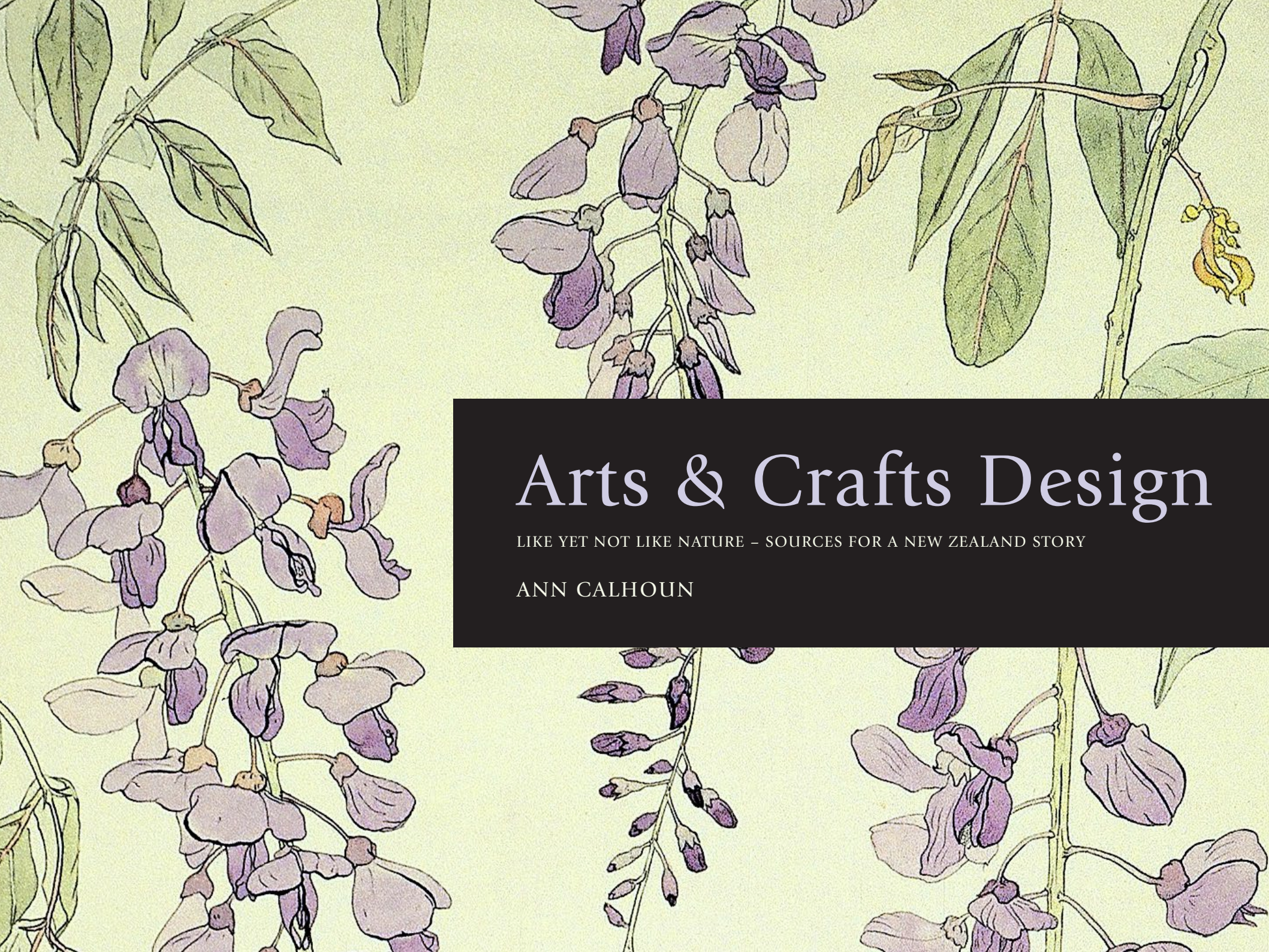

Arts & Crafts Design

LIKE YET NOT LIKE NATURE – SOURCES FOR A NEW ZEALAND STORY

ANN CALHOUN

FRONT COVER: Reverend Doris Tutill, Wisteria design suitable for embroidery, 1933, watercolour; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand (photo: Karl Valpy, Christchurch). Needle-art was taken up as an art form in New Zealand early in the twentieth-century as the Arts & Crafts became fashionable.

BACK COVER: Heather Masters, Repeat tree and cottage design, 1933, watercolour; Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand. The design is full of the beauty of life, the central message of the British Arts & Crafts to New Zealanders.

TITLE PAGE AND TITLE PAGE VERSO: John Gerard, "Of Turkie or Ginnie-hen flower.", Chapter 79, recorded for its beauty and not for its medicinal or food value, the more usual medieval approach; in The HERBALL OR Generall Historie of Plantes, Gathered by John Gerarde of London, Master of Chirurgerie, *John Norton, London (1597), illustration 122, 312 x 200mm; Rare English Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC-09.15.tif) The accompanying text states: "Of the faculties of thefe pleafant flowers there is nothing fet downe in the ancient or later writers, but are greatly efteemed for the beautifieng of our garden, and the bofomes of the beautifull." (123) J.W. Mackail (1899), William Morris's biographer, recorded that: "Gerard's 'Herbal', the old favourite of his boyhood, supplied useful information about certain disused vegetable dyes ...". (vol.I, 314) Full illustration on 152.*

CONTENTS PAGE: Christopher Dresser, "Knowledge is Power"; in The Art of Decorative Design *(1862), plate XXIV [between 182 and 183]; General Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 892-182/183). Full image on 65.*

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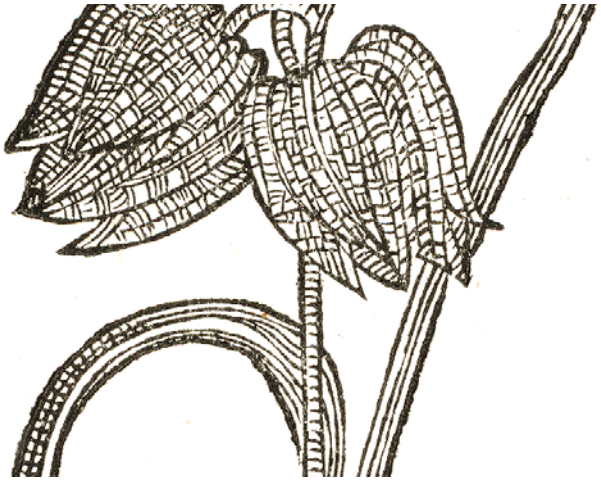

The real source of art is nature, and the best artists of every nation and period have taken it as their standard, and represented it under the peculiar aspect of their locality and period …

(A.W.N. Pugin, letter to *The Builder*, 2 August 1845)

"like yet not like" nature … to build structure, yet surprise the viewer with the content.

(Madame Louise Henderson's words on design as told to Heather Masters at the Canterbury College School of Art, New Zealand, early 1930s)

Art is a big part of the whole daily life of all of us. It is not reserved for the galleries, but should have its place in the home and among the everyday things of life.

(James Johnstone, in charge of Design and Craft at the Canterbury College School of Art 1926-58, radio talk, 1930s)

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Preface

Over decades of privileged study of the Arts & Crafts in New Zealand, I became aware of a body of beautiful designs on paper. Almost all were by women, almost all had never been realised on fabric or wallpaper or on any other media or end product, and most had never been exhibited or published. The purpose of the present study is to right this wrong. This is the story of Arts & Crafts design grounded in the British love of and dedication to nature: the book travels from medieval botanical illustration to late nineteenth-century British Arts & Crafts flat nature-based decorative design, an approach taken up in New Zealand using local and imported motifs: from John Gerard's *Herball*, 1597 (a William Morris favourite[1]) to Heather Masters' design, 1933 and Doris Tutill's embroidery design, based on a wisteria plant, also 1933.[2] A selection of designs is highlighted in colour plates throughout the story. The typical approach to Arts & Crafts design – with nature a constant companion – is summed up in the words of the inspirational Canterbury College School of Art teacher Madame Louise Henderson: "*like yet not like* nature ... to build structure, yet surprise the viewer with the content". (Madame Louise Henderson's words on design as told to Heather Masters at the Canterbury College School of Art, New Zealand, early 1930s)

The secondary purpose of the book is to reinforce the understood international reach of the British Arts & Crafts movement. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, exhibitions – William Morris (1996) and International Arts and Crafts (2005), and their comprehensive catalogues – included Japan, Europe, and the United States as entities adopting the British-sourced movement and creating local distinctive movements. New Zealand similarly acquired its Arts & Crafts movement from interactions with Britain and went on to create a home-born movement.

In 1971, reflecting on the bad press the Arts & Crafts had received in the twentieth-century, Gillian Naylor noted:

> It is obvious ... that the forces which shaped the movement were in evidence long before the 1860s, when Morris was establishing his Firm, and the 1880s when the impact of Ruskin's and Morris's teaching crystallized in the Guild ideal and the formation of at least five societies to promote that ideal.[3]

To understand these "forces", the movement's early origins are briefly introduced through ideas attached to the words *Gothic* and *Nature* for the nascent British Empire. By the 1830s, Britain had adopted nature and designs based on nature as a key to economic success. The story moves to A.W.N. Pugin and his Gothic Revival, to Owen Jones and his *Grammar*, to the roles of Christopher Dresser and the Aesthetic Movement as movement precursors. John Ruskin and William Morris were cardinal figures linking the movement to nature. Each had their place in the birth and life of the New Zealand movement.

The movement proper is presented in terms of texts and images available in New Zealand; figures such as Walter Crane, Lewis Day, W.R. Lethaby

and the movement in Scotland each had significant roles in the birth and life of the local movement. But above all else, imported texts and images brought the British Arts & Crafts movement to New Zealand: James Belich's *Replenishing the Earth: the settler revolution and the rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939* (2009) lays out the concept of an "Anglo-World", a "Greater Britain", an effective international conglomerate, based on London and binding:

> that entity together with webs of words and images ... between the 1890s and the 1930s ... Books, news, mail, and the like were the nervous system of Greater Britain, and as in old Britain they could carry identity as well as information ... [4]

The British Arts & Crafts movement was not finally named until 1887. Whatever its life-span the movement celebrated ideals wrapped around a love of materials and skills: woodcarving, stained glass, art metalwork and jewellery, art needlework, appliqué, stencilling, illustration, ceramics, tiles, weaving, and, at the forefront, architecture. Almost all were decorated with nature-sourced designs. Jessie Newbery, Glaswegian art embroiderer, teacher and theorist, was quoted by Gleeson White in *Studio* (October 1898):

> I believe that nothing is common or unclean; that the design and decoration of a pepper pot is as important, in its degree, as the conception of a cathedral.[5]

Jessie Newbery's words of 1898 represent the spiritual heights of the British Arts & Crafts. The conception and construction of a small object, "a pepper pot", and "a cathedral" were equally important to the Arts & Crafts designer and maker. The act of making was a "sacramental activity". The Arts & Crafts became a "secular religion" – "nothing is common or unclean".

By 1898, A.D. Riley, design and technical school head, Wellington, New Zealand, had visited Britain and the Arts & Crafts became an official aspect of the New Zealand education system. The Arts & Crafts at its most effective internationally became a voice in New Zealand from the 1890s.

Original texts are an intended aspect of the book, in particular sources known to have been available in New Zealand in the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries. The cited texts, as much as the illustrated Arts & Crafts designs and objects, convey a spiritual, mind-healing quality.

Arts & Crafts designers, those that made a difference, never stopped trying to simplify their designs; in the end borrowings from nature as legitimate decoration were disparaged (see Appendix). (The principal texts by or on highlighted Arts & Crafts designers are listed in the Bibliography.)

ENDNOTES

1 Title page illustration
2 Cover illustration, 9 full ill
3 Naylor 1971, 11
4 Belich 2009, 460-1
5 *Studio* XII/no55, 48. Jessie Newbery's idea is also discussed Glasgow 195-197 and "Legacy" 313

Acknowledgements

I take pleasure in acknowledging the help of Heather Masters (Canterbury College School of Art student 1932-6) and her daughter Lyndsay Brock. The unflagging help of Devon Sinclair during her ministry at the Canterbury College School of Art Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, was beyond any call of duty. I also wish to thank Ngarita Johnstone for her generous continuing help in assembling information on her father James Johnstone, head of Design and Craft at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1926 to 1958. The staffs of the National Library of New Zealand and Alexander Turnbull Library (Wellington), and the Wellington Public Library were, as always, generous with their help. The Alexander Turnbull Library's General Collection is to be cherished: the collection contains the story of a British art movement that found a new and valued home in New Zealand. Similarly the gracious and informed staffs of the National Library of Scotland are acknowledged. I was encouraged by Linda Parry, not least by her books, and by Elizabeth Cumming and her expertise on the Scottish movement. The help of Logan Sisley of the Edinburgh College of Art was greatly appreciated.

I also want to note the earlier important financial assistance given by Historic Publications and Creative New Zealand. Most importantly, I would like to acknowledge those women and their families and friends who gave me access to their treasures and records and gave me permission to take photographs: their recovered designs were the inspiration for this publication.

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Captions acknowledge photographic sources: institutional photographic reference numbers are included if they were supplied. Other than images taken by the author, photographers' names are included when known.

Ann Calhoun
Wellington, New Zealand
2015

Introduction

The richness of the British Arts & Crafts movement can only be fully enjoyed when its twin antecedents are recognised. Only when the medieval-based Gothic Revival and the Victorian devotion to *Nature* are accepted as entwined in the nineteenth-century is it possible to credit the passionate commitment of a sizeable group of gifted men and women to a movement they believed would – through the Arts – change the social, economic and cultural direction of the world. The movement has been termed "A Movement of the Mind"[1] but could as easily be termed a *secular religion*. This approach does not remove the disastrous effects of the Industrial Revolution but instead offers a route to understanding a worldwide movement that in New Zealand did not need a revolution to have meaning. The Gothic Revival passed into history, as did the reliance on Nature for decorative effects. Ultimately the Arts & Crafts movement destroyed itself, as Nature was rejected as the ideal source of decorative effects.

The story starts c.1835-6 when a British government Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures posted its concerns over "the want of taste in the designs for our staple manufactures, and the loss consequently sustained by our manufacturers in the markets of the world", the words of Richard Redgrave, a key figure in the coming design reform debate.[2] The Oxford Movement, and then the Cambridge Camden Society, and the powerful voice of *The Ecclesiologist* (1841-68), each played adjudicator on High Church issues, while also offering occasional views on design. Botanical and horticultural publications flourished, the first of a number of nineteenth-century publishing bubbles. And, as suggested to the 1835-6 Select Committee, students of drawing and design in Britain and "Greater Britain" (and the United States) should be and were taught to favour flat stylised decorative designs based on nature.

Reverend Doris Tutill, Wisteria design suitable for embroidery, 1933, watercolour; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand (photo: Karl Valpy, Christchurch). Needle-art was taken up as an art form in New Zealand early in the nineteenth-century as the Arts & Crafts became fashionable.

The word *nature*, of course, was so "invitingly vague" Kenneth Clark wrote in his seminal *Gothic Revival* (1928). Scholars of every persuasion, including the rampant anti-Gothicists, could not "write many pages without repeating that art is essentially the imitation of nature"[3], as arguments were spun from 1844 over Charles Barry's and A.W.N. Pugin's designs for the gothically-clothed Houses of Parliament. As Chris Brooks observes in his *Gothic Revival* (1999): "In gothic, history and nature became one."[4]

Gothic

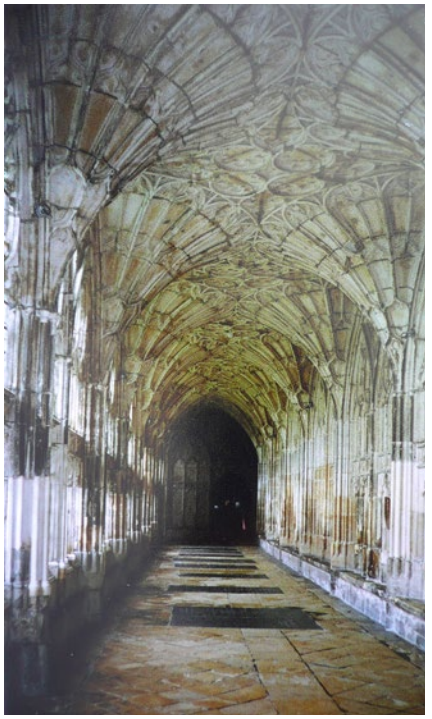
To distinguish and laud classical styles of architecture and ornament, the Renaissance had disparaged the architecture of the Middle Ages as apparently invented by barbaric Goths. Countering this stand, in England from the seventeenth-century into the eighteenth-century, the word *Gothic* underwent a transvaluation by which the word no longer meant uncouth and undesirable, and became a style of architecture (sometimes comprising no more than a romantic ruin) linked to Britain's past. Tastes and styles were adapted and Gothic architecture (and its accompanying ornament) were corralled and used to distinguish a supposedly much earlier *English* architectural style.

By the time Charles Barry's and A.W.N. Pugin's designs were accepted for the new Houses of Parliament, the style, as the *Gothic Revival*, was rapidly becoming the only true style of architecture for Britain and her Empire. As Gothic acquired naming rights in Britain, the trappings of medieval life were reinvented and appropriated for the British nation: "the power of evoking the past came to reside in the style itself."[5]

Gloucester Cathedral, an austere medieval building, was a destination for pilgrims coming to venerate the murdered (1327) King Edward II. The damage suffered over the centuries is apparent: Cromwell housed his horses inside and soot marks from fires are easily seen. Gilbert Scott restored the cathedral. The cathedral, with E.W. Godwin[6] as a guide (1864), taught "the power of design", noted a current newspaper cutting.[7]

Some key examples of the Gothic Revival architectural style in Britain and New Zealand are introduced chronologically in the following paragraph. A.W.N. Pugin's St Giles Church, Cheadle (1841-6) was built as the medieval Sainte-Chapelle, Paris, was being restored from 1837; the church was a lauded example of the painted church interiors of the Middle Ages. Next there was Charles Barry's and Pugin's Houses of Parliament, built between 1835 and 1868. William Butterfield's All Saints' Church, Margaret Street, London, begun in 1849, marked the central role of High Victorian Gothic architecture and constructional polychromy for the next twenty years. The building was much admired by Ruskin. The 1851 London Great Exhibition building, dubbed the Crystal Palace, had its interior effectively structured in painted colour by Owen Jones. Thomas Deane's and Benjamin Woodward's Oxford University Museum (c1859) was not finished, but is still remembered for John Ruskin's advocacy of naturalistic decoration. Philip Webb's Red House (1859) for William and Janey Morris with its gentle Gothic reminders was ultimately the key building for the still-dormant Arts & Crafts movement. In New Zealand Benjamin Mountford's Canterbury Provincial Government Buildings (1858-65) were built and the interior polychromatically decorated, as the British reliance on nature for decorative effects was being absorbed into the British system of design and art education.

Jonathan Mane-Wheoki in *Selwyn Gothic: the formative years* records the attitude of George Augustus Selwyn, the first Anglican Bishop of New Zealand, as he established St John's College: "the only architectural style he countenanced was that sanctioned by the university architectural societies in England: Gothic". A library was a necessity and Selwyn "acquired copies of A.W.N. Pugin's publications for the College library".[8] Gothic-style churches in New Zealand were often constructed, as is



The Cloister, Gloucester Cathedral, was used for some scenes in a Harry Potter film

The pillars have been painted (restored) to suggest the use of polychromy in medieval cathedrals.

St Andrews' Church, Martinborough, south Wairarapa, in wood rather than stone. Throughout New Zealand the exteriors and interiors of these churches herald the coming Arts & Crafts' call for Beauty and mark the movement's local influence.

Ian Lochhead, in his important book *Dream of Spires: Benjamin Mountfort and the Gothic Revival* (1999), links the influence of William Butterfield's Margaret Street London church[9] to the distant Canterbury Settlement:

> Indeed, there could have been no more auspicious time to establish a British colony in which Gothic architecture was to play a dominant role. The first great monument of High Victorian Gothic, William Butterfield's All Saints' Church, Margaret Street, London, was under construction as the Canterbury colonists sailed for New Zealand …
>
> In the hands of an architect like Mountfort ... Gothic was no longer a dead language but a living style capable of meeting any need the modern world might ask of it.

Gothic, in New Zealand as in Britain, was seen as a native style. By using string courses of differently-coloured local stone – the *streaky bacon* effect – for the northwest tower of Benjamin Mountfort's Canterbury Provincial Government Buildings, Christchurch, the "structural properties of the material" were highlighted. Tenders were first called in August 1857, and the tower built from, as Ian Lochhead notes:

> alternate courses of red and grey stone, creating a banded effect known as constructional polychromy ... it is the first example of Victorian constructional polychromy in New Zealand, and quite possibly the first in Australasia.[10]

Benjamin Mountfort owned books that were to play a significant role in

St Andrew's Anglican Church, Dublin Street, Martinborough, Wairarapa, New Zealand, 1883, a Gothic-style country church, designed by Frederick de Jersey Clere

Black and white striped roofing, a Gothic Revival fashion often attributed to John Ruskin; Christchurch Arts Centre, Christchurch, New Zealand

the lengthy development of the British Arts & Crafts:

- A.W.N. Pugin, *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (1841)
- A.W.N. Pugin, *An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England* (1843)
- A.W.N. Pugin, *The Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume, compiled and illustrated from Ancient Authorities and Examples* (1844)
- John Ruskin, *Lectures on Architecture and Painting, delivered at Edinburgh in November 1853* – acquired 1856
- Christopher Dresser, *The Art of Decorative Design (1862)* – acquired 1866
- Lewis Day, *Every-Day Art: Short essays on the arts not fine (1882)* – acquired 1883
- John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice* (1851-5)[11]
- G.E. Street, *Brick and Marble in the Middle Ages: Notes on a tour in North Italy* (1855)

Mountfort, as shown by Ian Lochhead, and touched on in later sections on A.W.N. Pugin and Owen Jones, had at every stage a surprisingly complete knowledge of the evolving Arts & Crafts movement in Britain.

Samuel Hurst Seager, Mountfort's protégé, may have visited Gloucester Cathedral[12], during August-September 1908, as he and his wife went from London to Norwich through the Midlands to Scotland, as part of his *grand tour* of Britain and the Continent. While overseas, Seager corresponded with Kate Beath, an apprentice architect in his Christchurch practice. His letters indicate that he had visited the cathedrals of northern France (1907?), which were also visited by A.W.N. Pugin and William Morris. He directed Kate Beath to a drawing of the interior of a Norman church, which he had sent to his Christchurch office. A postcard records a visit to Facciata della Cattedrale, Monreale, Sicily; M. Digby Wyatt had also visited the cathedral, the result being an illustration in the *Journal of Design and Manufactures* in November 1851.[13] Seager's letters and postcards point to visits to: Durham Cathedral; St Mary's Abbey, York; Haddon Hall; Chatsworth; Blickling Hall, Norfolk; Tintern Abbey, Mill St, Warwick; Ann Hathaway's cottage, Stratford-on-Avon; Old Ludgate Hill, and Cambridge; and Florence, Perugia, Rome, Chartre, Rouen, Nuremburg and Cambridge. Later in Christchurch he lectured on preserving Westminster Abbey.[14]

Seager, in Florence on 22 April [1908], wrote to Kate Beath in Christchurch (New Zealand), on her forthcoming trip Home:

> I ... look forward to a return to the delightfulness of the Cath. towns of England. See all you can of these & don't merely go to see them but live in them, & with them, & let the spirit of them grow upon you, then you will realise that no greater enjoyment is to be found ... of Grand architecture ...

Nature[15]

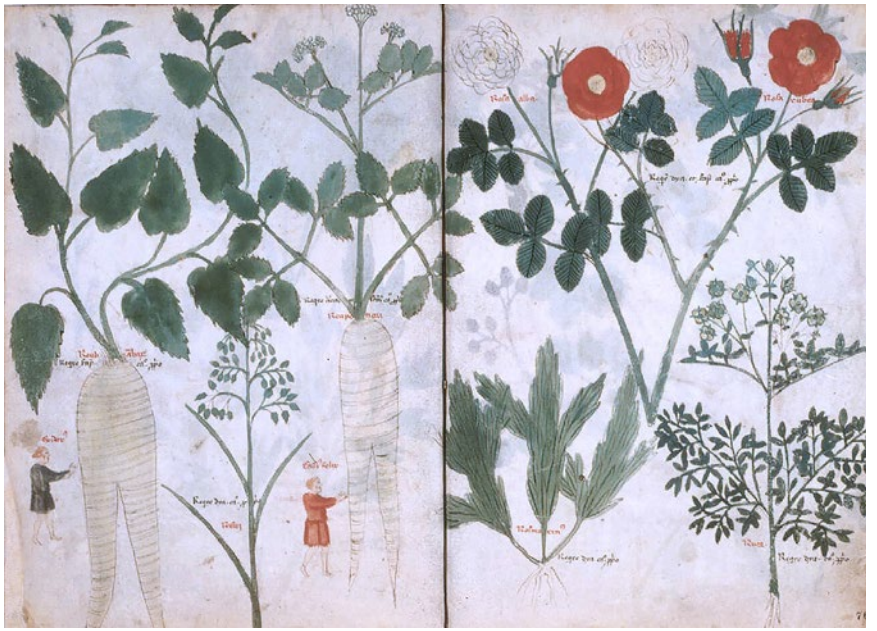
Botanical illustrations as records of plants for medicinal and food use are found as far back as Greece, Rome and Byzantium. Illustrated texts assembled as herbals served as practical guides to edible foods and the medicinal properties of particular plants. Some of the information was empirical fact and other, supposed facts were little more than myth. Illustrated herbals were to become a standard reference tool for Arts & Crafts designers.

The florilegium (pl. florilegia) or "flower book" was the characteristic botanical publication of the seventeenth century.

It is important to stress that the science of botany in both its nascent and developed states has had to rely on illustrations of plants in their living states for the highest quality information on those plants. Plants are fragile and, when dried, loose much of their original character. Insects, birds, Egyptian mummies, and even preserved human corpses from peat bogs, retain much more information about the original living specimen in comparison to dried plants. Botany as a science, distinct from medical or food use, did not appear until the late sixteenth-century in Europe.

In early botanical illustrations, even those prepared for fantastical ends, line drawings were needed to establish the plant's morphology (form and structural characteristics). Other drawings, more often coloured, gave an impression of a plant's aesthetic value.

The florilegium (pl. florilegia) or *flower book* was the characteristic botanical publication of the seventeenth-century. The illustrations, in other words the plates, became more significant than the text describing the plant. The flower garden now joined earlier garden types – the kitchen garden, the herb garden and the physic garden – and was often termed the "garden of earthly delights". Florilegia were often catalogues of plants in a particular garden, as well as signs of individual and family status and wealth, and as pattern books became important sources of



Materia Medica, from a Vatican exhibition, Smithsonian sourced, "Botany: Tradition and Innovation" *(1993): the caption reads: "This picture book, with no narrative text, is probably associated with a Salernitan herbal compiled at the medical school in Salerno in the twelfth century … Plants, animals, and minerals are arranged in alphabetical order with plant lists and captions in alphabetical order and in Latin. Here, a highly naturalistic rose appears side by side with some much less realistically rendered plants."*[16]

Carl Linnaeus proposed the system, haltingly adopted from the mid-eighteenth century, of classifying plants according to the sexual organs of the flower or the flower and the fruiting body

decorative motifs for applied artists such as embroiderers. *The Flower Garden Displayed* (1732) was described as "Very Useful ... for the Ladies, as Patterns for working".[17] William Morris is known to have used florilegia as a pattern source.[18]

Florilegia stand as records of the seventeenth-century passion for collecting and cataloguing anything and everything. Newly discovered plants flooded into Europe, with important botanical gardens established at or near centers of trade, such as Amsterdam and Venice.

As illustrated botanical texts multiplied in the eighteenth-century, there was an understandable need for an acceptable *universal* plant classification system.[19] An effort was made to provide a complete account of a plant's life cycle. Carl Linnaeus proposed the system, haltingly adopted from the mid-eighteenth century, of classifying plants according to the sexual organs of the flower or the flower and the fruiting body. The system was based on the reproductive requirements of the plant, rather than the whole plant. "Reproductive structures are not subject to environmental modification and are evolutionarily conservative because structural experimentation in reproduction often has no evolutionary future."[20] The Linnaean system produced illustrative work that is closer

Pterostylis Banksii. Large-leafed Pterostylis. 1792; in Curtis's Botanical Magazine; or, Flower-garden Displayed *1832, vol.59 plate 3172, drawn by Francis Bauer, page size 225x135mm; Rare Periodicals Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC 09/16) The plant was found on the bank of a stream entering the Bay of Islands, on the east coast of New Zealand, and recognised as the same plant found by Joseph Banks in New Zealand when he accompanied Captain Cook on the Endeavour in 1769.*

to flower painting than to botanical art. Dissecting and illustrating the reproductive parts of a flowering plant became standard practice: in time students were taught to turn their drawings into repeat designs. (Linnaeus's lasting contribution to botanical science was the binary system of naming plants, the first name the genus, the second name the species.)

Those nascent nations most actively involved in collecting and illustrating plants in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – Holland, Germany, northern France and England – were, not surprisingly, also the principal traders and colonisers of the time. Plants became part of a nation's, rather than an individual's or family's, wealth – nature harnessed for nationalistic ends.

The need for immediate on-site records of collected specimens created a demand for accurate records, and artists (those with drawing skills) were often included in a ship's complement. The fragile nature of botanical specimens must be stressed again. Accurately drawn records of found plants were essential to the success of Cook's voyages: plant cuttings were, in other words, often a part of an explorer's kit but one that was only useful if the plant's morphological characteristics could be quickly and accurately recorded.

The scientific excitement created in Britain and on the Continent by Cook's and other voyages made the study of botany even more fashionable, even more *tasteful*. Serial publications appeared: William Curtis's *Botanical Magazine: or Flower-Garden Displayed*, the *Floral Magazine*, and Jane Loudon's *The Ladies' Flower Garden* series. Botany became another tool of Empire.

In the first issue of William Curtis's *Botanical Magazine*, February 1787, Curtis declared his wish to make a "Display of the Flower Garden of ornamental Foreign plants cultivated in the open ground, the greenhouse, and the stove".[21] Curtis's publication, likely to have been available in New Zealand as settlement progressed, included, by 1973, 135 illustrated native New Zealand plants.[22]

Feeding into and suggesting an alternative approach to botanical illustration were illustrations prepared by Chinese artists. Chinese illustrators traditionally flattened and generalised natural plant forms. For a Western audience, they were given European illustrations to follow, although their original allegiances are easily spotted.[23] Six million pieces of Chinese pottery were brought to the West every year during the mid-eighteenth century.[24]

By the late eighteenth century the previous dedication to collecting the exotic flowers and plants of other lands on a scattered and illogical basis had become suspect, as argued by David Hay in 1836.[25] Distinctions appeared between illustrations with a primarily aesthetic aim and those seen to be sufficiently accurate for use by the scientific community.

Into the nineteenth century, botanical illustration became more than a means of identifying one plant species over another. Botanical illustrations became a symbol of knowledge and scientific insight. Those with such specialist knowledge were venerated in society. Gill Saunders (1995) records:

> Goethe, himself much occupied with botanical theory, felt that the demands of science were detrimental to the art in botanical illustration: writing in 1831 he declared that "A great flower-painter

> is not now to be expected: we have attained too high a degree of scientific truth, and the botanist counts the stamens after the painter and has no eye for picturesque grouping and lighting".[26]

In New Zealand, after climbing Mount Excelsior in 1886, Katherine Holmes wrote, looking at nature with the romantic eyes of the age, her words an echo of Goethe's preferences:

> ... at that moment ... we had for the time bidden adieu to cities and the cares of life, and become inheritors of the peace of the everlasting hills ... so we arose and struggled on, presently we reached the zone of the mountain daisy which cheered us somewhat; for it proved that two thirds of the ascent were accomplished. We pulled some of the blossoms which are about the size of a marguerite, and with sticky stalks that act as fly catchers.[27]

Amateur botany became popular and saw a rise in demand for illustrated manuals as *aides-mémoire* when botanising. Botany seemed to be mandatory for women of all ages. Travel thereby became an accepted aspect of botanising. Through their travels women had freedoms they might not otherwise have enjoyed. Trips were made to collect cuttings to be sketched for use in later botanical illustrations and flower paintings for both artistic and scientific ends. What these women faced, a dilemma also faced by male botanical illustrators, was the divide between art and science, an antipathy becoming more apparent later in the century.

Women, despite the assumption that the fair sex might fail to depict plants with scientific accuracy, continued to gain reputations as adept botanical illustrators and found employment as professional illustrators

Katherine Holmes, "Our sketchers camp 1886" (from a journal of a sketching trip from Dunedin to Te Anau, 16); Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref F12367 ½). In the sketch two female climbers are farther up the mountain than two male climbers.

for the astonishing number of botanical and horticultural publications appearing mid-century. Horticultural publications often illustrated flowering plants almost to the exclusion of everything else; the value of the prints increased when hand coloured using even washes.

For the gardener, the florist, and the botanical illustrator the principal concern was often colour, at a time when colour was being scientifically and aesthetically studied. The flower, predominant over all other aspects of the plant's life cycle, was presented frontally "in ever more exaggerated forms".[28] The reproductive technique increasingly favoured was lithography, which more easily allowed for mass printings. The effect was to enhance the frontality of the flower illustrated.[29]

William Curtis's *Flora Londoniensis* (published in parts from 1775, failed 1798) was of special interest for later developments in New Zealand. Gil Saunders (1995) comments:

> The failure … is surprising since its illustrations achieved a rarely surpassed level of beauty and accuracy. The engraved plates show the plants life-size, and in the coloured editions (which, at five shillings, cost twice as much as plain) the hand-colouring is unusually delicate and skilful.[30]

The publication was recommended in 1898 by Arthur Dewhurst Riley to the New Zealand government for students taking the additional subject *Plants in their relation to design*. The subject was introduced at the Canterbury College School of Art in 1899.[31]

Among New Zealand's settlers and their children were creditable numbers of botanical artist-illustrators – both female and male. Martha King is credited with being New Zealand's first resident female botanical artist-illustrator. Martha, an Irishwomen, arrived in Wellington in 1840, age 37. Suggesting prior training or previous work as a botanical illustrator, she was commissioned in September 1842 by the Wellington Horticultural and Botanical Society to prepare "two sets of drawings of the most interesting indigenous botanical species and species of native woods". She then received further commissions.[32]

Emily Harris was the daughter of a civil engineer, surveyor and an artist. She set sail for New Zealand with family in 1840. At 24 she spent time studying art in Hobart, Tasmania. She became the victim of the greater separation of art and science when she exhibited at the Sydney International Exhibition (1879-80). She received a first degree of merit for 28 "very finely painted" illustrations of New Zealand flowers, using the common flower names. The writer of the official catalogue for the exhibition thought "it would have been a great improvement if the botanical names had also been given", thereby asserting that a touch of science would have made these illustrations more valuable.[33] She prepared books on New Zealand berries, ferns and flowers, published around 1890 in Nelson.[34]

Nature was adopted by the British government as a useful patriotic source-book by which to rejuvenate and reform British decorative design and thereby the worth of British products.

Nature (and geometry) as precursors to Arts & Crafts design

Nature was adopted by the British government as a useful patriotic source book by which to rejuvenate and reform British decorative design and thereby the worth of British products. The noted 1835-6 government debate on design, before a Select Committee on Arts and Principles of Design, examined David Ramsey Hay on 15 June 1836. Hay gave his occupation as a "house-painter, decorator, and gilder" of Edinburgh. Hay ran a firm of 70 men, and published a number of books on design, including *Treatise on Colouring*, and *Original Geometrical Diaper Designs, accompanied by an attempt to develope and elucidate the true principles of Ornamental Design*. As Hay explained to the Select Committee, "all our designs appear to be copied from the French; the French have a style of design of their own". The British, he argued, should have their own ornamental style. Hay's comments, quoted and highlighted below, argued for students, after being introduced to basic geometric shapes, to be taught to draw from plant cuttings:

> [Chairman] What do you consider the best line of study for persons intended for a profession like your own, or best adapted to improve

George Pitkethly, Silver box with paua shell, c1911; Private collection. The box exhibits both natural and geometric patterns. Pitkethly, with A Raworth, designed and executed a plaster frieze The Vine *shown at the 1906-7 International Exhibition in Christchurch, New Zealand; exhibited by the Fairholm Arts and Crafts Studio.*[38]

Chrystabel Aitken, Jewel casket, 1930s, silver-plated copper repoussé with Celtic interlacing, lid with enamel inset (phoenix); Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand

"The vegetable kingdom presents the best examples for study ... by directing the attention of the pupils to nature we shall produce an ornamental school of our own ..."

> the taste of the working class generally? – It is, in the first place, to initiate them in the drawing of large symmetrical figures by the hand.
>
> By symmetrical figures what do you mean? – Squares, ovals and circles; they should then practise undulations and volutes. Their attention should then be directed to the vegetable kingdom, and they should begin their practice by studying from large, well developed leaves. All the common weeds that grow in such profusion by our hedge-rows and road-sides, as also in the wildest and most sterile parts of the country, are worthy of the study and attention of those who wish to improve their taste in regard to what is really elegant or beautiful in form. I consider it a mistaken idea that ornamental designers will be produced by setting young men to copy statues or pieces of sculptured ornament, however good they may be. The vegetable kingdom presents the best examples for study, and I reckon it an equally mistaken idea that the rare productions of the botanical garden are the only models of this kind from the study of which a taste for ornamental design may be derived. Both grace and elegance of form are to be found in the common dock, the thistle, the fern or even in a stalk of corn or barley. The study of such objects is within the reach of all classes, and those who thus form their taste, when they come to study the ornamental remains of Athens and Rome will find themselves familiar with the source from which such designs were derived, for the ancients undoubtedly owed their excellence in ornamental art to the study of nature, and they do not seem to have searched for novelties, but to have adopted her most common productions for the leading features of their designs; this kind of study cannot be commenced too early or made too general, as, independently of its usefulness, it must prove a continual source of pleasure to those who have adopted it.
>
> I mean, that by directing the attention of the pupils to nature we shall produce an ornamental school of our own in connexion with manufactures, and that our designs would then possess an originality that they could not do by our copying the works of any other nation.[35]

William Dyce (1806-64), Edinburgh-born, was a minutely naturalistic painter, fresco artist, designer, design theorist, educator, administrator and ecclesiologist – one of many polymaths involved in the design debate. Following publication of the 1835-6 British report on *Arts and Manufactures* (including Hay's comments above), Dyce and Charles H Wilson co-authored a *Letter to Lord Meadowbank*, and the [Scottish] *Committee of the Honourable Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufactures: On the best means of ameliorating the arts and manufactures of Scotland in point of taste*. The letter sought to set out "our views of the best means of bringing the principles of the Arts of Design, to bear on the improvement of Manufactures". An Academy would be established, whereby an "artisan" might become an "industrial artist".

After elementary training, based on the "beauties of ancient art", students

would be taught to think for themselves. There would be a School of Form: "there should be a class for the study of nature", and a School of Colour: "for the purpose of applying the right rules of colouring to coloured manufactures". The schools would co-operate, students ultimately being "allowed to study directly from nature, with the view of applying its conjoined beauties of *form* and of *colour* to the purposes of art".

> We would endeavour, then, constantly to impress on the minds of our pupils the difference between that kind of imitation which is the peculiar province of fine art, and the conventional representation of nature, admissible in designs for works of industry.

For Dyce and Wilson, such an Academy would set a "patriotic example of bestowing on Great Britain, what has been proved to be a national benefit, – the means of ameliorating her ARTS and MANUFACTURES in point of *taste*."[36] The letter was dated 30 May 1837.

William Dyce was appointed Superintendent and Professor of the government-sponsored School of Design at Somerset House, The Strand, London, in 1838. He toured Europe and returned advocating the Bavarian *werkstadt* system of teaching design skills for particular areas of interest. In 1842 he prepared a *Drawing Book* (see below). Stuart Durant views Dyce's *Drawing Book* as "probably the earliest, certainly the most complete, record of a basic course in industrial design".[37]

William Dyce published his *Drawing Book of the Government School of Design: A drawing book*; containing elementary instruction in drawing, and illustrating the principles of design as applied to ornamental art in 1842-3. The Elementary section consisted of 14 pages of shapes for students to copy. Outlines were selected from modern to ancient examples "so as to form a complete course of instruction in ornamental design, preliminary to drawing from nature". Dyce argued that for pragmatic reasons students needed outline copying exercises "to serve the double purpose of imparting manual skill in linear design, and of making the student versed in the established models of linear ornament." The outlines acquired the epithet "Dyce's Outlines". Dyce argued:

> There is no one who doubts that nature must be held up as the source from whence, as much now as ever, all the forms of beauty applicable to the uses of the ornamentist must be derived ... The artist, it has been observed, has for his drift the representation of beauty as it appears in its natural subject; the ornamentist, the application of beauty to a new subject ...[39]

Among the elementary outlines were the simple free-hand drawing-board exercises shown in the photographs in the Education section of the New Zealand *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* in 1898.[40]

The London school suffered as masters squabbled over whether ornamentists in training should or should not draw the human form for other than its use as applied ornament. Dyce was deemed to have resigned from the school in 1843, and resigned from the system in 1844.

Dyce's "outlines" would have influenced Pugin's 1849 *Floriated Ornament*, although a medieval herbal is no less plausible.[41]

As shown, the art and science of botanical illustration was modified over many centuries until a tradition was established in which a *correct* botanical illustration was one which accurately recorded a plant's

reproductive parts. From the middle of the nineteenth-century, as examined in the following sections, individuals are credited with specific innovations on the long road to the British Arts & Crafts movement. The key was the adoption of motifs drawn from nature as the official means of decorating British products. A designer studied a sectioned plant to find forms and colours from which to create pleasing designs to decorate a range of product surfaces. A uniquely British Arts & Crafts flat (*conventionalised*) nature-based decorative design ethic and style evolved by the eighteen-nineties and was taught in New Zealand schools and in most British-influenced societies. Gothic-touches colour the movement at every stage until disposed of as old fashioned.

ENDNOTES

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3 Clark [1928] 1964, 100
4 Brooks 1999, 58
5 Ibid 85
6 Godwin discussed "Eclectic aesthetics", 79, 80 ill
7 From a newspaper cutting in the Bristol Society of Architects minute book 1864, in Catherine Arbuthnott/Soros (ed) *Godwin* 1999, 51
8 *Art New Zealand* 54 (1990), 76, 78
9 See Pugin's Cheadle church spire 29 ill and Butterfield's spire, 40 ill
10 Lochhead 1999, 4, 115, 95, 100
11 Ibid 100; it can be assumed that Mountfort owned Ruskin's Stones and Street's *Brick and Marble* (Ian Lochhead email 15 Apr 2012)
12 Gloucester Cathedral, 10-11 ills
13 "A Portion of Plate No 17, extracted from specimens of the geometrical mosaics of the Middle Ages by M Digby Wyatt, Arch[T raised]. Published by Day & Son, Gate St, Lincoln Inn Fields. Linings to windows from Monreale Cathedral, Sicily" in *Journal of Design and Manufactures* VI 33(November 1851) [between 66-7]; National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh (ref PB-7268-06; v.14)
14 See Kate Beath's work, 231-2 ills
15 For further information, see Gill Saunders *Picturing Plants: An analytical history of botanical illustration* 1995
16 www.ibiblio.org/expo/vatican.exhibit/exhibit/g-nature/nature03.jpg
17 Saunders 1995, 111 and 111 ill
18 Ibid 41ff, 6; and David Con Hutton in Dunedin, 217 ill
19 Ibid 85ff
20 Phil Garnock-Jones & Phillipa Scott *Botanica* Adam Art Gallery Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand 2001, 13 (exhibition catalogue)
21 Michael Sidney Whittle-Tyler and Christopher Cook Curtis's *Flower Garden Displayed* Oxford 1981, 2
22 Sampson 1985, 61
23 Saunders 1995, 78
24 *Antiques Road Show*, TV1, 10 September 2005
25 See over 19-20
26 Johann Peter Eckermann *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann* 1984, 327, in Saunders 1995, 96
27 Entry for 18 February. A photocopy of the journal is held by the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. The mountain daisy was decoratively used by John Henry Menzies, 263 ill
28 Saunders 106, acknowledging the help of Brent Elliott
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30 Ibid 128
31 Discussed further 230 col2 ff
32 Long, Moira M. "King, Martha – biography" in the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography (Te Ara); http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/1k12/1; retrieved 10 Aug 2011
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34 Long, Moira M. "Harris, Emily Cumming – biography" in the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography (Te Ara); http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/2h15/1; retrieved 10 Aug 2011
35 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee on Arts and Principles of Design* II(15 June 1836), in British Parliamentary Papers: Industrial Revolution DESIGN I: Sessions 1835-36, 37-9, 430, 432
36 William Dyce and Charles H. Wilson letter 30 May 1837: 3, 38-41, 49, 54
37 Durant 1986, 26
38 Spielmann 1908, 269; George Pitkethly discussed further 241-2 and in his "biography" 329
39 Dyce 1842-3 III
40 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B opp 5, 173 ills
41 Durant/Whiteway 2004, 222 col3 no10; ills from Pugin's *Floriated Ornament* (1849), 30-31 ills

Chapter one

ARTS & CRAFTS DESIGN: THE PREAMBLE

Chapter Cover: *Full image, 33 ill*

Pugin was effectively the godhead for the later Arts & Crafts

A.W.N. Pugin (1812-52): a Gothic prodigy

The architect, designer, theoretician and publisher Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin was, as termed by Chris Brooks in his *Gothic Revival*, "a gothic prodigy".[1] Pugin, as his copious writings prove, demanded everything from exposed hinges, to propriety, to the "adaption of nature for decorative purposes"[2]: Pugin was effectively the godhead for the later Arts & Crafts:

Kenneth Clark in *The Gothic Revival: An essay on the history of taste* (1928) wrote:

> To Pugin ... the life of the Middle Ages was not strange or impossible, but the only good life. He looked on its social structure as a model by which contemporary society must be reformed; and only when the piety and public spirit of that time were re-established could a true Christian architecture arise. The tiny plates of Pugin's *Contrasts* contain the germs of Christian Socialism and [Ruskin's] St George's Guild.[3]

Pugin's strongly stated views on architecture and design and a great deal else came to public attention in *Contrasts* (submitted for publication in January 1836). When Pugin died at only 40 on 14 September 1852, *The Ecclesiologist*, in its October obituary, talked "of our friend, Mr Pugin,

A.W.N. Pugin, Title page; in Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume, *1844; Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. The medieval scriptorium illustrated by Pugin in 1844 is not dissimilar to the scriptorium created by William Toomath (2002-7) on a hillside in Wellington, New Zealand, a tribute to the medieval monks who gained solace in such quiet places of Beauty (311 ill).*

whom – now that we have lost him – we can have no hesitation in pronouncing [him] the most eminent and original architectural genius of his time". Pugin at the time of his death was still fully involved preparing designs for the Houses of Parliament. Despite reservations over Pugin's adopted Roman Catholic faith (1835), *The Ecclesiologist*, the voice of the English Anglican church for many decades, promoted Pugin whom, it seems, was:

> ... never perhaps quite able to understand how those who agreed with him so heartily in a profound admiration of mediæval art could tolerate any adaptation of its principles to modern requirement and an altered ritual. His own ideal of perfection was an absolute copy of a mediæval building; and this he carried out with singular fidelity in his own most interesting church of S. Augustine, at Ramsgate ...
>
> ... His energy was boundless, his power of application almost unrivalled, and the versatility of his powers inexhaustible. Our readers know in some degree what he effected over and above the actual branches of an architect's profession, in the manufactures of church plate, of metal work of all kinds, of enamelling, of weaving and embroidery, indeed of every kind of ecclesiastical or domestic art and decoration, not to mention stained glass, to which of late years he devoted so much skill and labour. Mr Pugin has indeed left a void which it will be long before any one else can fill.[4]

A.W.N. Pugin, *Contrasts; or, A Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, and Similar Buildings of the Present Day; shewing the present decay of taste: Accompanied by appropriate text* (1836), stated page 1, paragraph 2:

"It will be readily admitted that the great test of Architectural beauty is the fitness of the design to the purpose for which it is intended ..."

> It will be readily admitted that the great test of Architectural beauty is the fitness of the design to the purpose for which it is intended, and that the style of a building should so correspond with its use that the spectator may at once perceive the purpose for which it was erected.

Pugin's next two paragraphs stated a key Arts & Crafts premiss: the architect and ornamentalist should use vernacular architecture and ornament:

> Acting on this principle, different nations have given birth to so many various styles of Architecture, each suited to their climate, customs, and religion; and ... there can be little doubt that the religious ideas and ceremonies of these different people had by far the greatest influence in the formation of their various styles of Architecture.

For Pugin, the incontravertable need for "every ornament" to refer to vernacular prototypes (vernacular forms and materials) was argued for, even more forcefully, later in his 1836 text:

> Let us look around, and see whether the Architecture of this country is not entirely ruled by whim and caprice. Does locality, destination, or character of a building, form the basis of a design? no; surely not. We have Swiss cottages in a flat country; Italian villas in the coldest

> situations; a Turkish kremlin for a royal residence; Greek temples in crowded lanes; Egyptian auction rooms; and all kinds of absurdities and incongruities: and not only are separate edifices erected in these inappropriate and unsuitable styles, but we have only to look into those nests of monstrosities, the Regent's Park and Regent Street, where all kinds of styles are jumbled together to make up a mass.

The hand-crafted ethic, by which, correctly or not, Arts & Crafts work is often identified, was, for Pugin, clearly integral to the construction of a medieval building and honoured both architect and worker. That Pugin did not deal with the gross excesses of industrialisation is perhaps a weakness in his philosophy: the issues of machine-production and the division-of-labour were not yet central social concerns. Instead, he said in *Contrasts*:

> It was this feeling ["of raising a temple to the worship of the true and living God"] that operated alike on the master mind that planned the edifice, and on the patient sculptor whose chisel wrought each varied and beautiful detail. It was this feeling that induced the ancient masons, in spite of labour, danger, and difficulties, to persevere till they had raised their gigantic spires into the very regions of the clouds ... it is a feeling that may be traced throughout the whole of the numerous edifices of the middle ages, and which, amidst the great variety of genius which their varied styles display, still bespeak the unity of purpose which influenced their builders and artists.[5]

A.W.N. Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (1841), stated Lecture I, page 1:

> The two great rules for design are these: 1st, that there should be no features about a building which are not necessary for convenience, construction, or propriety; 2nd, that all ornament should consist of enrichment of the essential construction of the building. The neglect of these two rules is the cause of all the bad architecture of the present time. Architectural features are continually tacked on buildings with which they have no connection, merely for the sake of what is termed effect; and ornaments are actually constructed, instead of forming the decoration of construction, to which in good taste they should be always subservient.
>
> In pure architecture the smallest detail should have a meaning or serve a purpose; and even the construction itself should vary with the material employed, and the designs should be adapted to the material in which they are executed.
>
> ... Moreover, the architects of the middle ages were the first who turned the natural properties of the various materials to their full account, and made their mechanism a vehicle for their art.

"... even the construction itself should vary with the material employed ..."

Pugin, on metal-work, put forward rules for ornamental design, argued, that hinges, locks, bolts, nails, etc should not be "concealed in modern designs" but be recognised as "rich and beautiful decorations". He has here presaged the positive Arts & Crafts message apparent through small

structural necessities such as hinges made visible. Theses small structural necessities were often decorated with references to nature to enhance their beauty further. Still on metalwork, Pugin made a general comment:

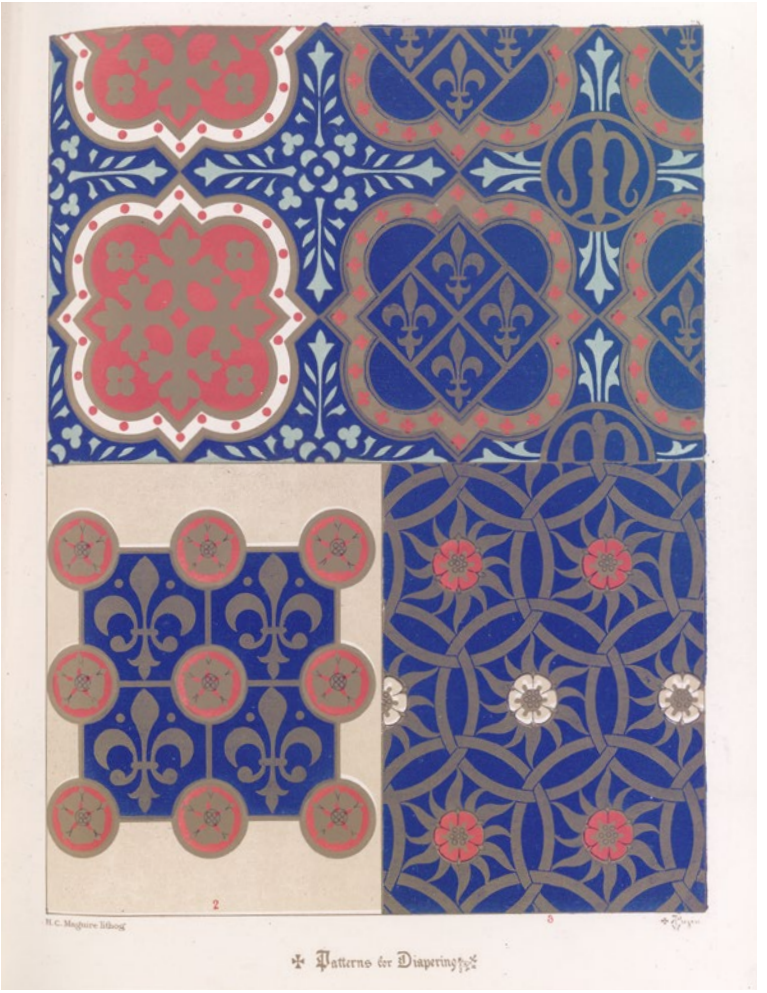
> How many objects of ordinary use are rendered monstrous and ridiculous simply because the artist, instead of seeking the most convenient form, and then decorating it, has embodied some extravagance to conceal the real purpose for which the article has been made!

Pugin argued against the "absurdity of repeating a perspective over a large surface with some hundred different points of sight", as in much Victorian gothic-patterned wallpaper; and set forth his much-repeated argument over carpet patterns, that modern carpets are "generally shaded. Nothing can be more ridiculous than an apparently reversed groining to walk upon, or highly relieved foliage and perforated tracery for the decoration of a floor."

> The ancient paving tiles are quite consistent with their purpose, being merely ornamented with a pattern not produced by any apparent relief, but only by contrast of colour; and carpets should be treated in precisely the same manner. Turkey carpets, which are by far the handsomest now manufactured, have no shadow in their pattern, but merely an intricate combination of coloured intersections.

Lecture II

Household furniture should be "simple and convenient", not imitative of church furniture. "We find diminutive flying buttresses about an armchair ... A man who remains any length of time in a modern Gothic



A.W.N. Pugin, "Patterns for Diapering" in Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume *1844, plate 28: '1. Cross and our Blessed Lady; 2. Rose and Fleur-de-Lis; 3. Red and White Rose, en Soleil'; Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. The flatness of Pugin's designs is definitive, as is Pugin's use of primary colours.*

room, and escapes without being wounded by some of its minutiæ, may consider himself extremely fortunate". Pugin admits to earlier perpetuating such "enormities", now offering the wood-carver necessary principles.

Pugin finally came to his central tenet, the return of England to the Catholic fold:

> Catholic England was merry England, at least for the humbler classes; and the architecture was in keeping with the faith and manners of the times, – at once strong and hospitable. There is a great reviving taste for ancient domestic architecture ... Tudor architecture was preferred ... The picturesque effect of the ancient buildings results from the ingenious methods by which the old builders overcame local and constructive difficulties.[6]

A.W.N. Pugin, *An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England* (1843): The clarity, the power, of Pugin's writing is understood on reading his *Apology*. Pugin looked to the importance of structure and "nature": Pugin urged the English to turn to nature's local riches (in words that could be by Frank Lloyd Wright):

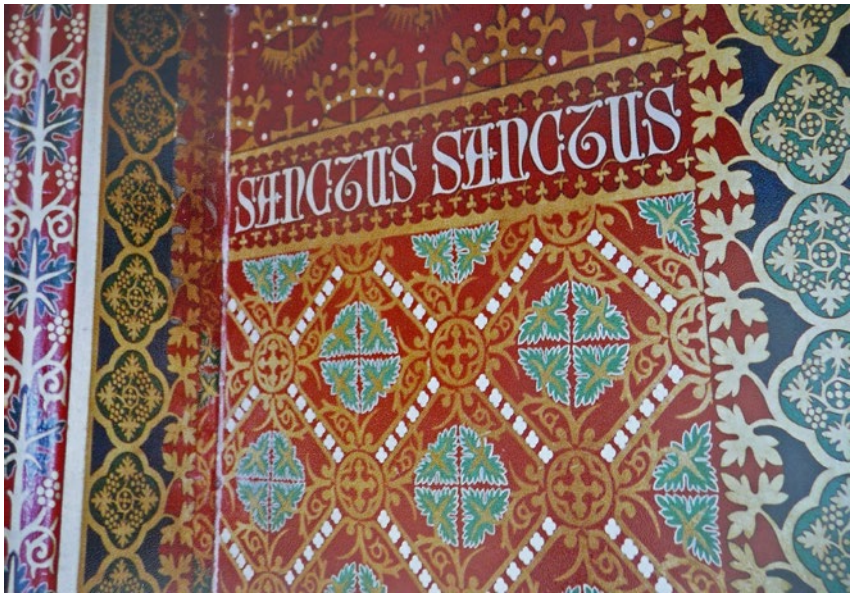
> ... architectural skill consists in embodying and expressing the structure required, and not in disguising it by borrowed features. The peasant's hut, the yeoman's cottage, the farmer's house, the baronial hall, may be each perfect in its kind: the student should visit village and town, hamlet and city; he should be a minute observer of the animal and vegetable creation, of the grand effects of nature. The rocky coast, the fertile valley, the extended plain, the wooded hills, the river's bank, are all grand points to work upon; and so well did the ancient builders adapt their edifices to localities, that they seemed as if they formed a portion of nature itself, grappling and growing from the sites in which they are placed.
>
> Every building that is treated naturally, without disguise or concealment, cannot fail to look well.[7]

A.W.N. Pugin, *The Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume, compiled and illustrated from Ancient Authorities and Examples* (1844) is a large (A3 size) and exquisitely illustrated pattern-book with chromolithographic plates (24 and 27 ills). A volume of this beauty could not have been produced without significant technical improvements in colour printing, in which Owen Jones played a significant role. Pugin opined:

> Ornament, in the true and proper meaning of the word, signifies the embellishment of that which is in itself useful, in an appropriate manner. Yet by a perversion of the term, it is frequently applied to mere enrichment, which deserves no other name than that of unmeaning detail, dictated by no rule but that of individual fancy and caprice. Every ornament, to deserve the name, must possess an appropriate meaning, and be introduced with an intelligent purpose, and on reasonable grounds. The symbolical associations of each ornament must be understood and considered: otherwise things beautiful in themselves will be rendered absurd by their application.[8]

The Ecclesiologist (1841-68)

Following a ringing endorsement of Pugin's *Glossary* in August 1844, *The Ecclesiologist* in September 1845[9] wrote "On Decorative Colour" arguing for colour in some parts of a church and not in other parts. Natural



A.W.N. Pugin, Interior decoration, St Giles' Church, Cheadle, Staffordshire, 1841-46, showing Pugin's typical repeating patterns. A fulsome expression of Pugin's theories took place with St Giles' Church, Cheadle. This building, so important for this story, was paid for by the Catholic Earl of Shrewsbury. The Earl wanted the trade work executed by local artisans. As happened later with Pugin's work for the Houses of Parliament, "every inch"[10] of the polychromatic interior was decorated with stencilled patterns, carving, tiles and tracery. The Kingdom of Heaven comes to mind. Polychromy became identified with High Victorian architecture and was carried forward aesthetically and structurally in William Butterfield's London Margaret Street church (and in New Zealand in Benjamin Mountfort's Canterbury Provincial Council Chamber).

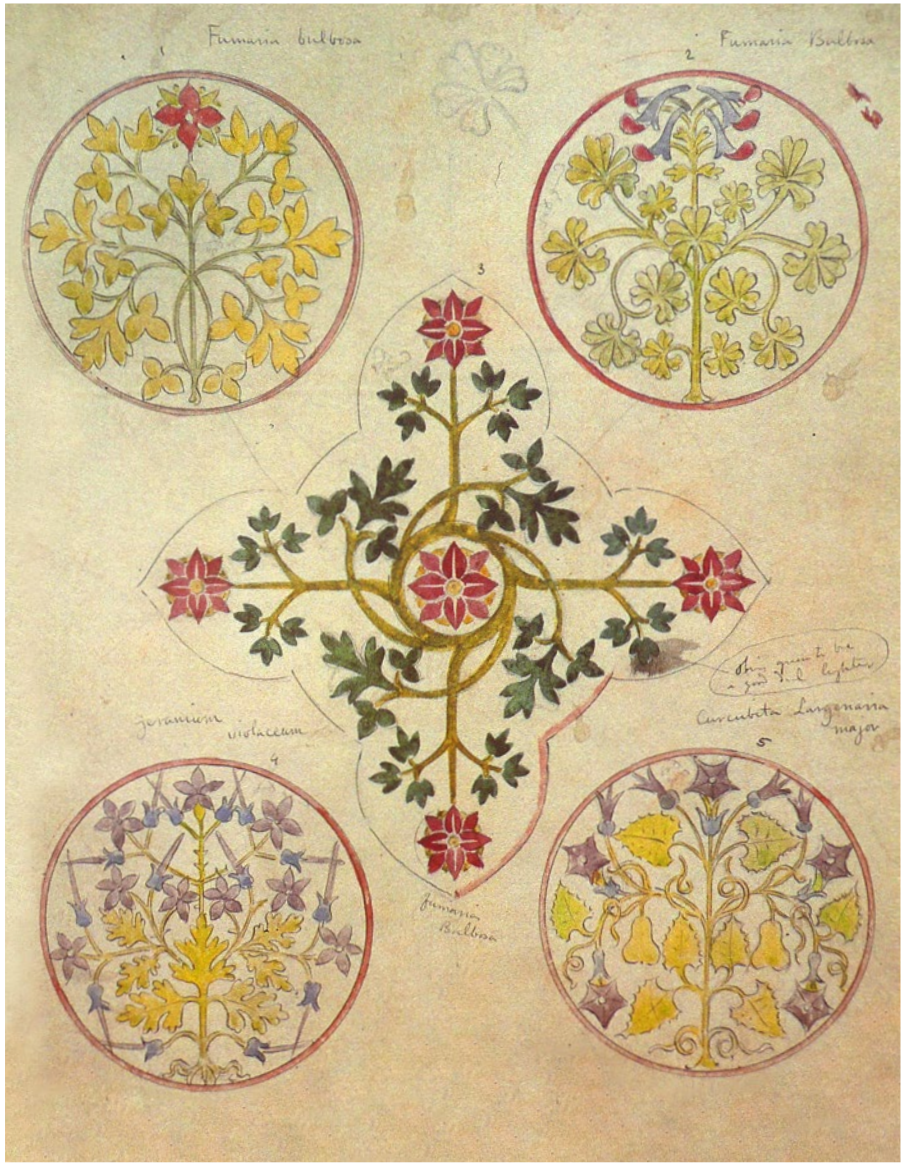
materials might be left uncoloured with their natural colours celebrated, as would happen with the Arts & Crafts:

> ... this vacuity of tint, this Protestantism (if we may so express ourselves) of colour, this blank and cold greyness ...
>
> We are consistent; we would have every inch glowing. Puritans are consistent; they would have every inch colourless ...
>
> We have, it is true, strongly protested against the æsthetical hypocrisy of graining wood to imitate oak, or employing patent cement, that may have the appearance of stone. That is we have condemned the making one thing pretend to be something better than it is, and that it therefore is not.
>
> We shall be glad if these remarks ... shall lead to a more due appreciation of the beauty, advantage, we had almost said necessity, of decorative colour.

British Houses of Parliament (1844-68)

For Sir Charles Barry's rebuilt iconic Houses of Parliament, also known as the Palace of Westminster, Pugin, at the height of his powers, extended his influence to large-scale secular architecture.[11] There were often, it is understood, no medieval models for Pugin to study. Instead, from boyhood onwards he had acquired a thinking-knowledge of Gothic which allowed him to prepare a flood of detailed designs. For the House of Lords, opened April 1847, Pugin prepared 2000 designs and popularised a House of Lords' heraldic decorative style.[12]

A.W.N. Pugin, Floriated Ornament *(1849), 7*



A.W.N. Pugin, Floriated Ornament *(1849), 32 and 25; 32 is preliminary study for 25*

A.W.N. Pugin, *Floriated Ornament: a Series of Thirty-one Designs* (1849)

When viewing Pugin's 1849 plates, a letter to *The Builder*, 2 August 1845, written as Pugin is completing the decoration of his Cheadle church, is crucial as setting out the approach to decorative design adopted by government schools (c1849), against which Ruskin was to wage a very personal battle:

> The real source of art is nature, and the best artists of every nation and period have taken it as their standard, and represented it under the peculiar aspect of their locality and period ... I am now preparing a work on vegetable and floral ornament, in which, by disposing leaves and flowers in geometrical forms, the most exquisite forms are produced, and of precisely the same character as those found in the illuminations ... of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[13]

Plates followed principles finally published in *Floriated Ornament* (1849). An original copy of the book, as with Pugin's other publications, was large and decorated with exquisite gilded chromolithographic illustrations. In his Introduction Pugin lauds "antient" (medieval) decorative artists "in their adaptation of nature for decorative purposes":

> ... I became fully convinced that the finest foliage work in the Gothic buildings were all close approximations to nature, and that their peculiar character was chiefly owing to the manner of their arrangement and disposition. ...
>
> [In a footnote, Pugin observed: Many of the capitals of the lateral shafts in the Sainte Chapelle at Paris are composed of branches of rose trees, exquisitely worked from natural plants. Instances of similar enrichments can be multiplied without number, from the first pointed down to the latest period.]
>
> ... It is absurd, therefore, to talk of Gothic foliage. The foliage is natural, and it is the adaptation and disposition of it which stamps the style. The great difference between antient [*sic*] and modern artists in their adaptation of nature for decorative purposes, is as follows. The former disposed the leaves and flowers of which their design was composed into geometrical forms and figures, carefully arranging the stems and component parts so as to fill up the space they were intended to enrich; and they were represented in such a manner as not to destroy the consistency of the peculiar feature or object they were employed to decorate, by merely imitative rotundity or shadow; for instance, a pannel [*sic*], which by its very construction is flat, would be ornamented by leaves or flowers drawn out or extended, so as to display their geometrical forms on a flat surface ...
>
> It is impossible to improve on the works of God; and the natural outlines of leaves, flowers, &c must be more perfect and beautiful than any invention of man. As I have stated above, the great skill of the antient [*sic*] artists was in the adaptation and disposition of their forms.

"The real source of art is nature, and the best artists of every nation and period have taken it as their standard, and represented it under the peculiar aspect of their locality and period ..."

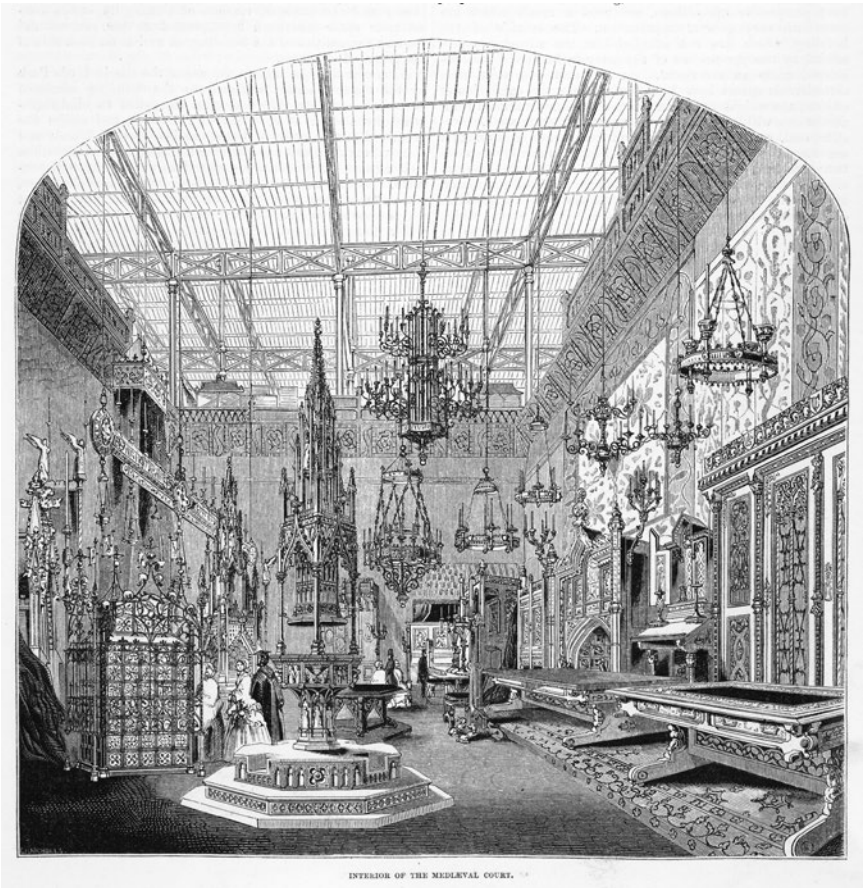
Pugin acknowledged his models as "a very curious and beautiful old botanical work, entitled, *Tabernæ montanus eicones Plantarum*, printed at Francfort in 1590".[14] Stuart Durant posits the possibility that Pugin's models were "unashamedly" based on William Dyce's 1842-3 *Drawing Book*.[15]

A.W.N. Pugin, St Augustine Abbey Church and house, The Grange, at Ramsgate, Kent (1846-51)

True to his boundless passions, Pugin threw himself into the building and decoration of his own church and house at Ramsgate. He used the asymmetry and irregularity found in Gothic ornament and architecture, these features later forming part of the Arts & Crafts lexicon. For the Grange, Pugin used the same interchange of colours, materials, texts and heraldry he had so successfuly used earlier. He used the same hand-blocked pattern "in red for the dining room, blue for the drawing room, and green for Mrs Pugin's bedroom, saying that he felt the change of colour would achieve sufficient variety to enable him to repeat the pattern in all of the principal rooms".[16]

J.H. Powell, Pugin's assistant, and nephew of John Hardman (head of the respected Birmingham decorative metalwork firm), described Pugin at work:

> He stood, bending over his well worn and well inked boards, a flat two foot rule in one hand and a pencil in the other, drawing with a rapidity that was my wonder then and never lessened in after years. The rule fled about in the required direction with unerring aim ... He worked fastest when happy, singing during pauses Gregorian hymns and snatches from Operas. He was sensitive, and a bad post spoilt



A.W.N. Pugin, designer, "Interior of the Medieval Court", Great Exhibition, 1851, engraving; in Art-Journal Illustrated Catalogue: The Industry of All Nations, *Special Edition (London); Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 702-xxiv).*

> his day, but a good one meant a "Jacks alive day", viz covering the tables with drawings and an overflow onto the floor, he poured out fifteenth century detail like a conjuror.[17]

The Abbey Church involved new directions for Pugin. Here, in his own church, he followed the new preference for natural materials, anticipated by the ecclesiologists. Rosemary Hill identified this change: "His growing preferences for plain surfaces and the natural qualities of stone and brick which created the effect of his own church, flint without and ashlar within, made him dislike applied decoration."[18] Pugin, shortly after publishing his *Floriated Ornament* in 1849, replete with stencil designs, had written in a pamphlet *Some Remarks on the Articles which have appeared in the "Rambler" relative to Ecclesiastical Architecture and Decoration*, essentially a repost to an attack by Ruskin (1850): "As for stencilled works, I dislike them exceedingly."[19] Pugin had in one sentence joined the Arts & Crafts preference for local unmodified materials for buildings and ornament, simpler and therefore preferable means of symbolising good, moral people.

For all this activity, Pugin established a huge decorative design business: metalwork, stained glass, furniture, textiles, wallpapers, carpets, curtains, sculpture in stone, wall painting, tiles, book bindings, and embroidery. Pugin's designs required new and revived craft techniques using specialist manufacturers, including Hardman of Birmingham, Crace & Son, and Minton & Co. He had sufficient knowledge to supply manufacturers with directions – effectively publicising their products and skills. Pugin as a designer did not himself practice a trade or craft, as was later also true of Christopher Dresser, E.W. Godwin and Lewis Day.

A.W.N. Pugin, Medieval Court, Great Exhibition (1851)

The Illustrated London News XIX (20 Sep 1851) included an engraved view of Pugin's Medieval Court. On the next page, Pugin's Medieval Court elicited the following fulsome comment:

> Amongst all the admirably-arranged treasures of the Great Exhibition, the Mediæval Court, we may say, on mature reflection, presents the most unique and best harmonised display of art and skill – art in the artist and skill in the executant. The mastermind who suggested these forms and these colours has evidently supervised their developments; each ornament and every detail bears the same evidence, that the head which thought them directed the hands which wrought them. To Mr Pugin, then, who furnished the design for this gorgeous combination, is the highest honour due; and he has marvellously fulfilled his own intention of demonstrating the applicability of Mediæval art in all its richness and variety to the uses of the present day.[20]

The 1851 exhibition, with full credit to Pugin, introduced an Old English and Gothic hybrid for the home decorator.[21] In the process artisanship was again secured, having not been as moribund as subsequently assumed. The Gothic Revival style in architecture was however not a comfortable style for house architecture. The functions of home and church were discordant.

New Zealand

Canterbury Provincial Council Chamber, Christchurch, New Zealand

As Ian Lochhead notes in his *Dream of Spires* (1999), writing about the seminal Canterbury Gothic Revival architect Benjamin Mountfort: "... it was Pugin more than any other contemporary architect who acted as the model for Mountfort's own career."

Modifying this point, Lochhead also observes:

> Through its publications, especially its journal, *The Ecclesiologist* (1841-68), and pamphlets such as *A Few Words to Church Builders* (1841), the Ecclesiological Society exerted an influence on church-building in England equal to and possibly even greater than Pugin.

Benjamin Mountfort for his singular High Victorian Gothic Provincial Council Chamber was interpreting developments in England. He would likely have visited Pugin's Cheadle church, and would be conversant with *The Ecclesiologist's* advice on the use of colour and its symbolic associations.[22] Later, he used natural materials prominently in his work, again bringing attention to colour. What is equally important is that the Provincial Council Chamber was a secular building.

The Gothic Revival and the morality at its heart had a lasting effect in New Zealand: the Canterbury College School of Art lecturer Francis Shurrock, in an address *Church and Art*, sought to convey the excitement of Gothic art to an audience at St Michael's Church, Christchurch, New Zealand; his address was recorded in *Art in New Zealand* in March 1932:

Top: *Benjamin Mountfort, Canterbury Provincial Council Chamber, Stencil decoration, 1867. Based on Mountfort's designs, stencilling was carried out in the early months of 1867 by the French/Australian-resident painter John Calcott St Quentin. References to Pugin's 1849 designs through Christopher Dresser's 1862* The Art of Decorative Design *are possible.*

Fleur-de-lis heraldic motif repeated on the stairway wall to the visitors' gallery

Geometric pattern used for a stairway stained glass window

And so we come to the wonderful flowering of the mediæval period, commonly known as Gothic, which word was first used as a term of derision by the Italians of the Renaissance, but now is looked upon as standing for one of the most beautiful revelations of mankind. This wonderful period, which so soon as the dreaded year of 1,000 AD was passed, rose during the next few centuries to unparalled heights. It is one of the world's prodigies: a wonderful unison, the beauty of the Church revealed by Art.[23]

ENDNOTES

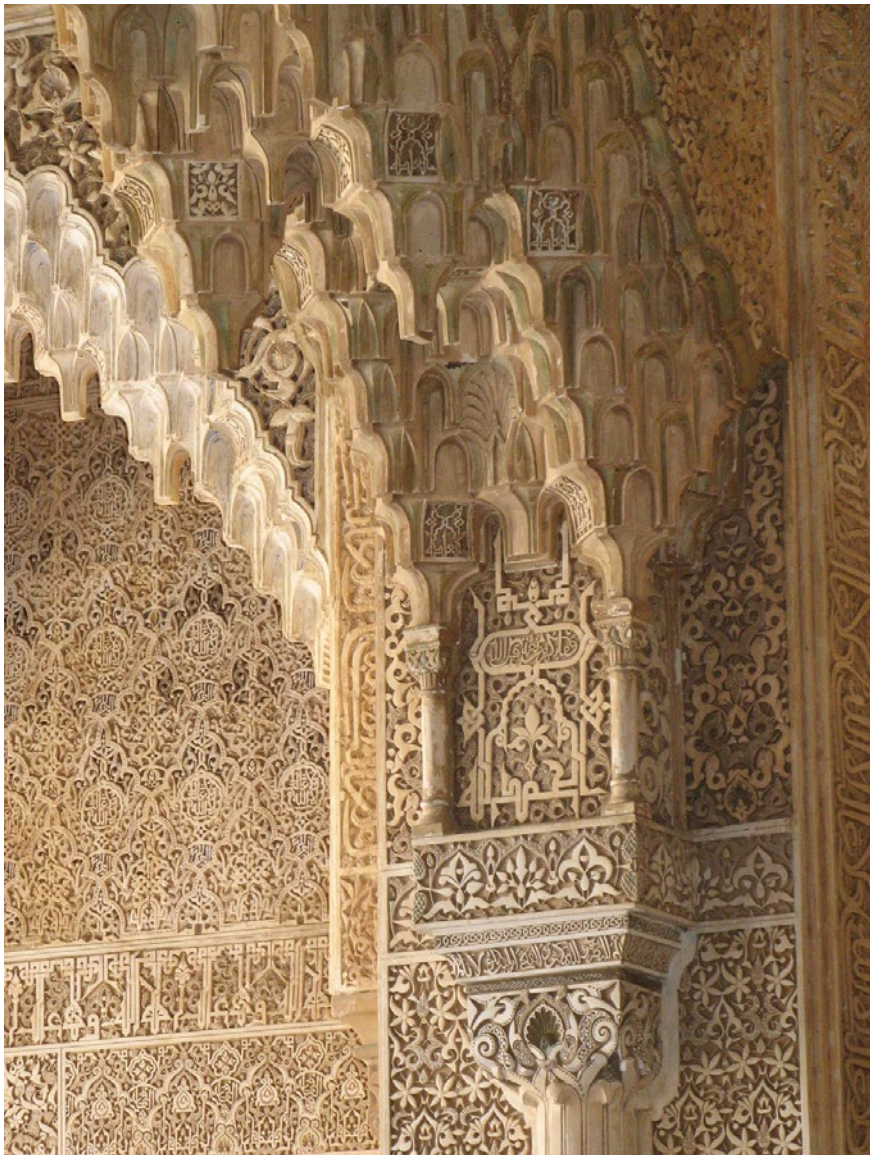
1 Brooks, Chris *The Gothic Revival* 1999, 207
2 Pugin Introduction *Floriated Ornament* 1849
3 Clark [1928] 1964, 129
4 *Ecclesiologist* XIII, 352, 353
5 Pugin 1836, 30-1, 2-3
6 Pugin 1841, 1-2, 20, 23, 25, 26, 34ff, 40, 61, 62
7 Pugin 1843, 21, 39
8 Pugin, "Of Symbolism in Art", in *Glossary*, 1844, iii
9 *Ecclesiologist* III, 141-3; IV 199-203: 201, 203
10 Clark [1928] 1964, 116
11 Gere 2000, 36
12 Stanton *Pugin* 1971, 180,182-183
13 Bell, Quentin *The Schools of Design* London 1963, AppII, 267
14 Clark [1928] 1964, 124-5
15 Durant/Whiteway *Dresser* 2004, 48
16 Alexandra Wedgwood *Pugin and His Family* (V&A 1985), 232, in Flores on *Jones* 34
17 *The Grange Ramsgate*, 2006, 28 – booklet published by The Landmark Trust, Shottesbrooke, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL63SW, England
18 Hill *Pugin* 2007, 434
19 *Some Remarks* 9, in Hill *Pugin* 2007, 434
20 *The Illustrated London News* XIX (20 Sep 1851), engraved view of Pugin's Medieval Court 361; quote 362; also *The Illustrated London News* XVIII (10 May 1851) 396 on the Mediæval Court
21 Gere 2000, 42; Brooks 1999, 248-9 ills
22 Lochhead 1999, 111, 32, 114-15
23 *Art in New Zealand* IV no15, 204

Owen Jones (1809-74): designing in colour

In his obituary in *The Architect* in 1874, Owen Jones was quoted on design and colour: "I always design in colour."[1] Jones's studies of the Alhambra (Granada, southern Spain) "from drawings taken on the spot" in 1834 and 1837 and his superb self-published chromolithographs, issued between 1836 and 1845, attest to Jones's technical skills in the cause of colour. While Joseph Caxton was the architect for the Crystal Palace, the London site for the 1851 Great Exhibition of the Arts and Industries of All Nations, Jones's incomparable practical and secular role was colour used to define the building's forms. Quotes have been chosen to indicate the intense interest in colour in the design debates of the 1830s, 1840s, 1850s and beyond. Colour became a key aspect of later Arts & Crafts designs and products.

Jones, an architect, is now more usually remembered for his *Grammar of Ornament* (1856). The *Grammar*, a compendium of historic, exotic and nature-based design possibilities, is still in print, available as a pocket-sized edition in 2001. Jones's 37 (often repeated) propositions were rules to follow for the correct construction of form (13 principles) and the correct use of colour (21 principles). As Pugin promoted construction and propriety, Jones, similarly by word and deed, promoted construction and colour: Proposition 14 says: "Colour is used to assist in the development of form, and to distinguish objects or parts of objects one from another."[2]

Used by manufacturers, designers, craftsworkers and students since 1856, the book's motifs were both copied extensively and used, as intended, as a spring-board to new designs throughout "Greater Britian". In New Zealand, William Colenso, printer, missionary, explorer, naturalist,

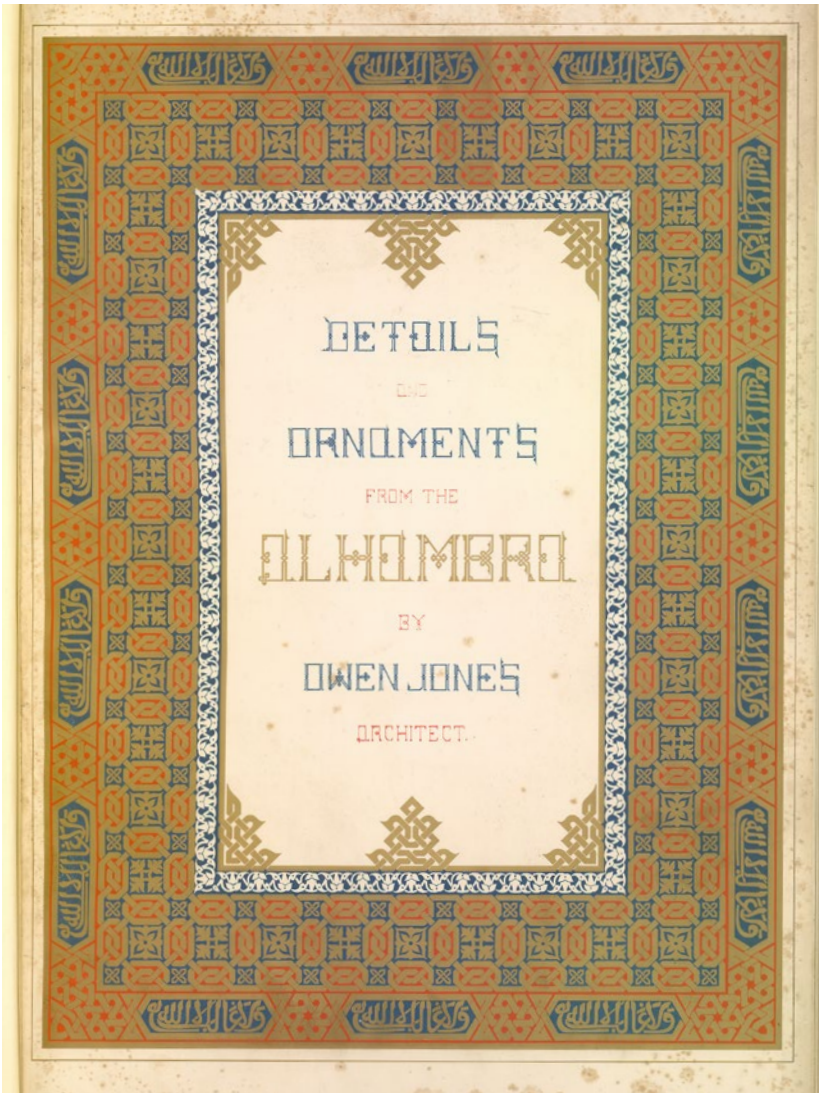


This page and overleaf: *Alhambra, Cordoba, southern Spain (photos: Sasha Calhoun)*

politician, owned a copy of the 1865 edition (now held by the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand).[3] A copy of the 1868 edition is held by the central Wellington public library, and is thought to have been acquired in the nineteen-twenties.[4] A.D. Riley recommended *The Grammar* for students of art and design in New Zealand in 1898.[5]

Jones was further the most significant contributor to the *Journal of Design and Manufactures*: January 1851, June 1851, August 1851, October 1851, November 1851, December 1851, January 1852, and February 1852.[6] As one of many polymaths involved in the design debate, Jones's flat patterns were fashionably used as ornament on innumerable household items: designs for furniture, textiles, wallpapers, carpets, tiles, book jackets, playing cards, and even wrappers for the biscuit-manufacturer Huntly Palmer.

Owen Jones *Plans, Elevations, Sections, and Details of the Alhambra*, two folio volumes, (1836-45)(1862, frontispiece image, opposite): Jones' first influential publication was based on the Alhambra. The project was initiated with Jules Goury (who was to die of cholera in 1834). Jones subsequently took personal control of plate production from his own London workshop, with book sections sold as they were finished (the first dated 1 March 1836, the first bound edition in 1842), providing some return from a financially-draining project. The second volume of polychromatic lithographic (chromolithographic) plates of designs, some plates illustrating five separate motifs, was published in 1845. The plates decorated in Arabic text glow in gold, blue and red with touches of white. Decorative effects could be pleasurably combined with quotes from the Koran. The key is Jones's and Pugin's understanding that the inscriptions and ground colours covering and decorating the



Owen Jones, Frontispiece, Details and Ornaments from the Alhambra *1862; Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.*

Alhambra could be infinitely varied within a grid, offering a seemingly inexhaustible system of generating ornament.[7]

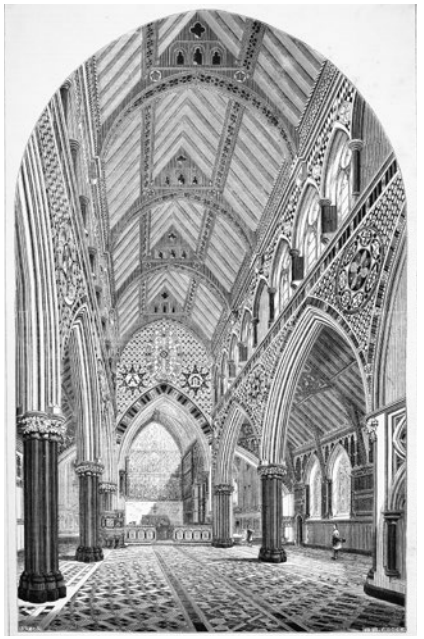
Jones raised colour printing to a new level of sophistication as books with colour-illustrations were sought by a growing middle-class as signs of taste and education. He is similarly credited with cultivating interest in beautiful book covers.[9] Jones collaborated in the publication of Henry Noel Humphreys' *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages* (1844-9), which included a Froissart illuminated miniature, from which William Morris is believed to have derived his famous small-repeat "Daisy" pattern (1864).[10]

Jones was among those making the "Islamic or so-called Alhambra" style tasteful.[11] At government schools of design, he had a fundamental "Orientalising" influence on student pattern-making; the *Grammar* was hailed as a "great work" and the book distributed as student prizes.[12]

William Butterfield, All Saints, Margaret Street, London (1849-59)

William Butterfield's church signalled pleasure in a Gothic style of architecture for the British nation – and its Empire – High Victorian Gothic. For the ecclesiologists the church was to be a model: when finished it was a superb example of constructional polychromy. On "New Churches", *The Ecclesiologist* in April 1850, offered:

> All Saints, Margaret Street, London – The site for this new church by Mr Butterfield will within a few days of our publication be cleared, and the work immediately proceeded with. The founders and the architect of this church are anxious to make it a practical example of what we



William Butterfield, Interior view, "The Church of All Saints", Margaret Street, Regent Street, London, 1849; in The Builder *4 June 1859, 377 ill; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref S-L 1072-377). The church stands as an exemplar for the use of contrasting materials in the construction of a modern urban building, for which the terms "constructional polychrome" (and "structural polychrome") were coined.*

William Butterfield, All Saints' Church in a narrow urban street, an ideal example of an urban minster.

> are very anxious to see tested, viz, constructional polychrome. The material of the building, and of the appended clergy and chorister-houses is to be red and black brick, arranged in patterns, with stone windows and bonding in the church. Internally there is to be a use of coloured marble, which was of course impossible in the middle ages. Geometrical mosaic-work in tiles is also to be introduced, and above all, the building is to be arranged with a view to frescoes of a high order of art. Those in the chancel are to be immediately undertaken by Mr Dyce.[13]

"Butterfieldian polychromy" set a new fashion.[14] The church building used encaustic tiles, while also employing the materials (eg, exposed brick) and forms of a dynamic forward-thinking nation. The building's outer austerity, the use of unadorned polychromatic bricks in strings in a narrow urban street, made the building a lesson in modernity. Ornament, while structurally confined, was freed to be vibrant, austere and symbolic. Craft firms prospered, as had happened with Pugin's decoration of the British House of Lords.

All Saints was being built after a decade of superior chromolithographic-illustrated publications, each glorifying colour: Owen Jones's *Alhambra* folios and books on mosaics and tiles, Pugin's *Glossary*, and Wyatt's *Geometric Mosaics*, as well as the polychromy used for Pugin's Cheadle church and his decorative work for the British Houses of Parliament.

The schools of design were about to be monitored closely by Henry Cole – conventionalised design was about to be canonised. Joseph Paxton's monument to the structural possibilities of cast-iron and glass, the Crystal Palace, was being constructed, and Owen Jones was about to decorate the interior of the building in the three colour primaries, red, blue and yellow, with white.

Owen Jones, the Crystal Palace and the Journal

Owen Jones was Superintendent of Works for the 1851 Great Exhibition. He presented his plan for decorating the building to the Royal Institute of British Architects on 16 December 1850. His talk was recorded in the *Journal of Design and Manufacturers* (January 1851), followed, after the exhibiton, by a lecture on 28 April 1852 before Prince Albert on principles to be used to regulate the use of colour in the decorative arts. His principle conclusions on colour were set out as Propositions 14 to 37 in his 1856 *Grammar*.

Owen Jones, "Plan for Decorating the Building of the Exhibition of 1851", *Journal of Design and Manufactures* January 1851:

> It [the Great Exhibition building] is well known to most by its marvellous dimensions, the simplicity of its construction, and the advantage which has been taken of the power which the repetition of simple forms will give in producing grandeur of effect; and this grandeur may be still further enhanced by a system of colouring which, by marking distinctly every line in the building, shall increase the height, the length, and the bulk.
>
> The very nature of the material of which this building is mainly constructed – viz. iron, requires that it should be painted. On what principle shall we do this?

Jones rejected:

> a simple tint of white or stone colour. The building's "canvass" cover meant that there would be: but little light and shade. The myriads of similar lines, therefore, of which the building is composed, falling one before the other, would lose all distinctness, and would, in fact,

form one dull cloud overhanging the Exhibition; ...

We are now brought to the consideration of the only other well-defined system which presents itself – parti-colouring. (meaning multi-colouring)

This, if successfully carried out, would bring the building and its contents into one perfect harmony; it would fitly carry out one of the objects for which this Exhibition was formed – viz to promote the union of fine arts with manufactures. It would everywhere bring out the construction of the building, which would appear higher, longer, and more solid.

To produce this result it is essential not to make a mistake. Parti-colouring may become the most vulgar, as it may be the most beautiful, of objects ...

If we examine the remains of the architecture of the ancients, we shall find, everywhere, that in the early periods the prevailing colours used in decoration were the primaries – blue, red, and yellow; the secondaries appearing very sparingly. We find this equally in the remains of Ninevah, Central America, of Egypt, and Greece; and throughout the Eastern civilization generally; we find also everywhere that, as time wore on, the secondary colours, invading the dominion of the primaries, blue and red were supplanted by green and purple ... In the Alhambra the blue and red of the Moors were painted over with green and purple by Charles V, and his successors, and with the worst effect ... When the secondary colours were used, in the best periods, in conjuction with the primaries, they were generally confined to the lower parts of the building; following, in this, Nature,

Owen Jones, Cover, Grammar of Ornament *[1856] 1868; Wellington City Library, New Zealand. The cover decoration references Egyptian, Greek and Celtic decoration. The edition was published the year after Jones's text on* Chinese Ornament, *1867.*

Owen Jones, "Moresque No5"; in Grammar of Ornament *[1856] 1865, plXLIII; Rare English Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC 09/22). The plate illustrates Islamic interlacing ornament. Owen Jones on "Moresque Ornament" in his* Grammar *acknowledged the invaluable system of repeat-pattern construction used for the Alhambra.*[8]

Owen Jones, "Italian No5"; in Grammar of Ornament *[1856] 1865, plXC; Rare English Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC 09/23). The plate endorsed the "almost ubiquitous Arts and Crafts black and scarlet type on title pages".*[21] *The accompanying essay on Italian Ornament was by M. Digby Wyatt.*

Christopher Dresser, "Leaves and Flowers from Nature No8"; in Owen Jones, Grammar of Ornament *(1856), plXCVIII; Rare English Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC 09-24). The plate and its 18 flowers, drawn by Dresser, follow in style the popular botanical illustrations of the day. Of Dresser's plate, Jones wrote:* On Plate XCVIII, we have shown several varieties of flowers, in plan and elevation, from which it will be seen that the basis of all form is geometry, the impulse which forms the surface starting from the centre with equal force, necessarily stops at equal distances; the result is symmetry and regularity.[23]

"I therefore propose to use the colours blue, red, and yellow, in such relative proportions as to neutralise or destroy each other ..."

who uses for her flowers the primaries, and reserves the secondaries for her leaves and stalks.

In the decoration of the Exhibition building, I therefore propose to use the colours blue, red, and yellow, in such relative proportions as to neutralise or destroy each other ... I propose in all cases to interpose a line of white between them, which will soften them and give them their true value.

It is well known, that if blue and red come together, without the interposition of white, they would each become tinged with the complementary colour of the other: thus, the red would become slightly orange and the blue slightly green ...

As one of the objects of decorating a building is to increase the effect of light and shade, the best means of using blue, red, and yellow, is to place blue, which retires, on the concave surfaces; yellow, which advances, on the convex; and red, the colour of the middle distance, on the horizontal planes; the neutral white on the vertical planes. Following out this principle on the building before us, we have red for the under-sides of the girders, yellow on the round portions of the columns, blue on the hollow of the capitals.[15] (The blue is still apparent in such hollows in the Alhambra.[16])

Canterbury Provincial Council Chamber wall tiles

Canterbury Provincial Council Chamber floor tiles

In the *Illustrated London News* on 17 May 1851[17], Jones's colouring scheme was fitly praised:

> On entering at the South Transept a spectacle is afforded which fills the mind with wonder, and produces an overwhelming effect upon the senses from its novelty, grandeur, and beauty ... The Transept is most brilliantly lighted, insomuch as its noble arched roof is left open to the sky, and is not covered with calico like the remainder of the Building ... To appreciate the genius of Owen Jones, the visitor must take his stand at the extremity of the Building ... Looking up the nave, with its endless rows of pillars, the scene vanishes from extreme brightness to the hazy indistinctness which Turner alone can paint.[18]

The *Illustrated London News* on the same day recorded that the first four ships of the "Canterbury Colonists of 1851" had reached Lyttleton, New Zealand.[19] The first group of Canterbury Association settlers, arriving in Lyttleton on 16 December 1850, included Benjamin Mountfort, who was to be distinguished as the architect for the Canterbury Provincial Council building and its polychromatic masterpiece, the Canterbury Provincial Council Chamber roof.[20]

Owen Jones, Grammar of Ornament *(1856)*

The *Grammar* onsisted of 100 folio plates drawn on stone by F Bedford, printed in colours by Day and Son and published by Day and Son (plates 43 ills). The 100 polychromatic plates were printed with 20 essays on the illustrated styles. Jones analysed ornamental styles ranging from those of "savage tribes" (which he admired) to the Renaissance, and he included chapters treating Moorish, Arabian and Persian styles, as well as Celtic, Chinese and Egyptian styles. Notably, Jones did not include a chapter on Japanese ornament. In each chapter he consolidated a wealth of patterns from noted sources and has been credited with aiding the Celtic revival of the 1890s and influencing Mackintosh and Archibald Knox.[22]

The *Grammar* was a dictionary, even a bible for some, of design styles. An original or a quality reproduction of the *Grammar* is still understandably influential. Jones's *Grammar* unintentionally furthered the fetish for design manuals – "grammars" of principles by which ornament could be constructed to endorse use and beauty – a scientific approach to ornament creation.

For the Preface of the *Grammar*, Jones concluded, endorsing the importance of "nature":

> Lastly, I have endeavoured to show, in the twentieth chapter, that the future progress of Ornamental Art may be best secured by engrafting on the experience of the past the knowledge we may obtain by a return to Nature for fresh inspiration.[24]

New Zealand

The colours used for Mountfort's High Victorian Gothic Provincial Council Chamber ceiling[25] can be seen as an interpretation of Owen Jones's propositions for colour use. Proposition 21 of the 1856 *Grammar* required blue for concave surfaces and yellow for convex surfaces – Mountfort instead has given equal weight to blue and yellow next to each other on the Council Chamber roof. The "intermediate colour" red, Jones stated, should be used on the undersides, "separating the colours by white on the vertical planes" – Mountfort has seemingly followed Jones's proposition (35 ill).

Mountfort would know of the excitement generated by William Butterfield's All Saints[26], and would likely know of other exercises in constructional polychromy and polychromatic-illustrated books. Mountfort, as noted, owned a copy of Christopher Dresser's 1862 *The Art of Decorative Design*.[27] Dresser in his 1862 text acknowledged his debt to Pugin, to Richard Redgrave (51) and, most particularly, to Owen Jones.

Tiles were combined with stone dressings to complete the polychromatic effect. With the innovative north-west tower and, inside, the surprise of the council chamber "ridge-and-furrow" ceiling, the high colour of the ceiling and walls, the stained glass, the tile panels on the lower walls and the floor tiles – the eclectic whole is, as acknowledged, an internationally important example of High Victorian Gothic.[28]

ENDNOTES

1 *The Architect* XI, 236
2 Jones *Grammar* 2001, 25 (Prop14); three *Grammar* plates are illustrated on 43 and one on 66
3 Colenso biography in the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography (Te Ara); http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/1966/colenso-william/1; retrieved 25 Jan 2011
4 Information with thanks to Gábor Tóth, Local and New Zealand History Specialist, Wellington City Libraries
5 New Zealand *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 40
6 See "Schools" (47ff) and "1850s" (57ff) for quotes from the *Journal*
7 Flores *Jones* 2006, 26-37, and see Pugin 27 ill
8 *Grammar* [1856] 2001, 189
9 Flores *Jones* 2006, 38-9
10 Gere 2000, 42
11 Darby, Michael. "Owen Jones and the Eastern Ideal", DPhil thesis, Reading University, 1974, in Halén *Dresser* [1990] 1993, 20
12 Chapter V "South Kensington" and the Science and Art Department/British History Online/Chapter V ref 18; www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=47518 ; retrieved 21 Apr 2011
13 *Ecclesiologist* X, 432-3
14 Brooks 1999, 329
15 Jones *Journal* IV no23(Jan 1851), 131-3 ; http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/DLDecArts/DLDecArts-idx?type=header&id=DLDecArts.JournDesv05 ; retrieved Aug 2011; "Plan for decorating the building"
16 See "Jones" 37-8 ills
17 *Illustrated London News* 17 May 1851, 424 col 3
18 See Van Zanten, David (1977). *The Architectural Polychromy of the 1830s*, 256-8
19 *Illustrated London News* 17 May 1851, 421 col 3
20 Lochhead 1999, 53. See CPCC illustrations: "Pugin" 35 ills, "Jones" 44 ills, and "Dresser" 69 ill
21 Cumming 2006, 14
22 Halén *Dresser* [1990] 1993, 82
23 *Grammar* [1856] 2001, 478
24 Ibid 18-19
25 See "Pugin" 35 ill
26 See "Jones" 40-1, 40 ills
27 See "Introduction" 13, 65 ill
28 Brooks 1999, 378 ill

Schools of Design and the Journal of Design & Manufactures (1849-52)

Drawing & design

The central role of drawing in Britain's continuing drive for world economic dominance in part explains the mid-nineteenth century passion for teaching the children of the poor to draw – drawing skills, drawing for practical ends, were a necessary part of Empire consolidation. For male children (and increasingly for women), drawing skills could mean employment and status; to become RA (a member of the Royal Academy) was beyond even A.W.N. Pugin. For the 1840s, the central concern of government schools was the best system by which to teach children and adults to draw, whether drawing instruction should lead to drawing the human figure as an end in itself or whether drawing instruction should be restricted to the human figure used as decorative applied art.

The continuing apex of academic drawing skills was figure drawing/life studies but equally the best botanical illustrators and ornamentists were skilled draughtsman. Linda Parry writes in the *Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (1988):

> Fine draughtsmanship is one of the most important characteristics of Arts and Crafts patterns and it is interesting to note just how many of the designers involved received a traditional artistic training, whether as an architect or through the various Schools of Design.[2]

In the intense nineteenth-century debate over how nature should be depicted, the issue of drawing instruction was never far away. The story

Paper-hanging, expressly to hang Pictures on. Designed by Richard Redgrave, ARA; manufactured by W.B. Simpson, 456 Strand, London; in Journal of Design and Manufactures *April 1849*[1]*; Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. The plant illustrated is identified as "Red-Berried Bryony"; the design is a testament to simplified design construction, based on the study of nature, as taught by William Dyce's* Drawing Book *(1842-3).*

is tightly bound to the relative rightness of naturalistic over stylised botanical drawing, the former exactitude championed by John Ruskin, the latter by the government Schools of Design. The story becomes one in which the two camps jostled for supremacy as to which was the God-given way to draw ornament to decorate two- and three-dimensional surfaces.[3]

Schools of Design

The first Government School of Design was established in London in 1837 as the sorry standard of British design became a national issue. "B" (Henry Cole) in the *Art Journal* (1849) "On the Government Schools of Design" opined:

> ... there existed an avowed and deep-felt yearning for some active and influential exertion to elevate the standard of British Industrial Art.
>
> ... twelve years of trial – twelve years of ineffectual experiments – ... a parliamentary commission has just closed its labour of inquiry into the cause of their almost total failure.
>
> The two fundamental principles for which they [the schools] were founded, viz, the teaching of Design, and its application to manufacture have been wholly lost sight of.

Even the "Metropolitan School" could not cater for so many differing manufacturing processes. In areas where there was "one staple manufacture" local teaching should be directed to supporting the local specialty. To date when preparing competitive drawings:

> ... the hand and eye alone have been called prominently into action;

Design room, Municipal School of Art, Manchester; in A.D. Riley's 1898 report to the New Zealand government on current British manual and technical education practices, including "Art Crafts".[4] Female students are at the back of the room and appear to be older.

The schools were soon to become institutionalised champions of flat nature-based (conventionalised) design. William Dyce's *Drawing Book* had made its mark.

> let there be study in which the head may be the leading influence ... memory is to form the store from which their future resources are to spring. Memory becomes the test to which imagination afterwards appeals; ...
>
> ... Let the chief object of study and principal aim of the tuition be the advancement of ornamental design in connection with Art-manufactures.[5]

Despite Cole's devotion to "drawing ... exactly as it appears in the specimen before the student", as argued for by Ruskin in the same year[6], there was already, in the schools, a rather painful shift to an "anti-naturalistic aesthetic", Shirley Bury's words.[7] The schools were soon to become institutionalised champions of flat nature-based (conventionalised) design. William Dyce's *Drawing Book* had made its mark.

By the time of the 1851 Great Exhibition in London, the Head School of Design at Somerset House had 480 students and 18 Branch Schools: Spitalfields, Manchester, Birmingham, Coventry, Nottingham, Norwich, Sheffield, Stoke, Hanley, Leeds, York, Huddersfield, Newcastle, Glasgow, Paisley, Dublin, Belfast, and Cork, a total of 3480 students.[8] Designs originating with the schools were being realised: for example, designs for ornamented lampposts for Buckingham Palace had been obtained; one was selected, and was "about to be executed".[9]

Henry Cole (1808-82) was initially a trenchant critic of the schools, but once in charge, as a supremely efficient administrator, he remained in charge of the South Kensington system of drawing and design instruction throughout "Greater Britain" for the next twenty years. The men around Cole are often referred to as the "Cole group". The group established the *Journal of Design and Manufactures* (1849-52), now thought to have been edited by Richard Redgrave (although Cole is often cited). Cole is credited with having "a special sympathy for the predicament of the intelligent middle-class lady".[10] He became the principal force behind the 1851 exhibition. Through his role in the exhibition, he is credited with fostering the idea of the aesthetic "beautiful home".[11] An unnamed reviewer in the *Art-Union* of the 1847 annual exhibition of government schools' work took aim at the schools, while praising female student work:

> ... the female students have far surpassed those of the other sex in every branch to which they have paid attention; the drawings and paintings of fruit are excellent; the panels are, in many cases, original thoughts, well worked out; and there are two or three designs of which manufactures might gladly avail themselves.[12]

The Female School shifted to the wrong side of the Strand in 1848 and suffered accordingly.[13] A decade later Christopher Dresser was teaching at the school and acknowledged the role of Female School students in the decoration of his books.

Plant cuttings were brought every week from London's Kew Gardens for students at the central South Kensington school to dissect, examine, and

draw for design construction.[14] In Christchurch (New Zealand), at the Canterbury College School of Art, cuttings were similarly taken from the city Botanical Gardens by the mid-1880s: Doris Tutill (Canterbury College School of Art 1929 to 1934) recalled:

> The teachers would go and bring great baskets of things from the Botanical Gardens, and they would pick things out for us to draw – or we would pick some out ourselves. We were very fortunate. And we studied the principles of design, and studied the principles of growth – how it all adhered to certain patterns and principles. It's something I've followed, right through everything I've done throughout my life.[15]

The use of plant cuttings became endemic to the South Kensington system of design instruction; the system became an endorsement of botanical illustration which at the time, mid-nineteeth century Britain, was at an apogee.

Journal of Design & Manufactures (1849-52)

The *Journal*, first published in March 1849, was smallish in size, copiously illustrated and included fabric swatches and wallpaper samples, supplied by named "Decorative Manufacturers", the samples tipped into issues of the *Journal*. Manufacturers en mass were acknowledged: manufacturers in "Woven Fabrics, Metals, Pottery, Glass, Paperhangings, &c".[17] The first issue alone had "Forty-four Fabric Patterns Inserted and Upwards of Two Hundred Engravings".[18] An important question remains: was the *Journal of Design and Manufactures* available in New Zealand?

The Journal men almost all had affiliations with the Schools of Design.

Diaper paper-hanging, Designed by A. Pugin. Manufactured solely for Crace and Son: This excellent paper consists of repetitions of the above equally diapered over the surface. We shall have some remarks on its principles of construction to offer at a future time; *in the* Journal ***October 1849***[16]*; Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.The design is noticeably flat and intended for machine production.*

"In 1848-9 the group emerged shaken, but still largely intact, with a new anti-naturalistic aesthetic which was to be enunciated by Redgrave, not Cole, in prose as passionate as any by Ruskin."[23]

The *Journal* became a forum for Cole-group ideas on correct "principles of design", particularly on anti-naturalistic and pro-conventionalised design. Contributors included: William Dyce, Richard Redgrave, John Bell, Owen Jones, Matthew Digby Wyatt, Gottfried Semper, George Wallis, and Mr Horsley, a number of whom were RA or ARA. The *Journal*'s importance can be under-estimated as it was also a trade journal: this fact perhaps accounts for the relatively few extant runs of the *Journal* found.[19]

Richard Redgrave ARA (1804-88) was appointed to the London school staff in 1846 and became "Master of Flower Drawing and Botany" in 1847.[20] He had been taught by William Dyce.[21] He became headmaster of the School of Design in 1848.[22] From 1852 Redgrave was Superintendent of Art, becoming Inspector General in 1857, continuing at the school until 1874. In his other life as a painter of landscape and genre themes, Redgrave's minute observation of nature makes his growing Ruskin-opposing-stance on conventionalised ornament "remarkable": Shirley Bury writes:

> The consensus of Cole and his artist friends, still intact in the autumn of 1847, was to be severely challenged by their experience with manufacturers and a growing knowledge of production processes. In 1848-9 the group emerged shaken, but still largely intact, with a new anti-naturalistic aesthetic which was to be enunciated by Redgrave, not Cole, in prose as passionate as any by Ruskin.[23]

The key to Redgrave's system was the use of designs "drawn from nature" and not as studies of other studies, such as occurred with herbals.

In two lectures delivered in 1848 on the "Importance of the Science of Botany to the Ornamentist", Redgrave, as his influence grew, set out the path by which conventionalised drawings from nature were cast as the base on which students created designs throughout the South Kensington and "Greater Britain" diaspora.[24]

Richard Redgrave and the Journal

The *Journal of Design and Manufactures* presents indisputable proof of the critical shifts in the design debate between 1849 and 1852. The debate was publicised with the July 1849 *Journal* issue. Chapter I was introduced, whether by Cole or Redgrave is not stated:

> Now is the season for the ornamental designer to study flowers in all their blooming variety ...

Redgrave's July and August 1849 chapters – "Importance of the Study of Botany to the Ornamentist" – were statements of intent. The key to Redgrave's system was the use of designs "drawn from nature" and not as studies of other studies, such as occurred with herbals. Redgrave began:

> The source from which everything new in ornament is to be derived,

> as everything new in art also, is not to be found in ornament or in art, but in the boundless stores of nature, which are still (as they have ever been) open for the inspiration of those who seek for it through her.

Redgrave dismissed Linnaeus's "artificial system" and encouraged the student of design to start by faithfully transcribing nature using outline drawings, to:

> master thoroughly all the details of nature, and acquaint himself with the anatomy of her structure. For this purpose drawing is, in the first place, of great importance, ... he will next proceed to study the different modes in which colour is applied to form, first from paintings and afterwards from the plants themselves, in water-colours, tempera, and oil-colours.
>
> ... until at length, when the pupil has become thoroughly possessed of this power, he will be taught how to use it in subjecting plants and flowers to a decorative or ornamental treatment, by a systematic combination and arrangement.[25]

In his second paper on the same subject (*Journal* August 1849), Redgrave disposed of "imitation".

> But while an intimate acquaintance with nature is thus insisted on, do not for a moment suppose me to imply that imitation is art, or that mere imitation is art, or that mere imitation is the end for which nature is to be studied ... In some applications of the forms derived from the vegetable world to the purposes of ornament, the treatment must be more conventionalized to suit the fabric, in some less; ...

"The object will be to treat of botany as an artist rather than as a botanist; to make botany subservient to art."

Redgrave interestingly regrets mechanical production: the latter was now an issue:

> ... whereby the labour of the skilled hand is superseded and replaced by the dull uniformity of the machine. How opposite is this to the unending variety of nature's works!
>
> While nature and art are both engaged in producing parts having a constant uniformity, nature graces them even in their likeness with an endless change; while art, thus mechanically working, sickens us with the sameness of a tame and disgusting monotony, violating one of the great principles of the beautiful in nature, symmetry with variety.
>
> The mechanical repetition of art tends, in its consequences, to enslave the ornamentist. Were it entirely to prevail, it would reduce him to the level of machines, working like pin-makers, one the head, another the shaft, a third the point. How different to the systems in older and better periods?

Redgrave excused the designer from having extensive botanical expertise. This waver was exactly what Christopher Dresser was subsequently to complain of, despite his admiration for Redgrave. As in traditional botanical illustration, Redgrave proposed:

> It is proposed also to take to pieces and explain the different parts of

which flowers are composed (often connected largely with the same laws of vegetable life), to shew the disposition of the flowers on their stems, either as solitary or grouped in various characteristic modes. Their seeds will come under consideration, ...

The object will be to treat of botany as an artist rather than as a botanist; to make botany subservient to art.

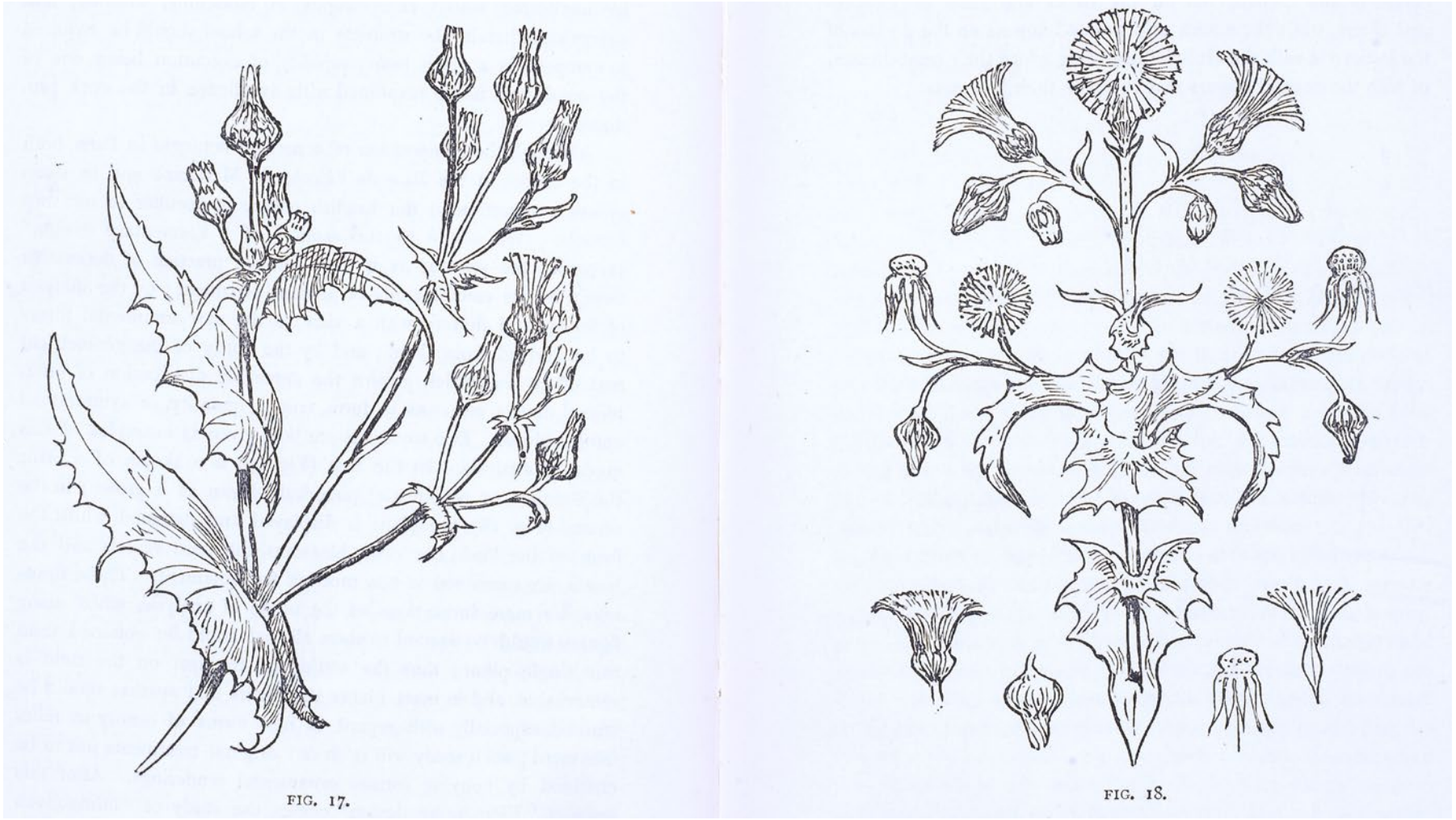
... the course most suited to the designer's wants is to make him acquainted with the structure and growth of plants generally, and individually of such as are most suited to be treated as ornament; and to put systems of classification at present aside, except so far as they are largely connected with peculiarities of structure.

Redgrave, as had Pugin, effectively offered a prime Arts & Crafts edict – the use of ornamental designs based on indigenous flora and fauna:

To this end reference will constantly be made to those plants which, being indigenous to our soil and climate, are to be seen by us in their native growth without the artificial qualifications of culture: no trifling consideration when we observe how plants are modified by the art of the horticulturalist. ...

He, to make his art widely popular, must address it as much as possible to the knowledge and sympathies of those whom it is intended to please. These influences are all mixed up with the plants of our hedgerows and the flowers of our cottage gardens, the rushes that grew along the margins of our streams, the trees of our forests, and the ferns and brackens of our moors, together with some few which, having been long acclimatized with them, have been known to us from our youth when all impressions are strongest, and with

James Johnstone, South Kensington flat conventionalised plant-based design, 20 March 1920, prepared during Johnstone's studies at Edinburgh College of Art; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand
(photo: Ngarita Johnstone)



Images demonstrating Richard Redgrave's approach to plant-based design preparation, c1852.

Left: *Study of a sow-thistle, woodcut, a traditional plant-study (botanical illustration) drawn directly from nature*

Right: *Conventionalised study of a sow-thistle, woodcut, based on the initial study drawn from nature, illustrating the parts of the plant (buds, blossoms, seeds and leaves) available for design construction.*[27]*; Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand (Te Papa ref no: E5663-I6093)*

them have grown into our language and our love. ...

Classes in botanical illustration and classes in ornamental design must have competed for students, women primarily! The schools were places where women could further their training as teachers – a new career? Botanical illustration could be a central or inviting sideline and money earner. Redgrave works hard to portray the designer as the equal of the fine artist; the ornamentist should without question study human anatomy:

> To these is to be added the perfect structure of man himself, which must be thoroughly understood by the ornamentist, if he would rank high in his profession.

Redgrave finished with a Ruskinian flourish:

> ... In fact, you must, with Milton's shepherd-spirit, make yourself acquainted with
>
> > "Every virtuous plant and healing herb
> > That spreads his verdant leaf to the morning grey."
>
> Here alone is mental occupation enough to satisfy any; and so accomplished, you will be stored, at least in this division of your labours, with all that can fit you for your profession of a designer of ornament.[26]

Conventionalisation

In 1852 the South Kensington system introduced a 23-step course in drawing (primarily) and design, prepared by Richard Redgrave and backed by Cole. The aim was to train students in "conventional (meaning linear and geometrical)" drawing.[28] A letter to Henry Cole of 30 July 1852 appears to illustrate, in pen and ink, Richard Redgraves' intended approach to teaching plant-based design: firstly, a traditional botanical illustration was prepared from a plant-cutting, in this case from a sow-thistle (Sonchus), and secondly, a conventionalised symmetrical sow-thistle design is prepared from the botanical illustration.[29] The sow-thistle, a common plant drawn from nature, fitted later nationalistic and Arts & Crafts ideals of native plants as the preferred source for ornamental designs. In 1876, Gilbert Redgrave published the *Manual of Design: Compiled from the writings and addresses of Richard Redgrave*; he reproduced the earlier studies as woodcuts and summarised the South Kensington approach:

> ... one section of the English course is peculiar to our own schools. We allude to the section of "Elementary design," preparing the student as it does for the practice of decorative design ... These drawings are mere indications of the mode of analysis, since many figures would be wanted to show all that could be obtained from this single plant ... After this stage of "Elementary-design" comes the study of "filling given spaces" with the ornament derived from the above sources, then the "repeats", by which units of ornament are distributed over large surfaces, and, finally, the student is taught the proper application of ornament to the various materials in which the design is intended to be wrought or executed; these laws of <u>fitness</u> in application are, to say the least, not followed by Continental decorative artists.[30]

The further central and essential event in the design debate came from the stunning effect of the Indian and other Oriental work displayed at the 1851 Great Exhibition, which is the subject of the next section. The

schools and Redgrave, as is now understood, acquiesced to Henry Cole and his insistence on payment on results:

> This, in spite of the stimulating nature of the new oriental-abstract or conventionalized patterns when they were first introduced (by Owen Jones or later by Christopher Dresser), in the end concentrated narrowly on "payment by results" and the almost total exclusion of imaginative work.[31]

ENDNOTES

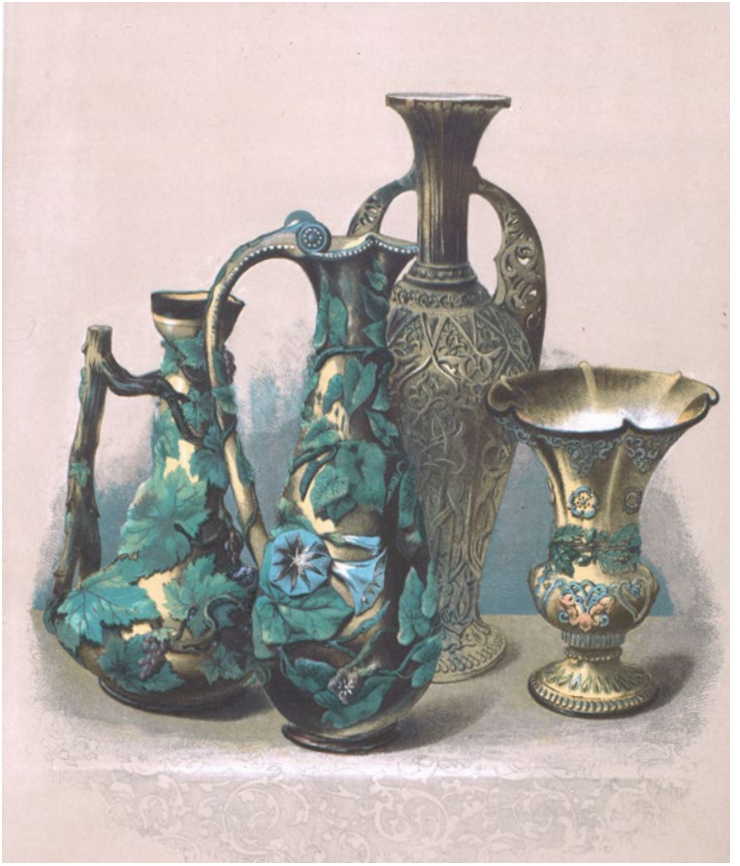
1 *Journal* I no2 (Apr 1849), between 50-1
2 Parry 1988, 34
3 See Brett, David *On Decoration* Cambridge (England) 1992
4 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, ill opp 40
5 *Art Journal* XI 1849, 270-1
6 See "Ruskin" 89
7 Casteras and Parkinson (eds) *Redgrave* 1988, 40
8 *Journal* V no26 (Apr 1851), 26
9 Ibid V no28 (June 1851), 116
10 Chapter V 'South Kensington' and the Science and Art Department/ British History Online/ ref 23; www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=47518; retrieved 25 Jan 2011
11 Gere 2000, 7
12 The Government School of Design: Its Annual Exhibition, in *Art-Union* 9 1847, 309 col2
13 Callen 1979, 29
14 Ibid 49
15 Ken Hall interview, http://www.artschool125.co.nz/Interviews/D_Tutill/; retrieved Jan 2011
16 *Journal* II no8 (Oct 1849), between 70-1
17 Ibid I, "Preface" vii
18 Ibid I, Title page. See http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibns/month/aug2001.html; retrieved 21 Apr 2011
19 Decorative Arts: The journal of design and manufactures: Contents; http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/DLDecArts/DLDecArts-idx?type=header&id=DLDecArts.JournDesv05; retrieved 21 Apr 2011
20 Frayling 1987, 28, 38
21 Halén *Dresser* 1990, 19
22 Durand/Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 49
23 Bury/Casteras and Parkinson (eds) *Redgrave*, 45, 40
24 See section "enduring", 291
25 *Journal* I no5 (July 1849), 147-51, chapter I: 147, 147, 150-151
26 *Journal* I no6 (Aug 1849), 178-85, chapter II: 178-179, 181-184, 185
27 Images from Redgrave, Gilbert *Manual of Design: compiled from the writings and addresses of Richard Redgrave* South Kensington Museum Art Handbook no6 1876, 166-7 figs 17 and 18; Image courtesy of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington
28 Frayling 1987, 40-2
29 Casteras and Parkinson (eds) *Redgrave* 1988, 153 ills (nos139-40), 154 (no143)
30 Redgrave, Gilbert *Manual* South Kensington Museum Art Handbook no6 1876, 166-7
31 Chapter V "South Kensington" and the Science and Art Department, in British History Online between refs 26 and 27; www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=47518; retrieved 21 Apr 2011

1850s: Great Exhibition & the design revolution

The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations (1 May to 15 Oct 1851) staged in Hyde Park, London, in Paxton's hotly-contested Crystal Palace, a massive modern structure in glass and cast-iron, acted as a focal point for further outpourings on naturalistic versus conventionalised design options. Whether the timely and heated discussion over design "standards" would have been so acrimonious without the vast reams of paper generated by the building and the exhibition is a moot point? (Victorian papers were by this time almost over-burdened with crude engraved illustrations.) The exhibition was staged to celebrate British industrial and manufacturing achievements and was a knockout success, with six million visitors and over 15,000 exhibitors. It was a moment when the British could view their Empire with a certain amount of smug satisfaction.[2] (The 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition in Christchurch was similarly motivated.)

Before the Great Exhibition had even finished, the standard of design in the exhibited works drew widespread derision. The design debate can be seen as a call to action, which, as introduced in the previous chapter, already had many able pens putting ideas into print. Ralph Nicholson Wornum vehemently condemned the "naturalist school" of "ornamental design" in his winning essay on the exhibition, earning him 100 guineas – "The Exhibition as a Lesson in Taste" – printed in the illustrated exhibition catalogue, subsequently published by the *Art Journal* as a Special Issue:

> That there is nothing new in the Exhibition in ornamental design;



"A Group of Earthenware Vases", by Mansard of Voisinlieu, France, shown at the Crystal Palace exhibition, 1851; in M. Digby Wyatt, The Industrial Arts of the XIX Century *1851-3, pl6; Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.*[1] *The text accompanying plate 6 finishes with a sardonic comment on* those quaint dishes, covered with skilfully modelled and painted representations of fruit, flowers, fish, &c ... Whether such a revival quite coincides with our ideas of the utilitarian application ... is a question upon which, considering the apparent popularity of these works, it might be ungracious to enter further.

> not a scheme, not a detail that has not been treated over and over again in ages that are gone; that the taste of the producers generally is uneducated, and that in nearly all cases where this is not so, the influence of France is paramount in the European productions; bearing exclusively in the two most popular traditional styles of that country – the Renaissance and the Louis Quinze.[3]

Wornum regretted that "beauty" was confused with the "quantity of ornament" to the point where it could be "doubtful what the object can be".[4] Jugs on display had so many bulges that the "jugness" of the object could but be guessed at. The public had been as happy or more than happy to buy French, rather then British, products. There was – c1851 – said Quentin Bell, in *The Schools of Design* (1963), a desperate need for "manufacturing artists."[5]

Ralph N. Wornum, *Analysis of Ornament: Characteristics of styles: An introduction to the study of the history of ornamental art (1856)* was made up of lectures, originally prepared for the Government Schools of Design in the years 1848, 1849, 1850. (Nellie Hutton, teaching in Dunedin, New Zealand, with her father David Con Hutton, used the 10th edition of Wornum's book (1896).[7]) Wornum's concerns were those of the design reformers of the 1850s:

> There is a class of ornament which has increased of late years in England, and, by way of distinction, we may call it the *naturalist school*. The theory appears to be, that as nature is beautiful, ornamental details derived immediately from beautiful natural objects must insure a beautiful design ... one peculiar feature of this school is, that it often substitutes the ornament itself for the thing to be ornamented ... ; in which the natural objects are so mismanaged

"Silverware" shown at the Great Exhibition; in Nikolaus Pevsner Pioneers of Modern Design *1936*[6]

> as to be principals: flame proceeding from a flower, a basket on an animal's head to hold a liquid, a bell made of leaves! the elements chosen being so opposed to the proposed uses of the objects ornamented, as to make the designs simply aesthetic monstrosities, ornamental abominations.
>
> Ornament is essentially the accessory to, and not the substitute of, the useful; it is a decoration or adornment; it can have no independent existence practically. We cannot look upon any mere ornament without instantly associating it with something that it is fit, or is destined, to adorn; as a necklance, or a bracelet. …
>
> Natural floral ornament is one kind of ornament, and a very beautiful kind; but even an infinite variety of floral detail, especially in the round, will have aesthetically but very little variety of effect upon the mind. For this purpose we must bring Art to the aid of Nature, or work upon the principles illustrated by natural objects, rather than imitate their individual appearances.[8]

Questions of good and bad design, taste, style and fashion became common currency. As noted by Alf Bøe (1957):

> It is a singular fact concerning the design typical of the period that it was disliked not only by the generations following immediately after, but by a great many among the Victorians themselves.[9]

Criticism was not entirely negative, as Wornum would have us believe: carpets at the exhibition received praise for their flat ornament in *The Illustrated London News* (1851):

> Among the glories of the Exhibition must be reckoned its carpets: and the amazing progress made in design as applicable to these articles during the last six or eight years cannot fail to strike every observant person. The domestic habits of the English are peculiarly favourable to the due stimulus of an event like this Exhibition to bring out the latent energies and talent of our carpet manufacturers and place their trade in its true position. The display now made is highly satisfactory, for there is, certainly, much less of the usual style of carpet decoration. In this respect we had, and still have, much to learn; and the absurd notion of ornamenting our floors with effects in high relief, when the chief requirement of such ornamentation is flatness, appears to be passing away. A floor, whether covered with a carpet or not, is intended to walk upon.[10]

The fulsome records published on the exhibition and the endless barbed commentary, extolling naturalism on one side and on the opposing side, with equal fervor, conventionalism, created a more design-savvy audience. The Cole group, having helped foment anti-exhibition sentiments, could bed in the design reform initiatives lauded by the *Journal*.

By the time of the exhibition, organic abstracted design had a respected foothold in Britain, aided, decisively, by praise for and purchase of Indian and other so-called Oriental or Eastern wares from the exhibition. Now recognised is the central importance of four individuals to the design-reform story: A.W.N. Pugin, Owen Jones, Henry Cole, and Richard Redgrave. The "Oriental" items selected by the four for the central government school of design – the simplicity of the designs and the innumerable possible colour-ways presented by the Indian textiles exhibited – were effectively "the missing-link" in the design-reform debate. (India, by the time of the exhibition, had been absorbed

into the Empire: it had effectively lost any ability to negotiate rights to its patterns.) Such goods were seen to embody the principles and ornamental style needed to reform British design and ensure British manufacturing preeminence.[11]

Indian and Oriental design at the Exhibition

Owen Jones, in his 1856 *Grammar*, wrote of the Indian exhibits:

> The Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations in 1851 was barely opened to the public ere attention was directed to the gorgeous contributions of India. Amid the general disorder everywhere apparent in the application of Art to manufactures, the presence of so much unity of design, so much skill and judgment in its application, with so much of elegance and refinement in the execution as was observable in all the works, not only of India, but of all the other Mohammedan contributing countries, – Tunis, Egypt, and Turkey, – excited a degree of attention from artists, manufacturers, and the public, which has not been without its fruits.[12]

India through the British East India Company supplied 7344 items; the Indian exhibits returned immediate undisguised praise in M. Digby Wyatt's prodigious, two volume, *Industrial Arts of the XIX Century* (1851-3):

> We cannot be surprised to find that the harmony of colouring, which was so essential and distinctive a characteristic of the fabrics contributed to the Great Exhibition from the continent of India, should pervade in an equal degree their illuminated manuscripts.[13]

As subsequent quotes endorse, the direction of flat nature-inspired

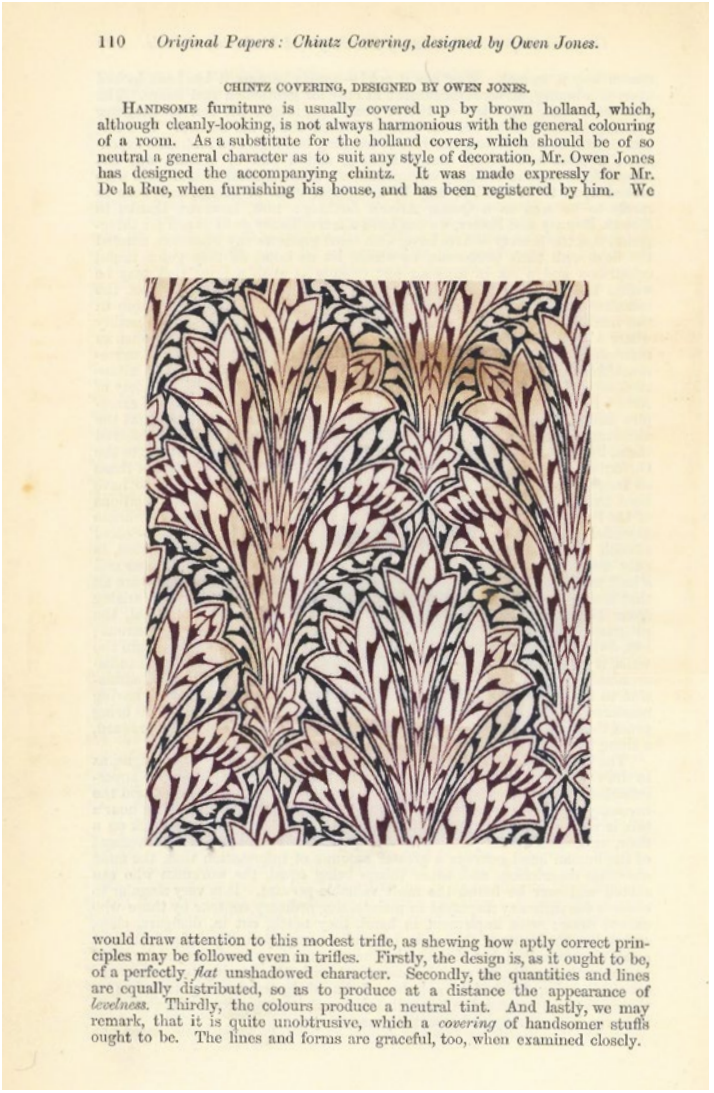
"Indian Department" in Grammar of Ornament *[1856] 2001, 248-249 ills. The simple shapes illustrated were transcribed from Indian works exhibited at the 1851 exhibition, mainly hookahs, supplied by the British East India Company. Some of the designs are based more directly on nature; in others nature is more conventionalised. In the 2001 republication, the original single studies have been cut up into 16 separatae studies.*

design instruction was permanently set on a new path. (Of interest is the fact that the admired asymmetry in Oriental art had already been admired in Gothic art.[14])

The effect of the Indian and other Oriental exhibits on British design is shown by Owen Jones's much-quoted articles in *The Journal of Design and Manufactures*. Jones's multiple contributions[15] came under the heading: Gleanings from the Great Exhibition of 1851. At the end of his first "Gleaning" in June 1851, Jones set out six broad principles on form and colour, the first paraphrasing Pugin's famous dictum: "1. The construction is decorated; decoration is never purposely constructed."[16] From his subsequent "Gleanings" there can be no doubt that, for Jones, pattern construction on Oriental exemplars could but be successful:

Owen Jones (*Journal* June 1851): NoI "On the distribution of form and colour developed in the articles exhibited in the Indian, Egyptian, Turkish, and Tunisian Departments of the Great Exhibition". Jones gave a personalised view of the rise of Islam, followed by fulsome praise for the forms and colours exhibited by the Eastern articles on display at the exhibition – an authoritative creed for the "wandering artist":

> The religion of Mahomet, which spread meteorlike over the East with such astounding rapidity, rapidly produced an art in unison with its poetic and imaginative doctrines. Forbidden by their creed to represent the human form, the followers of Mahomet were led to adorn their temples as none others have been. A most elaborate system of ornamentation grew up, recalling, perhaps, the silken tissues which had adorned their tents in their wandering state, whilst their religion impressed itself on all their works: texts from the Koran, interwoven with every ornament, added beauty and expressed faith ...



110 *Original Papers: Chintz Covering, designed by Owen Jones.*

CHINTZ COVERING, DESIGNED BY OWEN JONES.

HANDSOME furniture is usually covered up by brown holland, which, although cleanly-looking, is not always harmonious with the general colouring of a room. As a substitute for the holland covers, which should be of so neutral a general character as to suit any style of decoration, Mr. Owen Jones has designed the accompanying chintz. It was made expressly for Mr. De la Rue, when furnishing his house, and has been registered by him. We

would draw attention to this modest trifle, as shewing how aptly correct principles may be followed even in trifles. Firstly, the design is, as it ought to be, of a perfectly *flat* unshadowed character. Secondly, the quantities and lines are equally distributed, so as to produce at a distance the appearance of *levelness*. Thirdly, the colours produce a neutral tint. And lastly, we may remark, that it is quite unobtrusive, which a *covering* of handsomer stuffs ought to be. The lines and forms are graceful, too, when examined closely.

Owen Jones, "Chintz covering, designed by Owen Jones" in Journal VI no34 (December 1851) 110 ill, ; Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.

To the student of ornamental design, as applied to manufactures, these works offer a most fruitful lesson ...

It is for this purpose that I would beg the wandering artist I have described to repose his distracted eye and head in the departments of India, Tunis, Egypt, and Turkey. He will here find no carpets worked with flowers whereon the foot would fear to tread ... He will here be impressed with a sensation of most voluptuous repose: here there is no struggle after an effect, everything arises quietly and naturally from the want which has to be supplied. It is seen from the embroidered garment tissues to the humblest earthen vase: each follows the same law. The most brilliant colours are here harmonised as by a natural instinct; it is impossible to find a discord. Every piece of ornamentation shews that the artist thought, instead of copied whilst he worked ... One guiding principle of their ornamentation appears to be that their decoration was always what may be called surface decoration. Their general guiding forms were first considered and these forms decorated. Their flowers are not natural flowers, but conventionalised by the material in which they worked ... There is a total absence of shadow ...

Let our artists study here: let them, on the other hand, avoid adopting or copying the conventional forms thus conveniently offered to them. Let them go to Nature's ever-bounteous works, and conventionalise for themselves. Why should the acanthus leaf keep the field against all comers?[17]

Owen Jones (*Journal* December 1851, 57 ill): Chintz covering, designed by Owen Jones: the chintz furniture cover sample, in mauve, black and white, tipped into volume six, handsomely illustrated the new rules for ornamental treatment: the fabric sample was accompanied by the exhortation:

> Handsome furniture is usually covered by brown holland, which, although cleanly-looking, is not always harmonious with the general colouring of a room ... We would draw attention to this modest trifle, as shewing how aptly correct principles may be followed even in trifles. Firstly, the design is, as it ought to be, of a perfectly flat unshadowed character. Secondly, the quantities and lines are equally distributed, so as to produce at a distance the appearance of levelness. Thirdly, the colors produce a neutral tint. And lastly, we may remark, that it is quite unobtrusive, which a covering of handsomer stuffs ought to be. The lines and forms are graceful, too, when examined closely.[18]

Utility and simplicity were urged: Britain, it was noted, had understood for 15 years that "her industrial productions of various kinds, so good in material and fabric, were inferior in appearance".[19] (For modern audiences, Jones's chintz, illustrated in black and white, was included in Nikolaus Pevsner's *Pioneers of the Modern Movement*, 1936, underlining its importance.)

In 1852 Richard Redgrave prepared his now-recognised *Report on Design: Prepared as a supplement to the report of the jury of class XXX of the exhibition of 1851, at the desire of Her Majesty's commissioners* (London 1852) in which he posited the use of nature as the basis of design instruction.[20] The report had a "profound effect" – "Redgrave advocated the study of nature as the true basis of design, but he was equally as convinced that the business of the designer was to conventionalise and adapt natural motifs, never allowing them to distort the form of the object they were intended to decorate."[21]

In 1858 M. Digby Wyatt "On the Principles of Design applicable to the Textile Art": Extracted from *The Art Treasures of the United Kingdom* (1858) was published. The book was gifted to the "Library of the Department of Science and Art with the Author's respects. August 1858". Wyatt's essay had arisen from Manchester's 1857 "Great Exhibition": he conclusively noted:

> The best writers on the subject have agreed ... that it is in the fabrics of the East, decorated either in the loom by weaving; by printing, embossing, or embroidering when woven; by plaiting, spangling, slashing, or in any other mode, that the best models for analyses and judicious imitation are to be found. With such the Manchester Exhibition was amply supplied mainly through the liberality of the East-India Company; and it is to be hoped that the opportunity so afforded to the local designers, of studying the glowing and gorgeous but invariably beautiful Oriental stuffs, may not fail to have imparted to the artists of Lancashire and Yorkshire some considerable portion of that sensibility of taste and eye, upon which, after all, probably more than upon any regularly recognized rules, the native designer relies for his happiest effects.

Wyatt warned of a "tendency of the chief directors of taste ... , as it appears to the author, to tie the decorative artist's hands somewhat too dogmatically". Designs may "grow dry and arid". Usually "a highly conventional form" is needed but "too great rigidity in elementary geometrical treatment is almost as fatiguing to the cultivated eye as entire inattention to conditions of symmetry would be displeasing".[22]

New Zealand

The New Zealand Exhibition in Dunedin in 1865 included 1041 items from British India via the Indian Museum, London, and included cotton, silk, carpets, tapestry, lace, embroidery, clothing. After the exhibition there was a "handsome donation of the Secretary of State for India of most of the products and some of the manufactures exhibited" to the Colonial Museum of New Zealand in Wellington "where they are now displayed".[23]

ENDNOTES

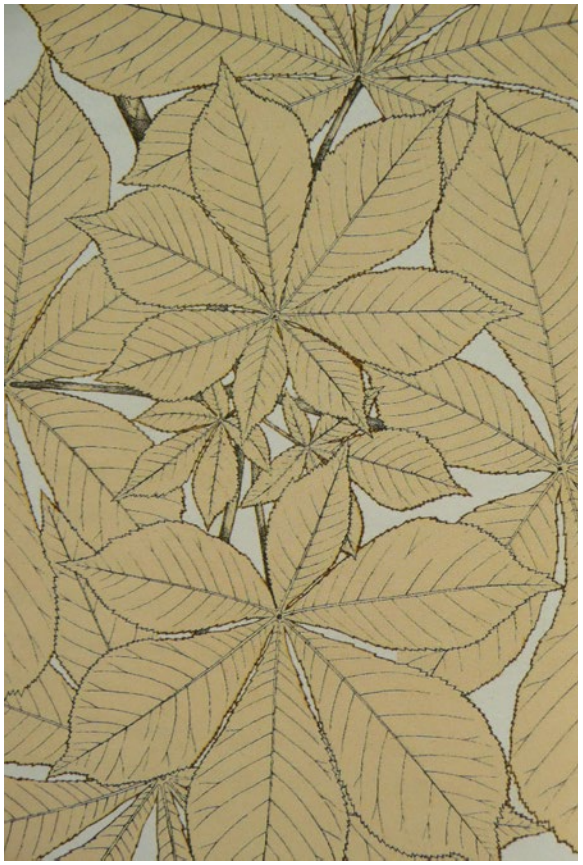
1 H. Pidgeon Del, F. Bedford Lith, M.D. Wyatt DipEx
2 Gere 2000, 35-36; Anscombe 1991, 13; Nochlin 1971, 226, 229
3 *Crystal Palace Exhibition* illustrated catalogue London 1851: An unabridged republication, NY Dover Publications Inc 1970 V*** col 1. Also see: Nicholson Wornum, Ralph *Analysis of Ornament* (1856); Pevsner, Nikolaus *Pioneers of Modern Design* (1936); and *High Victorian Design* (1951)
4 Ibid VI*** col 2
5 Quentin Bell 1963, 60
6 Pevsner [1936] 1960, 43 ill
7 Nellie Hutton appears in a photograph of the Dunedin School of Art, the teaching space replete with classical statues and plaster casts, in the last quarter of the nineteenth-century. The name was changed to the Otago School of Art and Design in 1894. (Brown, Gordon (1988) *Visions of New Zealand: Artists in a new land*, 183 ill). A National Library of New Zealand copy of Ralph Nicholson Wornums' *Analysis of Ornament* [1856] 1896/10th edn is inscribed twice, pen and ink, "Nellie L H Hutton".
8 Wornum [1856] 1896, 9-10, 12-13
9 Bøe 1957, 5
10 *Illustrated News* XVIII(10 May 1851), 396 col 2
11 Halén *Dresser* 1990, 20 on British Imperial expansionist aims from the Near East to the Far East
12 *Grammar* [1856] 2001, 241
13 Wyatt 1851-3, 168
14 Halén *Dresser* 1990, 149
15 "Owen Jones", 39
16 *Journal* V no28 (June 1851), 92
17 Ibid 89-93 and I 91-2
18 *Journal* VI no34 (Dec 1851),110
19 Ibid 135
20 Redgrave 1852, 708
21 Bury, Shirley, The Silver Designs of Dr Christopher Dresser in *Apollo* (Dec 1962), 766-770, 766 col 1
22 Wyatt 1858, 72, 77-78
23 *Dunedin Exhibition 1865: Reports and Awards of the Jurors* 337-351 (351), in Calhoun 2000, 44

Christopher Dresser (1834-1904): artistic botany and Japonisme

Christopher Dresser used the term "artistic botany" in 1857 and effectively linked the science of botany and the art-science of botanical illustration in support of "Arts and Art-Manufacture". When Dresser initially entered the South Kensington system in 1847, botanical illustration was both a popular pastime (and profession) and a valued scientific tool backed by a flourishing publishing machine. Into 1849, a preference for exacting naturalism was replaced in the system by nature-based "conventionalised" (stylised/abstracted) designs.[2] Dresser by 1862, perhaps earlier, had, as put by Alf Bøe, a "growing predilection for abstraction in design, throwing the emphasis on constructive, instead of ornamental beauty".[3] Dresser designs were based on an art-science combination, with – from 1862-3 – the exciting new design motifs and constructive approach apparent in Japanese design, the latter of particular interest here. Christopher Dresser, then E.W. Godwin and the Aesthetic movement, added Japonisme as a vital new impetus to design reform. Owen Jones's *Grammar*, as often noted, did not contain a section on Japanese ornament.

Dresser, a proudly commercial designer, has usually been omitted from histories of the Arts & Crafts. Dresser was a designers' designer, barely interested in the morality of handicraft or the demands of individual materials. By 1871, he would find fault with the South Kensington system.[4] By 1873, earlier than Morris, he was writing for the workers, perhaps by then sufficiently successful to acknowledge his modest

Christopher Dresser, Bookcover, The Art of Decorative Design, *1862; General Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 892-COVER). The Christchurch, New Zealand, High Victorian architect, B.W. Mountfort, owned a copy of Dresser's 1862 book. The cover design is an "ingenious paraphrase" of the cover for Owen Jones's* Grammar of Ornament *(1856).*[1]



Christopher Dresser, Horse-chestnut leaves, traced from Natural Leaves; in Owen Jones, Grammar of Ornament *[1856] 2001, plate XCI, 480 ill. Linda Parry writes:* "The basic elements which combine to make the pure naturalistic style of the [Arts & Crafts] Movement can be seen as early as 1856 in Christopher Dresser's detailed drawings of the horse-chestnut tree combined in a full-page illustration in Owen Jones's *Grammar of Ornament*".[11] *Plate XCI illustrates overlapping horse-chestnut leaves and conveys a certain amount of depth and tension. Dresser followed the layered affect Owen Jones recognised in Alhambran ornament; subsquently Dresser found and used similar Japanese pattern "structural qualities".*[12]

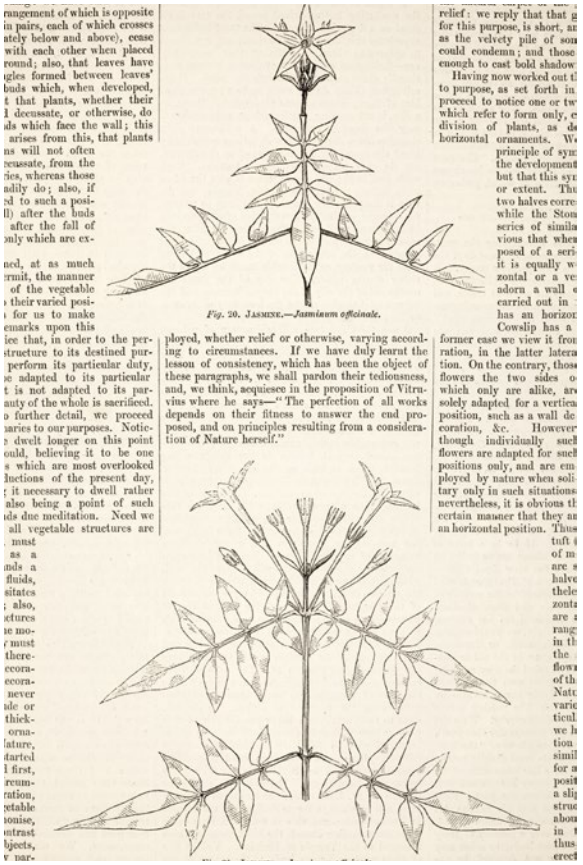


Fig. 20. Jasmine.—*Jasminum officinale.*

Christopher Dresser, "Jasmine Officinale" in Art Journal 1 *Jan 1857, 55 ill; General Lending Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 924-55). Dresser's lines of "power" (his spiky style) are already present in this 1857 illustration; power was one of the words in Dresser's later motto "Truth, Beauty, and Power": truth (science), beauty (art), power (knowledge is power).*

Christopher Dresser, "Repetition" in The Art of Decorative Design *1862, ill opp 84; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref f 892-84). The plate openly refers to Pugin's 1849* Floriated Ornament. *Dresser's 1862 colours are aesthetic secondary colours.*

origins. His importance to the design debate is now indisputable, as his place in the Arts & Crafts.

Born in Glasgow, into a peripatetic family, Dresser at age 13 was accepted at the School of Design, Somerset House, The Strand, London. The anti-naturalistic government-schools design-instruction system was developing, covered, as shown, by the *Journal of Design and Manufactures* (1849-52), as was Jones's controversial colour scheme for the Crystal Palace[5] and Jones's lavish praise for Indian, Islamic and Moorish design and colour during and after the 1851 Great Exhibition.[6] Dresser in turn learnt valuable lessons on design and colour from the Indian wares on display in 1851.[7]

Dresser finished training in 1854 and as well as an active publishing record, he lectured on botany and was master of the botanical drawing classes at South Kensington[8], at the female School of Design, Gower Street, and at various London medical institutions. Dresser replaced Richard Redgrave as lecturer in botany at the School of Design, South Kensington in 1861, resigning in 1868.[9] He practised as a designer for about three years before the 1862 art and industry exhibition.[10]

Seemingly, taking on Richard Redgraves' nature-based approach to design[13], Dresser by 1857 was in print developing a personal botanically-based approach to design construction.

Christopher Dresser, in "Botany, as Adapted to Arts and Art-Manufacture", as "Lecturer on artistic botany in the Department of Science and Art", in an eleven part series in the *Art Journal* in 1857 and 1858 said:[14]

> Though the science of botany has been long more or less perfectly understood, it has been but very scantily applied to the purposes

"To our minds three things chiefly influence this, viz, form, texture, and colour. ... "

> and requirements of the beautifying ornamentist ... this neglect is pardonable – for how were the two sciences to become mingled? ... Here, then, has been the difficulty – the ornamentist has not had time to study botany, and the botanist has not had time to study the requirements of the ornamentist. ...
>
> "Nature supplied the mediæval artists with all their forms and ideas; the same inexhaustible source is open to us: and if we go to the fountain-head, we shall produce a multitude of beautiful designs treated in the same spirit as the old, but new in form." ... [quoting from Pugin's *Floriated Ornament*[15]]
>
> Therefore, we shall show the adaptability of every part of the vegetable organism, when thoroughly understood, to the general requirements of the ornamental world; and then reveal the peculiar adaptability of certain forms and lessons to particular cases or manufactures. ["fitness of the design to the purpose for which it is intended", as taught by Pugin in 1836[16]]

Dresser into 1858 regularly contributed papers to the *Art Journal* on every aspect of a plant, by which plant forms could be used for ornamental ends:

> Nothing need be said in order to show that various flowers have varied effects; the causes of these diverse appearances is the question now proposed. To our minds three things chiefly influence this, viz, form, texture, and colour. …

"For ornamental purposes we deem literal copies altogether insufficient ... "

> Next we must notice nature's diaper patterns, or those simple repeating patterns, the parts of which are united.[17]
>
> To the ornamentist a knowledge of construction is necessary in order to enable him pleasingly to decorate the raised edifice, – for no decoration can be agreeable which is not in harmony with, or that does not take cognizance of, the structure. In this assertion we are bourne out by Mr Owen Jones in that proposition where he says that "construction must be decorated; decoration should never be purposely constructed:" in which sentiment we cordially acquiesce; and this principle, we have before intimated, is fully and beautifully carried out in vegetable nature. [Owen Jones' key proposition was originally formulatd by Pugin.[18]]
>
> Colour, by varied dispositions of quantity, and diverse degrees of intensity, may materially alter the general appearance. As a general principle, colour is used to assist form, and also by its enchantments to add to the beauty of the organism.
>
> In vegetable structures the primary colours, viz, blue, red, and yellow, are exhibited sparingly ... Secondary colours [purple, green and orange] are widely diffused ... green ... is remarkably cheering and grateful. The tertiary colours [olive, citrine and russet] are also prominent in the general effect of nature, and, if not in their maximum intensity, they are exhibited in their tints and hues.[19]
>
> ... botanists are engaged in a perpetual war with artists ... the ambition of the figure draughtsman is to delineate absolute truth; ... Shall, then, the ambition of the floral draughtsman be less ... therefore, let knowledge be combined with skill in every line of a delineated flower, for this alone can produce beauty. ...
>
> For ornamental purposes we deem literal copies altogether insufficient, representations of a more rigid character and analytical nature being necessary ... what is required is a series of drawings which shall convey a perfect knowledge of every part, so accurate indeed that if a model of the plant was required, the drawings alone would be necessary ... (noting that for a building a multitude of drawings are required[20])
>
> Have we not shown that vegetable structures suggest an almost infinite variety of treatments and combinations of parts? ... there are about one hundred thousand species of plants ... What more need be said in order to induce ornamentists to enter upon a series of studies relative to this fruitful and richly remunerating field of nature?[21]

In 1858, only 23, Dresser read a paper before the Linnean Society of London, just two months before Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace co-presented the paper on which Darwin's *The Origin of the Species* was based.[22] In 1861 Dresser became a fellow of the Linnean Society. Did Dresser hear Darwin? By 1863 Dresser includes Darwinism in his theories.

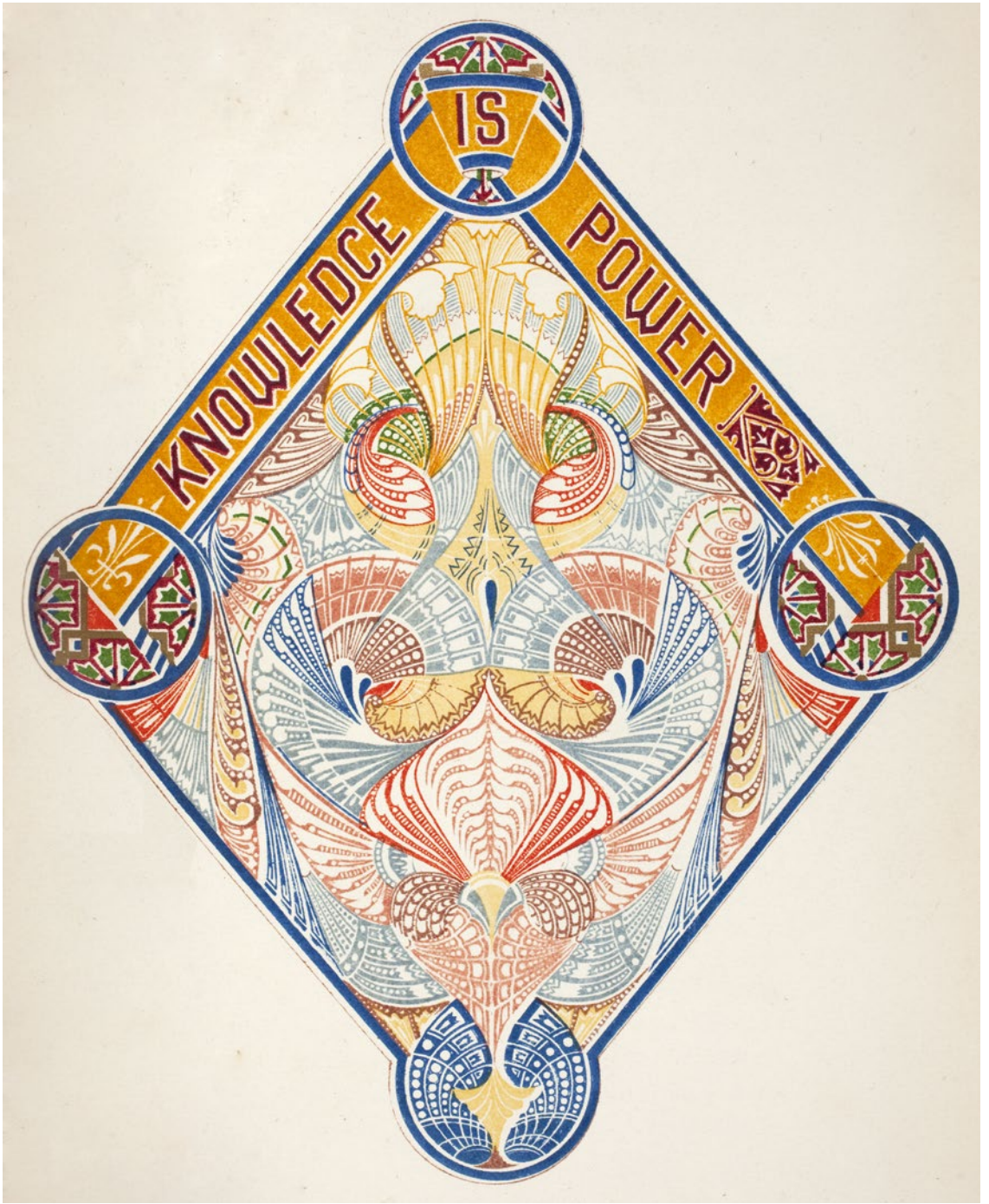
In 1859 he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Jena in Germany for his morphological researches. (Morphology is "the study of the external form and structure of plants, animals and organisms".[23])

In 1861 Dresser delivered a series of lectures on decorative design to the Society of Arts. In *The Builder* on 15 March 1862, Dresser on "The Art of Decorative Design" further rehearsed the arguments set out in his book of the same name, published the same year.[24] The lecture included examples of Japanese art.[25]

Christopher Dresser in *The Art of Decorative Design* (1862) looked to "plants" (not history) for "his knowledge of true ornament". Starting with "artistic botany" (not scientific botany), "nature" would supply "hints" for constructing ornament but the true source for an ornamental design would be "an inward instinct or passion", an idea formed in the "mind".[27] Stuart Durant posits that "It is the earliest book in which a designer was to suggest methods of inventing designs."[28] Dresser does this in Chapter XII, "The power of ornament to express feelings and ideas". If ornament was one of the "mind's necessities" (a Victorian idea), why not invent ornament in the mind?

> Chapter 1: Primarily, on the nature and character of ornament
>
> ORNAMENT is that which, superadded to utility, renders the object more acceptable through bestowing upon it an amount of beauty that it would not otherwise possess: it gives to that which it invests a new charm, as colour bestows upon the flower a new loveliness; and as the colour cannot be said to be essential to the existence of the flower, so the application of ornament to objects cannot be said to be absolutely necessary. …
>
> In so doing we not only follow the hints given us by nature, but act in accordance with an inward instinct or passion. … [a phrase also used by Wornum[29]]

Canterbury Provincial Council Chamber, New Zealand, Door-plate, in the form of an abstract flower, showing the influence of Christopher Dresser's spiky decorative style.[26]



Christopher Dresser, "Knowledge is Power" in The Art of Decorative Design *1862 plate XXIV [between 182 and 183]; General Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 892-182/183)*

> In a sense painting, sculpture, and architecture are ornamental arts, and their relationship with each other and with decoration is close ... ; indeed, between them there is no marked line of separation, for they meet at their confines as do the kingdoms of nature. …
>
> It will be found that the amount of pleasure derivable from the contemplation of an ornament will be largely dependent upon the extent to which mind is embodied in it.[30]

Dresser, in his key Chapter XII, discussing the idea of a dragon (a mythical creature for Dresser), argued that an illustration of a dragon by a Japanese artist might be created from the idea of a real dragon in the artist's mind:

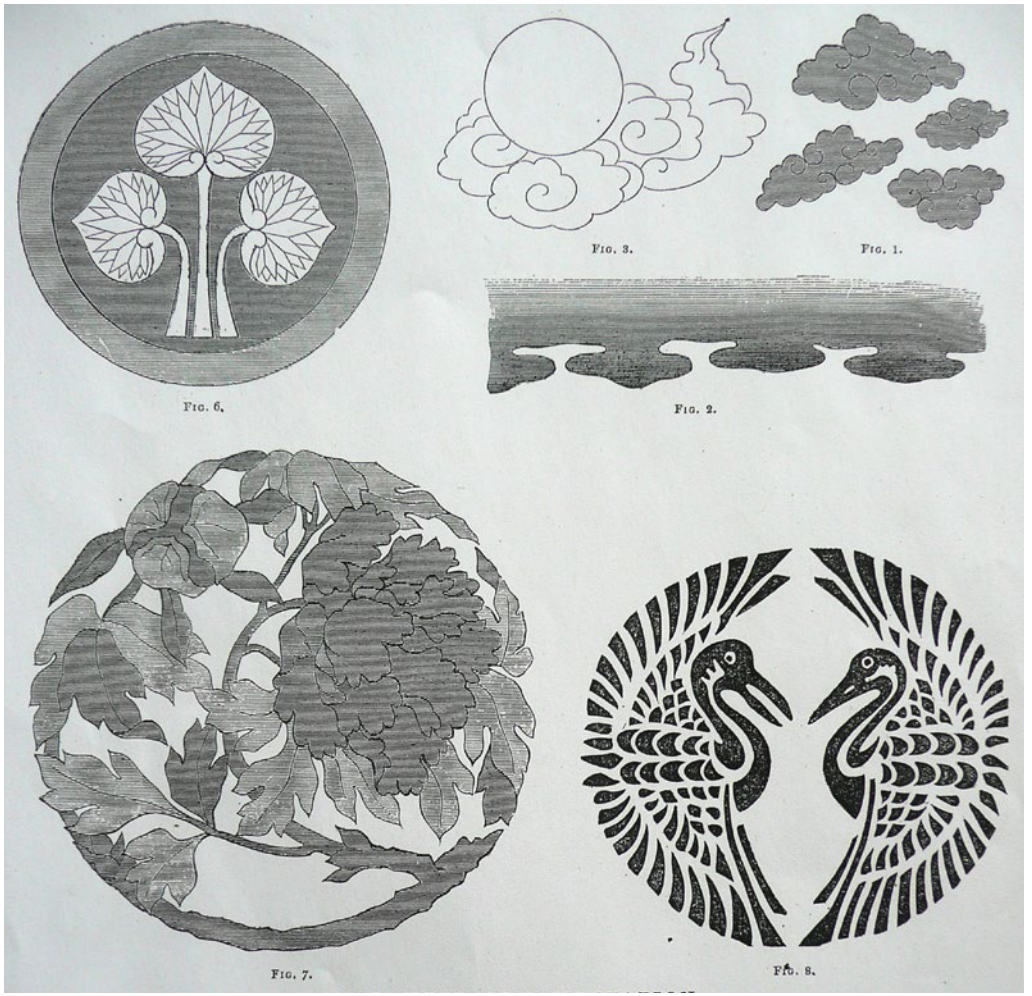
> Chapter XII*:* The power of ornament to express feelings and ideas
>
> This illustration [of a dragon] makes manifest the possibility of setting forth an idea by decorative forms, and we might bring forward others which would show that a plurality of thoughts can be illustrated by ornament, and that knowledge may be shrined in beautiful forms.
>
> ... yet the number of such symbols [eg, leafless branches representing winter] is few, consequently they afford no great means of expressing ideas. …
>
> In order that a symbolic art be powerful in utterance it is necessary that the people have knowledge of the purport or significance of the forms used and of the circumstances to which they have reference, ... this is the great drawback to a symbolic system ...
>
> Doubtless any thought may be set forth by ornamental forms; ...
>
> Having ascertained what goes to make up our mental idea of evening, ... a few salient features will usually suffice. All that is necessary is that we originate a series of conventional forms which shall call to mind the salient features in our conception, and the result is gained; but the success of the effect will rest upon the character of the ornament, the arrangement of the composition, and the right perception of the characteristic features. Plate XVI is a hasty sketch in which we have endeavoured to convey the thought of the evening star.[31]

In the book's Appendices under "characteristic plants of different countries", the last entry is for Australia and New Zealand. One appendix gave the hours of the day at which flowers open (the floral clock); Walter Crane later used Dresser's flower clock for one of his own publications.[32]

Japanese "aesthetic criteria"

Dresser made 80 or so drawings of Japanese wares included in the Sir Rutherford Alcock collection exhibited at the 1862 International Exhibition and after the exhibition acquired a "fair selection".[33] Dresser wrote an impressive brochure on the exhibition, spelling out his South Kensington allegiance to "the great superiority of the designs of Indian and Turkish carpets, both in the arrangement and general tone and harmony of the colours, and the flat treatment and geometrical distribution of form."[34]

The 1862 exhibition was not Dresser's first exposure to Japanese aesthetics[35] but the effect of Alcock's collection was transformative. On 19 May 1863 Dresser spoke to the Architectural Association on "The Prevailing Ornament of China and Japan"[36], the gathering chaired by William Burges and "probably" attended by E.W. Godwin.[37] In May-



Christopher Dresser, "Japanese Ornamentation" in The Builder *1863, 424 ill*

Chrystabel Aitken (Canterbury College School of Art 1921 to ?1936), Butterfly design on a circular base, c1928; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, N.Z.

Chrystabel Aitken, Chrysanthemum design on a hexagonal base, c1928; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

Audrey Black (Canterbury College School of Art early 1940s), Semi-circular design with blossoms; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Dresser acknowledged the power of Japanese flat, rigid designs, their asymmetry, their relative naturalism, their simplicity and their irregular groupings as an exciting new decorative approach.

June 1863 Dresser published three anonymous articles on "Japanese Ornamentation" in *The Builder*.[38] Dresser in these publications identified the factors that attracted the new aesthetes (such as E.W. Godwin) to Japanese design and helped define the Aesthetic movement.

Dresser acknowledged the power of Japanese flat, rigid designs, their asymmetry, their relative naturalism, their simplicity and their irregular groupings as an exciting new decorative approach.[39] Dresser understood that this was more than another style of medieval ornament.[40] Among the Japanese motifs Dresser acknowledged and used were: "chrysanthemum, lotus, bamboo, blackthorn, cherry, narcissus, hibiscus, pomegranate, reeds, grasses and trees, dragons, deer, storks, small birds, butterflies, beetles, grasshoppers and other insects."[41] Christopher Dresser, "Japanese Ornamentation", *The Builder* (1863)[42]: Dresser's three articles show his growing knowledge of Japanese symbolism and the aesthetic principles on which it was based – by the latter 1860s and into the 1880s Japonisme and Aestheticism became indissolubly linked and both within a few years were noticeably influencing British design to become the Anglo-Japanese style; significantly, Dresser recognised, in Japanese art, the value of stretching a design across a surface, as had Pugin in gothic art[43], and as later espoused by William Morris[44]. Dresser also opined:

> In many cases the French artists who have engaged themselves with recasting Japanese designs have failed to discover the purport or significance of the forms they have borrowed. They have taken the form, but have not perceived the sentiment of which the shape is but the shroud; or have copied forms and groupings without seizing the spirit of the work. …
>
> Japanese ornament, and that of China also, is in part made up of ideal forms, and in part of natural objects, treated, possibly, in a very conventional manner.[45]

In the second article of Dresser's trilogy (23 May 1863), having spoken of "forms which have a mental origin we shall now consider those derived from living objects". Japanese artists used flowers, birds, insects, "and certain fabulous creatures", but in "all cases the natural object" was "subjected to conventional treatment":

> The flowers are "displayed" rather than rendered symmetrical; that is, they are spread out flatly upon a surface ... The skill with which flowers are spread over surfaces is great, and they are generally beautifully drawn. Botanical truth is often observed in the small parts of the flower, and general accuracy is scarcely ever sacrificed. …
>
> While we say that flowers when used as ornament by the Japanese are usually "displayed" or rendered flatly, and yet without symmetrical order, it must not be understood that this is always the case. Flowers are sometimes treated symmetrically. ...
>
> Birds and insects are also much used, we say, in Japanese ornament, as well as conventional creatures ... The stork, certain small birds, many insects, as butterflies and grasshoppers, and even separate feathers, are frequent in decorative compositions. The stork is given

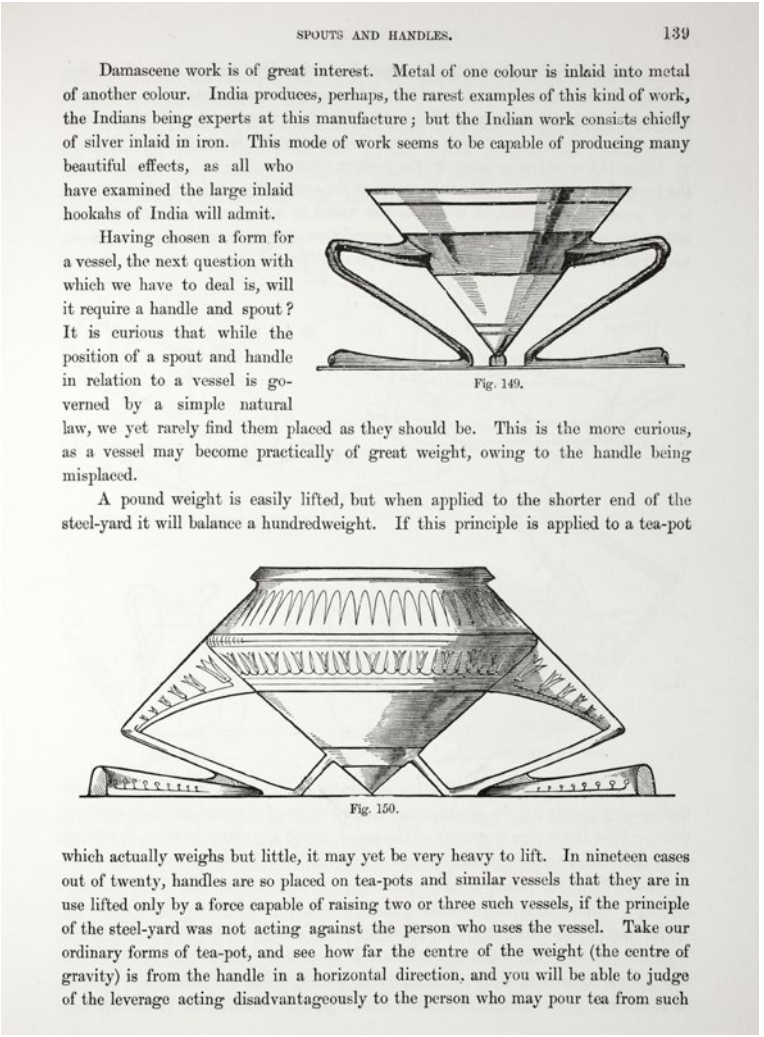
in every conceivable attitude, and a flight of these birds is commonly represented on a surface with the view of ornamenting it. But the birds are not treated naturally, but ornamentally. Conventional forms are produced sufficiently like the creature intended to suggest it to the mind. This is the true way to use natural objects for the purpose of ornament. …

... the groups of ornamental forms found in Japanese ornament, are frequently of a methodical or symmetrical character; but these groups are applied with great irregularity. …

There is no sham work with the Japanese ... If a surface is flat, and this is its most desirable condition, surely the ornament applied to it should not disturb this welcome feature. …

This principle of preserving the true condition of the surface decorated is maintained rigidly in all Japanese works ... Flowers, birds, clouds, and conventional ornaments are all rendered with the same flatness ... we have yet much to learn; ...

... another art-feature worthy of attention ... A great number of lacquered objects of Japanese manufacture are brightly coloured. Vermilion is common on these articles. Rich maroons, greens, and gold colours are regularly used; but the objects to which these colours are applied are small when compared with the wall of the room. They show us, however, that the Japanese are familiar with bright pigments ... The wall-papers are as dull and neutral as the lacquered objects are bright and positive ... It arises out of a true art-feeling. The wall of an ordinary apartment should always be treated as a back-ground.[46]



SPOUTS AND HANDLES. 139

Damascene work is of great interest. Metal of one colour is inlaid into metal of another colour. India produces, perhaps, the rarest examples of this kind of work, the Indians being experts at this manufacture; but the Indian work consists chiefly of silver inlaid in iron. This mode of work seems to be capable of producing many beautiful effects, as all who have examined the large inlaid hookahs of India will admit.

Having chosen a form for a vessel, the next question with which we have to deal is, will it require a handle and spout? It is curious that while the position of a spout and handle in relation to a vessel is governed by a simple natural law, we yet rarely find them placed as they should be. This is the more curious, as a vessel may become practically of great weight, owing to the handle being misplaced.

Fig. 149.

A pound weight is easily lifted, but when applied to the shorter end of the steel-yard it will balance a hundredweight. If this principle is applied to a tea-pot which actually weighs but little, it may yet be very heavy to lift. In nineteen cases out of twenty, handles are so placed on tea-pots and similar vessels that they are in use lifted only by a force capable of raising two or three such vessels, if the principle of the steel-yard was not acting against the person who uses the vessel. Take our ordinary forms of tea-pot, and see how far the centre of the weight (the centre of gravity) is from the handle in a horizontal direction, and you will be able to judge of the leverage acting disadvantageously to the person who may pour tea from such

Fig. 150.

Christopher Dresser, "Two sugar basins" in Principles of Decorative Design *[1873] 1973, 139 ills; General Lending Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 923-139). The illustrated sugar basins (figs 149 and 150) are virtually without ornament. Figure 149 appeared initially in a Dresser sketch of about 1864.*[49]

In the third article of the trilogy (13 June 1863), Dresser felt able to talk of the "speaking or symbolic forms" found in Japanese art.

> There are symbolic styles of ornament, and styles which are wholly æsthetic in character.
>
> ... Mediæval ornament consisted largely of forms of a speaking character ... Thus Mediæval art, being symbolic, addressed the understanding, and Greek ornament, being æsthetic, addressed the taste. Japanese ornament is in part symbolic, and in part of an æsthetic character. …
>
> None but a believer in dragons could draw these ideal beasts with the power and energy with which we often see them portrayed in the works of China and Japan ... No nation ever has had the power of producing monsters so full of energy and life as the dragons of Japan and China. The delineation of these subjects demands a conventional treatment of clouds, lightning, and the dragon, in the production of which the art of which we write is peculiarly successful. …
>
> The student of Japanese art cannot fail to observe small ornamental devices on many objects. Small circular compositions, squares formed into groups, and solitary rosettes, occur on many of the best lacquered articles ... They are crests. …
>
> Circular compositions have great favour with the Japanese. …
>
> The use of ornament which belongs to another age is never desirable; and the use of ornament belonging to a people of foreign faith should never be adopted ... We should have ... progressed in our arts, but we have not. Yet the art of the Middle Ages is not appropriate to us.

Christopher Dresser, Studies in Design for House Decorators, Designers, and Manufacturers: *Ceilings 1876, col. plate XII; Collection of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu.*[52]

> ... hence for us to use Japanese ornament, as it stands, would not be desirable. But if we use it we should employ its noblest qualities, and select from it those forms which are of an aesthetic rather than a symbolic character ... While we cannot approve of copying the ornaments of any style, we yet think that more real art is to be found in Japan than in many countries whose ornament we largely use; hence, if we cannot produce original decorations, and must copy others, we may, with advantage, study and appropriate Japanese ornaments.[47]

During the 1860s Dresser became a major designer and decorator, with a large studio, and an acknowledged designer of aesthetic products for the home.

Christopher Dresser, *The Principles of Decorative Design* (1873; 31 revised contributions to Cassell's *Technical Educator* (1870-3), published as a series of lessons for "working men").

Dresser's views on colour are inspiring and suggestive of Impressionism. Unlike Jones, Dresser preferred colours "of a tertiary character", with "small masses of primary or secondary colours ... employed in order to impart 'life' to the composition."[48]

Dresser's "CONCLUSION" was a statement of then current design-theory as the Arts & Crafts was about to gain traction – stressing, however, utility over beauty; by putting utility before beauty, Dresser ensured that his pots and jugs were able to pour:

> All art-objects must be useful and then beautiful; they must be utilitarian, and yet so graceful, so comely, that they shall be loved for their beauty as well as valued for their usefulness ... There is something in a true art-work which is too subtle for expression by words; there is a "quality" about an art-work, or the expression of an amount of "feeling", which cannot be described, yet which is so obvious as to be at once apparent to the trained eye.[50]

"All art-objects must be useful and then beautiful; they must be utilitarian, and yet so graceful, so comely, that they shall be loved for their beauty as well as valued for their usefulness."

At the end of the century, Dresser, a "pioneer", was the subject of an article in *Studio*; the unnamed writer, referring to Dresser's 1873 book, observed that:

> If space permitted one might quote page after page and find not a line, scarcely a word, that would not be endorsed by the most critical member of the Arts and Crafts Association to-day.[51]

In the late 1870s, Dresser used his name as a brand; his facsimile signature was used on a stamp noting that the wares were "Designed by Dr C. Dresser". Dresser (1876-7) scored a first when he, as an industrial designer, visited Japan to look at craft/trade and the manufacturies of Japan and to deliver gifts from the South Kensington Museum, as their representative, to the Tokyo National Museum. In 1882, Dresser published his acclaimed book on *Japan: Its architecture, art and art-manufactures*; in praise of Japanese Arts & Crafts, Dresser addressed the small perfect hand-made product as a tribute to both worker and buyer:

> There is as much pride in Japan manifested in completing a little cup,

> a lacquer box, a sheet of leather paper, or even a pair of chop sticks and by perfect work any handicraftsman may attain to the celebrity enjoyed here by a Landseer, a Turner, or an Owen Jones, and the fame supplies a stimulus for the production of work still more excellent.[53]

Dresser further designed pieces using ideas present in pieces from Japan, Peru, Mexico, Morocco and Ancient Britain.[54] With ill-health and the failure of the Art Furnishers' Alliance and other ventures, Dresser from 1883 returned to selling textile and wallpaper designs prepared by his studio, as well as his famous foray into "undecorated" metal, glass and ceramic wares, "to produce a new attitude that unites the metaphorical with the functional".[55]

Morris, in his address to the Birmingham Municipal School of Art on 21 February 1894, nailed his anti-Dresser, pro-Beauty, flag to the mast, a rather misplaced attack by one commercial house on another:

> In short, we are willing to rebel against the tyranny compounded of utilitarianism and dilettantism, which for the greater part of this century has forbidden all life in Art.[56]

Studio, a few years later, took up the still vexed issue of whether commercial production was inferior and argued that:

> The strenuous efforts of Mr Dresser to raise the national level of design ... by dealing with products within the reach of the middle classes, if not the masses themselves, deserve very hearty recognition.
>
> The Continental approval of late-nineteenth century design in Britain might never have come about had not the mid-nineteenth century designers prepared the way.[57]

Stuart Durant notes: "At the time of his death in November 1904 he was employing a full-time gardener to cultivate his large garden at Elm Bank, his home and studio by the Thames at Barnes." Dresser "spent as much time as he could in his conservatory".[58] Dresser, it appears, at the end of his life was still attached to his original botanical enthusiasms.

ENDNOTES

1 Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 46-7 ill and caption
2 See "Schools of Design" 55
3 Bøe 1957, 137
4 Halén *Dresser* [1990] 1993, 30
5 See "Owen Jones" 41-2, 44, 46
6 See "1850s" 60ff
7 Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 20 ill
8 Durant/Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 50, 219
9 Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 219
10 Shirley Bury *Dresser* 1962, 766 col 1
11 Parry 1888, 34
12 Halén *Dresser* [1990] 1993, 94. Compare to Beryl Mackenzie, black and white exhibition catalogue cover 1909; see "Colour", 160 ill
13 See "Schools of Design", 51ff
14 *Art Journal* 1857, 17ff, 53ff, 86ff, 109ff, 249ff, 340ff; and the articles indexed under "Botany" in the *Art Journal* 1858, 37ff, 237ff, 293ff, 333ff, 362ff
15 See "Pugin", 32
16 Ibid 25 col 2
17 *Art Journal* 1858 VIII, 237-238
18 See "Pugin", 26; Ibid IX 293
19 Ibid X, 333
20 Ibid XI, 362
21 Ibid, 364
22 Durant/Whiteway (ed) Dresser, 53
23 Ibid
24 *Builder* 15 Mar 1862, 185-186
25 Halén/Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 127
26 Regarding Dresser's spiky style, also see 1862 "Dresser" 65 ill, 69 ill; "Pugin" CPCC 1867, 35 ill; the "Alhambra" 37-38 ills, and "Jones" 39 ill, 42 ill
27 *Dresser* 1862 Preface, no4 and no21. See Brett 1992, 44
28 Durant/Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 55; "Design was treated as if it was an intellectual game." (57)
29 Bøe 1957, 136
30 *Dresser* 1862 no1, no4, no8 (repeated *Journal of the Society of Arts* XIX 1871, 217-226, 352), no21
31 Ibid 165ff: no3 166, no4 167, no5 167, no8 171, no9 173. The evening star is illustrated in Durant/Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 59 ill.
32 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 193 n23
33 Bury, Shirley *Apollo* Dec 1962, 766-767; Halén *Dresser* [1990] 1993, 37
34 Dresser 1862 exhibition brochure, quoting Richard Redgrave, 78
35 Halén *Dresser* [1990] 1993, 34
36 *Building News* 22 May 1863, 387-388
37 Ibid 36
38 *The Builder* May-June 1863: 308-309, 364-365, 423-424
39 Halén/Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 129
40 See William Burges' comments, under "Aesthetics" 81
41 Halén *Dresser* [1990] 1993, 36
42 Dresser, Christopher, Japanese ornamentation, in *The Builder* 1863, three articles: 308-309, 364-365, 423-424
43 See "Pugin" 30
44 See "Morris" 99
45 Dresser, Christopher, Japanese ornamentation, in *The Builder* 1863, first article of three: 308 col 1, 309 col 1 bottom
46 Ibid, second article: 364 cols 1-3, 365 cols 1-2
47 Ibid, third article: 423 cols 1-3, 424 cols 1, 3
48 Dresser [1873] 1973, 163
49 Halén *Dresser* 1990] 1993, 25 ill
50 Dresser [1873] 1993, 160
51 *Studio* XV/no68 (Nov 1898), 112
52 With many thanks to the Christchurch Art Gallery librarian, Tim Jones
53 In Whiteway (ed) 2004, 15
54 Judy Rudoe/Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 81ff
55 David Brett 1992, 66-67
56 Chiswick Press 1898 edn, 2
57 *Studio* vol XV/no68 (Nov 1898) 110, also 104
58 Durant/Whiteway (ed) *Dresser* 2004, 52, 223 n25

Eclectic aesthetics: E.W. Godwin, Japonisme and the House Beautiful

The Aesthetic movement was a broadly-based celebration of Beauty from its birth in the 1850s and 1860s to its manic moment in the early 1870s and into the 1880s. Without a pause to praise "Beauty", the Arts & Crafts may have missed its incarnation as the "House Beautiful" – Arts & Crafts aesthetics. The Aesthetic movement in New Zealand was significant and, as with the Arts & Crafts, the Aesthetic movement in New Zealand closely followed its British parent.

Edward William (E.W.) Godwin (1833-86), a graduate from the Gothic Revival, became a devoted aesthete. The interior decoration of Godwn's Bristol house (1862-65) is a must-mention in any record of Aesthetic movement history and introduced a simple, elegant interior decorative style which Godwin and his friend and colleague James McNeil Whistler made popular and tasteful. There was a noticeable cross-over in the interiors of the aesthetic house/home and the Arts & Crafts house/home; aspects of an Arts & Crafts interior were those introduced by aesthetes. The scene was recalled in 1925:

> The floor was covered with straw-coloured matting, and there was a dado of the same material. Above the dado were white walls and the hangings were of a cretonne with a fine Japanese pattern in delicate grey-blue. The chairs were of wicker with cushion-like hangings and in the centre of the room was a fullsize cast of the Venus de Milo before which was a small pedestal holding a censer from which was curving round the Venus, ribbons of blue smoke.[2]

> Ellen Terry later wrote of the Bristol home: This home, with its Persian rugs, beautiful furniture, its organ, which for the first time I learned to love, its sense of design in every detail, was a revelation to me ... For the first time I began to appreciate beauty, to observe, to feel the splendor of things, to aspire![3]

After the death of his wife Sarah in 1865, Godwin had moved to London and established an aesthetic environment for actress Ellen Terry and their children from about 1868 to 1874.[4] Their children were even dressed and educated as if products of the "Anglo-Japanese" style. Godwin then married Beatrix Philip, a business colleague, and, after Godwin's death in 1886, she married James McNeill Whistler. Godwin in retrospect appears a rather bohemian figure with a life-long commitment to bettering public taste; with his eclectic approach to life he was able to bring a fresh approach to his many ventures.

1862 International Exhibition

The 1860s were a crucible for the dual passions caught up by the conjunction of Gothic and Japanese spirits at the 1862 International Exhibition. The exhibition was the ideal base from which to launch Japonisme. The Anglo-Japanese style in the 1870s and 1880s became the *style du jour*, against which the Arts & Crafts gained a life of its own.

The 1851 exhibition had set in train further art and industry exhibitions; these exhibitions became international fixtures. The 1862 art and industry exhibition is remembered for its collection of Japanese lacquer and other wares, acquired and exhibited by Sir Rutherford Alcock Esq CB, "Her Majesty's envoy extraordinary and Minister plenipotentiary at the TYCOON". Japan had been closed to trade until 1853, although,

E.W. Godwin, Design for "Bamboo" wallpaper, 1872, watercolour on tracing paper, 21 1/4 x 21 1/4in (54 x 54 cm); ©Victoria and Albert Museum, London (E.515-1963. Checklist no65); Given by Edward Godwin, son of the artist. An aesthetic Japanese-style wallpaper, "Bamboo" was very popular through the last quarter of the nineteenth-century.[1]

undoubtedly, wares and prints found their way to the West. Japan was now compared to the Middle Ages as a similarly pure source of design aesthetics and motifs.[5]

"The Japanese Court in the International Exhibition", in *The Illustrated London News*, 20 September 1862, was described as having "a quaint picturesqueness":

> The contributions of Mr Alcock comprise 190 specimens of lacquer-ware, lacquering in wood, and inlaid wood and lacquer mixed, consisting of lacquered and inlaid cabinets and stands, lacquered trays for various purposes, toilet and luncheon-boxes, tables, bowls, nests of drawers, and so on ... On the whole, we cannot examine this curious and interesting collection without bringing away the most favourable ideas of Japanese skill and industry as applied to useful and ornamental manufacture.[6]

The Alcock exhibits offered immediate lessons on the Japanese style of ornament, with its flat approach, asymmetry, simplicity and irregular groupings; what is often noted was the similar celebration of asymmetry and irregularity in both Gothic and Japanese work. Godwin may have visited the Japanese Court at the exhibition between May and September 1862.[7]

William Burges (1827-81), a noted English architect and designer, and a committed medievalist, organised the 1862 Medieval Court for the Ecclesiological Society "and his commitment to colour permeated the whole display".[8] Burges had his own small collection of Japanese prints by about 1858.[9] Writing on "The International Exhibition", and the Medieval Court in *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Review* in July and September 1862[10], Burges seems to have understood that the limits of the Gothic style had been reached, even if he misread the cultural purport of Japonisme for the Japanese themselves:

> If, however, the visitor wishes to see the real Middle Ages, he must visit the Japanese Court, for at the present day the arts of the Middle Ages have deserted Europe, and are only to be found in the East ... Truly the Japanese Court is the real mediæval court of the Exhibition.[11]

In the second article in the September 1862 issue, Burges, on "The Japanese Court in the International Exhibition" wrote:

> ... somehow or other there is no display of Persian goods in the International Exhibition, and we are thrown back on to Egypt, Turkey, India, and Japan. The productions of the first three for the most part consist of textile fabrics and jewellery, but the latter presents us with so many articles of domestic use, and so nearly allied to the Middle Ages, that I propose to confine my attention to it alone.
>
> … I hope I have said enough to shew the student of our reviving arts of the thirteenth century, that an hour, or even a day or two, spent in the Japanese department will by no means be lost time, for these hitherto unknown barbarians appear not only to know all that the Middle Ages knew, but in some respects are beyond them and us as well.[12]

The exhibition otherwise furthered an acceptance of secular gothic as an appropriate style for the home. The exhibition introduced the public to the work of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co: Fine Art Workmen in Painting, Carving, Furniture and the Metals (to become Morris & Co in 1875, often termed the "Firm"). Among its fiercest advocates was, again, William Burges:

> The firm of Marshall, Morris & Co is an association of architects and painters, who have set up a shop in Red Lion Square, in the same manner as the Italian painters, such as Giotto, did in the Middle Ages. They execute stained glass and furniture from their own designs, and we have here a considerable number of specimens of their skill in the latter branch. The general characteristics of their furniture is an Eastern system of diaper combined with rather dark-toned pictures; in fact, they may be said to lean rather to what is called the Venetian school of colour; at the same time, it is only fair to state that their furniture is more what would have been used by the middle classes in the times of our forefathers than that of the other exhibitors. But if their work can hardly be called cheap; it is certainly not dear, when we consider that it speaks and tells a story, which assuredly cannot be said of most modern furniture.[13]

At the close of the 1862 exhibition, unsold wares from the Japanese Court went to the Oriental Warehouse of Messrs Farmer & Rogers' Great Shawl and Cloak Emporium in Regent Street, managed by Arthur Lazenby Liberty and another young salesman. In 1875, Liberty became the proprietor of East India House, opposite on Regent Street (to become Liberty & Co). For aesthetes, the store was a magnet and meeting place and encouraged the patronage Liberty & Co continues to enjoy. Godwin recalled an occasion when an expected consignment of Japanese fans did not arrive:

> Almost in a moment the swarm of folk vanished, and I was free to pick my way from ground-floor to attics, for No 218 Regent Street is from front to back and top to bottom literally crammed with objects of oriental manufacture ... There are matting and mats, carpets and rugs for the floor; Japanese papers for the walls; curtain stuffs for windows and doors; folding screens, chairs, stools, and so forth.[14]

Godwin became director of the new Liberty costume department and then the "Art" furniture department.[15] Murray Marks in Sloane Square and then at 395 Oxford Street was a similarly patronised emporium specialising "in furniture, tapestries, Continental and Oriental porcelains and enamels".[16] The outlets for Oriental items grew until the quality of merchandise was being questioned.

Arthur Liberty turned to other sources – "India, Java, Indo-China and Persia". He imported "plain, undyed fabrics from the East", which he had dyed by Thomas Wardle of Leek, who was also to work with William Morris.[17] Liberty and Christopher Dresser were friends and had, it appears, a similar approving attitude to machine production.[18]

The "House Beautiful"

Charles Locke Eastlake (1836-1906), *Hints on Household Taste in Furniture, Upholstery and other Details*, [1864] 1872/3rd edition revised. Eastlake, a committed aesthete, on every page of *Hints*, sets out rules for the would-be tasteful home-decorator: "The true principles of good design are universally applicable, and, if they are worth anything, can be brought to bear on all sorts and conditions of manufacture."

Eastlake's lessons on tasteful home decor were reprinted and repeated sufficiently often to become cardinal rules for Aestheticism (art-this and art-that), the "House Beautiful" and subsequently the Arts & Crafts. *Hints*, published 1868, as with other later similar home-taste-guides, was compiled (from 1864) from a series of magazine articles. Without overly

stating the issues, it would seem that middle-class lives, if not the lives of the "people", were significantly improved by these, often sensible, guides.

As well as acknowledging Pugin, Eastlake similarly asked for early national traditions such as the "country cartwright" to be preserved:

> We have at the present time no more artistic workman in his way than the country cartwright. His system of construction is always sound, and such little decoration as he is enabled to introduce never seems inappropriate, because it is in accordance with the traditional development of original and necessary forms.

Eastlake on "nature" wrote:

> ... *nature* may be typified or symbolised, but not actually imitated. The beauty of Indian shawls, and indeed of all Oriental objects of textile fabric, is too universally admitted to need any comment in these pages. Did you ever see any picture of bird, beast, or flower on these specimens of Eastern manufacture? …
>
> The tender plants which we cultivate in a greenhouse must once have grown wild somewhere. They may surpass the flowers of our English hedgerows in fulness of leaf or delicacy of hue, but the humblest daisy or buttercup which springs on meadow land is as much a work of High Art, as perfect of its kind, and certainly fulfils the same eternal laws of floral growth as they obey.[21]

Images of London houses with aesthetic and Japanese motifs:

Sunflowers in urn, Carlisle Mansions, Cheyne Walk, London, 1886[19]

Japanese motifs, Carlisle Mansions, Cheyne Walk, London, 1886[20]

Nesfield & Shaw Queen Anne style, Swan House, 17 Chelsea Embankment, London (refined Wren style)

Aesthetic publishing cluster

Published advice on the "House Beautiful" assaulted the public on every side or lampooned such taste, as in the illustrated George du Maurier cartoon (see cartoon opposite). The aesthetic publication bubble was as relevant in New Zealand as in England, as highlighted by James Belich.[22] Hermann Muthesius in *The English House* (1904-5) appositely wrote on the "Significance of aestheticsm in domestic culture":

> The most important point was that the attention of the public had been guided back to the appreciation of the interior as a work of art. This was the season of the flood-tide of books on "taste in the house". They were written mainly by women and there was not much profit to be made out of them. But the books show that these questions had by now become burning ones.[23]

E.W. Godwin 1870s & 1880s

Godwin by the 1870s was designing furniture, textiles, carpets, wallpapers and ceramics, not least being his multiple contributions to the theatre. He did not limit himself to the Aesthetic and Japanese styles but worked as easily in an Anglo-Egyptian or Anglo-Greek style. Godwin published 410 articles and 8 "books" in 35 years.[24] He is credited by Fiona MacCarthy as introducing "startling reticence and purity" to the Aesthetic movement.[25]

"solid and void"

As had Morris, Godwin found no suitable furniture for his home (Albany Street, London) and turned to Japanese furniture; ten years later, he told his story in one of his many comments on his working and living spaces: "My Chambers and What I Did to Them" in *The Architect*

"The Six-Mark Tea-Pot", cartoon by George du Maurier, mocking the current blue and white porcelain craze, Punch *30 Nov 1880: Aesthetic Bridegroom. "It is quite consummate, is it not!" Intense Bride. "It is, indeed! Oh, Algernon, let us live up to it!"*

(London, 1 July 1876); he used the phrase "solid and void" for which he is so often remembered to underline the changed aesthetic occasioned by Japonisme:

> When I came to the furniture I found that hardly anything could be bought ready made that was at all suitable to the requirements of the case. I therefore set to work and designed a lot of furniture, and, with a desire for economy, directed it to be made of deal, and to be ebonised. There were to be no mouldings, no ornamental metalwork, no carving. Such effect as I wanted I endeavoured to gain, as in economical building, by the mere grouping of solid and void and by a more or less broken outline.[26]

The Anglo-Japanese style

The term "Anglo-Japanese" appears in a 1877 catalogue, William Watt *Art Furniture from Designs by EW Godwin FSA, and Others, with Hints and Suggestions on Domestic Furniture and Decoration* (reprinted 1878), and helped secure the term for general use. Later designers often studied and copied Godwin's work, rather than original Japanese sources, when interested in Japonisme.[27]

The Editor (F.R.C.) for the *Art-Journal* could comment in 1872 that 33 years ago that "there were literally no Art-manufacturers who sought the assistance and co-operation of artists."

> THE ART OF JAPAN
>
> The attention of people in this country has of late been increasingly turned to the Art of Japan ... The splendid collection of Japanese manufactures ... which attracted such unusual throngs of visitors to South Kensington, awakened a keen interest that shows no signs of abating. Thus not only do we find shops and warehouses crowded with Japanese ware – some rich and costly, some wonderfully cheap, and all possessing a certain degree of excellence ...

Japanese "aesthetic principles" required but a few lines to indicate the effect of a storm in a landscape:

> He draws fierce broad lines across the picture, few in number, but marked in purport, and conveys to the instinct of the beholder such a true hieroglyphic of pelting, pitiless rain, that we never pause to inquire how the impression is produced on the mind.
>
> Again, Japanese draughtsmanship differs essentially from our own in the absence of outline. If in such matters as the definition of distance, or the drifting of the storm, the Japanese may be thought far more conventional than the European, in respect of outline he is far less so. For, in point of fact, outlines rarely are seen in nature. ...
>
> The Art of Japan is not less remarkable for its mastery over colour, than for its original felicity in design. In this, the Japanese artist is aided by the rich colours which the various descriptions of lacquer place at his command. The red is of a pure full tone, of which we see numerous specimens, as lacquered trays and vases. The black and the gold are perfect.[28]

Bedford Park estate (from 1877) provided houses and lives for the successful artisan and professional wanting an affordable aesthetic milieu. Bedford Park was London's first "garden suburb".

Jonathan Carr discovered E.W. Godwin in back issues of the *Building*

News and hired him to design houses for the Bedford Park Estate, London. Harsh newspaper criticism meant that Godwin was replaced by Norman Shaw, with whom we usually associate the Bedford Park Queen Anne house style.[30] Shaw designed smallish, severely simple houses in brick with retained trees, and small gardens for the aesthetically-minded. One such house, No9 Queen Anne Gardens,[31] is thought to have been designed by the architect W. Wilson.

Oscar Wilde, the quintessential aesthete, recognised the "Renaissance of the decorative Arts", which he saw in terms of Aesthetics and Beauty but not Ethics: "Aesthetics are higher than ethics." His essay "The Critic as Artist: with some remarks on the importance of doing nothing and discussing everything" (published 1891) is quoted (below): Wilde's words capture the essence of a free aesthetic spirit devoted to nothing other than Beauty; the words capture the sentiments of the Aesthetic movement and highlight some of the deeply contrary ideals held by subsequent Arts & Crafts believers; Wilde by 1891 was questioning Nature as the ideal of beauty:

> Gilbert (in conversation with Ernest) ... Beauty has as many meanings as man has moods. Beauty is the symbol of symbols. Beauty reveals everything, because it expresses nothing. When it shows us itself, it shows us the whole fiery-coloured world ...
>
> ... All over England there is a Renaissance of the decorative Arts. Ugliness has had its day. Even in the houses of the rich there is taste, and the houses of those who are not rich have been made gracious and comely and sweet to live in ... We have got rid of what was bad. We have now to make what is beautiful. And though the mission of the aesthetic movement is to lure people to contemplate, not to lead

W. Wilson (attributed), no9 Queen Anne Gardens, 1880, Bedford Park, west London. Below the house gable, the monogrammed initials are those of the actor Perceval Clarke and the date 1880.[29] Bedford Park with its Queen Anne houses was the quintessential aesthetic suburb and an effective pattern book for developing Arts & Crafts aesthetics.

Bedford Park, where residents could enjoy the beauty of blossoms, as if in Japan.

> them to create, ... there is no reason why in future years this strange Renaissance should not become almost as mighty in its way as was that new birth of Art that woke many centuries ago in the cities of Italy.
>
> Certainly, for the cultivation of temperament, we must turn to the decorative arts: to the arts that touch us, not to the arts that teach us ... the art that is frankly decorative is the art to live with. It is, of all our visible arts, the one art that creates in us both mood and temperament. Mere colour, unspoiled by meaning, and unallied with definite form, can speak to the soul in a thousand different ways. The harmony that resides in the delicate proportions of lines and masses becomes mirrored in the mind. The repetitions of pattern give us rest. The marvels of design stir the imagination. In the mere loveliness of the materials employed there are latent elements of culture. Nor is this all. By its deliberate rejection of Nature as the ideal of beauty ...
>
> ... Aesthetics are higher than ethics. They belong to a more spiritual sphere. To discern the beauty of a thing is the finest point to which we can arrive. Even a colour-sense is more important, in the development of the individual, than a sense of right and wrong.[32]

Hermann Muthesius, linking Gothicism and Japonisme and Aestheticism and their ultimate evoluion into the Arts & Crafts plant-based style of the 1890s, offered the opinion, while also crediting "Persian influence":

> It is a rather spiky flat pattern made up partly of geometric, and partly of naturalistic flower-motifs and was the precursor of the later entirely modern stylised flat plant ornament.[33]

ENDNOTES

1 http://trustworth.com/wallpaper.shtml; retrieved 18 Aug 2011
2 Forbes-Robertson, Johnstone (1925) *A Player Under Three Reigns*, 66; in Gere 2000, 70 ill, 80 ill
3 Terry, Ellen (1932) *Ellen Terry's Memoirs* 38; in Soros/Soros (ed) *Godwin* 1999, 186-187
4 See "Crane" 166, 168 ills
5 See William Burgess's comments 81
6 *The Illustrated London News* 20 September 1862, 318-9
7 Wilkinson/Soros (ed) *Godwin* 1999, 73
8 Gere 2000, 42
9 Wilkinson/Soros (ed) *Godwin* 1999, 73
10 *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Review* New Series 13 (Jul 1862), 3-12; and New Series 13 (Sep 1862), 243-54
11 Ibid Jul 1862, 10-11
12 Ibid Sep 1862, 243, 254
13 Ibid New Series 13(Jul 1862), 4-5
14 In Stephen Calloway (ed) *Liberty* London 1992, 31
15 Gere 2000, 48
16 Ibid 46
17 Calloway *Liberty* 1992, 31-32
18 Halén *Dresser* [1990] 1993, 40,188
19 See Aslin 1969, 54 ill no37 showing a lower panel with lilies
20 Ibid 59 ill no42
21 Eastlake *Hints* [1864] 1872/3rdedn revised: 92; on Pugin 38; 60-61, Elizabeth Aslin 1969 61, quoting from Eastlake, comments that "This passage contains in brief all Eastlake's novel recommendations for good design."; 69; 221
22 See "Preface" 6. On the aesthetics publication bubble, see: Calhoun 2000, 69; Petersen. Anna K.C. *New Zealanders at Home: a cultural history of domestic interiors 1814-1917* 2001; Gere "Nineteenth-century manuals and catalogues" 2000, 139; Brett, David 1992, 50
23 Muthesius *English House* [1904-5] 1979, 162
24 Soros; in Soros (ed) *Godwin* 1999, 13
25 MacCarthy, Fiona. *Guardian* 26 March 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2011/mar/26/aestheticism-exhibition-victoria-albert-museum p3; retrieved 24 Apr 2011
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27 Wilkinson/Soros (ed) *Godwin* 1999, 71
28 *Art Journal* 1872: 293 cols 1-2, 294 cols 1-2
29 Affleck Greeves *Bedford Park Guide* 11
30 Juliet Kitchin/Soros (ed) *Godwin* 1999, 103 n90
31 See "Aesthetics" 80 ill
32 Oscar Wilde's essay: The Critic as Artist: www.readbookonline.net/readOnLine/480; retrieved 1 May 2011; also see Gere 2000, 13-14
33 Muthesius *English House* [1904-5] 1979, 157-8

Chapter two

ARTS & CRAFTS DESIGN: NATURE DEIFIED

John Ruskin (1819-1900): nature's warrior

Intrinsic to a climate of nature idealisation was the ultimate use of nature as the preferred source for decorative designs, flowers brightly depicted to the point of super-reality by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and as endorsed by John Ruskin. The Pre-Raphaelite name celebrated the links these artists sought to forge with early fifteenth-century artists, as Arts & Crafts practitioners subsequently similarly celebrated a British pre-industrial past.

What mattered for the future Arts & Crafts was Ruskin's ability to involve his Victorian audience; he became "the" oracle for many of the movement's causes. His texts and lectures conferred a moral stamp on Gothic architecture and ornament, as expressing, as Alf Bøe (1957) notes, "priceless virtues – and this it did because it was built on the wholesome observation of forms and principles in nature".[5] Ruskin epitomised the position of the naturalist school: his devotion to nature was slavish, idolatry in a leafy guise. His commitment to Gothic necessarily meant a commitment to nature and nature-based ornament meticulously-recorded. Linda Nochlin (1971) suggests "a good case might be made for Ruskin's believing that the moral impact of art depended upon its adherence to natural form".[6] For Ruskin, correct Gothic ornament epitomised Nature and morality joined at the hip.

Such was Ruskin's continuing influence that Selwyn Image, in the "Introduction" to the 1907 Everyman's Library edition of Ruskin's *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), could still write of Ruskin:

> ... it is impossible for us to pass on as if he had never lived and taught.

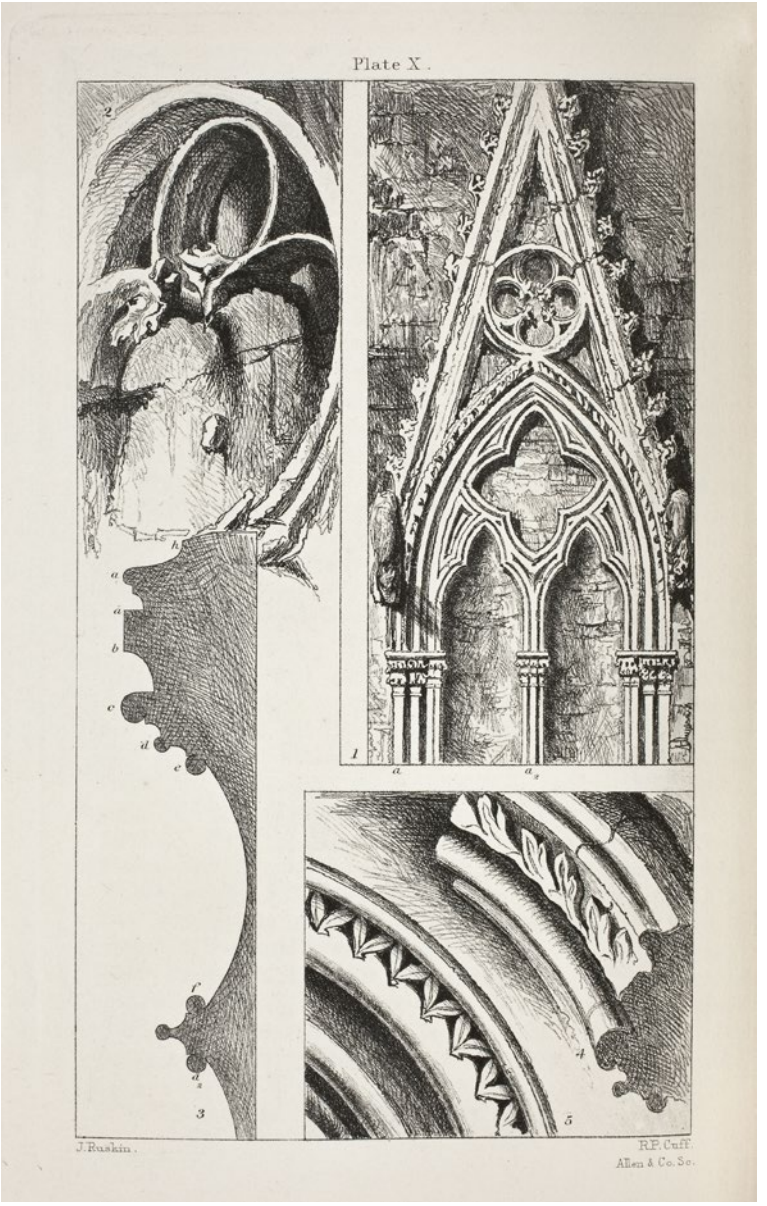
Oxford University Museum of Natural History, 1860, Glazed court showing wrought and cast iron nature-based ornament.[1] The building was described by the Museum's benefactor, Dr Acland, as "A Book of Nature" [2]: for John Ruskin the building "fearlessly put to new trial this old faith in nature"[3]. Dr Acland wrote: The rigid (cast) material supports the vertical pressure; the malleable (wrought) iron is employed for the ornament, and is chiefly hand wrought ... The wrought iron ornaments represent in the large spandrels that occupy the interspaces between the arches of the principal aisles, large interwoven branches with leaf and flower, of lime, chestnut, sycamore, walnut, palm, and other trees and shrubs, of native or of exotic growth; and in various parts of the lesser decorations, in the capitals and nestled in the trefoils of the girders, leaves of elm, briar, water lily, passion flower, ivy, holly and many others.[4]

Image adds: ... from the end of the forties to the beginning of the seventies Ruskin's influence as an authority on art was immense.[7]

William Richard Lethaby, subsequently to be such a strong voice on design instruction in New Zealand and internationally, is said to have read all Ruskin.[8] (The usual reference work, *The Works of John Ruskin: Library edition* (1903-12), edited by E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, comprises 39 volumes.)

New Zealand

The effects of Ruskin's rhetoric had, as observed by Linda Parry and Karen Livingstone (2005), particular "resonance for those living in different rural and agrarian communities not yet part of the industrial world", for which New Zealand was in many ways an ideal example.[9] Eric Olssen in *Building the New World: Work, politics and society in Caversham 1880s-1920s* (1995), based on the Dunedin (New Zealand) suburb of Caversham, observes that "Ruskin's denunciation of the machine and its debased products helped to sever the meaning of craft from that of trade, his rules for craft helped to foster the pride of skilled men in their skill".[10]



John Ruskin, Mouldings on the medieval Rouen Cathedral in "the noblest manner of Northern Gothic", "The Lamp of Beauty"; in The Seven Lamps of Architecture *(1849)*[12]*; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 932-10). The extent of any abstraction allowed by Ruskin can be seen in the words he used to describe his study of leaf mouldings*[13]*:* ... the leaves have little more than their flow and outline represented; they are hardly undercut, but their edges are connected by a gentle and most studied curve with the stone behind; they have no serrations, no veinings, no rib or stalk on the angle, only an incision gracefully made towards their extremities, indicative of the central rib and depression. The whole style of the abstraction shows that the architect could, if he had chosen, have carried the imitation much farther, but stayed at this point of his own free will ...[14]

John Ruskin, "The Lamp of Life", The Seven Lamps[15], *described the:* ... bas-reliefs of the north door of Rouen Cathedral ... Each of the angles ... is filled by an animal. There are thus 70 x 4 = 280 animals, all different, in the mere fillings of the intervals of the bas-reliefs. Three of these intervals, with their beasts, actual size, the curves being traced upon the stone, I have given in Plate XIV; ... ; *Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 932-14)*

Of the skilled men of Caversham, Olssen wrote, setting out the singular appeal of Ruskin in far-off New Zealand, c1900:

> Skilled men dominated Caversham, but men in handicraft trades dominated the ranks of the skilled and helped to ensure that the norms of handicraft production defined the labour process ... A local market existed for most things produced under handicraft conditions and it is even possible that a barter economy survived to some extent ... The small scale of handicraft enterprises, the high degree of self-employment and the fact that much handicraft production was done at home made Caversham a pre-industrial society with residual pre-capitalist values.[11]

Drawing

For the 1840s the argument had been over how drawing should be taught: Ruskin rushed into the fray, eloquently arguing for the precise depiction of nature. Ruskin's drawings of bas-relief carvings on the medieval Rouen Cathedral underscore his own graphic abilities. Nature, he said, didn't have outlines and the emphasis on outlines by the government schools was patently sinful. The developing government system of drawing and design instruction was too hide-bound for Ruskin, inhibiting imagination and spontaneity. He, as he contrarily argued in *The Elements of Drawing* (1857), nevertheless found a relevant place for outline drawing if used to test a student's "accuracy of eye, and discipline his hand".[16] Ruskin had spent the winter of 1856 writing *Elements* "for which I thought there was an immediate need".[17]

E.T. Cook, the joint editor of Ruskin's *Works*, wrote that drawing for Ruskin should be "an integral branch of general education" and "was far more important than the special teaching of design. "I want," he had written to his father in 1858 ... "to get my system taught at Marlborough House, and then I shall think of giving up art lecturing and art teaching and looking how the world goes on without me, which I doubt not its doing very well.""[18]

John Ruskin Modern Painters *(5 volumes 1843-60)*

With *Modern Painters* (volume 1, 1843), John Ruskin, as an orator and writer, became a voice to contend with; he wished to emulate, not regurgitate, the "mediæval centuries":

> And first, it is evident that the title "Dark Ages," given to the mediæval centuries, is, respecting art, wholly inapplicable. They were, on the contrary, the bright ages; ours are the dark ones. I do not mean metaphysically, but literally. They were the ages of gold; ours are the ages of umber.[19]

John Ruskin The Seven Lamps of Architecture *(published May 1849)*

Increasingly the conditions under which art and life were conducted in Victorian England became the target of Ruskin's prose and polemic. Ruskin interrupted work on *Modern Painters* to write *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) and thereby declare his allegiance to super-Naturalism in the "battle of the styles".[20] The need was to record Nature with God's precision.

In "The Lamp of Life", chapter V, in *The Seven Lamps* (1849), Ruskin extended his crusade against machine-production as the destroyer of men: ornament must be prepared by hand, not by machine:

"... And all noble ornamentation is the expression of man's delight in God's work."

> I said, early in this essay, that hand-work might always be known from machine-work; observing, however, at the same time, that it was possible for men to turn themselves into machines, and to reduce their labour to the machine level; but so long as men work as men, putting their heart into what they do, and doing their best, it matters not how bad workmen they may be, there will be that in the handling which is above all price: ... and if the man's mind as well as his heart went with his work, all this will be in the right places, and each part will set off the other; and the effect of the whole, as compared with the same design cut by a machine or a lifeless hand, will be like that of poetry well read and deeply felt to that of the same verses jangled by rote ... to those who love Architecture, the life and accent of the hand are everything. They had rather not have ornament at all, than see it ill cut – deadly cut, that is.[21]

John Ruskin The Stones of Venice *1851 (volume I)*

Early in *The Stones* Ruskin asked a worker ornamenting a material to see himself as an emissary for God; for Ruskin, ornament turned a "building" into "architecture":

> So then, the first thing we have to ask of the decoration is that it should indicate strong liking, and that honestly. It matters not so much what the thing is, as that the builder should really love it and enjoy it, and say so plainly. ...[22]

> But the second requirement in decoration, is sign of our liking the right thing. And the right thing to be liked is God's work, which He made for our delight and contentment in this world. And all noble ornamentation is the expression of man's delight in God's work.[23]

A chapter in the first book of *The Stones of Venice* (1851) is devoted to "Treatment of Ornament":[24]

> We have, with Christianity, recognized the individual value of every soul ... This is the glory of Gothic architecture, that every jot and tittle, every point and niche of it, affords room, fuel, and focus for individual fire. But you cease to acknowledge this, and you refuse to accept the help of the lesser mind, if you require the work to be all executed in a great manner.[25]

Of the three orders of ornament, Ruskin could only tolerate the "mediæval system":

> Then we have the mediæval system, in which the mind of the inferior workman is recognized, and has full room for action, but is guided and ennobled by the ruling mind. This is the truly Christian and only perfect system.[26]

Ruskin's views were contrary to those of "the building school" (Pugin, Philip Webb) who "would have said that though a certain amount of ornament was inevitable, this ornament was less important than construction, and should consist more in disposition than in detail". Ruskin demanded that ornament have a human quality and fight against the "slavery" of wearisome mechanical repetition.[27]

The corollary of Ruskin's stand was that the mark of the hand of the craft or trade worker must be apparent. Marks of imperfection, thought to signal hand-production and the evil of machine-production (the worth of the artisan) became, sometimes erroneously, to identify Arts & Crafts products.

The Stones of Venice *1853 (volumes II and III, completed October 1853)*

"The Nature of Gothic" (volume II of *The Stones*, 1853)

The sentiments expressed in "The Nature of Gothic" became central to Ruskin's influence: "I shall endeavour therefore to give the reader in this chapter an idea, at once broad and definite, of the true nature of Gothic architecture, ... universal Gothic."

> ... we shall find that Gothic architecture has external forms and internal elements. Its elements are certain mental tendencies of the builders, legibly expressed in it; as fancifulness, love of variety, love of richness, and such others. Its external forms are pointed arches, vaulted roofs, etc. And unless both the elements and the forms are there, we have no right to call the style Gothic. It is not enough that it has the Form, if it have not also the power and life. It is not enough that it has the Power, if it have not the form.
>
> ... the characteristic or moral elements of Gothic are the following, placed in the order of their importance:
>
> 1. Savageness.
> 2. Changefulness.
> 3. Naturalism.
> 4. Grotesqueness.
> 5. Rigidity.
> 6. Redundance.
>
> The third constituent element of the Gothic mind was stated to be NATURALISM; that is to say, the love of natural objects for their own sake, and the effort to represent them frankly, unconstrained by artistical laws.
>
> ... and every discriminating and delicate touch of the chisel, as it rounds the petal or guides the branch, is a prophecy of the development of the entire body of the natural sciences, ...
>
> ... the tendency of the Gothic to the expression of vegetable life is to be admired.
>
> ... the great Gothic spirit, as we showed it to be noble in its disquietude, is also noble in its hold of nature.[28]

Ultimately, Ruskin wanted the "great Gothic spirit" to triumph, by which ornament would capture the spirit of Gothic, and God and Nature as one would be duly celebrated.[29]

For Ruskin the possibility that a machine-made object might convey beauty continued to be beyond his comprehension:

> It is verily this degradation of the operative into a machine, which, more than any other evil of the times, is leading the mass of the nations everywhere into vain, incoherent, destructive struggling for a freedom of which they cannot explain the nature to themselves ... It is not that men are ill fed, but that they have no pleasure in the work by which they make their bread, and therefore look to wealth as the only means of pleasure.[30]

William Morris wrote in the "Preface" to "The Nature of Gothic", written at Kelmscott House, Hammersmith, 15 February 1892:

"art is the expression of man's pleasure in labour"

> To my mind, and I believe to some others, it [the chapter] is one of the most important things written by the author, and in future days will be considered as one of the very few necessary and inevitable utterances of the century ... For the lesson which Ruskin here teaches us, is that art is the expression of man's pleasure in labour; that it is possible for man to rejoice in his work, for, strange as it may seem to us to-day, there have been times when he did rejoice in it; and lastly, that unless man's work once again becomes a pleasure to him, the token of which change will be that beauty is once again a natural and necessary accompaniment of productive labour, all but the worthless must toil in pain, and therefore live in pain. ...
>
> If this be true, as I for one most firmly believe, it follows that the hallowing of labour by art is the one aim for us at the present day.[31]

By 1853 Ruskin could write positively of modern Gothic in the "Conclusion" to volume III of *The Stones of Venice*, discussing William Butterfield's All Saints' Church, Margaret Street, London:

> … this church assuredly decides one question conclusively, that of our present capability of Gothic design. It is the first piece of architecture I have seen, built in modern days, which is free from all signs of timidity or incapacity ... Having done this, we may do anything; ... to display in them the beauty of every flower and herb of the English fields, each by each; doing as much for every tree that roots itself in our rocks, and every blossom that drinks our summer rains, as our ancestors did for the oak, the ivy, and the rose.[32]

The force of Ruskin's prose left an impression of the Cole group as cutthroat materialists and Ruskin and his followers as people with a direct path to the Almighty.

John Ruskin *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, delivered at Edinburgh in November 1853 (1854); a copy of the book was owned by B.W. Mountfort:

> Lecture II "Turner, and his works": And observe carefully, with respect to the complete drawing of the leaves of this tree, and the smallness of their number, and the real distinction between noble conventionalism and false conventionalism. You will often hear modern artists defending their monstrous ornamentation on the ground that it is "conventional", and that architectural ornament ought to be conventionalised. Remember when you hear this, that noble conventionalism is not an agreement between the artist and the spectator that the one shall misrepresent nature sixty times over, and the other believe the misrepresentation sixty times over, but it is an agreement that certain means and limitations being prescribed, only that kind of truth is to be expected which is consistent with those means. …
>
> There are indeed one or two other conditions of noble conventionalism, ... but you will find that they always consist in stopping short of nature, not in falsifying nature; and thus in Giotto's foliage, he stops short of the quantity of leaves on the real tree, but he gives you the form of the leaves represented with perfect truth.[33]

Canterbury Provincial Council Chamber, old Government Buildings, Christchurch, New Zealand, the ceiling arches continued down the walls by polished porphyry columns; stone corbels, carved by stonemason and craftsman William Brassington, support the painted beams. Geoffrey W. Rice writes that William Brassington's talent as a stonemason was noticed by Benjamin Mountfort: "Of the richly decorated corbels which terminate the ceiling arches and adorn the windows, no two are the same; a few are simple, but most are intricate clusters of fruit, flowers or leaves, similar to the medieval carvings at Lincoln Cathedral. Many varieties of leaves are depicted, including olive, oak, ivy, hazel and fern. Ten faces also appear".[38]

E.T. Cook, quoting Ruskin, observed:

"'I want also,' wrote Ruskin in 1858 when describing his many activities, 'to give lectures in all the manufacturing towns.' … Ruskin by the success of his lectures thus increased the number of his readers, and thereby the extent of his influence ... he sought to influence the doers as well as the thinkers; he wanted to see, in the everyday world, some fruit of his principles and labours."[34]

Oxford University Museum of Natural History (1860)

Thomas Deanne and Benjamin Woodward's Oxford University Museum was for Ruskin intended as an exemplary "naturalists" modern Gothic building, as was the Margaret Street church.[35]

By 1858-9, the O'Shea brothers, archetypal artist-craftsmen, were executing their "timeless" carvings in Caen stone for the Oxford Museum, as Ruskin continued to voice concerns over conventionalisms. In a letter to his friend Dr Henry W. Acland on 20 January 1859, he wrote:

> Your Museum at Oxford is literally the first building raised in England since the close of the fifteenth century, which has fearlessly put to new trial this old faith in nature, and in the genius of the unassisted workman, who gathered out of nature the materials he needed.[36]

The O'Shea brothers based their ornamental capital carvings on plant cuttings from the botanical gardens near the Magdalen Bridge.[37] The Oxford Museum and its ornament were to be understandably influential, even if the building was not completed.

Capital with squirrel, Canterbury Museum entrance porch, 1876, carved by stonemason and craftsman William Brassington (photo: Douglas Calhoun)

To Ruskin we owe a cardinal Arts & Crafts precept, voiced and endorsed by William Morris in his first public lecture in 1877: "I do not want art for a few, anymore than education for a few, or freedom for a few."

New Zealand

Helen M. Simpson on "The Canterbury Provincial Buildings" (*Art in New Zealand* December 1928) wrote, in words that speak of Ruskinian ethics, and, as he required, the use of local materials, naturalistic ornament and continued support for Gothic art:

> ... there are few interiors approaching in splendour this old Council Chamber, none quite like it; and it is a pity that it is not familiar to more.

... an example of true Gothic art ...

... stone ... brought by bullock drays from their far-off quarries – trachyte from Halswell, porphyry from Hoon Hay and Cashmere, sandstone from Governor's Bay, and limestone from the Weka Pass. The doors, perfectly hung and fitting, are of native woods, polished and beautifully inlaid, with heavy bronze handles and ornaments of exquisite design ...

... stone-mason [William Brassington] cut every capital and every corbel in a design different from all the others, when he carved a snail upon a bunch of strawberries, a toad on a cluster of leaves, a human head, a cat, a bird, he was not merely imitating the old monkish carvings with which he must have been familiar in his English boyhood – he was expressing himself and his own joy in his craft.[39]

At a slightly later date, the *Church News*, discussing Frederick Gurnsey's carving for St Paul's Church, Tai Tapu, Christchurch (1931-2), noted that the church "possessed 'some of the most exquisite furnishings and adornment which can be found in any church in New Zealand, giving Mr F G Gurnsey an opportunity to display his outstanding craftsmanship'".[40] The abundant references to nature, consistent with the ideals and aesthetics of the Arts and Crafts movement, would have, as Mark Stocker (1997) observes, "delighted Ruskin".[41]

ENDNOTES

1 Brooks, Chris *The Gothic Revival* 1999, 317 ill (Photograph by A.F. Kersting, London)
2 Birkin Haward *Oxford University Museum: Its architecture and art*, Oxford University Museum 1991, 2 ill, caption 1
3 Section 24, in Ruskin *Works* XVI, 231
4 Acland, H.W. and J. Ruskin *The Oxford Museum* 1859, 30-1, in Haward 16
5 Bøe 1957, 87
6 Nochlin 1971, 233, paraphrasing Alf Bøe 1957, 85ff
7 Selwyn Image, in Ruskin *Seven Lamps* 1849 "Introduction", ix, x
8 Brooks, M. *Ruskin* 1987, 307
9 Parry and Livingstone 2005, 14
10 Olssen, Eric 1995, 61
11 Ibid 47
12 Ruskin *Seven Lamps* 1849, chapter IV, section 27, plate X, ill opp 165
13 Ibid ill fig 5, plate X
14 Ibid chapter IV, section 31; in Ruskin *Works of John Ruskin: Library Edition* (1903-12) VIII, 172
15 Ibid chapter IV, section 23, plate XIV, ill opp 216
16 Ruskin *Elements* [1857] 1907, xix
17 In Ruskin *Modern Painters* 5, Preface, xiii
18 Ruskin *Works* XVI, Introduction, xxix
19 Ruskin *Modern Painters* III, chapter XVI, section 9, 240
20 Naylor 1971, 25
21 Ruskin *Seven Lamps* 1849 chapter V, section XXI, 214
22 Ruskin *Stones* I chapter II, section 13; in Ruskin *Works* IX, 69-70
23 Ibid section 14, 70; also see chapter XX 'The Material of Ornament' section 15, in Ruskin *Works* IX, 264
24 Ruskin *Stones* I chapter XXI; in Ruskin *Works* IX, 283ff
25 Ibid section 13, 291
26 Ibid section 14, 291
27 Clark [1928] 1964, 184-5
28 Ruskin "The Nature of Gothic" *Stones* 1853 II, chapter VI; in Ruskin *Works* X, 181ff: section 1, 181, section 4, 183, section 6, 184, section 41, 215, sectin 69, 237, section 71, 238, section 71, 239
29 Bøe 1957, 87
30 Ruskin 'The Nature of Gothic' *Stones* 1853 II, chapter VI, section 15, in Ruskin *Works* X, 194; also Pevsner *Wyatt* 1950, 18-19
31 Appendix 14 *Stones* II; in Ruskin *Works* X, 460-2: 460
32 *Stones* III, chapter IV, section 36; in Ruskin *Works* XI, 229-30
33 Ruskin *Lecture* 1853 on Turner: 154-6
34 Ruskin *Works* XVI Introduction, xx-xxi
35 Haward (details footnote 2) 1991, 3
36 Section 24; in Ruskin *Works* XVI, 231
37 Haward (details footnote 2) 1991, 21, 32-7 ills
38 http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1b30/1; retrieved 18 Jul 2011
39 Simpson, Helen M. *Art in New Zealand* Dec 1928, I no2, 95-8: 97
40 Stocker, Mark 1997, quoting *Church News* 62 (Feb 1932), 6
41 Ibid 50

William Morris (1834-96): the pattern genius

By the 1870s, Morris, as in "Jasmine" (100 ill), was using a shallow foreground in his designs within which stems intertwine to give a wonderfully tense naturalistic-geometric framework for a repeat pattern of flowers and plants stretching across the material surface.[1] Morris's flowering plants are conventionalised but still identifiable. The content is Morris's joy in nature and his increasing moral conviction that the humblest in society had a right to enjoy such beauty.

What Morris unsurpassably did was to go "backwards", Peter Floud's term[4], and reconnect Victorians with ornament sourced in their beloved natural world – Morris identified the flowers he preferred to the uncommon ones he abjured:

> In choosing natural forms be rather shy of certain very obviously decorative ones, eg, bind-weed, passion-flower, and the poorer forms of ivy, used without the natural copiousness. ...
>
> On the other hand, outlandishness is a snare ... those natural forms which are at once most familiar and most delightful to us ... are the best for our purpose. The rose, the lily, the tulip, the oak, the vine, and all the herbs and trees that even we cockneys know about, they will serve our turn better than queer, outlandish, upside down-looking growths.[5]

Morris felt compelled to teach himself the trades/crafts for which he was designing; his actions in retrospect can be seen as individualistic marketing but must equally be seen as concern for his workers and even for his clients. Whatever his motivations, Morris seemed to love what we would term "mucking-in". Each new craft taken up was accompanied by an infectious call to others to follow his lead and made subsequent "hand-made" labels a sign of people with taste and sensitivity to beauty. Morris's story was told in two volumes by his biographer J.W. Mackail (1899), beginning here in 1875-6:

> From the very beginnings, the work of the firm had been hampered and often crippled by the difficulty of getting material, either raw or manufactured, which came near Morris's standard ... "On the whole I remember that we had to fall back on turkey-red cotton and dark blue serge." ... Industrial art was no longer, as it had been in the fifties, absolutely debased. From centres of education at South Kensington and elsewhere there had been a slow and partial diffusion of knowledge, and ugliness or dishonesty, or both, did not now reign uncontrolled over the whole field of decorative production. …
>
> What he worked at most assiduously at Leek [where he now had a full dye-house] was the lost art of indigo-dyeing ... About this time his hands were habitually and unwashably blue, and in no condition to do fine work. …
>
> Morris noted: "... I have found out and practised the art of weld-dyeing, the ancientist of yellow dyes, and the fastest. We have set a blue vat for cotton, which I hope will turn out all right to-morrow morning: it is nine feet deep, and holds 1,000 gallons."[6]

He (with Ruskin) thus released traditional trades/crafts from the constraints imposed by the professional trade guilds. In time, by linking such skills to the arts, as art-crafts, crafts could claim a superior status

over trades. Numerous books such as those published under the guiding hand of Morris's disciple Richard Lethaby – *Artistic Craft Series of Technical Handbooks* – are in fact excellent guides to traditional craft/trade practices.[7] Eleanor Joachim, the Dunedin (New Zealand) bookbinder[8], owned Mackail's two volume biography of William Morris; she trained in London with two of Douglas Cockerell's students, returning to New Zealand in 1904. (Another set was owned by the Canterbury (New Zealand) Adult Rural Education Scheme, date stamped 11 Apr 1931.)

William Morris, Original "Jasmine" wallpaper design, pencil and watercolour, 1872; © William Morris Society, Kelmscott House, Hammersmith, London. Linda Parry, discussing Arts & Crafts textiles (1988), said of Morris's "Jasmine" pattern: Tall and trailing plants provided invaluable frameworks and, whereas Morris had mostly used curving leaves to control his patterns, stems now formed repeats and provided movement. It is these elements above all others which give the style an intensely British quality and one that excited foreign buyers by its originality.[2]

Colour

As with Morris's commitment to materials and traditional manufacturing processes, Morris's commitment to colour was decisive; as Mackail recalled (1875-6), citing commentary by George Wardle (Morris's Queen Square business manager):

> On every side Morris was confronted by the double barrier of material that would not take good colour, and colour which in its own substance was uniformly bad ... 'This system of colour ... marks very distinctly what may be called the first period of the history of the firm, when Mr Morris had not yet a dye-house. The peacock-blues, rusty reds, and olive-greens of that period were not by any means his ideals, but the best he could get done. As soon as he was able to set up his own dye-house he turned at once to the frank full hues of the permanent dye-stuffs – indigo blue, madder red, weld yellow, etc – and with these he produced the beautiful Hammersmith carpets and the Merton tapestries and chintzes." …
>
> It may be added that, like most great masters of colour, and following in this matter the best traditions of Oriental art, he used but few colours, and gained his effects by skilfully varied juxtaposition and contrast.[9]

Catherine Holiday, a highly skilled art embroiderer, employed by the Firm on a freelance basis[10], said:

> "He actually did create new colours; ... his amethysts and golds and greens, they were different to anything I have ever seen; he used to get a marvellous play of colour into [his home-dyed embroidery silks]. The amethyst had flushings of red; and his gold (one special sort), when spread out in the large rich hanks, looked like a sunset sky."[11]

James Johnstone, William Morris-style design, 20 March 1920

Socialism

Morris and the Firm came to the fore at the 1862 international exhibition.[12] Morris's role as a social campaigner did not begin in ernest until the later 1870s. Nevertheless, before going to Oxford, early in the 1850s, Morris had read the first two volumes of Ruskin's *Modern Painters*,[13] which with Ruskin's essay "Of the Nature of Gothic",[14] would inculcate ideas on which he later acted; it similarly seems that Morris, with his friend Burne-Jones, was reading and learning from A.W.N. Pugin, Owen Jones and M. Digby Wyatt.[15] Pevsner noted Morris's ownership of Jones's *Grammar of Ornament*.[16] Morris, in his subsequent calls for social reform, tied his exhortations to quite practical advice on design, the principal thrust in the following quotes, and to the healing qualities of Beauty. Near the end of his life, on 21 February, 1894, in "An Address delivered at the distribution of prizes to students of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art", Morris demanded: "... we must awaken ... that 'divine discontent' which is the mother of improvement in mankind".[17]

Tied in with Morris's socialist voice were views quite divergent to Ruskin's: "In religion I am a pagan", he said to Douglas Cockerell at Kelmscott House on 28 November 1892.[18] Pevsner commented: "... Pugin's religious premisses have been replaced by social, but also more broadly human, premisses."[19]

Drawing and socialism

By 1877 Morris had developed views as strongly expressed as Ruskin's on teaching drawing.[20]

William Morris, on "The Lesser Arts", to the Trades' Guild of Learning, 4 December 1877, said of drawing in this, his first practical cum socialistic lecture, at a time when he was already part of the South Kensington system:

All Saints, Selsley, Gloucestershire; architect G.F. Bodley, c1861. The interior stained-glass windows of a telling simplicity were among the early trades/crafts by which the firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co retold the stories of an ideal medieval world and established the firm's reputation.[3]

> ... all handicraftsmen should be taught to draw very carefully; as indeed all people should be taught drawing who are not physically incapable of learning it: but the art of drawing so taught would not be the art of designing, but only a means towards this end, general capability in dealing with the arts. …
>
> For I wish specially to impress this upon you, that designing cannot be taught at all in a school: ... but the royal road of a set of rules deduced from a sham science of design, that is itself not a science but another set of rules, will lead nowhere - or, let us rather say, to beginning again. …

As to the kind of drawing that should be taught to men engaged in ornamental work, there is only one best way of teaching drawing, and that is teaching the scholar to draw the human figure.[21]

South Kensington

A year earlier, in 1876, William Morris began his involvement in the British government "South Kensington" system of drawing, design and art education. Morris and Lewis F. Day were both examiners at the time.[22] Mackail recorded:

> The regular work in examining at South Kensington, which he had begun two years before and which he continued till his last illness, had contributed to an increased interest in textiles. He had undertaken that work partly out of a feeling of gratitude for the immense service which the collections at the South Kensington Museum had been to him personally as a designer and manufacturer: "perhaps," he said incidentally in his evidence before the Royal Commission of 1882, "I have used it as much as any man living.'[23]

Beauty

Morris used aesthetics to tie the screaming need for housing reform to the needs of "the people"; his maxims on Beauty became key slogans for Arts & Crafts purveyors.

William Morris, "The Beauty of Life", to the Birmingham Society of Arts and School of Design, February 19, 1880:

> ... the whole civilized world had forgotten that there had ever been an art made by the people for the people as a joy for the maker and the user. …

"... there is only one best way of teaching drawing, and that is teaching the scholar to draw the human figure."

> What else can we do to help to educate ourselves and others in the path of art, to be on the road to attaining an Art made by the people and for the people as a joy to the maker and the user? …
>
> … our golden rule: Have nothing in your houses which you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful. ...
>
> All art starts from this simplicity; and the higher the art rises, the greater the simplicity.[25]

Pattern-designing

Morris's devotion to nature, as slavish as Ruskin's but secular, not religious, was, as often as not, accompanied by fulsome practical advice on pattern-designing. The importance of pattern-designing for Morris is apparent from the number of times he dwelt on the topic. A paper (c1879) and lecture (1881) on pattern-designing are quoted below:

William Morris, "Making the Best of it" (1879, in or before), a paper read before the Trades' Guild of Learning and the Birmingham Society of Artists. Morris talked of the "moral qualities" inherent in good pattern designing.

> … all patterns which are meant to fill the eye and satisfy the mind, there should be a certain mystery. …
>
> (Morris asked the designer to stretch the pattern out to cover the

"Have nothing in your houses which you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful."

material surface completely.) Every one who has practised the designing of patterns knows the necessity for covering the ground equably and richly. This is really to a great extent the secret of obtaining the look of satisfying mystery aforesaid, and it is the very test of capacity in a designer. …

... Now the only way in our craft of design for compelling people to understand you is to follow hard on Nature; for what else can you refer people to, or what else is there which everybody can understand? – everybody that it is worth addressing yourself to, which includes all people who can feel and think.[32]

William Morris, "Art and the Beauty of the Earth", a lecture delivered at Burslem Town Hall, on 13 October 1881. Morris holds that art schools are necessary "unless we are prepared to give up all attempt to unite these two elements of use and beauty". …

Always think your design out in your head before you begin to get it on the paper. Don't begin by slobbering and messing about in the hope that something may come out of it. You must see it before you can draw it, whether the design be of your own invention or Nature's. Remember always, form before colour, and outline, silhouette, before modelling; not because these latter are of less importance, but because they can't be right if the first are wrong.[33]

William Morris, "Some Hints on Pattern-designing": A lecture delivered at the Working Men's College, London, on 10 December 1881 (first page

The dining room of Kelmscott House, by anonymous photographer. London, England, 1896; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London (ref 2006AT7542.jpg). The rug is used as fine art and hung on a wall as if a painting. A key to understanding Morris's success was his singular role in the canonisation of the aesthetic home using romantic-designed-reminders of a past "greener" world.[24]

Morris's devotion to nature ... was, as often as not, accompanied by fulsome practical advice on patttern -designing.

106). The lecture set out Morris's own relatively straight-forward rules on pattern-designing, while warning that pattern-designing could be "harassing". Without preamble, Morris said:

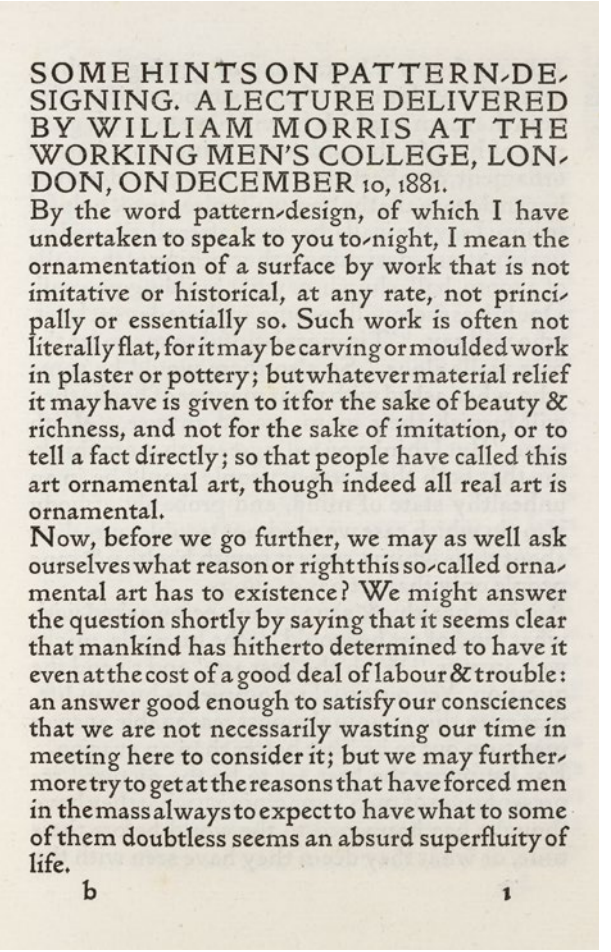
> By the word pattern-design, of which I have undertaken to speak to you to-night, I mean the ornamentation of a surface by work that is not imitative or historical, at any rate not principally or essentially so. Such work is often not literally flat, for it may be carving or moulded work in plaster or pottery; but whatever material relief it may have is given to it for the sake of beauty and richness, and not for the sake of imitation, or to tell a fact directly; so that people have called this art ornamental art, though indeed all real art is ornamental. …
>
> ... we must provide ourselves with lesser (I will not say worse) art with which to surround our common workaday or restful times; and for those times, I think, it will be enough for us to clothe our daily and domestic walls with ornament that reminds us of the outward face of the earth, of the innocent love of animals, or of man passing his days between work and rest as he does. …
>
> Now, this is done by means of treatment which is called, as one may say technically, the conventionalizing of nature. That is to say, order invents certain beautiful and natural forms, which, appealing to a reasonable and imaginative person, will remind him not only of the part of nature which, to his mind at least, they represent, but also of much that lies

View of the Arts & Crafts section of the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition, Christchurch, showing William Morris's "Daisy" wallpaper (c1864), on a panel hinged to the upper back wall, next to a sample of "Acanthus" wallpaper, 1874.[26] *Other named "Morris & Co, Decorators, Ltd" hand-blocked patterns hanging in the main Arts & Crafts exhibition hall and Annex included: "African Marigold" (1876) chintz*[27]*, "Fruit" (c1866)*[28]*, "Autumn Flowers" (c1880) and "Wild Tulip" (1884) wallpapers. These were among Morris's earlier designs and, as such, the selection could be considered slightly patronizing. Morris wallpapers were already available in New Zealand through, eg, W. Sey in Christchurch.*[29] *On the adjacent wall hangs Annie Garnett's "Settleback, in hand-spun silk. Thistle design.* Executed by *Windermere Industry Spinsters, Weavers and Embroiderers.* Exhibited and designed *by Annie Garnett, A&C".*[30] *In the foreground is a case of typical Arts & Crafts jewellery.*

beyond that part ... Now further, this working in materials, which is the raison d'être of all pattern-work, still further limits it in the direct imitation of nature, drives it still more decidedly to appeal to the imagination. …

Morris then comes to his own crowning success: "the making of a recurring pattern for a flat surface" and particularly the "floriated diaper".[34] The latter, the floriated-diaper or nature-based repeat-pattern for a flat surface earned Morris his Pevsner-epithet: "true designer's genius".[35]

> ... floriated diaper. The lines are formed by shapes of stems, and leaves or flowers fill the spaces between the lines. This kind of ornamentation has got a long way from the original stripes and squares, and even from the cross-barred matting diapers.
>
> ... this more elaborate diaper ... has never been superseded: ... and until the great change took place, when the once-despised East began to mingle with the old decaying Western civilization, and even to dominate it, it was really the only form taken by recurring patterns, ...
>
> As to the construction of patterns the change was simply this: continuous growth of curved lines took the place of mere contiguity, or of the interlacement of straight lines. …
>
> To put the matter ["of the relief of patterns"] as shortly as possible, one may say that there are two ways of relief for a recurring surface pattern, either that the figure shall show light upon a dark, or dark upon a light ground; or that the whole pattern, member by member, should be outlined by a line of colour which both serves to relieve it



SOME HINTS ON PATTERN-DESIGNING. A LECTURE DELIVERED BY WILLIAM MORRIS AT THE WORKING MEN'S COLLEGE, LONDON, ON DECEMBER 10, 1881.

By the word pattern-design, of which I have undertaken to speak to you to-night, I mean the ornamentation of a surface by work that is not imitative or historical, at any rate, not principally or essentially so. Such work is often not literally flat, for it may be carving or moulded work in plaster or pottery; but whatever material relief it may have is given to it for the sake of beauty & richness, and not for the sake of imitation, or to tell a fact directly; so that people have called this art ornamental art, though indeed all real art is ornamental.

Now, before we go further, we may as well ask ourselves what reason or right this so-called ornamental art has to existence? We might answer the question shortly by saying that it seems clear that mankind has hitherto determined to have it even at the cost of a good deal of labour & trouble: an answer good enough to satisfy our consciences that we are not necessarily wasting our time in meeting here to consider it; but we may furthermore try to get at the reasons that have forced men in the mass always to expect to have what to some of them doubtless seems an absurd superfluity of life.

b 1

The first page of William Morris's lecture, "Some Hints on Pattern-designing", delivered at the Working Men's College, London, on 10 December 1881; printed by Chiswick Press 4 October 1899, using Golden type designed by Morris for Kelmscott Press (established 1891); page size 208x143 mm; Fine Printing Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC 09/18)

> from its ground, which is not necessarily either lighter or darker than the figure, and also prevents the colour from being inharmonious or hard. …

The first method of relief stresses "form", the second "colour". In the patterns found on Eastern carpets, there was "the relief of colour from colour, and designs treated thus both should look, and do look, perfectly flat".[36] Morris believed these patterns were storyless and thereby of lesser value.[37]

> I, as a Western man and a picture-lover, must still insist on plenty of meaning in your patterns; I must have unmistakable suggestions of gardens and fields, and strange trees, boughs, and tendrils, or I can't do with your pattern ...

Morris became a technical expert in all the crafts he took up:

> I want you to understand that I think it of capital importance that a pattern-designer should know all about the craft for which he has to draw. Neither will knowledge only suffice him; he must have full sympathy with the craft and love it, or he can never do honour to the special material he is designing for. …

Morris paraphrased Ruskin:

> Again, as to dealing with nature. To take a natural spray of what not and torture it into certain lines, is a hopeless way of designing a pattern. In all good pattern-designs the idea comes first, as in all other designs, eg, a man says, I will make a pattern which I will mean to give people an idea of a rose-hedge with sun through it; and he sees it in such and such a way; then, and not till then, he sets to work

Peggy Hay (Proffitt), Large design in red, yellow, turquoise and purple, 1943-8; Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. Recalling Owen Jones, William Morris asked (c1879) that all noble patterns should at least look large. Some of the finest and pleasantest of these show their geometrical structure clearly enough; and if the lines of them grow strongly and flow gracefully, I think they are decidedly helped by their structure not being elaborately concealed.[31]

> to draw his flowers, his leaves and thorns, and so forth, and so carries out his idea.[38] …
>
> ... the constant designing of recurring patterns is a very harassing business, ...

Ultimately Morris turns to his abiding moral passion:

> ... the degradation of labour which I believe to be the great danger of civilization, as it has certainly proved itself to be the very bane of art. …
>
> ... have no ornament merely for fashion's sake, but only because we really think it beautiful, otherwise to go without it; ... treat the national beauty of the earth as a holy thing not to be rashly dealt with for any consideration; ...
>
> In short, ... we must strive against barbarous luxury, ... we must strive against barbarous waste ... we must strive to put commercial peace with justice and thrift beside it.
>
> ... most deeply am I convinced that popular art cannot live if labour is to be for ever the thrall of muddle, dishonesty, and disunion.[39]

In his 1894 address in Birmingham[40], Morris finished as he started: "... the pleasure of creating beautiful things ... is the greatest pleasure in the world."[41] (A Chiswick Press copy of Morris's "Birmingham Address", in Golden Type, was sold at the 1906-7 International Exhibition in Christchurch, New Zealand.[42]) Morris said so much more and so much that was good common sense. He, quite singly, made the handmade product a precious thing by his own example.[43] (C.F.A. Voysey owned copies of Morris's *Art & the Beauty of the Earth* and his 1894 lecture, Chiswick Press edition.[44])

May Morris & "needle-art"

May Morris in her own right deserves attention. At 23 (1885) she became manager of the embroidery department at Morris & Co (until 1896).[45] She became a social campaigner in her own right; we would term her a feminist: in May Morris, "Chain-stitch embroidery", Century Guild's *Hobby Horse* IX (1888), she argued:

> Nowadays European women for the most part have not the harem-like leisure of the latter centuries which enabled our near ancestresses, when not busied over the housekeeping they took such pride in, to set long hours over the delicate embroideries ... Nor again have they the better leisure of the Middle Ages, when embroidery was counted among one of the serious arts, and was not the trivial pastime for waste half-hours that it has been in this century ... I am inclined to take needle-art seriously, and regard its simply priceless decorative qualities worth as careful study and appreciation as any form of art; certainly research into its history and development is as rich and fruitful.[46]

In 1893 she published *Decorative Needlework*, and taught embroidery at the Central School of Arts & Crafts, from being a visiting lecturer in 1897 to taking over direction of the embroidery course two years later.[47] The 1906-7 official exhibition record lists a "Panel for Screen, floss silk on silk canvas. Executed by MAY MORRIS and MAUDE DEACON. Exhibited and designed by MAY MORRIS, A&C".[48]

The Morris "look"

The Morris "look" in house decoration became an antipodean fashion for the wealthy, as photographs of the Adelaide houses of Robert and Joanna Barr Smith attest.[52] In New Zealand Alexander Turnbull would

be a committed patron of the firm. Morris's influence in Canada at the turn of the twentieth-century was noted by Katharine A Lochan: "From Vancouver to Halifax ... the people who founded most of the museums and art schools were Morris adherents." Morris, out of favour for a period, found favour again in the late 1960s, his anti-industry stance restoring his popularity with "back-to-the-land hippie leftists".[53]

Annex for the overflow of British Arts & Crafts exhibits, 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition, Christchurch[49]*, with applied arts for sale, including (as listed in the exhibition catalogue): "Hand-blocked Printed Cottons (chintzes). Designed by William Morris, A&C, and W.H. Dearle"*[50]*, which seem to be hung on the back wall; a wardrobe, designed by Ambrose Heal, from Heal & Son ("Oak wardrobe, inlaid with ebony and holly"), similar to a wardrobe illustrated in* Studio *in January 1900.*[51] *The metalwork on top of the Heal wardrobe and upper left is the type of fleshy deep repoussé metalwork made popular by C.R. Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft and by Birmingham groups, both groups featuring in the 1906-7 exhibition.*

ENDNOTES

1 Parry *Morris* 1996, 209; David Brett 1992, 38
2 Parry, Linda 1988, 36
3 Harrison, Martin/Parry *Morris* 1996, 107
4 Floud, Peter "William Morris as an Artist: A new view" in *The Listener* 7 Oct 1954, 563
5 Morris, William "Some Hints on Pattern-designing": A lecture delivered at the Working Men's College London on 10 December 1881; in Morris *Works* XXII, 200
6 Mackail, J.W., 1899 edn, I: 311, 317, 325
7 See "Lethaby", 182-3
8 Margery Blackman "Leaves and flowers of gold: The art and craft of Eleanor Joachim, 1903-1914"; http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-GriHand-t1-g1-t6.html; retrieved 26 Apr 2011
9 Mackail 1899 edn, 1: 311-12, 313
10 Parry *Morris* 1996, 24
11 Mackail, 1899 edn, 1: 374-5
12 Refer to "Aesthetics" 81-2
13 Parry *Morris* 1996, 14
14 Discussed "Ruskin", 94
15 Pevsner *Wyatt* 1950, 13ff re Wyatt and footnote 20 re "Owen Jones"; see negative comments by Wyatt, 63
16 See "Pevsner" [1936] 1960, 49
17 Chiswick Press edition of Morris's address page 5, in *Works* XXII, 424
18 Morris; in Morris *Works* XXII, xxxii
19 Pevsner *Wyatt* 1950, 45 n59
20 See "Ruskin" 92
21 Morris *Works* XXII, 3ff: 20
22 Bøe 1957, 173 n22
23 Mackail 1899 edn, 1, 374
24 Lesley Hoskins (ed) *The Papered Wall: The history, patterns and techniques of wallpaper* London 1994, 148
25 Morris *Works* XXII, 51ff: 58; 73, restated 80; 77
26 Spielmann 1908, 262 ill
27 Ibid 297 ill
28 Ibid 301 ill
29 Calhoun 2000, 99,109
30 Spielmann 1908, 273, 262 ill
31 Morris *Works* XXII, 81ff: 109
32 Morris *Works* XXII, 81ff: 109; 110, also "Pugin" 32 and "Dresser" 73ff on the same approach by Japanese designers; 111
33 Morris *Works* XXII, 155ff: 155, 168
34 Morris *Works* XXII, 175ff: 175, compare to "Dresser": 66ff
35 Pevsner [1936] 1960, 48
36 Morris *Works* XXII, 175ff: 184, 185, 187, Ibid
37 Pevsner [1936] 1960, 49
38 Morris *Works* XXII 175ff: 195-6, 199, 199-200. Morris attacked Dresser's spiky designs: Jervis/Whiteway (ed) Dresser 2004, 198-9
39 Ibid: 201-202, 204-205
40 Refer to "Morris" 103, 108
41 Morris 1894 address, Chiswick Press edn: 25
42 Spielmann 1908, 259
43 Bøe 1957, 126-7
44 Wendy Hitchmough *Voysey* 1997
45 Parry *Morris* 1996, 247
46 *Hobby Horse* IX (1888), 25
47 Callen 1979, 42
48 Spielmann 1908, 296
49 Ibid 290 ill
50 Ibid 299
51 *Studio* XVIII/no82 (Jan 1900), 280 ill
52 Menz *Morris* 1994, 42ff
53 Young, Pamela *Maclean's* 5 July 1993, 62-3

Chapter three

ARTS & CRAFTS DESIGN

The issues

To the men and women of the Arts & Crafts, the Industrial Revolution had run amok. Living and working conditions for "the people" were deplorable – in fact subhuman for millions. The movement sought to return Victorian lives to an imagined pre-Renaissance state, an adoration of the medieval world (and its Pugin-desired Gothic architecture and ornament) in which the individual and the individual within the community mattered. To Emma Lazarus, on 21 April 1884, William Morris wrote:

> ... you see I have got to understand thoroughly the manner of work under which the art of the Middle Ages was done, ["only to discover that it is impossible to do now"] and that that is the only manner of work which can turn out popular art, only to discover that it is impossible to work in that manner in this profit-grinding Society.[1]

The movement was not less important for helping to define a new "life-style"; it promoted a new sort of home for the middle-classes (and putatively for the lower-classes), with individual objects, rooms, house and garden unified as an aesthetic spiritual whole. Beauty and the prefix "art", so central to the Aesthetic movement, were annexed by the Arts & Crafts and, as Henry Cole would have wished, the "House Beautiful" movement flourished.[2] Middle-classes lives might at least be happier and healthier.

"the Machine"

"the Machine" became a tangible symbol of the debasement of human effort. The public understood that the pendulum had swung too far.

Above: *Owlpen Manor (1450-1616), near Dursley, Gloucestershire, England. The Tudor manor house was restored by Norman Jewson, a Cotswolds Arts & Crafts architect, designer and craftsman, the manor decorated by Morris & Co, with encaustic tiles by Minton & Co. The restored Manor (1925) breathes the nationalistic fervour associated with the later nineteenth-century and British and other Arts & Crafts movements.*

Tiles, Owlpen Manor chapel

Even Tories could be anti-industrial.[3] Workers and their supporters united to form a socialist front. As socialism became popular, socialism and the Arts & Crafts movement can be seen to affect each other, although few Arts & Crafts activists are remembered for their left-leaning pronouncements. The Arts & Crafts should instead be seen as a calling. As much through the published word and image as through concrete examples, the Arts & Crafts assumed a secular everyman and whole-earth approach, romantically recalling a pastoral idyll believed to have been lost with the ravages of the Industrial Revolution. Anti-machine designers understandably drew their motifs from nature.[4]

William Morris by 1881 opined that:

> ... if you have to design for machine-work, at least let your design show clearly what it is. Make it mechanical with a vengeance, at the same time as simple as possible.[5]

Walter Crane, among Morris's most ardent acolytes, embraced socialism from the mid-1880s and in tandem with Morris became a central and active figure in design reform. Crane was perhaps better known than Morris when he, Crane, said in a reprint of an earlier essay:

> ... cheapness in art and handicraft is well-nigh impossible, save in some forms of more or less mechanical reproduction. In fact, cheapness, as a rule, in the sense of low-priced production, can only be obtained at the cost of cheapness – that is, the cheapening of human life and labour; surely in reality a most wasteful and extravagant cheapness. It is difficult to see how, under present economic conditions, it can be otherwise. Art is, in its true sense, after all, the crown and flowering of life and labour, and we cannot reasonably expect to gain that crown except at the true value of the human life and labour of which it is the result.[6]

"... the artistic value of such designs is not lessened by the fact that they are quite as well, if not better,. printed by steam than they have ever been by hand."

Joseph Pennell questioned the extremes present in the Ruskin-Morris-Crane anti-machine crusade in the important first issue of *The Studio: An illustrated magazine of fine and applied art* 1893. In "A New Illustrator: Aubrey Beardsley", Pennell, extolling Beardsley's beautifully lascivious and velvety drawings for an edition of Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, argued:

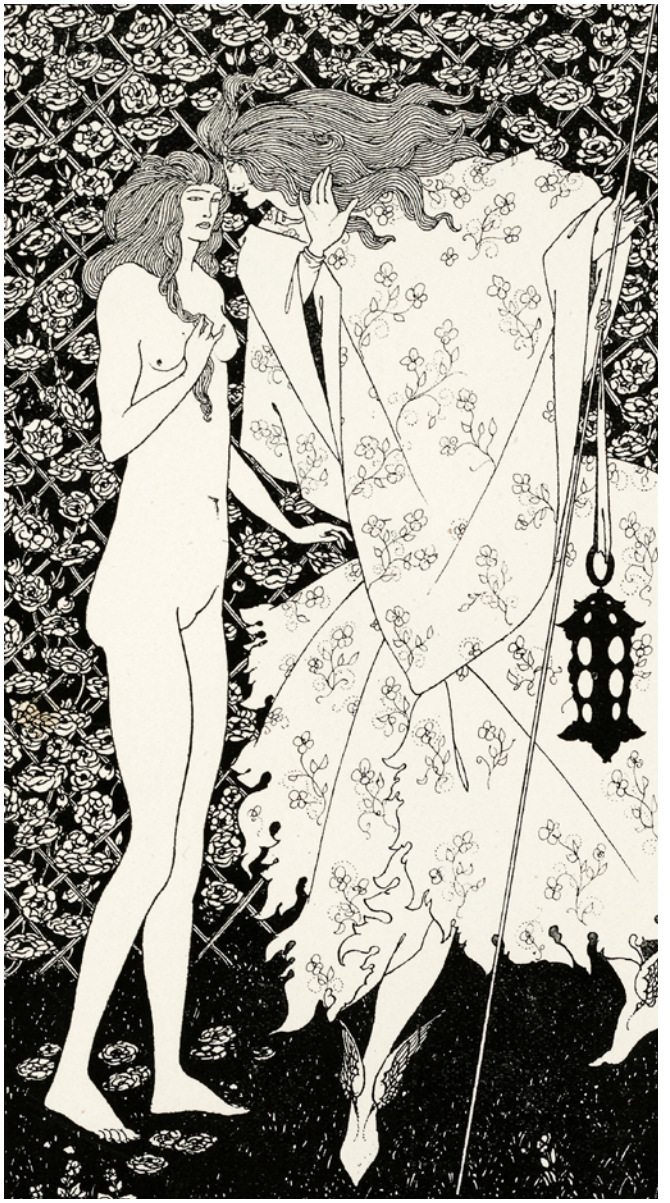
> he has not been carried back into the fifteenth century, or succumbed to the limitations of Japan; he has recognised that he is living in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and he has availed himself of mechanical reproduction for the publication of his drawings, ...
>
> ... here I find the distinct quality of a pen line, and of Mr Beardsley's pen line, which has been used by the artist and reproduced by the process-man in a truly extraordinary manner. The decorative borders also are very charming. Mr Beardsley has recognised and shown by his work that decoration means, not the production of three or four fine stock designs, and the printing of these in books, to which they have no earthly relation, on a hand-press; but that decoration should be the individual and separate production of designs which really illustrate or decorate the page for which they were made, and that the artistic value of such designs is not lessened by the fact that they are quite as well, if not better, printed by steam than they have ever been by hand.[7]

"Design & Handicrafts" and "Use & Beauty"

C.F.A. Voysey's *Studio* green-cloth-cover design (116 ill), stamped in black ink, is an austere linear flat study of the figures of "USE AND BEAUTY" in simple monastic garb under a flowering tree, a signature Voysey circlet of birds romantically circling the union. The male figure holds the regulating governor of a steam engine ("Use"), and kisses the female figure ("Beauty"), holding a lily. The central tree-of-life trunk and flower stems give the cover illustration a distinctly vertical emphasis.

Voysey's 1893 cover when studied next to Walter Crane's important 1892 "DESIGN AND HANDICRAFT" cover for *The Claims of Decorative Art* focuses the to-and-fro debate so characteristic of the Arts & Crafts as it reached maturity (124 ill). While regretting the necessity, Arts & Crafts designers such as Crane used machine production. (Linda Parry's book on Arts & Crafts textiles, 1988, includes a section listing the manufacturers used by key members of the movement.)

There has been a quantum shift from Crane's 1892 cover for *The Claims of Decorative Art* and its central "DESIGN" and "HANDICRAFT" banners – the artist and the tradesman shaking hands – to Voysey's 1893 *Studio* cover and its more machine-friendly pledge to honour "USE" in tandem with "BEAUTY".[8] Among the many who took sides, Lewis Day represented the value of mechanisation, to his eventual cost.



Aubrey Beardsley "The Mysterious Rose Garden"; in The Yellow Book: An illustrated quarterly *January 1895, IV [after 266]; Fine Printing Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ref S-L 1075-266). Beardsley's line work, his use of black and white, appearing in early issues of* Studio, *was also a feature of early issues of* The Yellow Book. *The illustrated plate seems to refer to the seduction of Eve by Lucifer, but can also be seen as a play on Morris's "Trellis" design with its trailing roses and follows Morris's lessons in image construction. Other volumes of* The Yellow Book *had images by members of the Glasgow School, and by members of the Birmingham School.*

Lewis F. Day, Morris's and Crane's contemporary, was in the vanguard of the Arts & Crafts and of design reform; Day was a South Kensington lecturer and examiner, design theorist and design manual author, and a successful commercial designer. His role in the evolution of Arts & Crafts guilds, his design manuals and his South Kensington roles gave him an important role in the New Zealand story.

Day's 1882 defence of machinery, in *Everyday Art: Short essays on the arts not-fine*, suggests rather that he and the movement were never wholly for or against machinery:

> Whether we like it or no, machinery and steam-power, and electricity for all we know, will have something to say concerning the ornament of the future.[9]
>
> No artist will think of denying that the highest art is of necessity hand-work. No machine can approach the best work of men's hands. And even in the arts of every-day there must always be room for actual handicraftsmen.[10]

Day's 1882 book, *Every-Day Art*, was owned by 1883 by B.W. Mountfort in New Zealand.[11]

Frances Newbery, under the *nom-de-plume* F. Elliott, in *The Scottish Art Review*, on "The First Exhibition of the (British) Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society" 1888 (published in Glasgow) wrote of a novel exhibition and a novel exhibition catalogue and of "the machine", and in the process highlights the almost immediate influence of the (British) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society on the devolution of the Arts & Crafts movement to a wider audience:

"... the education of the people will speedily mean the education of the manufacturer."

> Prefacing the catalogue proper with a series of short essays on the history and technique of the various handicrafts under review, a set of practical object-lessons is the result, ...
>
> ... Not for a moment can the ordinary production of the machine be defended, but a good deal could be done and is done by recognising the machine itself as a fact; and if it be the spirit of the age it cannot be altogether ignored. …
>
> Of the enviable position the [Arts & Crafts Exhibition] Society holds there can be no question ... The power capable of being wielded from this position is very great, and the education of the people will speedily mean the education of the manufacturer.[12]

In 1889 the British government passed the Technical Instruction Act and by 1891 in Wellington (New Zealand), South Kensington trained A.R. Riley had changed the name of the Wellington School of Design to the Wellington Technical School. Riley, at the behest of the New Zealand Education Department had travelled to Australia in 1888 and reported:

> Technical training is undoubtedly necessary, and, if this colony is to be equal in the race with Australasia, technical classes must be established and well supported.[13]

The necessary change in emphasis occurred between 1888 and 1893, as the romance of the individual handmade item had to accommodate

appropriate machine-production to provide affordable products for an enterprise to be viable.[14] A "craft cum machine aesthetic" was developing.[15]

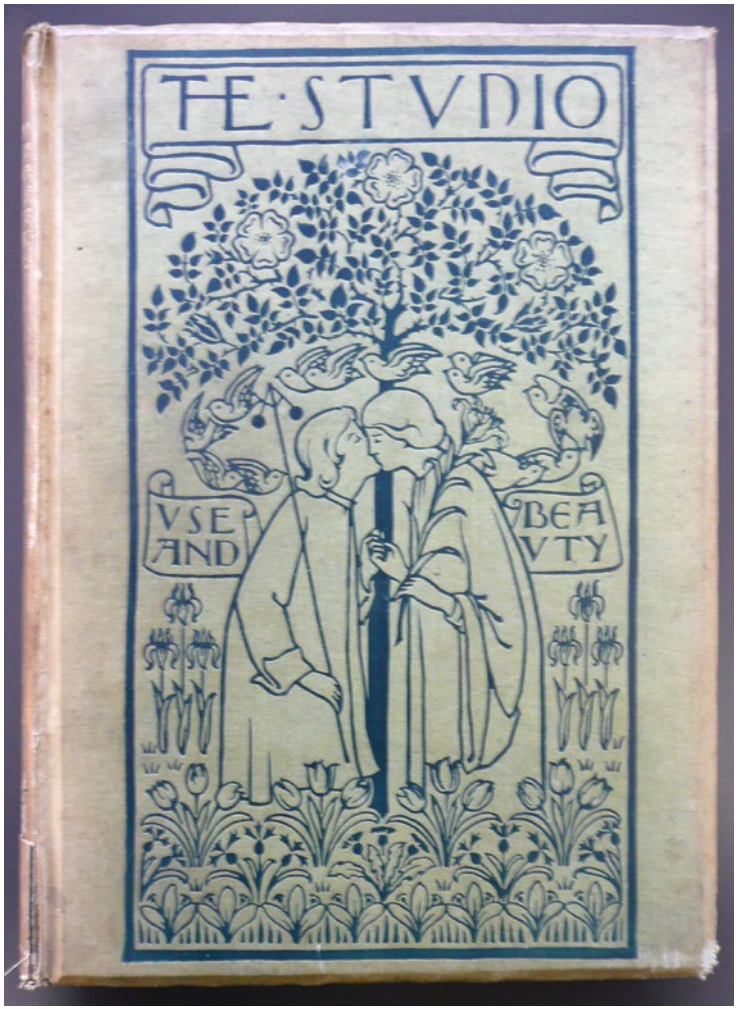
Alan Crawford, in his defining book (1985) on the designer-architect Charles Robert Ashbee, wryly observes that Ashbee's writings on "the Machine" were "of shifting and elastic meaning".[16] Ashbee was another Ruskin acolyte and wrote in this vein on "The Relation of the Architect to the Workmen", in *Building News* in June 1892:

> The origin of style lies in the social relations of men to men, in their state of society, in their habitude to one another, in the leisure they may have for the thinking out of problems and the creation of forms. In short, the origin of style is social, not an artistic question.[17]

Ashbee, by 1894, was teaching crafts/trades to local working-class lads at Essex House in East London, and talked topically in *A Few Chapters in Workshop Re-Construction and Citizenship* of the symbolic beauty of the "trifles" he made in words that capture the indefinable magic wound into the best Arts & Crafts work:

> This mere trifle of mine, of what use or beauty may it be, will it give any one delight? ... The trifle of mine is a mere symbol, the thing itself is empty, vain, its goodness consists in the spirit put into it, and the doing it, its creation by us, reflects a greater doing, symbolizes a creation elsewhere, in which we are sublimely and unconsciously taking part. We talk of a piece of machine-made work as soulless, what a deal we mean when we say that! So let us continue to make our trifles, remembering always that they are symbols only.[18]

Crawford warns that Ashbee's symbolism was more muted than it might appear.[19]



C.F.A. Voysey, Stamped cloth book-cover, Studio *I/no1 (April 1893).*[25] *The illustrated first cover for* Studio *was owned by "A.D. Riley", the first head of the Wellington School of Design (New Zealand). Riley's personal card is fixed to the magazine's bright yellow diagonally patterned end-papers.* The Studio *issue then became the property of the "Wellington Technical College Library". The usual* Studio *cover is illustrated on 139 and the second continuous cover on 140.*

Ashbee, the "Practical Idealist"[20], put the welfare of his workers first; they were more important than his clients and the quality of work produced[21]: for Ashbee the ideal "architect and designer is an artist who must do what he thinks right?"[22]: "it was to the idea of the spiritual in art that he turned."[23]

It has been argued that Ashbee was a later convert to machine-production.[24] Not quite true, Ashbee was aware of his failures, but continued to trumpet the Arts & Crafts party-line and continued to desire worker pleasure in doing: in 1917 (*Where the Great City Stands: A study in the new civics*) in words that must have seemed especially relevant as the horrors of WWI were understood, Ashbee wrote:

> We know that beautiful things can be made by mechanical power. It is the system as a whole we have to consider ... We must free the human spirit again ... We have to free it now from the incubus of mechanism – of power, misunderstood, misapplied, miscontrolled.[26]

By the end of the nineteenth-century (*Studio* November 1898), "Greater Britain" was finally working through the issues raised by an article on Christopher Dresser's dedication to "commercial production":

> Yet to refuse to allow that worthy things may not come from a firm existing ostensibly as a business enterprise, or from a trained artist whose livelihood depends on the sale of his designs, is illogical ... in the case of Christopher Dresser, we have not the least but perhaps the greatest of commercial designers imposing his fantasy and invention upon the ordinary output of British industry, it would argue blindness or prejudice to decline to recognize in him a very loyal friend of the cause we have at heart. …
>
> But Mr Dresser is in a way the figure-head of the professional as opposed to the quasi-amateur designer, and is familiar to the outer world while the very names of some of his worthy contemporaries never have been and never will be known outside trade circles.[27]

Dresser in fact was forgotten for decades. A parallel bias meant that Liberty & Co were not included in (British) Arts & Crafts Society exhibitions. In 1901, *Studio* recorded, with linguistic aplomb, the confusion over the word "manufactured"; the meaning of the word was modified to meet new demands. At this point, as a new century arrived, in New Zealand and no doubt elsewhere in "Greater Britain", governments, as seen through A.D. Riley's 1898 report after visiting Britain, would be more concerned with the issue of "commercial production", than in the romantic idea of hand-production. Gleeson White, the versatile first editor of *Studio*, on "The First International 'Studio' Exhibition" Part I, took up the transvaluation of the word "manufactured":

> For we have got beyond the stage at which "hand-work" was the one idea of the æsthetic revivalist; the phrase "hand-made throughout" was the supreme recommendation, and the word "hand-painted" was significant of our loss of all values in words even; so that "manufactured", which naturally meant hand-made, came finally to mean <u>not</u> hand-made, but made by machinery. Design at that time was nothing; labour was all. And so the sedentary designer in the background went on spinning his abstruse patterns or copying his literal bunches of flowers; and when brought at last to the point of designing useful furniture, his ignorance of practical affairs made his work, for the most part, needlessly costly, so that only the wealthy could furnish on the "specially designed and hand-made" plan.[28]

What was unashamedly opposed by Ruskin[29] and Morris and other Arts & Crafts sermonisers was any imagined dehumanisation of production. As the issue of the division-of-labour became associated in reformers' minds with the perfidy of "the Machine", salvation was seen to lie in worker participation in both the design and making processes – hands-on teaching through apprenticeship training or at least design-school-based hands-on training. The creation of guilds (see following section) in the 1880s appeared to right another of those societal imbalances by which the Arts & Crafts established its credentials.

The Ruskin-Morris-Lethaby lobby scoffed at Day's so-called "paper promises", W.R. Lethaby's words.[30] (The skill is also termed "design intelligence". Frayling uses the term "transferable design skills".[31]) William Morris, as relayed by his biographer, J.W. Mackail (1899), said:

> The skilled workman is not as a rule a workman who possesses any remarkable innate skill of hand. He is one rather whose general intelligence has protected him against that excessive division of labour which cramps and sterilizes the modern artificer.[32]

The creation of Arts & Crafts guilds, in which Morris's disciple, W.R. Lethaby played a central role, is directly linked to the later movement, whereby practical craft training (quasi-apprenticeship training) was now thought to be a prerequisite for the successful designer. Students usually studied a range of crafts and then specialised in one craft technique.[33]

In the process, the words "trade" and "craft" ceased to be synonymous, and "craft" might now mean "amateur" work. The question remained – what should be the worker's role in the making or manufacturing process? Morris, as noted, took up the workers' cause by teaching himself each craft process but, with a technical process "mastered", Morris returned to preparing paper-designs which were executed by skilled assistants. Peter Floud, in "The Inconsistencies of William Morris", detailed Morris's almost total reliance on "division-of-labour" practices.[34]

Lewis Day, by 1910, was accusing the South Kensington system under W.R. Lethaby of "snobbish disdain for industrial design":

> Design and Ornament, so far as they are taught at all, are taught in relation to Architectural decoration, so that in reality Ornament is very little considered and its practical application to Industry is entirely neglected.
>
> ... And the Arts and Craft Movement, instead of helping it, has drawn what artistic sympathy there may be for it away from Industry and towards the more or less amateurish pursuit of little Handicrafts – which to my mind matter much less. But I hold very strongly that the Board of Education ought to consider the question of design teaching in relation to the larger interest of the country.[35]

Day believed that a designer could not have knowledge of every trade for which a design was prepared; and said:

> Insight, readiness and suppleness of mind are indispensable to the designer, and these practical faculties, no less than the artistic, it should be the aim of design teaching to bring out. So far from this being realised, I find it suggested that, in order to design for textiles, a man must work at a loom ... Of the many trades for which I have designed I have scarcely practised any.[36]

The movement for Lewis Day had lost sight of its goal, an improvement in the standard of industrial design.

"Art is skill in making but the thing to be made must first of all be known in the mind."

James Johnstone, head of design and craft at the Canterbury College School of Art, New Zealand, from 1926 to 1958, was conversant, it is clear, with British Arts & Crafts sentiments on the place of machine production in society, a line that encompassed both a social conscience and a recognition of the necessity of machine production; in the first of three radio talks (1930s), on "The worker in relation to production", he said:

> Art is skill in making but the thing to be made must first of all be known in the mind.
>
> Today the only fully responsible workman is the designer. A man who must know the real purpose of the thing he intends to make, knows the possibilities, suitabilities of his materials, knows the capabilities of his tools – in this case the machine. Man, the consumer, is a herd. What will the herd buy? Unfortunately the herd will buy that which by mass suggestion – advertisement, publicity – can be made to seem what he must buy.
>
> Now I am not decrying the machine, it is with us & we have to accept it ... That [products] have the stamp of the machine should not detract from them. If they have been properly designed for such production, & they make no pretence of being something which they are not – handmade – they should have a beauty of their own.
>
> Strange as it may seem the initial design – the prototype – is nearly

James Johnstone, South Kensington flat trefoil conventionalised design, 20 March ***1920*** *(photo: Ngarita Johnstone)*

always made by hand. Even our motorcar, our aeroplane are first made by craftsmen who can modify or alter.

> This easy way of saying a machine can do it has the tendency to make people lose all appreciation & pride in good craftsmanship. To the craftsman this pride forms almost all his reason for living and working. It becomes almost a sacred duty to him to use his talent for the enjoyment of the community.[37]

Applied art v fine art: a continuing struggle to be heard?

South Kensington understood the failure of its teaching system and began a reform process that by the end of the century had been effectively remodelled by Walter Crane and members of the Art Workers' Guild. It is even possible to claim that the movement would not have enjoyed its international following without its guild members and their constant call for design reform, delivered in no small part through South Kensington-linked schools.

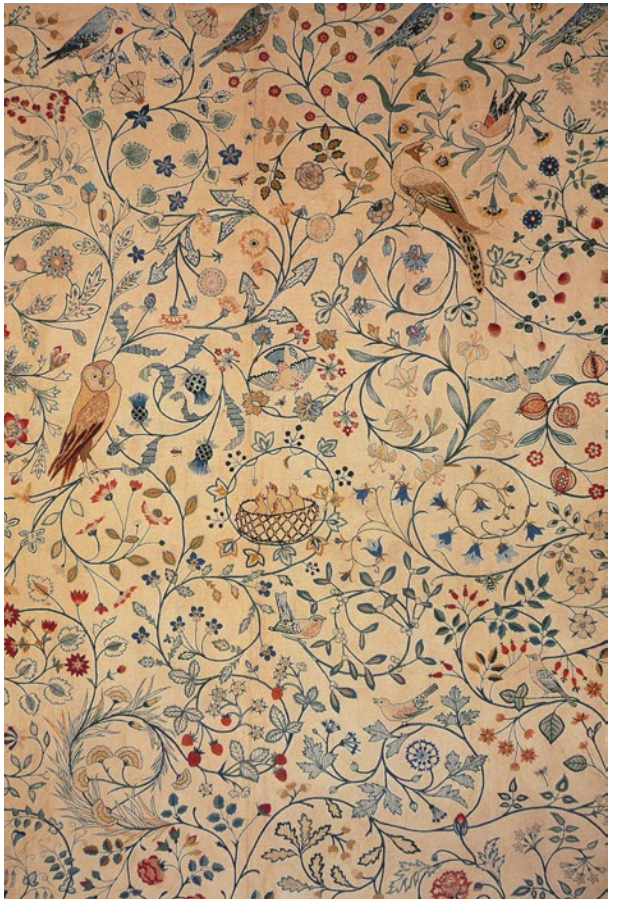
As the movement extended it hold internationally, the Arts & Crafts engaged in its most important struggle – to be treated as the equal of the fine arts. The issue was fudged as designer-artists easily drifted from the applied to the fine arts and back again. For New Zealand, the mixed messages were, as James Belich has suggested[38], largely conveyed by incoming publications. Gleeson White, *Studio* editor, authored a quartet of articles on "Some Glasgow Designers and their Work" during 1897 and 1898.[39] Setting the tenor of his views, he wrote:

> If the same privilege long since accorded to the Fine Arts be allowed to the Applied Arts, then it is no more venal to praise a side board than applaud a portrait.[40]

Alfred Drury, "The Age of Innocence", original 1897, brass; Collection of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu (New Zealand). The bust was purchased by the Canterbury Society of Arts from the 1906-7 international exhibition in Christchurch and gifted to the gallery in 1932.

Mabel Hankey, "Summer Days", miniature on ivory; Collection of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, New Zealand. The miniature was purchased by the Christchurch Art Society from the New Zealand International Exhibition of Arts & Industries in Christchurch, staged in Hagley Park over the summer of 1906-7. The miniature echoed values and attitudes to nature and landscape held by the British – attitudes transmitted to New Zealand by her colonists, suggesting the rightness of securing the miniature for the local art society. The young women convey a sense of belonging, of being at one with nature and their nation. They are romantic visions, reminding us of Jane Austin's heroines waiting for their Mr D'Arcy but they are equally exemplars of Aesthetic cum Arts & Crafts taste dressed by Liberty & Co of London.

View of the 1906-7 International New Zealand Exhibition, Christchurch, New Zealand; Mary Newill's "The Owls" hangs on the back-right-wall.[41] *The view makes it clear that needle-art and art metalwork were being treated as the equal of fine art. Gilbert Bayes' relief, "Jason ploughing the acre of Mars", now owned by the Christchurch Art Gallery, is on the back wall.*



Mary Newill, "The Owls" (depicts a mother and fledgling owls in a nest), embroidered hanging, wool on linen, c1906; Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, University of Central England (ref: 2003-0458)

The term "Arts & Crafts" is essentially one word and was intended to convey the unity of fine and applied art. The worker in the trades/crafts was thereby entitled to have his/her applied art production judged as the equal of fine art production.

New Zealand

In Christchurch, New Zealand, over the summer of 1906-7, the Arts & Crafts section of the New Zealand International Exhibition of Arts and Industries was effectively modelled on earlier (British) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society displays and the rightness of the guild philosophy, and set a singular standard for the protean local movement. The Christchurch event occurred two decades after the Arts & Crafts acquired its name and almost two decades after the first (British) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society event; but while the contents of the exhibitions would have been broadly similar, the New Zealand exhibition was less about guild philosophy and more about hands-on making and the pleasures of owning hand-made wares.

ENDNOTES

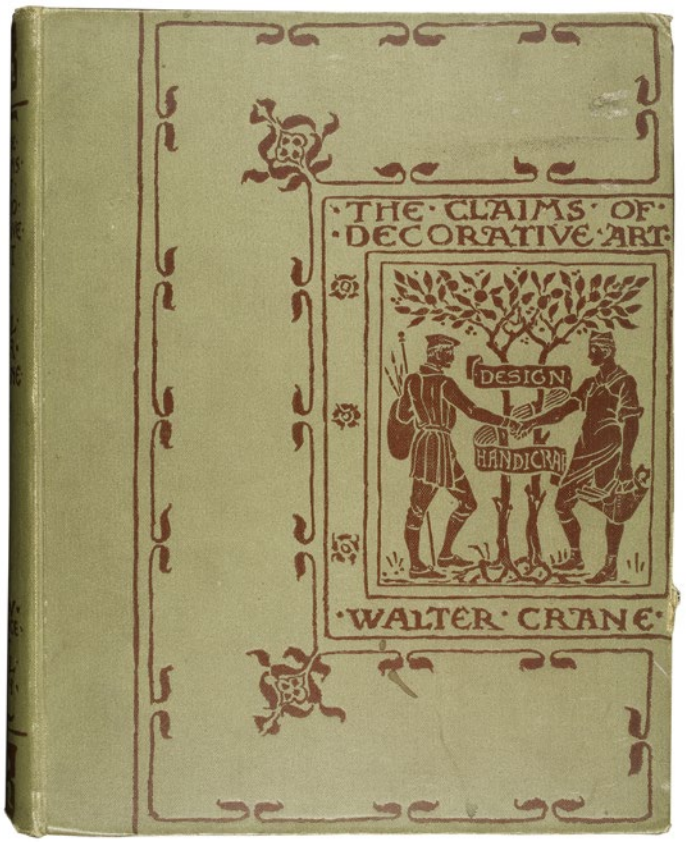
1 Christine Poulson (ed) *William Morris on Art & Design* 1996, 30
2 Gere 2000, 8
3 Naylor [1971] 1990, 5; Crawford *Ashbee* 1985. 13
4 Durant 1986, 214
5 "Introduction" 12, in Morris *Works* XXII, 169
6 *Studio* II/no7 (Oct 1893), 7
7 *Studio* I/no1 (Apr 1893), 14-19: 14, 17
8 See "Voysey", 116 ill
9 Also quoted by Pevsner [1936] 1960, 26, who used the quote to suggest that Day was unreservedly pro-machinery.
10 Day 1882, 273
11 Refer to "Introduction", 13
12 Frances Newbery (as F. Elliott) "The First Exhibition of the [British] Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society" in *The Scottish Art Review* I, no6 (Nov 1888), 160
13 NZ *AJHR* 1888 E-11, 6
14 For example, Nochlin 1971, 162-5
15 Ibid 164
16 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 419
17 Ashbee "The Relation of the Architect to the Workmen" in *Building News* 43 (3 Jun 1892) 759; in M.W. Brooks *Ruskin* 1987, 314
18 Ashbee *A Few Chapters in Workshop Re-Construction and Citizenship* 1894, 156; in Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 212
19 Crawford 1985, 230
20 Ibid 10
21 Ibid 213
22 Ibid 211
23 Ibid 212
24 Pevsner [1936] 1960, 26
25 See "Publications", 140 ill
26 Asbee 1917, 21; in Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 419
27 *Studio* XV/no68 (Nov 1898) 104, 106: 106
28 *Studio* XXIV/no105 (Dec 1901) 175
29 See "Ruskin", 92-3
30 Rubens 1986, 215, 226
31 Frayling 1987, 78
32 Mackail 1901, II, 48
33 Frayling 1987, 70
34 *The Listener* BBC London (14 Oct 1954), 615
35 Lewis Day to Robert Morant at the Board of Education, 2.iii.1910.24/87PRO; in Rubens *Lethaby* 1986, 225 n17
36 *Reports on the National Art Training School* op cit 48; in Rubens 1986, 226 n18
37 Johnstone 1930 talk, "The worker in relation to production": 2 note, 7-8 note, 8 note, 9 note
38 See "Preface", 6
39 *Studio* XI (two), XII, XIII, and also XXVI, XXVII
40 *Studio* XI/no52 (Jul 1897), 88
41 In Spielmann 1908, 251, 243 ill

The role of the guilds

There were during the 1880s significant groups set up on medieval guild principles.[1] The *Shorter Oxford* notes: "The *trade guilds* were associations of persons exercising the same craft, formed to protect and promote their common interests." Not strictly aping medieval trade guilds, these guild-like groups, were the forerunners of the Arts & Crafts guilds. These guilds were as important to the formation of the Arts & Crafts as the broader issues raised in the previous section. The guilds discussed below sought to ennoble work by returning trade/craft teaching to the medieval guild manufacturing system by which students acquired skills through apprenticeships. What was also so crucial was that these structures enabled the new art-craft movement to shuck off too great a reliance on gothic sources for its designs, while continuing to refer to nature as the ideal source of decorative product motifs.

As Walter Crane related in *An Artist's Reminiscences* (1907) on the creation of "The Fifteen" and the Art Workers' Guild:

> It was during the winter of 1881 that a group of designers and decorative artists formed themselves into a little Society to discuss subjects of common interest to themselves and bearing upon various branches of design. The idea was initiated by Mr Lewis F. Day ... We used to meet at each other's houses or studios about once a month from October to May, the host of the evening being responsible for the refreshment of both the outer and the inner man, and he had to provide a paper or open a discussion on some subject or question of decorative art.
>
> The name "The Fifteen" was adopted from a popular puzzle ... We never, however, really numbered fifteen. Some joined and some left,



Walter Crane, Bookcover, The Claims of Decorative Art *1892; General Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL photo B-K 902-COVER). Design and Handicraft hold hands, the figures in brown on an olive green cloth cover.*

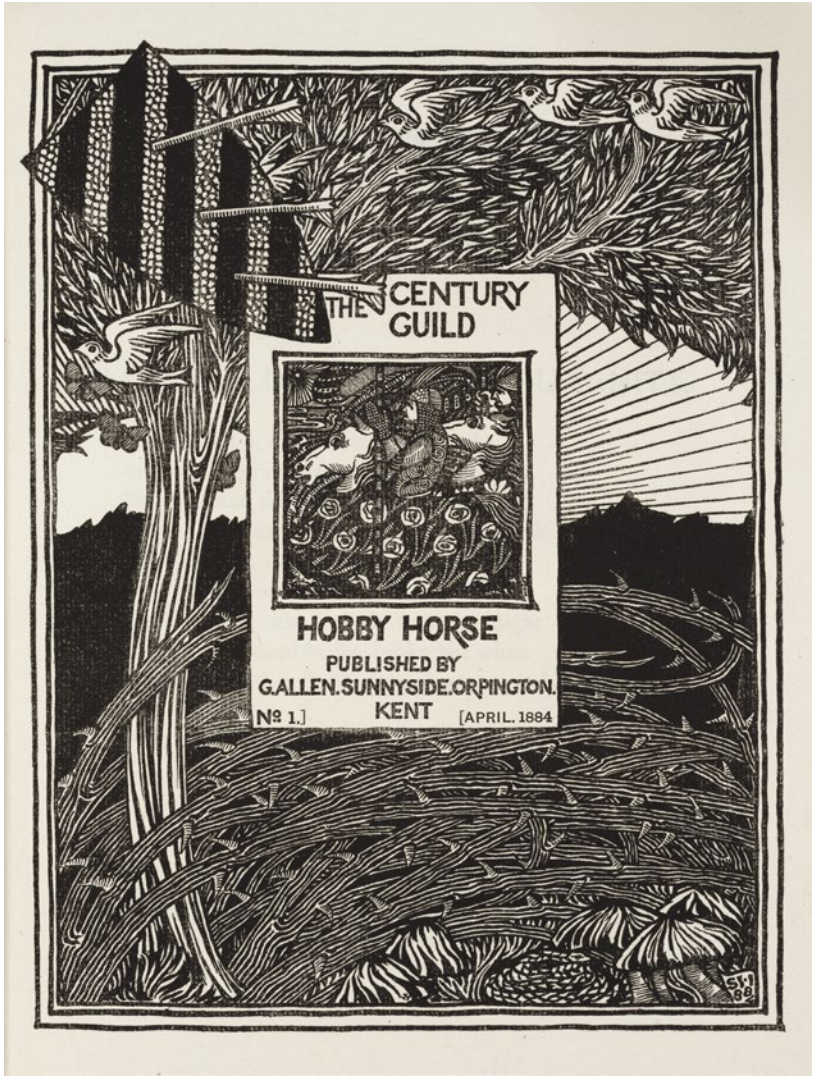
"Speaking generally, the Arts and Crafts ethic of designer-as-maker benefited women in an age when female skills were regarded as inferior."

> but we kept our meetings up for two or three years, and should, no doubt, have existed longer, but for the ... natural absorption of our members into a larger Society ... in 1884 ... namely The Art Workers' Guild, ... which was able more effectively to raise the banner of Decorative Design and Handicraft and to gather under it a larger and wider representative group of artists.[2]

The motto of the Guild was "The Unity of the Arts"[3], an affirmation of higher, God-directed, activity.[4]

Women were excluded from the important guilds established in the 1880s; subsequently, women do seem to have been members of the (British) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society as the catalogue for the Arts & Crafts section of the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition add "A & C" for female and male designers, executants and exhibitors alike: it is important to understand that women did not easily fit into the Arts & Crafts hierarchy until "the home" became its central focus: Jan Marsh has written:

> Speaking generally, the Arts and Crafts ethic of designer-as-maker benefited women in an age when female skills were regarded as inferior. Many Arts and Crafts women were active supporters of women's suffrage and sexual equality. It is sad to relate, therefore, that the Art Workers' Guild, the premier organisation for designer crafts, did not admit women members. Nor were they involved in craft co-operatives like the Century Guild, or Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft.[5]



Selwyn Image, Second title page of Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo's Century Guild Hobby Horse *no1, April 1884, Chiswick Press, 270x215mm; Rare Periodicals Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC 09/21)*

"The principles that govern ornamental design are deductions from the laws of the imagination ..."

In 1882, Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo, English designer-architect, with Herbert Horne and his friend Selwyn Image, established the Century Guild of Artists (1882 to 1893) and in 1884 published the first number of the guild's *Hobby Horse*:

> The few members of the Century Guild are all artists of one craft or another; each therefore known best through his own craft: though also here to be somewhat known by joint literary work in which each will, from time to time, when fate compels, come forward, say his say, and then retire to his studio, hoping to meet his reader there, no publisher between to make a chilling third.
>
> … Hence the Guild – an union by which we each anticipate having better chance of success in the exercise of our especial arts. As without resigning a jot of our individuality, we receive by virtue of this incorporation, the support of the whole in larger spirit influence and multiplied power of material help.[6]

Mackmurdo is now more often remembered for his free-flowing plant-tendril and root designs, including the bookcover for *Wren's City Churches* (1883).[7] His refreshing worth to the Arts & Crafts came, when he rebuked Lewis Day, in a review of one of Day's multiple publications: Mackmurdo believed that Day had served up too many books based on the nature and ornament formula. Day, for Mackmurdo, should instead look to the "laws of imagination":

> The principles that govern ornamental design are deductions from the laws of the imagination, while laws arbitrarily govern all imaginative work. The forms therefore which ornament may take under the hand of the artist are as illimitable in their range as individual in their treatment, and as original in their source as fancy herself. They will be imitative of established forms only by choice, and not by preference nor necessity.[8]

In 1884, in much the same spirit as the Guild groups were formed, the Home Arts and Industry Association was established. The association was a largely female-run affair that operated throughout Great Britain and Ireland, and sold work from its London outlet by rural workers (so-called cottage or peasant industries) and amateurs, and organised exhibitions and classes. The association played a major role in popularising the Arts & Crafts, and stimulated an appreciation of craft work for the home: "As well as encouraging metalwork and woodwork, the bastions of other Arts and Crafts Groups, the Association also championed spinning, embroidery, lace-making and sewing".[9] Of the association, Gleeson White in *Studio* (July 1896) said:

> Its purpose is not to teach rough artisans a more "genteel" way of gaining a livelihood, not to provide listless amateurs with a new way of wasting time and money; but to give fisher lads and farm labourers, factory hands and errand boys, an interest in honest worthy crafts.[10]

The Association would, said Riley in Wellington within two years, "teach the minor arts to the working-classes, thus spreading a knowledge of artistic handiwork among the people".[11]

In 1896 the Society of Designers was founded "to support the dignity of

the profession, and for friendly social intercourse" with Walter Crane, Lindsay Butterfield and C.J. Haité, and manufacturers and retailers Arthur Lasenby Liberty and Alex Morton. "They took as their motto the words on Voysey's work-box: 'Head Hand and Heart'."[12]

By 1886 the idea of a national exhibition was being mooted.[13] T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, fine book-binder and Doves Press founder (1900), is usually credited with inventing the adopted name "Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society" in 1887, leading to the first society exhibition in October 1888 at the New Gallery in Regent Street. The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society gave members a needed window for the sale of their wares, a public lecture forum and an over-arching title for their far-reaching essays. The exhibitions allowed the like-minded to gather and exchange ideas. Frances Newbery in Scotland reported, as noted, that the "short essays" in the first exhibition catalogue were "a set of practical object-lessons".[14] The essays cum exhibition catalogues were carried throughout "Greater Britain". The term "Arts & Crafts" became synonymous with an international art movement and style. Walter Crane was President until 1912, except for 1893 to 1896 when Morris was President.

The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society held shows in 1888, 1889, and 1890, at The New Gallery in Regent Street, London, and thereafter every three years. (The copy of the 1888 catalogue held by the Alexander Trurnbull Library (New Zealand) is inscribed "T.J. Cobden-Sanderson Esq Goodyers Hendon".)

Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society & Catalogues 1888, 1889, and 1890

These exhibitions and the accompanying catalogues, lectures and papers established a new means by which the movement could publicise itself and its goals by, notably, naming the artist-designer, and the maker or worker, as well as the name of the exhibitor. The society had been formed to this end, to give recognition to the previously unacknowledged designer and maker. A collateral end was the education of all levels of society exposed to new wares in which ornament was usually based on beneficent nature.

Walter Crane wrote the "Prefaces" to the first three exhibition catalogues and thereby underlined his pivotal role in the international design debate from 1888. In the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue (first exhibition), he wrote:

> A series of papers upon various Arts and Crafts follow, written by men whose names, as will be observed, are associated with the subjects of which they treat, not only in the literary sense, but as actual designer and workman. September 1888. …
>
> The decorative artist and the handicraftsman have hitherto had but little opportunity of displaying their work in the public eye, or rather of appealing to it upon strictly artistic grounds in the same sense as the pictorial artist; and it is a somewhat singular state of things that at a time when the Arts are perhaps more looked after, and certainly more talked about, than they have ever been before, and the beautifying of houses, to those whom it is possible, has become in some cases almost a religion, so little is known of the actual

"The true root and basis of all Art lies in the handicrafts."

designer and maker (as distinct from the proprietary manufacturer or middleman) of those familiar things which contribute so much to the comfort and refinement of life – of our chairs and cabinets, our chintzes and wallpapers, our lamps and pitchers – the Lares and Penates of our households, which with the touch of time and association often come to be regarded with so peculiar an affection. …

Of late years, however, a kind of revival has been going on, as a protest against the conviction that, with all our modern mechanical achievements, comforts and luxuries, life is growing "uglier every day", as Mr Morris puts it …

The true root and basis of all Art lies in the handicrafts. If there is no room or chance of recognition for really artistic power and feeling in design and craftsmanship – if Art is not recognized in the humblest object and material, and felt to be as valuable in its own way as the more highly rewarded pictorial skill – the arts cannot be in a sound condition; and if artists cease to be found among the crafts there is great danger that they will vanish from the arts also, and became manufacturers and salesmen instead.

It was with the object of giving some visible expression to these views that the present Exhibition has been organised.[15]

John D. Sedding, Upper view of church, and gate repeat section, Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, Chelsea, London, 1888-90. Sedding, a pupil of George Edmund Street, designed the church in "Free Gothic". The church is effectively an Arts & Crafts museum with important stained glass windows by Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris. The east window by Edward Burne-Jones is made of 48 panels and is the largest window ever made by Morris & Co.[16]

"Plain materials and surfaces are infinitely preferable to inorganic or inappropriate ornament; yet there is not the simplest article of common use made by the hand of man that is not capable of receiving some touch of art ..."

1889: Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue (second exhibition):

> Regarding design as a species of language capable of very varied expression through the medium of different methods and materials, it naturally follows that there is all the difference in the world between one treatment and another, both of design and material; and, moreover, every material has its own proper capacity and appropriate range of expression, so that it becomes the business of the sympathetic workman to discover this, and give it due expansion. …
>
> Plain materials and surfaces are infinitely preferable to inorganic or inappropriate ornament; yet there is not the simplest article of common use made by the hand of man that is not capable of receiving some touch of art – whether it lies in the planning and proportions, or in the final decorative adornment; whether in the work of the smith, the carpenter, the carver, the weaver, or the potter, and the other indispensable crafts …
>
> The movement, however, towards a revival of design and handicraft ... indeed represents in some sense a revolt against the hard mechanical conventional life and its insensibility to beauty (quite another thing to ornament) …
>
> It asserts, moreover, the value of the practice of handicraft as good training for the faculties, and as a most valuable counteraction to that over-straining of purely mental effort under the fierce competitive conditions of the day; apart from the very wholesome and real pleasure in the fashioning of a thing with claims to art and beauty, the struggle with and triumph over the stubborn technical necessities which refuse to be gainsaid. And, finally, thus claiming for man this primitive and common delight in common things beautiful, it makes, through art, the great socializer, for a common and kindred life, for sympathetic and helpful fellowship, and demands conditions under which your artist and craftsman shall be free.[17]

1890, John D. Sedding, "Of Design", Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue (third exhibition): Sedding discussing embroidery design bemoans the use of historical motifs, which should, to him, remain in a museum:

> Nature is, of course, the groundwork of all art, even of ours: but 'tis not to Nature at first-hand that we go. The flowers we embroider were not plucked from field and garden, but from the camphor-scented preserves at Kensington.
>
> Think of the gain to the "Schools", and to the designers themselves, if we elect to take another starting-point! No more museum-inspired work! No more scruples about styles! ... No more loathly Persian-tile quilts! .... No more Tudor roses and pumped-out Christian imagery suggesting that Christianity is dead and buried. But, instead, we shall have design by living men for living men – something that expresses fresh realizations of sacred facts: personal broodings: skill: joy in

"... modern design should be as the old-living thought, artfully expressed ..."

> Nature – in grace of form and gladness of colour; design that shall recall Shakespeare's maid who
>
> > ... "with her needl composes
> > Nature's own shape, of bud, bird, branch, or berry
> > That even Art sisters the natural roses."
>
> For, after all, modern design should be as the old-living thought, artfully expressed: fancy that has taken fair shapes. And needlework is still a pictorial art that requires a real artist to direct the design, a real artist to ply the needle. Given these, and our needlework can be as full of story as the Bayeux tapestry, ...[18]

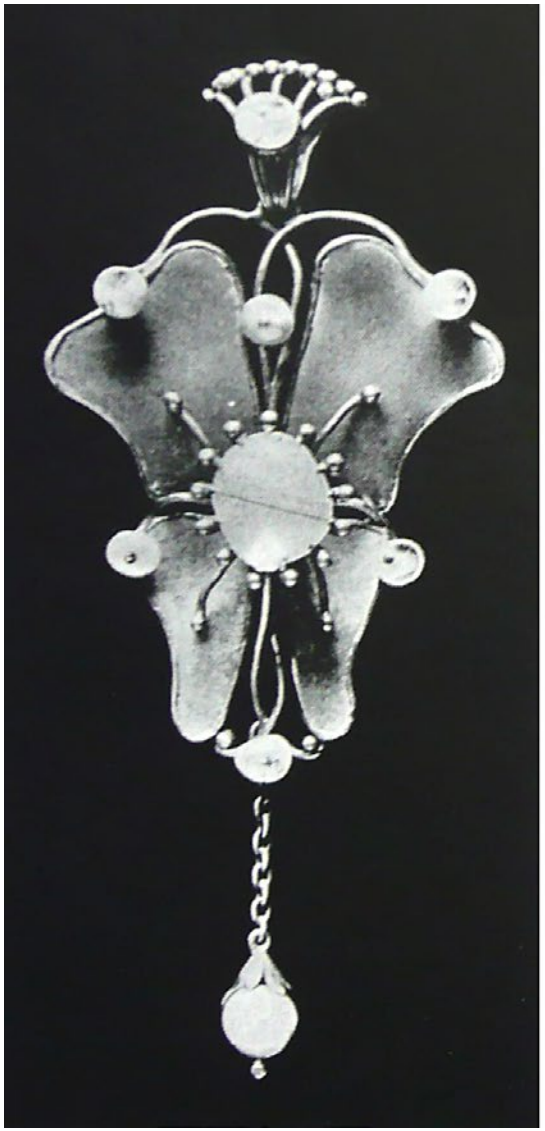
The years 1893 to 1903 are described by Linda Parry (on textiles) as the "middle period" of the movement, when Butterfield, Hiaté and Voysey created a "type of floral decoration" – the movement's style in "its most typical and original form".[19] The textile style of the 1890s was typically British:

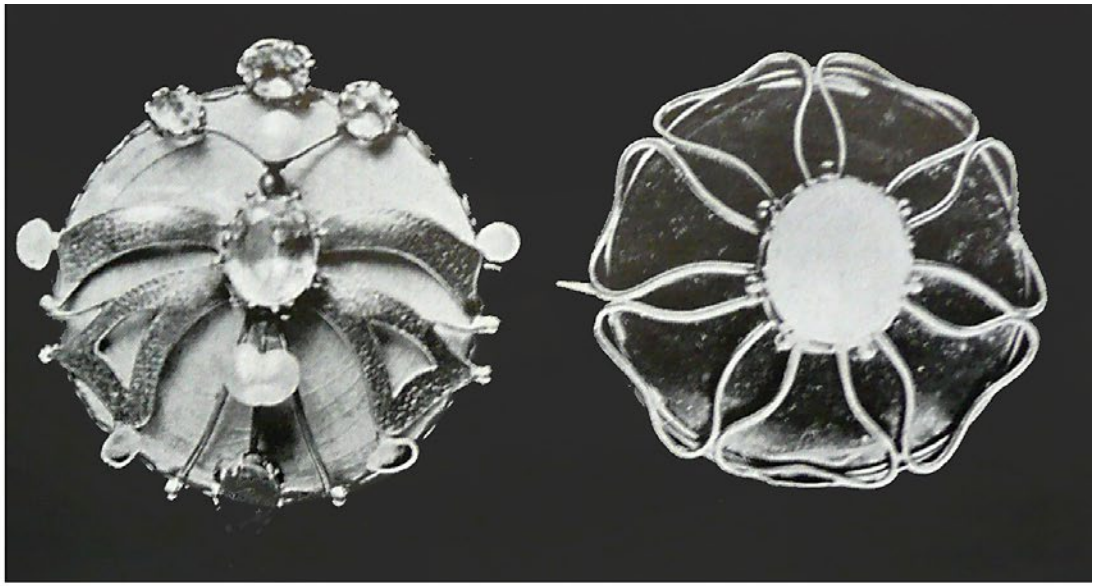
> Although the [Arts & Crafts Society] exhibitions were never able to display a representative selection of commercial textiles they did give some indication of this new successful phase.[20]

Trade Unions and Mechanics Institutes were strangely overlooked.[21] During the eighteen-nineties draughtsmanship, as the starting point for mass-production, and handicraft, as an apparently more worker-friendly approach, juggled for attention. London became the centre for the developing Arts & Crafts movement as the movement's influence became international. The moral/socialist pitch of the movement continued, a softer sell removed from the threats of workers' demands.

C.R. Ashbee, "Silverware", "Designed by C.R. Ashbee", "Executed by the Guild of Handicraft", Studio *XVIII/No 80 (Nov 1899) 121 ill*

In 1888, C.R. Ashbee (130-2 ills) created the Guild and School of Handicraft and in 1898 the Essex House Press, Mile End Road, London. (Essex House Press, when Morris died in 1896, acquired staff and presses from Morris's Kelmscott Press.) The co-operative guild ideal was more nearly realised in the Mile End Road experiment than in any other group calling itself a "Guild". Ashbee and his guild were taken up as a "cause" by the Arts & Crafts supportive *Studio* in its second notice on the 1896 Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society event:





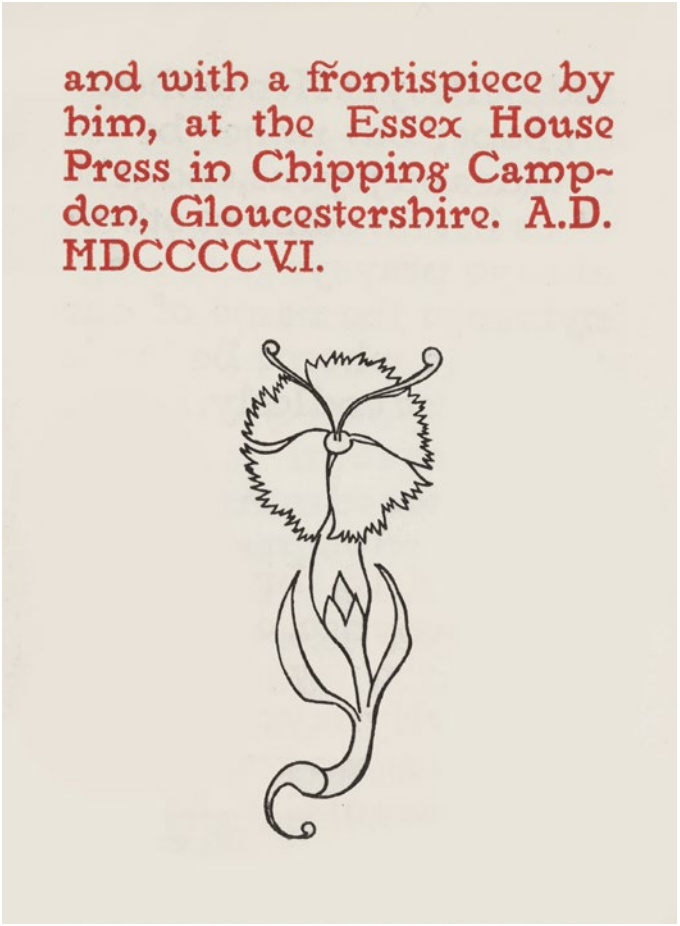
C.R. Ashbee, "Jewellery", "Designed by C.R. Ashbee", "Executed by the Guild of Handicraft", Studio *XVIII/No 80 (Nov 1899) 124 ill.* The jewellery is partly cast and partly hammered in gold or silver ... Set with stones, or treated in enamel, the results are of great richness. A peculiarity of Essex House jewellery is the insistence upon the aesthetic as opposed to the commercial value of precious stones. Colour is a quality always held in view, and thus we find combinations of copper and yellow crystals, gold and topaz, silver and obstein, red enamel and amethyst, blue enamel and opal, and the use of a variety of stones, contemptuously regarded by the ordinary jeweller as "off colour" or unmarketable.[22]

> The jewellery of Mr C.R. Ashbee's design, which is here illustrated … is not less important than the table-ware. …
>
> We can but hope that every one whose means permit will do his best to support a movement towards beauty in these needlessly degraded industries … You have but to realise Mr Ashbee's intention, as evidenced in these designs, to discover that gold and silver, jewels and less precious stones need not be vulgar; that fine substances well employed are capable of becoming artistic to the highest degree. But they do fail to "look their cost", they do not shout across a room that they are worth so much sterling, even if their metal was melted down and their stones unset. Hence they are likely to find many enemies … The crusade is in the hands of the few who appreciate beauty, and if they wish to conquer they must not under-estimate the prejudice against their effort.[23]

Aymer Vallance, in *Studio* in November 1899, observed that:

> ... whereas many contemporary artists cause their designs to be carried out by artisans working under them and implicitly obeying their orders. Mr Ashbee, as head of the Guild founded by him, seeks rather to elicit the potential talent of the workshop ... In short, Mr Ashbee's position is not that of an isolated genius, whose art depends on his personal activity alone and must perish with him; but he has achieved the feat of raising up a living school, imbued with the same spirit and principles as himself ...[24]

While still in London, John Pearson, a rather separate personality within the Ashbee Guild, created a style of large copper and brass charger with distinctive deeply moulded fish, birds, galleons and peacocks. The influence of *Studio*, and the flood of applied art publications in the 1890s,



"A Mornyge Remembrance", white "pink" tailpiece, printed "under the care of C.R. Ashbee", at the "Essex House Press in Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire. A D MDCCCCVI." (1906); Fine Printing Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC 09 19-1176871) Printing in black and red ink was a popular printing style, reborn with the renewed interest in finely printed books.[27] The tailpiece is an Essex House Press colophon, "inspired by the pinks which grew in abundance in the garden of the Guild's Essex House premises in the Mile End Road."[28] Pinks were one of the flowers favoured by Persian designers and taken up by Arts & Crafts designers including William Morris.[29]

may account for the almost instantaneous national and international popularity of Pearson's bulbous metalwork.[25]

Ashbee transferred the Guild and Press to Chipping Campden in the English Cotswolds, Gloucestershire, in 1902, hoping but not entirely succeeding in recreating the ideal of a medieval guild in a romantic rural setting – guildsmen in tune with nature. An old silk mill, Sheep Street, Chipping Camden, was used; the silk trade had died mid-century and the building was vacant.[26]

> And it [the jewellery] was modern, in the sense that it owed no very obvious debt to the past and took its motifs so often from nature, the only source of inspiration that is at once old and always new.[30]

Not only work seen at the 1906-7 Christchurch (New Zealand) exhibition but later the overarching style of art jewellery and metalwork produced under James Johnstone at the Canterbury College School of Art (New Zealand) was influenced by Ashbee, the Guild and Birmingham metalwork styles (particularly Georgie and Arthur Gaskin). The New Zealand story is of considerable interest as the successful sale of art metalwork and jewellery from the 1906-7 Christchurch (New Zealand) exhibition occurred as the Chipping Camden Guild was headed for receivership.[31] The Christchurch exhibition included, by Ashbee, an item titled *Last Records of a Cotswold Community*.[32]

Henry Cole had argued in 1849 for local schools to specialise in the prominent local trades/crafts. The idea was pursued by prominent local manufacturers in key towns, especially important being Birimingham and Manchester.[35] Both cities and their institutions were pivotal for the New Zealand movement. Riley in his 1898 report to government on British schooling cited schooling in both Birmingham and Manchester on art and Arts & Crafts training.

Maud Caygill, Necklace; Private collection; it is possible to claim Ashbee's influence on Maud's necklace.[33]

James Johnstone, Pendant necklaces (photo: Ngarita Johnstone). James Johnstone further consolidated metalwork styles that owed much to Ashbee, the Gaskins and the Birmingham Guilds.[34]

Birmingham Municipal School of Art, the Birmingham Group, and the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft

Birmingham as a city specialised in commercial jewellery and metalwork, much of it of suspect design; an art school, a group and a guild were established to influence standards; the three groups, as shown by Alan Crawford in *By Hammer and Hand: The Arts and Crafts movement in Birmingham* (1984), were formed from art school staff, students and fellow travellers all moving to and from the school. The "Morrisian method" used in Birmingham, Walter Crane's words, had the "great advantage and charm" of lending itself to either "simplicity or splendour" in the aesthetics of product and home decoration.[36]

In 1890 the Birmingham city council established the Birmingham Municipal School of Art under Edward Taylor: by December 1893 the *Studio* could quote from "a recent report":

> The matter which is of more than local interest is the vitality the School shows in studying the applied Arts. In metal-work, jewellery, enamels, book illustration and designs for manufactures generally, we are face to face with the original motive of the whole South Kensington scheme, which was founded undoubtedly not so much to create a rival to the Academy, or private schools of Painting and Sculpture, but to raise the general level of commercial design, and send out capable artisans and craftsmen to infuse once again into English goods the beauty they most certainly possessed in the past. …

Art jewellery created by students at the Canterbury College School of Art c1915-20; in Canterbury College School of Art Syllabus 1920, opp 18 ill. *By the late teens, influences on New Zealand art metalwork and jewellery by C.R. Ashbee, Arthur and Georgie Gaskin, and the Birmingham Guilds were wide-ranging and would have influenced the teaching in Christchurch of Frederick Gurnsey and Charles Kidson and in Wellington George Pitkethly.*

> This system of going beyond the mere design of an object and allowing the pupil to essay the actual work, with all its limitations and technical difficulties, is so obviously a healthy one that it would be a waste of words to praise it.[37]

Firstly the school was by the end of the century a "perfectly precisely defined drawing school".[38] The further aim was to create "artisan students"who had returned "to the bench and the loom, the anvil or the factory, with a knowledge of design and a taste for beauty, combined with a mastery of technique of their particular crafts."[39] The Birmingham school was singular but also an obvious model six years later for the Central School of Art and Crafts in London.

The school style, attributed to Taylor, was termed "Naturalistic" by *Studio*; this was not the strict precision required by Ruskin[40] but the greater naturalism over abstraction (or conventionalism) credited to Morris.[41] Of equal importance was the head-master's wish "to discover the latent impulses of his pupils"; students would stop trying to draw a design and instead model their "subjects in clay".[42]

The Birmingham Guild of Handicraft, founded 1880, grew from similar honest intentions, developing by February 1895 into "a self-supporting co-operative workshop".[43] Simplicity of line, and the idea of less-is-more when decorating an object, were the touch-stones of these guilds.

A trade school specialising in jewellery and silversmithing, the Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths, was established in 1890 under R. Catterson-Smith. Arthur Gaskin became head of the Vittoria Street School in 1903 and brought the commercial institution into the Arts & Crafts fold. The Gaskins were lionised by Arthur S. Wainwright in *Studio* in May 1914:

Mabel Caygill, Tea service, silver; in Canterbury College School of Art Jubilee exhibition 1882-1932 Souvenir Exhibition catalogue 1932, *12 ill*

James Johnstone, Silver sugar basin, in Art in New Zealand *1, no2 (Dec 1928) 134 ill*

Frederick Boyce, Silver teapot; in Art in New Zealand (*June 1930) 289 ill*

> It was very late in the nineteenth century that the awakening came ... [Arthur Gaskin and his wife Georgina Evelyn France Gaskin] valued the more irregular cutting of the Indian workman who strives only to show the best that the stone contains from a decorative point of view.[44]

The Gaskins were among the Arts & Crafts practitioners who chose inexpensive stones:

> All their work was, of course, hand wrought, and based upon simple floral forms original to themselves.[45]

> All these beautiful jewels speak for themselves and in finish and completeness need fear no comparison with any of the "trade" products. And bearing in mind the very notable advance in the taste and quality of the jewellery offered for sale in the best shops during the last few years this is no empty compliment.[46]

Birmingham created a style of book-art that came to be seen as particularly English.[47] The school sought to endorse traditional wood engraving. The style was identified by white lines on black and by the solidity and strength of these lines, in contrast to the sprightly style of the 1890s.[48] (The books, illustrative work, and calligraphy on show in Christchurch (New Zealand) at the 1906-7 International Exhibition were a further display of the applied arts of "Greater Britain".[49])

A further important art and craft, fostered through the Birmingham groups, was needle-art. Embroidery and the role of Mary Newill, in particular, are usually identified.[50] The *Studio* in December 1899 noted:

> Miss Mary Newill – who, in common with a few members of the

Arthur and Georgie Gaskin, Art jewellery using silver, gold, opals, topaz, and fine green paste; in Studio *LXI/no253 (May 1914) 297 col ill*

> Birmingham school, became distinguished first as an artist in black and white ... For some time past Miss Newill had entertained the idea, started by the wish to emulate the effect of Japanese prints, of turning her hand to appliqué; but it was not until now [after preparing embroidered panels illustrating Spenser's "Faerie Queene"] that the occasion arose for giving practical shape to her intention.[51]

The 1906-7 Christchurch (New Zealand) exhibition included Mary Newill's famous "The Owls" embroidered hanging, wool on linen, c1906.[52] "The Owls" has a certain degree of naturalism, as encouraged by Edward Taylor, but it is the extent of the naturalism that is of interest. Newill attended the Birmingham Municipal School of Art, and was a member of the Birmingham Group and an independent applied artist. In her basket of achievements, she also taught at the Birmingham school from 1892 to 1920.[53] For "The Owls", she built a stable framework for her repeat-pattern using strong stems creating ovals; the stems meander vertically towards the top of the pattern.[54] The owls are not so stylised that the species could not be identified. Yet they are not so accurately drawn as to detract from their owlness. Another owl hanging was positioned further along the same wall.[55] The second owl hanging is likely to have been designed and embroidered under Mary Newill's guidance by Birmingham school needlework students.

1905 Scottish Guild of Handicraft started in Glasgow c1900 and was run as a cooperative to exhibit and sell members work.[56]

In New Zealand, student guilds were established at the art school in Wellington in 1900 on A.D. Riley's suggestion "for the practical working-out of designs and sketches",[57] and in Christchurch in 1906 by Robert Herdman Smith[58].

ENDNOTES

1 Pevsner [1936] 1960, 54; Parry 1988, 10-12
2 Crane 1907 2nd ed., 223-4
3 Crawford *Birmingham* 1984, 8
4 See similar exhortation by "Pugin", 26 col1
5 Jan Marsh, "The Female Side of the Firm" *Crafts: The Decorative and Applied Arts Magazine* no140 (May-June 1996), 45
6 "The Guild Flag's Unfurling" *Hobby Horse* Chiswick Press no1(April 1884), 2, 2-3. Naylor 1971 includes a valuable section on Mackmurdo 115ff. Also see Aymer Vallance on Mackmurdo: http://www.victorianweb.org/art/design/mackmurdo/index.html; retrieved on 31 Aug 2010
7 http://arh346.blogspot.com/2007/10/blog-post_01.html; retrieved 31 Aug 2010
8 Lewis Day *Nature in Ornament*, 1892, reviewed in the Century Guild *Hobby Horse* (26 Apr 1892), 62-8: 63-4
9 Michael Jeffrey *Christie's Arts and Crafts Style,* 37
10 *Studio* VIII no40, 92
11 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 42; *AJHR* 1902 E-1, xxix-xxx, 25th annual report of the Minister of Education
12 Parry 1988, 102; Cumming 2006, xv
13 Ibid 10-11
14 See comments by Frances Newbury, 115
15 Crane Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue 1888: Preface: 5-6, 7, 7-8
16 For interior image, see: http://www.flickr.com/photos/belowred/3365823715/; retrieved 24 Aug 2011
17 Crane Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue 1889: Preface: 6, 7, 8-9, 10-11
18 John D. Sedding, "Of Design", Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue 1890: Sedding discussing embroidery design (122-8): 124, 125-6
19 Parry 1988, 40
20 Ibid 71
21 Naylor [1971] 1990, 6
22 *Studio* XII/ no55 (Oct 1897), 34
23 *Studio* 9/no44 (Nov 1896), 117-134: 127, 129
24 *Studio* 18/no80 (Nov 1899), 118
25 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 313-16. Repoussé metalwork was being created in New Zealand by 1902, see illustrations 239, 242
26 Ibid 108
27 See "Jones" 'Italian No 5' 40 ill; "Ashbee" 132 ill
28 Naylor 1971, 6
29 Richard Glazier *A Manual of Historic Ornament* [1899/1906] 1933, 82
30 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 357
31 Ibid 367
32 Spielmann 1908, 266
33 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 357
34 Johnstone pendants, earrings and ring illustrated *Art in NZ* VII (Dec 1934) no2, 84; also see Johnstone 294 ill, 295 ill
35 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 161
36 Crawford *Birmingham* 1984: 28, 25
37 *Studio* II/no9 (Dec 1893), 92, 93
38 Crawford *Birmingham* 1984, 27
39 *Studio* II/no9 (Dec 1893), 93-4
40 See "Ruskin", 90 ill, 91 ill
41 See "Morris", 100 ill
42 *Studio* II/no9 (Dec 1893), 95
43 Crawford *Birmingham* 1984, 30-1
44 *Studio* LXI/no253 (May 1914), 293-301: 293
45 Callen 1979, 156
46 *Studio* LXI/no253 (May 1914), 293-301: 296, 301
47 See "Crane" 166ff; also *Studio* II/no9 (Dec 1893), 94
48 http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/speel/group/bhamsch.htm; retrieved 31 Aug 2010
49 See "1906-7 International Exhibition", Christchurch New Zealand, 239
50 Crawford *Birmingham* 1984, 28-9
51 *Studio* XVIII/no81 (Dec 1899), 186
52 Mary Newill "The Owls" embroidery illustrated 111 ill cover and at the 1906-7 International Exhibition in Christchurch, also 122 ill
53 Parry 1988, 140
54 Ibid 36
55 Second Mary Newill needlework, 246 ill (back left)
56 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 406
57 NZ *AJHR* 1901 E-5 13Wn
58 NZ *AJHR* 1907 E-5 44Ch

Publications and the "book-arts"

What seems certain is that the Arts & Crafts would not have become an international art-craft movement without its publishing arm. The point especially applies to New Zealand. Paul Greenhalgh writes on "The English Compromise":

> By 1880, several publishing houses focused almost completely on the history and theory of design. B.T. Batsford, for example, boasted a list of 103 books on the subject, and Chapman and Hall had fifty-seven titles available by the turn of the century.[1]

This was another nineteenth-century publishing cluster, as had occurred earlier in the century with botanical publications and later with house-furnishing etiquette, a publishing cluster that made the Arts & Crafts an international movement.

In tandem, in the 1880s, when the printing trade was modernised with the introduction of "stronger, metal process blocks", the book-arts were reborn.[2] Included in this awakening were serial publications such as the *Hobby Horse*, or the *Arts & Crafts* magazine.[3] Often through small private presses, the Arts & Crafts romantically set about conserving and inventing fonts, formats, papers and printing methods. Beautifully drawn and printed illustrations and individually handmade, limited edition books became treasured Arts & Crafts objects. What such changes advanced was a rich platform for the display of stylised/abstracted plant-based designs, whether as a central design motif or as accompanying decoration.[4]

For women, book-Arts & Crafts represented an aspect of a major art movement to which they could make an individual contribution[7]; as Anthea Callen records, women had difficulties accessing training as

Aubrey Beardsley, Cover, Studio: An illustrated magazine of fine and applied art, *I/no1 (Apr 1893). The first* Studio *cover is usually credited to Beardsley; another first cover was by architect-designer C.F.A. Voysey.*[5] *Beardsley's simple cover used bold clean black lines with a vertical emphasis – a nature study of daffodils and trees. A figure of Pan was removed from the illustration (upper-left) before the magazine appeared.*[6] *The New Zealand owner's name, "Mr D.C. Hutton", is inscribed top-left corner.*

Studio and similar fine and applied art publications were primary – not secondary – sources of information for New Zealanders on the latest artistic tastes at 'Home' ...

bookbinders, although sewing bindings was considered a suitable feminine occupation and led in 1898 to the establishment of the Guild of Women Binders.[8]

The Studio: An illustrated magazine of fine and applied art

Excitement over the Arts & Crafts was generated by the *Studio* from 1893, and in a wealth of other applied art magazines during the 1880s and the 1890s and into the new century. (It is not surprisingly to find runs of *Studio* throughout New Zealand.) Other publications were: *Arts & Crafts: a monthly practical magazine for the studio, the workshop and the home*; *The art amateur: devoted to art in the household*; *The house: the journal of home Arts & Crafts*. *Studio* had further relevance in being an early successful example of the use of "photomechanical process block" reproduction[9] and set photographic production standards that took many years to better. (Issues of these magazines often reached New Zealand within a year of publication.)

Studio and similar fine and applied art publications were primary – not secondary – sources of information for New Zealanders on the latest artistic tastes at "Home" – and must have been similarly effective for Arts & Crafts lovers outside London and other major centres. Frances Hodgkins had visited the editor of *Studio* in March 1902 and reported back: "I told him how much we prized the *Studio* in the Colonies & how

R. Anning Bell, Second cover, Studio *6/no252 (Mar 1914) – first used May 1894. This second* Studio *cover was used over many decades; the cover was of a swain (dressed as a builder) and his maid, USE and BEAUTY.*

it was a source of much help & inspiration to us all".[10] *Studio* for October 1910,[11] held by the Wellington Public Library, New Zealand, is stamped "24 Apr 1911". Gustav Stickley's *Craftsman* magazine for April 1913, date stamped "2 June 1914", was available at the Wellington Public Library, New Zealand, just over a year after publication.

The sub-title of *Studio* endorsed the link between the fine arts and the now-established Arts & Crafts. From Ruskin to Mackmurdo, "the rhythmical grace and ordered measure of the human form" had re-entered the decorative artist's vocabulary. Under Ambrose Poynter, the painter of *Asterie*,[12] "life studies" became an assured part of the South Kensington system, the change furthered by Walter Crane as much as any other design reformer.[13] *Studio*, in turn, by its easy support of both the fine and applied arts assured figure and nude studies (and landscape) of a place within any Arts & Crafts decorative vocabulary.

By the end of the century, *Studio* and other publications (not least being the British Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society volumes) were effectively replacing the phenomena of art and industry exhibitions spawned by the London-based 1851 exhibition.[14] International art and industry exhibitions were still held, such as that in Christchurch, New Zealand, over the 1906-7 summer, but goods and services could as effectively be promoted through handsomely illustrated, increasingly photographically illustrated, publications. The importance of the burgeoning illustrated publishing industry cannot be sufficiently stressed.

Walter Crane, Of the Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New *(1896)*

Walter Crane prepared an early history of the book-art movement: as Crane noted, his book was compiled "primarily from the decorative point of view", a history in which "the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society may claim to have had some share" through work exhibited and papers delivered.[15] (For the 1906-7 art and industry exhibition, New Zealand, Crane, with Alfred Longden, were selectors for the private press books, book illustrations, illuminations, and exemplars of calligraphy displayed.)

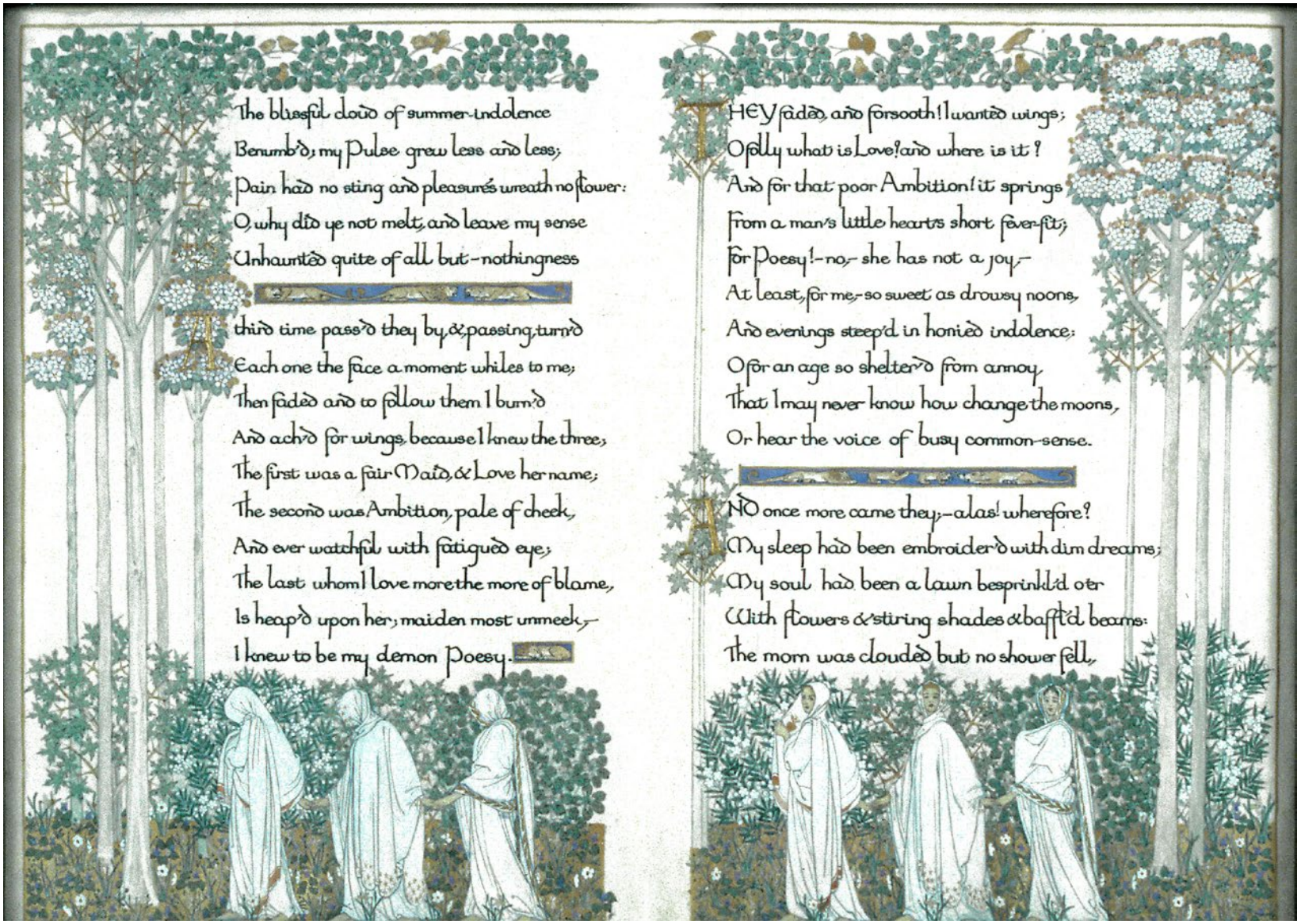
In 1896 Crane claimed a special role for the English in the development of book-arts:

> A brilliant band of illustrators and ornamentists have appeared, too, and nearly every month or so we hear of a new genius in black and white, who is to eclipse all others. …

Crane claimed a special role for "the Birmingham School":

> It may, at any rate, I think be claimed for it, that in both method, sentiment, and subject, it is peculiarly English, and represents a sincere attempt to apply what may be called traditional principles in decoration to book illustration …
>
> Without vain boasting, it is interesting to note that whereas most artistic movements affecting England are commonly supposed to have been imported from the Continent, we are credited at last with a genuine home growth in artistic development.[16]

Gleeson White, the first editor of *Studio*, would, in the July 1896 issue, remind students of Owen Jones's advice "Ornament your construction, do not construct your ornament".[17] Concurrently, the *Studio* was a voice for Art Nouveau; the 1890s, the decade of Art Nouveau, was endorsed in



Florence Kingsford "Ode on Indolence", page of Book of Keats, *c1900, illuminated manuscript: ink, watercolour, gold leaf on vellum. Purchased at the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition, Christchurch, New Zealand; Collection of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu*

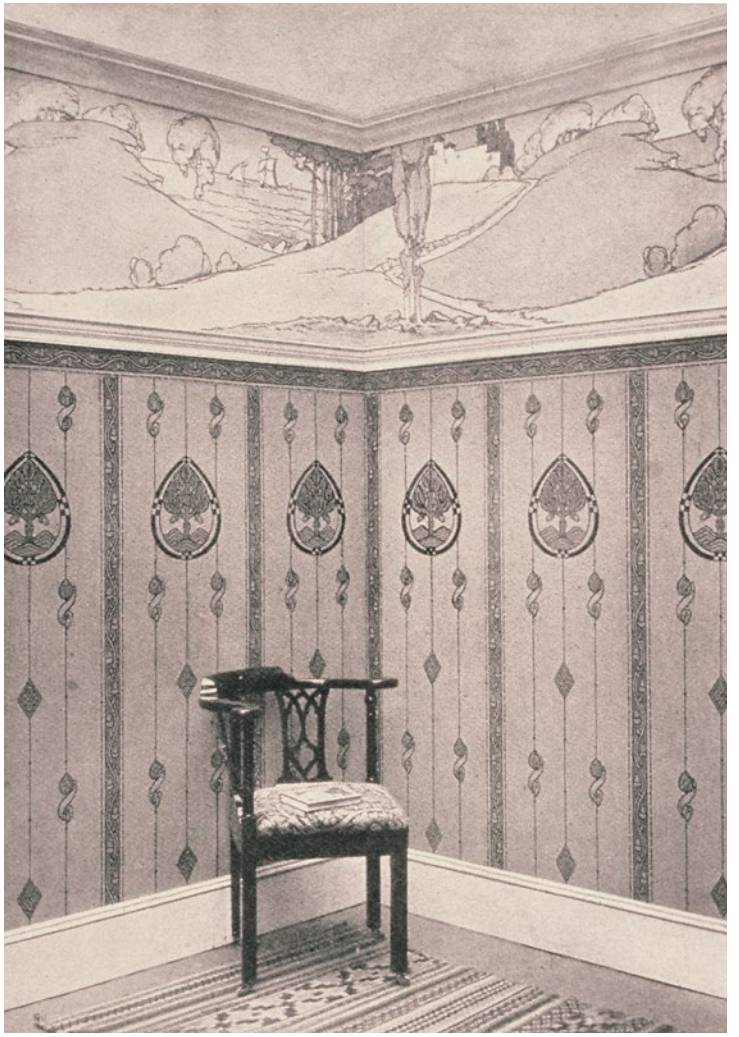
the October 1896 issue, where it was said:

> Since 1888, when the first Arts and Crafts Exhibition was held at the New Gallery, much has happened. Then, the average man looked upon the new Society as a fresh attempt to revive the so-called "æsthetic craze", which, born in Punch, died in Patience. Now, eight years after, Paris has an "Arts and Crafts" – L'Art Nouveau; the two great Salons admit examples of the applied arts; the Royal Academy has already coquetted with them in its winter shows, and might at any moment extend its rules a little to include half the objects hitherto relegated to the New Gallery.[18]

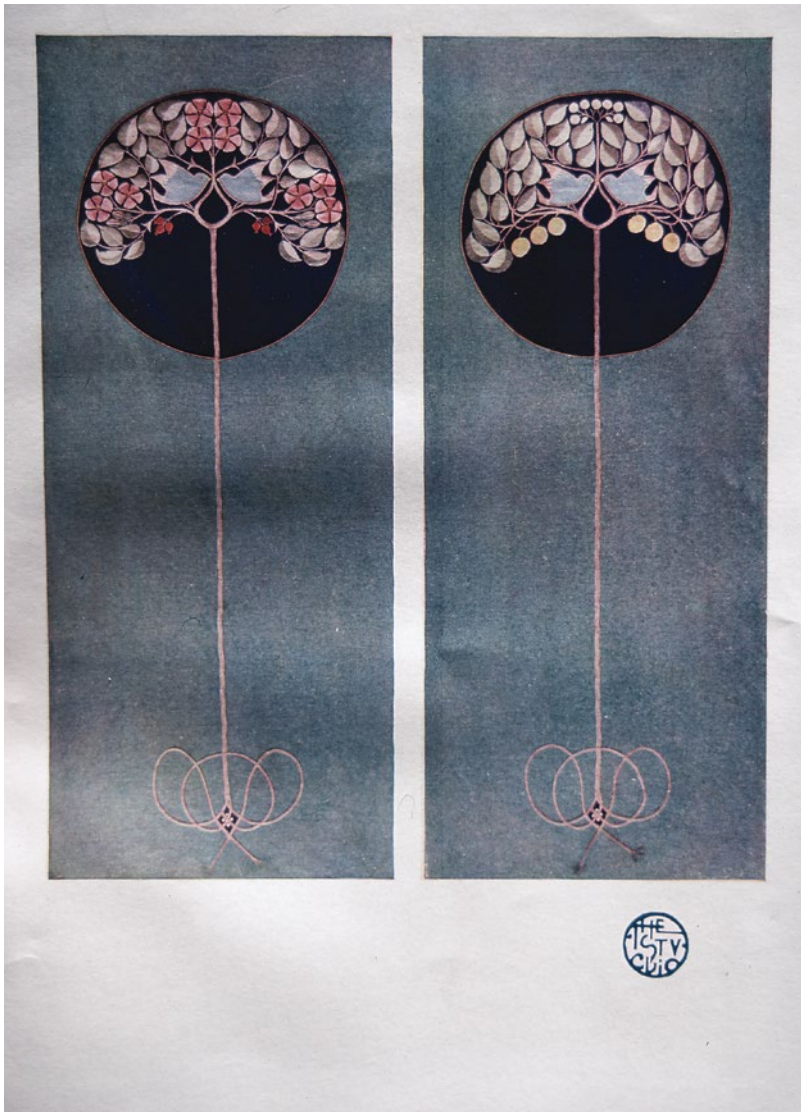
Florence Kingsford had attended the Central School and trained with Edward Johnstone; she used "Carolingan-derived letters".[19] She was singled out in *Studio* (October 1900) for work exhibited at an early Central School exhibition[20]; in March 1906 *Studio* in its second notice on the Arts and Crafts Society exhibition said:

> Miss Florence Kingsford has, perhaps, approached most nearly to the spirit of the old times which inspire her art, for her illuminations, like the old illuminations, are an embodiment of her thoughts.[21]

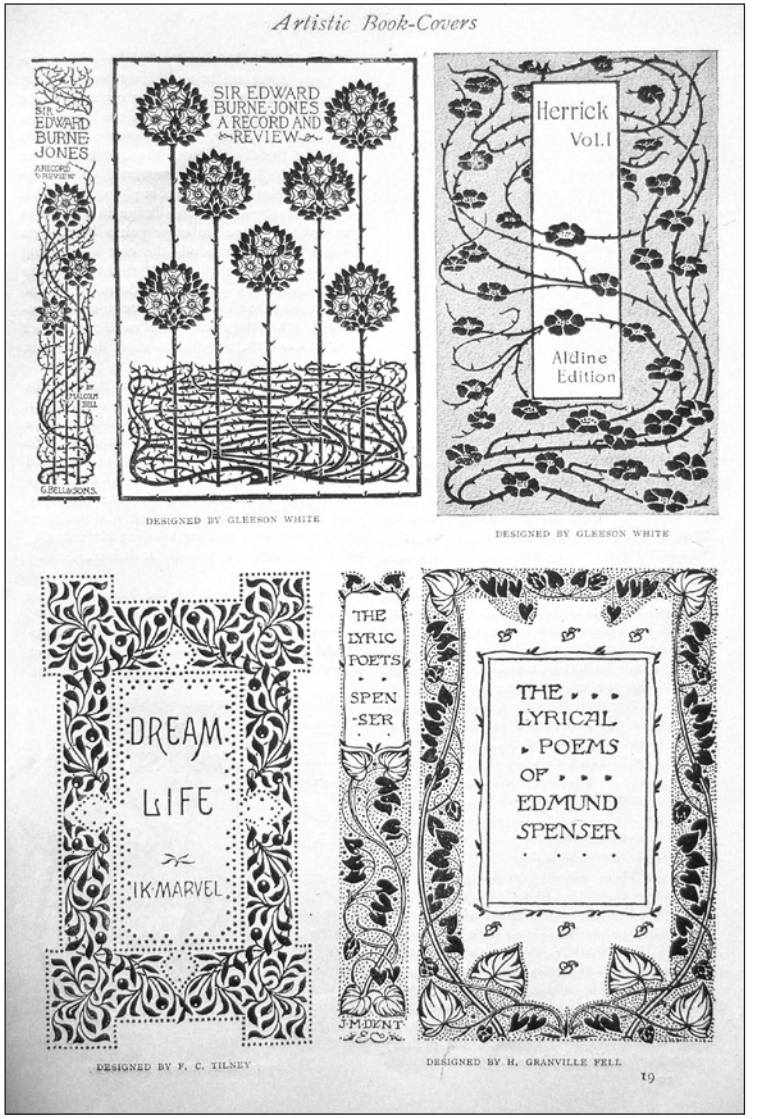
In *Studio* issues for 1903 and 1906, items illustrated or discussed in the first, second and third "Notices", in effect reviews, of the 1903 and 1906 Arts & Crafts Society exhibitions were available for would-be purchasers attending the 1906-7 Christchurch, New Zealand, exhibition; *Studio* in effect provides a buyers' guide for the Christchurch exhibition, including Florence Kingsford "Ode on indolence" illumination.



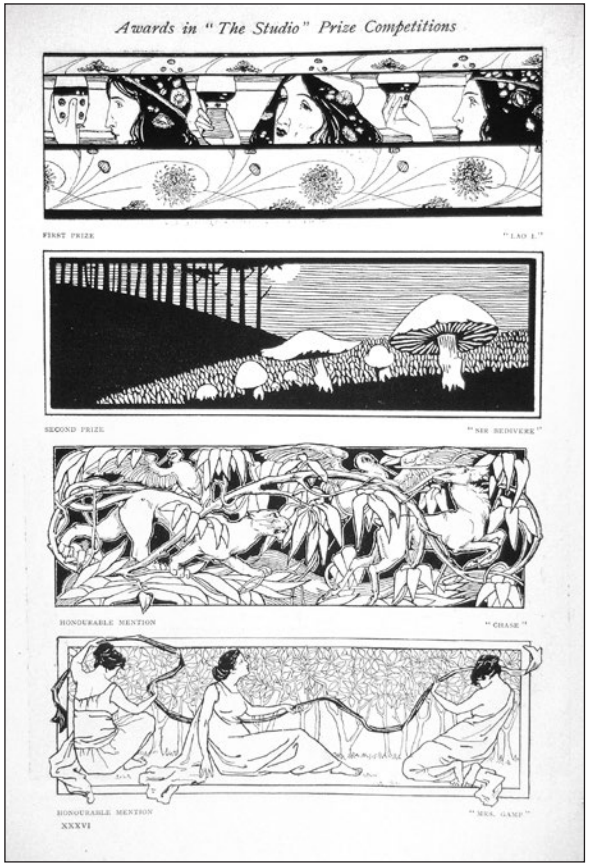
Interior decoration: English Wallpapers & Friezes, Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art *1906, its first year of publication. The wallpaper design has similarities to the handprinted stencilled wallpaper prepared by Canterbury College School of Art students for their Guild alcove at the Christchurch international exhibition 1906-7.*[22]



M.H. Baillie Scott, "Embroidered panels designed by M.H. Baillie Scott and worked by Mrs Scott"; Studio *XXVIII/no122 (May 1903), 281 col ill*



The Artistic Decoration of Cloth Book-Covers *by Gleeson White, including designs by Gleeson White, F.C. Tilney and H. Granville Fell,* Studio *IV/no19 (Oct 1894), 15-23 (19 ill)*



"Awards in The Studio *Prize Competition"*, Studio *IV/no23 (Feb 1895), III (after 200). On designs for initial letters:* We have been almost tempted to classify the designs now before us into styles, such as the "Walter Crane", the "Ricketts", the "Beardsley", so much do many of them call to mind the peculiar line or method of treatment adopted by these well-known illustrators.

"Awards in The Studio *Prize Competition"*, Studio *IV/no23 (Feb 1895), XIII ill and XXXVI ill (after 200). This was a high point for the awards, with some 60 pages of illustrations following on from the text.*

In April 1903, on the Arts and Crafts Society exhibition, *Studio* observed:

> The enamels and silver-work of the Guild of Handicraft generally represented the very best craftsmanship of that active and versatile body of art workers. Their exhibits in this field were as admirable as ever in fineness of workmanship and in the matter of good taste.[23]

The illustrations published here are but a taste of international influences for which *Studio* and like-publications can take credit: the art jewellery, metal and enamel work, art needlework (the decided popularity of appliqué), and book-arts subsequently prepared at the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, New Zealand, were not dissimilar to Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society pieces and plentiful other applied art pieces illustrated in *Studio*.[24]

Ultimately, in 1906, *Studio Year-Book of Decorative Art* was published for the first time: the aesthetic "House Beautiful", notably its interior, was canonised by the Arts & Crafts.

> Hitherto no systematic endeavour appears to have been made to meet the needs of that ever increasing section of the public who take an interest in the application of art to the decoration and general equipment of their homes by placing before them periodically a comprehensive survey of current achievement in this direction.

Studio underlined the importance of the Arts & Crafts for women; women's involvement, vitally important for the movement's prosperity, was acknowledged, if in slightly circumspect terms:

> The entrance of women into the ranks of designers for textiles of the larger kind cannot fail to re-act well upon their needlework, the

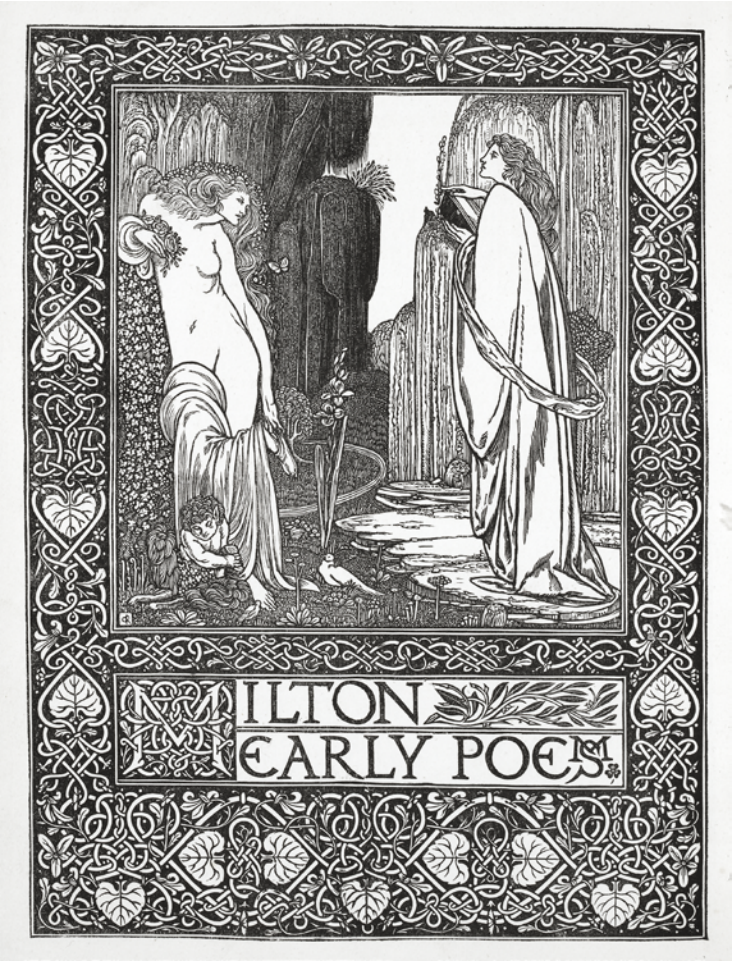
"Awards in The Studio *Prize Competition"*, Studio *XXV/no108 (Mar 1902), 152 ill*

planning of carpets and curtains giving the embroiderer a greater breadth and individuality of treatment and a keener sense of proportion, composition, and decorative line.[25]

What the *Studio* and similar publications record, of supposed interest to their female readers, was the shift from a male trade-oriented handicraft ethic to the crafts of house and home decoration, a shift to decidedly hands-on crafts. It is these more hands-on crafts which largely determined the continued existence of the movement as artcrafts.

The changed environment in which the Arts & Crafts became an idealised lifeyle, involving the house and home, was recognised in the *Studio*'s own design competitions in 1893, providing endless linear ideas and an abundance of Art Nouveau twists but with little apparent effect on "industrial art": it was said that, although 115,000 "are engaged in learning design and being trained to assist in developing the industrial art of the kingdom, nothing is further from the truth."[26] The *Studio* competitions were, at least, an acknowledgement of Walter Crane's (and Gleeson White's) efforts to free up the graphic work of South Kensington students.

The National Art Competitions continued, originally introduced by Henry Cole in 1852, giving students recognition for 63 years (1852-1915), credit coming also from the *Art Journal*. National Art Competition catalogues (held by the V&A Library, London) show that New Zealand occupied a special place in these competitions, one that was not enjoyed by Australia, and results for New Zealand were included in the official competition exhibition records for 1911, 1912, 1913 and 1914, along with England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man.[27]



Charles Ricketts, Title page, Milton Early Poems *1896, "designed and cut on the wood", using Vale type, a Vale Press publication using hand-made paper, page size 256x194mm; Fine Printing Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC-09_20-1290543.tif) The woodcut shows the influence of Morris's Chiswick Press, established 1891, and of Audrey Beardsley's sensuous line celebrated in the first issue of* Studio *in 1893. Ricketts used commercial printers but oversaw every aspect of design and production.*

"April 1884, was … Never before had modern printing been treated as a serious art …"

Private Presses/the "Book Beautiful"

The Private Press movement or book-art movement was one of the most positive off-springs of the Arts & Crafts, and among its most influential and lasting.[28] The Arts & Crafts created a more intense approach to fine-book publication as private presses sought to emulate medieval publications and manuscript illuminations, or to create contemporary equivalents. Early herbals were studied and used as inspiration.[29] Aymer Vallance credited Mackmurdo with instituting the Century Guild: the issue of the *Hobby Horse* came as a due and fitting sequence. …

> … The earliest number, … April 1884, was … quite unique of its kind. Never before had modern printing been treated as a serious art, whose province was to embrace the whole process, from the selection and spacing of the type and the position of the printed matter on the page, to the embellishment of the book with appropriate initials and other decorative ornaments.

A publication type was being re-instated in which every aspect of the process was "treated as a serious art". The result was a revived art form – the "Book Beautiful".[30] Cobden-Sanderson delivered a paper to the Art Workers' Guild in 1892 on 'The Book Beautiful'; he determined to produce such books: "I must," he wrote in 1898, "before I die, create the type for today of 'The Book Beautiful', and actualise it – paper, ink, writing, printing, ornament and binding. I will learn to write, to print and to decorate."[31]

Zelda Paul, Rhodian 16th-century circular flower study, 1938-40; Private collection (photo: Kristelle Plimmer).

Emery Walker talked on "Letterpress Printing and Illustration" at the 1888 Arts and Crafts Society exhibition.[32] William Morris was "greatly pleased" and by 1891 had established the Kelmscott Press, "the brilliant achievement with which his name will always be associated".[33] Morris designed fonts (preferring gothic), and used varying margins, close set type, uncut edges and woodcut decorations.[34] The Press's principal illustrator was Edward Burne-Jones. Other private presses produced work that typically was more restrained in style, exemplified by the muted presentation and detailing typical of books prepared by Charles Rickett's Vale Press, the Pissaros' Eragny Press, T.J. Cobden-Sanderson and Emery Walker's Doves Press, Ashendene Press, and C.R. Ashbee's Essex House Press.

The Studio marked this renascence in book-arts with commentary on Douglas Cockerell and the bookbindings he exhibited at the 1906 Arts and Crafts Society exhibition:

> No one knows more thoroughly than Mr Cockerell the ins-and-outs of the art of bookbinding, its history, and its traditions. He also is the possessor of a wide-minded understanding of what is demanded of the modern bookbinder who, whilst retaining the true traditions of his art, wishes to meet the demand for beautiful books, at a not prohibitive price, which does certainly exist and, we suppose, always will. Bookbinding is an art so inextricably bound up with the history of civilization that its study is one of absorbing interest apart from the acquisition of any knowledge of how to design and use the tools. ...

Cockerell was quoted:

> The great beauty and life of good gold-tooled ornament comes from the fact that each tool is put down separately, so the impressions reflect the light at slightly different angles.[35]

... manuals on the "how-to" of decorative design construction became standard issue.

Manuals

James Johnstone owned a *Studio* with an article on Persian patterns, his interest further sparked by the Glazier pattern design manual he owned: Richard Glazier in *A Manual of Historic Ornament* (1899) wrote on Persian ornament:

> ... there is no doubt that the art of the Arabs was founded upon the traditional arts of Persia.
>
> Persian decoration is characterized by a fine feeling for form and colour, and the singularly frank renderings of natural plants, such as the pink, hyacinth, tulip, rose, iris, and the pine and date. These are used with perfect sincerity and frankness, and are essentially decorative in treatment, combining harmony of composition of mass, beauty of form, and purity of colour. It was doubtless owing to these qualities, together with the perfect adaptation of ornament to material, that the Persian style so largely influenced contemporary work, and especially the European textile fabrics of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[36]

From the manual archetype, Owen Jones's *Grammar of Ornament*, manuals on the "how-to" of decorative design construction became

Shirley Ellis, "Glazed tile – Persian"; Private collection.
A student, such as Shirley Ellis, would prepare historically representative designs: Persian, Assyrian, Greek, Early Christian, Egyptian, English, French. James Johnstone owned a copy of Studio *for 1931, including an article on "The spirit of Persian art". Johnstone had served in the Middle East during WWI; a student Peggy Hay recalled: …* he was very keen on Persian design and that came over in his teaching. We did a lot of copying of some of his work he had made in the Middle East. I became rather fond of the peacock colours – the turquoise blues-greens and those sort of interesting colours. It's never left me, this sense of design – how to place things in a house and a garden. That was his legacy for lots of us.[37]

standard issue. While Crane was attempting to loosen the official design instruction system, Richard Glazier was compiling *A Manual of Historic Ornament, treating upon the evolution, tradition, and development of architecture & the applied arts : prepared for the use of students and craftsmen* (1899), termed by Stuart Durant as "among the best of its kind and widely used by design students".[38] The quote on Persian ornament from the Glazier manual exemplifies the topics touched on by typical design manuals available to design students in New Zealand.

The Persian art held by the South Kensington Museum (the Victoria & Albert) was a noted influence on William Morris and other Arts & Crafts designers.[39] The 1931 *Studio*, owned, as noted, by James Johnstone, and its article on Persian art began with the belief common since Owen Jones' contributions to design theory and colour in the mid-nineteenth century that the Orient "has been named mistress of the arts of colour"and the West "remains sovereign in the various arts of form".[40] The "effective beauty" of Persian art depended "on facts not found in Nature but supplied by the artist's imagination". The use of "pure forms", not "realism", gave the subject its "supremacy".[41] Their art expressed "an inner quality of mind than echoes of an outer world":

> The mind had mastered the world, not the world the mind. It is this triumph that endows Persian art with its authority and with its still unexplored and limitless potentiality.[42]

ENDNOTES

1 In *Designing Modernity 1885-1945* Thames and Hudson 1995, 118
2 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 373
3 *Studio* XVI/no73 (Apr 1899), 183-92: p189; re *Arts & Crafts* magazine, see 262 ill
4 Calhoun 2000, 78-86: New Zealand "Designers and Illustrators"
5 See illustration of Voysey *Studio* cover "Issues" 116 ill
6 *Studio* 95/no418 (Jan 1928), 3 ill
7 Callen 1979, 187; *Art Journal* 1897, 14-15
8 Ibid 189-91
9 Clive Ashwin; in *Studio* exhibition catalogue 1993, 8
10 Linda Gill *Letters of Frances Hodgkins* Auckland 1993, 121
11 *Studio* 51/no211
12 Poynter's *Asterie* is owned by Te Papa, Wellington, New Zealand
13 Cumming 2006, 34 col2
14 Calhoun 2000, chapter 1 "Art and Industrial Displays", 43-53
15 Crane [1896] 1972, 168
16 Ibid: 154, 168, 197
17 *Studio* VIII/no40 (Jul 1896), 101
18 *Studio* IX/no43 (Oct 1896), 50; Arts & Crafts Exhibition 1896 (First Notice)
19 Crawford *Ashbee* 1894, 384
20 Calhoun 2000, 141
21 *Studio* XXXVII/no156 (Mar 1906), 131; *Press* Christchurch, New Zealand (22 Sep 1906) 3
22 See Calhoun 2000, 122 ill
23 *Studio* XXVIII/no121 (Apr 1903), 184
24 *Studio* XXVIII/no119 (Feb 1903), 27ff (First Notice); XXVIII/no120 (Mar 1903), 117ff (Second Notice); XXVIII/no121 (Apr 1903), 179ff (Third Notice); XXXVII/no155 (Feb 1906), 48ff (First Notice), XXXVII/no156 (Mar 1906), 129ff (Second Notice), XXXVII/no157 (Apr 1906), 213ff (Third and Concluding Notice). Images of work from the Guild of Handicraft were specifically illustrated in *Studio* issue: XXXVII/no157 (Apr 1906), 224-6
25 "The First International *Studio* Exhibition" Part II, *Studio* XXIV/no106 (Jan 1902), 245
26 *Studio* II/no7 (Oct 1893), 37
27 V&A National Art Library Pressmark: 97.PP.82 Board of Education National Competition 1911 to 1914
28 See "1906-7 exhibition" 248-9
29 "Introduction" 14 ill, 15 ill, 152 ill
30 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 376
31 http://www.ull.ac.uk/exhibitions/beautifulcases.shtml; retrieved Aug 2011
32 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 376
33 Aymer Vallance *Studio* XVI/no73 (Apr 1899), 187; for full text see http://www.victorianweb.org/art/design/mackmurdo/index.html; retrieved on 31 Aug 2010
34 Crawford *Ashbee* 1895, 377-8
35 *Studio* XXXVII/no156 (Mar 1906), 138
36 Richard Glazier *A Manual of Historic Ornament* 1899, 81-2
37 Interview with Peggy Hay, 1 Sep 2002
38 Durant 1986 p23; Glazier also published *Historic Textile Fabrics: A short history of the tradition and development of pattern in woven & printed stuffs* (1923)
39 Parry 1988, 31
40 *Studio* CI/no454 (Jan 1931), 3
41 Ibid 8
42 Ibid 24

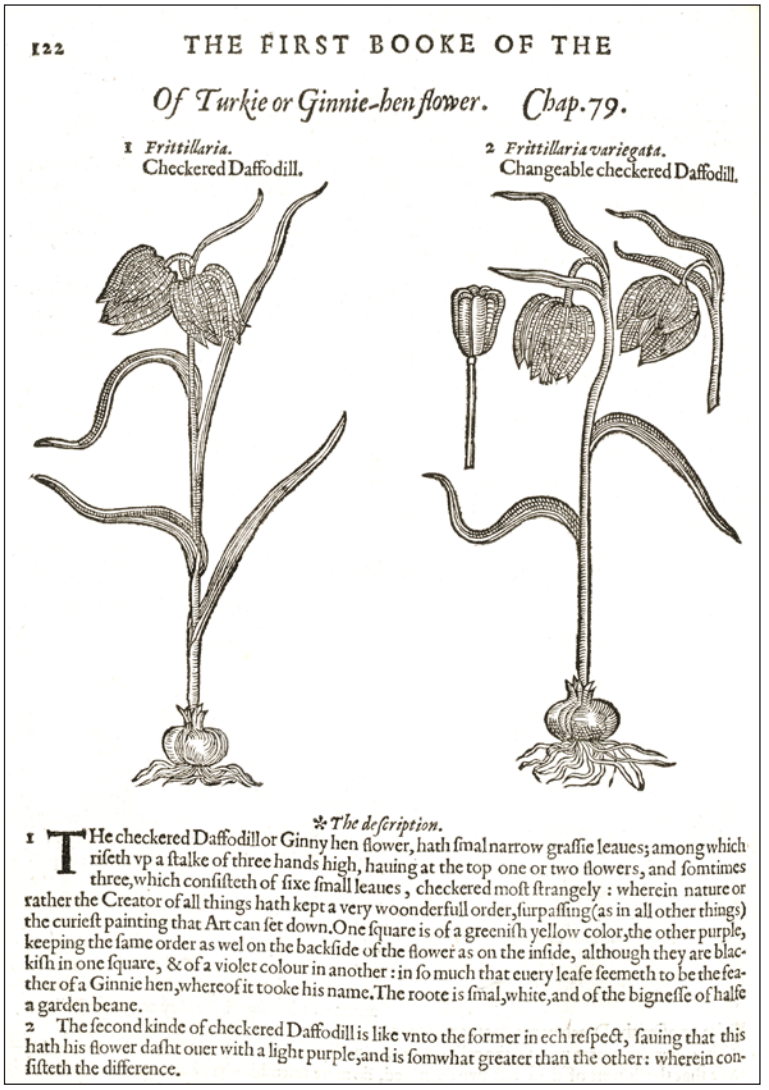
Herbals

The use of medieval herbals and pattern-books became one of the standards of later Arts & Crafts design practice. As in Gerard's Herball, the root system is frequently shown and carried through to later designs in a variety of media (for example, C.R. Ashbee "King Edward VII Prayer Book", 249 ill). Pugin used a medieval herbal to generate his decorative stencil designs (1849; 30-31 ills). Other Arts & Crafts figures known to have used and advocated the use of herbals included William Morris, Walter Crane, J.D. Sedding, the Glasgow School of Art, and W.R. Lethaby's Central School of Arts & Crafts in London. In New Zealand D.C. Hutton in Dunedin used "pattern books ... designed for Dunedin School of Art students".[1] A.D. Riley in Wellington, New Zealand, recommended Gerard's herbal.[2]

Richard Redgrave, instead of (or perhaps as well as) herbals, demanded direct study from nature: students were to use actual plant cuttings. As seen in photographs of design classes, the plants might be half-dead (196 top ill). Christopher Dresser followed Redgrave and used actual plant cuttings; as well as teaching cards.

J.D. Sedding "particularly recommended drawing inspiration from reference to early herbals".[3] In the 1890 (British) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue, Sedding on "Of Design" schooled his pupils:

> For the unskilled designer there is no training like drawing from an old herbal: for in all old drawing of nature there is a large element of design. …
>
> For the professional stylist, the confirmed conventionalist, an hour in his garden, a stroll in the embroidered meadows, a dip into an old



122 THE FIRST BOOKE OF THE

Of Turkie or Ginnie-hen flower. Chap.79.

1 *Frittillaria.* Checkered Daffodill.

2 *Frittillaria variegata.* Changeable checkered Daffodill.

✲ *The deſcription.*

1 THe checkered Daffodill or Ginny hen flower, hath ſmal narrow graſſie leaues; among which riſeth vp a ſtalke of three hands high, hauing at the top one or two flowers, and ſomtimes three, which conſiſteth of ſixe ſmall leaues, checkered moſt ſtrangely: wherein nature or rather the Creator of all things hath kept a very woonderfull order, ſurpaſſing (as in all other things) the curieſt painting that Art can ſet down. One ſquare is of a greeniſh yellow color, the other purple, keeping the ſame order as wel on the backſide of the flower as on the inſide, although they are blackiſh in one ſquare, & of a violet colour in another: in ſo much that euery leafe ſeemeth to be the feather of a Ginnie hen, whereof it tooke his name. The roote is ſmal, white, and of the bigneſſe of halfe a garden beane.

2 The ſecond kinde of checkered Daffodill is like vnto the former in ech reſpect, ſauing that this hath his flower daſht ouer with a light purple, and is ſomwhat greater than the other: wherein conſiſteth the difference.

John Gerard in The Herball, *London, 1597, 122 ill; Rare English Collection, Special Printed Collections, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SPC-09.15.tif). Also see page 2 for further information.*

> herbal, a few carefully-drawn cribs from Curtis's *Botanical Magazine*, ... is wholesome exercise, and will do more to revive the original instincts of a true designer than a month of sixpenny days at a stuffy museum. The old masters are dead, but "the flowers", as Victor Hugo says, "the flowers last always."[4]

Jude Burkhauser in her discussion of the Glasgow style, in *Glasgow Girls* (1990), notes that the Glasgow School of Art library owned an early herbal "which has been linked to some of the first work of the Glasgow Style in design at the school".[5]

J.W. Mackail (1899), William Morris's biographer, recorded that:

> Gerard's *Herbal*, the old favourite of his boyhood, supplied useful information about certain disused vegetable dyes ... Other old herbals which he acquired, both for their woodcuts and for the information they gave as to dyeing, were those of Matthiolus (Venice, 1590) and Fuchsius (Basle, 1543), the latter of which he notes as the best of all the herbals for refinement of drawing in the illustrations.[6]

Walter Crane used early herbals:

> and, like Morris, recommended these as sources, not only of information but as models of fine woodcut design ... Of the three famous herbals, by John Gerard, Pier Andrea Matthiolus and Leonhard Fuchs, it was the latter's *De Historia Stirpium* which Crane particularly admired.[7]

Photographs from herbals were recommended for Manchester students and a school conservatory to supply fresh plant cuttings, "to satisfy the 'constant necessity of fresh suggestion and resource for the designer'".[8]

C.F.A. Voysey's "Apothecary's garden" design (c1926) was "composed like an assemblage of needlework 'slips' copied from a seventeenth-century herbal. In the needlework tradition 'slips' were appliquéd on fabric, usually silk or velvet, to embellish a large area of cloth."[9]

ENDNOTES

1 Brown 1900-1920, 23 n117
2 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5, 40
3 Burkhauser *Glasgow Girls* [1990] 1993, 99-100
4 1890 (British) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue: 127, 127-8
5 Burkhauser *Glasgow Girls* [1990] 1993, 100
6 Mackail 1, 314
7 *Journal of the Society of Arts* (23 Oct 1889) 882, in: Spencer *Crane* 1975, 100
8 Walter Crane *Recommendations and Suggestions* Manchester (March 1893) 2 SecVI, in: Spencer *Crane* 1975, 163
9 http://trustworth.com/wallpaper.shtml#whoot; retrieved 5 Sep 2010

Gardens

Arts & Crafts gardens were not surprisingly among the most enduring and original applied arts created by the movement. Gardens throughout New Zealand would have supplied designers and students with plant cuttings preparatory to design construction. The rightness of using clippings from nature was practiced by David Blair at the Canterbury College School of Art in the mid-1880s and was still being used by Florence Akins, also at the Canterbury College School of Art, from the 1920s to the 1960s.

The smaller garden, more suitable for the burgeoning middle-class, with aspirations if not income, was introduced with William Robinson's *The English Flower Garden* (1881); as Walter Cook writes, discussing the Lady Norwood Rose Garden, Wellington, New Zealand: "Robinson proposed a move away from formally planted gaudy displays of plants and hardy exotics."[2] Wendy Hitchmough, in the beautifully illustrated *Arts and Crafts Gardens* (2005), posits the role of the Arts & Crafts garden as an extension of the life of the house, and a "feminine domain", with thoughts of nature's larger garden beyond.[3] William Morris's textiles were based on the flowers and plants found in smaller often-enclosed gardens, such as the trellised garden at his Red House, Bexleyheath, southeast London:

William Morris, "Making the Best of it" (1879, in or before), said in a paper read before the Trades' Guild of Learning and the Birmingham Society of Artists:

> And now to sum up as to a garden. Large or small, it should look both orderly and rich. It should be well fenced from the outside world. It should by no means imitate either the wilfulness or the wildness of

Alice Waymouth in her garden at Rawhiti (now Mona Vale), Christchurch, sometime between 1900 and 1905.[1]

> Nature, but should look like a thing never to be seen except near a house. It should, in fact, look like a part of the house.[4]

Linda Parry in *Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (1988) writes of the textile patterns of Arts & Crafts designers such as William Morris, as the Arts & Crafts grew towards its most abiding form in the delights of its nature-based designs of the 1890s:

> It is not surprising ... to find that many of the later designers of repeating floral patterns were also keen gardeners and chose the subjects of their designs on a basis of botanical and horticultural knowledge ... There is very little attempt to distort or adapt for the sake of pattern and all the flowers, plants, trees and fruit used are shown at their best, in bud or full bloom, reflected in the light of an English spring or summer morning.[5]

What was wanted were apparently-untended romantic gardens in which a swain and his maid (as seen on the second cover for *Studio* 1894[6]) would do their courting. Arts & Crafts gardens were rich with hollyhock, iris, delphinium, poppy, sunflower, roses, lavender, lupin, and pinks. The champion of the Arts & Crafts, *The Studio: Illustrated magazine of fine and applied art*, in articles in October, November and December 1900, offered articles on "Garden-making" as an applied art form. The first included an illustration of Orchard Green designed by William Morris.[7]

With the Aesthetic movement, absorption in Japonisme and thereby Japanese gardens provided new motifs; Charles Holme in an early issue of *Studio*, for which he was a founder and later edited, on "Artistic Gardens In Japan" wrote:

> In all our researches in the art of Japan we are again and again struck with the fact that the Japanese are ardent admirers of nature; that not only do they borrow from nature all that is good in their art, but they look upon the beautiful or the curious things of nature as objects almost of veneration ... It is this same veneration of nature's art that underlies much of their artistic work, and is the very foundation on which rests the elaborate structure of their art of gardening. …
>
> Suffice it here to say that the laws which govern these matters, although at times somewhat arbitrary, are not opposed to the statement we have made, that it is the veneration which the Japanese possess for nature's art that underlies the principles they have adopted in the laying out of gardens.[8]

Edward S. Prior wrote on "Garden-Making" in the October 1900 issue of *Studio*:

> It is the intention of this short essay to take gardens modestly, since their making is a simple homely work within the reach of any one who has the control of a quarter of an acre or less. At the same time – because of this homely work rather than in spite of it – it will be claimed that garden-making is an art, bounded by conditions which can be abused as well as used; that if it be easy to make a good garden, it is sadly easy to make a bad one; for that, in gardening as in all arts, sense and feeling produce beauty, while perverseness and indifference make ugliness.[9]

New Zealand followed Britain and created national traditions of botanising and botanical illustration, as well as pattern book preparation; importantly garden formation and plantings following British Arts & Crafts aesthetics. The National Library, Wellington, owns,

for instance, 22 books by the influential Arts & Crafts gardener Gertrude Jekyll. In New Zealand, a local Arts & Crafts garden style was developed by Alfred Buxton; Keith Stewart, an architectural historian, in "Looking for England: Alfred Buxton's Gardens – a New Zealand *House & Garden* Series", comments that Buxton "was arguably the original New Zealand landscape architect".[10] Ian Lochhead, for the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, refers to the influence of the English Arts & Crafts movement on the cottages built by Samuel Hurst Seager at The Spur, Sumner, Christchurch, noting that they:

> ... were combined with garden-city planning concepts to produce a unique residential development of timber cottages in a garden setting ... Seager was committed to the social role of architecture ... Seager was concerned with the total built environment and from 1910 his energies were increasingly directed towards town planning issues ...[11]

An important legacy is the revival of interest in botanical illustration. Nancy Adams was an exemplar: her obituary[12] noted that she learned to draw as soon as she could hold a crayon; her background was rich in botany. She went on to turn her botancial illustrative passions into a career at Te Papa. Te Papa more recently published: Audrey Eagle, *Eagle's Complete Trees and Shrubs*, Te Papa Press, Wellington 2007.

ENDNOTES

1 Elizabeth Abbott, at a similar date, prepared a cover for a rose catalogue cover, 1899, a similar design used for her winning *NZAFA annual exhibition* cover, 1898
2 Walter Cook "The Lady Norwood Rose Garden" 8; The Lady Norwood Rose Garden. pdf ; retrieved 10 Aug 2011
3 Wendy Hitchmough *Arts and Crafts Gardens* 2005, 10
4 Morris *Works* XXII, 81ff: 91
5 Parry 1988, 35
6 See "Publications ...", R. Anning Bell 140 ill
7 *Studio* XXI/no91, 35 ill
8 *Studio* I/no4 (Jul 1893), 128-35: 129, 135
9 *Studio* XXI/no91 (Oct 1900), 28
10 New Zealand *House & Garden* Series (March 1995), 52-6
11 Ian Lochhead "Seager, Samuel Hurst-Biography"; from the *Dictionary of NZ Biography* (Te Ara); http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/3s8/1; retrieved 10 Feb 2011
12 *Dominion Post* Wellington, New Zealand, 5 April 2007, B7

Arts & Crafts colour

Natural materials have colour and understandably with the movement's defining interest in materials went the colour, texture and tactility of chosen materials. The use of natural materials, preferably local materials, became a defining norm for the Arts & Crafts. Primary, secondary, and tertiary colours were an equally effective aspect of Arts & Crafts colour: colour conveys Beauty.

The colours of the 1890s were the secondaries green, mauve and yellow, from the particular green of the cloth binding covering Walter Crane's 1892 *Claims*[1], to the magic yellow-green used for the 1889 title page for Crane's *A Floral Fantasy in an old English Garden*[2], to the assumed decadence of the yellow cover of *The Yellow Book*.

Studio from the first took up the issue of colour in an article on poster collecting; the bright aggressive colours on French posters were heralded: "bitter red" and "burning yellow", "splendidly audacious colour and broad execution". "It is truly amazing that Chéret can reduce intense indigo, burning crimson, glowing green and yellow, in fact all the hottest colours on the palette, into broad harmony."[3]

C.F.A. Voysey, talking to *Studio* in September 1893, on his wish to raise the standard of design included, of course, colour:

> Some of the designs owe so much to their colour ... In the design of "Birds and Berries" ... the deep yellow of the birds, perched on pale green stalks among berries of salmon and creamy yellow, is balanced by the blue-green of the conventional leaf form, and the harmony kept without the least sense of "spottiness" which the black and white facsimile undoubtedly has.[4]

Hilda McIntyre? (Canterbury College School of Art student from c1908-9), Heraldic embroidered motif, Paint Rag *(Sep-Oct 1910), in purple, green and yellow*

Miss Cranstoun's famous Glaswegian "Tea Rooms", for which Mackintosh was the interior decorator for the upper storey mural decoration, involved the ground colours: green, "a greyish-greenish yellow, and ... blue ... so that the idea of earth to sky is preserved". Vivid colours were only used in "small, jewel-like spots, so that the whole aspect of each wall is cool, and forms an excellent background".[5]

Gleeson White believed that the "decorative schemes" for the tea rooms were the:

> first examples of permanent mural decoration evolved through the poster. Not a few of those who devoted special attention to the modern poster were interested far more in the influence it promised to exercise upon fresco and stencilled-surface decoration than for anything relating to its own ephemeral purpose.[6]

Posters by the likes of the Beggarstaff Brothers and Aubrey Beardsley "who have exploited flat-colours in simplified masses" would hopefully be a force for future mural decoration:

> it is not the personal expression of any one artist which is here commended, but the systematic conventionalisation of form, the use of bright colours, and the absence of hackneyed motives which mark the experiment.[7]

New Zealand

Maud Kimbell (Sherwood), NZAFA (Wellington, New Zealand) annual exhibition catalogue cover, 1900

Alice Beville Collins (Canterbury College School of Art student from 1910), Enamel painting; Private collection

Annie Buckhurst (Canterbury College School of Art student from 1910), Enamel paintings, 1910-21; Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Yvonne Rust collection). Alexander Fisher's work was pivotal to the popularity of enamel painting.

… black and white were in the end the immutable – "the inseperable and all-pervasive" – colours of the 1890s.

Black and white

It is as if constant nineteenth-century innovation and the comparative technical improvements in printing drew attention to the reality of black and white printing. In no way lessening the dominance of green, mauve and yellow as the colours of the 1890s (see 157 ill), black and white were in the end the immutable – "the inseparable and all-pervasive" – colours of the 1890s.[8] Private press books used black in lines of varying widths and velvety spongy expanses of black. Walter Crane, among the most ably equipped, prepared his readable history on black and white book illustration[9]; of "our modern black and white artists", Crane wrote:

> Now for the graphic ability, originality, and variety, there can be no doubt of the vigour of our modern black and white artists. It is the most vital and really popular form of art at the present day, and it, far more than painting, deals with the actual life of the people; it is, too, thoroughly democratic in its appeal, and, associated with the newspaper and magazine, goes everywhere – at least, as far as there are shillings and pence – and where often no other form of art is accessible. …
>
> It might be possible to construct an actual theory of the geometric relation of figure design, ornamental forms, and the forms of lettering, text, or type upon them, but we are concerned with the free artistic invention for the absence of which no geometric rules can compensate. The invention, the design, come first in order, the rules

Beryl Mackenzie, NZAFA (Wellington, New Zealand) annual exhibition cover 1909, showing overlapping motifs as in Japanese designs; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ref S-L 350-COVER-1909)

and principles are discovered afterwards, to confirm and establish their truth – would that they did not also sometimes crystallize their vitality![10]

It was the "idea of the book itself" – the book as a unified art and craft form of many parts.[11] Prints and posters, equally, whether Japanese or French, taught new lessons in the use of black and white.

ENDNOTES

1 See "Walter Crane" 124 ill
2 See "Walter Crane" 167 ill
3 *Studio* I/no2 (May 1893), 61,63
4 *Studio* I/no6 (Sep 1893), 235
5 *Studio* XI/no52 (July 1897), 95-6
6 Ibid 99
7 Ibid 100
8 Stephen Calloway *Studio* exhibition catalogue 1993, 34 para1
9 Walter Crane *Of the Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New* [1896] 1972, see 141
10 Ibid 169, 230
11 Ibid 174

Alice Beville Collins (Canterbury College School of Art student from 1910), Enamel sketch; Private collection

Lewis Foreman Day (1845-1910): a common sense aesthete

Day was among the designers who into the 1880s created a decorative style that presented nature as magical, free and crisp; for designers the ornamental possibilities sourced in nature were limitless. Day's style used the now-mandatory structured design format and soon used the attractively swinging lines associated with Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo. These patterns were rich with suggestions for the coming Art Nouveau style.[1]

Day is said to have acquired his interest in design from visiting the South Kensington Museum. In the 1870s he became a "free-lance designer for textiles of all kinds, wallpaper, ceramics, silver and furniture".[2] A key aspect of his latter career was his passionate endorsement of "paper designs", as Christopher Frayling observed:

> By separating "design" or "ornamentation" from process, he was at one level harking back to the old South Kensington ways of thinking – against which the Arts and Crafts people had consistently argued; but at another level he was laying the foundation for a substantial new critique of design teaching which has survived to the present day.[3]

Day was a founding member and treasurer of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society.[4] He was an Examiner for the South Kensington schools and an assessor in the National Competitions. He was an "occasional lecturer in surface design" at the Royal College of Art from 1895 to 1900, and employed Lyndsay Butterfield, an outstanding student.[5] With his roles in the South Kensington system Day was assured of influence throughout

Lewis Day, Roller-printed cotton manufactured by Turnbull and Stockdale in 1888, probably shown at the first Arts & Crafts Society Exhibition; © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.[6] *Day's roller-printed cotton uses Mackmurdo's vertically swaying lines.*[7] *For New Zealand Day was a distant but important taste-setter.*

"... Anything more lifeless and characterless than the competition designs that were exhibited annually at South Kensington could scarcely be imagined."

"Greater Britain". Day's 1903 book (quoted 164-5) was used for teaching basic design at the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, New Zealand, for many decades. Day backed "instinct"; his 1903 book concluded: "The best in design is that which there is no discussing. It is there, or it is not. You feel and appreciate it, or you do not." Day by 1908 was delivering a message on design that paralleled Dresser's ascetically stylised records of plant cuttings, as a preliminary step in design construction.

Lewis Day, *Instances of Accessory Art: Original designs and suggestive examples of ORNAMENT with practical and critical notes* (1880) illustrate Day's well-written advice on design:

> The Adaptation of Natural Form to Ornamental Design
> I think it was mainly owing to the preaching of Owen Jones that the full time of our tastelessness was turned. Jones, (he was almost morbidly afraid of a touch of nature), was perhaps useful in effecting a clean sweep of all naturalistic ornament whatever ... The kind of Moresque scroll and diaper work which in the hands of Owen Jones was nearly always graceful and ingenious, if somewhat monotonous, did not find many imitators. But a ghostly kind of ornament came into fashion at Kensington and elsewhere, consisting of the forms of leaves and flowers arranged upon a geometric basis. The natural forms were invariably flattened out as if they had been put in a press, till the effect of these designs (so-called) was more suggestive of dissection than design. Anything more lifeless and characterless than the competition designs that were exhibited annually at South Kensington could scarcely be imagined.
>
> How then to solve this difficulty of combining fitness with growth, life, character, and interest? The key to this problem was supplied by an art almost unknown to Owen Jones, the art of Japan. Within the last ten years or so there has been a perfect flood of Japanese wares in our shops ... The fact is, Japanese art took us by surprise, and we went fairly mad about it ... The study of these two styles [Gothic & Japanese], and of nature, should enable us to master at least the difficulty of rendering natural forms aptly ... I think the influx of all three must be evident to eyes that can see.[8]

Early in *Every-Day Arts: Short essays in the arts not fine* (1882), Day noted

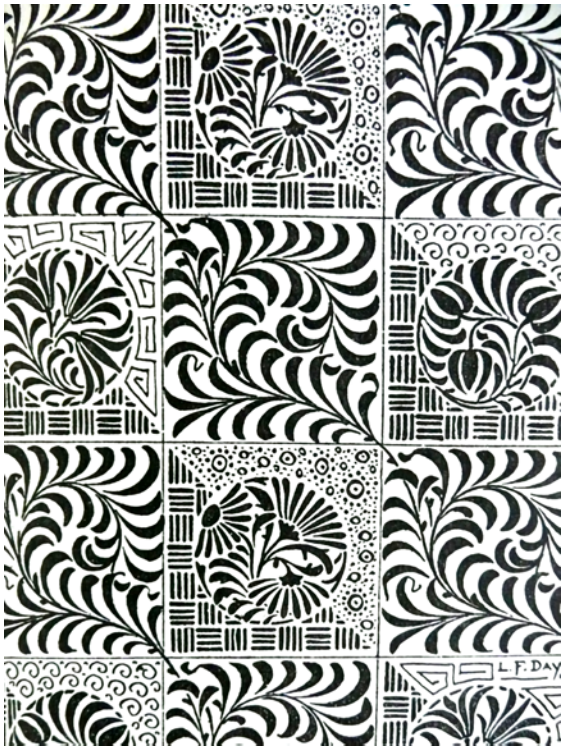
Audrey Black (Canterbury College School of Art, early 1940s), Wallpaper design, watercolour; Private collection[9]

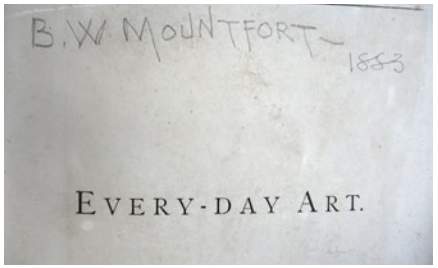
"... The art of pattern design consists not in spreading yourself over a wide field, but in expressing yourself within given bounds ..."

that many of the pages in the book had already been printed in the *Magazine of Art* (available in New Zealand). The third edition of *Nature in Ornament* was available in the (New Zealand) General Assembly Library by 9 September 1899. In the "Introductory" to the book, Day wrote: "The bias of natural man is not unnaturally in the direction of nature."

Lewis Day, *Pattern Design: A book for students, treating in a practical way of the anatomy, planning and evolution of repeated ornament* (1903). The 1933 edition of this book was owned and treasured by the Canterbury College School of Art design teacher Florence Akins; the edition was revised and enlarged by Amor Fenn, the latter providing a valuable illustrated chapter on the history of design:

> I. What Pattern Is
>
> If folk knew a little more about it, realised what was and what was not within the control of the designer ... The art of pattern design consists not in spreading yourself over a wide field, but in expressing yourself within given bounds. …
>
> Pattern is, in fact, the natural outgrowth of repetition[10] ...
>
> XIV. How To Set About Design
>
> The natural lines of a flower, determined by no thoughts of repetition, are scarcely likely to bear repetition very well, and the difficulty of working up to nature, and comprehending such naturalistic details in any satisfactory scheme of composition, is extreme ... A designer makes his flowers grow his way.[11] …





Top: Lewis Day, Every-Day Art (1882), "Pa*inted tile pattern", 123 ill – (see p155)*

Bottom: *Lewis Day, Title page,* Every-Day Art *(1882). The National Library of New Zealand copy of* Every-Day Art *is inscribed, in pencil, "B. W. MOUNTFORT – 1883."*

"... An artist of initiative will show marked originality in the treatment of the oldest theme ..."

> XX. The Invention Of Pattern
>
> ... An artist of initiative will show marked originality in the treatment of the oldest theme. …
>
> Inspiration comes to a man from without as well as from within: every competent designer, you may be sure, has made an infinite number of studies, both from nature and old work. But he does not work from them, nor often refer to them, except perhaps to refresh his memory by way of preliminary to design. The sight of them before his eyes would hamper him. …
>
> Neither is it possible to design straight-away from nature. ...
>
> All trades want learning ... A designer, whatever his natural gift, is of no practical use until he is at home with the conditions of manufacture. …
>
> And then, when he has learned his trade, and when he has developed, let us hope, to the full the sense of beauty and the faculty of expression that may be his, he has further to be an artist ... The best in design is that which there is no discussing. It is there, or it is not. You feel and appreciate it, or you do not.[12]

A damning report of 3 July 1911 noted the dearth of RCA students becoming "professional 'designers and craftspeople'".[13] Perhaps, not surprisingly, New Zealand withdrew from the "South Kensington" examination system in 1913. Unfortunately, the withdrawal ensured that there was no organised assessment system for "artist-designers".[14]

ENDNOTES

1 Parry 1988, 40
2 Ibid 122
3 Frayling 1987, 78
4 Refer to "Guilds" 124
5 Frayling 1987, 78; Parry 1988, 121-2 for a list of manufacturers using Day's designs
6 Parry 1988, 14 ill col plate, 16, 22
7 http://arh346.blogspot.com/2007/10/blog-post_01.html; retrieved 31 Aug 2010
8 Day 1880, plate XII
9 Illustrated *Simplicity and Splendour: The Canterbury Arts & Crafts movement from 1882* Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu (exhibition catalogue) 19 Nov 2004–27 Feb 2005, endpapers 2-3
10 Day [1903] 1933: I, *What Pattern Is*, 1ff: 1-2, 2
11 Ibid: XIV, *How To Set About Design*, 167ff: 185, 187
12 Ibid: XX, *The Invention Of Pattern*, 278ff: 279, 279-80, 280, 281
13 Frayling 1987, 79
14 Calhoun 2000, 153

Walter Crane (1845-1915): a graphic approach

Walter Crane is William Morris's best known protégé. Crane's ability to be part of the "movers and the shakers" of his time made his importance to developments in design in "Greater Britain" and elsewhere all the more important. While passionately espousing Arts & Crafts ideals – the union of design and handicraft – Crane's designs were "paper designs" prepared for sympathetic manufacturers, such as Metford Warner, the proprietor of Jeffrey and Company. Crane designed primarily for a range of two-dimensional media for the home such as textiles and wallpapers, and also, of special interest here, for a range of graphic media.[1] Crane, while not an architect, treated architecture as "the" art. (For New Zealand, his illustrated books and his role in the 1906-7 art and industry exhibition are of still largely-bypassed importance for local design reform.)

Crane was a core member of the Art Workers' Guild and the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society and, as much as Morris, and later Lethaby, the person most responsible for cementing the philosophy of quasi-apprenticeship and handicraft training to the British South Kensington system. Crane, as much as Morris and Lethaby, set the hand-crafted parameters by which the Arts & Crafts movement is often defined.

Toy-books

Crane served an apprenticeship as a wood-engraver from 1859 to 1862 and talked subsequently of the value of his apprenticeship.[2] He became a skilled draughtsman who thereafter retained a passionate interest in line. Lewis Day would later claim an individuality for English poster

Crane's toy-books became recognised source books for home decorators following aesthetic preferences ...

design that owed little to the Japanese or the French but all to Walter Crane's "toy-books":

> Deliberately flat treatment of design in strongly outlined masses of bright colour begin in this country, whatever it may owe to Japanese prints, with the toy-books of Mr Walter Crane ... It is no longer possible to contend, in the face of work like theirs, [for example, the Beggarstaff Brothers], that English advertising art is a negligible quantity.[3]

Crane's toy-books became recognised source books for home decorators following aesthetic preferences (illustrations below): Crane's illustrated interiors are not dissimilar to the interiors assembled by E.W. Godwin, leading in the 1870s to the fashion for Japonisme: ebonised furniture, folding screens, blue and white pottery, irregular groupings, asymmetry, and bright spots of colour.

Bookplates

Crane, from the 1880s, expanded his commercial design interests to include book plate production (169 ill), and "menu cards, tickets, cover designs and advertisements for the business firms".[5] It can only be conjectured at the tangential influence Crane must have had on the *Studio* competitions from 1893, which were often designs for graphic media.[6]

Walter Crane, Title pages, A Floral Fantasy in an old English Garden *1899; General Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 925-TITLE). Crane's* Fantasy *arose from the geometric perfection of the garden at Pent Farm, Kent, in the summer of 1898.*[4] *The predominant colour in the garden scene, green, was at its most fashionable.*

Walter Crane, Bookcover, The Baby's Opera: A book of old rhymes with new dresses, *"engraved, & printed in colours by Edmund Evans", issued Christmas 1876[8] London and New York*

Walter Crane, The Baby's Opera, *"Here we go round the mulberry bush", 11*

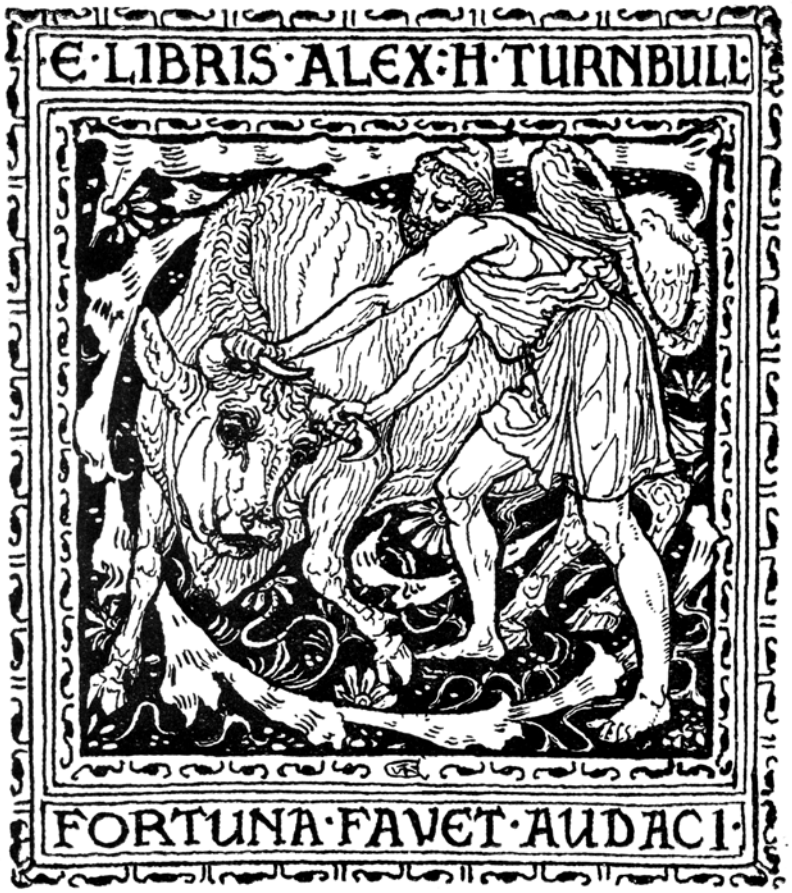
Walter Crane, The Baby's Bouquet: A Fresh bunch of old rhymes & tunes, *ill opp title page, "arranged & decorated by Walter Crane", "Cut & printed in colours by Edmund Evans", "ready for Christmas" 1878[9], London & New York. The first book (1876) was printed from wood-engravings, and the second (1878) was prepared using Japanese colour wood-block printing techniques.*

Crane's designs might now seem overly busy but his free use of figures, animals and birds, and references to nature, was especially important for later designers.[7] Crane's graphic lines were not flattened and ironed (in the manner disparaged by Lewis Day[10]) but move and "'swirl' and 'blob'".[11] He surprisingly refused to acknowledge the coming Art Nouveau style, even if designs such as those for *Flora's Feast: A masque of flowers* (1889, 170 ill) helped popularise the style.

Flora's Feast was held to be singular in the *New Zealand Mail* on 2 Dec 1892 page 11 (as Crane's theoretical volume on *The Claims of Decorative Art* was being published). A paper on "Walter Crane and his work" was read at the Wellington Art Club by Mr J. Baillie; the review, under "Art Notes", was fulsome:

> But it is to his work as an illustrator or I should say designer of books that I wish to draw your attention ... There is a certain roundness in his figures which is obtained by the simplest and most decorative means. Crane's drawings show an outline in nature which most painters will not admit. But both are right. The former to keep his decorative effect must retain a certain flatness and an outline is needed to keep the subject in its place and give it effect ... Crane's figures and plant forms [are drawn] from memory. There is not the slightest doubt that his plant form is drawn from nature. For pure line and beautiful harmonies in colour, one cannot do better than study the works of Walter Crane. I believe that a set of his works is kept at South Kensington for use of the students there.

Baillie clearly owned an extensive collection of Walter Crane children's books:



Walter Crane, Alexander Turnbull Bookplate, June 1891, "Ex Libris. Alex H. Turnbull, Fortuna Favet Audaci", pen and ink, 122x104mm (mounted); Drawings, Paintings & Prints, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref A-136-001). Alexander Turnbull commissioned Crane to prepare a drawing for a bookplate: "The design was genealogical in origin, representing the legendary founder of the clan – 'a man turning a bull', as Alexander Turnbull described it – with his own name and 'Fortuna Favet audaci' below."[12] Bookplates had again become popular and the first issue of Studio *contained an article on "Designing for Book-plates".[13]*

Walter Crane, "Lilies, turned to tigers"; in Flora's Feast: A masque of flowers *1889.* Flora's Feast: *"forty unframed colour-lithographed pages illustrating Flora calling the flowers from their winter sleep, each one appearing according to its place in the yearly cycle".*[14] *The illustrated "Lilies, turned to tigers" from* Flora's Feast *is based on William Blake's famous imagery, yet uses the freely-swinging lines of the Art Nouveau style.*[15] Flora's Feast *was the first of a series of flower books designed by Crane between 1888 and 1906.*[16]

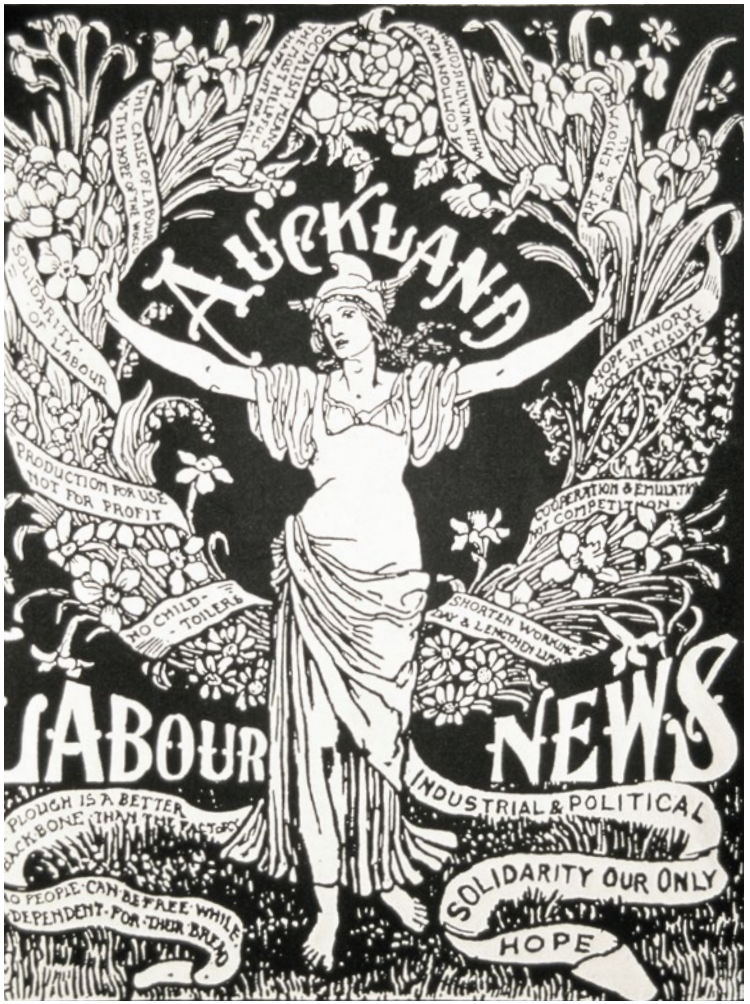
The best of my collection I consider the *Masque of Flowers* [Flora's Feast] (1890). It shows Mr Crane at his very best. His love of flowers and the different places he gives them in his mind is very plainly perceptible by the beauty of his designs ... He has designed some very beautiful wall papers, and is quite an authority on all kinds of decoration.

Design & socialism

As Crane's association with Morris and socialism became intense – from the mid-1880s – both men made serious contributions to design education. Walter Crane's socialism, through his union involvement, had international implications. Commitment must be complete, even if anarchy was a step too far.

Crane became "the artist for the Cause", arguing in 1892 in *The Claims of Decorative Art*:

> If I may have succeeded in making out a case for the arts now called Decorative and Applied (though "there is but one art"); if I have made good their claim to consideration in an age given largely to place pictorial and graphic power first; ... and especially to think out further the relation of art to labour and to social life, ... my book will serve its purpose. …
>
> ... we want a vernacular in art, a consentaneousness of thought and feeling throughout society ... No mere verbal or formal agreement, or dead level of uniformity, but that comprehensive and harmonising unity with individual variety, which can only be developed among a people politically and socially free. …



Auckland Labour News, *cover (1915-27), the title superimposed on the 1895 Walter Crane cartoon noXI,* A Garland for May Day; *in* A Souvenir of the International Socialist Workers and Trade Union Congress *1896; in Bert Roth and Janny Hammond,* Toil and Trouble *1981, 95 ill.*

> Hence comes it that most of the efforts to revive the arts and crafts among the people, without reference to their economic condition, are like so many attempts to grow the tree leaves downwards.[17]

Crane's 1892 book *The Claims of Decorative Art* was his manifesto and was as much about workers' rights and the rightness of socialism as it was about freeing design and handicraft from their existing constraints. Crane's thesis should be read in conjunction with, even as a corollary to, William Morris's texts.

Walter Crane The Claims of Decorative Art (*1892*)[18]

Crane, like Morris, was late in taking up his pen to both illustrate and write for the socialist cause and necessary design reform. (The copy of Crane's 1892 book held by the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, is inscribed on the title page in pen and ink: "To Mr & Mrs G. F. Watts/with Walter Crane's/Sincerest regard./August 14 1892". G.F. Watts' RA bookplate, drawn by Crane, is attached inside the front cover.) Riley in New Zealand recommended Crane's 1892 book for students in the colony. Crane wrote:

> Of the papers included in this volume some of the shorter ones had their origin in fireside discussions in the studios of brother artists; others have been addressed to larger and various audiences; but all have been written under the influence of that new-old view of art, which has revived during the last quarter of our century, which regards it not only in relation to use and material, and seeks for its vital root in the handicrafts, but also in its connection with common life and social conditions. …

"… The real test in decoration is adaptability, either to position or material."

> While maintaining the first importance of the arts and crafts of design as contributing to the formation of a fine sense of beauty – a sense which grows by what it feeds on, I have dwelt upon the necessity of harmonious relation in all the arts, and a return to their primal unity in architecture.[19]

The Claims of Decorative Art

> The current notion of decoration is summed up in the expression "flatness of treatment" … Hence, too, the flat-ironed primulas and the genus of enfeebled flora and fauna generally, which so often, alas, do duty as decoration. As if decorative art was a voracious but dyspeptic being, and required everything in heaven and earth to be thoroughly well boiled down before it could be properly assimilated. …
>
> Flatness of treatment, of course, is well enough; it is the most single and obvious answer to one of the many problems a decorative artist has to consider … all art … needs our best faculties, whether we treat things in the flat or the round; but as well might one be satisfied with the definition of painting as "the imitation of solid bodies on a plane surface", as with "flatness of treatment" as adequate characterisation of decoration. …
>
> The real test in decoration is adaptability, either to position or material. The exigencies of both often open the gates of invention;

"... there appears to be a certain logic of line and colour in design which, given certain fundamental forms and characters, demands certain necessary sequences ... "

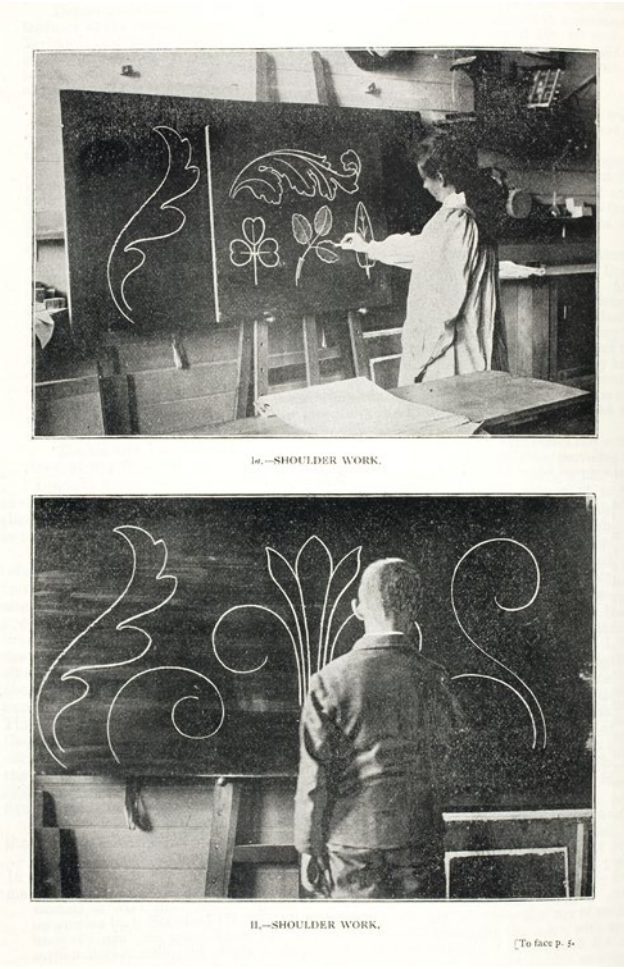
but assuredly no decoration has a right to the name which does not satisfy these conditions.[20]

On the Structure and Evolution of Decorative Pattern

From the poetic or artistic side pattern might be defined as the Notation of silent music. Certain decorative units are the keynotes. Primitive patterns, like primitive music, consist of very simple elements – of very few notes. Repetition is the chief factor in the development of both – Repetition and Rhythm ... "Here is a sound," says the musician, "let us make music." "Here is a surface," says the designer, "let us make a pattern". …

The art of pattern-making might be defined as the constructive sense applied to surfaces. The ornamental designer is not so absolutely bound by structural laws as the architect; but the fact that the structural laws which govern his art are more mental than physical does not make them less binding or less real. Designing is not mathematics or geometry, but there appears to be a certain logic of line and colour in design which, given certain fundamental forms and characters, demands certain necessary sequences. …

And a design fitted for a hanging will not adapt itself to a floor or ceiling. A pattern, a design, should at once speak for itself. Its plan should declare its purpose, and its treatment acknowledge


I.—SHOULDER WORK.

II.—SHOULDER WORK.

To face p. 5

"Shoulder work", AJHR *1898 E-5B ills opp 5; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-K 893-E5B-5). A.D. Riley's 1898 text on "Drawing" explained:* Shoulder-work in freehand drawing – that is, drawing done at arm's length ... Occasionally this is done upon the blackboard, but oftener the work is done upon brown paper with charcoal, white or coloured chalks. *Crane's approach was effectively put in place for South Kensington students throughout "Greater Britain" and beyond, and was recommended by Riley for New Zealand students.*[21]

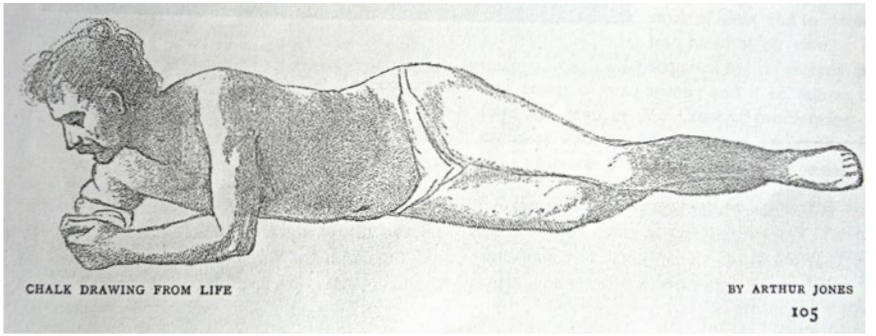
"Taking line, then, as the basis of ornament, a simple horizontal line forms, as it were, the primal decorative unit."

the limitations and necessities – the characteristics, in short, of the material in which it is produced, and the method by which it is worked. …

Taking line, then, as the basis of ornament, a simple horizontal line forms, as it were, the primal decorative unit. Repeat it in parallels, and we get at once the type of a whole series of the simplest, but perhaps the most widely-used of patterns. It gives us the banded courses of brick and marble, the reeded mouldings and strings in architecture, the endless linear borders in ceramics; whilst in textiles it seems, in the ever-recurring barred and striped patterns, as if it were the Alpha and Omega of design, and that like Hope – slightly to alter the well-known line – it

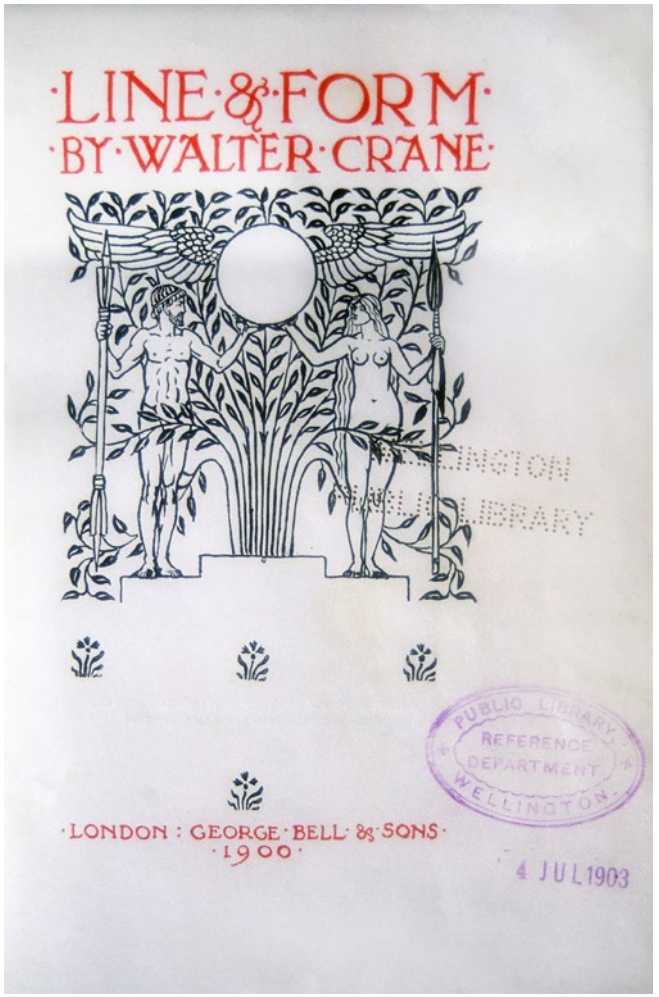
– *springs eternal in the human vest.* …

It seems to me that one of the difficulties of designers in the present day is rather the embarrassment which comes from the overwhelming mass of examples from every age and clime with which he is overwhelmed. It requires a very powerful artistic digestion to assimilate such a mass and such a variety of ornamental styles. The consequences, too, are evident enough around us ... an extraordinary jumble – a hybrid production resulting from a mixture in the mind of all these styles, - just as if one were to consult the dictionaries of all the tongues living and dead, and take a few words there and a few

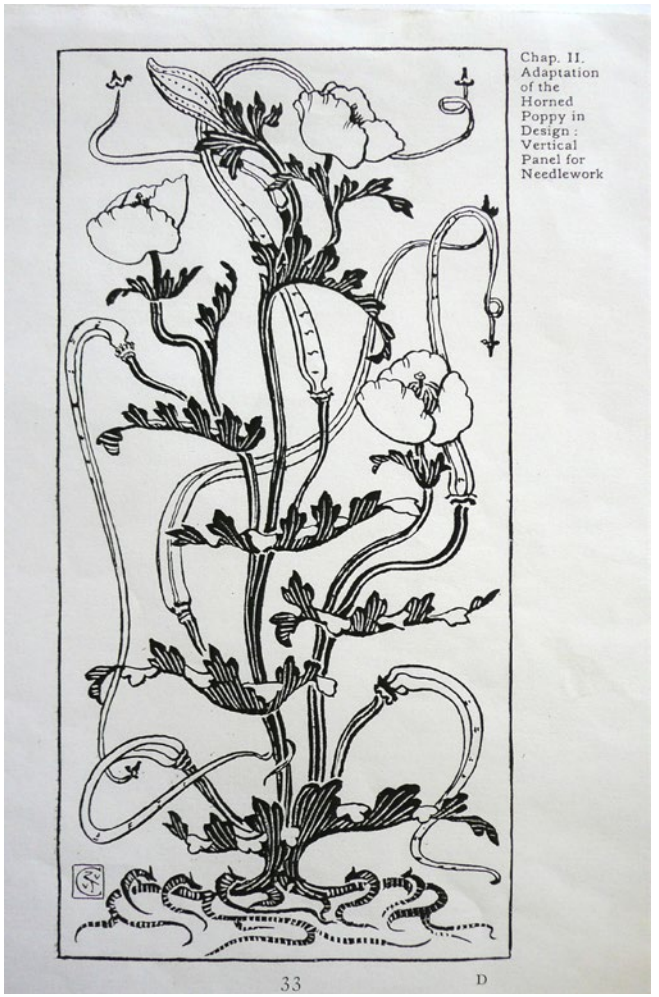


Arthur Jones, Chalk drawing from life, "Manchester School of Art", Studio *V (June 1895) no27, 105 ill. Life-drawing classes were by this time accepted for both fine and applied art students and were among Crane's recommended course changes for Manchester School of Art students from 1893, the practice followed in New Zealand by the new century.*[24]

Costume drawing class, Wellington Technical School, c1900; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand[25]



Walter Crane, Title page, Line & Form *1900, London, stamped as received by the "Public Library Wellington, Reference Department" on "4 JUL 1903", with its red and black ink lettering.*[27] *The book's date-stamp of "4 JUL 1903" suggests the comparative speed with which such publications reached New Zealand. (The National Library, Wellington, copy was later circulated by the "Country Lending Service".)* Line & Form *(1900) was a practical guide to the development of skills in drawing line and form.*



Walter Crane, Adaptation of the Horned Poppy in Design: Vertical panel for needlework, Line & Form, *33 ill.*

"... if he acquires the skill to make a thing of beauty, he is an artist in the true sense of the word."

words here and call the results language or poetry. …

If we must have ornament let it be good as far as it goes, and grow naturally out of the constructional necessities and material of the work. The importance of good design and handicraft cannot be exaggerated, for upon their health depends the health of all art whatsoever; and the test of the conditions of the arts in any age must be sought in those crafts of design which minister to the daily life and common enjoyment of humanity. …

And it matters not whether he wield the chisel, the hammer, or the brush, or work at the forge, the carpenter's bench, the stone-mason's shed, on the scaffold or in the studio; if he feels his work, if he acquires the skill to make a thing of beauty, he is an artist in the true sense of the word.[22]

Art & Handicraft
The formation of guilds of workers in art, taken with other indications of a very decided movement towards a revival of handicraft and of design as associated with it, is one of the most notable signs of the times.

In the midst of the full tide of mechanical invention and unheard-of ingenuity in the adaptation of machinery, we come back to the hand, as the best piece of machinery after all.[23]

The Importance of the Applied Arts, and their Relation to Common Life

... I believe we are making a mistake in training students in art, from first to last, solely with the pictorial view. The imitative powers are cultivated to the utmost, while the inventive are neglected. The superficial effects of nature are studied, while the expressiveness and value of pure line, and its bearing on applied art, are very much overlooked. Thus the designing, constructive power seems to be considered secondary to the depicting power, or rather one phase of it; the consequence is we get large numbers of clever painters and graphic sketchers, but very few designers. Everything is looked at from the pictorial point of view, and the term artist has been narrowed to mean the pictorial or imitative painter.

I should like to see a reversal of the principle. I should like to see a course of training in the handicrafts come first, as the most important to the cultivation of a sense of beauty in common life, not to speak of its importance to an industrial country, in an industrial age.[26]

Crane and Manchester

By September 1893 Crane had been confirmed as part-time Director of Design at the Manchester School of Art.[28] Crane's appointment was recorded in October 1893 by *Studio*:

Coincidentally with the appointment of Walter Crane as Director of Design, the Manchester City Council has transferred the study of design, hither to carried on in the technical school, to the School of Art in Cavendish Street, and consolidated the two, with Mr Glazier

Crane sought to loosen a decidedly turgid system – to breath new life into the government system of design instruction.

> as head-master. The fees have been reduced out of regard to students who can afford only a portion of their time for the study of art.[29]

Among the important thrusts of Crane's proposed course was his belief that studies from life were "'of the utmost importance to students in all branches of art'":[30]

> … rapid studies of leading lines and notes of motion and momentary attitudes from the living model, ... are indispensable ...
>
> The exercise in black and white drawing ... includes ... study of printers' ornaments, the form of letters and type, and the decorative use of inscriptions, ...
>
> An already existing class for training designers of printed textiles has been enlarged by the addition of a special section in which rapid studies can be made of momentary poses – poses suited to particular designs – and in which art-workers in search of wider and more comprehensive practice can gain profitable experience ... Students have now a much wider choice of means of expression. They may draw from life or the antique in white chalk on brown paper, with the brush in oil or water-colour, or with the pen; they may substitute for the wiry outlining of antique figures, which used to be insisted upon, broad silhouettes, suggesting mass and stating proportions; they are encouraged to believe that mere surface finish and neat execution are not the only things at which they have to aim, but that style and artistic capacity have an even higher value.[31]

Crane's desired course regrettably had to be run along with the National Course of Instruction as it was for this that the Manchester school was funded by government and not for any advantages theoretically offered by Crane's experiments.[32]

Crane additionally recommended: medieval herbals;[33] a school conservatory to supply fresh plant-cuttings; studies in material suitability; a costume collection 'and an avairy' to teach colour.[34] Crane's blackboard demonstrations taught students to free their line studies,[35] using Crane's "Lines of Movement", published in *Line & Form* (1900): it is especially interesting to find that Eadweard Muybridge, whose photos of galloping horses changed scientific views on animal movement, had lectured at South Kensington in 1889.[36] Crane sought to loosen a decidedly turgid system – to breath new life into the government system of design instruction. What was so important for the training designer was the shift from "plaster casts" and "historical ornament" to "a fluent interpretation of natural form and inventive pattern-making".[37]

New Zealand

A.D. Riley, in the lead up to his 1898 report to government, visited London, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and Glasgow; Riley was charged with studying both science and art educational courses. His recommendations on drawing, design and art instruction for New Zealand[38] appear to be strongly influenced by developments in Manchester and Birmingham.

Walter Crane in his *Claims* (1892) had said: "I should like to see a course

"... Line is ... a language, a most sensitive and vigorous speech of many dialects; which can adapt itself to all purposes ..."

of training in the handicrafts come first."[39] He was shortly to be in a position to realise his ideal. Crane was briefly (August 1898 to March 1899)[40] but influentially in charge of the central South Kensington school, renamed the Royal College of Art (the RCA) in 1896. Due to Crane, on 7 March 1900[41], it was announced that members of the Art Workers' Guild (practising designers) would be hired to teach at the school.

Crane resigned in short order due, he said, to "private work ... It was just that, with his mind on *A Floral Fantasy in an Old English Garden* and on *Beauty's Awakening: A masque of winter and spring* ... Crane could not take the department in-fighting any more."[42]

Walter Crane The Bases of Design *(1898) and* Line & Form *(1900)*

The two books were compiled from monthly lectures by Crane as Director of Design at the Manchester Metropolitan School of Art.[43] The books were standard text books over many decades.[44] *Bases of Design* (1898) looked at historical examples of ornament applied to architecture but in a less prescribed manner than recommended by other manuals.[45] (The two are among an impressive collection of books on the Arts & Crafts from the turn-of-the-century held by the Wellington Public Library.)

Walter Crane, Line & Form (1900)

> ... Line is, indeed, as I have before termed it[46], a language, a most sensitive and vigorous speech of many dialects; which can adapt itself to all purposes, and is, indeed, indispensable to all the provinces of design in line.[47]

Line & Form encouraged the development of technical skill by experiment and an analytical approach to nature and design. It may even claim to be a modest precursor of Paul Klee's *Pedagogical Sketchbook* 1925. It attempted to arouse the kind of curiosity which was to lead a later generation of artists in the 1950s to study Darcy Wentworth Thompson's *Growth and Form*.[48]

New Zealand

Walter Crane in 1906-7 at the Christchurch, New Zealand, exhibition offered over 20 items "Exhibited, designed and executed by Walter Crane, RWS, A&C" – original drawings, designs and sketches, with two portières designed by Crane, one executed by Mrs Walter Crane and the other by Mrs Jefree.[49]

Crane's importance for taste and design reform in New Zealand is most easily demonstrated by the numbers of children, toy and picture books in local libraries. The National Library, Wellington, New Zealand, owns around 85 books by Walter Crane and 7 books by his sister Lucy. As illustrated, Alexander Turnbull (after whom the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellingon, New Zealand, was named) commissioned a bookplate from Crane, June 1891.[50]

ENDNOTES

1 Parry 1988, 121
2 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 76
3 "English Poster Design", *Art Journal* (April 1906), 97-8; Calhoun 2000, 78
4 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 138
5 Ibid
6 See graphic media illustrations, 144-6
7 Calhoun 2000, 23 ill (Antique class, Wellington Technical School, c1900); 96 ill (Plaster modelling class, Wellington Technical School, c1900); 96 ill (Modelled heads, Wellington Technical School, c1900)
8 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 76
9 Ibid 77
10 See back "Day" (1880), 163
11 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 106
12 Letter, 9 Jul 1891, in E.H. McCormick *Alexander Turnbull: His life, his circle, his collections* Wellington 1974, 92-3
13 *Studio* I (Apr 1893) no1, 24-8
14 Spencer *Crane* 1975: 99; 193 n23 notes that a similar idea attracted Crane in 1866, based on Christopher Dresser's *Dial a Flower*
15 Ibid 100
16 Ibid 137
17 Crane 1892: preface vi, 15, 17
18 Ibid cover, 119 ill
19 Ibid: preface, v (preface written in Edgewater, Illinois, January 1892.); vi
20 Ibid: *The Claims of Decorative Art* 1ff: 4, 4-5, 5
21 Refer to Riley's New Zealand innovations, 237ff
22 Crane 1892: *On the Structure and Evolution of Decorative Pattern* 39ff: 39-40, 40, 41, 42, 47-8, 48, 49
23 Ibid: *Art & Handicraft* 62ff: 62
24 Refer to drawing instruction in New Zealand 217-223
25 Also see illustration of the Antique drawing class, Calhoun 2000, 23 ill
26 Crane 1892: *The Importance of the Applied Arts, and their Relation to Common Life* 106ff: 121-2
27 See the use of red and black ink for Owen Jones *Grammar* "Italian" illustration, 66 (centre)
28 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 161
29 *Studio* II(Oct 1893) no7, 36
30 Crane *Recommendations & Suggestions* Manchester (March 1893), 3 secXII; in Spencer *Crane* 1975, 163
31 *Studio* V/no25 (Apr 1895), 107-9
32 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 165
33 See "Herbals", 152ff
34 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 163
35 Ibid 163 ill
36 Ibid 164 ill
37 Ibid 162
38 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 39ff
39 See back "Crane" (1892), 176 col 2
40 Frayling 1987 p59
41 Ibid p67
42 Ibid p60
43 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 162
44 Ibid 165
45 Ibid 163
46 See back "Crane", 178
47 Crane 1900, 20-1
48 Spencer *Crane* 1975, 165
49 Spielmann 1908: 260, 263, 264
50 See Crane bookplate illustration 169

William Richard Lethaby (1857-1931): work as art

"... architecture and building are quite clear and distinct as ideas – the soul and the body ..."

W.R. Lethaby is still an insufficiently acknowledged voice for the mature Arts & Crafts movement; his passionately-espoused ideal of work as an art form – work as a spiritual idea – and his equally strong advocacy of a whole-earth philosophy have continuing resonance. Lethaby's leadership roles at the Central School of Arts & Crafts[1] and the Royal College of Art – and his role in recommending appointments to New Zealand schools – made him a more important figure to the Arts & Crafts in New Zealand than might be thought.

Joseph Ellis, of the Municipal School of Art, Belfast, was appointed to the Wellington school in 1908 (on Lethaby's recommendation) to teach modelling, modelling design, and carving in wood and stone.[2]

H. Linley Richardson, appointed the same year, again on Lethaby's advice, took the life classes and encouraged illustrative work at Wellington Technical College.[3]

Vivian Smith, remembered warmly as head of the art department at Wanganui Technical College (1932-46), arrived in New Zealand in 1913, recommended by Lethaby. He had attended the Royal College of Art from 1907 to 1911 during Lethaby's tenure.[4]

Francis Shurrock attended the Royal College of Art from 1909 to 1913 and was recognised for his drawing, modelling and sculptural skills; he was appointed to the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, New Zealand, in September 1923, under the La Trobe Scheme[5]: while the influence of Lethaby will have been secondary, the latter's ideas resonate in Shurrock's effect on his students. Shurrock's words could be Lethaby's; as Mark Stocker observes in his study on Shurrock (2000), the influences originated with John Ruskin.

Lethaby had read Ruskin[6] and the latter's philosophy is present throughout his writings and practice, as are Morris's words: "art is the expression of man's pleasure in labour". Lethaby talked in the broadest terms: he talked in universals.[7]

From a trade/craft background, Lethaby was at 14 apprenticed to local architect Alexander Lauder. In 1879 Lethaby went to London to work for Norman Shaw, the firm known for encouraging the "Queen Anne" architectural style. Ten years later Lethaby went into private practice. In the 1880s he was a founding member of the Art-Workers' Guild and helped found the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. He was briefly involved in a furniture-making enterprise set up on co-operative Arts and Crafts principles.

W.R. Lethaby wrote *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth* in 1891, stating:

> ... architecture and building are quite clear and distinct as ideas – the soul and the body ...
>
> If we trace the artistic forms of things, made by man, to their origin, we find a direct imitation of nature. The thought behind a ship is the imitation of a fish. …

> Old architecture lived because it had a purpose. Modern architecture, to be real, must not be a mere envelope without contents. …
>
> What then, will this art of the future be? The message will still be of nature and man, of order and beauty, but all will be sweetness, simplicity, freedom, confidence, and light; the other is past, and well is it, for its aim was to crush life: the new, the future, is to aid life and train it, "so that beauty may flow into the soul like a breeze".[8]

Lethaby's 1891 book was reworked and serialised in *The Builder* in 1928, when, as noted by Gillian Naylor, "the theories of Modernism were being consolidated on the Continent".[9] It is also the publication date of Kenneth Clark's *Gothic Revival*. Based on the 1928 series, *Architecture, Nature, and Magic* was published in 1956, and continued Lethaby's crusade: "At the inner heart of ancient building were wonder, worship, magic, and symbolism; the motive of ours must be human service, intelligible structure, and verifiable science."[10] Lethaby's ideas were, it appears, in circulation from 1891 to 1956 and, with the listed appointments to New Zealand schools, will certainly have been influential in New Zealand.

In 1896, the Central School of Arts & Crafts (under W.R. Lethaby and George Frampton) became the acme of all that the Arts & Crafts guild-like groups could have wanted and offered training only to those already in an "art" trade – "the first school ever to be based entirely on the principles of craft training".[12]

New Zealand

Only two years earlier, in 1894, the New Zealand Education Department had taken control of New Zealand-wide South Kensington drawing,

Interior with Arts & Crafts scholar Noni Ashton. The simplicity of the interior lauds Lethaby's economical approach to building and his sympathetic interpretation of local tithe barns.

W.R. Lethaby, Church of All Saints, Brockhampton, Herefordshire, 1901-2, modelled after the English tithe barn.[11] Lethaby used a concrete vault roof, protected by Herefordshire thatch. At Brockhampton Lethaby was talking in nationalistic-symbolic terms. The use of local thatch on a concrete vault roof was both traditional and innovative. Ruskin would have commended the church for its truthful uncut roughness – Gothic clothed in a modern dress.

design and art examinations. A few years later, in 1898, Arthur Dewhurst Riley, presented his report to the New Zealand government on British drawing, design and art education.[13] Riley's report is sourced in Crane and Lethaby philosophies; words such as "originality" and "freedom and variety" pepper Riley's text. Riley understandably advocated that New Zealand establish a school along the lines of the London-based Central School of Arts and Crafts:

> It may not be possible to approach in completeness any such school as the Arts and Crafts of London, but something may be done by combining design and practice together as previously indicated in our New Zealand art schools.[14]

The Central School of Arts and Crafts, as a trade school, did not encourage female students, other than classes elected as suitable for women.[15]

Hermann Muthesius was in Britain from 1896 to 1903 on behalf of the Prussian Board of Trade, resulting in his famous three-part tome on *The English House*. Muthesius's friends included "Walter Crane, the McNairs, Charles and Margaret Mackintosh and the Newberys from Glasgow".[16] He visited the Central School and wrote that the school was "Probably the best organised contemporary art school".[17] Lethaby followed Crane's sterling effort to replace the world of plaster casts with examples of direct relevance to a student's later trade. Lethaby had amassed illustrated texts and the best possible examples of applied arts, the collection moved to the Central School in 1896 as a circulating library. The Central School library included, as recommended by A.D. Riley for New Zealand schools within a few years, John Gerard's *Herbal* and William Curtis's *Flora Londinensis*.[18]

W.R. Lethaby, Church of All Saints, Brockhampton, Herefordshire, 1901-2 (181 ills), was commissioned by Alice Foster in memory of her parents. The church and its interior display severe plainness and respect for local/vernacular materials and indigenous building styles. Local natural materials and building types contribute to the "repose" created by the church. It was not a question of reproducing a past style, or jumbling together a strikingly-new style; a knowledge of past styles allowed the designer or architect to create something new while genuflecting respectfully to a past style, as Lethaby does at Brockhampton.

Walter Crane's theoretical positions[19] were principally responsible for the Royal College of Art restructuring in 1900. The four new Royal College of Art principals were all members of the Art Workers' Guild: Lethaby became Professor of Ornament and Design. In 1902 Lethaby was appointed sole charge of the Central school. He left the Central in 1911 to devote himself full-time to his role at the Royal College of Art. He was involved with the Design and Industries Association from 1915. Lethaby left the Royal College of Art in 1918 and became Surveyor for Westminster Abbey. He continued writing and lecturing, as a valid means of popularising his whole-life philosophy.

Lethaby's teaching style at both the Central and the Royal College of Art was as he set out as editor for the internationally available *Artistic Crafts Series of Technical Handbooks*.[20] Specialists in particular popular crafts cum trades taught at the Central and authored books in the series published from 1901.[21] The series had an influence on the Arts & Crafts internationally and the books are still relevant as technical guides to popular crafts. Lethaby in 1906 in the "Editor's Preface" to Edward Johnston's influential *Writing & Illuminating & Lettering*, the volume

reprinted 26 times, set out Lethaby's personal philosophy – indirectly endorsing Owen Jones's understanding of the gestalt of calligraphy[22]:

> In issuing these volumes of a series of Handbooks on the Artistic Crafts, it will be well to state what are our general aims. …
>
> In the first place, we wish to provide trustworthy text-books of workshop practice, from the points of view of experts who have critically examined the methods current in the shops, and putting aside vain survivals, are prepared to say what is good workmanship, and to set up a standard of quality in the crafts which are more especially associated with design. Secondly, in doing this, we hope to treat design itself as an essential part of good workmanship. During the last century most of the arts, save painting and sculpture of an academic kind, were little considered, and there was a tendency to look on "design" as a mere matter of appearance. Such "ornamentation" as there was was usually obtained by following in a mechanical way a drawing provided by an artist who often knew little of the technical processes involved in production. With the critical attention given to the crafts by Ruskin and Morris, it came to be seen that it was impossible to detach design from craft in this way, and that, in the widest sense, true design is an inseparable element of good quality, involving as it does the selection of good and suitable material, contrivance for special purpose, expert workmanship, proper finish, and so on, far more than mere ornament, and indeed, that ornamentation itself was rather an exuberance of fine workmanship than a matter of merely abstract lines. Workmanship when separated by too wide a gulf from fresh thought – that is, from design – inevitably decays, and, on the other hand, ornamentation, divorced from workmanship, is necessarily unreal, and quickly falls into affectation. Proper ornamentation may be defined as a language addressed to the eye; it is pleasant thought expressed in the speech of the tool. …
>
> It is desirable in every way that men of good education should be bought back into the productive crafts: there are more than enough of us "in the city", and it is probable that more consideraton will be given in this century than in the last to Design and Workmanship.[23]

Lewis Day died in 1911 and Lethaby's formula for design and trade/craft instruction was prescribed for South Kensington students everywhere.[24] Day had accused Lethaby of only promoting design for architecture and of neglecting design for "industry", meaning mass manufacture. Day, it will be recalled[25], believed that "design intelligence" could be taught and by working with manufacturers a designer would understand the limitations of individual materials and technologies.

Lethaby directed Royal College of Art training, on terms opposed to Lewis Day's:

> By this direct access to the material conditions the meaning and purpose of design as arrangement for real work is brought home to the students, it corrects the erroneous idea that design is an abstract thing, and convinces them that suitability and pleasant fitness are the main considerations.[26]

The Lethaby approach, despite similarities to past courses, was taught by practising artists and artisans, and introduced imagination, invention, and variety in the use of "outline, colour, simple shapes, and 'games'

with forms". Students were to be "competent in a certain small group of subjects and an artist in at least one branch".[27]

W.R. Lethaby, "Art and Workmanship", *The Imprint*, issue one, January 1913[28], introduced with Ruskin's words, encapsulated Lethaby's ideas: Lethaby was a voice for his times as the world was about to experience World War I:

> Ruskin was quoted: As the art of life is learned, it will be found at last that all lovely things are also necessary: the wild flower by the wayside, as well as the tended corn; and the wild birds and creatures of the forest, as well as the tended cattle; because man doth not live by bread only, but also by the desert manna; by every wondrous word and unknowable work of God. Happy, in that he knew them not, nor did his fathers know, and that round about him reaches yet into the infinite, the amazement of his existence.
>
> ... A work of art is a well-made thing, that is all ... Most simply and generally art may be thought of as THE WELL-DOING OF WHAT NEEDS DOING. ...
>
> EVERY WORK OF ART SHOWS THAT IT WAS MADE BY A HUMAN BEING FOR A HUMAN BEING. Art is the humanity put into workmanship, the rest is slavery. The difference between a man-made work and a commercially-made work is like the difference between a gem and paste.[29]
>
> Although a machine-made thing can never be a work of art in the proper sense, there is no reason why it should not be good in a secondary order – shapely, smooth, strong, well fitting, useful; in fact, like a machine itself. Machine-work should show quite frankly that it is the child of a machine; it is the pretence and subterfuge of most machine-made things which make them disgusting.[30]
>
> In the reaction from the dull monotony of early Victorian days it must be admitted that many workers fell into affectation of over-designing their things. Rightly understood, "design" is not an agony of contortion but an effort to arrive at what will be obviously fit and true.[31]
>
> *ART IS THOUGHTFUL WORKMANSHIP.*[32]

The English, having led design reform for the second-half of the nineteenth century, had now been surpassed by Continental designers.

W.R. Lethaby, *Form in Civilization: Collected papers on art and labour* (1922). The book reprints earlier papers and commentary from 1896 onwards. The principle paper of interest is "Design and Industry" delivered to the Design and Industries Association in 1915. The English, having led design reform for the second-half of the nineteenth-century, had now been surpassed by Continental designers. What should be done?

> It is therefore proposed to found a Design and Industries Association which shall aim at such closer contact between the several branches of production and distribution, and at the same time explain its aims and ideals, as far as may be, to the public. We ought to obtain far greater results from our own originality and initiative than we have done in the past. We must learn to see the value of our own ideas before they are reflected back on us from the Continent ... The English book, from the letterpress to the binding, has very greatly

The idea of beauty, daily-bread beauty, not style pretences, must be brought back into our lives.

> influenced foreign productions. Pattern designing of all kinds for textiles and wall-papers has also been remarkably developed here, and the English fashion in design has led the world during the last generation. …
>
> There is undoubtedly some misconception as to what English people want. There is a large section at least which wants what it can't get. Quite remarkably beautiful cotton stuffs woven with coloured stripes, tartans, and chequer patterns are produced for the Indian market. They would make delightful curtains in country houses, but they are entirely unknown in England. …
>
> It happens that here in England for two generations men have been spontaneously turning towards the making of things. Morris himself was one of the first educated men who felt this impetus, and he has been followed by hundreds of others, many of whom have made great sacrifices for the crafts in the endeavour to make reasonable and beautiful objects ... The students in our design schools feel the same impulse towards making things, and show an aptitude which seems to come from this instinct towards workmanship. There is indeed enough designing ability in the country to improve our wares up to any conceivable pitch of excellence, and with due encouragement to bring new life of many kinds into all sorts of industries.[33]

In another essay, Lethaby's words catch the essence of his ideas: The idea of beauty, daily-bread beauty, not style pretences, must be brought back into our lives.[34] Lethaby's "quasi-religious socialism", Godfrey Rubens words[35], continued to be relevant.

New Zealand

The power of Lethaby's message in New Zealand can be seen from a little book, *Home and Country Arts* (1923), published by the National Federation of Women's Institutes, London, which is stamped "9 Mar 1945" and was circulated by the New Zealand Country Library Service, and recognizes a shift to crafts for the home stretching back to the (British) Home Arts and Industry Association (established 1884). In a chapter on "Drudgery Redeemed: Beauty in Common Things", Lethaby said:

> By art I think we should mean all worthy human handicraft, from dairy work and ploughing to cathedral building. ...
>
> ... If work is without art it is mere toil, drudgery and slavery; skill, the sense of service and pride in the doing, will fill it with a new spirit. Art is drudgery made divine. We have to make beauty out of all we do[36]

ENDNOTES

1 Calhoun 2000, 163 on New Zealand students at the Central School
2 *Wellington Technical College Jubilee Review 1886-1936*, 82, in Calhoun 2000, 115
3 Calhoun 2000, 115; Jane Vial, "H. Linley Richardson 1878-1947", in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography Volume Three 1901-1920*, R17
4 See Wanganui illustrations 270-2
5 Mark Stocker *Shurrock* 2000, 26
6 Referred to "Ruskin", 90
7 Naylor *Lethaby* 1984, 44-5
8 Lethaby [1891] 1974: 2, 4, 7, 8
9 Gillian Naylor; in Backemeyer and Gronberg (eds) *Lethaby* 1984, 48
10 Godfrey Rubens' "Introduction" to Lethaby *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth* [1891] 1974 concludes (16) with the cited quote from Lethaby *Architecture, Nature, and Magic* 1956, xviii
11 C&K illustrations nos 23, 24
12 Frayling 1987, 70
13 NZ *AJHR* 1898, E-5B, 1-81: 37, 38
14 Calhoun 2000, 62
15 Callen 1979: 40, 42, 189-91
16 Dennis Sharp in his "Introduction" to Muthesius 1904-5, xvi
17 Theresa Gronberg; in Backemeyer and Gronberg (eds) *Lethaby* 1984, 14
18 NZ *AJHR* 1898, E-5B, 40. LCC Schools Examples Collection, Central School Collection, in *Lethaby* 1984, exhibition catalogue illustration no172, 100-1
19 See "Crane", 171-4, 176
20 Lethaby introduced "Morris", 100
21 Calhoun 2000, 219-20
22 Durant in Whiteway *Dresser* (2000): 57, 225 n47
23 Lethaby "Editor's Preface" to Edward Johnston *Writing & Illuminating & Lettering* [1906] 1911: vii, vii-viii, ix
24 For an introduction to the debate between Lewis Day and Lethaby, see "Issues" 114ff, in particular 118
25 See Day under "Issues", 118
26 Reports on Royal College of Art, HMSO, 1910, 38, in Rubens *Lethaby* 1986, 224
27 Frayling 1987, 70
28 Lethaby 1913, 1-3. Reprinted in *Form in Civilization* [1922] 1957, 166ff
29 Ibid: 1, 2
30 On the issue of machine production, also see "Issues" 112-13; "Ruskin": 92-3, 94; James Johnstone 119-20, and "enduring" 293-4
31 Lethaby 1913, 2-3. For further consideration of "over-designing", also see the quotes demonstrating the movement's drive to simplicity, in Appendix, 312-13; and see Ruskin's views on Giotto's conventionalisms, "Ruskin", 95 col 2; and James Johnstone and Francis Shurrock under "enduring", 292, and James Johnstone, 293
32 Lethaby 1913, 3
33 Lethaby [1922] 1957, 2nd edition: 40, 43, 44-5
34 Lethaby [1922] 1957, 12
35 Reubens *Lethaby* 1984, 268
36 *Home and Country Arts* [1923] 1930, 17

Charles F. Annesley (C.F.A.) Voysey (1857-1941) and Mackay H. Baillie Scott (1865-1945)

In the first volume of *Studio* (September 1893) Voysey agreed to be interviewed to "raise the appreciation of design", an end to which the magazine was dedicated. For Voysey, pattern repeats should be obvious and not hidden. Voysey's symbols are noticeably conventionalised without any fudging of meaning:

> You do not consider the ornament on a paper should be limited to strictly conventional foliage and purely ornamental motives?
>
> Voysey replied: No, I do not see why the forms of birds, for instance, may not be used, provided they are reduced to mere symbols. Decorators complain of small repeats and simple patterns, because they are apt to show the joints, and because the figures may be mutilated, in turning a corner for instance. If the form be sufficiently conventionalised the mutilation is not felt; a real bird with his head cut off is an unpleasant sight, so is a rose that has lost half an inch of its petals; but if the bird is a crude symbol and his facsimile occurs complete within ten and a half inches' distance, although one may have lost a portion of his body, it does not violate my feelings. To go to Nature is, of course, to approach the fountain-head, but a literal transcript will not result in good ornament; before a living plant a man must go through an elaborate process of selection and analysis, and think of the balance, repetition and many other qualities of his design, thereby calling his individual taste into play and adding a human interest to his work. If he does this, although he has gone

C.F.A. Voysey, Artist's Cottage, 14 South Parade, Bedford Park, 1891. The house is a studio home on the edge of Bedford Park, an economical white-painted roughcast English house with a slate roof. Voysey, concerned with economy in house design, used stringent simplicity, little ornament, low ceilings, and "simple" colours.[1]

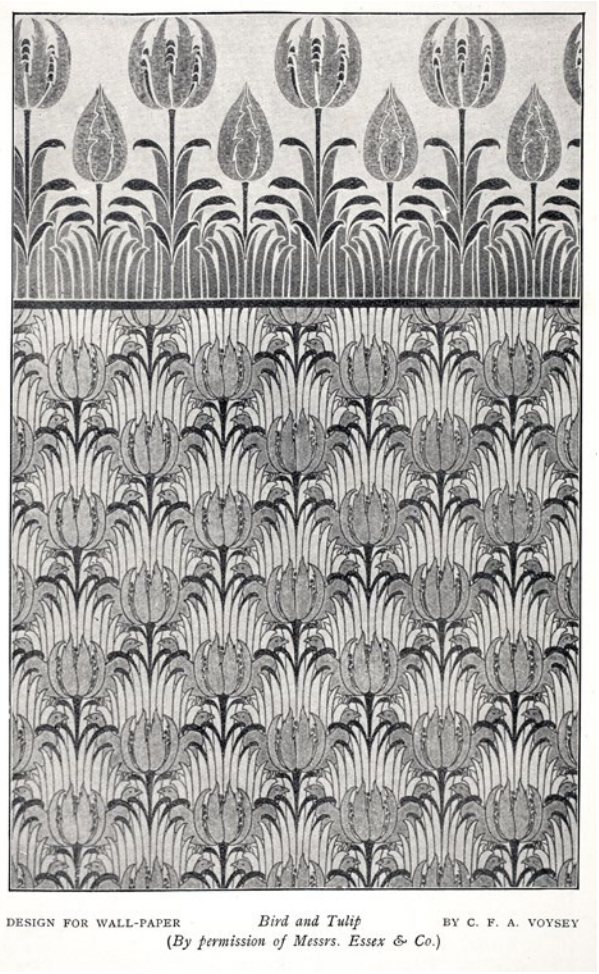
directly to Nature, his work will not resemble any of his predecessors; he has become an inventor. …

It seems to me that to produce any satisfactory work of art, we must acquire a complete knowledge of our material, and be thorough masters of the craft to be employed in its production. Then, working always reasonably, with a sense of fitness, the result will be at least healthy, natural, and vital; even if it be ugly and in a way unpleasing, it will yet give some hope. ...

... We have a language of ornament and yet nothing to say – charmed by its sound, we have let vanity feed on its own creations, and forgotten that the expression of deep and noble feelings would make decorative art once again full of life and vigour.

... Not that we need shut our eyes to all human efforts, but we should go to Nature direct for inspiration and guidance. Then we are at once relieved from restrictions of style or period, and can live and work in the present with laws revealing always fresh possibilities.[2]

Voysey, architect, designer, lecturer and writer, another polymath, was the author of signature aspects of the modern smaller viable middle-class house. Voysey, after architectural training, including time with J.P. Seddon's practice, set up his own practice in 1882. He was a member of the Art Workers' Guild from its inception in 1884 and an Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society participant from 1888.[3] A Ruskin-Morris follower, Voysey nevertheless was a "paper designer", working closely with manufacturers, using similar designs for "repeating designs for wallpapers, woven and printed textiles and carpets".[4] Wendy Hitchmough, in her monograph on Voysey (1997), stresses that by transferring designs



C.F.A. Voysey, "'Bird and Tulip' design for wall-paper", Studio *VII/no35 (May 1896), 211 ill; in "Some Recent Designs by Mr C.F.A. Voysey by E.B.S."[7]; New Zealand & Pacific Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref SL-1090-211). Voysey and Baillie Scott both designed interiors with nature as their calling-card and both used strongly conventionalised designs. Both designed houses as country retreats; and houses for appropriately groomed parts of a city, such as Bedford Park or Hampton Heath in London.*

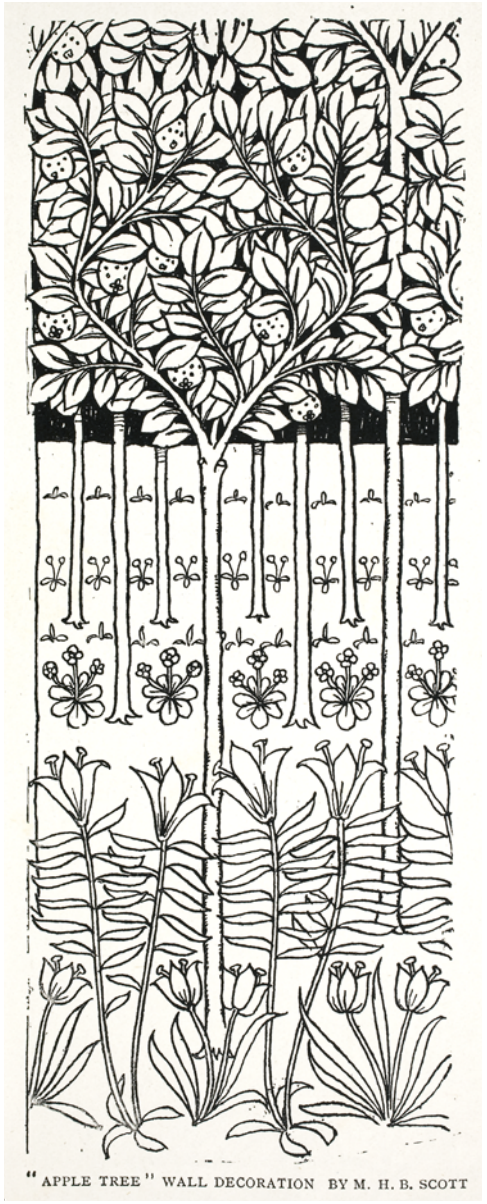
Voysey's patterns are crisp, delightful representatives of positive mechanical pattern production, the artist still staunchly loyal to Arts & Crafts ideals.

between media (contrary to Arts & Crafts precedents), Voysey was "striving for a particular type of unity throughout the arts, which would allow him to express his philosopy of spiritual love, thought and feeling through a set of refined symbolic icons".[5]

Voysey's patterns are crisp, delightful representatives of positive mechanical pattern production, the artist still staunchly loyal to Arts & Crafts ideals. He valuably was willing to publicise his views through lectures and articles in *Studio*. His linear patterns with strong under-structures, often in "hot" colours, are representative of Arts & Crafts textile design between 1893 and 1903[6] and for many represents Arts & Crafts two-dimensional design at its most attractive. What is noticeable about Voysey's 1893 *Studio* interview (187-8) is the assumption that Voysey, through his simplified, unified, personal decorative vocabulary was designing for machine-printing, not hand-printing. By 1893, designers thought in terms of mechanical production. The drive to simplicity did of course favour machine production.

Voysey himself understood, it seems, his own role in the maturing Arts & Crafts and its dedication to the small as beautiful. In the *Architectural Review* article (October 1931), he wrote:

> The 1851 Exhibition awakened the idea of utility as the basis of Art. All that was necessary for daily life could be, and ought to be, made beautiful. This utilitarian principle began to be put in practice when



M.H. Baillie Scott, "'Apple Tree' wall decoration", Studio, V/no25 (April 1895), 18 ill; in "The Decoration of the Suburban House"[8]; New Zealand & Pacific Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref S-L 1089-18)

> William Burgess [sic], E.W. Godwin, A.H. Mackmurdo, Bodley and others regarded nothing in or outside a home as too small to deserve their careful consideration. So we find Burgess designing water-taps and hair brushes; Godwin and Mackmurdo furniture; Bodley, like Pugin, fabrics and wallpapers. Then soon came the Art Workers' Guild, the aim of which was to bring craftsmen and architects of every description together, to compare their difficulties and explain their several crafts and peculiarities. All of which motives leading to a more and more practical attitude of mind than to a theoretical one. Styles and Conventions were slighted.

For "Greater Britain" Voysey's designs, such as the one illustrated (page 188), might only be known in black and white from the pages of *Studio* and the like; not necessarily a limitation, the black and white photographs sharpen the crisp lines of the motifs and the design's vertical structuring.

EBS in *Studio* in May 1896 discussed the special relationship Voysey had with manufacturers. EBS noted that since Voysey had been the subject of a *Studio* interview in 1893, the style of a "Voysey wall-paper" was now "almost as familiar as a 'Morris chintz' or a 'Liberty silk'".[9] Voysey urged designers into new territory:

> Dozens of typical flowers and plants have been overlooked hitherto, and others, notably the fuchsia, the dielytra, the foxglove, and a host too numerous to mention, have not become hackneyed by use like the sunflower, the rose, and the apple blossom.[10]

"The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery", 1903: *Studio* in its "First Notice" on the exhibition recorded Voysey's changed status and presaged his inclusion in the 1906-7 international exhibition in

Kathleen Alcorn, Pewter and enamel panel, c1911, possibly intended as a door-plate, a typically small house-item, the beauty of which spoke of high ideals. The outlines, bas-relief leaves and twisted trunks seen in Voysey's cover for Studio *in April 1893*[13]*, also appear in Dunedin's Eleanor Joachim's book cover*[14]*, Kate Beath's repoussé plaque and preparatory drawing*[15]*, and the metal panels on the settle prepared by the Canterubry College School of Art Guild for the Christchurch 1906-7 International Exhibition*[16]*, to mention a very few examples of a style that had become international. Liberty & Co sold Voysey designs.*[17] *As the accompanying photograph illustrates, Voysey's style and his leaf-shape became international property.*

Christchurch, New Zealand:[11]

> To the rich the change has merely been a change of fashion, though welcome enough at that. To the poor, good work and good materials are luxuries still, and have yet to be put among the necessaries of life.[12]

C.F.A. Voysey, *Individuality*, 1915: Voysey, with the effects of a brutal war, begged for the "creative spirit" to be a tool for recovery:

> I have written these chapters in the earnest hope of encouraging my fellow-men to believe and feel the creative spirit within each and every one, which while stimulating thought, leads on to mutual sympathy and true union. And so through the working of natural laws, we come to create that beauty which draws us onward and upward.

At this date, 1915, Voysey's words on the making of a fireplace poker, suggest the continuing influence of the Arts & Crafts message:

> The very poker at your fireside becomes of interest to you the moment you recognize the sentiments of its maker. Maybe its maker's mind was absorbed by greed and apish imitation for greed's sake; then you will find no grace, no truth, no dignity in your poker. It will be an ill-bred poker, and you will feel no joy in it ... So, too, with all the objects of daily use; if we train ourselves to look for signs of moral quality we shall do much to encourage true culture and bring spiritual joy out of material mire.[18]

Mackay H. Baillie Scott

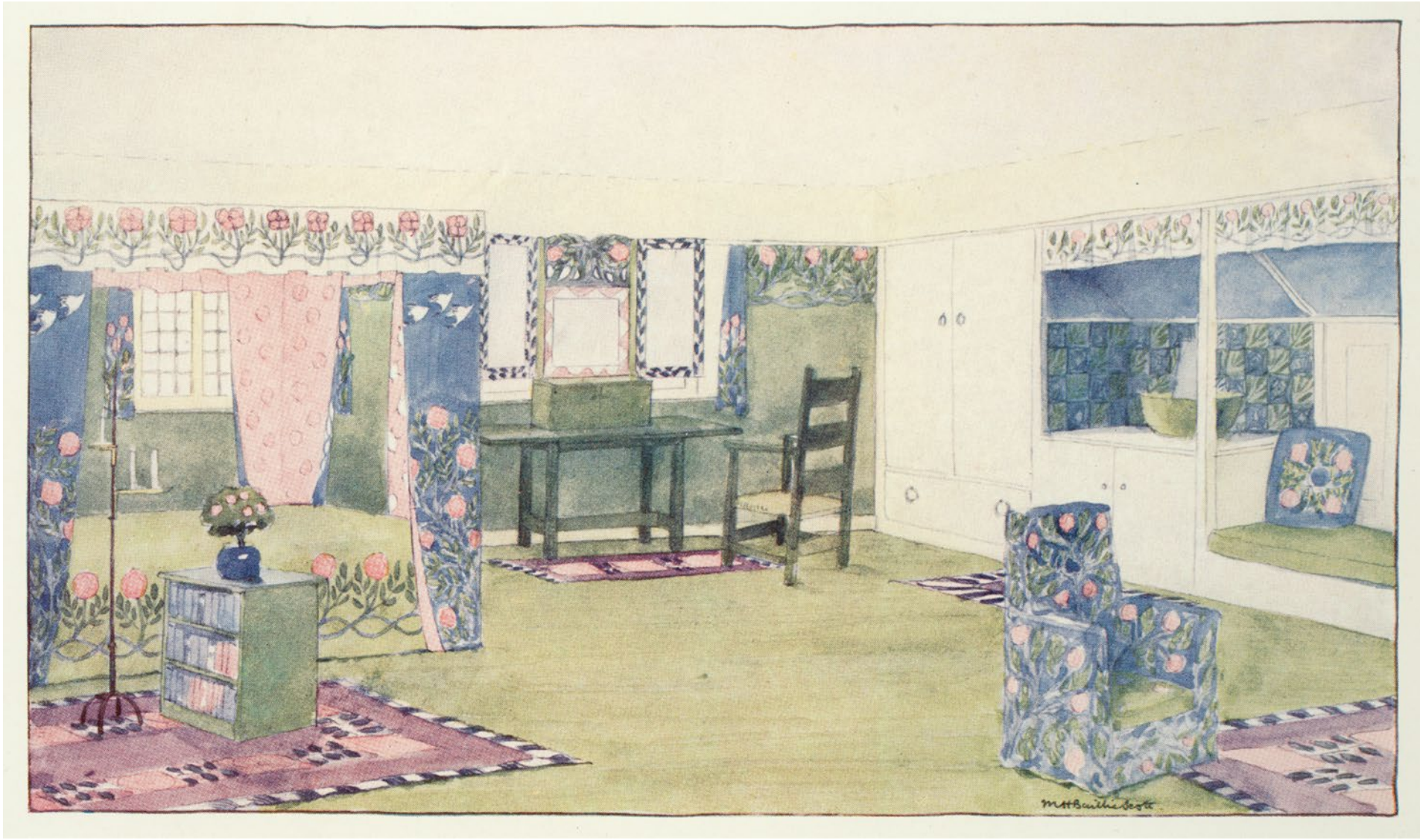
The aesthetic "home beautiful" architects M.H. Baillie Scott and C.F.A. Voysey designed and decorated – "inside and out" – theoretically affordable Arts & Crafts middle-class houses set in rural pastoral settings or in a "garden suburb" such as Bedford Park. House sizes were appropriate and not merely large houses scaled down. Hermann Muthesius claimed that:

> Baillie Scott's concept of the house is already that of an organic whole to be designed consistently inside and out ... in Baillie Scott's work each room is an individual creation, the elements of which do not just happen to be available but spring from the over-all idea. Baillie Scott is the first to have realized the new idea of the interior as an autonomous work of art.[19]

Hermann Muthesius believed that nineteenth-century architects had generally declined to involve themselves in the interior furnishings of their buildings; the only rational path for the salvation of the applied arts was towards the decoration in the house/home interior:

> ... Morris's Arts and Crafts movement and the movement in architecture had in fact nothing to do with one another ... In so far as handicraft relates to the furnishing of the house, it was virtually bound to develop into the requisite new form by following Morris's lead; and, as we have already stressed, the development took place within a small group which gradually grew into the Arts Workers' Guild, the members of which organised the Arts and Crafts Exhibitions from 1888 onwards.[20]

Before William Morris died in 1896, *Studio* had indicated a modified



Mackay H. Baillie Scott, "A Country Cottage: Design for Bedroom", Studio *XXV/no108 (Mar 1902), 86-94, 91 ill; New Zealand & Pacific Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref S-L 1078-91) Baillie Scott had trained in Bath, then practised as an architect in Douglas, Isle of Mann, and then in Bedford.*

role for the Arts & Crafts – the provision of cheerful and healthy smaller homes for the sufficiently affluent middle-classes. *Studio* seems to have appointed itself as guardian of the "home beautiful" and its interior decoration.

Baillie Scott, in *Studio* in March 1902, quoted Walter Pater:

> "Here you felt ... all had been mentally put to rights by the working out of a long equation which had zero equals zero for its result." ... For there is so much which might well be rubbed out in the modern house, while so many of our so-called ornaments which disturb our peace might well be eliminated.
>
> ... the bedrooms may be dedicated each to a special flower. In pursuance of such a scheme, in the example shown the rose is chosen, and this bed of roses may give an opportunity for those products of the needle which generally take the form of antimacassars and other drawing-room trifles. …
>
> The garden, indeed, like the dwelling, will be of the cottage kind, of which so many beautiful examples may be found in English villages …[21]

As with Baillie Scott's bedroom design (192 ill), every room's purpose, including colour (which could be elegantly conveyed by appliqué work), furniture and window placements, was celebrated. Motifs were based on plants with geometric edging. "This shows the architect's keen interest in furnishing textiles, particularly printed fabrics and appliqué embroidery."[22]

More specifically, on "Some Experiments in Embroidery" in *Studio* in

M.H. Baillie Scott, "Blackwell", Lake Windermere, Lake District, England, 1898-1900

May 1903, Baillie Scott pleaded for "the qualities of the materials" to be to the forefront (144 ill left). His use of appliqué embroidery on textiles was a special attribute of his work:

> The first [suggestion] is the idea of breadth of effect gained by the use of large pieces of material appliqué and the second the idea of jewel-like preciousness to be gained by the concentrated use of gold and silver with jewels and silk.[23]

The "satin stitch", so called, was the recommended stitch.

> In the consideration of the place of needlework in the house, it is necessary to remember that the embroidery should be made for the house, and not the house for the embroidery. It is this inversion, this topsyturvydom of modern ideas on decorative work which has turned the average house into a mere shelter for "art treasures".[24]

As was concurrently occurring in New Zealand through the architect Samuel Hurst Seager and the houses built on The Spur (Christchurch), attention was being given to creating garden suburbs and smaller viable houses;[25] a Baillie Scott brochure promoting the Hampstead garden suburb said:

M.H. Baillie Scott, *Garden Suburbs: Town planning and modern architecture* (1910):

> It has been the aim of the promoters of the Garden Suburb Development Company [Hampstead] to find a better way of building even the smallest dwelling; and with the object lesson so long disregarded, of the cottages and farmhouses of old England, to try if we in these modern days cannot also build as they did.[26]

ENDNOTES

1 Muthesius [1904-5] 1979, 41-3
2 *Studio* I (Sep 1893) no6, 231-7: 233-4, 234
3 Parry 1988, 150-1
4 Ibid 150
5 Hitchmough 1997, 145
6 See Parry 1988 comment referred to under "Guilds", 134 col 1
7 "Some Recent Designs by Mr C.F.A. Voysey by EBS", in *Studio* VII/no35 (May 1896), 209-18
8 M.H. Baillie Scott "The Decoration of the Suburban House", *Studio* V/no25 (April 1895), 15ff
9 *Studio* VII/no38 (May 1896), 209ff: 209
10 Ibid 211. The need to use local flowers and plants for designs was wide-spread: also see David Hay 1836, "Introduction" 19-20 and "Morris", 99
11 Spielmann 1908, 312 and 268 ill
12 *Studio* XXVIII (Feb 1903) 119, 27ff: 32, 35
13 Voysey 1893 cover illustrated "Issues", 116 ill
14 Eleanor Joachim's work illustrated Arts & Crafts in New Zealand in an exemplary way, 267 ill
15 Kate Beath's work illustrated "1906-7" illustrations 253 ill
16 Calhoun 2000, 122 ill
17 Parry 1988, 150-1
18 Voysey *Individuality* 1915, quoted in John Betjman "Charles Francis Annesley Voysey: The Architect of Individualism" *Architectural Review* Oct 1931, 95
19 Muthesius [1904-5] 1979, 51; C&K 51-2, 55
20 Ibid 37; and 47-51
21 *Studio* XXV/no108 (Mar 1902): 90, 93; 93, 95
22 Parry 1988, 80
23 *Studio* XXVIII/no122 (May 1903), 279-84: 280
24 Ibid: 283, 283-4
25 See Samuel Hurst Seager "biography", 330
26 V&A NAL Pressmark: 503C103, 83

Glasgow, Edinburgh and New Zealand

The Arts & Crafts movement in Glasgow and Edinburgh were of special importance to the New Zealand movement. The number and importance of Scots immigrating to New Zealand are now being researched and acknowledged. Here, the appointment of D.C. Hutton (trained Dundee, Scotland) as drawing master to the Otago School of Art in 1870 can be cited as an effective point from which to study the New Zealand movement. Later in the century the central role of London and London-Scotland-New Zealand links were influential. More easily accessed are the illustrated designs of Glaswegian-style needlework and appliqué work[1] promoted by *Studio* and related publications. Still not sufficiently understood is the effect of the significant items of needlework, lace and embroidery distributed within New Zealand through sales from the 1906-7 New Zealand Exhibition in Christchurch.[2]

Glasgow

Gleeson White, editor of *Studio*, authored a quartet of articles on "Some Glasgow Designers and their Work" during 1897 and 1898.[3] Setting the tenor of his views, he wrote:

> If the same privilege long since accorded to the Fine Arts be allowed to the Applied Arts, then it is no more venal to praise a side board than applaud a portrait.[4]

In an interview (*Studio* October 1897) with Jessie Newbery (head of the School of Embroidery at the Glasgow School of Art), her personal aesthetic and artistic creed – and that of the important Glasgow group – was reprinted, without direct reference to "any personal theories of design

Edinburgh College of Art applied art classes, after 1910; Kenneth Balmain Collection, Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, Scotland

"... I believe that nothing is common or unclean; that the design and decoration of a pepper pot is as important, in its degree, as the conception of a cathedral. ..."

for embroidery specially": repeated here in part, this is the philosophy of the later Arts & Crafts movement – simplicity and a holistic overview of life:

> I believe that the greatest thing in the world is for a man to know that he is his own, and that the great end in art is the discovery of the self of the artist.
>
> I believe in being the sum of tradition; that consciously or unconsciously men are all so, but some are more derivative than others.
>
> I believe in education consisting of seeing the best that has been done. Then, having this high standard thus set before us, in doing what we like to do: that for our fathers, this for us.
>
> I believe that nothing is common or unclean; that the design and decoration of a pepper pot is as important, in its degree, as the conception of a cathedral.[5]
>
> I believe that material, space, and consequent use discover their own exigencies and as such have to be considered well.
>
> I believe in everything being beautiful, pleasant, and, if need be, useful.
>
> To descend to particulars, I like the opposition of straight lines to

Edinburgh College of Art applied art classes, after 1910; Kenneth Balmain Collection, Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, Scotland

curved; of horizontal to vertical; of purple to green, of green to blue.

I delight in correspondence and the inevitable relation of part to part.

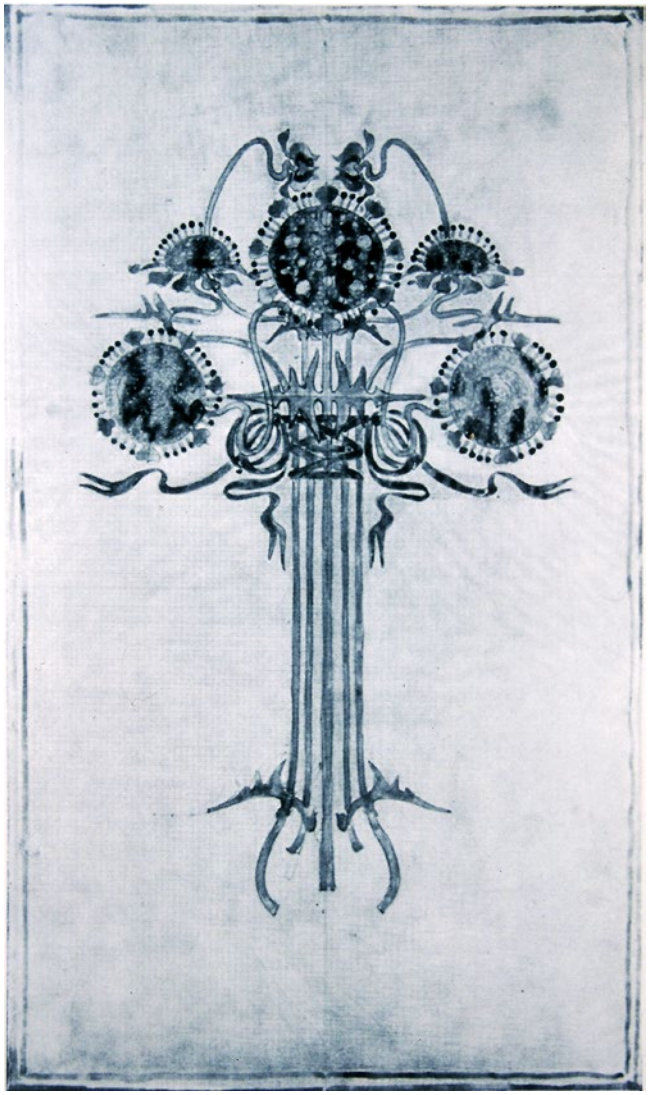
I specially aim at beautifully shaped spaces and try to make them as important as the patterns.

I try to make most appearance with least effort, but insist that what work is ventured on is as perfect as may be.

I hope that in the foregoing expression of opinion I have not seemed over egotistic, considering the little sum of work accomplished by me.[6]

Jessie Newbery's husband, Francis Newbrey had become head of the Glasgow School of Art in 1885, after London training. Jessie Newbery herself headed the School's distinguished school of embroidery from 1894. Mackintosh, with fellow-students at the Glasgow school, Herbert McNair[7] and the Macdonald sisters, Margaret and Frances (who became Margaret Mackintosh and Frances McNair), became the "Glasgow Four", the four creating the "Glasgow style" and its elongated linear figures. The style's distinctive "spook" figures are said to be sourced in the *Three Brides* drawing by Dutch-Indonesian artist Jan Toorop, which appeared in the first volume, number six, of *Studio*.[8]

Gleeson White had visited the Macdonald sisters' studio.[9] In his quasi-devotional articles on the Glasgow style, his first topic was the sisters' work, which he placed "first in order", and then Rennie Mackintosh's "schemes for interior decoration, for furniture, and for posters … we shall endeavour to show, so far as black-and-white illustrations can



Jessie Newbery, "Design for an Embroidered Panel"; in Gleeson White, "Some Glasgow Designers and their Work – III"; in Studio *XII/no55 (Oct 1897), 49 ill*

convey an idea of a scheme depending to a great extent on colour.":

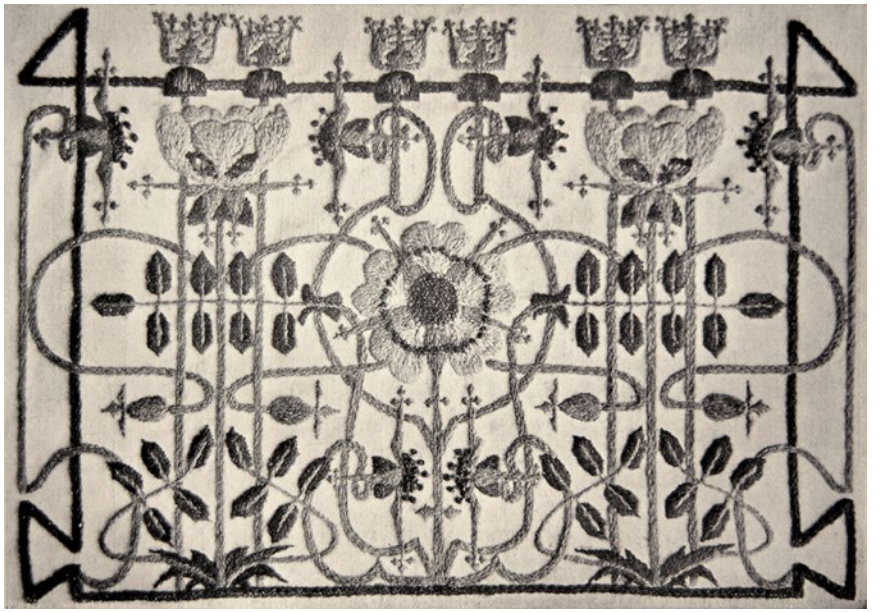
> The decorative movement in Great Britain today is showing many signs of vitality which promises well for its future. That not a few of its new departures are in opposition to the Gothic ideals which William Morris cherished, or to those of the English Renaissance which the Century Guild proclaimed, need not be wholly regretted. …

A misguided foreign critic was:

> ... driven to believe that the very individual manner in which they [the Macdonald sisters] have elected to express their sense of beauty is really the outcome of the feeling they have towards the arrangement of lines and masses. "Why conventionalise the human figure?" said one critic. "Why not?" replied another of the group. ... "why should not a worker to-day make patterns out of people if he pleases?" ... After seeing much of it one must needs admit that there is method in its madness; that in spite of some exaggeration that has provoked the nickname of "the spook school", yet underneath there is a distinct effort to decorate objects with certain harmonious lines, and to strive for certain "jewelled" effects of colour, which may quite possibly evolve a style of its own, owing scarce anything to precedent. …

At a time when "art" needlework was being taken up in New Zealand, Frances Newbery wrote an appreciation of Ann Macbeth's embroidery and expressed sentiments in common with those of his wife:

> Beauty is not for the few, but for the many, and that it is costly is no valid objection. …



Embroidered panel. Designed & executed by Miss Jane Younger, Glasgow School of Art student; in Studio XIX/no 86 (May 1900), 233 ill: In the work produced by the students of the Glasgow School of Art, this principle of individuality is the one quality underlying all the productions.[10]

> Like the old Italian masters she arrived at a knowledge of ornament through the practice of drawing from the figure: and when at length she turned her attention to traditional ornament, she found herself in a position to ignore it, and to start where the mediæval ornamentists did – namely, at and with Nature ... Ornament, to be worthy of the name, must be more than an aggregation of conventional forms to be used on occasion, like recipes taken from a cookery book.[13]

In his annual report for 1902, Arthur D. Riley in Wellington, New Zealand, reported that under M.E.R. Tripe the art needlework section of the school's Arts and Crafts Guild had "met with considerable success, as shown by the work exhibited at the recent exhibition, when some very excellent articles of workmanship were displayed."[14]

John Betjeman recalled in 1931 in *The Architectural Review* that he had asked:

> Mr F.H. Newbery, who taught Charles Rennie Mackintosh at the Glasgow School of Art, from whom his pupil derived his inspiration. And I learned it was from Voysey, who was at that time starting practice.[15]

Mackintosh's importance internationally as an architect-designer cannot be gainsaid; in Andrew McLaren Young's words:

> He did not reject the need for decoration, for this would have meant the rejection of the things that had stimulated him in his formative years. But for him decoration was new clothing for new ideas: new ideas, on the role of function and the geometry of architectural space.[16]

Appliqué embroidery designed by Ann Macbeth, Studio International Yearbook of Decorative Art *(1906). Ann Macbeth's illustrated embroidery is in dark green, blue and purple, the colours used in the heraldic embroidery (by Hilda McIntyre?) in the Canterbury College School of Art Guild journal,* The Paint Rag *Sep-Oct 1910.*[11]

Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Repeat green glass motifs symbolising birds in trees, near the top of the stairwell windows of the Scotland Street School (1903-6). Mackintosh used strong verticals to symbolise growth and to stress the building's structure; Mackintosh thereby integrated both his architectural concepts and acknowledged his belief in ornament based on nature.[12]

"Yet the essence of the art of the Glasgow group in fact rests in an underlying emotional and poetical quality."

He was also one of the increasing number of "paper" designers with a singular respect for designs sourced in nature:

> Running through all, as a kind of continuum, are flower studies, made in years of happiness and disappointment from a schoolboy drawing of daffodils of 1887 to one of pine cones at St Louis two years before his death.[17]

E.W. Godwin's *Art Furniture* catalogue (1877) and its Anglo-Japanese references were studied at the Glasgow School of Art "courtesy of the South Kensington loan scheme, at a time when Mackintosh ... and Walton ... were enrolled as students".[18]

Hermann Muthesius, an ardent admirer of Mackintosh and the Glasgow style, wrote in *The English House* (1904-5):

> The central aim of these members is the room as work of art, as a unified organic whole embracing colour, form and atmosphere. Starting from this notion they develop not only the room but the whole house, the sole purpose of the exterior of which is to enclose the rooms, their central concern, without laying any particular claim to an artistic appearance itself. ...
>
> Yet the essence of the art of the Glasgow group in fact rests in an underlying emotional and poetical quality. It seeks a highly charged artistic atmosphere or more specifically an atmosphere of a mystical,

Jewel casket, Designed and executed by Miss de Courcy L. Dewar, Glasgow School, with heart shaped leaves that became so typical of later Arts & Crafts work; in Studio *XIX/no86 (May 1900), 238 ill*

Archibald Knox, Central Celtic motif, carpet; Private collection[25]

> symbolic kind ... In a way, colour is now raised to a higher level since it is used more sparingly. ...
>
> ... Once the interior attains the status of a work of art, that is, when it is intended to embody aesthetic values, the artistic effect must obviously be heightened to the utmost.[19]

Studio *and the "Glasgow Style" in New Zealand*

The aesthetic symbols of the Glasgow style are apparent in "the head, the heart, the rose and the leaf" symbols used in multiple applied art media in New Zealand by the early twentieth-century.[20] Among the more obvious effects of the *Studio* was its inclusion of images of art metalwork, some from "sister studios" in Glasgow; such studios operated as putative guilds, as did many art and design school classes. Other effects came directly from Scottish trained masters, such as Alexander Fraser.[21] Archibald Knox's Celtic interlacing in his "Cymric" (silver) and "Tudric"(pewter) wares can be assumed to be present, and/or wares from the Silver Studio. (Knox was born on the Isle of Man in 1864. He was a keen botanist (see illustration on 201) and attended the Douglas School of Art).

The invention of the sustainably popular Glasgow rose was initially credited to Mackintosh but is now credited to Jessie Newbery's art needlework.[22] Jude Burkhauser writes in *Glasgow Girls: Women in art and design 1880-1920* (1990):

> The use of the Glasgow Rose may be attributed to appliquéd flower imagery introduced at the Glasgow School of Art by Jessie Newbery, an avid gardener, in her early textile designs and is documented in her early sketchbooks ... [c1900]. "The characteristic Glasgow Rose is believed to have evolved from her circles of pink linen, cut out freehand and applied with lines of satin stitch to indicate the folded petals ..."[23]
>
> This geometric stylised flower form ... which became a feature in much of the Glasgow Style work was adopted by Newbery's students in the studios and carried into international exhibitions in Turin, Vienna, and Glasgow on a variety of objects. Today, along with the heart, it is the most recognisable element of the Glasgow Style ... [24]

Edinburgh & New Zealand Scottish Heritage

The influence of the Scottish drawing, design and art education system in New Zealand appears to have been more pervasive than presently acknowledged. David Con Hutton trained in Dundee, Scotland, and taught in Perth, Scotland, before emigrating to New Zealand as drawing master.[26] Alexander R. Fraser, a graduate of Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh, succeeded the late W.H. Bennett as the instructor in woodcarving at the Wellington, New Zealand, school.[27] As Elizabeth Cumming records (2006), Heriot-Watt College, named in 1885, was "Edinburgh's leading industrial college".[28]

Frank Morley Fletcher, appointed to head the Edinburgh College of Art in 1906, had trained in Liverpool and from 1899 to 1904 taught Japanese-style wood-block printmaking at Lethaby's Central School, while, over a similar period, was also head of art at University College, Reading. He was subsequently to contribute a volume on *Wood Block Printing* to Lethaby's *Artistic Crafts Series* (1916). A new "Crafts" section was opened at Edinburgh College in 1910. Design instruction was under

William S. Black, "primarily a graphic and textile designer". Douglas Strachan, "now a confirmed professional stained glass artist" was invited "to come south from Aberdeen". James Johnstone, a key figure in applied art instruction at the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, New Zealand, had attended the Edinburgh school for 1914-15 and after war service graduated in 1920, with a further year specialising in stained glass. Classes offered in Edinburgh were broadly the same as those to be offered to Canterbury College School of Art students. Elizabeth Cumming observes:

> Edinburgh would offer craft classes which came closest in Scotland in range and method to Central School practice – writing and illumination, embroidery, woodcarving, stained glass, plaster work, silver-smithing, repoussé and chasing, bookbinding and leather tooling, and die cutting.[29]

James Johnstone's instructors in Edinburgh appear to have been William S. Black and Douglas Strachan.[30] In 1910, with the opening of the new craft workshops, a text by Strachan stressed function and material and the "mission of beauty, not as a sensuous luxury, but as a spiritual force ... on this rock alone can a Modern Tradition by founded".[31]

Scottish appointees bought with them their Scottish background, but had, usually, also trained directly or indirectly under the London-sourced South Kensington system, which they could adopt or reinterpret. Muthesius had reminded his readers (1904-5) that:

> Common to both [London and Scotland], however, is a strictly tectonic underlying factor that holds qualities of material and construction sacred and in this respect never descends to the

Chrystabel Aitken, Celtic colour design with phoenix; Macmillan Brown Library collection, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. New Zealand's Celtic heritage was understandably strong and motifs appeared in a wide variety of work.

unnatural and artificial. Sound workmanship like construction and design within the natural limits of the material (so that wood, for example, is not treated like rubber or cast iron) are basic stipulations of both groups – in which both contrast with certain sections of the continental movement ...[32]

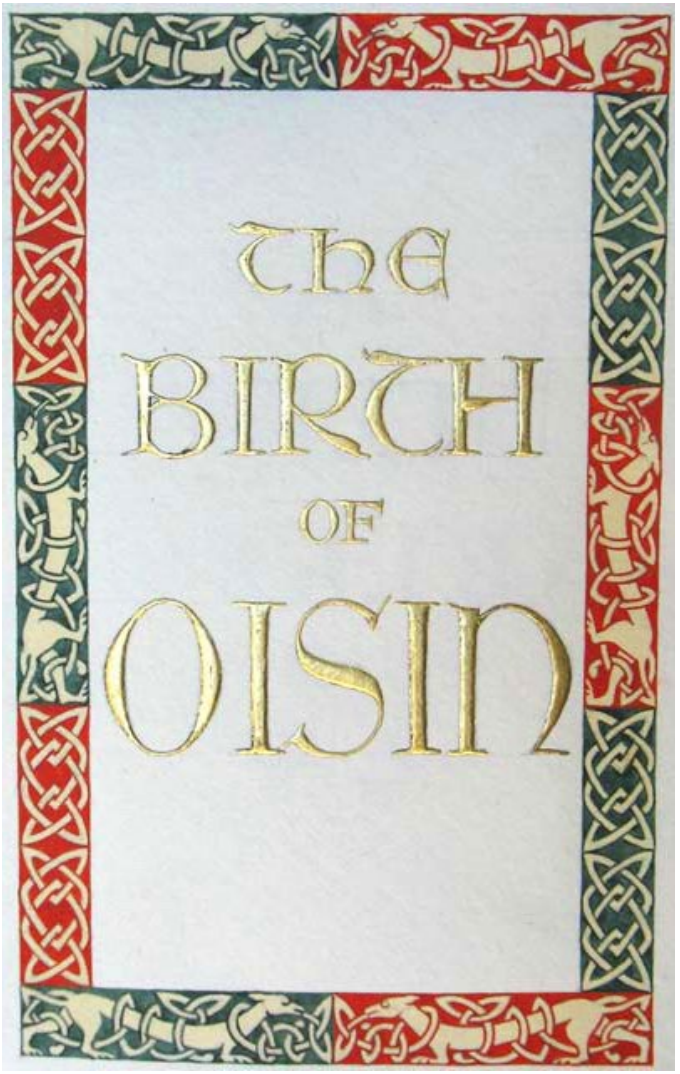
New Zealand heritage

The contribution of Scots settlers to the cultural life of New Zealand is best touched on here, rather than under the next section on New Zealand Arts & Crafts Design. Talking of "Greater Britain", James Belich in *Replenishing the Earth: The settler revolution and the rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939* (2009) discusses the pace of Scottish immigration to New Zealand:

> Governments were also great promoters of immigration; indeed in the new lands this was often seen as their main business ... In the 1870s, the New Zealand government had seventy-three immigration agents in Scotland alone, and advertised in 288 Scottish newspapers.[33]

Jock Phillips & Terry Hearn, in *Settlers: New Zealand immigrants: From England, Ireland & Scotland 1800-1945* (Auckland 2008), give a brief review of emigration to New Zealand, which puts other issues in context:

> ... New Zealand settlers from the British Isles were over twice as Scottish as the homeland population. …
>
> ... during the whole period of settlement a clear majority of Scots migrants – about six or seven out of ten – came from the Lowlands, the most urbanised and industrialised areas around Glasgow and Edinburgh. …



Ngarita Johnstone (Canterbury College School of Art 1946-50), Title page, The Birth of Oisin, *Celtic design; Private collection*
(photo: Ngarita Johnstone)

> ... most of the immigrants from Scotland lived either close to, or even within, cities, in particular Edinburgh and Glasgow, and that many of them were city workers usually employed, if they were men, in crafts, or if they were women, in domestic service ... If we are looking from immigrants with urban experience behind them, there is no doubt that they are to be found primarily among the Lowland Scots and the Londoners. It is hardly surprising that once people from these two places of origin arrived in New Zealand they tended to gravitate to the cities.[34]

Until the twentieth century "few Scots among these city workers" came from "an industrial background". "A high proportion of the Scots migrants from 'an industrial background' had fathers who had been weavers, many of whom may well have worked at home."[35]

The authors had earlier noted that in the core years of migration 1853-1915, there was consistent migration to New Zealand from London and Middlesex:

> Immigrants from this area were disproportionately of three types ... builders and carpenters ... The second kind of London migrant came from a background in the skilled traditional crafts. Over one in four of the London migrants during the core years of migration (1853-1915) had fathers who were craftsmen. These were people from a range of crafts serving the urban consumer, among them bakers, bookbinders, jewellers and piano-makers. When we add the builders to this group, until 1915 they comprise well over 40 per cent of the migrants from London and Middlesex.[36]

The story shifts at this point to the ideas and ideals inherent in the Arts & Crafts as brought to New Zealand and to the nature-inspired design style born in 1890s Britain and introduced to New Zealand in the late 1890s.

From being at the forefront of design reform, Britain into the twentieth-century ceded its leadership in the design reform debate to the Continent. Alan Crawford (1984) understood that the movement ultimately concentrated its attention on the products: "... there seemed to be inspiration enough in the intrinsic qualities of craftsmanship, form and colour, materials and pattern."[37] The best means of teaching design continued to be a central concern – whether to teach "design intelligence" or to give students the equivalent of apprenticeship training. The Deutsche Werkbund was set up in Germany in 1907, the Design Club in Britain in 1909. There was a Werkbund Exhibition in London in 1914. The British Institute of Industrial Art was founded in 1914 and the Design and Industries Association, the DIA, in 1915. What seems certain is that, though delayed, the Continental debates, also took place in New Zealand.

Two Continental voices defined the Arts & Crafts style at its most successful; one was Hermann Muthesius (below), and the other the key German architect Peter Behrens in *Studio* in 1901. Muthesius, in *The English House*, wrote conclusively:

> The English commercial flat patterns of the last phase of Arts and Crafts are the products of the South Kensington schools, an entirely general, popular artistic achievement, the result of a long process which has been subject to various influences. It has been built up on the study of nature as its actual foundation and a certain characteristic use of line as its ideal foundation. The study of nature means, very largely, the study of plants, which form the typical basic motif of

> these patterns. The characteristic line became what it is today quite distinctly under the spell of aestheticism, more precisely, under the influence of Rossetti's art.[38]

The movement in its heart-of-hearts never farewelled its pleasure in purposefulness linked to the sanctity of its song. EBS in "Some Aspects of the Work of Mary L. Newill", in *Studio* in April 1895, in a few words, captured the question of the moment:

> Here it is too late to again raise the question of the meaning of the word "decorative", whether to protest against its limitation, or to accept it as a definitely descriptive term for work that relies chiefly upon beautifully arranged lines and masses, without ignoring the more obvious imitation of the nature it depicts.[39]

The last word on the British Arts & Crafts is left to T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, often credited with coining the term "Arts & Crafts". Cobden-Sanderson's essay on the "Arts and Crafts Movement" was seen as a fitting close to a series of articles on the 1906 Arts & Crafts Society exhibition at the Grafton Gallery (third & concluding notice: *Studio* April 1906). Mulling over possible definitions for the "Arts and Crafts", Cobden-Sanderson linked the movement to:

> ... ideas characteristic of the close of the last century, and [can] be defined to be an effort to bring it under the influence of art as the supreme mode in which human activity of all kinds expresses itself at its highest and best ... : or it may be associated with the revival, by a few artists, of hand-craft as opposed to machine-craft, ... : or again, ... it may be defined to constitute a movement to bring all the activities of the human spirit under the influence of one idea, the idea that life is creation, and should be creative in modes of art, and that this creation should extend to all the ideas of science and of social organisation, to all the ideas and habits begotten of a grandiose and consciously conceived procession of humanity, out of nothing and nowhere, into everything and everywhere, as well as to the merely instrumental occupations thereof at any particular moment.[40]

Cobden-Sanderson finished with a practical utilitarian definition of the organisations associated with the movement: "some of them, indeed, concerning themselves only with the facilities to be afforded to the craftsman for the exhibition, advertisement, and sale of his wares."[41]

ENDNOTES

1 See Calhoun 2000, 134 ill and "Glasgow"
2 See art needlework and textiles "1906-7 International exhibition", Christchurch, New Zealand, 237-8
3 *Studio* XI (two), XII, XIII, & also XXVI, XXVII
4 *Studio* XI/no52 (Jul 1897), 88
5 Quote also discussed "Preface", 6 and "Legacy", 293-4
6 *Studio* XII/no55 (Oct 1897), 48
7 Also spelt MacNair
8 *Studio* I/no6 (Sep 1893), 247 ill. Refer to Pevsner [1936] 1964, 95 ill; alternative sources are given in Burkhauser [1990] 1993, 105
9 Burkhauser [1990] 1993, 165
10 *Studio* XIX/no86 (May 1900), 233
11 Hilda McIntyre embroidery 150 ill
12 http://www.scotcities.com/mackintosh/scotlandst.htm; retrieved 21 Sep 2011
13 *Studio* XXVII/no115 (Oct 1902), 40-9: 42, 45
14 NZ *AJHR* 1903 E-5, 19
15 *The Architectural Review* LXX (Jul-Dec1931) 96
16 Andrew McLaren Young; in *Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928): Architecture, design and painting* Edinburgh 1968 (exhibition catalogue) 7
17 Ibid 8
18 Register of loans from South Kensington kept in Glasgow – loan 23 Sep to 11 Nov 1886, V&A Museum Department of Circulation, in Soros *Godwin* 1999, 97-8. On Godwin, also see "Aesthetics", 73ff
19 Muthesius [1904-5] 1979, 51-2
20 Burkhauser [1990] 1993, 178
21 See Alexander Fraser "biography" 321
22 See Calhoun 2000, 188 ill
23 Margaret Swain "Mrs Newbery's Dress" *Costume* 1978, 66, in Burkhauser [1990] 1993, 102
24 Burkhauser [1990] 1993, 102
25 See Michael Haslam *Arts and Crafts Carpets* 1991, 132 ill
26 See David Con Hutton "biography", 324
27 NZ *AJHR* 1903 E-5, 18
28 Cumming 2006, 32
29 Ibid: 45, 46 (two relevant sources on this page)
30 See James Johnstone "biography", 325-6
31 *A Lecture on Design and Craft delivered by Douglas Strachan, Head of Section of Crafts at the Edinburgh College of Art*, 2 March 1910, in Cumming 2006, 47
32 Muthesius [1904-5] 1979, 51
33 Belich 2009, 190, in Tom Broking, "Tam McCanny and Kitty Clysdale: The Scots in New Zealand" in R.A. Cage (ed), *The Scots Abroad* London, 161
34 Phillips & Hearn 2008: 107, 108, 114
35 Ibid 114
36 Ibid 101
37 Crawford *Birmingham* 1894, 23
38 Muthesius [1904-5] 1979, 161
39 E.B.S. "Some Aspects of the Work of Mary L Newill"; in *Studio* V/no25 (Apr 1895), 56
40 *Studio* XXXVII/no157 (Apr 1906), 213-29: 227
41 Ibid

Chapter four

NEW ZEALAND ARTS & CRAFTS DESIGN

Introduction

The British Arts & Crafts movement is often described as a reaction to uncontrolled nineteenth-century industrialisation[1]: the same was not true for the New Zealand movement. The movement in New Zealand was more directly linked to the "intellectual", but still spiritual, movement in Britain at the end of the nineteenth-century.[2] The Arts & Crafts as restated in New Zealand into the 1890s and the new century became an identifiable brand. The British movement reached New Zealand through: the local British-sourced drawing, design and art education system; British imports, travel, and, particularly, through the British late nineteenth-century applied art publishing bubble.

The settler-colony of New Zealand was – by the 1890s - taking hold of its own persona and defining itself in ways that said more about local nationalism than ties with "Mother England". Such self-discovery included indigenous flora and fauna (and Maori motifs) used as ornament for a growing local Arts & Crafts movement.

Flowers, plants, trees, gardens, birds, animals and people – the flora and fauna of nature – were available to designers for the decorative enrichment of an object or building. Plant cuttings from loved gardens were used to create these nature-based decorative designs. As explained, botanical illustrations were prepared by drawing the leaves, flowers, buds and seeds, the reproductive parts of a plant, and were encouraged as the first step in the preparation of a design – and by the 1890s, due significantly to Walter Crane, figures were plentifully included. The particular subject here – nature-based decorative designs – were preferred by the 1890s in "Greater Britain", over historically sourced motifs. Nature was an assured source of Beauty: beauty and its ability to lighten the load of the

Plant-based stencils, c1870s, were used in the foyer and elsewhere in the Wellington Government Buildings, New Zealand (now the Law School, Victoria University); Department of Conservation Collection (photo: Tony Kellaway)

Previous page: *James Johnstone (head of Design and Crafts at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1926 to 1958), "Table Lamp", oxidised silver on copper, c1932; Private collection (photo: J. Thomson, Christchurch). Full illustration 295. Johnstone owned the December 1928 issue of* Studio[3]*, which included an article on "A Living German Art School: The Handwerker-Und Kunstgewerbeschule, Halle", a school modelled on Bauhaus principles of creation through hand worked models for mass manufacture, including "Electric Light Fittings",[4] one lamp not unlike Johnstone's: an art school could be a similar "laboratory for modern handcrafts".[5] The 1932 Canterbury College School of Art jubilee exhibition included other lamps not dissimilar to James Johnstone's lamp.*

John Henry Menzies, St Luke's Church, Little Akaloa, Banks Peninsula, Canterbury, New Zealand. Exterior view.

St Luke's Church, interior view towards altar, 1904-6. Menzies' decorative carving used an eclectic mixture of Scottish-Gothic-Celtic motifs, as well as native and Maori motifs.[6]

Joan Edgar (Canterbury College School of Art, late 1930s), Copper repoussé bowl with an abstract-organic hebe seed-head pattern on its base; Private collection. Joan Edgar noted that "cuttings were brought from the Christchurch Botanical Gardens – students made wash drawings from cuttings – next day we would construct an all-over design within a rectangle, a square, an arch, a circle – the designs would be stylised, 'stretched, pulled': these exercises took place in the first year and were used by students in, for example, their embroidery".[7] During WWII, Joan Edgar worked as the arts and crafts teacher at a private girls' school; the head mistress explained that, but for the war, an English-trained teacher would have been hired. Later, she was employed as a designer for Axminster carpets, preparing the required "leafy, floral designs": "Realism was so important"; preferably "you could smell the flowers". The designs were translated from drawings onto graph paper – the smaller the graph square, the more expensive the carpet. Women were employed at the Riccarton factory to weave the supplied carpet designs.

worker was an appropriate catch-all for the Arts & Crafts. As simplicity displaced nature as the focus of design reform in the twentieth-century, nature-based designs lost their charm for the moment.

Joan Edgar's bowl (illustration previous page) is an ideal example of the mix of British and local movements. The bowl is of hammered (repoussé) copper; the base has added base-decoration, as seen in C.R. Ashbee's metalwork. The bowl's base pattern gives the bowl its distinctive character, and was generated from the seed-head of a native hebe plant. Shaping the curved base was a technically difficult process. Joan Edgar was taught by James Johnstone. As her teacher would have wished, her bowl signals ethical production and use. The bowl is as importantly a small object, beloved by the Arts & Crafts, telling the story of the pleasures of making. Who could deny the effect of Beauty and Nature on the life of an individual?

The nineteenth-century split between conventionalism and naturalism had been resolved by the time the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, New Zealand, opened in 1882, the two sides not as divergent as the original combatants imagined. Malcolm Haslam, writing on Arts & Crafts carpets (1991), comments:

> It is ironic that a style born of such utilitarian considerations should have been assimilated by artists and craftsmen who were, without exception, ardent disciples of John Ruskin.[8]

Linda Nochlin (1971) terms the changes starting mid-nineteenth century a "moral-aesthetic impulse", observing that there was "no necessary paradox involved in demanding scientific naturalism in the representational arts and schematized abstraction in the decorative ones as part of the same moral-aesthetic impulse towards truth and reality".[9]

Among the stylistic tags for the mature British Arts & Crafts style were: ornament, imagination, exposed construction, material celebration, and simplicity; the use of local materials; natural colours, rather than those created by analine dyes; the revival of "lost" craft techniques. What is being stressed here is the timeless values of the Arts & Crafts internationally; there was "unity of purpose".[10]

The movement in the same people-oriented vein continued to laud ornamented objects showing their "man-made origin".[11] Ornament was the perfect place to introduce the hand-made imperfection. The hand-made object with its Ruskinian "roughness" marked the moral superiority and imagination of its maker: the marks of hand-production were of course never crude in the hands of the best artist-makers.[12] Ashbee had railed against the practice of intentionally applied hammer-marks or other so-called imperfections. Such dishonesty was seen as a prime reason for the failure of Ashbee's Chipping Camden venture; Ashbee wrote in *Modern English Silverwork* (1909):

> I dedicate this book therefore to the Trade Thief, desiring him only – if indeed he have any aesthetic honour, thieves sometimes have! – to thieve accurately.[13]

In New Zealand Charles Kidson's partner, George Fraser, similarly charged the public at a similar date with neglect:

> machine-embossed work began to come in, and the general run of people saw no difference between this and hand-beaten work. The result was that the prospects of a business for beaten work were not too rosy.[14]

Exposed construction, a key Arts & Crafts marker, spoke of honest building or object-making for which the mark-of-the-hand was proof. Traditionally, construction was hidden.[15] Instead, exposed hinges, finials and other small fittings became a hallmark of the Arts & Crafts style or, as with James Johnstone's table lamp (chapter cover, 208 ill and full 295) had only necessary ornament. The constructive struts forming the hood of the lamp act as ornament, as does the sheen of silvered copper from which the lamp hood is made. Chrystabel Aitken's flask (image opposite) exhibits a similar respect for materials and subtle textured ornament. Pugin believed (1841) that hinges, locks, bolts, nails, etc should not be "concealed in modern designs" but be recognised as "rich and beautiful decorations".[16]

Nineteenth-century scientific and aesthetic interest in colour carried through to the Arts & Crafts. The Oriental forms and colours, as in the display of Indian items (the largest court) at the 1851 art and industry exhibition, and Owen Jones's earlier triumphal publication of plates from direct studies of the Alhambra, southern Spain, offered incomparably rich alternative colours and forms for the designer. Japonisme and the Anglo-Japanese style introduced Japanese colours, use and forms: Japonisme design strengthened the asymmetry and odd groupings already admired in gothic; secondary and tertiary colours became fashionable.

With the Arts & Crafts message of material suitability came an appreciation of surfaces and textures and natural colours: wood, stone, metals, and, in tandem, plain fabrics, and other undecorated or simply finished surfaces. Designs should acknowledge, even celebrate, the materials used, the craft process(es) used and the intended use. Pugin said (1841): … designs should be adapted to the material in which they are executed.[18] Sham materials were to be abhorred.[19]

Chrystabel Aitken (Canterbury College School of Art 1921/22 to ?1936), Copper repoussé flask with pewter stopper in the shape of an antelope's head, created in James Johnstone's metalwork class, Canterbury College School of Art, in the 1930s; Private collection (photo: Lloyd Park)

Chrystabel Aitken, Repoussé plaque; Nancy Bridgewater, Coffee pot, silver; Nancy Grant, Teapot and cream jug, silver; Ngarita Partridge, Lamp, oxidised silver plate; Canterbury College School of Art Jubilee exhibition 1882-1932 Souvenir Exhibition *catalogue 1932, Christchurch.*[17]

As Ian Lochhead noted occurred in New Zealand with Benjamin Mountfort and continued with his pupil Samuel Hurst Seager, the beauty of natural materials replaced outright "constructional polychromy".[20] Arts & Crafts jewellery and metalwork used the colours and textures of natural materials, even inexpensive "found" stones; equally viable were silver, gold, opals, blister pearls, greenstone, and amethysts, as favoured by Ashbee. Colours could equally be bright, although there might only be touches of colour, as seen in the use of touches of bright enamel by the Japanese.[21] Colour Plates testify to the importance of Colour. As Walter Crane said of the movement, it could involve "simplicity or splendour".

Simplicity v Ornament (see Appendix): The constant call for simplicity by those involved in the Arts & Crafts movement has often been noted; A.W.N. Pugin, also in 1841 wrote:

> Architectural features are continually tacked on buildings with which they have no connection, merely for the sake of what is termed effect; and ornaments are actually constructed, instead of forming the decoration of construction, to which in good taste they should be always subservient …[23]

Francis Shurrock at the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, NZ (1924 to 1949) "… emphasized simplicity – in the form mainly and a thorough-overall structure".

Nationalism required that British ornament be homegrown and then desirably exported. Medieval or gothic sources might now be particularly British. As well as these medieval and/or gothic sources, Victorian decorative designers freely borrowed the forms and colours of other cultures seen to possess imagination: Moorish, Indian, Chinese,

*Walter Cook with items from his private collection of china and pewterware, gifted to Te Papa Tongarewa (*Evening Post *1 Nov 1995, 21 ill). China and pewterware similar to items in Walter's collection were available and sold from the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition of Arts and Industries, Christchurch, New Zealand. Sales were made, for example, of wares from Doulton and Co, and James Powell and Sons.*[22]

… other cultures seen to possess imagination: Moorish, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Persian.

Japanese, Persian. But in time, as Pugin had encouraged[24], English sources and the romance of the English countryside prevailed as the Arts & Crafts promoted the vernacular.

The mature Arts & Crafts movement was "a very intellectual movement", Alan Crawford's words, and, as shown, its practitioners were constantly in print.[25] There was, as James Belish notes[26], a publishing cluster in the 1890s, by which British tastes were fostered throughout "Greater Britain": in the order of 100 new publications devoted to the applied arts were started in Europe in the 1890s.[27] What such changes advanced was a rich platform for stylised plant-based designs, whether as a central design motif or as accompanying decoration.

More specifically, Walter Cook (see image on 214), an authority on the Arts & Crafts, has urged that recognition be given to the New Zealand Arts & Crafts as, in the first instance, an imported style and one best understood by knowledge of the British and Continental movements. When Walter gifted his 250-piece collection of china and pewterware to Te Papa Tongarewa (Museum of New Zealand) in 1995, he said, as a comment on the necessity for such gifts: "Our shopping history is a complete dark age to a certain extent."[28]

In effect, New Zealand was influenced by Arts & Crafts tastes as they became marketable, remembering that interior decoration, now a fashionable concern for women, often dictated what appeared in the home.

"English sources and the romance of the English countryside prevailed as the Arts & Crafts promoted the vernacular. ."

Through the *Studio* it was clear that the Arts & Crafts had reached the "colonies": Aymer Vallance on "British Decorative Art in 1899 and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition" wrote:

> Never, indeed, have the agencies for instruction in the arts and crafts been more numerous or better attended than at present. The handicrafts, in short, have no longer now to plead for the bare licence to be regarded and to be practised as arts. And do not the numerous exhibitions of Arts and Crafts that, independently of the original Society, are frequently held in the provinces and even occasionally in the colonies, to name only such recent exhibitions as those of Cape Town and Glasgow, or forthcoming ones at Dublin and Nottingham – do not these all testify alike that that which began as a tentative experiment in London eleven years ago[29] has now developed into an established factor in our industrial life?[30]

There is a simplicity, a broadness, an all-over patterning in Arts & Crafts designs prepared in Britain in the 1890s that is distinctly British and is found in the designs subsequently prepared in New Zealand. From this base, local designers were commended when they used native and/or Maori motifs for their designs. Ngarita Johnstone, James Johnstone's daughter, on design instruction at the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, New Zealand, from the 1920s to the late 1950s, recalled teaching based on "plant forms", and as seen in William Morris designs: "Of course we used many examples from Owen Jones."[31] On being asked

about "creating simplified designs", Ngarita added:

> Basically, plant forms, very stylised though. We seemed to work a lot on stylising forms but basically plant forms are the starting point.[32]

Johnstone also used books written locally, two of those looking at Maori art.[33]

Schools modelled on the British South Kensington prototype opened in Christchurch under David Blair and George Herbert Elliott in 1882, in Wellington under Arthur Dewhurst Riley in 1886, in Wanganui under David Blair in 1892, Auckland (Elam) under Edward William Payton in 1889.[34] This first complement of South Kensington appointments had had traditional South Kensington training with drawing skills as the primary target.

In the interests of the new colony and in words that characterise South Kensington instruction throughout New Zealand, the Canterbury College School of Art opened in 1882:

> The work is carried on in the school has for its object the systematic study of practical Art and the knowledge of its scientific principles, with a view to developing the application of Art to the common uses of life, and to the requirements of Trade and Manufacture.[35]

Riley sought and obtained South Kensington affiliation for the Wellington Technical School in 1888; the Dunedin school followed in 1893-4 (the name changing to the Dunedin School of Art & Design), and the Christchurch school in 1896.[36] New Zealand, as part of "Greater Britain", took on the British so-called "South Kensington" drawing, design and art examination and prize system in 1894 at a national level through the New Zealand Education Department.[37]

ENDNOTES

1 Discussed p112
2 Crawford *Birmingham* 1984, 24
3 *Studio* 96 no429
4 Ibid 427 ills
5 Ibid 426
6 Illustrations of interior, see 263
7 Interview with Joan Edgar, 16 Feb 2000
8 Haslam 1991, 13
9 Nochlin 1971, 230
10 An idea voiced by Pugin 1836, see 26 col 1
11 Naylor 1971, 27
12 Ibid 29
13 C.R. Ashbee *Modern English Silverwork: an essay by C.R. Ashbee ... : a new edition with introductory essays* by Alan Crawford & Shirley Bury, London [1909] 1974, 3
14 Fraser on Kidson (1957), article courtesy of Neil Roberts, in Calhoun 2004-5, 31
15 Crawford *Birmingham* 1984, 25
16 See comment by Pugin 1841, see 26-7
17 *Art in New Zealand* V (Sep 1932) no17, 58 ill. The cream jug may be a sugar bowl.
18 Pugin 1841, see 26 col 2
19 Comment in *The Ecclesiologist*, see 30
20 On Pugin's changed attitude to polychromy, see 34 col 1
21 On Dresser's use of spots of colour, as found in Japanese art, see 74
22 Spielmann 1908, 356,358
23 Pugin 1841, see 26-8
24 Pugin 1843, see 28
25 Crawford *Birmingham* 1984, 24
26 Belich 2009, quoted in "Preface", 6
27 Roberta Waddell *The Art Nouveau Style: in jewellery, metalwork, glass, ceramics, textiles, architecture and furniture* New York 1977, vii, in Calhoun 2000, 66
28 Walter Cook *Evening Post* (1 Nov 1995) Wellington, New Zealand, 21
29 The (British) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society held its first exhibition in 1888, see 127ff
30 *Studio* XVIII/no79 (Oct 1899), 37-58: 42
31 Ngarita Johnstone email 28 Apr 2003
32 Ngarita Johnstone, Canterbury College School of Art group interview 17 Mar 1993
33 Illustrated, see 265
34 For further details, see Calhoun 2000, 209 n47
35 Canterbury College School of Art Prospectus 1882, 5
36 NZ *AJHR* 1894 E-1, 86Dn and NZ *AJHR* 1897 E-1C, 16Ch
37 NZ *AJHR* 1894 E-1, 71

Drawing and design

Drawing skills, in New Zealand as in Britain and throughout the South Kensington diaspora, were equated with artistic talent; students could go on to be good designers, or so it was believed. Most students still wished to graduate to fine art for which drawing skills were axiomatic. Botany (and drawing) were considered suitable school subjects for girls: A.D. Riley (a key figure among first-generation design-reform immigrants), in his pivotal 1898 report to government on manual and technical education, wrote that for girls' secondary schools: "Botany is the most usual subject."[1]

The first drawing school

Gordon H. Brown in his classic history of *New Zealand Painting 1900–1920* quotes from the *Otago Daily Times* (10 November 1908, 4):

> Nature indeed only reveals herself truly to the artist who goes to her with the twin sisters, thought and imagination, as his helpmates.[2]

Hutton's illustrated studies reflect the Victorian fern craze. At the Dunedin school Hutton designed pattern books for student use.[3]

David Con Hutton was described as "a highly qualified drawing master".[4] The stress on drawing skills was understandable in gold-rich Protestant Dunedin; the city followed its Scottish heritage and opened a drawing school. As recorded by Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, in *Settlers: New Zealand immigrants from England, Ireland and Scotland 1800-1945* (2008), Scots settlers came to New Zealand in numbers from Glasgow and Edinburgh; the men often had backgrounds in craft trades. Settlers from such urban and craft/trade backgrounds would accept the advantages to their children and themselves of learning to draw.

David Con Hutton (head of the Otago provincial drawing school in Dunedin from 1870), Ferns, from an early sketch book; Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu.

With the 1877 New Zealand Education Act, drawing instruction became a required subject for all primary school children. Drawing was a standard subject at private girls' schools and when Fanny Wimperis retired in 1906, the principal of Otago Girls' High School, Miss Margaret McLeod, noted that she had trained a generation of girls "who owe to her their appreciation of the beauty of line and form". Their work at the Christchurch International Exhibition (1906-7) had met with much praise.[5]

A New Zealand Royal Commission in 1879 on the requirements for a national education system said:

> In all civilized countries schools of art and design are recognized as an important means of cultivating the taste of the people; and, regarded from this point of view, they are perhaps more necessary in a young colony than in older countries. But, independently of such considerations, they have a high practical value in their relation to several professions and to manufacturing industry.[6]

Primary school instruction

Drawing was seen as valuable training in manual dexterity, a generally desirable trait and of especial interest for artisans and tradeworkers, whether male or female, and for the colony's desired manufacturing concerns.[7] It is worth recording Arthur Dewhurst Riley's 1888 words on drawing instruction in primary schools:

> Regarded aright, drawing in general education is the most potent means for developing the perceptive faculties, teaching the student to see correctly, and to understand what he sees. Drawing, if well taught,

Kawhia Native School, AJHR *1903 E-2 [ill after page 34]; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref C17729). As well as drawing exercises, children were given hand-to-eye coordination exercises using sloyd, a Scandinavian method of teaching children manual dexterity.*

Mokowai School, Manawatu, 1909; F.J. Denton collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref G20894 1/1). On a blackboard, left rear, is a stylised plant drawing, which children would have copied free-hand.

> is the constant practice of the analysis of forms. By this practice the eye is quickened, and rendered incomparably more accurate, and, as the eye is the most open and ready road through which knowledge passes to the mind, the full development of its powers is a matter of no small importance to all.[8]

Drawing cultivated "taste" and opened the "eyes to see the beauties of nature". Drawing (and modelling) from an early age encouraged "originality".[9] Henry Cole had said, as Riley reported in his annual report for 1888:

> As to drawing, it is next in use to writing, and even of more importance than writing in handicrafts.[10]

Currently, there was:

> no attempt to train the eye to see, the memory to retain the impression made, and the hand to convey that impression to paper. The mere fact of copying is not drawing.[11]

In his 1898 report, Riley on "DRAWING" began:

> If the public-school system is to be made the instrument whereby our future workmen are trained in technical work, then drawing must be thoroughly taught. The importance of drawing as an industrial subject cannot be overestimated.[12]

Geometry

Shape-filling plant-based elementary exercises were seemingly set throughout New Zealand as further drawing, design, art and technical schools were established on the British South Kensington model. Also current for students was David Blair *Colonial Drawing-Book*, and D.C. Hutton *Practical Geometry: Definitions, problems, scales and exercises*. Riley a few years later was to warn against too much reliance in schools on "Blair's or Hutton's books".[13]

David Con Hutton's annual 1898 report could have been written by David Ramsey Hay, the Scot, who spoke in 1836 to the British Government Select Committee on Arts and Principles of Design:[14]

> The students were chiefly occupied in sketching, analysing plant-forms from nature, and elementary designing to fill given shapes, such as a square, oblong, polygon, circle &c, with given foliage. This course enabled students not only to more fully appreciate the beauties of plant-forms and the forms most suitable for design, but also to acquire some technical ability. A few very fair designs of ornamental treatment to fill given spaces were exhibited at the close of the session.[15]

The following year Hutton recorded:

> Several very good designs suitable for wood-carving, book-covers, and room-decorations, &c, were made by the advanced students.[16]

Florence Akins (Canterbury College School of Art lecturer 1927 to 1969) would, she recalled, ask students to design a pattern for a square scarf, perhaps with a border:

> I'd say, "I want you to break up that square with a geometric pattern ... and then work up a design." The students were left to work up their designs individually. Students did not start from historic patterns; for example, the Icelandic patterns illustrated in Lewis Day's book. When

Nelson College for Girls Art Studio, Mrs E.F. Cooke. Nelson Provincial Museum, Tyree Studio Collection (ref 178798)

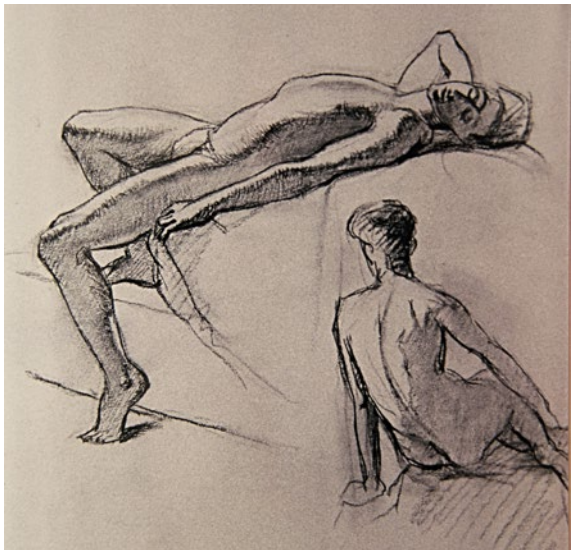
> I started juniors on design, I got them to use a compass. I drew large border patterns at home and asked the student to make their own black and white pattern. The student could copy my pattern but then also had to do one of their own with a compass. They, the students, would do a pattern with a straight line, with a curve, perhaps in black, grey and white, that is, use of a tone. The third exercise would be with more straight lines and fewer curves and, perhaps, two tones of grey or just black, white and grey. I would continue in this direction and introduce half-drop patterns and exercises. And then there were exercises in counterchange, interchange and so on. It was a matter of introducing principles, for example, how to link half-drop designs, and then the ogee curve.[17]

Florence Akins explained her approach to design for her Junior A and B girls before the introduction of the Canterbury College School of Art diploma course in 1927:

> You have a foundation on which you base the design, I used to tell students. "When you see some material in a shop (and I used to do this myself, looking at material designs in Ballantyne's window) work out the repeat pattern. Is it built on a rectangle or a lozenge shape or the ogee curve?" I also used to do it with carpets when I was in the dentist or anyplace.

Bill Sutton (Canterbury College School of Art student from high school to 1937), a student and a lecturer, a self-taught exponent and teacher of book-binding, tooling, illumination, and calligraphy, recalled:

> Flo was a superb teacher. She taught me all the perspective I know and she made me into a scrupulous draughtsman. Her drawing



Chrystabel Aitken, Quick sketch from life, prepared Canterbury College School of Art 1923; Private collection

Grace Butler, Hands (Canterbury College School of Art from 1910); Private collection

> was excellent. I studied plant form with her. Every week a bundle of cuttings was brought over from the Botanical Gardens and we studied the shapes of buds and how leaves joined onto stems and the structure of blossoms and so on. Later with James Johnstone we used these drawings to evolve designs based on plant forms.[18]

Florence Akins, recalling the need to prepare a design on paper and to be proficient in a handicraft, said:

> An interest in design was revived with the arrival of Mr Johnstone and designing for repoussé work, laying metal on metal and filigree work. A design was always done on paper. You had to have done that first. You have to have your pattern worked out and measured or you would end up with only half a pattern at the end. There was pitch inside the bowl. You had to beat out your bowl shape first. The pattern would then be marked on the bowl. There's no hit and miss method. You've got to be very practical. Sometimes there might be a happy accident but usually a successful result would be the result of hard work.[19]

As indicated, students needed geometry to transfer a two-dimensional design to a curved surface. Ngarita Johnstone noted that students took geometrical drawing so that they could transfer designs on paper to three-dimensional objects when required. Students, said Doris Tutill, transferred the outline and then either used a paintbrush to create a faint outline or incised the outline on the object and then filled in with a darker paint colour. Doris recalled drawing dancing figures around a grey bowl and stippling the design with gold. She also recalled making a Dutch Magyar bonnet.[20]

Life drawing

Life drawing as the nineteenth-century ended was an essential aspect of training. Figures were plentifully included in designs, in no small part due to Walter Crane's admonitions.[21] In 1893, Hilda McIntyre received a first for her "free-hand" drawing. In the same year, Leonard Booth was offered a free studentship, as one of ten head boys in drawing in the district State school competitions.[22] Vivian Smith, initially trained at the Sheffield Technical School of Art, had received a book prize "for the manner in which he has attempted and realized with celerity and success, certain momentary actions"; the prize was recorded in the 19 September 1905 issue of *Arts & Crafts: A practical magazine for the studio, the workshop and the home* (London). Smith won his prize in the National Competition of Schools of Art for 1904, in a section for "Drawing and painting from the living model".[23] He went on to attend the Royal College of Art in London and was selected by Lethaby in 1912 to teach drawing at Wellington Training College.[24] Subsequently, Smith became head of the Wanganui Technical College. John Simpson explained:

> You had to be able to find your way around and name every bone in the body and every muscle, its origins and insertion. You had to be able to draw a fully muscled figure in any position from memory. You can see where all this comes from, namely the tradition of the human form in art, the Renaissance, the bread and butter of sculptors, engravers, painters.[25]

Drawing from "the life-model", for "hour-sketches", was prescribed by 1898.[26] Chrystabel Aitken, a student at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1921, recalled that on "Friday nights I did five minute life sketches. I did lots of drawing." Ngarita Johnstone concurred: "We did

life drawing. That was one of the things that the design people did. They had to do life drawing. They had to sit that." Ngarita thought she had done life drawing for two years. "I can't remember for sure now. I just went on doing it. Most of us did. But we did actually have to sit life drawing. We used to beat the painters too. [Laughter]" Bill Sutton remembered: There were classes "in the late afternoon from four till five, something like that, and I remember a model there who had a baby and I'd feed the bottle to the baby. [Laughter] She was a good model so it was worth it."[27]

Doris Tutill (Canterbury College School of Art 1929 to 1934) won the pencil portraiture prize: "I was taught by James Cook. Oh, his pencil work was lovely. Just lovely."[28]

Frances Shurrock (Canterbury College School of Art instructor 1924 to 1949), a key figure in the Arts & Crafts debate in New Zealand, encouraged drawing studies; Peggy Hay (Canterbury College School of Art 1943 to 1948), her daughter Wendy recalls, had a talent for life drawing, recognised by Shurrock:

> Shurrock was most particular about not having a heavy pencil line right around the outline of the body. No, you had light and shade in your pencil marks. You never did a solid line. That just wasn't it. You learnt to lift the hand a bit and emphasise shadows and on top of the shoulders, of course, it would be lighter because the light shines on the shoulders.[29]

ENDNOTES

1 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 36
2 Gordon Brown 1972, 34
3 Ibid 23 n117
4 NZ *AJHR* 1879 Session I H-1, 9
5 Principal's report, Dunedin, December 1906
6 NZ *AJHR* 1880 H-1, 31
7 See photograph of government recommended free-hand exercises, illustrations 173
8 "Technical and Arts Instruction and Drawing in Primary Schools ... in Australasian Colonies" NZ *AJHR* 1888 E-11, 2-3
9 Ibid 2
10 NZ *AJHR* 1888 E-11, 3
11 Ibid
12 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 4
13 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 5. F. Graeme Chalmers "South Kensington and the Colonies: David Blair of New Zealand and Canada", in *Studies in Art Education* 26 no2 (Winter 1985) 69-74, provides a full analyis of colonial South Kensington courses
14 See comment by David Hay 1836, 19-20
15 NZ *AJHR* 1899 E-5, 22
16 NZ *AJHR* 1900 E-5, 18; Calhoun 2000, 34 ill
17 Interview with Florence Akins, 4 September 1992
18 Interview with Bill Sutton, 8 Dec 1992
19 Interview with Florence Akins, 4 September 1992
20 Interview with Rev Doris Tutill, 23 July 2006
21 Refer to "Crane", see 177
22 NZ *AJHR* 1894 E-7, 5
23 Vivian Smith "Drawing and painting from the living model" prize, in National Competition of Schools of Art 1904, listed in *Arts & Crafts: A practical magazine for the studio, the workshop and the home* (London) 19 Sep 1905, 182
24 See "Lethaby", 180
25 Interview with John Simpson, 14 May 2003, 2
26 A.D. Riley report to goverment, NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5, 38
27 Group interview Christchurch, 17 Mar 1993
28 Interview with Doris Tutill, 15 May 2003
29 Interview with Peggy Hay, 1 Sep 2002

New Zealand: an aesthetic pulse

The Aesthetic movement in New Zealand has its own growing record, including Anna K.C. Peterson's *New Zealanders at Home: a cultural history of domestic interiors 1814-1917* (2001). Libraries contain copies of essential guides such as those by Charles L. Eastlake.[1] What follows is a brief look at a variety of published sources from which further insights into the Aesthetic movement in New Zealand coud be assembled.

Aesthetic dress, as worn by Alla and Dolla Richmond, and the attention their dress attracted is recorded in Frances Porter's book on *Jane Maria Atkinson* (1989): in November 1880 on their return journey to New Zealand, J.C. Richmond's daughters were described by fellow passenger Walter Turnbull as:

> very plain looking and dressed in a most extraordinary fashion quite aesthetic, loose robes with tippets and girdles round the waist, with hair cut short in other words perfect guys.[2]

Subsequently, apparently wearing the same or similar outfits, Alla and Dolla are thought to look as if they:

> have walked out of one of Walter Crane's books. Dolla has certainly a beautiful face – very beautiful – and is most picturesque in appearance altogether.[3]

In Nelson, Alla and Dolla both refurbished St James so that "now it is high art". Above the Venetian red fireplace Dolla painted, after Kate Greenaway, a fresco of five geese dancing to the moon; they were to be an "allegorical representation of us five".[4]

An aesthetic attitude to "art" could be found even at the Auckland Society of Arts annual exhibition. The second annual opened at noon on 20 April 1882. The *New Zealand Herald* noted:

> A noted feature of the exhibition is the small collection of paintings for door panels. This class of art is in great favour at Home, and we observe from the specimens shown that the style is similar to that in vogue in England.[5]

South Kensington

A new central school had opened in South Kensington, London, in 1864. The new school was housed in the growing South Kensington Museum and the drawing, design and art teaching system acquired its "South Kensington" tag. A Select Committee heard that, notes Christopher Frayling, the "French educationalists (of all people) were beginning to rate the [British] national system as a great success". The continuing issue was whether the English had "raised themselves" by sowing "the seeds of artistic instruction among the working population".[6]

The Aesthetic movement (and the later Arts & Crafts) effectively commissioned women to provide an aesthetic background to domestic life "in the 1860s and 1870s".[7] Presciently, Lewis Day, in 1881 in the *Magazine of Art*, on "The Woman's Part in Domestic Decoration", offered the opinion:

> It is one of the pressing questions of our time – How shall poor gentlewomen support themselves? – and many imagine that the career of art, and of decorative art especially, is open to them. So it is – or would be if they had been trained to it ... the real source of their distress and trouble is in the prejudice which men

> hug to themselves with more than feminine infatuation, that a man is degraded by allowing his daughters to work for their own living ... When a young woman is all at once thrown upon her own resources, with a necessity of earning immediately her own living, those resources seldom prove adequate ... When one has arrived at a certain proficiency in one's craft these accomplishments begin to be valuable, but till then they are sometimes even a hindrance.[8]

Aesthetic/Oriental influences

Before James McLachlan Nairn came to New Zealand, he prepared an illustrated double-sided screen: *The four seasons – a screen in four sections; verso: Sun and moon – a Japanese landscape*, c1888, oil on canvas.[10] The verso side of the screen shows the significant effect of Japanese idioms in Scotland, the spirit of which the artist brought to New Zealand in 1891, to teach at Wellington Technical School. The other side of the screen shows "The four seasons", a post-impressionist study. In a lecture in 1892 Nairn said:

> ... if we want art we must begin at the point where all great artists have begun – the study of nature from life or outside.[11]

Margery Blackman in her biography on Dorothy Theomin of Olveston – mountaineer, photographer, traveller and benefactor (2007) – discusses a trip by Dorothy and her mother, 1901-2, to Australia and from there:

> the Theomins visited Hong Kong, China and Japan. There are few Chinese objects in Olveston, but the richness of the Japanese collections suggests a genuine interest in the ceramics, textiles, ivories and metalwork of Japan. They then crossed the northern

"Geo Barrow, Age 10, Std V, 10-5-98" (from the Southwark Division, Alma School, London); Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref BK-893-E5B). A circular design, published in 1898 in New Zealand government papers[9], emotes earlier Anglo-Japanese aesthetics and uses currently fashionable Art Nouveau twists. The colours used were secondary colours.

Pacific Ocean to Canada.[12]

Canterbury Society of Arts annual exhibition catalogue 1904, advertisement for W. Sey, Painter and Decorator, of Christchurch:

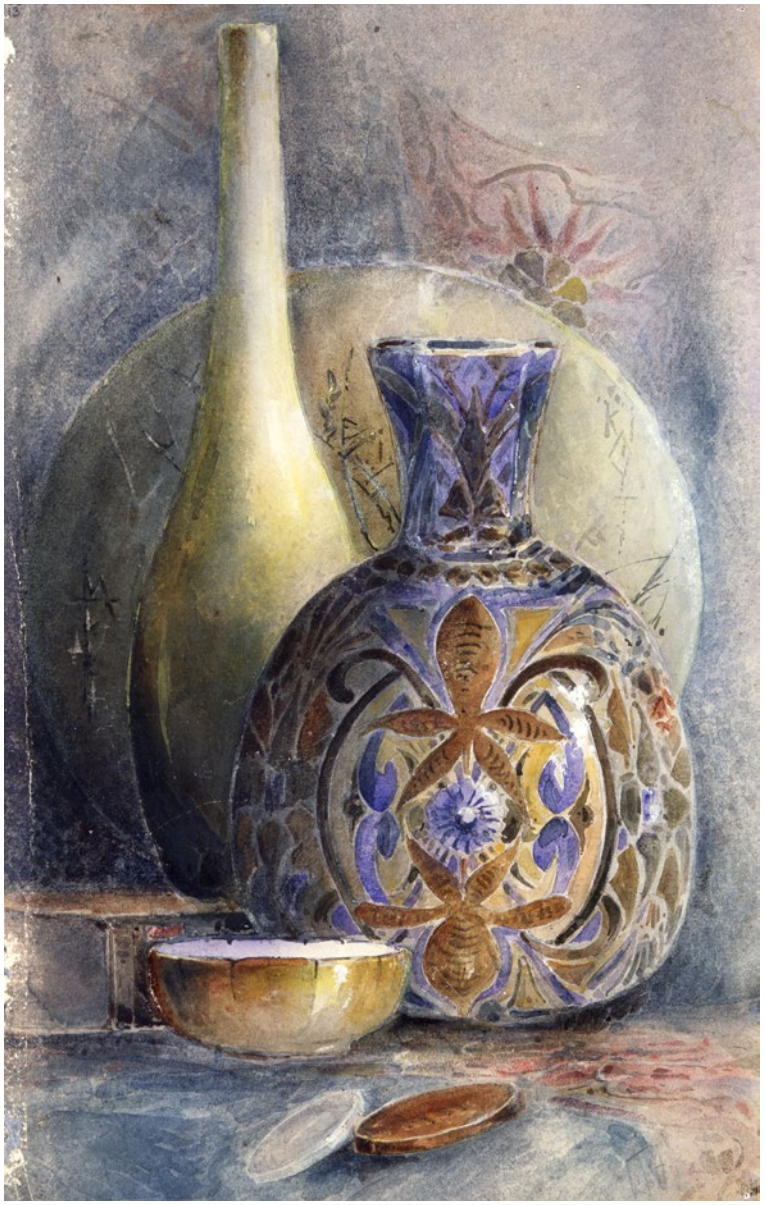
> WALL PAPERS from an Artistic point of view ... an Aesthetic point of view ... a Ruskin point of view ... a "Morris" point of view ... from the most eminent designers ... from people of taste ... that will make home happy and beautiful ... an artistic eduction in themselves ...[13]

Isidore Spielmann, reporting to the British government on the British section of the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition in Christchurch (Canterbury, New Zealand), quoted the *Lyttelton Times* for 15 April 1907:

> British Arts and Crafts will have a lasting effect on the homes of the people of Canterbury. Quite a large number of people have written to the manufacturers in England with the object of obtaining articles such as those displayed at the Exhibition at Christchurch.[14]

James Cowan, in the official report (1910) to the New Zealand government on the exhibition, noted sales of "a host of ... pretty things for the home beautiful".[15] Of the current local applied art scene, Cowan wrote:

> Just a few, these, of the hundreds of richly beautiful articles in the collection – examples of the excellent use of art designs in common things as well as in jewellery and in articles for house-decoration.[16]



Isabel Hodgkins (1867-1950), "Study of a vase", watercolour, undated (c1885?), 434x269mm; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref B-083-013). The watercolour is a perfect study of the style termed "Anglo-Japanese" and uses aesthetic colours, asymmetry, and irregular groupings.

Liberty & Co, the London Regent Street emporium of refined aesthetic taste, had among its antipodean outlets the shops of the Alcorn sisters (photographs opposite), the first opened in 1906 on Lambton Quay.[17] The Liberty name and the term Art Nouveau were often used interchangeably at this time. The store did not name its designers and was thought to add a hand-crafted look to its metalwares by machine, both disdained by Walter Crane, for one; as a result, Liberty wares were not included in the 1906-7 Christchurch art and industry exhibition.

The Liberty link for the Alcorns seems to have been provided by A.D. Riley, principal of the Wellington, New Zealand, school of design, a friend and sponsor. Margaret Alcorn had received a South Kensington book prize in 1903 for a stencilled design in "sober clematis purple, with glints of silver on dull green".[18]

The sisters owned photographs from Liberty Furnishing and Decorative Studio: locals could read of Liberty handicraft available through the sisters' shop, in an advertisement running across the lower edge of pages in their local Wellington art society catalogue (1911):

> LIBERTY'S are showing new shipments of Cretonnes, Linens, Silks, Etc ... For Truly Artistic Productions visit LIBERTY'S, 162 Lambton Quay ... New Shipment of Art Pottery just opened at LIBERTY'S ... LIBERTY'S Silks are printed at their own works at Merton Abbey ... LIBERTY'S Pewter and Silver Ware is specially designed and made at their Birmingham Works by Liberty Cymric ... LIBERTY Carpets or special designs are more artistic and not any more expensive than the ordinary design shown by other houses ...[19]

Mary Alcorn with her bicycle and Margaret Alcorn dressed for a pageant; Alcorn Family Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. Mary and Margaret Alcorn distributed photographs (Calhoun 2000, illustration on page 99) showing metalwork from Liberty of London available through their Wellington store on Lambton Quay from 1906 and in the Burlington Arcade, off Cuba Street, Wellington from c1928.

In August 1915 for a war-time fund-raising knitting book, Isabel Field designed the cover and the Alcorns advertised their merchandise inside:

> LIBERTY'S NAME SYNONYMOUS WITH BEAUTY
>
> Everyone is acquainted with the name of 'Liberty'. It stands for all that is good and characterful in fabrics and wares ... All prices are catered for – from the decorative Persian volume of Omar Khayyam (translated by Fitzgerald) at a few pence, to the dainty silver ware and Liberty clocks at as many guineas.

The adoption of home-making ideals by the art and design schools of New Zealand gave these schools in the twentieth-century a continuing means of attracting female students. Markets in New Zealand, as elsewhere, were quick to capitalise on the "look". The national magazine *Progress* for January 1913 included a small item on "The Home Beautiful", an advertisement for Messrs Andrew and Clark, Queen Street, Auckland:

> To make the "home beautiful" should be the aim of all who are furnishing, and this cannot be done without much careful thought and proper training.[20]

Aesthetic colours such as the blue-green of peacock feathers would long be favoured and, in New Zealand, Peggy Hay recalled the 1940s and her love of these colours, learned from Yvonne Rust, who in turn would have been influenced by her mother, Annie Buckhurst.[21]

ENDNOTES

1 See "Eclectic Aesthetics", 82-3
2 Walter Turnbull letter 29 Nov [1880]. Journal ... 1825-80 ATL, in Frances Porter *Jane Maria Atkinson* 1989, 323-4
3 Ibid 324
4 Ibid 333
5 *New Zealand Herald* 20 Apr 1882, 5
6 Frayling 1987, 50
7 In Anscombe 1991, 149
8 Lewis Day "The Woman's Part in Domestic Decoration" *Magazine of Art* 1881, 462-3; in Callen 1979, 173
9 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B [plate after 102]
10 Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa collection (ref: 1987-0052-1/A-D.b)
11 http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/search.aspx?term=Nairn%20&imagesonly=on; retrieved 18 Aug 2011
12 Margery Blackman *Dorothy Theomin of Olveston – Mountaineer, photographer, traveller & benefactor* 2007, 13; Friends of Olveston Dunedin 2007
13 CSA annual exhibition catalogue 1904, advertisement 8
14 Spielmann 1907, 18
15 Cowan 1910, 283
16 Ibid 284
17 Ann Calhoun "Alcorn sisters", *The Book of Women* 1991
18 "Alcorns" in Calhoun 2000, 98-101
19 *NZAFA 1911* exhibition catalogue, 13-24
20 *Progress* January 1913, 249; 246-8 ills
21 See Peggy Hay 308 ills and the Buckhurst sisters 275 ill

Botanical art and design: New Zealand

The 1882 Canterbury College School of Art *Prospectus* advised that for students taking "Botany and Plant Form":

> Every Friday morning at 11 o'clock, students who are working in Stage V will attend a short lecture on Botanical Drawing and Plant Form as applied to Art. Fresh specimens of a plant then in flower will be supplied at each lecture for use of students; it will be drawn in detail on the blackboard; its botanical characteristics pointed out, with suggestions for ornamental arrangement:
>
> The position of the plant in the vegetable kingdom
> The stem; its form and branching
> Form of the leaves; the stalk and its insertion, stipules, spines and tendrils
> The leaf and flower bud
> The fully expanded flower and its parts; the fruit
> The plant applied to design.[1]

To repeat, students, via a plant cutting, firstly, made a "naturalistic" record of the plant cutting: secondly, and defining a particular British-sourced design-style, students were taught to select forms from their plant cuttings with which to create an abstracted or stylised flat design for use on a two-dimensional surface, such as a textile, or the surface of a three-dimensional object, be it a metal box or a wooden side-board.

By 1884, David Blair was demonstrating plant dissection and design construction. Each week students brought a specimen of a local plant, such as honeysuckle, rose, or common flower, which was:

David Blair, Coprosma Baueriana, botanical illustration; in Thomas Kirk, The Forest Flora of New Zealand *1889, plate 62 [opp 109]; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref BK-908-62)*

For five decades Margaret Stoddart was arguably this country's best-known flower painter.

> ... explained botanically, its details of form, with suggestions for ornamental treatment, drawn on the board before the students, several of whom took up the work and prepared a few elementary designs for competition at the annual exhibition of school work held in December.
>
> He added: I hope during the present year to obtain from this class designs that may be applied to practical purposes.[2]

The Canterbury College School of Art opened in March 1882. The *Lyttleton Times* on 27 December 1882, reviewing an exhibition of student work, said:

> In sepia from the cast both Miss Budden and Miss M. Stoddart have done exceedingly well, some ivy leaves by the latter being exceptionally good ... In one room are gathered all the watercolours ... and a great number of botanical and flower studies from nature.[3]

Julie King's excellent exhibition and catalogue *Flowers into Landscape: Margaret Stoddart 1865-1934* (1997) contains a wealth of botanical illustration, which were prepared as much for aesthetic ends as for scientific purposes. Margaret Stoddart had studied botanical illustration at the Canterbury College School of Fine Art and perhaps earlier while studying in Edinburgh. In Edinburgh, drawing lessons, which given the innovations called for by Edinburgh-born and based David Ramsey Hay and Edinburgh-born William Dyce earlier in the century, would have included drawing from plant-cuttings.[4] Julie King writes:

> For five decades Margaret Stoddart was arguably this country's best-known flower painter. Beginning in the 1880s with precisely observed studies of native plants pictured frequently in their native habitats, she moved on to delicately painted still lifes and, by the early 1900s, her painterly techniques meant that she was well on the way to making this genre her own. …
>
> The results of Margaret's training are seen in the accuracy of her representation in *Titoki Berries, 1886*, a study painted against a conventional plain ground, in *Mandevilla, 1888*, where the plant is depicted growing in situ, and in early still-life paintings of floral arrangements such as *Cherry Blossom, 1890*. The inclusion of botanical art in the school's curriculum was related to its application to design and it also reflected the value this period placed on recording natural phenomena.[5]

Riley's 1898 report[6] recommended an additional course on "Plants in their relation to design" in ten parts covering both the aesthetic and scientific aspects of botanical illustration. The parts followed the 1882 Canterbury College School of Art *Prospectus* (above) and followed current British South Kensington practice. The books recommended for the Government-directed course included Curtis's *Flora Londoniensis* (1778).[7] George Herbert Elliott, at the Canterbury College School of Art in Christchurch, introduced a new course in 1899: "Plant Form in Relation to Design" – Lecturer – Head Master.

Kate Beath's botanical illustrations (illustrations over page) would have been prepared at the Canterbury College School of Art, probably about

Kate Beath, Apple, pear and blackcurrant botanical illustrations, watercolour, 1903; Private collection

Kate Beath, Columbine botanical illustration, watercolour, 1903; Private collection

1903-4, in line with Elliott's new plant-based design course. Her work includes a drawing for a copper repoussé panel and the finished panel. (253 ills) The study and panel may have been prepared as a member of the Canterbury College School of Art Guild for the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition; her nature-based Arts & Crafts design is similar to C.F.A. Voysey's and R. Anning Bell's covers for the *Studio* (1893 and 1894)[8], a tree design/motif also found in John Henry Menzies' Little Akaloa church. Her plaque bears the homily: "Benidicite Ignis et Aestus Domino". Such homilies became a common feature of Arts & Crafts homes and were often carved into the front face of a mantelpiece above a fireplace. She appears to have studied at the Canterbury College School of Art with George Herbert Elliott and Samuel Hurst Seager, but possibly also with Charles Kidson after his 1903 studies in Britain[9] or with Robert Herdman Smith after his arrival in Christchurch in 1906.

Leaving New Zealand, perhaps with plans to obtain British architectural qualifications, Kate Beath prepared sketchbooks of cathedral architectural details as urged by Samuel Hurst Seager. He wrote to her from Florence (22 April 1908?):

> I would wish for nothing more at present than to see everything you can both in England, & on the Continent making many sketches ... What you want for the next 6 months & as much more as possible is to see-see-see all the time.

In London, reflecting her need for further training for a viable career, W.H. Seth-Smith FRIBA, of Seth-Smith & Munro Architects, 46 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC, wrote (5 July 1908) of finding her:

> "a prospectus of the New Art School Earls Court Road which has Mr

Kate Beath, Sketch of the type students would have prepared to equip them to become professional illustrators, possibly prepared when Kate attended the John Hassall School of Art in London; Private collection

John Hassall Esq as Principal. Special attention is given to Poster Drawing & Black & White for the Press – Possibly this might be a help to your Studies ... ". Seth-Smith's daughter was studying at "Leighton House in preparation for the Royal College of Art course & she would so much like to know you & might introduce you to some ladies who like yourself wish to take up some special art work or another as a profession."

"Pansy" Annie Ford's family believe she earned the nickname "Pansy" as a result of winning a South Kensington prize for this design (illustration opposite). She was probably taught by Leonard Booth and Charles Kidson, as the family own photographs of Charles Kidson (1897) and Leonard Booth (1900). Pansy's papers include a design paper for 1898 for which the examiners included Lewis Day and Walter Crane. Her sketchbook noted:

> Fine arts and decorative arts – those arts which supply our animal wants are spoken of as useful arts while those that appeal to the finer parts of our being are called the fine arts. There is a close relation between the fine arts of music, literature, painting, sculpture, and architecture. Music and literature are the emotional arts. The last three are spoken of as the plastic arts. The fine arts have the power in common of making different forms of worship. This distinguishes them from the industrial arts.
>
> The industrial arts: First we have those that deal with floors, tiles, mosaics, parquetry (which is patterns), carpets, rugs, mattings. Decorative arts are a profession. Mosaics, ornament, ornamental plastic work, different forms of paper hangings, paintings, stencil work. There are other forms of decorative work – terracotta work in

"Pansy" Annie L. Ford (Canterbury College School of Art 1895 to 1907), South Kensington exam piece, linoleum print, inscribed lower edge of print "Square Filling with initials Pansy A.L. Ford Original"; Private collection (photo: Karl Valpy, Christchurch): "Pansy" wrote in her sketchbook: Decorative design may be defined as the art of beautifying objects which have been constructed. It also teaches us to make our constructions beautiful. True decorative art always helps to suggest the purpose for which an object is constructed. That is what is meant by decorative design.

all forms, pottery, stained glass work, wrought and cast iron work, carving, stone carving. These then are the principal arts which come under the heading of decorative arts.

Decorative art is that which has for its subject not the creation of an independent work of art but the ornamentation of a constructive whole or single room or the surface of an object already in existence. Decorative art is therefore a subordinate art which is amenable to special rules, the principle of which is that it should never forget the particular function or destination of the object which is to be decorated. The absolute imitation of nature is forbidden to it.

"Pansy" repeated a section from Ernest Clark *A Handbook of Plant-Form* (1904), the book presumably in the Canterbury College School of Art library:

Having finally set it upon the plant in the given space a good method is to commence by lightly sketching in the constructional main lines of the design, getting these to balance each other and to harmonize with the given lines of the space which are, of course, the controlling lines of the composition. Having decided upon these, suggest with charcoal or soft pencil where the masses or interesting spots will occur. Taking care that these will balance, they should generally fall at the most important divisions of the space. Again, the student may begin by placing the masses of the design first and then connecting them by suitable lines. A third way is mentally to work out the design before putting pencil to paper. As this is not usual with students as it requires long experience to accomplish it one or two of the first former ways will be safer and quicker.

Chrystabel Aitken, "Design for rectangular panel based on japonica", 1923; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. A similar key-hole Art Nouveau design was prepared by Mary Green (272 ill). The teacher may have been Margery Harris, who taught Florence Akins at this time.

In March 1905 her notes included a definition of "conventionalism":

> Realistic ornament aims only at arranging the beautiful detail of nature within the space decorated in [a] somewhat haphazard way. In a conventionalism we set out a skeleton of beautiful structural lines and with them beautiful details taken from nature .... Conventionalism picks and chooses those [lines] from the natural object which will be most effective in the design. A realistic ornament by attempting a close imitation of nature often produces inappropriate results. Conventionalism considers what is appropriate to the material and the purpose for which it is to be used.

William La Trobe, Director of the Wellington Technical College in his 1908 annual report, a few years after his appointment, following Walter Crane's guidelines[10], wrote:

> Plant studies: Good work has been done in these classes during the year. Although it is always possible to obtain cut flowers for these classes, it is advisable to have as many specimens of growing plants in the school as possible, and a small glasshouse would greatly facilitate the keeping of such plants.[11]

Florence Akins, Chrystabel's friend and staff colleague, said, illustrating the continuing importance of plant studies:

> We didn't cut ourselves off from nature, even with our abstract designs. Students still had to go out and observe nature, watch plants growing, observe the variety. From nature you get all the principles I taught in the design course. Nature contains all the basic principles of colour – these principles are man discovered not man invented.[12]

Chrystabel Aitken (Canterbury College School of Art 1921/22 to ?1936), Daffodils, primroses, forget-me-nots, and flowering currant, "12th Sept 19." [?1919]; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. The flower study was prepared in Southland about 1919, as Chrystabel's talents were recognised by her teacher Christine Cameron.

ENDNOTES

1 1882 Canterbury College School of Art Prospectus, 20
2 NZ *AJHR* 1885 E-7, 5, Blair's annual report
3 *Lyttleton Times* on 27 Dec 1882, 5
4 Refer to the "Introduction", 19-21
5 Julie King exhibition catalogue 1997: 14, 39
6 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 40
7 Ibid
8 Illustrations Voysey 1893 cover ill, 116 and R. Anning Bell 1894 cover ill, 140
9 See Charles Kidson "biography", 326-7
10 See "Walter Crane", 177
11 NZ *AJHR* 1908 E-5, 52
12 Quoted by Amanda Rudkin, Flo Akins' great great niece, at Flo Akins' funeral service, 26 October 2012

Arts & Crafts introduced: the first generation

Samuel Hurst Seager wrote to Sir Julius von Haast, Director of the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, in 1885:

> There is in England now a very widespread desire to improve, in every particular, the homes both of rich & poor, & anything which will tend to this - either in Science or Art is receiving the careful attention of eminent men, & by their means being forced upon the notice of an, hitherto, apathetic public ... it is no use having store houses of Art treasures if the people are not educated to value them, & that, they never can be while surrounded in their homes by inartistic furniture & utensils.[1]

Gifts: Seager's gifts to the Canterbury Museum were in the same spirit as Lethaby's to the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London[2] and in the same spirit as purchases from the 1851 Great Exhibition, to become the base of the Victoria & Albert Museum collection. For Victorians, museums and libraries alike had an educative purpose. Seager's gifts to the Canterbury Museum included glassware from Powell & Co, a possible craft-industry for New Zealand.[3] Riley in Wellington sought a New Zealand version of South Kensington Museum (the V&A).[4]

From September 1893 Seager, at the Canterbury College School of Art, taught the "Principles and Practice of Decorative Design and their application":

> The designs at first will be simple modifications of the examples given, and later original designs based on New Zealand flora and fauna. Examples of the ancient and modern art of different countries would be viewed, but the teachings of surrounding nature, the flora and fauna of New Zealand, will be placed before the students as the source whence all good original design should spring.[5]

Regretting that New Zealand, he said, still lacked trained "artistic craftsmsn", Seager by 1900 was able to boast that:

> excellent decorative work has been done by students of our Art School [Canterbury College School of Art]. The beaten copper work … referred to is by a former student …, while some powerful designs in colour have been produced by the Wellington School.[6]

Samuel Hurst Seager is recognised in particular for the eight Arts & Crafts bungalows built on The Spur, Christchurch between 1902-14.[7] Seager's own bungalow, the living room and another bungalow are pictured in Douglas Lloyd Jenkins' beautifully presented *At Home: A century of New Zealand design* (2004).[8]

As Judy Siers celebrates in her definitive book on James Walter Chapman-Taylor (2007), few local architects were as dedicated to the Arts and Crafts as Chapman-Taylor[9]:

> Some linked themselves directly with the Arts and Crafts Movement by the nature and style of their work. Some labelled their work – providing a clue to their philosophy – "Art Architect" or "In the Arts and Crafts style" or, and as Chapman-Taylor did, "Architect and Art craftsman".[10]

His role in the New Zealand Arts & Crafts is especially important for the respect it bestowed on the hand-made and hand-carved; Judy Siers' book is beautifully endowed with photographs of his architecture and carving. Here, the concern is also to show that the movement entered

New Zealand through the education system, direct travel 'home' and, definitively, through the rush of late nineteenth-century publications flowing from Britain around the globe.[11]

Arthur Dewhurst Riley 1898 report to government

"Schools of Art & Crafts: The practice of the various arts as a craft …"[13]

In 1898, A.D. Riley, head of Wellington Technical School, after an extensive tour of British schools[14], presented a report to the New Zealand government on British manual and technical instruction, including a substantial section on the advantages of teaching "Art Crafts".[15] The report brought Riley national recognition as a prophet of "the new movement in education".[16]

As Samuel Hurst Seager had indicated, there was in England and now in New Zealand a receptivity to the new Arts & Crafts movement: Riley's report followed the same thread:

> If our system of education is to be successful, art schools must play a very important part in that success. Drawing is the basis of all technical teaching, and is now regarded as a universal language open to all. There has been much discussion upon the question of whether an art school should undertake what is called "pure art" or "applied art", the former alluding to the pictorial, and the latter to the working or application of art to clay, metals, wood, or stone. France, Germany, and latterly England, have found it useless to make any distinction between the two, and now great pains are taken to spread pure art knowledge as the best method of instruction for the higher the value of the work done the more successful must industrial or applied art become. In our colonial art schools it behoves us to

Design class, Wellington Technical School, 1898-c1901; Alcorn Family Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref F174107). The teacher in the photograph may be Florence Broome, who went on to work as a designer in Britain. In London in 1902, Frances Hodgkins compared Florence Broome's designs to the "jewel-like" work of Eleanor Brickdale, a member of the Pre-Raphaelite school.[12] The framed designs on the walls may be loans from the central London South Kensington school.

> strain every possible point to improve the general standard of art education, from the simplest elements in the primary schools to the highest possible point of success.[17]

As well as London, Riley spent time in Manchester and Birmingham and seems to have taken on Crane's and Lethaby's ideas. His report included a list of recommended texts for the library of a New Zealand government-funded drawing, design and art school, such as Riley's own Wellington Technical School:

> The following syllabus of the Manchester School of Art may help teachers to block out their work systematically.[18]

He was clearly as impressed with Lethaby's London Central School and spent two evenings visiting classes:

> The practice of the various arts as a craft is by every means to be encouraged in connection with our local art schools. The London County Council wisely requires that not less than one handicraft shall be taught in connection with each school of art receiving aid from the Board. ...[19]
>
> London School of Art and Crafts. – In order to meet the requirements of artisans and craftsmen who are engaged in industries, the London Technical Education Board has established two special schools – one at 316, Regent Street, and the other in Camberwell. In these schools art is taught entirely in relation to special crafts, and the fees are fixed at a sufficiently low figure to enable working-men to attend the classes. Both these institutions have met with remarkable success, and are to be followed by others. …

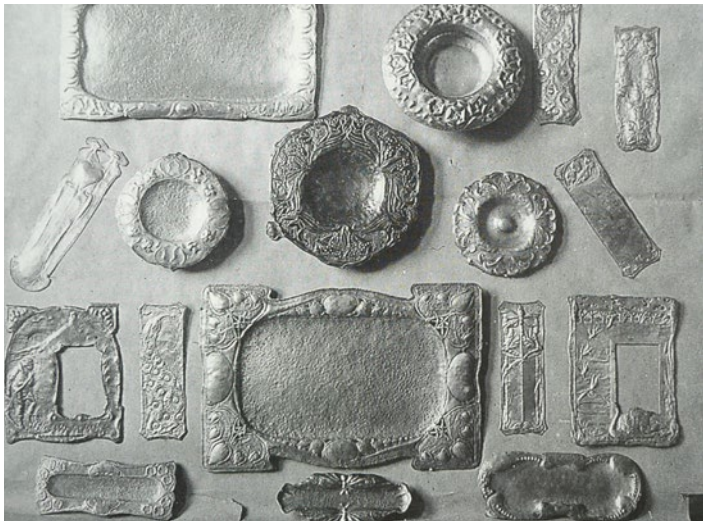
Design class, Wellington Technical School, c1902-6; Alcorn Family Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref F174109). The teacher in the photograph, appointed 1902, is Robert Herdman Smith

There were no fees for apprentices, except for the life class. There is no intention of supplanting apprenticeship, but simply to give thorough tuition in technical details, and to encourage expression of individuality in original work. …

Of special interest here is the section on: Woodcuts in Colour. – A special class is formed in this subject. Design, engraving, and printing of colour prints from wood blocks are done in a method based upon Japanese practice.

Altogether the work of this school forms one of the most interesting and instructive features of modern methods of education. I was pleased to find in the bookbinding class an old Wellington Technical School student, making good progress in his work, with the intention of returning to New Zealand. It may not be possible to approach in completeness any such school as the Arts and Crafts in London, but something may be done by combining design and practice together as previously indicated in our New Zealand art schools.[20]

What Riley imparts was not simply a copy of British practice; he passionately wanted his adopted country to match and even better the motherland in drawing, the fine arts and the "Art Crafts". Riley's report included a supplementary section issued by the Science and Art Department for primary schools on the central importance of brush-work[21], which in effect celebrates lessons learnt from Japanese art[22]. The report concluded:



Repoussé metalwork created at the Wellington Technical School, c1902; Alcorn Family Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref: 174110)

> There is a further danger in connection with our art schools that there may be too much teaching, particularly in the case of promising students. In such cases what is really wanted is not so much teaching as direction, so that there may be no stifling of a student's originality. Particularly is this so in such a subject as design, where originality, even if unfortunate in composition or treatment, should be encouraged. …
>
> Too much outline drawing is inadvisable ...
>
> Freedom and variety should be the constant thought of the instructor.
>
> ... rapid and effective sketches should be encouraged in every possible way, the life-model occasionally being posed in turn by the students for hour-sketches in pen, pencil, chalk, &c ...

> Drawings and paintings of interiors and plant-form receive every attention. Here, again, variety of work and method are to be encouraged. In the study of plant-form and foliage the use of colour, and the habit of working directly upon paper with the brush, would give great facility and precision of touch, a directness of execution very desirable in all work. In painting without background, native foliage should receive particular attention. Drawings from memory and in black and white should be frequently given, the latter enabling the student to study the values of colour to black and white, a style of work particularly useful for illustrative purposes[23].

Riley's philosophy on Design instruction – a template for all New Zealand schools – by which any and all students could profit from instruction in basic design, had been, it will be recalled, fairly violently opposed by John Ruskin and William Morris[24]:

> Many persons conclude that design is not capable of being generally taught – that only gifted students are eligible for such instruction. Design, however, may be and should be taught from the earliest stages … as is done in Birmingham, and to a certain extent this is already done in the Wellington District. Design should undoubtedly form a part of ordinary education in our art schools. It has occasionally been remarked that it is useless to teach a subject having no application to the industries of New Zealand. Surely some of the following trades would receive considerable benefit from their workers having a knowledge of ornament and its application: Wood-carvers, stone-carvers, metal and wrought-iron workers, picture-frame makers, jewellers, engravers, lithographers, bookbinders, book-illustrators, house-decorators, architects, modellers, pottery-workers, printer, &c. In the various branches of these trades and professions alone design is a most important factor, and there is no reason to suppose that other industries will not spring into existence. …
>
> In all cases in more advanced work students should make themselves acquainted with the various processes of workmanship, such as stencilling, colour-printing, inlaying, wood-carving, modelling, casting, &c, so that their designs may be practically adapted to execution in a given material. Instructors ... should recollect that there is more to be learnt from making a simple design well suited to its purpose than from elaborating the most ambitious drawing adapted to no purpose or process of execution. ...
>
> I cannot too strongly urge the application of all designs to practical purposes, and by this means make the subject a real live one, and a very valuable one to our rising industrial artists. …
>
> The report concluded: That applied design be taught in connection with the art schools of the colony.[25]

Charles Kidson[26] was appointed to the Canterbury College School of Art, full-time, in 1892; he returned to England in 1903 and significantly studied repoussé and enamelling. He had already worked in low relief in clay and went on to produce art metalwork in relatively low relief (252 ill). The subsequent distinctions between art metalwork decorated in low relief and the more bulbous work developed by Ashbee's Guild[27] are a means of dating the metalwork.

South Kensington Loan System

Riley had asked the Science & Art Department "for a loan collection of prize works in connection with the national competition of 1896".[28] In reply:

> The Minister of Education sent for exhibition an interesting selection of work from the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, consisting of worked examination papers in the various subjects of drawing, painting, and designing, finished studies in light and shade and in colour, design for textile fabric, and casts of modelled designs.[29]

South Kensington sent "some fifty framed specimens of worked exercises".[30]

Alexander Fraser[31], a graduate of Heriot-Watt College in Edinburgh, was appointed to the Wellington school to teach woodcarving in 1902.[32] Clara Firth would recall of the earlier years that "Woodcarving was much in vogue then, and enthusiastic classes met under Mr Fraser, lately arrived from England".[33]

Robert Herdman Smith[34], a graduate of the Bath Municipal School of Art, and experience at the Leeds School of Art, was also appointed in 1902. Former student Clara Firth recalled Herdman Smith:

> An adept with the brush, we watched with fascination his treatment of gesso in the decoration of furniture. With his "grand" manner, his long straight hair brushed well back, his velveteen jacket and painting smock (commonly designated Smith's nightshirt!), he seemed to personify all our preconceived ideas of an Artist.[35]

William La Trobe[36]: Following Walter Crane's advice and the precedents set by Riley, La Trobe, within a year of his appointment in 1904 to head the Wellington school, responded to the demand for training in commercial art. He called for "historic costumes" to hone student sketching abilities:

> The class in design had again been well attended, and a quantity of good work done ... Students of this class worked out a number of designs for various firms and others in Wellington ... and posters in colour for the Art and Science Department may be cited as examples.[37]

Robert Herdman Smith, Canterbury College School of Art Director from 1906, wrote in his annual report for 1907:

> Artistic Crafts.– A course of silversmiths' work and Limoges, Champlevé, and Cloisonné enamelling was commenced at the beginning of the year, and several beautiful pieces of jewellery were executed. Larger and more important work will be possible when a larger muffle furnace is available. Classes were held for repoussé, gesso, wood-carving, and embossed-leatherwork during the morning, afternoon, and evening throughout the year.[38]

Frederick G. Gurnsey[39] had been appointed to the Christchurch school "as instructor in applied art at the beginning of the year" and "proved very satisfactory".[40] The Arts and Crafts Guild members numbered "over two hundred, many of which are ex-students of the school".[41]

George Pitkethly[42] had a plaster frieze on sale at the Christchurch 1906-7 exhibition[43], which appears not to have sold, similar to the frieze in the entrance hall to the Old CCSA (now the Christchurch Arts Centre). In 1907, La Trobe, in the spirit of the Arts & Crafts at their

strongest, appointed Royal College of Art graduate George Pitkethly to teach "Lettering, Writing and Illuminating". Pitkethly may have attended Edward Johnston's classes in calligraphy at the Royal College of Art. In a Wellington Technical School syllabus entry on the course, Pitkethly cited both Morris and Ruskin to call up the muse:

> William Morris, who was a writer and illuminator before he was a printer, has shown how beautiful modern illuminated writing may be, and how useful the practice of it will prove to the printer and book decorator; for writing is the foundation of illumination and printing, and, therefore, of book decoration.
>
> The ordinary illuminated address often fails because the writing in it is compressed and distorted, because it is in fact "illumination" with some lettering, not, as it ought to be, a page of writing decorated.
>
> Ruskin says:- "The pen ... its right use is the foundation of the art of illumination. Perfect illumination is only writing made lovely, the moment it passes into picture-making it has lost its dignity and function. But to make writing itself beautiful – to make the sweep of the pen lovely – is the art of illumination." – Lectures in Art.[44]

A subsidised five-year course was introduced[45], the course designed, in the first instance, "To train students in the artistic crafts and to provide a wider outlook and training for apprentices engaged in these crafts". To obtain a final certificate, a student had to have served a trade apprenticeship or to have served "pupilage in workshop".[46] Women could not obtain or did not seek apprenticeships and instead La Trobe endeavoured to attract female students to "artistic crafts" classes to augment school coffers.[47]

The New Zealand Mail *for 5 Nov 1902, 41, included a photograph of Technical School staff members, Herdman Smith and James Nairn, at work on their metalwork*

ENDNOTES

1 Letter 23 Mar 1885, von Haast Papers, MS-Copy-Micro-0717-11, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. Also in Lochhead 1987, 95
2 See "Lethaby", 182 col 1
3 Callen 1979, 63 draws attention to the employment of women by Powell & Co
4 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 41
5 Canterbury College School of Art Prospectus 1894, 5
6 Referring possibly to Maud Kimbell's winning 1900 NZ Academy of Fine Arts catalogue cover 158 ill in *RIBA journal* VII, 490
7 Ian Lochhead "The Architectural Art of Samuel Hurst Seager", *Art New Zealand* 44 (Spring 1987), 92-9
8 Douglas Lloyd Jenkins *At Home: A century of New Zealand design* (Godwit) 2004, 6-7 ills
9 James Chapman-Taylor "biography", 319
10 Judy Siers in her definitive book on James Walter Chapman-Taylor (Millwood) 2007, 46
11 See James Belich "Preface", 6 and "Publications", 139ff
12 Linda Gill (ed) *Letters of Frances Hodgkins* AUP 1993, 121
13 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 36ff
14 See "Crane", 177 col 2
15 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 40ff
16 NZ *AJHR* 1899 E-1, xvii
17 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 36-7
18 Ibid 39
19 Ibid 40-1
20 Ibid 41
21 Ibid 6ff
22 See "Dresser", 71-6 and "Eclectic Aesthetics", 79ff
23 Section III – Schools of Art and Crafts: drawing, painting, modelling and design (36ff), NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 37, 38, 38-9
24 See "Ruskin", 92 and "Morris" 102
25 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B noXII, 39, 40, 81
26 See Charles Kidson "biography", 326-7
27 Refer to Ashbee Guild work, illustrated 130-1
28 NZ *AJHR* 1897 E-1C, 5
29 NZ *AJHR* 1903 E-5, 32Dn; see 227 ills, the work on the class walls possibly sent from South Kensington
30 NZ *AJHR* 1904 E-5, 19 Wang
31 See Alexander Fisher "biography", 321
32 NZ *AJHR* 1903 E-5, 18
33 *WTC Jubilee Review 1886-1936*, 107. See Fraser side-board design, Calhoun 2000, 54 ill
34 See Robert Herdman Smith "biography", 323-4
35 *WTC Jubilee Review 1886-1936*, 107; Herdman Smith pictured in 227 ill
36 See William La Trobe "biography", 327-8
37 NZ *AJHR* 1905 E-5, 21
38 NZ *AJHR* 1908 E-5, 73Ch
39 See Frederick G. Gurnsey "biography", 321-2
40 NZ *AJHR* 1908 E-5, 73Ch
41 Ibid
42 See George Pitkethly "biography", 329
43 Spielmann 1908, 269
44 *WTS Syllabus* 1911, 42-5
45 NZ *AJHR* 1908 E-5, 72
46 *WTS Syllabus* 1911, 41
47 Calhoun 2000, 114

1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition of Arts and Industries, Christchurch[1]

Over the summer of 1906-7 Christchurch staged an international art and industry exhibition, a way of advising the world of the nation's pending maturity. The British Art Section contained 1826 items, of which 690 works were offered for sale in the Arts & Crafts section. The latter represented 170 Arts & Crafts exhibitors. Walter Crane was co-selector (with Alfred Longden) for the Arts & Crafts. A frieze by Walter Crane ran around the upper walls of the entire British Art Section, of both the fine and applied art/Arts & Crafts sections. While Crane's work was well-represented, he did not visit; instead Alfred Longden represented the British Arts & Crafts section. Crane's effect on local taste, drawing and advertising styles was, as shown, decisive: Longden's role was perhaps even more decisive. As Linda Tyler demonstrates (1988), the British fine art selection was not similarly auspicious.[2]

James Cowan's official exhibition report (1910) reminds us of Longden's leading role in the selection and sale of wares from the exhibition:

> Mr Longden believes that the exhibition of samples of British arts and crafts will have a lasting effect, in the homes of the people of Canterbury at any rate. This was only the second time that arts and crafts had been included in the British Fine Arts Section at an International Exhibition, and it has been shown in Christchurch that the idea could be very successfully carried out.[3]

Cowan claimed that 321 works by 72 artists from the British Arts & Crafts

View through a linking arch of the painting and sculpture on sale at the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition, Christchurch, New Zealand.[5] *Sir George Frampton's "Mother and Child" can be seen through the arch; Frampton with Lethaby were co-principals of the London Central School of Arts & Crafts.*

Main Arts & Crafts exhibition hall, 1906-7 International Exhibition of Arts and Industries, Christchurch, New Zealand, showing a case of art jewellery in the C.R. Ashbee-Guild of Handicraft style and a case of lace.[6]

halls were sold, suggesting that purchasers had favourites among the exhibitors.[4] Cowan introduced the "arts-and-crafts" section:

> The section of the gallery occupied by the arts-and-crafts exhibits was a delightful museum of the applied arts – book-illustration, book binding and printing, illumination, caligraphy[sic], metal-work, jewellery, enamel, glass and pottery, wood-carving, furniture, gilding, mosaic, stained glass, wall-decoration, needlework, tapestry, lace, and hand-weaving.[7]

The model for the exhibition was without doubt the exhibitions staged by the British Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society from 1888.[8] Crucially, each exhibition was exhaustively reviewed and illustrated by *Studio*.[9] What is regrettable is that, by 1906, these exhibitions were failing to attract continuing enthusiasm. Almost in stark contrast, the 1906-7 Christchurch exhibition was an undoubted success: it was both an art and industry exhibition and a quality Arts & Crafts exhibition. As John Seddon, New Zealand's recently deceased Prime Minister, had hoped, the exhibition celebrated developing nationhood. In 1907 New Zealand ceased to be a colony and became a Dominion.

The Press, through the voice of Robert Herdman Smith[10], Canterbury College School of Art principal, offered continuing comment on the applied art exhibited:

> This section is particularly interesting, embracing the work of so many highly-trained artist craftsmen. Regarding design as a species of language capable of very varied expressions through the medium of different methods and materials, it naturally follows that there is all the difference in the world between one treatment and another, both of design and material, and, moreover, every material has its own proper capacity and appropriate range of expression, so that it becomes the business of the sympathetic worker to discover this and give it due expansion ... This collection will undoubtedly do good and help the student in design in New Zealand to see that good form and colour in applied art is far more valuable than elaboration ... If the public will study these excellent pieces of jewellery and then compare them with the gaudy highly burnished articles of poor form to be seen in our shops, which rely more upon polish than workmanship, they will see that the beauty of jewellery lies in the design and craftsmanship and not in the kind of metal out of which it is fashioned.[11]

Introducing a discussion of sales from the exhibition, the *Press* reported:

> It is an axiom that a person cannot want that which he has never known, but buried deep in his nature may be a longing that only needs arousing to hunger for realisation. Such seems to be the state of colonial feeling on art and craft; to see is to want, and then to strive for acquisition. To such an extent has this feeling grown by what it has fed upon in the Art and Crafts section, that orders have been received, in some cases over and over again, for specimens of art jewellery in duplicate.[12]

Sales to Adelaide, South Australia

Few of the pieces listed in Spielmann's report as "Purchased"[13] have ever been identified, other than works purchased by Harry P. Gill, Director for Technical Art, Adelaide School of Design, South Australia. Gill (South Kensington trained)[14] had established the Adelaide School of Design

in 1887 with a "geometrical foundation". Gill visited the Christchurch exhibition and returned to Adelaide with substantial purchases from the exhibition for the Adelaide school collection. In tune with art masters throughout "Greater Britain", Gill said in a lecture, "The Straight and Devious Paths of Studentship", delivered at the School of Design on 9 February 1894:

> All artistic representation is founded upon Nature. Man, in whom was the imitative capacity, found himself surrounded by Nature, and his artistic works show his endeavors to reproduce her aspects. …

For Gill, advanced students must produce work "marked by individualism". …

> This lack of uniformity is as important a product as is the attainment of truth. It is a proof of truth. …
>
> I have shown you that all art is produced by a study of Nature, that your productions are limited by your knowledge, and biased by your affection, which should be noble, to ennoble and not debase your work.[15]

Three exhibition areas

Exhibits of British Arts & Crafts fell roughly into three areas: art needlework and textiles; book production, calligraphy and illumination; art jewellery and metalwork.[16] The chief sources of information on the exhibition are the official British record by Sir Isidore Spielmann, *The British Government Exhibit at the New Zealand International Exhibition 1906-1907* (1908); the official New Zealand government record by James Cowan, *Official Record of the New Zealand International Exhibition*

Richard Garbe, Casket, 1905, fish skin, ivory, silver; South Australian Art Gallery, Adelaide, South Australia

View of the main Arts & Crafts exhibition area, with, right rear, a second owl hanging by Birmingham Municipal School of Art art-needlework students, probably guided by Mary Newill.[17] Her "Morte d'Arthur" needlework panel hangs on the wall to the right.[18] In the foreground are cases of art metalwork.

of Arts and Industries, held at Christchurch: A descriptive and historical account (1910), and *New Zealand International Exhibition 1906-7: Official catalogue* (a copy of the official catalogue is annotated with sales and prices obtained). The Spielmann catalogue exhibits the new standard of black and white photography introduced by *Studio*. By their numbers and sales, the Arts & Crafts were a distinctly successful aspect of the international exhibition, but were nevertheless listed at the end of the Spielmann catalogue, underlining the equivocal position of the Arts & Crafts internationally.

The local Christchurch *Press* recorded a chat with co-Arts & Crafts selector, Alfred Longden:

> The collection of arts and craft work, which was made by myself, is fully representative of all kinds of art applied to industrial work, and will be illustrative of the provincial art and crafts work of Great Britain. I visited all the principal large towns, notably Birmingham, and was particularly successful in obtaining what I wanted ... It is now generally conceded that applied art is entitled to take rank as high art, and should be connected with it.[19]

Art needlework and textiles[20]

James Cowan's official report to government said:

> Of tapestries and art screens, decorative panels, embroidery-work, plaques, banners, worked coverlets, &c there was a bewildering variety, of surpassing beauty of design and richness of colouring. It is impossible to list or describe them all ... a screen-panel and cushion-cover by May Morris; ... a needlework panel, "Sweet Thames", designed by Walter Crane and executed by Violet Turner; ... beautiful hand-woven fabric ... ; "peasant" tapestry and curtain, designed by Godfrey Blount and executed and exhibited by members of the Peasant Arts Society ... and a host of other pretty things for the home beautiful.[21]

Importantly here, tracing the transfer of textile design prototypes from Britain to New Zealand, is Linda Parry's comments in *Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (1988) that:

> The 1899 and 1903 [Arts & Crafts Society] Exhibitions showed an increase in hand weaving and in other revived traditional industries such as Honiton lace and Donegal carpet making. 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 ...[22]

Following from Linda Parry's observation, an astonishing amount of work, both displayed and purchased from the 1906-7 Christchurch exhibition, can be attributed to the publicity given internationally to the (British) Home Arts and Industries Association (established 1884).[23] Major associations offered work for sale at the Christchurch exhibition: County Meath Home Industries Association[24]; Fine Needlework Association for Crippled and Invalid Women and Girls[25]; Haslemere Weaving Industry[26]; Peasant Arts Society[27]; Mrs Vere O'Brien[28]; Windermere Industry Spinsters, Weavers and Embroiderers/Annie Garnett[29], Edmund Hunter and St Edmundsbury Weavers[30], North Buckinghamshire Lace Association[31]. Somewhere in New Zealand, there is a "Hand-tufted Rug, Lotus Design",

executed by Rebecca Fanning and Mary Burke, exhibited and designed by Evelyn Gleeson.[32] Evelyn Gleeson founded Dun Emer Industries with Elizabeth and Lily Yates, at Dundrum in County Dublin.[33] The rug may be that under a table in the Annex.[34] What may not have been appreciated by the exhibition organisers is that New Zealand's own art and industry exhibitions had made a significant play on local so-called "cottage-home industries", in no small part due to the Premier Julius Vogel.[35]

As the Arts & Crafts grew in popularity in New Zealand early in the twentieth-century, art needlework became a recognised part of art and design school instruction.[36] Appliqué work, c1910, appeared in a photograph of a St Albans Street, Christchurch, house interior, most probably executed by the female occupant(s).[37]

In 1907, Mrs J.A. Mayne, trained at the Royal College of Needlework, London, was appointed to teach at the Christchurch school, the Canterbury College School of Art, and there were courses in lace-making within a few years.[38]

Book production, calligraphy and illumination[40]

James Cowan in his fulsome report on the exhibiton lists "book-illustration, book binding and printing, illumination, caligraphy [sic]" as the first area of sales:

> In art book printing and binding numerous fine examples were shown, lying open in the gallery (as well as three cases of books in the main British section). They were of great value to New-Zealanders as models of beauty in the making of a book, both in clearness and boldness of type and in rich and decorative binding.[41]

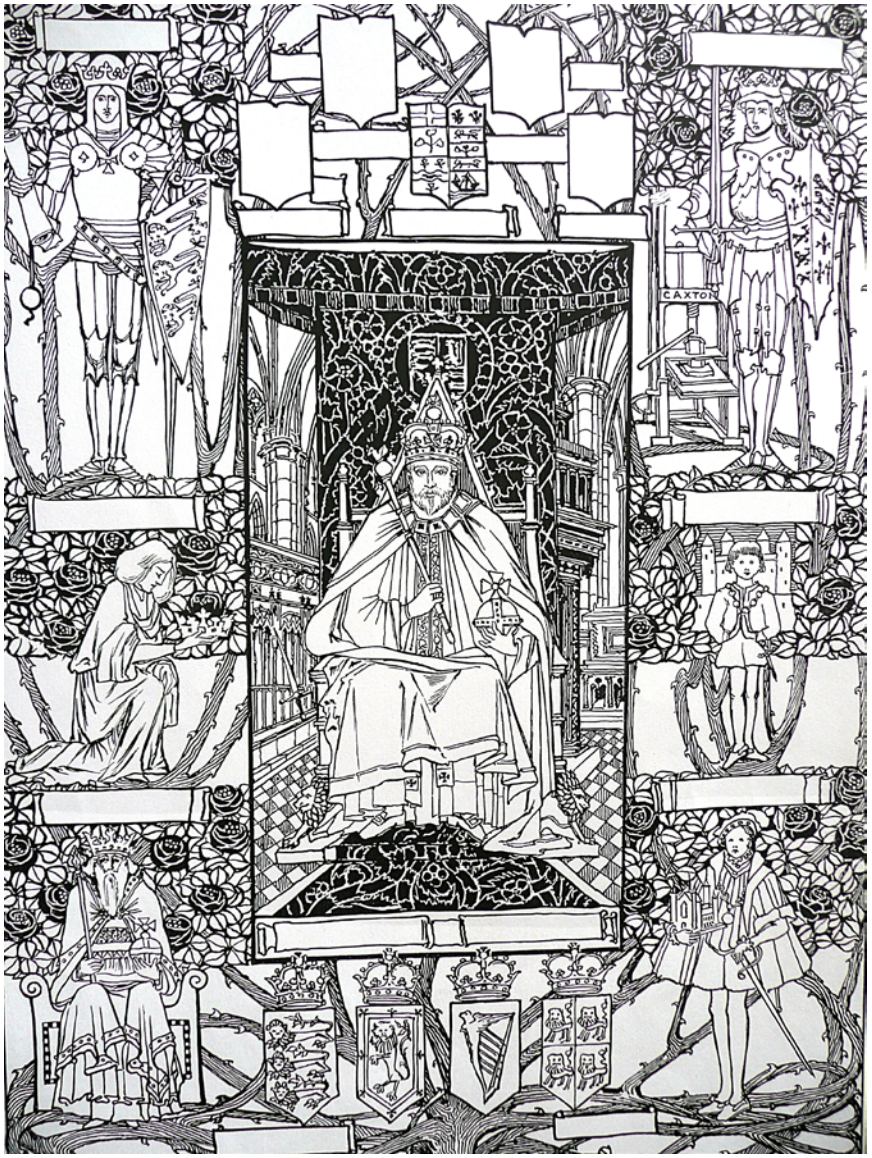
Lace from Mrs Vere O'Brien's Lace School: Fichu in Tambour Limerick Lace. The Spielmann catalogue notes that "Smocked and Embroidered Frocks, Limerick Lace Scarfs and Fichu" had sold.[39]

With Walter Crane as one of the exhibition selectors, it could be expected that books and illustrations and the like would feature. Sales were significant from the Chiswick Press, Lucien and Esther Pissaro's Eragny Press, and Essex House Press. Books were easy to transport and good examples of a modern handmade-art form. This was a tasteful reclaimed medieval art; plentiful sales suggest the privately printed book distinguished the owner as a person with taste. Of the 12 books offered for sale by the Chiswick Press, 7 were sold; Essex House Press offered 16 books, 6 sold; Lucien and Esther Pissaro's Eragny Press offered 6 books, 5 sold. Other examples of book-art were sold by Walter Crane, Irma Rowntree and Alice Pattinson.[42]

Art jewellery and metalwork[43]

In his report (1910), Cowan would enthuse:

> The display of beautiful work in beaten silver was a leading feature of the splendid collection, and many of the gems of the art shown were excellent examples of mediæval designs applied to modern articles of use and adornment. …



C.R. Ashbee, Page of The Prayer Book of King Edward VII – *"The Seven Edwards" (1903). A page from Ashbee's* Prayer Book *was illustrated in the Spielmann catalogue.*[44] *The* Prayer Book *as a whole sold at the Christchurch exhibition (£12-12). The book was designed by Ashbee, "A & C" and "Executed" (binding) by Edgar Green at Essex House Press. "He prepared some hundred new designs for engraving on wood". A folio, it was "bigger than anything the Press had printed before". Four hundred copies were prepared at twelve guineas each.*[45] *Ashbee prepared all the illustrations in a "simple style of drawing, clear and occasionally stiff, … close to outline drawing".*[46] *The* Prayer Book *was a "consciously modern book".*[47] *The page used Mackmurdo's twisted gnarled branches and roots, Glaswegian roses and stylised flat leaves, devices that had become internationally popular.*

It was indeed a display that represented the highest level of the silversmith's art. Everything was made by hand, and there were no duplicates of any articles. There were silver buckles, belt-clasps, brooches, buttons, necklets, bowls, tankards, caskets, jugs, spoons, and a multitude of other beautiful objects, designed by artists and executed by clever art workers. In jewellery there were many exquisite articles: gold pendants and charms; gold pendant necklaces set with pearls, turquoises, rubies, and other gems; silver and turquoise necklaces; silver and enamelled pendants; silver crosses set with precious stones; wrought gold and silver brooches; bracelets in silver and mother-of-pearl; a gold filigree pendant set with moonstones – but they were beyond enumeration, all of graceful design and meticulous care in workmanship. Some of the enamel-work in the jewellery was particularly beautiful; it was often used with great taste in the adornment of belt-buckles and in pendants, &c.[52]

The sales of art metawork and jewellery from the 1906-7 exhibition was so significant as to make the subsequent paucity of examples a continuing puzzle, possibly many melted down. The exhibition included art jewellery and metalwork, in particular, from the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft (12 pieces offered, 10 sold), the Birmingham Municipal School of Art (Head Master: R Catterson-Smith) and the Birmingham Municipal School for Jewellers and Silversmiths (Head Master: Arthur Gaskin); and Arthur and Georgie Gaskin. The Gaskins offered 17 items (8 sold).

C.R. Ashbee's significant influence on local students over the following decades appears in sales by the Guild of Handicraft (24 items offered,

Cases of art metalwork and pottery in the exhibition Annex.[48] The metalwork selection reinforces Alfred Longden's view that he had obtained what he wanted for the exhibition in Birmingham. The aluminium clock, in the front cabinet, was designed by C.F.A. Voysey (£10-10, not sold).[49] Also available, by Voysey, was a brass double inkstand, silver hot-water jug and two hand-painted tiles.[50]

Annex showing metalwork cases from the opposite direction, with lengths of fabric at the back.[51]

10 sold, art jewellery and small silver items).[53] Designed by Ashbee only a "Silver Pepper Pot, set with Amethyst" was sold but other Guild work purchased from the exhibition may be identified from Ashbee's preferred use of planished silver and cabochon stones. The illustrated Frederick Gurnsey chalice (this page) is gratifyingly like an Ashbee chalice illustrated in his 1909 *Modern English Silverwork*.[54] Loop-handled vessels are usually credited to Ashbee: Alan Crawford in his 1985 tome on Ashbee wrote: "In their elegance they were both construction and ornament, beauty and use."[55] Crawford argues that Ashbee's loop-handled vessels "have made him part of the genealogy of the Modern Movement ...".[56]

Arthur and Georgina Gaskin

The twisted wires of the Gaskin's work, naturalistic plant studies, were well-represented in the exhibition and pendants, necklets and necklaces sold (from £6-6 to £14-14); though none of the sold work has been identified, pieces should be easily recognised. Work was in gold and silver, with chrysoprases, pearls, opals, and turquoises. Pieces were treated as art and given names: sold pieces were named: "Jeanette", "Briar Rose", "Forget-me-not", "Dorothea", and "Estelle".

Art metalwork and jewellery were reordered and orders are likely to have gone back to Birmingham, to the Gaskins, or to Ashbee's Guild in Chipping Camden. It is worth reflecting on the singular role of art

Frederick Gurnsey, Chalice, 1949; The Dean of Christchurch (photo: Bruce Foster). The chalice was influenced by C.R. Ashbee's style of simplified art metalwork, and is in silver. A 1931 chalice was in "Repoussé gold set with turquoises and amethysts".[58] As the Church News *recorded, the earlier chalice was made from "old brooches and lockets and other trinkets".[59] The practice of melting down Victorian "trinkets" to make new pieces rather unfortunately continued.*

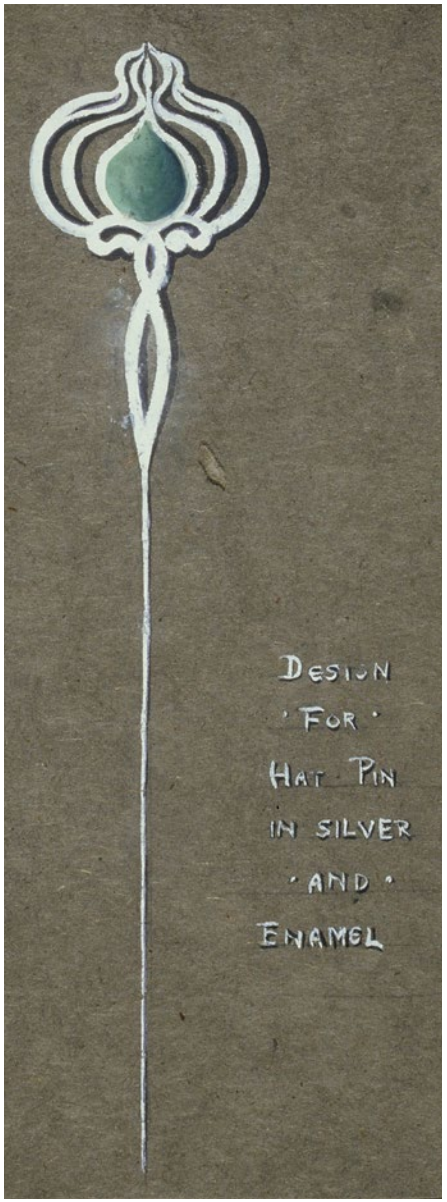
jewellery and metalwork in the New Zealand Arts & Crafts story. The particular influence of Ashbee, the Birmingham Guilds, and the Gaskins cannot be denied or the effect of the 1906-7 Christchurch exhibition, but the final effects on New Zealand work were also exemplary of the British schools attended by New Zealand instructors. The case of Charles Kidson is of an established Canterbury College School of Art instructor taking time to visit Britain and learn new skills[57]; his future partner George Fraser wrote to Kidson's son:

> He brought back all the latest ideas about beaten metal work which was coming into favour at Home. Also, he was interested in enamelling work. To experiment along these lines he secured a muffle furnace, which we afterwards sold to the School for four pounds, ten shillings. This was the origin of all Art Craft work at the School, for which your father should receive all credit.

The New Zealand Fine Art exhibition catalogue listed art metalwork for sale by Miss Beatrice (Biddy) Waymouth, of which Cowan wrote:

> Other exhibits worthy of particular mention were a number of beautiful works in the Arts and Crafts division by Miss Alice B. Waymouth, of Christchurch, comparing over a score of articles such as belt-buckles, a coat-clasp in silver and enamel, an enamel, silver and turquoise necklace, another in greenstone and silver, a set of enamel and silver "kowhai" buttons, photo-frames in copper and silver, a hand-beaten silver cream-jug set with greenstone, a beaten-silver sugar-bowl and silver mug, and boxes and a rose-bowl in beaten copper – all excellent specimens of deft workmanship, and well worthy of comparison with some of the beautiful articles of this class in the British gallery.[60]

Charles Kidson, Repoussé charger with peacock motif, pre-1908; Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gift of Roger Eltoff



Unidentified student, "Design for Hat Pin in Silver and Enamel", The Paint Rag, *c1909-10; Archival Collection, School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand*

Kate Beath, Repoussé plaque, c1906; Private collection

Kate Beath, Drawing for repoussé plaque, c1906; Private collection

Rose Zeller, "Design for Comb in Enamel & Tortoise Shell", The Paint Rag, *Sep-Oct 1909; Archival Collection, School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand*

Biddy had studied with Ashbee, probably for the 1905-6 terms at the Camden School of Arts and Crafts, started 1904. (A selection of Biddy Waymouth's subsequent work is now owned by the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, New Zealand.)

Charles Kidson's relatively shallow bas-relief style is in contrast to the more rounded and fleshy work produced under Robert Herdman Smith and by Kate Beath (illustration, page 253).

Interest in art metalwork, jewellery and enamelling grew exponentially with the 1906-7 exhibition, as is apparent from classes subsequently offered, if not through identified work. As said in *The Press*, orders had to be sent home twice over.[61] The effects were felt throughout "Greater Britain".[62] The popularity of these new art crafts would be responsible for G.R. Pitkethly's appointment in Wellington[63] and to Frederick Gurnsey's appointment to replace Charles Kidson in Christchurch[64].

CCSA Guild

The Arts & Crafts Guild corner at the Christchurch exhibition, with its student designed and printed wallpaper in "pale greens with wild-rose", was described:

> The Canterbury College School of Art had a bay fitted up as a hall and a corner. The walls were battened and decorated with stencil designs and with a deep frieze in harmony ... This school is doing excellent work under the guiding hand of Mr R. Herdman Smith, formerly of the Wellington Technical School ... The wall-decoration of this corner was a tasteful study in pale greens with wild-rose painted embellishments, panelled in dark-brown oiled wood.[65]

Canterbury College School of Art design class, 1907, with the screen created by Guild students back left. The photograph also appears in the Canterbury College School of Art Syllabus 1908, 31, Webb & Bunz photograph.

The designs from *The Paint Rag* are a reminder of the original intentions (trade and manufacture) on which the Canterbury College School of Art was established.[66]

New Zealand women participated in the 1907 Melbourne First Australian Exhibition of Women's Work, intended as a first of many exhibitions of women's work, but in the event was a first and only exhibition. Eleanor Joachim exhibited hand-made and hand-tooled books.[67] Importantly, exhibits included "woven fibre artefacts" in a collection of 36 items supplied by the Dominion of New Zealand under the heading: "Exhibit of the Work of the Maori Women of Aotearoa".[68]

Apart, as indicated, from work now in Adelaide, South Australia, few purchases from the 1906-7 Christchurch exhibition have been found. It is possible to claim that the widely available *Studio: Illustrated magazine of fine and applied art* often dictated what was purchased.[69] If individual Arts & Crafts sales from the 1906-7 exhibition (if illustrated in Spielmann) are compared to *Studio* magazine illustrations, it should be possible to find more purchases.

As noted, New Zealand cut its ties to the South Kensington examination system in 1913. The complaint was that examination results were too slow in coming from London. After WWI, the split from London required that a local applied art language be developed using native and established flora and fauna for decoration.

ENDNOTES

1 See Calhoun 2000, 119-123
2 Linda Tyler "Art for Empire: Paintings in the British Art Exhibit", in John Mansfield Thomson (ed) *Farewell Colonialism: The New Zealand International Exhibition Christchurch, 1906-07* Palmerston North, New Zealand 1988, 95ff
3 Cowan 1910, 285
4 Ibid 267, 272, 284-5
5 Spielmann 1908, 222 ill
6 Ibid 1908, 244 ill
7 Ibid 281
8 Refer to (British) A&C Society, discussed 127
9 See "Guilds"/Ashbee 130-3 and "Publications", 140-1
10 Information with thanks to Linda Tyler
11 Christchurch *Press* 2 Nov 1906, 12
12 Christchurch *Press* 30 Jan 1907, 7
13 Spielmann 1908, 356-8
14 Christopher Menz *Morris & Co* exhibition catalogue 1994, 29
15 Harry P. Gill lecture 1894: 7, 15-6, 16, 23
16 Cowan 1910, 281; Calhoun 2000, 126ff
17 Mary Newill's "The Owls" illustrated chapter 3 cover 111 and "Issues", 122
18 Spielmann 1908, 286 ill; see *Studio* XXVIII, 181 ill for illustration of Newill panel
19 Christchurch *Press* 22 Sep 1906, 3
20 "Art Needlework and Stencilling" are introduced in Calhoun 2000, 132-9
21 Cowan 1910, 282-3
22 Linda Parry 1988, 76
23 See "Guilds", 126
24 Speilmann 1908, 260
25 Ibid 269
26 Ibid 283 ill
27 Ibid 303 ill
28 Ibid 300
29 Ibid 273
30 Ibid 287
31 Ibid 300
32 Ibid 277; a similar rug is illustrated in Cumming & Kaplan 1991, 80
33 Callen 1979, 11,184,197
34 Spielmann 1908, 296 ill
35 Calhoun 2000, 43-53
36 Ibid 134 on M.E.R. Tripe "needle-art" classes at Wellington Technical School
37 Calhoun 2000, 111 ill
38 Also Annie Buckhurst, Embroidered flamingo hanging, c1913, Calhoun 2000, 14 ill; Cordelia Akins, cover designed and embroidered in Hilda McIntyre's class, c1924, Calhoun 2000, 137 ill; Doris Tutill, appliqué hanging, created at the Canterbury College School of Art, 1933, based on a circular design enclosing two central-facing flamingoes Calhoun 2000 189 ill; design for flamingo embroidery, see 285 ill
39 Spielmann 1908, 271 ill, listed 300, sales 358

40 "Book Production, Calligraphy and Illumination" are introduced in Calhoun 2000, 139-43
41 Cowan 1910, 282
42 Spielmann 1908, 356-8
43 "Art Jewellery, Metalwork and Enamelling" are introduced in Calhoun 2000, 126-32
44 Spielman 1908, 266, 276 ill
45 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985,390
46 Ibid 392
47 Ibid 393
48 Spielmann 1908, 268 ill
49 C.F.A. Voysey, "Clock in unpolished ebony", *Studio* XXXVIII/no159 (Jun 1906), 69 ill. The Spielmann 1908 catalogue included a photograph of a large Voysey house: Merlhanger, on the Hog's Back, near Guildford, Surrey (241 ill)
50 Spielmann 1908, 314
51 Ibid 312 ill
52 Cowan 1910, 281-2, 283-4
53 Figures from an annotated copy of the 1906-7 exhibition catalogue, copy possibly owned by co-selector Alfred Longden
54 Ashbee 1909 [1974], plate 84
55 Crawford *Ashbee* 1985, 327
56 Ibid 343
57 See Charles Kidson biography, 326-7
58 Stocker 1997, iii ill, 44-5
59 *Church News* 60 (Nov 1930), 3
60 Cowan 1910, 270-1
61 See back, 245 and see Calhoun 2000, 120
62 Compare Ashbee's more bulbous and linearly defined influence, 130-1 ills (and Kate Beath metalwork, 253 ills) and the lesser bulbous effects used by Charles Kidson, 252 ill (and in Neil Roberts 2000 exhibition catalogue)
63 Refer to Pitkethly, 241-2 and 329
64 Refer to Gurnsey, 241 and 321-2
65 James Cowan *Official Record of the New Zealand International Exhibition of Arts and Industries... Christchurch* Government Printer, Wellington 1910, 173
66 Calhoun 2000, 146-8
67 Ibid 52
68 Ibid 52-3
69 Refer to footnote 9 above.

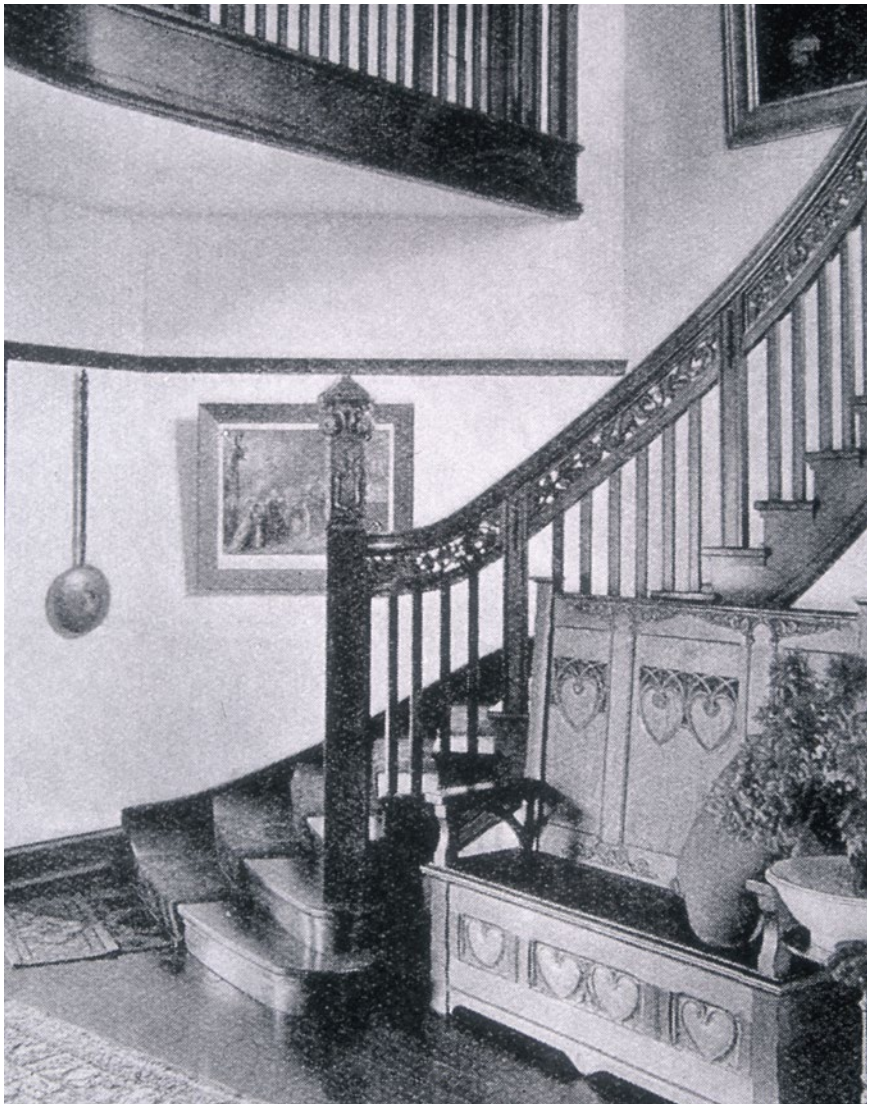
Arts & Crafts in situ: the second generation

The New Zealand "home beautiful"

Samuel Hurst Seager wrote in the British architectural journal (RIBA) in July 1900:

> … for, while the mart, the store, or the office may well be based only on the beauty of utility, in our homes, where we have leisure to enjoy, should be found the highest form of artistic expression that our feelings demand or our means allow. If the means are small, here too, the beauty of utility must alone be relied upon, and is relied upon in several inexpensive, artistic homes which have lately been erected [in New Zealand].
>
> Now that some provinces have passed and others are reaching their jubilee, the ties which bind us to the land of our adoption are stronger, and there is more widespread desire to live in houses that can satisfy the growing aesthetic needs.[2]

"Overton", Wellington, New Zealand



"Overton" interior, Wellington, New Zealand, appearing in the Ladies Mirror *(1 Nov 1923). The settle (ill opp), the newell post and stair rail were carved by Harriette Crawford (born Bennett).*[1]

Harriette Crawford (born Bennett), Stair rail carving, "Overton", Wellington, NZ (photo: Philippa Woodcock)

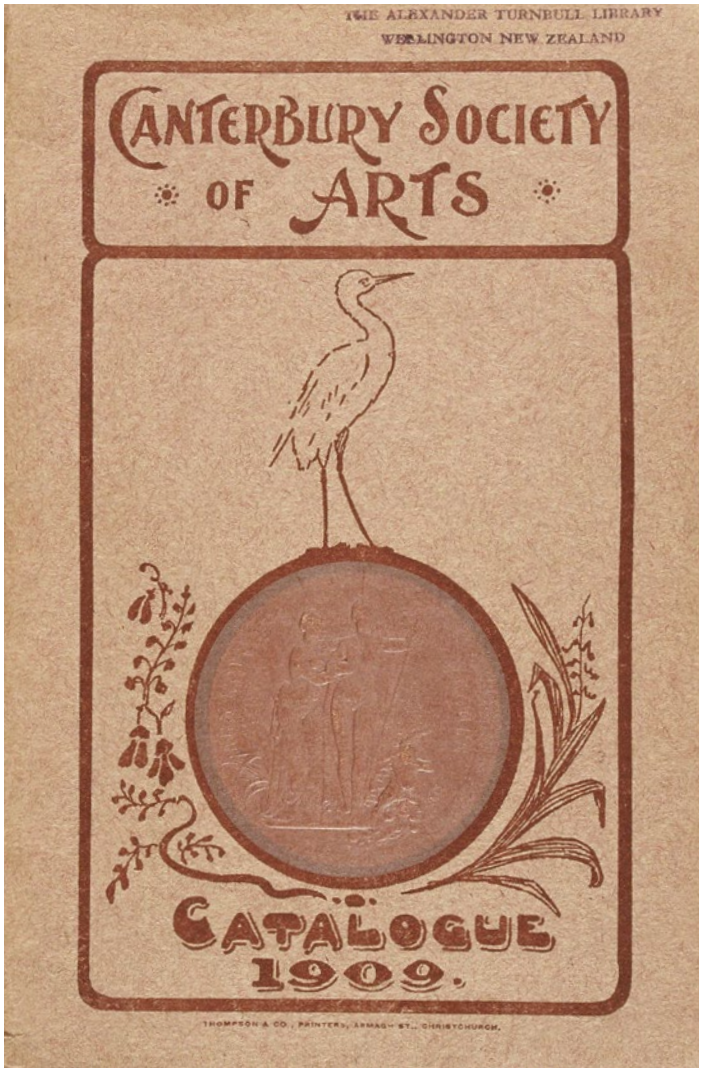
Harriette Crawford (born Bennett), Handcarved settle, "Overton", Wellington, New Zealand (c1923). The heart motif became internationally popular through Voysey and Scottish designers.

*England Brothers (Architects): Drawing room interior in the Arts & Crafts style, with a Morris-style chair and a settle, Springfield Road, St Albans, Christchurch, New Zealand, c1910 (*Progress *Sep 1913, 655). The paper frieze was designed by C.O. Masters and made by John Line and Sons Ltd, England: illustrated* Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art *1906, 127; Steffano Webb Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref G-9226-1/1).*[3]

Imported and locally sourced motifs

The British movement can be credited with introducing and blessing local New Zealand flora and fauna as legitimate motifs for design and decorative effects: Samuel Hurst Seager, by July 1900, had recognised the advances in decorative art made by New Zealand students.[4] Later, the 1906-7 Christchurch exhibition was to be an effective further ambassador for plant-based design on a national level.

The abiding effect of the movement was on the homely little touches that give pleasure in life. Such effects might include past styles, such as the Anglo-Japanese style (for example, Robert Hawcridge 1895, see illustration on 266): the cover for the local Christchurch art society annual exhibition catalogue for 1906 to 1909 was of an aesthetic, stylised Anglo-Japanese-inspired kotuku (or white heron) pattern. (The cover may have been designed by Mrs E.C. Huie.) The peacock, a left-over from the Aesthetic movement, was among the Arts & Crafts most popular motifs.[5] The "tree-of-life" motif was a repeatedly used Arts & Crafts motif.



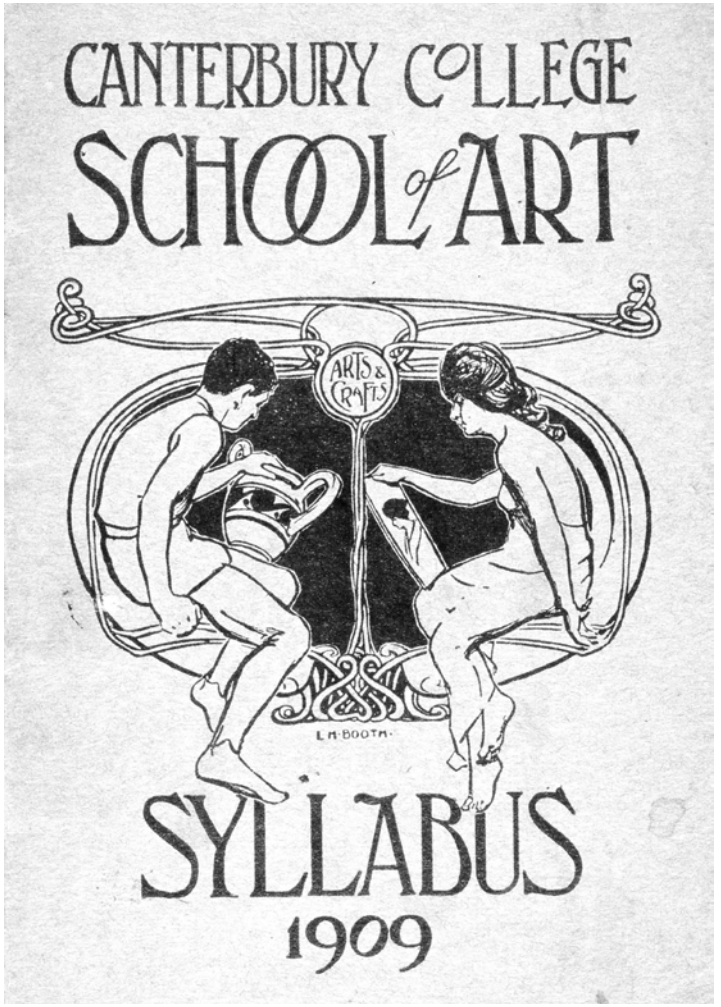
Kotuku, Japonisme pattern based on the iconic New Zealand white heron, with kowhai and flax motifs, Canterbury Society of Arts exhibition catalogue cover 1909; Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref S-L 474-SLIDE)

Gladys Smith, Peacock embroidery, silk with silk floss, 1922-24; Private collection (photo: Valerie Carson)

Alice Beville Collins, Calling card holder, Limoges enamel painting on copper plaque, c1912-13, of an Eastern maiden backed by a display of peacock feathers; Private collection

Hilda Barrett, Embroidery, c1912, a student of Mrs J.A. Mayne at the Canterbury College School of Art; in 1912 Auckland Arts and Crafts Club exhibition catalogue

ARTS & CRAFTS: A monthly practical magazine for the studio, the workshop and the home, *November 1905. The magazine was owned by the Christchurch family, the Buckhursts, as indicated by the family signature in the upper right corner. The cover bears the typical Arts & Crafts tree-of-life, and the Arts & Crafts homily: "As The Sun Colours Flowers So Art Colours Life"; Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Christchurch, New Zealand*



Leonard Booth, Cover, Canterbury College School of Art Syllabus 1909; *Archival Collection, School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand*[6]

John Henry Menzies, St Luke's Church, Little Akaloa, Banks Peninsula, 1904-6 (ills p200)

St Luke's Church, Little Akaloa, Banks Peninsula is a singular example of a building, in this case a church, embellished with mixed British and local Arts & Crafts motifs: it suggests Menzies was able to keep abreast of developing British Arts & Crafts practice and would undoubtedly have visited the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition in Christchurch, although there seems to be no proof. Menzies incorporated "Maori" motifs in terms of his Arts & Crafts background. He himself was a passionate woodcarver, having taken up the craft as a young man. A pamphlet on St Luke's tells visitors that Menzies finished carving in November 1906. An extract from the *Church News* (January 1907) describes the base of the font as:

> ... a wealth of carving ... the column rising out of nikau palm fronds ... The altar rail was of carved kowhai wood set with paua shell. Designs for the pulpit were based on native ranunculus. Other carving used passionfruit flowers and leaves, and, of course, grape-vine leaves and branches. Maori motifs were copied from some old and chaste designs. The rafters were decorated in Maori patterns, and carefully painted in true Maori colours ... Behind the rafters is a perfect imitation of the true Maori method of lining with Raupo rushes.

The description of St Luke's concludes:

> What an opportunity, does the adoption of refined native designs in our sacred buildings give, at one and the same time showing our unity,

St Luke's Church, Little Akaloa, Banks Peninsula, New Zealand. Carved pulpit decorated with ranunculus (mountain daisy) pattern (photo: Joanne Toews)[7]

St Luke's Church, Little Akaloa, Banks Peninsula, New Zealand. Edge of carved altar railing

St Luke's Church, Little Akaloa, Banks Peninsula, New Zealand. Carved font, in Mount Somers stone, combining geometrical, native plant forms and "Maori" patterns (photo: Joanne Toews)

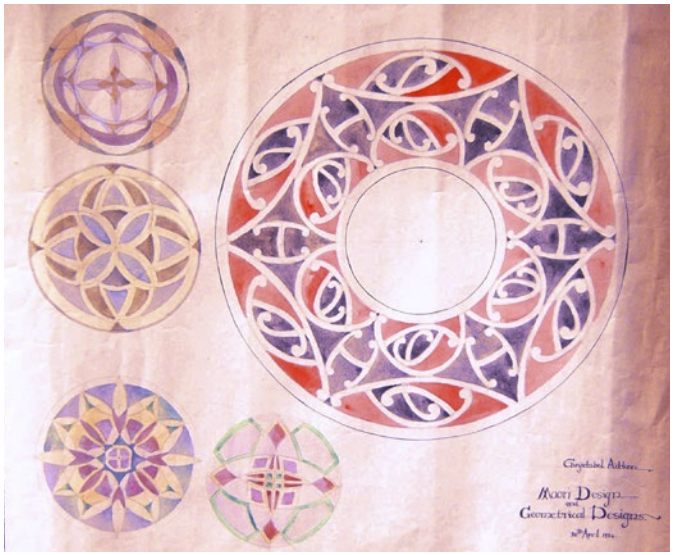
our interest in the perpetuation of native art, and the distinctiveness of our New Zealand branch in the Church, Catholic and Apostolic.

The wall recess has a homily, "I am the vine Ye are the branches", an Arts & Crafts homily used with a hand-carved tree-of-life motif. As well as the recess, the little church is replete with nature-based motifs and Arts & Crafts admonitions, including the quoted phrase around the wall recess. On the altar screen there is another carved homily:

> In the morning sow thy seed *[First altar panel]*
> and in the evening withhold not thine hand. *[Next panel]*
> How beautiful upon the mountains are the *[Upper edge altar]*
> feet of them that preach the gospel of peace.

Maori sources and Arts & Crafts design

The imported British movement supplied an Arts & Crafts style that local artists, designers and craft/trade workers could adapt using local materials and motifs. The Arts & Crafts encouraged unique regional styles and ensured that rural craft practices were retained or revived. The assured borrowing of designs from ethnic and native crafts assisted in their preservation (if not in the furtherance of the peoples involved). Such borrowing, it was believed, contributed to "national identity". The preservation of the designs of a native craft was often viewed as a form of altruism, and a form of economic development. *Studio* published a number of illustrated articles on Maori design by C.J. Praetorius[9] and thereby included Maori design within an international pool of design possibilities. For students in New Zealand, so far from their own cultural antecedents and anxious to create a local style, Maori designs must have represented a legitimate vernacular form for both fine and applied art



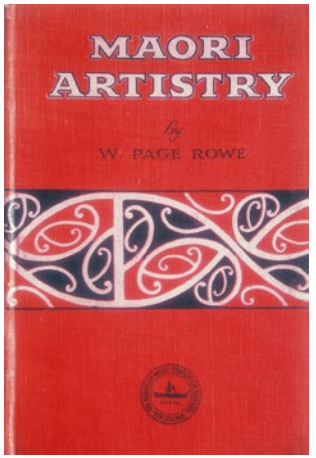
Chrystabel Aitken, "Maori Design & Geometrical Designs", "30 April 1924"; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

Doris Tutill, Maori whare and tiki design, 1932; Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. The Reverend Doris Tutill noted: "Maori patterns abounded."[8]

ornamental ends. In this spirit John Henry Menzies published *Maori Patterns Painted and Carved*.[10]

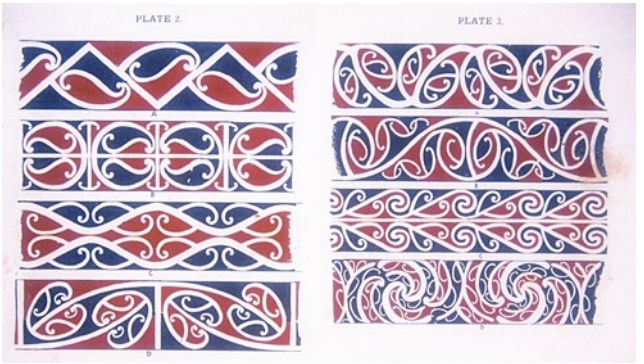
Maori motifs were incorporated in mast-heads in the *School Journal* (October 1923)[11] and Chrystabel Aitkins, for one, used Maori motifs in her work in 1924.[12] The Reverend Doris Tutill used the colours of the 1890s (greenstone green, purple, mustard and black) in a whare and tiki pattern in 1932.[13] Gordon H. Brown made a carving study in his first year at Wellington Technical College (1946).[14] The use of flat "Maori" patterns to decorate a variety of surfaces made bold statements, the koru and kowhaiwhai being the most popular borrowed patterns. Were these patterns borrowed as a New Zealand vernacular made legitimate by the British Arts & Crafts movement or were students encouraged to use these patterns to make their work more marketable?[15]

A second-generation of appointees hired to teach design by the South Kensington system in New Zealand had undeniably been influenced by William Morris and John Ruskin, but more directly influenced by Lewis Day and Walter Crane and then by W.R. Lethaby. Apart from the direct appointments of Joseph Ellis, H. Linley Richardson and Vivian Smith, Lethaby's role in appointments to New Zealand schools can for the moment only be surmised, but his endorsement of quasi-apprenticeship training for students was widely understood.



W.P. Rowe, Cover, Maori Artistry, *Board of Maori Ethnological Research, 1928 (owned by James Johnstone)*

Gordon H. Brown (Wellington Technical College 1946 to 1950, then Canterbury College School of Art), Maori carving study, 1946; Private collection



W.J. Phillips, Maori Designs, *Harry H. Tombs, 1940s, plates 2 and 3, on 16-17 (owned by James Johnstone)*

Dunedin: Robert Hawcridge, Eleanor Joachim

Robert Hawcridge[16], an artist-designer with Coulls Somerville Wilkie since 1889[17], was appointed to head the Dunedin School of Art in 1909.[18] The effect was immediate with attention paid to commercial art: local business firms used students as designer-illustrators:

> There has been much generosity shown by local business firms in allowing our design students to compete for their calendars, and &c, ... The calendars for the Westport Coal Company and the Dunedin Evening Star are examples of the success attending the experiment, the catalogue-cover of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts being the work of our students.[19]

An arts and crafts department was established "during 1913":

> It is hoped that the establishment of an arts and crafts department during 1913 will strengthen the hold of the school upon the community, besides improving the educational value of the institution ... An exhibition of needlecraft and stencil-work was held in the School of Art during June, and was very largely attended, the point and Irish lace, church embroidery, and white work creating great interest.[20]

Hawcridge appointed Nelson Isaac as his assistant in 1913:

> ... a brilliant young craftsman ... whose all-round training in art combined with his special knowledge and talent in modelling and the art crafts renders the prospects of the successful development of this department most hopeful.[21]

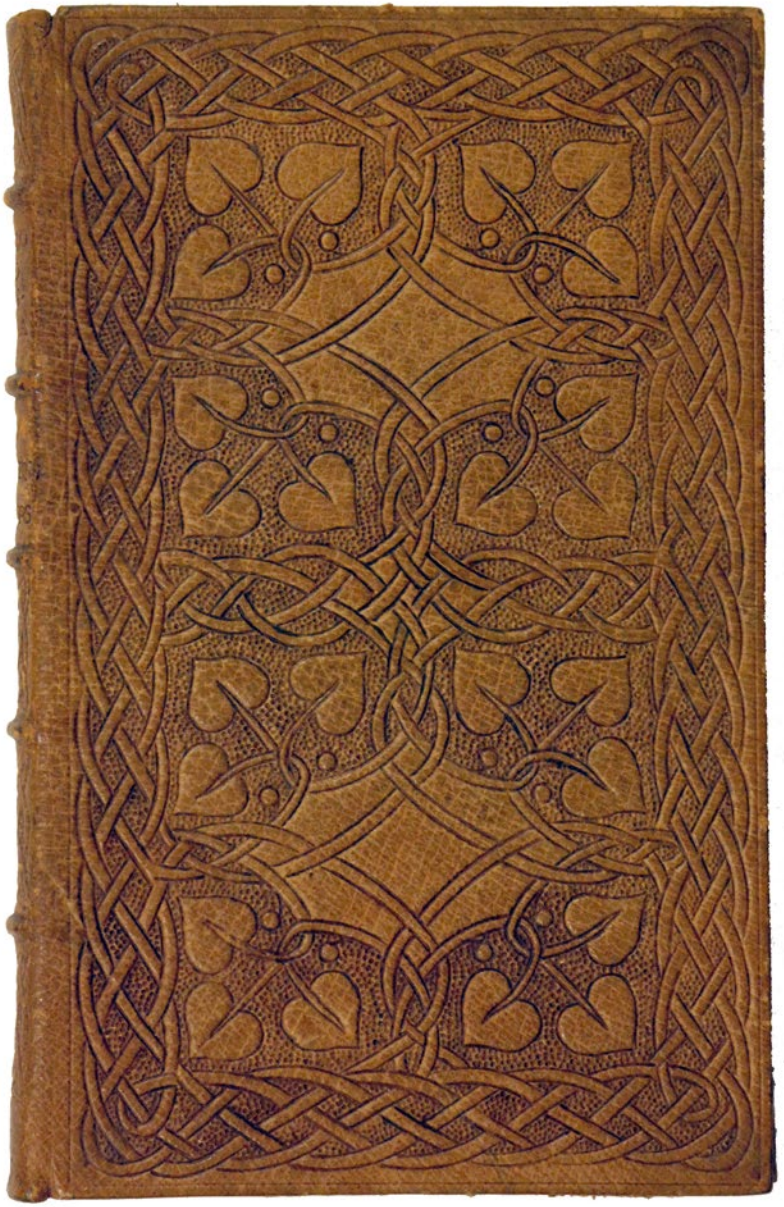
Nelson Isaac was the son of E.C. Isaac, Inspector of Technical Education,

Richard Hawcridge, Title-page, Otago Art Society Nineteenth Annual Exhibition *catalogue, 1895; Courtesy of the Heritage Collections, Dunedin Public Libraries. The image has over-lapping motifs, as absorbed from Japanese art .*[23]

and became a vital figure in the movement in Wellington.

During World War I, Hawcridge wrote "sensibly" on the limitations forced on the school by the war:

> Although these numbers show a slight increase on 1915, the war again sensibly affected both enrolment and attendances. The architectural course lost 80 per cent. of its students during the year … The attendance of lady students also suffered, especially during the day, on account of the demand for office and shop assistants to replace men on active service … In art craft subjects, copper and pewter relief and enamelling, wood-carving, stencil, art needlework, and modelling were provided for, and met with fair support considering the war strain on society.[22]



Eleanor Joachim, Binding, Paolo and Francesca, *1903; Reed Room, Dunedin Public Library, New Zealand; Courtesy of the Heritage Collections, Dunedin Public Libraries.*[24] *The Dunedin Public Art Gallery owns, gifted by Eleanor Joachim, a William de Morgan plate, two Martin Brothers vases, a May Morris silk satchel*[25] *and a pillow cover designed by William Morris and stitched by Janey Morris.*

Auckland: Elam

The Auckland newspaper, the *New Zealand Herald*, had written in 1888:

> This object was the foundation of a school not only for the promotion of art, but for encouraging designing for the promotion of manufacturing and industry, and the kindliness of the gift is enhanced by the fact that in the selection of pupils a preference is to be given to those who have not the means for continuing their studies ... As it is, the School will doubtless become the nucleus of a great institution of Art and Design ... that may help to make our city yet a home of art as well as a great auxiliary in the extension of manufactures and other industrial enterprises dependent on the cultivation of artistic skill.[26]

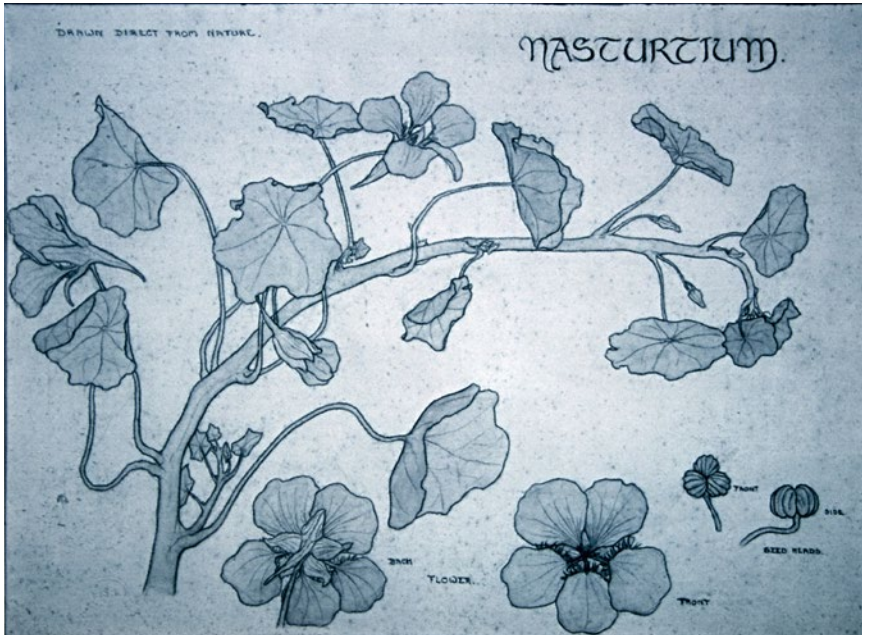
> This school is attended chiefly by a class of students who, sooner or later, have to make their own living ... in various businesses or professions in Auckland in which they have been enabled to obtain employment from the work in some branch or other that they have done in this school; and I constantly receive letters from grateful students acknowledging their indebtedness to the late Dr Elam's bequest.[28]

Under the 1900 Manual & Technical Instruction Act, manual crafts were strengthened in the early 1900s:

> For every "serious" student of painting and sculpture there were fifty students of repoussé, wood-carving, enamelling, china painting, leatherwork, illuminating, bookbinding, batik, weaving, fabric painting, tapestry and embroidery.[29]

Elam class with Aesthetic students, c1907, with Edward William Payton, Alice (Fallwell) White (second from left), and Jane Eyre (far left). Others unknown. The 1907 image demonstrates the influence of aestheticism in the interim since the more sedate class group photograph of c1897.[27]

The school became more oriented to fine art after World War I.[30] After World War I "[C]raft activities waned as the demand for commercial artists, painters and sculptors gradually increased." "From 1921, the School operated as a 'Technical School'".[31] This was "traditional education in the arts based on Royal Academy prescriptions of instruction in painting and drawing from still life, plaster models and life subjects."[32]



Ida Eise (Elam 1909 to 1915), Traditional botanical illustration, "Nasturium: drawn direct from nature", 1912, pencil & watercolour; Drawings, Painitngs, and Prints Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref D-008-020)[33]

Ida Eise, "Two colours", circular design in fawn and blue using the flowers, leaves, and branches of the Puriri, 1913; Drawings, Paintings, and Prints Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref D-008-025)

Ida Eise, Floral design: "Puriri: three colours", 1913, watercolour; Drawings, Paintings, and Prints Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref D-008-026). See Ida Eise biography, 320.

Edith Collier, Floral design in purple and olive, 1903-12, gouache and pencil; © The Edith Collier Trust; The Edith Collier Trust Collection; Image supplied by the Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui

Edith Collier, Floral design in white and green on purple, 1903-12, gouache and pencil; © The Edith Collier Trust; The Edith Collier Trust Collection; Image supplied by the Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui [34]

Wanganui: Vivian Smith

The Vivian Smith designs illustrated would have been prepared during Lethaby's RCA tenure[36], including a page, dated May 1908, of Morris & Co, Oxford Street, designs. In New Zealand, Smith appears to have prepared an Art Deco design, probably for teaching purposes, based on a pohutakawa flower.

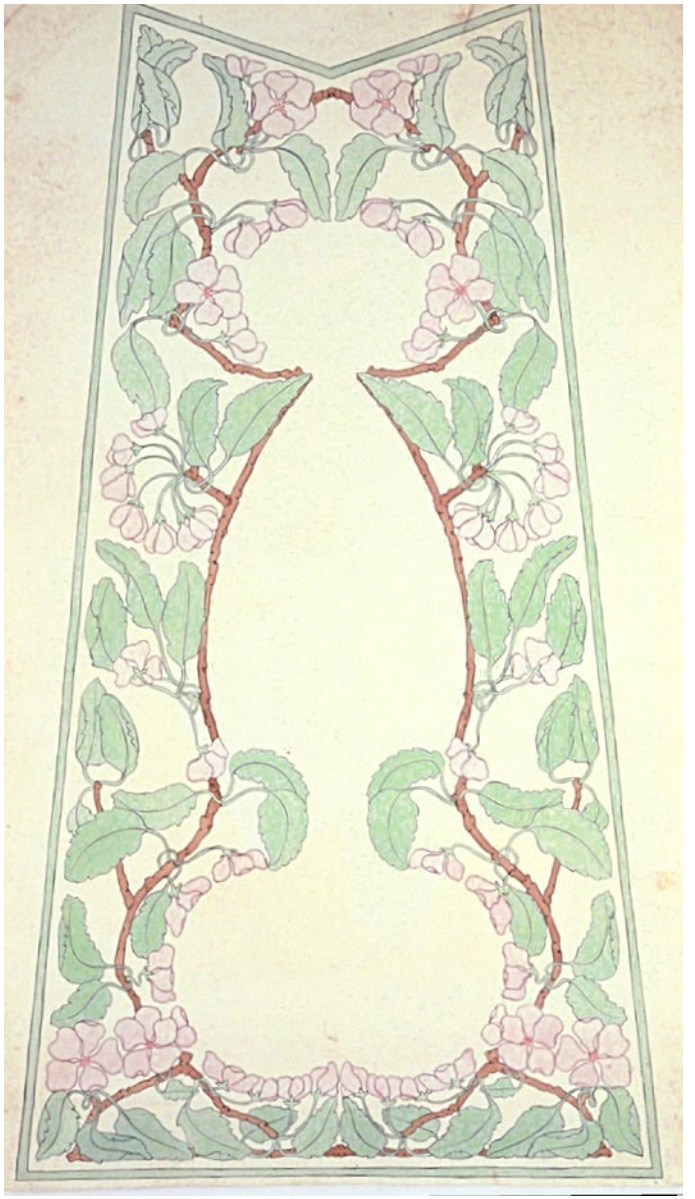
Vivian Smith, Floral designs, probably prepared before Smith came to New Zealand to take up a Wellington appointment in 1912; Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, New Zealand[35]

Vivian Smith, Pohutakawa design, undated; Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, New Zealand

Vivian Smith, Hydrangea design, June 1908; Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, New Zealand

Wanganui: Mary Green (later Smith)

Mary Green, Art-Nouveau design, probably prepared at Wellington Technical College (c1911-17), an art nouveau pattern similar to other key-hole art nouveau patterns by New Zealand South Kensington students, suggesting a standard school exercise; Image supplied by the Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, New Zealand.[37]



Christchurch: Frederick Gurnsey

Gurnsey's carved work was included in the Home Industries Section of the 1906-7 international exhibition, Christchurch, apparently shipped to New Zealand before his arrival. Gurnsey introduced the new courses outlined earlier in Herdman Smith's annual report for 1907.[38] For 1908, the Canterbury College School of Art Syllabus lists Herdman Smith and Gurnsey as responsible for design and Gurnsey, of the Central School of Arts & Crafts, London, in charge of "Artistic Crafts". In the wake of interest in art crafts generated by the 1906-7 exhibition, an instructor of Gurnsey's standing was needed and appointed. Attendance records suggest his students may have included Rose Zeller, Marjorie and Kathleen Harris, the Buckhurst sisters, Hilda Edgar, and Connie Tutton. What is undoubted is the number of students who, as a result of his teaching, continued to carve over many decades.

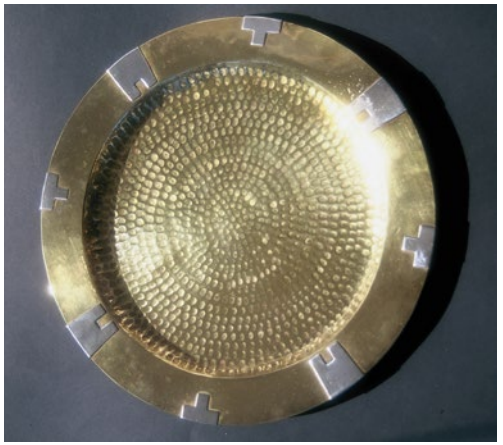
There could be few artist-craftsmen more wedded to nature than Gurnsey, examples of his love of nature generously conveyed in the principal text on Gurnsey, Mark Stocker's *Angels and Roses: The art of Frederick George Gurnsey* (1997): "thistles, roses, shamrocks and vines"[39]; "from the early 1930s" he incorporated "indigenous flora and fauna into his carving";[40] the finials of a later organ case "consist of eight birds and its corbels at the base take the form of eight cherub heads. The small birds, the song-thrush, tui, house-sparrow and skylark, are placed between the larger birds, the kiwi, morepork, spotted shag and yellow-eyed penguin."[41] Understandably, Gurnsey's work is fused with the ideals of Ruskin and William Morris. It is also possible to see Lethaby's ideal of "work as art".[42]

Frederick Gurnsey, Sun dial bearing the motto "No buds blossom at night."; Private collection

Frederick Gurnsey (and Francis Shurrock), William Ferguson Massey Memorial *(carved leaf detail), 1928-30, Point Halswell, Wellington, New Zealand*

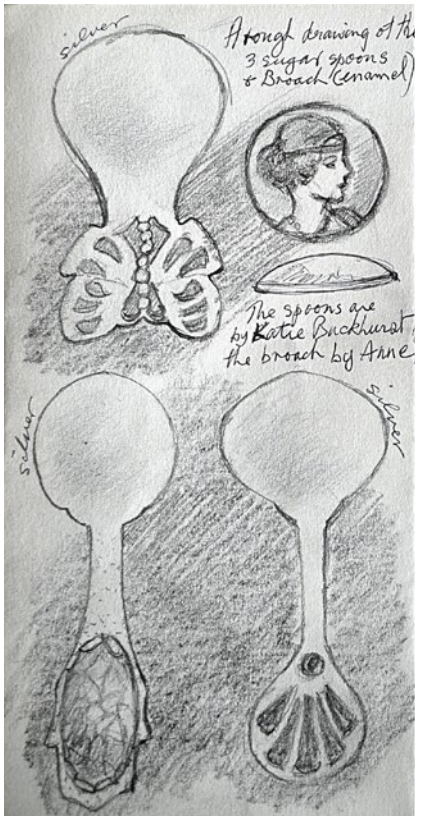
Ruth Nelson (a pupil of Frederick Gurnsey), Altar, Woodford House Chapel, 1928-30. Image courtesy of MTG Hawkes Bay (photo: David Frost). "The chief event in the history of the Chapel this year was that on the last day of the year [1930] the altar arrived. Ruth Nelson had been working at it since 1928 and the School was delighted with her achievement … The altar's design is based on the vision of Isaiah. There are four angels each with the symbol of one of the Evangelists. In the upper portion which forms the reredos, there is a cross with a wreath of roses between the angels. The top of the reredos is decorated with an ornament copied from Gothic art …" (Lucy Hogg, Sursum Corda, *history of the chapel, 1981)*

Christchurch



Mabel Caygill, Platter,
Private collection

Maud Caygill, Necklace;
Private collection



Kate and Annie Buckhurst[43]*, Spoons and brooch, drawn by Pamela Whyte in a letter, 3 Nov 2003*[44]

Canterbury College School of Art student art metalwork and jewellery, *in Canterbury College School of Art Syllabus 1921: The metalwork produced has made a decided shift from items of personal adornment to pieces for the "home beautiful".*[45]

Wellington

Alfred Atkinson, "Necklace, with Pearl Blisters and Pink Coral with Oxydised Silver"; in Art in New Zealand *III (Jun 1931) no12, 291 ill*

Hazel Julian (Wellington Technical College 1919-24), Fork and box, c1920; Private collection (photo: Nicola Burkitt)[48]

Elsie Morrah (Kingston) (Trained Canterbury College School of Art; Paris; Central School, London), Antelope with sheep's heads on antlers, 1933, cloisonné enamel on gold leaf plaque; Private collection (photo: Cosima Ray)[47]

Molly Miller Atkinson (Southland Technical College 1926-9), Silver-plated bowl and spoon; Private collection. The designer-artist established an artcraft studio from which she could work, sell and teach.[46] *(photos: Rosemary Hawkins, née Miller)*

ENDNOTES

1 Also see Calhoun 2000: 62-8, 88, 62 ill
2 RIBA *Journal* VII, 490
3 Also see Calhoun 2000, 111 ill; Steffano Webb Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref G-9231 1/1)
4 RIBA *Journal* VII, 490
5 Also see Calhoun 2000, 14 ill
6 Also see T.H. Jenkin, Dunedin Technical College prospectus cover, 1924; in Calhoun 2000, 157 ill
7 Also see Menzies' hand-carved secretaire with a bas-relief lid decorated with Mount Cook lilies and doors decorated with mountain daisies, 1891, Calhoun 2004-5, 9 ill
8 Interview with Rev Doris Tutill, 15 May 2003
9 See, for example, "Maori Wood Carving", *Studio* XXI/no91 (Oct 1900), 15-21 and "Maori Houses", *Studio* XXII/no95 (Feb 1901), 18-26
10 John Henry Menzies published *Maori Patterns Painted and Carved* [1910] 1975
11 Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand (ATL ref C17730)
12 See Calhoun 2000, 73 ill and 75 ill
13 See Calhoun 2004-5, 23 ill
14 Letter from Gordon H. Brown and enclosures on Wellington Technical College training, 22 August 2006
15 A.C. McIntyre attack on Johannes Anderson as promoting the production of "Maori Art" over "English thoughts or costume subjects"; *Paint Rag* May-Jun 1910, Canterbury College School of Art archive
16 See Robert Hawcridge "biography", 322
17 Brown 1972, 26 n135
18 NZ *AJHR* 1910 E-5, 75
19 NZ *AJHR* 1911 E-5 Appendix xlviiDn
20 NZ *AJHR* 1913 E-5, 81-2
21 NZ *AJHR* 1914 E-5, 85
22 NZ *AJHR* 1917 E-5, 38
23 In *Art New Zealand* 2 1976, 30 ill
24 Calhoun 2000, 140-1
25 Calhoun 2000, 133 ill
26 *NZ Herald* 29 Jun 1888, 4 col 8
27 See Calhoun 2000, 42 ill
28 NZ *AJHR* 1901 E-5, 5
29 P.J. Beadle "The Elam School of Art" University of Auckland *Gazette* 14 no1 (Apr 1962), 5; in Simon A. Franks MA thesis "1890-1983: A History of the Elam School of Fine Arts" 1984, 6
30 Simon A Franks 1984, 7
31 Ibid 10
32 Ibid
33 Also see Calhoun 2000, illustrations on 25, 27, 118
34 Also see Calhoun 2000, 17 ill
35 Also see Calhoun 2000, 101 ill
36 Refer to "Lethaby", 180ff
37 Also see Calhoun 2000, illustrations on 105, 147
38 Refer Herdman Smith, 241
39 Mark Stocker (and Anna Crighton) *Angels and Roses: The art of Frederick George Gurnsey* 1997: "thistles, roses, shamrocks and vines", 46
40 Ibid 55
41 Ibid 60
42 Refer to "Lethaby", 180ff
43 See Buckhurst sisters' "biography", 319; Calhoun 2000, 151-3
44 See images of Annie Buckhurst's enamel paintings "A&C colour", 159 ills
45 See, for example, Walter Crane's comment in the (British) Arts & Crafts Society exhibition catalogue 1888 ("Publications", 127-8): "the beautifying of houses, to those whom it is possible, has become in some cases almost a religion".
46 Also see Calhoun 2000, 164-5 ills
47 Also see *Art in New Zealand* III (Dec 1930) no10, 124 ill; Calhoun 2000, 172 ill
48 Also see Calhoun 2000, 170 ills

Fine art in a context of design: the third generation

The City Gallery, Wellington, illustrated, with spots applied for a contemporary exhibition, sports a band of symbolic titles across its face, including both "Useful Arts" and "Fine Arts". The "Useful Arts" were the original intention of the "Arts & Crafts" implying that "beauty" or "art" might also incorporate "use". The message was that usefulness did not have to be a separate dispeptic being. Art did not have to be status ridden. As William Morris had said so eloquently, so often, Beauty as a necessary aspect of the workings of life would improve life in so many ways and improve life for all classes. The term "Arts & Crafts", although a now-discarded tag, was being realised as a nameless or lower-case "composite term". Tanya Harrod (1996) terms the mix "cultural schizophrenia".[1] David Trubridge (New Zealand, 2012) terms this a happy union – "a third dimension".[2]

A principal, but unsung, advocate for the union of fine art and applied art was *Art in New Zealand* from 1928, and from 1945 the *Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand*. Illustrated examples were numerous in a journal seen as a necessary voice for local literature:

- Nelson Isaac ARCA, "Anglican Primatial Cross", silver and enamel, designed and executed by the artist; in *Art in New Zealand* I (Sep 1928) no1, 41 ill. Isaac was appointed to head of the Art Department, Wellington Technical College, in 1925.
- James Johnstone, Silver sugar basin; in *Art in New Zealand* 1 (Dec 1928) no2, 134 ill
- R.N. Field ARCA, "Decorative Interior", oil painting; in *Art in New Zealand* I (Jun 1929) no4, 235 ill
- Roland Hipkins ARCA, "Hand-printed Fabric from Lino Blocks",

Word signals, such as "Useful Arts" (the Applied Arts), are carved on panels stretching across the front of the Art Deco Wellington Public Library, now the City Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand. Topics, left to right, include Philosophy, Religion, Sociology, Science, Literature (above entrance), Useful Arts, Commerce, Fine Arts, History. The coloured spots were attached to the outer walls for Yahoi Kusama's exhibition "Mirrored Years" 2009-10. The building was originally built as the city library, opened 1939. The architects for the Art Deco exterior were New Plymouth architects Messenger Taylor and Wolfe with the Auckland partnership of Gummer and Ford.[3]

designed and executed by the artist; in *Art in New Zealand* II (Sep 1929) no5, 41 ill

- Lexie Macarthur, Dunedin Technical School student, linocut; in *Art in New Zealand* II (Sep 1929) no5, 66 ill. The linocut uses the overlapping decorative motifs associated with Japanese art.[4] Lexie was a pupil of R.N. Field.[5]
- R.N. Field, "Head Carved direct in Stone"; in *Art in New Zealand* IV (Dec 1931) no14, 123 ill (Sep 1931 Group Exhibition, Christchurch). Field had learned to carve in the same RCA studio as Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth.[6]
- Francis Shurrock, "Architectural Piece in Stone"; in *Art in New Zealand* IV (Mar 1932) no15, 205 ill
- May Smith, Hand-printed fabric; in *Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand* no3 1947, 96 ill. As stated: "There are social implication in May Smith's applied art, a belief in design as a national cause."[7]
- A.R.D. Fairburn, Hand-printed fabrics; in *Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand* no3 1947, 97 ill

Lethaby retired in 1918 from his Royal College of Art post but continued to have a significant voice throughout "Greater Britain": the Royal College of Art entered a vital new aesthetic phase, directed by William Rothenstein, appointed 1920, teaching "Fine Art in a Context of Design".[9] John Simpson suggested in 2003:

> What Rothenstein was saying (he was being very brave) was completely against the whole history of the place. He was saying the fine arts would have a recognised and honourable place at the Royal College of Art within the context of its primary function which was to create

Chrystabel Aitken, a student of Francis Shurrock, carving the 1940 Centennial Exhibition building frieze in Wellington, New Zealand.[8]

designers. He was pleading he wouldn't be "fired" for encouraging people to be very good painters and very good sculptors. They would allow him to do that so long as he held faith and a proper amount of attention was given to the direction and education of designers.[10]

New immigrants, often La Trobe scheme appointees from 1922, were surprised at the distinctions imposed by local (New Zealand) art societies. What was farewelled was any restriction to Nature as the foundation of worthy design.

W.H. Allen ARCA "Impressions of New Zealand Art", *Art in New Zealand* I (Mar 1929) no3:

> These remarks are chiefly concerned with painting, because the various Art societies in New Zealand apparently consider painting to be by far the most important form of Art. This in itself is not a healthy sign. If Art is to take its rightful place in the life of the community there is much to be done.
>
> Firstly, we must get rid of the prevalent idea that Art is principally concerned with painting and sculpture, and realise that modern developments in architecture, furniture design, stained glass, pottery, textiles, interior decoration, commercial Art, etc, are just as important, perhaps more important, in their effect on the general public.
>
> Secondly, Art appreciation – the love of all beautiful things – and the joy of designing and making, must form the basis of Art instruction in all our schools – primary, secondary and technical.[11]

The charismatic Christopher Perkins (in New Zealand from January 1929 to 1933) said in commentary on the 1929 Wellington art society exhibition (*Art in New Zealand* II (Dec 1929) no6, the issue devoted to Maori art):

> For the last hundred years, from Ruskin to Pach, writers on art have deplored the fact that machinery has driven all the apprentices with any feeling for personal expression into the art schools, where they are only taught to make pictures. Of late years even the "popular" artist has been supplanted in various mechanical ways; but what is more interesting is that the artists are regaining control of the crafts. It is something bigger than the "hand-spun" utopias of William Morris and the like, in their little coteries. It is the example of the Paris Exhibition of Decorative Art in 1924. It is the example of many people who have acheved [*sic*] fame as painters but abandoned painting for some more direct vehicle of their inventive powers, and especially for thinking in terms of durable or beautiful matter, in co-operation with the new type of intelligent industrialists. Could not the Academy broaden itself to accommodate something of this sort? Is not something being done by Maoris? Is painting our best or our only possible art form? Who will set a brave example?

Art in New Zealand shortly after its birth in 1928 had its capitalised article titles printed in red; from September 1931 the titles were also in an Art Deco font. Both stylistic affectations recall plate XC of Owen Jones' *Grammar*.[12]

The revival of craft into the 1920s was a more inclusive, populist movement, not often seen for what it was: a late flowering of the British and local Arts and Crafts movements. The phobia for simplicity and functionalism behind the outward rejection of the movement was never as total as envisaged now.[13]

E.C. Isaac, Inspector of Technical Schools, New Zealand, and himself a skilled craftsman, recorded the "general revival of interest in craft-work". Design, he said, was still taught concurrently with drawing and students were encouraged to apply their designs "to useful purposes"; some of the work produced compared "favourably with similar work produced under more favourable conditions in older countries". A New Zealand version of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London was needed if a "high standard of design and construction" were to be attained, and "it is hoped that an effort will be made to secure a few first-class specimens of students' craft studies, including silversmithing and jewellery, from British art schools for circulation among our applied art classes".[14]

The handicraft activity of the 1920s in New Zealand (as in Britain)[15] bore the traditional, but modernised, marks of the movement: attention turned to the production of plain products for the home. These trends were apparent from Dunedin's Richard Hawcridge's choice of new classes, which made household items rather than the decorative items for personal use so popular earlier. Classes in New Zealand tended towards handcraft with the necessary *soupçon* of individual spiritual satisfaction. Following Ashbee's utopian ideal, individuals sought to make all aspects of their lives more holistic. From the 1920s, the arts & crafts became a "way of life" for many.[16]

The La Trobe Scheme 1922

The 1920s witnessed another change of staff at art and design schools in New Zealand. These third generation of appointees, most appointed under the La Trobe Scheme from 1922[17], were primarily Lethaby-inspired teachers. Almost without exception this third generation were both fine and applied artists. The design reform movement morphed into an allied approach to fine and applied art – for which the term "Fine Art in a Context of Design" was apt. As already illustrated, *Art in New Zealand* took, it appears, an even-handed approach to both sides of the debate, and included literature and poetry in its ambit. The easy cross-over between fine and applied art comes through in Gordon H. Brown's "Catalogue" listings in his books on *New Zealand Painting 1900-1920*, *1920-1940*, *1940-1960*.[18] Ivy Copeland trained in Auckland (Elam), and after time in Wanganui returned to Elam "interesting so many new students in the study of design".[19] Subsequently, in Christchurch in the 1930s, as Florence Akins recalls, Ivy Copeland preferred to be seen as a painter.[20] Ida Eise, also Auckland-trained, when she left the school the annual report noted that her work had "been excellent alike in fine and applied art" and "will be much missed".[21] She also subsequently returned to Elam. Chrystabel Aitken despite her applied art training chose to become a sculptor.

Some students such as Joan Edgar took a design and craft diploma and did not attempt a fine art career; in Joan Edgar's case, and no doubt in other cases, parents preferred to see their daughters obtain a qualification more likely to lead to employment. What was also true is that many more women received appointments, even if, as Florence Akins reported, some had to live at home to adequately support themselves.[22] These appointments were often in the applied art area, although women such

as Louise Henderson are more often remembered for their fine art. What is conveyed by these students is a commitment to their task for which Lethaby's ideal of "work as art" is recalled; their approach is somehow ethereal. To owners, objects, whether useful or not, are loved for their Beauty.

E.C. Isaac's replacement William Sanderson La Trobe, as Director-General of Technical Education, followed the teaching concerns put in place by Arthur Dewhurst Riley. La Trobe's goal (the La Trobe Scheme) was to attract British, primarily Royal College of Art graduates, to teach fine and appied art in New Zealand and in 1922 La Trobe hired graduates for schools in Dunedin[23], Auckland, Napier and Wanganui.[24] Rothenstein's Royal College of Art challenge was replayed in New Zealand, and, as at the Royal College of Art, part-time tutors were appointed who were also practising artists or designers; Paul Nash's Royal College of Art part-time irritations[25] were not entirely different to those cited by Florence Akins.

R.N. Field in an interview with Libby Wilson credits his attendance at Edward Johnston's Royal College of Art lettering classes with La Trobe's interest in appointing him to a New Zealand art and design school, in this case Dunedin.[26] Field also mentions his efforts to interest students in Clive Bell's ideas on "significant form".[27]

Notably, the catch-all phrase "Arts & Crafts" is missing, as is William Morris's call to the proletariat to arise and create a new world order. The term Arts & Crafts, if used, was, as often as not, used as the lower case "arts and crafts" or art crafts and often used perjoratively. What was retained had its sources in Britain (although Continental ideas were absorbed[28]). In their way, the "arts and crafts"were still a "secular religion".

Groups in the British Cotswolds continued to live the rural dream (see, for example, Mary Greensted *The Arts and Crafts Movement in the Cotswolds*, 1993). Eric Gill and his "cell of good living" and his views on "individualism and a union of art with craft" would be known in New Zealand and have an effect on the wish to feed art into industry.[29] Others, such as Gordon Russell used machinery, as needed, to produce high quality products and thereby balance costs against beliefs. Production-by-hand for an appreciative audience, often middle-class, continued and continues to convey the imprimateur of the original movement ("secular morality"/"work as art") and is still the means by which Arts & Crafts sentiments are often realised.

In New Zealand in the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties, as in Britain, individuals set up ventures combining hand-making and sales of art jewellery, pottery, hand-block printing and weaving.[30] Under Dr Beeby, as touched on in the "Legacy"[31], the Arts & Crafts are praised for giving students a love of handworked crafts and by this is meant handprinted textiles, weaving, metalwork, jewellery and other recognised craft skills such as pottery.

Studio in January 1928 might include an article on "Art in the Machine Age", which starts with what became the standard denunciation of the nineteenth-century with the statement: "The products of the age lacked sound design."[32]

As an apparently needed antidote, the *Studio* editor also introduced a reprinted pamphlet by Philippe Mairet, "The Idea behind Craftsmanship" (October 1928, the *Studio* issue owned by James Johnstone), which captures why craft was reborn in the 1920s:

> We have recently given some prominence to the point of view which assumes that the artist to-day must come to terms with the machine. As an expression of opinion on the other side, this essay by Mr Mairet (published as a pamphlet by the New Handworkers' Gallery, 14 Percy Street, London, W1) seems to us very able …[33]

Mairet's views are close to those expressed by James Johnstone in the thirties,[34] views with a lineage back to Lethaby, to Morris and Ruskin, and to Pugin:

> Work as life, work as creation, work as play – that is what our craftsman even now realise for themselves, but cannot realise for the world in this age of history … They are regarded as the diehards of the old order … Very few yet see that the truth which the craftsmen stand for is indispensable to the future of mankind, that our future cannot be fulfilled without it. The craftsmen alone stand for instant realisation, for the whole of life as an art, here and now and always. …
>
> … Unexpected friends will appear – even engineers and physicists will understand their meaning, and join with them to revolutionise, by humanising, the whole organisation of man's work, until, out of the satisfied soul of working and creating man, a higher need will call forth a higher fulfilment. And then a new style will begin to break forth like blossom in every branch of industry.[35]

Printmaking

Print media, such as linocuts, with their commercial undertones, had, over many decades, to do battle to be recognised as art forms; printmaking nevertheless had been blessed at the Royal College of Art (1920) and not surprisingly, teaching was formalised (1924).[36] The results were born out by La Trobe scheme appointments.

Block printing

Roland Hipkins, a La Trobe scheme appointment to Napier Technical High School, wrote on linoblock printing for *Art in New Zealand* in September 1929:

> "BLOCK PRINTS"
> Within the last twenty years there has been a revival of the "print". The processes of etching, lithography, wood engraving and colour printing from metal plates and wood blocks, etc, have all provided an outlet for artistic expression varying in character according to the technical possibilities of each craft. …
>
> Linoleum blocks may also be used for hand printing on textiles. Is it not possible for New Zealand artists to produce designs for fabrics which breathe the spirit of this Dominion? Unique conditions exist for the designer to adapt the typical trees, foliage, flora, birds, landscape and life of this country as motifs in design for decoration of textiles.[37]

"Linocutting" "as a school craft" was introduced for art students at the technical college in Wellington in 1930.[38]

The many skills associated with "book-arts" – calligraphy, manuscript illumination, bookbinding, papermaking - must make it among the most successful legacies of the Arts & Crafts. Small presses, the Caxton Press in Christchurch and the Unicorn Press in Auckland in the thirties,[39]

adopted the book production standards set by Morris's Kelmscott Press and other presses at the end of the nineteenth-century, which have subsequently been followed by art presses such as Alan Loney's Hawk Press: with text by Bill Manhire and images by Andrew Drummond, the press created "Dawn/Water" in 1979.

Chrystabel Aitken, Celtic interlace pattern; Macmillan Brown Library collection, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

Chrystabel Aitken, Art Deco sketch; Private collection

Block printing, Canterbury College School of Art, 1940s: Jack Knight?, Molly McNab (3ZB), James Johnston, and unknown student

Francis Shurrock, "Poppies", inscribed lower edge, "In Flanders fields the Poppies Grow Between the crosses, row on row Francis A. Shurrock", linocut, ?c1934; Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu (Acc no L79/34; neg 79/69/27A)

Commercial art[40]

Students with traditional training, at ease with the decorative simplified flat designs encouraged by their training, moved comparatively easily into commercial illustration. Posters and ads incorporated photographs, drawings and text in the collaged approach introduced by "modern" artists. Art-Deco, the latest decorative style adopted angular black and white and colour geometrically-determined oblique rectangles, wide bold curves, triangles and zigzags. The razzmatazz of black and white graphics and prints as shown in *Studio* and up-market journals made easy inroads into the New Zealand artistic consciousness; the cover for the art-deco Auckland Society of Arts catalogue in 1925[41] would in its way match E. McKnight Kauffer's new strong art-deco *Studio* cover (1928), in green, black and white.

The Auckland Society of Arts in September 1933 launched a "black and white exhibition", the "first of its kind held by the Society".[42] The other notable event was the establishment of the New Zealand Ex-Libris society in Wellington in 1930.[43] In 1990, the Book Arts Society of New Zealand staged an exhibition and published the *Art of the Book*.

Avis Higgs (Senior Art), Poster Design for State Coal, 1938; Wellington Technical College Review *illustration opposite 56. The back-ground tree is a tree-of-life with a leaf style found in, for example, C.F.A. Voysey's patterns in the 1890s.*

Winifred Vickery (Senior Art), Prize-winning design. League of Nations Union Poster Competition, 1938; Wellington Technical College Review *illustration opposite 56*

Textile design

James Johnstone owned three *Studio* issues.[45] *Studio* between 1927 and 1931 added to its general long-held and valuable interest in British and European rural crafts to, by 1931, articles linked to the international style of architecture and design. The 1927 volume had an article on "Expressionist Embroideries" by Dr Hedwig Michaelson:

> It is interesting to observe that the artistic struggles of the fine arts are equally fought out in the border districts of the crafts, revolutionising even the peaceful realm of needlework.[46]

What the issues for 1927 also illustrate is a modernist bookcase similar to one Johnstone built for himself.[47] Although Johnstone kept the three issues, he is also likely to have had his interest in textile creation sharpened by other issues of the magazine. The magazine was still a force for change, although no longer the trend setter of the late nineteenth-century.

In December 1928, Marcel Valotaire on "New Textiles from France" observed:

> Anyone interested in the subject must have had many opportunities of observing the evidences of intelligent and judicious desire for revival in the domain of modern fabrics. Whatever the stuff or its purpose, it is quite clear that the art of fabric designing has participated in the general movement of renewal in the applied arts which has developed during the last twenty years.
>
> ... To Grasset, Verneuil and Mucha we owe a new method of decorative stylisation of flora and fauna. Then came Lalique, then Bakst brought the Orient into fashion ...[48]

Canterbury College School of Art hand-printed fabrics (1950s)[44]

Canterbury College School of Art printed textiles, 1948 Canterbury College School of Art student exhibition

Studio for 1931 included an illustrated article: Louise Bonney, "Modern Fabrics: leading designs and materials at the International Exhibition of the American Federation of Arts" at the Metropolitan Museum, New York.[49] The presence of articles on Persian art[50] and modern fabrics, and Florence Akins' ownership of the 1933 edition of Lewis Day's *Pattern Design*, with its supplement by Amor Fenn and art deco images, would have suggested a contemporary avenue for the talents of local art and design students, as seen in the textiles printed at the Canterbury College School of Art (286 ills). The Federation, said the *Studio* author, had done much "to dignify design and offer constructive suggestions to a mass-producing world":

> Of the two countries [America and England], England's work proves the better, if we judge from the exhibits. She has established the value of contemporary artist design in both hand and machine production. She has developed the hand-blocked industry until it stands on its own feet as a business and has a strong influence on machine production. She has worked steadily on mass production problems until the mass fabrics of this exhibition show a vitality not often found in machine goods.[51]

The May 1931 issue included items on Frank Brangwyn's murals, Persian book-binding, John Nash, and "Leach and Tomimoto West and East" by Bernard Leach.

R.N. Field understandaly felt isolated in New Zealand but would comment to Libby Wilson in 1980:

> We were able to be ourselves and as far as we could we kept in touch with the work of folk overseas through *The Studio* and …
>
> Drawing and Design, and little periodicals, various things. And the exhibitions came out.[52]

ENDNOTES

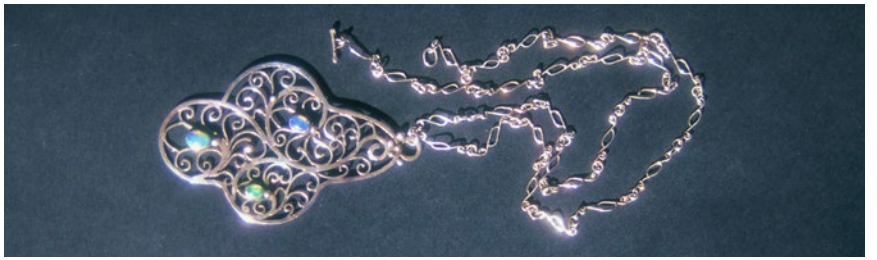
1 Tanya Harrod "Paradise Postponed", *Crafts: the decorative and applied arts magazine* no140 (May/June 1996), 22 col2
2 David Trubridge talking to Catherine Ryan, National Radio, 8 March 2012. Three pieces of David Trubridges' work had just been acquired by the Pompidou Centre in Paris, recognition that beauty might invade the ordinary. Trubridge published *So Far* in 2013 (Craig Potton Publishing)
3 Michael Kelly *Art Deco: Wellington's 1930s buildings* no8
4 See Dresser illustration, horse-chestnut leaves, 66 coloured ill (left)
5 Libby Wilson "R.N. Field Interview", *Bulletin of NZ Art History* 8 1980, 17
6 Libby Wilson "R.N. Field Interview", *Bulletin of NZ Art History* 8 1980, 20
7 See Calhoun 2000, 192
8 Also see: Alison Duff modelling in plaster at the Canterbury College School of Art, early 1930s; Calhoun 2000, 97 ill. Alison Duff later worked with Chrystabel Aitken on the Centennial Exhibition building frieze, Wellington.
9 Frayling 1987, 92
10 John Simpson interview 2003
11 W.H. Allen ARCA "Impressions of New Zealand Art", *Art in New Zealand* I (Mar 1929) no3, 216
12 See Owen Jones' *Grammer* 1856 plate XC, 43 ill (centre)
13 Tanya Harrod "Paradise Postponed", British *Crafts* magazine 140 (May-Jun 1996), 21; Calhoun 2000, 156
14 NZ *AJHR* 1920 E-5, 10. When Isaac retired "his great skill in handicrafts" was noted. (NZ *AJHR* 1923 E-5, 11). At the Academy annual exhibition in 1924 Isaac exhibited an oak gate-leg table in Tudor style, inlaid. (NZAFA 1924 annual exhibition catalogue 36 no466)
15 See, for example, "The 1910s and 1920s" MacCarthy 1982, 85-101
16 C&K 104
17 See La Trobe "biography" 327-8 and Gordon H. Brown *NZ Painting 1920-1940* sections 2 and 3, pages 18-24
18 Gordon H. Brown publications: 1972, 1975, and 1981
19 NZ *AJHR* 1915 E-5, 32
20 In Penelope Jackson "Ivy M. Copeland"; in *Art NZ* 70 (Autumn 1994), 82; NZ *AJHR* 1919 E-5, 26
21 NZ *AJHR* 1915 E-5, 32
22 Interview 4 Sep 1992; Calhoun 2000, 181
23 In 1922, T.H. Jenkin and F.V. Ellis, both ARCA, were appointed, to be replaced by W.A. Allen and R.N. Field, both associates of Royal College, in 1925. J.D. Charlton Edgar replaced W.H. Allen in 1930. "Today the emphasis is placed on design in relation to fine craft work, the aim being to combine a painting school with a sound training in industrial design."; in "The School of Art, Dunedin"; in *An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, edited by A.J. McLintock, originally published in 1966
24 NZ *AJHR* 1923 E-5, 8
25 Frayling 1987, 92
26 Libby Wilson "R.N. Field Interview", *Bulletin of NZ Art History* 8 1980, 16
27 Ibid 17
28 For example, "Vienna Secession Exhibition", *Studio* XXV/no110 (May 1922), 267-75
29 C&K 104
30 Calhoun 2000, 156ff
31 See "Legacy", 313-14
32 *Studio* 96, 3
33 *Studio* 96/no427, 231
34 See James Johnstones thoughts under "Issues", 119-20 and "enduring", 293-6
35 *Studio* 9/no427: 232 col1, 233 col2
36 Frayling 1987, 93
37 *Art in New Zealand* II no5, 39-46: 39, 46
38 *WTC Review* 1930, 35
39 See, for example, 'The making of New Zealand literature'. URL: http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/culture/literature-in-new-zealand-1930-1960. (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 19-Sep-2014
40 See Calhoun 2000, 173-8
41 Calhoun 2000, 156 ill
42 *Art in New Zealand* VI (Sep 1933) no1, 54
43 Calhoun 2000, 176-7
44 Also see Calhoun 2000, 191 ill
45 James Johnstone owned *Studio* no406 (1927), no427 (1928) and no454 (1931)
46 Dr Hedwig Michaelson "Expressionist Embroideries" *Studio* no406 (1927), 23
47 *Studio* 93/no409 (Apr 1927), 290 ill
48 *Studio* Dec 1928, 383
49 *Studio* CI/no457 (Spring 1931), 256
50 On Persian Art, see "Publications", 148 ill, 149, 150 ill, 151
51 *Studio* CI/no457 (Spring 1931), 256
52 Libby Wilson "R.N. Field Interview", *Bulletin of NZ Art History* 8 (1980), 21

Later art metalwork & jewellery

Canterbury College School of Art student metalwork exhibition, August 1948

Colleen O'Connor (born Ferguson) (Canterbury College School of Art graduated 1957), Cross of Life *(1951-2), Standard silver cover, turquoise enamels, and handwritten illuminated parchment; Private collection (photos: Artist)*

Audrey Bascand (born Gabites) (Canterbury College School of Art student 1951-8), Coffee and tea pots; Private collection (photo: Lawrie Bascand)



Zelda Bedell (later Paul) (Wellington Technical College 1934 to 1938, Canterbury College School of Art to 1940), Necklace; Private collection

Audrey Bascand, Fretwork container for bowl, Silver-plated copper; Private collection (photo: Lawrie Bascand)

Dick Seelye (Canterbury College School of Art 1945-8), Cutlery and lamp base; Private collection (photos: Artist's daughter)

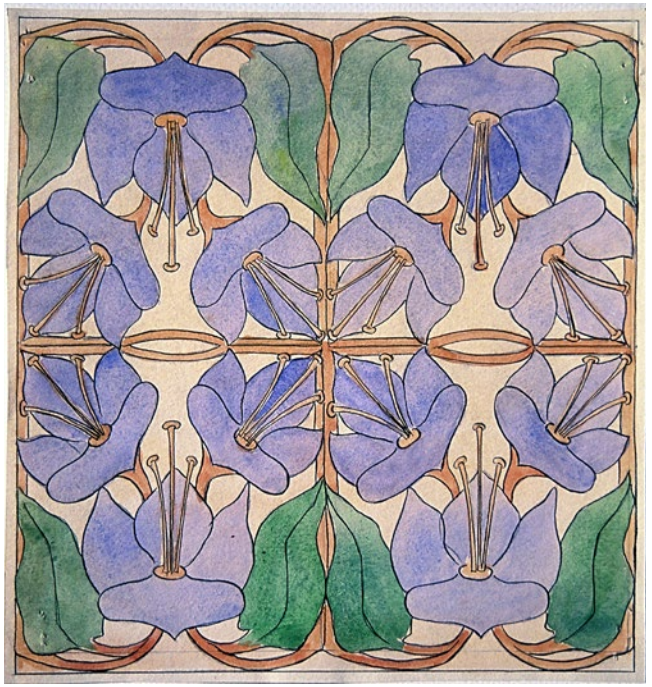
An enduring message: the Canterbury College School of Art

Chrystabel Aitken's patterns use the structural-norms developed by C.F.A. Voysey and other British designers by the 1890s, nature-based designs created with respect for machine production. Discussing the illustrated wallpaper design "Bird and Tulip",[1] "one of Messrs Essex's new patterns for this season", EBS in *Studio* in 1896 said:

> ... the vertical lines of the foliage [act] as a background for a diaper of flower-forms whose rich curves tell out all the more superbly by contrast with the stiff, almost angular lines of the leaves; granted even that such a one is as happily planned and as carefully schemed – yet it must needs be but an echo of a very simple and beautiful idea.[2]

The Voysey pattern was printed "in a varied series of colour-schemes" chosen by Voysey in consultation with Essex; in this instance, rich purples and greens.[3] In tune with Voysey's dictums, Linda Parry traces the approach back to Christopher Dresser in 1856.[4]

The following images and quotes are by lecturers and students at the Canterbury College School of Art, and highlight the plant-based designs created by both female and male staff and students at the Canterbury College School of Art. These designs were the original inspiration for this book.



Chrystabel Aitken (Canterbury College School of Art 1921/1922-1936?), Unit for a repeat pattern in blue, green and brown, 1928, watercolour wash, design outlined in pen and ink over pencil; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand (Gift of the artist).

Chrystabel Aitken (Canterbury College School of Art 1921/1922-1936?), Repeat designs, one in blue, one in yellow, 31 July 1928, watercolour wash, design outlined in pen and ink over pencil; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterburwy, Christchurch, New Zealand (Gift of the artist)

"You need roots, good basic principles that don't change with fashion. It's what you build on."

Francis Shurrock (head of modelling and sculpture Canterbury College School of Art 1924 to 1949, often called "Shurry")

(The principal text on Francis Shurrock is Mark Stocker *Francis Shurrock: Shaping New Zealand sculpture* 2000.)

Florence Akins and Chrystabel Aitken set out the parameters by which Francis Shurrock taught both fine and applied art:

> A wonderful teacher. I got my good basic training and knowledge through association with him ... My understanding of form and tone and colour was basically through him. He taught students the basics. You need roots, good basic principles that don't change with fashion. It's what you build on. You either throw them out or use them.[5]
>
> Francis Shurrock also emphasized simplicity – in the form mainly and a thorough-overall structure: the ornate never appealed to him, simplicity (not the ornate). ... Practical in methods – encouraging each Student to think for himself. He never altered, or worked on any student's objects, or works, at any time – and it does seem a good method – James Johnstone also taught in this way, encouraging each Student to see, in his or her own way – and not be influenced by someone else.[6]

Francis Shurrock himself wrote, in "Life: Art", *Tomorrow: An independent fortnightly paper*, 18 March 1936:

Florence Akins, Francis Shurrock working, linocut; Private collection (photo: Florence Akins)

> I ask for no sop of encouragement to the so-called "Fine Arts" that heretical title of Hellenistic date, I plead for Life, food for the soul as well as for the body, with opportunity to exercise both to the well being of each, and so shall we be a truly, healthy people and beauty will be about us, for is not beauty the sign royal of good health? Yes, and art will be fine, further it will be everywhere, I repeat everywhere, because life is fine in its noblest sense; but it must be by a collective will we all must exercise. Shall we pause a while and dream? Yes, even a peep of heaven is better than a blank sky.[7]

In a later article, Shurrock, on "Labour", in *Tomorrow: An independent fortnightly paper*, 24 June 1936, wrote:

> Art, or Life, if you will, is only made manifest by and through labour ... Art is founded on Labour, it is work of mind and hand. ...
>
> No doubt confusion in meanings comes about to a great extent through association, and the low meaning so frequently attached to Labour comes about through our social structure, which makes absurd distinctions between mind labour and hand labour – evident in salaries offered and accepted. …
>
> Labour, work, occupies a degraded position in our minds. We must regrade it.
>
> ... Labour is the foundation of civilization, of life art, by which time capitalism will have passed away.
>
> ... Now we cannot have a beautiful world until we are all artists, not in the narrow sense of being painters, sculptors, poets, musicians, and the like, but in its widest sense, that all those who are engaged in work worth doing are artists in that they do that work well and I repeat all art is founded in labour. And where have the potent artists of the past and present come from? The workshops of Life. ... It is a terrible thing we have in our midst this artificial idea of art, this low opinion of labour. The apprenticeship system and that of the older operative modes were more wise than our present day attempts at short cuts to culture.
>
> Art is the result of man's joy in labour, it is not anæmic æsthetics.[8]

Shurrock's words are an unabashed tribute to W.R. Lethaby.

James Johnstone (head of design and craft Canterbury College School of Art 1926 to 1958, also called "Jas" and "Johnny")

Chrystabel Aitken recalled:

> James Johnstone stressed design basics – the design had to complement the basic shape (not the other way round) – if I remember, and the good or best planning of the material itself. Not too many frills etc. (distracting!)

The importance of James Johnstone's teaching is best seen in the changed approach to design which took place with his appointment; it is best seen by looking at a design by Chrystabel Aitken from 1923[9], in which the Art Nouveau lines are still strong, and her 1928 designs (at the start of the section), in which there is a strong, simplified approach with lines enclosing flat areas of colour.

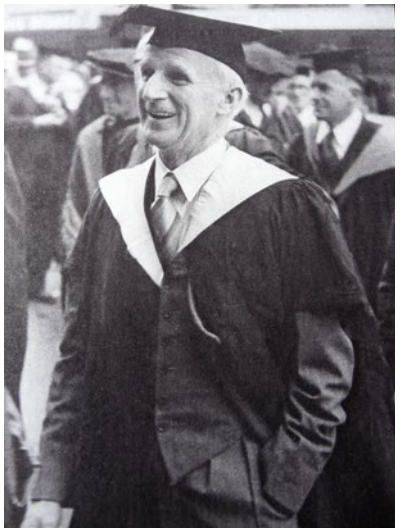
Johnstone's personal philosophy can be found in three radio talks

(1930s), the texts for which were saved by his daughter Ngarita Johnstone: these strongly worded lectures on "Crafts and the Craftsman" attest to a man passionately committed to the Arts & Crafts and to William Morris. In what appears to be his first talk, hand-written, sub-titled "The worker in relation to production", Johnstone discusses medieval workers as tradesmen with varying degrees of "skill" and the artist as a Renaissance creation:

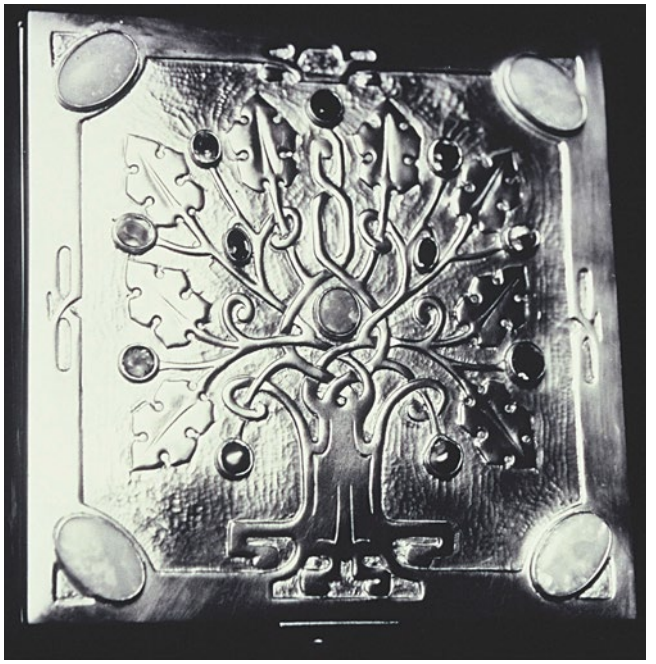
> Art wasn't a special line of business. There was only this art or that art – the art of cooking, the art of sculpture ... The workman did not serve the machine. He was master of his tools. This state continued well into ... the industrial age, in which the dominant idea, if not, in many instances, the only idea, is that of making money. Where, in this age of mass-production workers are no more than obedient tools – ants rather than men – machine minders, consequently only producers.[10]

In a second talk, dated 7 October 193? (1930s), James Johnstone discusses the "Profitable Use Of Leisure Time" and the "Harnessing Of Creative Urge", as a "new syllabus for post-primary education" was being introduced, giving "the children" of "this country" "an introduction and opportunity to practice crafts". This talk owes much to Lethaby's approach to design and craft:

> Incidentally, craft work will do more to raise the taste of a nation than any amount of drawing and painting ... Furthermore, from working in material, one begins to know instinctively what is appropriate to that particular material in the way of treatment, shape and decoration for the article to be made. He or she begins to find that what is appropriate and proper in one material or purpose is



*James Johnstone, Portrait photograph, late 1940s(*Arts Year Book *no6 1950, 39 ill)*[11]



*James Johnstone, "Tree of Life", silver box top with cabochon stones for sacrament bread; Private collection (*Arts Year Book *no6 1950, 39 ill)*[11]

entirely out of place in another.

> They develop good taste in material and that is fundamental to the development of good taste and intelligent appreciation ...
>
> Then, having attained some skill in handling of the tools pertaining to the craft of our choice, we turn our thoughts to designing, and herein lies the real pleasure of the craftsman – conception, design and the carrying out. The work then belongs to one's self and becomes an expression of ideals. It was this approach that produced the beautiful things of the past. The medieval cathedral, the beautiful mosques of Persia, the temples of the East, the books, pottery, silks, metalwork and carpets: all things for use, things which are truly universal in their appeal, made by men who took pleasure in making them. They are indeed works of art ... Art is a big part of the whole daily life of all of us. It is not reserved for the galleries, but should have its place in the home and among the everyday things of life.

As James Johnstone nears the end of his talk, he offers the thought that "the practical artist-craftsman ... , in turn, is exerting a strong influence on the industrial designer."

James Johnstone's third talk demonstrates the continuing influence of the "arts & crafts". Johnstone is also tackling modernism. The talk was delivered after the Empire Loan Collection of contemporary British art opened its Australasian tour on 2 May 1934.[12] Five further similar exhibitions were staged over the next five years[13]:

> As a man thinks, so he becomes; as a community desires, so its works of art become. As men are – not as they mainly wish, do they create themselves and their cities ...

James Johnstone , "Table Lamp".
See chapter four cover (208) for view of Johnstone's modernist lamp, c1932, and see caption (209).

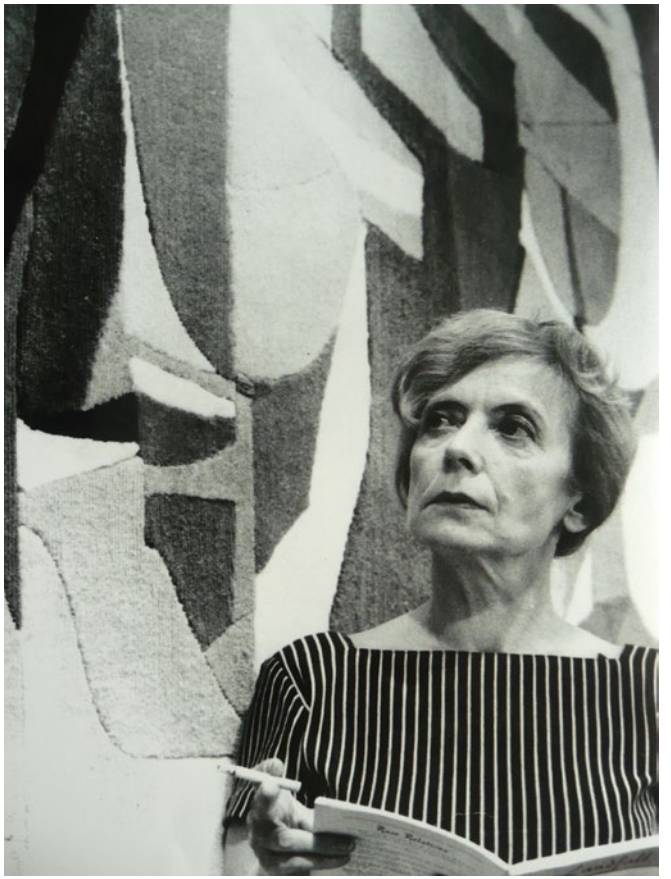
This problem of design and pattern is no new one but ... the more one pushes design and pattern the more nature suffers. To those of you who had the opportunity of seeing the recent exhibition of contemporary British art, in Christchurch, two pictures would explain my point ... Whistler's "Nocturne", the pattern here is of the flat type; almost reduced to two dimensions, height and width, practically all sense of the third dimension, depth, having been lost in the evening light ... Pablo Picasso's early works illustrate very clearly the reduction of painting to two dimensions – two dimensional cubism as it is sometimes called. – Even he retained sufficient representation of natural forms to make his work understood. But pure abstract painting would exclude all representation and would depend entirely for its aesthetic appeal on beautiful arrangement of lines, shapes, proportion and rhythm, colour and tone ... Most of my listeners are sufficiently well acquainted with modern cretonnes, carpets and other furnishings in which floral design has been replaced by designs consisting entirely of different shapes of colour and tone. These are exceedingly attractive and give to the onlooker quite a considerable amount of aesthetic pleasure, but while most of us are prepared to accept such abstract design in our architecture, interior decoration or furnishings, few are prepared to accept compositions in painting or sculpture which are so far departed from naturalistic representation. It seems that both of these arts must always rely for their interest on a measure of realism. But pure naturalistic representation, which is the other extreme, can never claim to be creative. Its appeal may be associative but never intellectual.

Louise Henderson, Monstera Deliciosa *(Cook Islands), felt tip pen rubbed into textured board, 1960s?, each panel 2'x3' approx.*

Louise Henderson (embroidery and design instructor part-time Canterbury College School of Art 1926 to 1941)

Louise Henderson "Embroidery a Living Art":

> This art, as one sees, is, so to speak, handed down, but of course being very versatile, its character embodies the peculiarities of the particular people one considers at the time. It is borrowed but assimilated, and, so to speak, re-born in each country if it finds a suitable ground, and from all that emerges the national style of which embroidery embodies its expression, and one should carefully consider it so to keep its full expression. ...
>
> Once more may I mention, so as to avoid any confusion, that embroidery is a decoration. Decoration is design [see Jessie Newbery's comment on "design and decoration" (6, 196). It must be consistent with the cloth upon which it is worked, and consideration given to the practical side of it. Being placed on a flat surface which is usually looked upon from above, design for embroidery must have only two dimensions, and offers no idea of a possible third dimension at all, whatever object it is placed on. And as it is to be used in our lives, we must only place it on things of use, as it always has been done in the past in every country. ...
>
> As embroidery is the art of the people, by which is expressed some idea, why not use what is here under your hand? People in New Zealand should think of their flora, their bush plants, mosses, and the many other things which are connected with the land they live in and love.



Louise Henderson, portrait photograph. Diane McKegg writes: "The work in the background is a collage made of New Zealand wool carpet for the New Zealand Room in the Hong Kong Hilton Hotel. It was commissioned to encourage viewers to consider the possibility of wool as a medium for decorative use. This was an extension of Louise Henderson's interest in tapestry, which she pursued in the late 1960's, creating two tapestries one of which is, I believe, in the Te Papa Collection. I would hazard a guess that the collage was made subsequently, possibly in the early to mid-seventies."

> They may look at the beautiful Maori patterns, and find inspiration in their design. I shall go further, for in other countries the people (peasants mostly) make their own patterns, sketching vague shapes on the material, and working them at their fancy. So why not do the same! Through this, one may attain a national art.[14]

Chrystabel Aitken (Canterbury College School of Art 1921/1922-1936?)

Reverend Doris Tutill (Canterbury College School of Art 1929 to 1934)

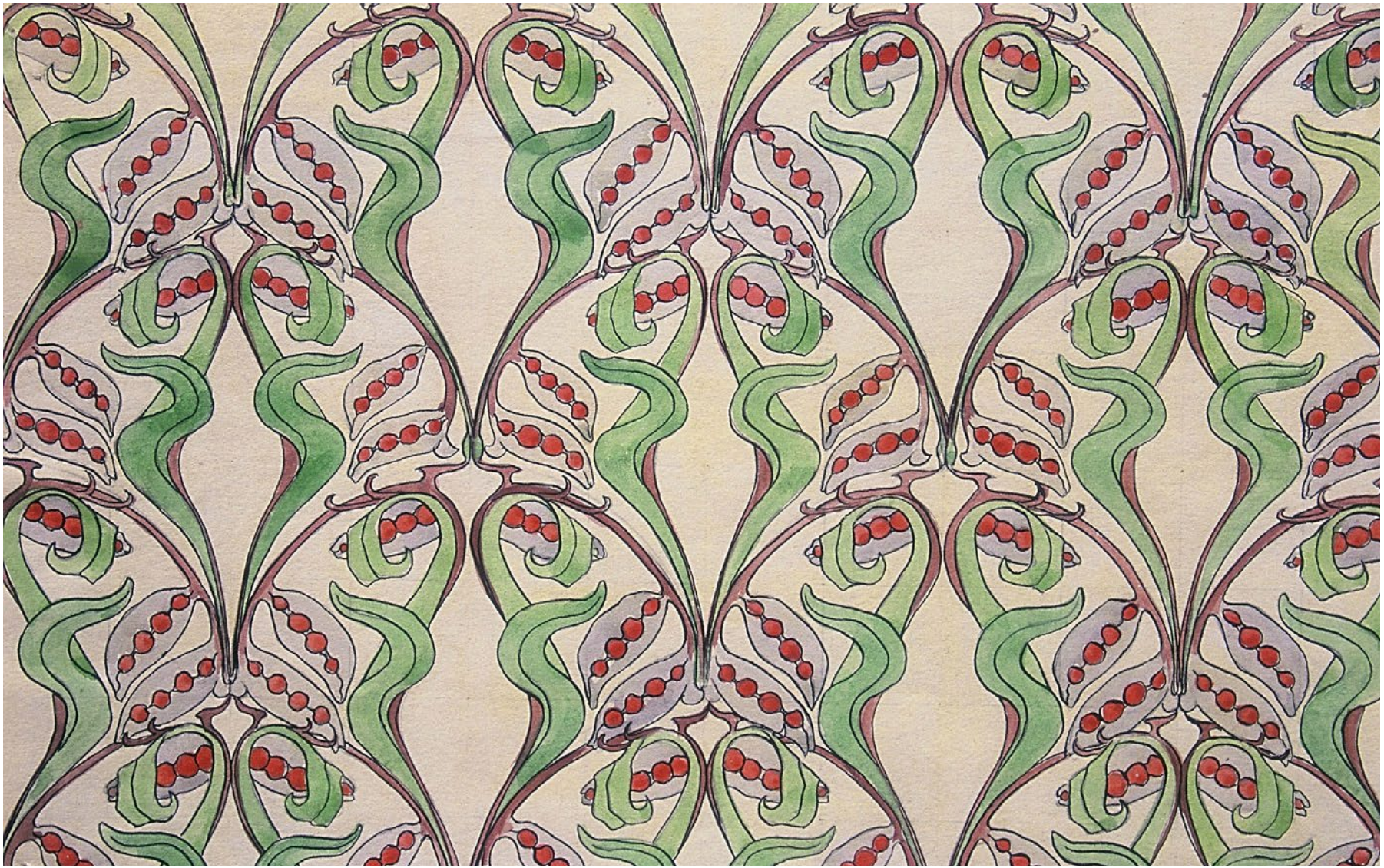
Reverend Doris Tutill recalled in conversation:

> I always call my years at the School of Art 1929 to 1934 "my halcyon years". I loved them. I just loved every bit of it – the rickety old stairs and I can remember every detail. I can remember the details of what the teachers wore. ...
>
> I was going into my fifth year. I thought I'm coming back. I can't leave this place. The only way I could do it, because after that you had to pay. Your parents had to pay. So I thought, I have to win a scholarship. That's all I could do. I was determined to win a scholarship. So I set out and the hanging you've seen with the wisteria, that was a scholarship piece ... And win a scholarship I did, much to the chagrin of some of the older pupils ...

Asked to name the plants above the flamingoes, Reverend Tutill said:

> Gold satin flamingoes on a brown background with the very stylized tree above it, stylized into a squarish shape ... Just a sort of William

Chrystabel Aitken (Canterbury College School of Art 1921/22-?1936), Repeat design in mustard, apricot and turquoise, c1928; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, New Zealand



Chrystabel Aitken (Canterbury College School of Art 1921/1922 -?1936), Repeat four-colour design with red berries, brown stems, and green leaves on cream; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Morris influence. I didn't know at the time but that's what it was. ...

I suppose ... Florence Akins had the greatest input. You see because Louise Henderson moved on. She went up to Auckland. ...

Of her hollyhock design, she said:

Well, I think that I may have been so familiar with hollyhocks that I just did them ... Such a lot of people drew hollyhocks ... I just know what hollyhocks were like. If you were observant you did.

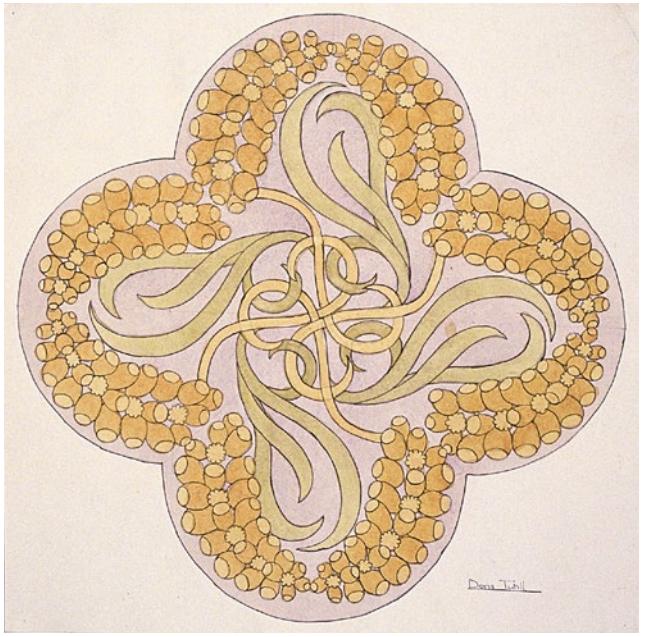
After graduating, to earn a living, as she said:

Yes, I did orders for several of the big firms doing Christmas gifts. I made my own parchment. I had it hung up all around the house. Mother was very long suffering. And I did it for James Smith, Milne & Choyce, and Beaths. Then of course I went on to the little more fiddly things – very fine linen lawn is so fine, it's so fine you'd never buy it now – embroidered handkerchiefs with handmade lace, very fine lace, around the edges. And then latterly I went on to teaching at St Margaret's.[15]

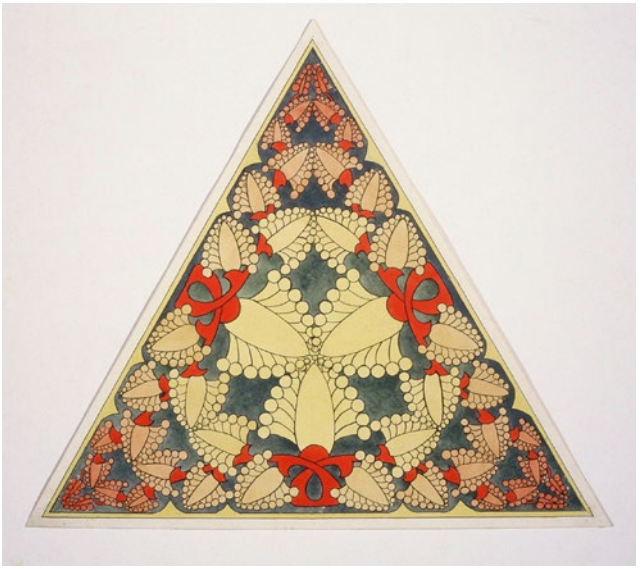
Heather Masters (Canterbury College School of Art 1932 to 1936)

Heather Masters noted that her designs and those of her peers were prepared as a portfolio for potential production. Louise Henderson took Heather Masters for design and some embroidery. She was "extremely exacting with embroidery designs". Students had to make up garments from patterns they had designed and cut themselves.[16]

To Heather Masters we owe the following snippets on Louise Henderson's



Reverend Doris Tutill, Lachenalia design, 1931; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand (photos: Karl Valpy, Christchurch)



Reverend Doris Tutill, Triangular design

teaching methodology and of the life of a talented student at the Canterbury College School of Art in the 1930s:

> In the very first class in watercolour and drawing, each student was given a branch or bloom, and were required to produce a work of specific dimensions. After that it varied, sometimes with free choice & sometimes a set piece.
>
> There was no teaching of botany, so the scientific angle wasn't explored. However, in Madam Henderson's design classes students were expected to extrapolate from nature & exercise imagination, creating works "like, yet not like" existing flowers.[17]

She didn't remember Doris Tutill or Julia Scarvel, but Florence Akins, Ivy Fife and Hilda McIntyre were names she did recall ... Hilda McIntyre, embroidery tutor, was also a "very good painter".[19]

Mr Johnstone took metal work. His classes were fun. Heather describes him as a very nice man, who was full of enthusiasm and encouragement. She created some beautiful items in his classes. ...

> The curriculum in pattern making and dress design was particularly full, and one couldn't keep up the regime of cutting and stitching without putting in a lot of extra time. ...

Senior pupils achieved the privilege of "mufti". So, after the first two years Heather enjoyed wearing the results of acquired skill. A little tweed suit is especially remembered. She became wonderfully adept in this field, working as a designer for Dovemeyer Robinson's Childswear firm in Auckland in her 20s.[20]

> Mum is quite definite that the female tutors were multi-talented, and

Reverend Doris Tutill, Circular design for appliqué hanging with two central-facing flamingoes[18]

Reverend Doris Tutill, Repeat fuchsia pattern in red-orange, green and cream on black

Heather Masters, Repeat flower design in red-orange with brown stems; Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington

Heather Masters, Blue bulbous flower repeat design with cream stems, green and orange on cream

Heather Masters,Tri-lobed design in orange, turquoise, and cream on black, 1934

Heather Masters, Art Deco design for The New Zealand Decorator

Heather Masters, Wilted poppy

Jane Mackenzie Masters (Heather Masters' mother) carved at night classes in Taihape (photo: Lyndsay Brock)

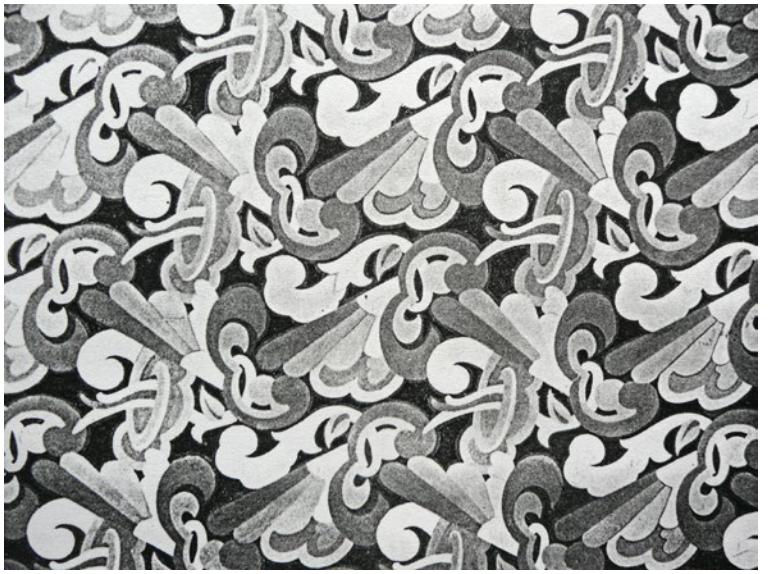
often quite fluid in their movement across disciplines, on occasion teaching classes outside their usual purview. Whether this was a case of simply relieving for another teacher, or taking a short module on a specific genre, topic or discipline is not clear. Anyway, to the point; Mum is 99% sure that Hilda McIntyre took a series of classes in "Landscape" ... She also recalls it was her habit to present her own personal prizes to students who excelled during the term. Mum received one, and, while happy to be chosen, she was disappointed that it involved receiving the gift of a very innocent children's story book (which she thought she was far too worldly-wise for).[21]

... pupils were expected to be fit in body as well as mind. This "body" beautiful philosophy had an influence on artistry as well. Heather and her sister Joyce used to take long camping trips, and each would pose for the other. There are some wonderful photographs, still in existence, of these lithe, slender women, bared to the elements and the beauties of nature.[22]

Part way through Heather's final year, her father unilaterally changed her fate again. She was abruptly withdrawn from school, shipped off to Miss Lillian Smith's boarding house in Devonport, and placed in a pre-arranged job in Auckland, drawing the catalogue for an underwear manufacturer.[23]

She was there for at least three years, working at a desk easel in a corner of the factory floor, and the wages were one pound a week ... This had to be subsidized with ten shillings sent from home to cover fares etc.

Her work was very exacting, as she had to reproduce details of lace patterns and place precisely, first so buyers would be able to order from



Aldwyn M. Jones, Furnishing textile; in Art in New Zealand (*Sep 1937), 46 ill*[24]

an accurate image, and secondly, so further batches could be produced as needed. She describes the work as "very boring", ...

Heather describes Sir Dovemeyer Robinson's (DR) Childswear factory as a very large upstairs workroom, over looking Queen Street. It was open plan, with huge long cutting tables. Staff included overlockers, machinists, pattern cutters and cloth cutters. She was the designer, taking over from DR's wife, also draughting patterns. Mrs DR did continue to produce a few designs after Mum's arrival, though Heather did all the draughting for the firm.

> Childswear, at that time, produced clothing for girls only, confining itself to day and party wear ... no coats or strict tailoring.
>
> Sir Dovemeyer was a long term friend & business acquaintance of my grandfather, and was always immensely kind to my mother. ...

Eileen Rose (O'Malley) ("Technical college teacher, embroiderer, silversmith and jeweller", 1930s)

Technical college teacher, embroiderer, silversmith and jeweller Eileen Rose produced a significant body of wallpaper designs ... Her perfectly executed flat design is structured within a geometric framework, with stylised naturalistic forms. The deer, trees and flowers generate a fluid rhythmic movement. Brighter colours affirm designs for the machine age. …

By the 1930s technical school industry training changed its attention from the need for personal fulfillment through hands-on activities to designs for mass production.[25]

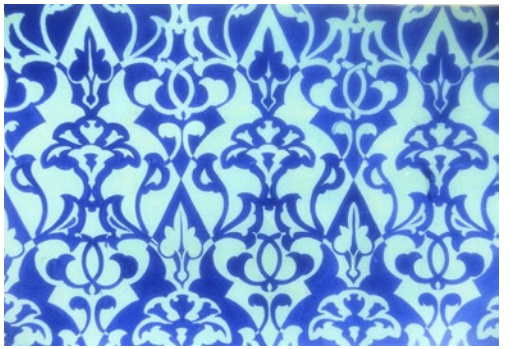
Eileen Rose (O'Malley), Wallpaper/textile design, 1930s; Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira (ref 2005-66-1(1).jpg and 2005-66-1-k.jpg)

Zelda Bedell (Paul) (Wellington Technical College 1934 to 1938, Canterbury College School of Art to 1940)

Mary Barrett (later Bensemann) (Canterbury College School of Art from 1932 while at Rangi Ruru)

Zelda Bedell (Paul), Design in red and green on tracing paper for transfer; Private collection (photo: Kristelle Plimmer)

Mary Barrett (Bensemann), Nature study; Private collection



Mary Barrett (Bensemann), Formal turquoise-blue repeat design; Private collection

Mary Barrett (Bensemann), Repeat abstract horsemen design; Private collection

Audrey Black
(Canterbury College School of Art early 1940s)
(also "Day", 163 ill)

Audrey Black's designs, early 1940s, acknowledge Morris's curving/trailing stems and the designs developed by Mackmurdo's Century Guild, early 1880s, and, importantly for New Zealand, the English commercial designer Lewis Day, through Florence Akins's design instruction at the Canterbury College School of Art.

Audrey Black, Protea flower head

Audrey Black, Repeat pattern in turquoise with shells, seaweed and fish

Audrey Black, Nature study; Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

Audrey Black, Repeat pattern in rose, white and dark blue

Audrey Black, Repeat pattern in dark maroon on dark pink

Peggy Hay (later Proffitt)
(Canterbury College School of Art 1943-48)

I went to the Armoury, where Johnny Johnstone reigned supreme and did a bit of metalwork, art metalwork. We sat around on high stools and a high table with cutouts and a leather apron in-between to take the shavings of silver. You always saved these little bits and pieces and you melted them down. You put the ingots in a cooler and you cooked the ingots until you got to wire. You made your own silver wire, which you can see in one of those coffee spoons I showed you. And we mixed up our own sterling silver to a recipe that Johnny had given us.

When we started off with a bowl ... we used copper, a cheaper metal in those days ...

We ground up glass to make the so-called oval stones, which we mounted on the pieces.

We did do jewellery with the sterling silver ... Johnny Johnstone did some beautiful stuff. He showed us one time a beautiful chalice he had made for one of the Christchurch churches and a platter. He brought it to us – to show his students. We were most impressed, I remember that. He was a lovely man, with a delightful chuckle and he had the patience of Job. I didn't realise until years and years later how valuable his teaching was and his sense of design, imparting it to us ...[26]

Peggy Hay (later Proffitt), Repeat pattern of leaping deer in blue and cream

Peggy Hay (later Proffitt), Children's wallpaper design; Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington

Peggy Hay (later Proffitt), Dress fabric close-up in purple and white

Shirley Ellis
(Wellington Technical Art School,
Palmerston North Technical High School,
Canterbury College School of Art from 1947)

Shirley Ellis majored "in craft and design under the instruction of Russell Clark, Ivy Fife, James Johnstone, Bill Sutton and Flo Akins – and it is due to her influence that I still pursue my love of weaving".[27]

Shirley Ellis, Small repeat pattern of birds and trees in red, blue, turquoise on purple; Private collection (photo: Ngarita Johnstone)

Shirley Ellis, Repeat pattern of grasshoppers and butterflies; Private collection (photo: Ngarita Johnstone)

ENDNOTES

1 See "Voysey", 188 ill
2 *Studio* VII/no35 (May 1896), 211
3 Ibid
4 Parry 1988, 34
5 Florence Akins interview, 4 Sep 1992
6 Letter from Chrystabel Aitken, 17 Mar 1993
7 Francis Shurrock "Life: Art" *Tomorrow: An independent fortnightly paper*, II (18 Mar 1936) no18, 30
8 Francis Shurrock "Labour" *Tomorrow: An independent fortnightly paper*, II (24 Jun 1936) no25 (sic26): 23, 24
9 See (NZ) "Botanical Art" 234 ill
10 The rest of this quote is found under "Issues", 119-20
11 Also see: pendant necklaces, in *Art in New Zealand* VII (Sep 1934) no, 84 ill, exhibited at the New Zealand Society of Artists Exhibition, Christchurch; and "Guilds", 133 ill, caption 129
12 *Art in NZ* VI (Jun 1934) no4, 191
13 Brown 1975, 55-6
14 *Art in New Zealand* XIV (Sep 1941) no1, 37-8: 38
15 Interview with Reverend Doris Tutill, 15 May 2003
16 Note from Lynsay Brock, Heather Master's daughter, 12 Mar 2007
17 Lyndsay Brock email, 15 January 2008
18 See Calhoun 2000, 189 ill, for completed hanging
19 Lyndsay Brock email, 21 Mar 2007
20 Lyndsay Brock letter, Apr 2004
21 Lyndsay Brock email, 3 Apr 2007
22 Lyndsay Brock letter, Apr 2004
23 Ibid
24 Also see Calhoun 2000, 191
25 Louis Le Vaillant *NZ design and decorative arts, from the collection of Auckland Museum* exhibition catalogue 2006, 19
26 Peggy Proffitt interview, 1 Sep 2002; Peggy Hay on colour, see "Publications", 150 ill caption
27 See Shirley Ellis "biography", 320

The legacy

From 2002, William (Bill) Toomath, New Zealand architect, design educator and advocate, designed and built a study in his Wellington hillside home based on the fifteenth-century painting St Jerome in His Study *by Antonello da Messina. Toomath's recreated study celebrates the beauty and quality of earlier design and architecture. The photograph shows Bill in his study and was shown in the Massey University "125 Exhibition", 2011 (curated by Luit Bieringa). Compare with A.W.N. Pugin's illustrated title page for his 1844 Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume, 24 ill. (Jim Simmons, photographer, for Tony Hiles, City Associates Films, for the documentary* Antonello and the Architect, *2007)*

Herbert Read, in *Art and Industry* (1934), quoted Walter Gropius, at that point fleeing Nazi Germany, after turning the Bauhaus into the most progressive school of design internationally:

> Handicrafts are now changing their traditional nature. In future their field will be in research work for industrial production and in speculative experiments in laboratory-workshops where the preparatory work of evolving and perfecting new type-forms will be done.[1]

John Simpson, James Johnstone's replacement at the Canterbury College School of Art in 1958, noted the failure of Britain and her diaspora to heed Walter Gropius and Herbert Read on art and the machine:

> The real distinction has to be made between machine art and handwork reproduced by machine ... Machine art recognises the qualities, characteristics and the limitations of the machine as a tool, not as a reproductive agency. That's the distinction.
>
> ... I worked quite closely with Herbert Read, Sir Herbert Read. For me, he was my guru. And my bible was *Art and Industry*, published by Faber.[2]

For Simpson, Read also put paid to "ornament" while understanding the value of Arts & Crafts ideals:

> The machine [at the time of the Great Exhibition of 1851] was an instrument for recreating cheaply, initially very badly, the great voices of the past ... It's based on a fatal fallacy. The great works of the past were highly decorated with the most magnificent skilled ornament simply to reflect the social status and power of the person who employed the makers ... That's the whole basis of ornament. It is the unnecessary, the gratuitous, pouring in of skill and energy and rare, rare talent into an object so that the person who has that object is distinguished from every other person, because no one else had that object. The idea of suddenly making hundreds of "exact copies" of that object is nonsense because the whole basis of it is that it should be rare.
>
> The idea at the Bauhaus was to make things by machine, using the machine as a tool, not as a gramophone. Factories shouldn't be giant gramophones producing "exact" copies of works of the past. That's the crunch.[3]

The necessary acknowledgement of the needs of industry quietly arrived and *Art in New Zealand* included informed articles urging updated ideas:

E.C. Simpson, "The Artist as Designer: Industrial design the characteristic art of the 20th century", Art in New Zealand, *December 1937:*

"What is Industrial Design?"

> The most important manifestation of art at the present day is the world-wide movement to enlist the hand and brain of the artist in the guidance and direction of the mass-produced machine-made manufacture.[4]

Seemingly the Arts and Crafts had been bypassed but E.C. Simpson's definition of the new style contains much that belongs to the earlier movement. What had been banished was the use of abstract-nature-based designs. Another *Art in New Zealand* article, R.N. Field ("Art

and the Public – Design", September 1941) disposed of the view that "pure functionalism ... gives rise to the aesthetic ipso facto"; Field then disposed of nature as a desirable source of design motifs:

> It is this power of design that modern art has rediscovered and emphasised, and nature very rarely offers us more than a suggestion in this direction, plus a mass of somewhat irrelevant raw material.
>
> Modern art in general has stripped art bare of incidents in an endeavour to probe the depths the significance of form.[5]

Dr Clarence E. Beeby, from the early 1940s was the individual most responsible for initiating art and craft classes in New Zealand's primary and secondary schools. A.R.D. Fairburn on "Arts and Crafts in the Schools: A view of aesthetic education" in *The Arts in New Zealand* (April-May 1945) wrote of Dr Beeby's understandable caution over "the methods and scope of the teaching of art and crafts in the schools" of New Zealand.

In words which could be those of Henry Cole as he established the South Kensington art and design education system in 1852, Fairburn said:

> It is true enough that while the Royal College turns out a number of fine painters and sculptors each year, industrial design in England remains on the whole at a fairly low level, and the taste of the general public both in works of art and in furniture and fabrics is utterly barbarous.

He added:

> It is good that an electric iron or a kitchen range should be designed with some regard for the principles of design that are inherent in the best traditional painting and sculpture; but I feel we shall be on dangerous ground if we begin to judge the great works of painting and sculpture according to principles worked out in the course of designing a good-looking iron or range.[6]

Fairburn words spell-out the inability of the "Arts & Crafts" to explain its mission to the world; the movement had sought to enrich – to add a spiritual (a transcedental) dimension to – the lives of "the people" by introducing Nature/Beauty/Art into the work of making and using the necessaries and extras of modern life. The worker's world by Fairburn's definition was still limited: it might be commendable to make "applied art" but "fine art" was still in another world, a world only accessible to those trained to have taste. The Arts and Crafts movement, at its zenith, as put by Jessie Newbery[7], believed that:

> ... nothing is common or unclean and that the *design* of a pepper pot is as important, in its degree, as the conception of a cathedral."[8];

she added:

> I believe in everything being beautiful, pleasant, and, if need be, useful.

The proletariat would be free to imbibe "Beauty" – through beauty or "work as art" lives might begin to be mended.[9]

Dr Beeby was New Zealand's Director General of Education from 1940 to 1960 and took "arts and crafts" instruction in New Zealand in a necessary revitalised direction. In the preface to a tributary exhibition catalogue (1992) Beeby stated: "In the 1940's New Zealand became one of the first countries in the world to make art and crafts compulsory

subjects in the curricula of all its schools." The art specialists employed under the scheme "taught a whole generation of New Zealanders to discover the deep satisfaction that comes from creating something of beauty, however simple, with their hands".[10]

Under Beeby's mandate, Gordon Tovey was appointed National Supervisor of Art and Crafts (1946 to 1966). The service by the end of the 1950s included Maori Art Specialists. A Pataka Porirua, Wellington, exhibition recognised "Tovey and the Tovey generation" (3 March-16 May 1996): in his catalogue essay, Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, himself an Advisor under Tovey, recalled the major artists fostered by the scheme and its importance for contemporary Maori Art; Cliff Whiting recalled "The period with Gordon Tovey was a vital one, very vital, quite tremendous actually"; Arnold Wilson said "It was Tovey who was the light, who really opened out the whole field, and we fitted into the big opening he made"; Muru Walters recalled "Our fledgling years owed much to Gordon Tovey."[11] Tovey, as Luit Beiringa notes, had "an early interest in Maori and Pacific Island art" and in 1949 Tovey was asked "to write an art scheme for the Cook Islands and Western Samoa. In many ways the very fine *Art and Craft for the South Pacific* publication, a result of his visit to the islands, is the precursor of similar publications produced on Maori art in the early sixties."[12]

The Arts & Crafts movement in New Zealand did not arise out of abhorrence with the effects of the Industrial Revolution, but there was a climate of opinion in which an Arts & Crafts movement could prosper. The spirit of the movement lasted in New Zealand for decades after WWII. The movement in New Zealand received a significant boost from European immigrants to New Zealand from the 1930s who brought with them knowledge of Bauhaus practice; the effect should be seen as a worthy parallel to the export of British Arts & Crafts ideals and exemplars to the Continent in the early years of the twentieth-century. From this mix of sources, New Zealanders created further arts and crafts movements: whatever the medium pursued, these movements each taught lessons about the beauty of the here-and-now, of life lived to its fullest.

E.A. Plishke, an Austrian architect, one of many vital new-New Zealanders, authored *Design and Living*, 1947.[13] Plishke does not use the words "Arts & Crafts"; if used, they would have sounded obsolete, although Arts & Crafts ideals are so clearly present. For immigrants like Plishke, the British Arts & Crafts movement was translated through Continental experience to have relevance in post-WWII New Zealand.

E.A. Plishke, Design and Living, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, New Zealand, 1947

> This booklet is an attempt to show that we of the twentieth century can live our ordinary lives in an environment properly designed for the purpose – if only we wish to do so. Design is important: we can live better with design than without it. Design is not something fancy. In writing I have tried to make it plain that the design of a good chair, a good house or a good town must work well, and must use the most suitable materials and construction, but that both of these qualities must be a real, "organic" part of some creative conception. Without this a design can never convey a lasting satisfaction.
>
> The utilitarian and the aesthetic approaches to planning are not fundamentally opposed. The difference is one of emphasis only. ...

> A well designed chair of today and a fine town of five hundred years ago have in common this fundamental characteristic of creative quality. So that the early remarks in this booklet, about the design of a chair, can equally well be applied when, at the end, we come to plan a town.[14]

Plishke set out his personal thesis on life and living: for him, … Work became art and art became work …[15], Lethaby's priority:

> The industrial revolution of the last century brought a new change ... The new but powerful middle class assumed privileges and amenities reserved up till then for a much smaller part of the community. But the new prosperity did not mean a recovery of the standard of living for the craftsman (we have mentioned the decay of his social standing from the Middle Ages onwards), so that when the industrial period began his humble place in society was accepted as a matter of course; and as machinery was improved, making his skill superfluous, his position deteriorated still further. ...
>
> However, the [William Morris and John Ruskin] purification movement did not have creative vision forceful enough or far-seeing enough to accept the machine as a new and useful tool ... they ... decided that the machine was altogether evil. This hopeless attitude in the face of a new reality delayed the growth of creative artistic activity, ...
>
> Industrial design in our sense really started only after the end of the first Great War. Mass-production is the chief characteristic of modern industry. Therefore the great masses of consumers are the determining factor in industrial design. Their needs and taste are bound to have a strong influence on the kind and taste and quality of manufactured products. So we must infer that the products of the machine are very largely a democratic expression of the artistic level of our time. ...
>
> I pointed out that our modern towns show an apparent absence of a communal structure and focus ... But the newly awakening social consciousness of our time justifies at least the hope for a more organic co-ordination and relationship among the different groups that make up our society. Philosophy and art, as well as the science, could deepen our understanding of the world we are part of: and architecture, painting, sculpture, and music could once again dignify the way we live.[16]

ENDNOTES

1 Gropius "The Formal and Technical Problems of Modern Architecture and Planning", *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 19 May 1934, 682, in Read 1934, 40
2 Interview with Professor John Simpson, 14 May 2003, 13
3 Ibid
4 E.C. Simpson "The Artist as Designer: Industrial design the characteristic art of the 20th century", *Art in New Zealand* X (Dec 1937) no2, 81
5 R.N. Field "Art and the Public – Design", *Art in New Zealand* XIV (Sep 1941) no1, 39-40: 39, 40
6 A.R.D. Fairburn "Arts and Crafts in the Schools: A view of aesthetic education", *The Arts in New Zealand* Apr-May 1945, 9-12, 32-6: 10
7 Refer to Jessie Newbery, 6, 195-7
8 *Studio* XII/no55 (Oct 1898), 48
9 Refer to "Preface", 5-6
10 *Beeby: The Enlightened Years* New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, Wellington, exhibition catalogue Jul-Aug 1992, "Preface", 9
11 Quoted by Jonathan Mane-Wheoki in *Tovey and the Tovey Generation* 1996, 2
12 *Tovey* 1996, 8-9
13 Illustrated Michael Smythe *New Zealand By Design: A history of New Zealand product design* 2011, 112 ill
14 Plishke 1947, 1 note
15 Ibid 8
16 Ibid 23-4, 24, 25, 92

New Zealand Arts & Crafts biographies

Participants in the New Zealand Arts & Crafts movement are divided into first, second and third generation practitioners, each generation broadly based on Arts & Crafts developments in New Zealand. Canterbury College School of Art student records from 1921 to 1946 are missing, destroyed by a fire. Full biographies are therefore often reliant on family memories, the receipt of which has been a singular honour and a matter of trust.

1st generation: 1870-1906

2nd generation: 1906-1920

3rd generation: 1920-1960

Aitken, Chrystabel (later McArthur) **(3rd generation**) was born in Southland in 1904. She attended the Canterbury College School of Art from 1921, gaining elementary, intermediate and senior scholarships. In 1924, she obtained an Advanced Day Scholarship and, in 1924 and 1925, Modelling Scholarships. From 1926, she assisted Francis Shurrock with junior modelling classes. In 1930, she received the first School Medal for Special Excellence in Modelling. Chrystabel Aitken and Alison Duff were part of a group designing, modelling and carving pieces and panels for the 1939-40 New Zealand Centennial Exhibition in Wellington. She is also known for her distinguished art metalwork, as well as her portraits, still lifes, landscapes, prints and leatherwork.[1] She died aged 100 in January 2005.

Akins, Florence (Flo) (3rd generation) was born in Christchurch in 1906 and attended the Canterbury College School of Art under government junior and senior free-place provisions for a total of five years, followed by scholarships. Florence Akins was appointed to the Canterbury College School of Art part-time staff in 1927, teaching drawing and junior and first year design, including plant form design. In 1929 she obtained the Student Medal for General Excellence in drawing and painting, and in 1930 her diploma.[2] She taught full time from 1936 to 1966, retiring in 1969. Singularly important, she established a course in woven textiles in the mid-1940s: her abilities and passionate teaching style were precursors to the 1970s weaving and tapestry arts renaissance. Florence Akins died on 18 October 2012, aged 106.

Atkinson, Alfred[3] "Prior to the First World War Alfred divided his time between working as a dental technician and being a jeweller and craftsman in metal".[4] "Alfred was an art metalworker in the true sense of the word. His oeuvre encompasses a range from delicate and intricate jewellery set with cabochon cut stones and carved paua shell to domestic ware such as biscuit barrels, tea caddies and lolly tins, flatware from servers to teaspoons and some spectacular lamps made from beaten brass."[5] "Alfred Atkinson was a surveyor, who became a dentist who took up metalwork as a hobby. Yet this hobby became his legacy, his gift to the future."[6]

Barrett, Mary (later Bensemann) **(3rd generation)** was born in Hawera in 1914, and attended Southland Girls' High School. In Christchurch, she studied modelling with Chrystabel Aitken at the Canterbury College School of Art while attending Rangi Ruru. Subsequently, at the Canterbury College School of Art she studied modelling and sculpture with Francis Shurrock, design and perspective with Florence Akins, geometrical drawing with Archibald Nicoll and Herbert Horridge, and artcraft with James Johnstone.[7] She became a skilled photographer and gifted a collection of her photographs to the Canterbury College School of Art Archival Collection. After training, she made shop dress models. She remained a close friend and helpmate for Chrystabel Aitken. She died on 23 September 2005 and is survived by three children.

Bascand, Audrey (born Gabites) **(3rd generation)** attended the Canterbury College School of Art from 1948 to 1952, graduating in 1952, studying design, majoring in art metalwork. She subsequently taught arts and crafts, worked as a commercial artist for Lane Walker Rudkin in Christchurch for two years, illustrated four books, and exhibited in various media.[8] In Dunedin from 1968, she is especially regarded for her etchings. She has three children.

Beath, Katherine (Kate) (later McDougall) **(3rd generation)** was born in Christchurch in 1882, and attended the Canterbury College School of Art from 1899 to 1904.[10] She appears to have obtained her teaching qualifications. She was articled to the Christchurch architect Samuel Hurst Seager from early 1905 to 1908. For Christmas 1905, Seager gave her Lewis Day's *Windows: A book about stained and painted glass* (London 1897). In 1907 she received a first class pass in Stage 1 "Building Construction and Drawing". Seager's testimonial (of 3 June 1908) talked of "the talent she undoubtedly possesses". Extant drawings include working drawings for a house at 255 Gloucester Street, Christchurch. There are also eight sketch stencil logos for the Canterbury College School of Art Arts & Crafts Guild, started at the Christchurch school in 1906 by Robert Herdman Smith.

Leaving New Zealand on 5 March 1908, she toured Britain and the Continent, her travels commented on in letters exchanged with Seager, the latter providing advice on what to see and how to look.[11] Probably seeking training for a possible career, she attended the John Hassall School of Art in London; Hassall was an illustrator, cartoonist and poster artist.[12] Her absence was noted in the Canterbury College School of Art Guild magazine, *The Paint Rag*. Architecture was still not an option, even for a talented draughtswoman.

Bedell, Zelda (later Paul) **(3rd generation)** attended Wellington Technical College 1934 to 1938, then transferred to the Canterbury College School of Art craft and design diploma course, completing the course in 1940.[9] She raised five children. She has been closely involved with the Tokoroa Art Society, and was awarded a Queen's Service Medal in 1985 and a Zonta award for her encouragement of the arts in Tokaroa.

Black, Audrey (later Prouse) **(3rd generation)** was born in 1919. She attended Palmerston North Technical High School, then took the Canterbury College School of Art diploma course in the early 1940s, graduating in May 1943.[13]

Blair, David (1st generation) was born in 1852 in Dundee, Scotland. Graeme Chalmers in "Whatever Happened to David Blair?" supplies the answers: Blair age 13 was apprenticed to Thomas Brassey's (later the Earl

of Birkenhead's) Canada Engineering Works where he was a draughtsman for three and a half years, spent time in the erecting shop, and a year in the pattern shop. He attended evening classes at the Birkenhead School of Art. He obtained a scholarship and in London gained his South Kensington Art Master's Certificate. He held two positions, one of them teaching drawing. He became a South Kensington Examiner in Art in 1880 and made "wood engravings and lithographs for the Linnean Society", becoming a Fellow in 1878, and illustrating three books on botany. In New Zealand he was an illustrator for Thomas Kirk's *The Forest Fauna of New Zealand* (1889).[14] Blair seems to have been appointed to head the new Canterbury College School of Art in 1882 as much for his technical background, the school established to train potential artisans and tradesmen for futures in trade and manufacture.[15] He resigned in 1886, after an unproven charge of indecency, and seems to have become "an itinerant Art Master". He became Headmaster of the Wanganui Technical School from 1892 to 1899; the school became affiliated to South Kensington. Blair was involved in setting the primary school drawing syllabus. Blair moved to Victoria, Canada, and taught drawing until 1910. He died in 1925.[16]

Broome, Florence (1st generation) trained and prospered at the Wellington school and subsequently claimed that Riley had taught her all she knew of decorative design.[17]

In 1896 Florence received a prize for design in the South Kensington exams, making the school the only school in the Australasian colonies to receive a prize in the "national" competitions. In that year, for instance, 47,978 works were submitted to the South Kensington Science and Art Department from 269 schools throughout the United Kingdom and its colonies. Only 4,044 works were chosen for the "national" competition.[18] Local recognition of Florence's talents as a designer appear in a prize of £3 awarded by Messrs Manning and Co, Brewers, of Christchurch, for the best bottle-label. From 1898 to 1900 Florence was on the staff of the Technical School and illustrated *Brush work for Schools*, the book said to have been distributed in New Zealand, the United States and England.[19]

Of Florence's design work in the 1900 New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts annual exhibition, the *New Zealand Times* enthused that "One of the features of this year's collection is Miss Broome's superb specimens of decorative work. Nothing finer than the conception and expression of the figures in her designs this year has been seen within the four walls of the gallery for a long time" and Christabel in her "Social Gossip"column in the *NZ Free Lance* declared that every one of Miss Broome's designs had been sold "before it was hung and several people were heard bemoaning their ill-luck in not securing one."[20]

By 1901 her local stature and the recent loss of her only brother in the Boer War were sufficient for her absence in England to be remembered on the front page of the *NZ Free Lance*:

> The decision of the Education Board to invite applications from Home for the post of instructor in the Technical School recalls the fact that Miss Broome has dropped quietly out of our life. That is just like the little lady, who went about her duties in the quietest of quiet manners. She had the honour of graduating from a pupilship to an instructorship in the school, and was particularly clever in designing. Yet no one ever charged her with being a designing miss! She was absorbed in her work, and was practically Wellington's only amateur poster designer to get the honor of printing and being "stuck" upon the hoardings.[21]

Her mother's health forced Florence to resign from the staff of the Wellington Technical School and remain in England. Frances Hodgkins found one of Florence's designs at the Institute of Water Colours: "good – and well hung – the only thing of its kind in the gallery". Florence attended the Slade but work was hard to get, for, as reported by Frances Hodgkins, "decorative work is such a terribly overstocked line, as is everything else."[22] None of her designs have been found.

Buckhurst sisters, Anne (Annie) and Catherine (Katie) (2nd generation) and their sisters Stephanie and Marie, all attended the Canterbury College School of Art. Annie and Katie trained in art metalwork and became tutors. Annie, the fifth child, born in 1893, started at the Canterbury College School of Art in 1910, tutored principally by Frederick Gurnsey and would most likely have attended the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition, where she could have seen the best current British Arts & Crafts, as well as Biddy Waymouth's work. At the Canterbury College School of Art she received prizes and scholarships in art metalwork and embroidery (including appliqué) and for her advanced plant-form designs.[23] Eight items were included in the 1912 Auckland Arts & Crafts Club exhibition.[24] She replaced Frederick Gurnsey as the metalwork tutor in 1917 when he was acting Canterbury College School of Art director, resigning when she married in 1921. Annie taught Katie enamelling and metalwork: Katie taught metalcrafts part-time until James Johnstone's took up his Canterbury College School of Art position. In 1926 Katie visited France and acquired a small white oblong kiln for firing enamelled pieces. A studio in the back garden of the family home in Cashel Street was used as a sales outlet for art jewellery, pewter work, repoussé work and marquetry, and for classes.[25]

Caygill, Mabel and Maud (3rd generation) The sisters are believed to have studied metalwork with James Johnston between the late 1920s and 1940s.[26]

Chapman-Taylor, James Walter (2nd & 3rd generation) The major text on Chapman-Taylor (1878-1958) is Judy Siers *The Life and Times of James Walter Chapman-Taylor* (Millwood Heritage Productions, 2007). Dislike of any form of mechanisation became for Chapman-Taylor a devotion to materials used in their natural state and a dislike of ornament not created by hand. This was a key to the work of English-born New Zealand architect and artist-craftsman Chapman-Taylor, working in the tradition established in the English Cotswolds by Ernest Gimson and Sidney Barnsley, the latter "even chopping up his logs of wood himself".[27] For Chapman-Taylor: "The craftsman will leave no stone unturned in his search for truth. He will be a seeker all his life …".[28] He recalled in 1933:

> It has been pointed out to me that to use whole trees for beams squared up with axe and adze; to use hand wrought iron hinges and latches, small panes of glass instead of large, and hand made fittings instead of factory made, etc is going back to a past age! Well now, is it really? … All honour to the factory made article in its proper place. [29]

Collins, Alice Beville (later Millar) **(2nd generation)** She obtained draughting skills in her father's architectural office, then attended the Canterbury College School of Art from 1910, where she became a successful art metalworker and enameller.[30]

Collier, Edith (2nd generation) attended Wanganui Technical College from 1903-12. The art master was David Edward Hutton,[31] recalling that Hutton had been teaching with his father David Con Hutton after

the Dunedin school's name had changed to the School of Art & Design and teaching became specifically directed to plant-based design.[32] After time overseas she became a nationally recognized for her portraits and landscapes.[33]

Edgar, Joan (3rd generation) completed her Canterbury College School of Art Diploma in Design and Artcraft in the late 1930s.[34] She taught art at Woodford House. Later, as well as teaching, she designed Axminster carpets for a period. She said, referring to art society sales in the 1930s, "If you sold a work for five guineas, even for three guineas, it was a lot of money and went a long way." She died after being injured in a car accident in 2004.

Eise, Ida (2nd generation) trained at Elam in Auckland between 1909 and 1915, studying for her South Kensington design exams in 1912, 1913 and 1914; in 1914 she and Miss E.E. Wood "received their art class teacher's certificates from the Board of Education, London". When Ida left the school the annual report noted that her work had "been excellent alike in the fine and applied art" and "will be much missed".[35] She moved to the New Plymouth Technical College "to reorganise the art class and organise a crafts department of enamelling, copper and silver work" and "in addition to her school students, took adult classes in the later afternoons and at night".[36] She rejoined the Elam staff in 1919.

Ida Eise's designs are now held by the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington,[37] including "Fuchsia: Drawn Direct from Nature", 1912;[38] and "Puriri (Vitex Littoralis): Native of New Zealand", 1912.[39]

Elliott, George Herbert (1st generation) "The master, finding the work of the school increasing, applied for assistance, and the Board, desirous of making the school thoroughly efficient, appointed Mr G.H. Elliott, who holds a certificate from the National Art Training School, South Kensington".[40] With David Blair's departure, Elliott was Head Master from 1886 to 1905. He was listed in the 1894 Canterbury College School of Art Prospectus as "Art Master and Gold and Silver Medallist in the National Competition, South Kensington, London; late Second Master School of Art, Bradford Grammar School". He was a steady hand at the Canterbury College School of Art and vitally important to the introduction of British-based plant form design instruction from 1899. He resigned in 1906 and became head of art at Palmerston North Technical School.

Ellis, Joseph (2nd generation), "King's Prizeman of the Belfast College of Art, was appointed in 1908, having been selected by Professor Lethaby from a large number of candidates for the position of instructor in modelling, modelling design and carving in wood and stone. In addition to his Technical School teaching, Mr Ellis conducted very popular classes at the Wellington Boys' and Girls' Colleges."[41]

Ellis, Shirley (3rd generation) took her Fine Arts Preliminary Diploma at the Wellington Technical Art School "under the watchful eye of Freddie Ellis with Nugent Welch as the landscape tutor". She had a short period in Palmerston North tutored by H. Linley Richardson. At 18, during WWI, she was conscripted, working in the draughting office at the Herd Street Post Office in Wellington. Finally, in 1947 she attended the Canterbury College School of Art and obtained her Diploma of Fine Arts, "majoring in craft and design" with Russell Clark, Ivy Fife, James Johnstone, Bill Sutton and Flo Akins – "it is due to her [Flo's] influence that I still pursue my love of weaving".[42]

Field, R N (3rd generation) Born Bromley, Kent, England 1899. Studied Royal College of Art, London 1918-23. Arrived in New Zealand 1925 to teach art at Dunedin Technical College. Visited England 1933-4. Returned to Dunedin. Appointed Head of Art Department, Avondale College, Auckland 1945. Retired 1960.[43] Appointed under the La Trobe scheme, Field and his wife later recalled:

> We bought out Edward Johnston's manual of Roman sculpture and lettering, which is absolutely perfect ... Roman type, beautiful lettering ... The Times of London started it off, didn't they? ... This was a terrific standard of taste you know, to study the Roman alphabet puts you off all sorts of type Because you had been a student of Edward Johnston's ... That was why, no doubt, why Mr La Trobe was so interested ... Might be, and of course it was a great privilege for us to sit there with Edward Johnston. He spent his life, I think, pretty well drawing from the Roman numerals, well not the Roman numerals, actual letters, and he made a very good, an excellent job of it.
>
> And I think that it was La Trobe that backed us up in that ... And the other point, while I think of it, is, when we were in England, we came across the colour developments, colour theories, one was called the Ostwald Colour Theory, and it was a big advance on the three colour theory, red, blue and yellow ... You know, all of a sudden cars became beautifully coloured and colour came into its own. And I think that had a very big influence on us.[44]
>
> I remember trying to teach these youngsters Clive Bell's *Significant Form*. [1914][45]
>
> ... he [La Trobe] was definitely encouraging ... a creative type of person, and he could see that we were trying to do something ... and we were unusual ... we weren't adopting any standard approach or anything like that. But of course we taught drawing ... We had a life class and an antique class ... we weren't bound by it ... People learnt the technique of using materials and tools and things ... they developed fairly individually for the most part and those that had talent, it came out.
>
> But, when I went back to England, I went and visited my former principal and professor, Sir William Rothenstein.[46]

Fisher, A.J.C. (3rd generation) Fisher was trained at the Birmingham Municipal School of Art and the Royal College of Art. Fisher stressed "three-dimensional constructional draughtsmanship":[47]

> I regard this problem of draughtsmanship as the power to produce the illusion of a third dimension on a flat surface; in other words, to give an illusion of solidity.[48]

Fraser, Alexander R. (2nd generation), a graduate of Heriot-Watt College in Edinburgh, succeeded W.H. Bennett as the instructor in woodcarving at the Wellington school in 1902.[49] He "implanted in his students a sound knowledge of design and craftsmanship".[50] Fraser and Herdman Smith jointly exhibited repoussé metalwork at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts exhibition in 1902: frames, finger plates and trays.[51]

Gurnsey, Frederick George (2nd generation) was born in Wales in 1868. He was apprenticed and worked in Exeter for Anglo-Catholic Harry Hems, "who ran one of the most prolific ecclesiastical workshops in Victorian England", the firm carving in a "crisply self-confident" Gothic

Revival style. Further training included time at the Central School of Arts & Crafts in London and the School of Applied Art in Edinburgh.[52] For a short period he tutored at the Norwich School of Art and Craft. He settled in Christchurch in 1907 and became one of the essential building blocks of the Arts & Crafts in New Zealand. From a foundation of applied art teaching at the Canterbury College School of Art and the enthusiasms aroused by the 1906-7 International Exhibition in Christchurch, Gurnsey, with the Director Robert Herdman Smith, established a block of applied art courses the equal of any in Britain: carving, modelling, casting, enamelling and metalwork. He acted as Canterbury College School of Art acting director between 1917 and 1920. He resigned and became a professional woodcarver in 1923. He died in 1953.[53]

Harris, Marjorie (Horridge) **(2nd generation)** may turn out to have been one of the more important second generation of teachers at the Canterbury College School of Art. She won a rare State School Scholarship for Girls in 1905, a first class pass for a Design Day student in 1905, and an applied art scholarship in 1909 (trained by Frederick Gurnsey). In 1914 she shared an excellent pass in Advanced Plant Form with Annie Buckhurst for her art teacher's diploma, the same year winning the Applied Art Scholarship of £25 and medal. In 1915 she passed drawing from plant form, advanced, and again took the £25 Applied Art Scholarship and medal. By 1919, when the annual Canterbury Society of Arts exhibition included a beaten brass electric lamp by the artist, she was teaching Florence Atkins plant form design. From these beginnings, Florence Atkins taught plant form design at the art school for the rest of her career.

Hawcridge, Robert (2nd generation), an artist-designer with Coulls Somerville Wilkie since 1889.[54] The cover designer of the Otago Art Society exhibition catalogue for many years, Hawcridge was appointed to head the Dunedin School of Art in 1909.[55] In 1911, he gave lectures on 'The Principles and Practice of Design'.[56] By 1913, the Arts & Crafts department of the Dunedin school was equipped to teach design, modelling, wood and stone carving, art needlework, and stencilling.[57]

In 1913 Hawcridge appointed Nelson Isaac as his assistant, "a brilliant young craftsman ... whose all-round training in art combined with his special knowledge and talent in modelling and the art crafts renders the prospects of the successful development of this department most helpful".[58] Isaac was the son of technical school inspector E.C. Isaac. Hawcridge died in 1919, and efforts to bring the school into line with other technical schools led to falling rolls and the effective demise of the school.[59]

Hay, Peggy (later Proffitt) **(3rd generation)** spent from 1943 to 1948 at the Canterbury College School of Art, taking the craft and design option, studying principally with "Johnny" Johnstone, specializing in art metalwork and jewellery. Examples of her distinctive handblocked wallpaper and clothes made from handblocked fabric are in the Te Papa collection.[60]

Henderson, Louise (3rd generation) was born Louise Sauze in 1902; her father and grandfather both held prestigious positions in the arts in France. After basic training that entitled her to teach in French primary schools, she attended a school of industrial design in Paris, graduating as a designer in 1921. As Elizabeth Grierson records in her MA on the artist:

> Her basic skills and interest in design later became manifest in her concern for structure and arrangement of colour and form in paintings, fabrics and textile work. This focus was also evident in her work, as a teacher of design and embroidery in Christchurch and Wellington.[61]

After marrying by proxy, she came to New Zealand in 1925. She was a part-time Canterbury College School of Art instructor in embroidery and design from February 1926 to December 1941, "one night a week at first, then extended to 17 hours a week".[62] She received an honorary Canterbury College School of Art diploma in fine arts in 1931. Her students tell of her far-reaching influence on their designs.[63]

Louise Henderson, Joan Edgar recalled, brought panels with her from France.[64] Louise introduced a professional approach to embroidery and design, and prepared a history of embroidery, later used by the Department of Education.

> She ... changed the emphasis in the course from teaching domestic embroidery on petticoats and nightgowns to an intensive study of traditional methods of gold-stitch church and medieval embroidery; using the example of the Bayeux tapestry.[65]

Heather Masters (Canterbury College School of Art 1932-6) recalled Louise Henderson:

> Madame Henderson taught design and embroidery. Heather describes her as a dark haired, vivacious little French woman with a fairly strong accent. Madame was very stern and brooked no nonsense. She required your best, and appeared to achieve it, as the designs produced by her students are quite extraordinary. In embroidery, precise, to scale, design was required. The pattern had to be perfectly drafted before any work could proceed. Many of the designs were art works in their own rights. "Broderie Anglaise" is remembered as especially exacting. (from Lyndsay Brock letter, April 2004, passed on by her mother)

The artist said: "It was important that students should realize that embroidery was not only a matter of domestic garments, but also had a significant historical use and application".[66] "She was", recalled Florence Akins, "a delightful person to have on the staff".[67] Louise Henderson urged everyone, as she wrote, "to create things excellent in themselves through their fitness to their purpose, and the charm of their originality".[68] In Wellington from 1941 to 1944 she established a course in needlework and embroidery for the New Zealand Correspondence School. Much of her work from the late 1940s involved, as noted by Elizabeth Grierson, "[h]er remarkable command of modernist ideas and cubist principles" in "oil on canvas and paper, tempera on board and works on glass".[69] She died in 1994.[70]

Herdman Smith, Robert (2nd generation), a South Kensington graduate, had been art master at Leeds School of Art and had taught at Bath Municipal School of Art. In the 1914 Canterbury College School of Art Syllabus, Herdman Smith was listed as: "FSAM Eng, International Silver Medallist, Paris (Design), National Silver Medallist, London (Figure, Modelling, Design), National Bronze Medallist, London (History of Ornament), Queen's Prizeman, London." He was appointed to the Wellington school in 1902:

> The work generally in these classes [Art section] has been considerably strengthened by the appointment of Mr Herdman Smith, late of the

> Bath School of Art, to the design and modelling sections of the Art School ... The advantages of modelling are slowly being recognised as a means of obtaining a knowledge of forms, without which success is unobtainable. Black-and-white work for illustrative purposes has been a very prominent feature of the school's work during the year.[71]

Herdman Smith and Alexander Fraser exhibited jointly at the local art society exhibition in 1902.

Herdman Smith was appointed to head the Canterbury College School of Art in 1906, resigning 1917. On appointment, he immediately established a Guild of Arts and Crafts, with over 200 members, many ex-students.[72] There were lectures and demonstrations by "well-known artists and craftsmen" to encourage members.[73] The annual report for 1908 stencilling contained trade implications: "Good work has been done in sign-writing and decorating, especially in stencilled decoration and three-tone painting and poster work."[74] In 1909 Herdman Smith travelled overseas, including visits to the Central School of Arts and Crafts and Royal College of Art in London.[75]

Hutton, David Con (1st generation): The first drawing school opened New Zealand in 1870 (the Otago School of Art in Dunedin) under the Provincial Drawing Master David Con Hutton. Born 1843 in Dundee, Scotland, a student of Dundee School of Art, Con Hutton gained his South Kensington Art Master's Certificate at 21. He would have progressed through the new Henry Cole/Richard Redgrave training system and may also have had contact with the teaching cards prepared by Christopher Dresser. He was Art Master at the Perth (Scotland) School of Art for five years, before being selected for the Dunedin post in 1869.[76] Nellie Hutton, Con Hutton's daughter, taught at the school, as did Hutton's son David Edward.[77]

Hutton, David Edward (2nd generation), son of David Con, was first assistant to his father at the Dunedin School of Art from 1882 to 1898 (School of Art and Design from 1894); and Director and Art Master at Wanganui Technical School (and district schools) from 1899 to 1908, as recorded by his daughter. He left New Zealand in 1908 "to visit England, Scotland and the Continent to study the methods and the results of the various Art and Technical Schools, as great advances had been made in Arts & Crafts". He visited the chief Scottish Art Schools and Technical Colleges. In London, he visited the Royal College of Art and University of London. "Whilst there he studied design and its application to Industrial Arts, and also took a course of Architecture under Professor Bannister Fletcher, MA." Later he taught in Birmingham which "allowed him to continue the study of enamelling, jewellery and metal work". Returning to New Zealand in 1910 and to New Plymouth, he practiced as an architect and seems to have taught handicraft and designed illuminated addresses, moving to Christchurch in 1917. As the founder of the Arts & Crafts Society in Wanganui and in New Plymouth, he may have been involved in Ida Eise's appointment to New Plymouth Technical College, where she created a craft department.[78]

David Edward Hutton owned copies of: *The Graphic* for 1893 and 1898, *The Art Amateur* March 1899, *The Artist* September 1899, and F. Edward Hulme *Suggestions in Floral Design* (1878) – stamped on the fronticepiece "D.E. Hutton, Wanganui". D.E. Hutton also owned Christopher Dresser *Studies in Design: for House Decorators, Designers & Manufacturers: Ceiling* [1876], also stamped as above.[79]

Isaacs, Nelson (3rd generation), a successful Wellington student under George Pitkethly, he became Robert Hawcridge's assistant in Dunedin

in 1913. He saw service in WWI and then attended the Royal College of Art 1920. He taught in Auckland at Elam,[80] then at Southland Technical School in Invercargill, and in 1925 was made head of the art department at the Wellington Technical College. The school *Jubilee Review* for 1936 noted that "Mr Isaac won distinction in England not only as a draughtsman, but as a craftsman of high attainment".[81] His appointment was the focus for the passion for craft so evident in Wellington in the 1930s.

Jakins, Nan (2nd generation)[82] is known for her painted china.[83] This female-friendly art form was born through the influence of female-friendly potteries such as Milton's Kensington Art Pottery Studio and Doulton's Lambeth Art Pottery, both in London, and the American Newcomb Pottery and Overbeck Pottery. In New Zealand, Miss Jakins, Elizabeth Luxton (Friberg) and Mary Amelia Makeig all offered private tuition in china painting. Miss Jakins had studios in Christchurch, where she exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts exhibitions in 1908 and 1909. In 1910, her teaching studio was at 61 City Chambers, Auckland. She also exhibited with the Auckland Society of Arts.[84]

Joachim, Eleanor (2nd generation) As Margery Blackman researches on Eleanor Joachim have shown, Eleanor, from a prominent Dunedin family, may have learnt plant-form design from her aunt Frances Wimperis or during training as a bookbinder in London with two of Douglas Cockerell's students. She returned to Dunedin during 1904 to practice her craft. Her book cover design for *Paola and Francesca* uses Voysey-like heart-shaped leaves for an ivy and interlaced Celtic pattern. [85] She exhibited an "Artistic Book Binding" at the 1907 Melbourne *Women's Work* exhibition.[86] The most complete record on the artist's life is contained in publications by Margery Blackman: see Margery Blackman, "Five: Leaves and Flowers of Gold: The Art and Craft of Eleanor Joachim: 1903-1914", in *A Book in the Hand: Essays on the History of the Book in New Zealand* (http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-GriHand-t1-g1-t6.html)

Johnstone, James (Jas/Johnny) (3rd generation) was "Craft and Design Master" at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1926 to 1958. Johnstone became a core force in the New Zealand Arts & Crafts story, after trained in Edinburgh under the London-mandate put in place by Frank Morley Fletcher from 1906.[87]

James Johnstone joined the Canterbury College School of Art staff in 1926 as "Craft and Design Master" and was head of department until replaced by John Simpson in 1958. Johnstone taught practical classes in metalwork (including evening classes), pattern design, writing and illuminating and lectured on the History of Craft, Historic Ornament, and Heraldry. His inestimable contribution was firstly as a loved lecturer but also as a design tutor, as shown by his own designs,[88] and by images of his own student-exercises.[89]

The following text has been compiled from notes by Ngarita Johnstone, James Johnstone's daughter:

James Johnstone, born in Edinburgh in 1893, started a six-year apprenticeship in a housepainting and decorating firm when he was about 12 years old, later employed as a journeyman with the same firm, which included work on the restoration of the interiors of some of Scotland's stately homes and work carving the ceiling of the Knights of the Thistle Chapel in St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, with the architect Sir Robert Lorimer. He became a day student at Edinburgh College of Art

in October 1914 at 21.

For 1914-15, and after war service from October 1919, Johnstone took classes differing little from those offered at the time in New Zealand when the Canterbury College School of Art was linked to the South Kensington system of drawing, design and art education. As spelled out in the Edinburgh College Prospectus for 1914-15, the section on "Design", under William S. Black, required students to study:

> Historic Styles and Principles of Design, with the development of Designing in direct relation to the materials and tools of the Crafts and to industrial processes of manufacture. Students taking the Diploma Course will be required to make special study of at least one Craft.

The design diploma course included "Studies from Nature. – The study of natural forms in relation to their decorative use in design." and "Colour Study. – The laws of colour and their application to the Arts."

During WWI Johnstone worked at the Speedwell Ironworks, Coatbridge, which helped his knowledge of metalwork and casting and the like before volunteering for the Royal Army Service Corps, working as a turner and serving in Mesopotamia. Johnstone gained his Design Diploma in June 1920, the date of his illustrations included in this story. In his Diploma course he covered various areas both practical and historical in drawing, painting, sculpture, design (including pattern design, lettering, plant form, heraldry, and architecture), after which he completed a post-graduate year in stained glass (probably with Douglas Strachan). Concurrently, he completed a two-year teacher-training course and in 1922 was appointed to Oban High School. In 1925 he came to New Zealand under contract to the New Zealand Education Department and began to teach at the Canterbury College School of Art in 1926.

Johnstone, Ngarita (3rd generation) attended the Canterbury College School of Art from 1946, graduating with her Diploma in Fine Arts in 1950, specialising in design and applied art. In 1950, she won the Gwendoline Mary Fleming prize for Writing and Illuminating, and her handmade book[90] was included in the annual Canterbury College School of Art exhibition. She subsequently taught art and craft, primarily at secondary school level, retiring in 1985. Ngarita has also been actively involved in researching and recording her father James Johnstone's key role in design and applied art instruction at the Canterbury College School of Art .

Kidson, Charles (1st & 2nd generation) was immensely important to the evolution of applied art teaching and appreciation in New Zealand. He was born in 1867 in the English Midlands and attended night classes at the Birmingham Municipal College of Art in Margaret Street from 1884. He immigrated to New Zealand in 1888, living initially in Nelson. He moved to Christchurch in 1891 and obtained a full-time position at the Canterbury College School of Art in 1892. In the early 1890s he also worked with the Sydenham potter Luke Adams decorating blank pots, using low relief plant forms and Maori motifs. In the 1894 Canterbury College School of Art Prospectus Kidson was listed as an Assistant Master with an Art Teacher's Certificate, South Kensington, London. He obtained his Art Master's Certificate in 1900. Neil Roberts has written:

> Up until the time of his arrival [in Christchurch] in 1891 there were a few limited classes offered in modelling and carving, but over the next fifteen years he was able to develop this and lay the foundation

of a vibrant art craft and sculpture department.[91]

In the 1900 *Jubilee* exhibition catalogue Kidson is listed as teaching "Drawing, Geometry, Perspective, Modelling and Casting, and Stone Carving". He is listed as teaching Plant Form from 1902 to 1905 and in 1906 as teaching Design and Artistic Crafts.

In 1903 Kidson returned to England for six months, thereby effectively placing himself among second generation appointees: his time away was equivalent to Seager's earlier Arts & Crafts grand tour. Overseas he attended: Liberty's; took lessons in carving, modelling and plasterers' techniques; evening classes at the London Regent Street Central School, taking modelling and drawing from life; studied wood-carving at the South Kensington School of Art; took classes at Camden Town School of Art studying repoussé and enamelling; he visited London South Kensington schools and a number of provincial schools including his old alma mater in Birmingham.[92]

Kidson resigned from the Canterbury College School of Art in 1906 and established a metalwork firm with George Fraser, the firm failing as the public failed to value handwork. He died only two years later: Samuel Hurst Seager wrote to Kate Beath:

> Yes, it was indeed a great blow to hear of Mr Kidson's death, for I valued him highly, as being by far the best sculptor, in fact, almost the only sculptor in New Zealand, and in many other ways full of true artistic feeling and with all modesty.[93]

La Trobe, William (2nd generation) was appointed to head the Wellington Technical College in 1904 and immediately sought unity with industry by emphasising technical skills "which seem to have received less attention hitherto than their importance demands".[94] La Trobe, an engineer, presented his philosophy in an early annual report:

> Art Section.–
>
> The attendance in the design class has been well maintained during the session ... The aim of the work in this class has been to encourage students engaged in the artistic trades to study the branch of design specially suitable to them, so as to be able to design as well as to execute their work. Cabinetmakers, metal workers, jewellers, ticket-writers, sign-writers, painters and decorators, workers in stained glass, &c, have been instructed in designing for their special work. Depending to a considerable extent upon the work done in the design classes are the following craft classes in which the students are encouraged to carry out their own designs, and are instructed in the technique of their work (a) Stencilled designs ... (b) Wood-carving ... (c) Metal-work, jewellery, and enamelling ... (d) Painting and decorating and sign-writing ... (e) Lettering, writing and illuminating, and ticket-writing ... The establishment of craft classes ... in which students are taught conjointly drawing and design and the technique of their trade, is of the utmost importance. It is in such classes that the greater part of the work of an art-school culminates. The other classes are preparatory to these, and lead up to them. Without these the duties of an art-school are only half-performed.[95]

William La Trobe's name is most often associated with the La Trobe Scheme, introduced to bring appropriately educated art, design and artcraft tutors to New Zealand.[96] As encouraged by William Rothenstein (Lethaby's replacement at the Royal College of Art) appointees (3rd generation appointments), who were also practising artists and/

or designers were preferred. Appointments were made to the schools in Dunedin, Auckland, Napier and Wanganui.[97] La Trobe became Superintendent of Technical Education in 1923.[98] He retired in 1936.

Masters, Heather (3rd generation) was born in Taihape in 1917. She studied at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1932 to early 1936. Her principal legacy to the Arts & Crafts in New Zealand is her perfect botanically-based designs and illustrative work. A portfolio of work is held by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.[99] Work is also held by the Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch. At the Canterbury College School of Art , she took design, antique, life drawing, portraiture, line drawing, landscape and lettering. "Madame Henderson" was of great importance, teaching design and embroidery.[100] Heather Masters, after leaving the school, designed for an Auckland factory, and later worked as a children's wear designer. She was also a talented photographer.

Heather Masters noted that her designs and those of her peers were prepared as a portfolio for potential production. The artist's portfolio includes design pieces, life studies and urban landscape in watercolour and gouache, posters, calligraphy, plus embroidery and wallpaper designs.[101]

> Heather was a quiet, artistic, free spirited child who loved to pretend ... When she was 14, the family went to Christchurch on holiday. While there, her sister Joyce contracted typhoid and was admitted to hospital. Her father, without preamble or discussion, arranged for her to stay with an aunt and uncle, enrolled her at the School of Art, then departed. She never really went home again ... Slowly ... she grew to enjoy the school.[102]

Mayne, Mrs J.A. (Sidney) (1st generation) was a graduate of the Royal College of Art Needlework and was appointed in 1907 to the staff of the Canterbury College School of Art.

McIntyre, Hilda (2nd generation) was a student of both the fine and applied arts at the Canterbury College School of Art . Her exhibits at the 1908 and 1909 Canterbury Society of Arts exhibitions cover the full range of second generation Arts & Crafts skills: china painting, stencilling, woodcarving, repoussé and enamel work. A *Paint Rag* contributor,[103] Hilda McIntyre became a part-time instructor in design and embroidery at the beginning of 1925[104] and taught until 1939.[105]

Menzies, John Henry (1st generation) (1839-1919) was the spirit and carver behind the unmatched St Luke's Catholic church in Little Akaloa.[106] Menzies life and carving legacy have been recorded in Ian H. Menzies *The Story of Menzies Bay: Banks Peninsula* (Pegasus 1970) and Gordon Ogilvie *Banks Peninsula: Cradle of Canterbury* (GP Books 1990). As a boy, Menzies recalled "carving with a knife all day long" at Cheam, a Church of England school in south-east England. He left for New Zealand from Bristol in September [1860]. Of the secretaire[107] he carved in 1891 Ian Menzies wrote:

> I am fortunate in having inherited what is, I think, the best example of his art: the writing design with the lid carved in a design of the Mount Cook "lily" (*Ranuncullus lyalli*), and the panels on the cupboard of the mountain daisy (*Celmesia coriacea*).

His patterns were primarily based on native flowers or Maori patterns. In 1910 Menzies published *Maori Patterns Painted and Carved* (facsimile 1975). The wealth of Arts & Crafts motifs in Menzies church point

inevitably to Menzies having access to Arts & Crafts publications, none of which have been identified; the church apse is a particular example with its entwined vines and homily.

Mountfort, Benjamin Woolfield (1st generation) The authoritive text is Ian Lochhead *Dream of Spires: Benjamin Mountfort and the Gothic Revival* (1999)[108]

O'Connor, Colleen (later Colleen Ferguson) **(3rd generation)** was born in 1922 in Auckland to loving and encouraging parents. After coming to Christchurch she started taking art classes at night. As a young married woman she entered and completed a Diploma of Fine Arts, graduating in 1957, describing herself in retrospect as "in love with ART". She was subsequently a tutor at every level. She designed the "Pegasus Panel"for the new Christchurch Town Hall, received an Arts Council grant in 1984 to study advanced calligraphy in New South Wales and helped to set up the Silversmiths' Guild and later the Calligraphy Society of New Zealand.[109]

Payton, Edward William (1st generation) is of especial interest for applied art training in New Zealand as he had studied at the Birmingham Municipal School of Art, when Birmingham was the centre of the commercial jewellery trade but before the Arts & Crafts design-reforms of the 1890s.

After coming to New Zealand in 1883 he returned to London to train at the National Art Training School, South Kensington. He was appointed Director of Elam School of Art and Design on 1 January 1890.[110] The school was established by a bequest from Dr Elam, and was to be "a great auxiliary in the extension of manufactures and other industrial enterprises dependent on the cultivation of artistic skills".[111]

Pitkethly, George (2nd generation), ARCA, appointed by La Trobe to head the art school in Wellington in 1907, "left a deep impression upon all of his students. Not only was he a good general artist, but he had special knowledge of craft and craft design".[112] Pitkethley was a National Gold, Silver and Bronze medallist, London, and was winner of the Royal College of Art Gold Medal Travelling Scholarship.[113] At the Royal College of Art, it is possible that he had studied calligraphy with Edward Johnston. He was for many years second master at the Leicester Municipal School of Art, teaching applied classes in jewellery, metalwork, enamelling, carving, leather-work, and book-binding. Pitkethly left the Wellington school in 1915 to head Melbourne Working-Men's College School of Art.[114]

Richardson, H. Linley (2nd generation) "was born London 1878. Studied there and Paris. Arrived New Zealand 1907. Taught Wellington and from 1928 Palmerston North. Died 1947."[115]

Riley, Arthur Dewhurst (1st generation) was appointed to head the School of Design in Wellington in 1886: as cited in his important 1898 report to the New Zealand government,[116] he was "Arthur D. Riley, Director for Technical Instruction to the Education Board of the Wellington District, National Scholar and Gold Medallist of the Science and Art Department, London, &c."[117] An excellent source on the school is Noel Harrison *The School that Riley Built* (1961)

Rust, Yvonne (3rd generation) attended the Canterbury College School of Art from 1940, graduating in 1946 and is best known for her roles as a potter and singular teacher. The key text is Theresa Sjoquist's biography

Yvonne Rust: Maverick Spirit (2011), an informed and pleasing account of Yvonne's life and career, told with substantial quoted text left by Yvonne. Yvonne died in 2002.

Seager, Samuel Hurst (1st generation). London-born, Seager worked as an architectural draftsman in Benjamin Mountford's architectural firm in Christchurch (New Zealand) before returning to England in 1882 for further study, including the South Kensington National Art Training School as a student and lecturer, returning to Christchurch in 1885,[118] bringing current Arts & Crafts practice and ideals with him. In the 1894 Canterbury College School of Art Prospectus Seager was listed as "Lecturer & Instruction in Architecture & Decorative Design; Hons Student in Architecture in University College & School of Architecture, London; late President of the Sydney Architectural Association". He taught at the Canterbury College School of Art from September 1893 to 1918, teaching the "Principals of Architectural and Decorative Design and their application" from 1897. He was the architect for Christchurch's famous municipal buildings on the banks of the Avon River (1886), importing the picturesque Queen Anne architectural style, offering an alternative to prevailing Gothic and Renaissance styles. Ian Lochhead, for the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*,[119] refers to the influence of the English Arts & Crafts movement on the cottages designed by Seager for The Spur, Sumner, Christchurch, noting that they:

> were combined with garden-city planning concepts to produce a unique residential development of timber cottages in a garden setting ... Seager was committed to the social role of architecture ... Seager was concerned with the total built environment and from 1910 his energies were increasingly directed towards town planning issues .... [120]

Seager further sought to ensure New Zealand had an equivalent to the British South Kensington Museum in London; when he returned in 1885 with "Art treasures" to help teach taste and, hopefully, to encourage local manufacturing concerns: he had dispatched a bundle of "high class wall papers" and specimens to show printing methods from Messrs Woollams, and a bundle of "Tapestries" from Messrs Jones & Willis. "I also sent a case containing rubbings of brasses which I have taken here & on the Continent." He had been promised "Faience" wares and glass goods from Messrs Powell.[121]

Seelye, Edgar C. (Dick) and Robyn Hitchon (later Robyn Seelye) **(3rd generation)** both attended the Canterbury College School of Art from 1945 to 1948, graduating with craft and design diplomas. Seelye (1915-87) was a rehab student. The pair married in 1949. Both trained in metalwork and worked with Dermot Holland, and briefly Colin McCahon, making costume jewellery. Seelye also specialized in fabric printing. Subsequently, he taught graphic design and silk-screeen printing at Wellington Technical College.[122]

Shurrock, Francis Aubrey ("Shurry") (**3rd generation**) was born in Lancashire, England, in 1877. He spent two years as a pupil-teacher at Chester School of Art (1905-7), and attended the Royal College of Art (1909-13),[123] then taught at King Edward VII School of Art in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1914-15). World War I service was severe. After the war he was principal of the School of Science and Art in Weston-super-Mare (1919-23). Shurrock immigrated to New Zealand and became Canterbury College School of Art modelling master (1924-49). Both before and after retirement, he practised and exhibited as a professional sculptor. He was a favourite with students and his influence was truly significant.[124]

Simpson, Professor John (3rd generation) became Senior Lecturer in Design at the Canterbury College School of Art 1958 to 1961, and Head of the School and Foundation Professor Fine Arts from 1961 to 1990.

Simpson's story is one that follows the British Arts & Crafts movement in its later stages when the importance of mechanical production and the "printing industry" were recognized: he was awarded a National Scholarship in Art and attended the Sydney Cooper School of Art, Canterbury (later the Canterbury City College of Art), his training included (approximately 17 years old) the Advanced Diploma in Industrial Design, specializing in silversmithing:

> I did my examination in Silversmithing, not to become a silversmith, a professional silversmith, but to master techniques absolutely essential for model-making and prototype-making when designing for machine-production, mass-production through factory organizations selling through ordinary retail shops. I wasn't interested in becoming a painter. I subscribed to William Morris's wry observation that all he did was make "beautiful things for the idle rich". I had no intention of following that. I wanted to make things, ordinary things, that people had to have, but to make them as lovely and as delightful as possible, so that the work of art, is on the breakfast table, in the bedroom, all around. Everything one has to use could be made superbly. There was no need for factory production to be crude and sub-standard, no need at all. So right from the beginning I had this vision. It sounds like socialism. But it wasn't. It was really a determination to try and make things for ordinary people at an ordinary price, a price they could afford. My first steps towards achieving this were in silversmithing.[125]

After war service he returned to the renamed Canterbury City College of Art and studied furniture design, completing his National Diploma in Design in 1950, and his Art Teachers' Diploma in 1951. He worked at the Brighton College of Arts and Crafts and, while there, spent time at the "Guild of St Mary and Joseph" in Ditchling, originally founded by Eric Gill; then worked at the new College of Art and Industrial Design, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. While at Newcastle, Simpson worked for Joblins (the manufacturer of Pyrex) and Heals of London. As part of an intense interest in art teacher training, Simpson became interested in:

> the works of some pioneers of "Basic Design", especially Victor Pasmore, the distinguished English painter who was also at Newcastle. But he was much more than that. He was a theoretician and philosopher. He had worked out what could only be described as a new grammar of fundamental design – for architects, painters, sculptors, designers, engineers. The interesting thing was that in the first year engineers, architects, would-be designers of all kinds, all working together in the same enormous room, were all doing the same course on the principles of foundation design. That was based on Wassily Kandinsky's Point and Line to Plane. You can of course see where this comes from? It comes from the Weimar Bauhaus. It came from people like [Maholy] Nagy, Kandinsky and Klee. What evolved was a kind of "grammar of form" which was a vital and as of much interest to future painters, printmakers, sculptors, as to a whole range of designers.[126]

> ... design changed direction and became centered on the printing press. This was an industry already well-established in New Zealand. It was one of the largest industries in New Zealand. There was a

dearth of really talented well-trained typographic designers. So we introduced graphic design in place of silversmithing because we felt that it would be possible for people to complete the course and find work in the printing industry – published and so on – and make a living. And so it proved.[127]

Smith, Gladys (3rd generation) (later Evans), born in Christchurch in 1906, and attended Canterbury College School of Art 1922 to 1924. Her large embroidered peacock was exhibited in Simplicity and Splendour at the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu (2004-5), after conservation by Valerie Carson.[128]

Smith, Hetty (Hettie) L. (1st generation) was a successful Canterbury College School of Art student and lecturer, as the school records demonstrate, but little is known about her. In 1898 she had an excellent pass in woodcarving in the morning class. She may have attempted the Diploma of Architecture or Diploma of Decorative Design (Draughtsman). She is listed in the 1900 *Canterbury Jubilee Industrial Exhibition* catalogue as teaching geometry, perspective, drawing and woodcarving. Success came in 1904 in "Principles of Ornament & Design", in which she had 9 excellent passes; all but two students were women, including Hetty.

Smith, Vivian (2nd generation) attended the Sheffield Technical College (winning a prize for anatomical studies[129]) and the Royal College of Art from 1907 to 1911 (at similar dates to Francis Shurrock). He was appointed in 1912 by W.R. Lethaby "to help teach drawing to teachers" and is recorded as teaching drawing at the Wellington Training College.[130] In 1932 he became Art Master at Wanganui Technical College.[131] He married Mary Green in 1917, an adept comic artist and illustrator, who may have been a part-time teacher at the school. She took over his teaching role for a period after his death.[132]

Sutton, William (Bill) (3rd generation) was born in Christchurch in 1917. A major retrospective of his work, *W.A. Sutton: A Retrospective*, was one of the opening exhibitions for the new Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu in 2003. Recognised as an outstanding regional painter, he was also, as Neil Roberts noted, involved in "printmaking, calligraphy, typography (through the Templar Press), murals, stained glass design, drawing and watercolour". He trained in calligraphy, metalwork and bookbinding at night classes in the 1930s with James Johnstone and spent a postgraduate year studying "calligraphy, silversmithing and bookbinding". He created two exquisite handmade books (1936 and 1939-40). Early in the 1950s, he taught illumination. Sutton became the patron of the Calligraphy Society of New Zealand when it was founded in 1988. He died in 2000, aged 83.

Tutill, Reverend Doris (3rd generation) attended the Canterbury College School of Art for six years (1929-34), and distinguished herself as an exceptional student. Her teachers included Louise Henderson, Florence Akins, Julia Scarvell, Dorothy Brewster, Ivy Fife, and Hilda McIntyre. After graduation, she worked for Whitcombe & Tombs, Christchurch, as a designer. Towards the end of the 1930s, she joined a Christchurch studio making parchment and designed lampshades and stationery covers. Then, working from home, she produced cards, bookmarks and book covers for department stores. Concurrently, she worked as a secretary and taught dressmaking. In 1954 or thereabouts, she became head of art at St Margaret's College, and remained in the position for 25 years, much of the time as Head of Department. Doris Tutill was ordained as

an Anglican priest in 1986.[133]

Tutton, Constance (Connie) (3rd generation) was born in 1886 and attended Rangi Ruru in Christchurch from 1902 as a boarder. The family own a sketchbook dated 1899-1900, suggesting that she attended drawing classes. She trained and became a skilled woodcarver with Frederick Gurnsey. As her son recalls:

> All the furniture she carved was for her own home. The dining room was fully furnished with her work including an eight-seater kauri table and eight chairs, all carved as well as a very large carved sideboard. She also did a large hall stand and seat.

Connie Tutton died in 1965.[134]

Waymouth, Alice and Beatrice (Biddy) (2nd & 3rd generation) were typical of Canterbury families in which mother and daughtrs and female relatives were all involved in art studies and the city's cultural life. As a relative has explained, the family, who built Karewa, now Mona Vale, "followed the fashionable Arts & Crafts trends in the furnishings and objects brought from England". Alice led an active social and cultural life, gardened enthusiastically and collected natve plants. She practised landscape design, woodcarving and collected cloisonné enamel work. Biddy spent time training in art jewellery, metalwork and enamelling with Charles Ashbee at Chipping Camden in the Cotswolds. Her work was sold at the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition and she exhibited in New Zealand before returning to England in 1911. Their sister, Eleanor, was an accomplished artist.[135]

Zeller, Rose (3rd generation) appears in art school records in 1908 and 1909, winning Elementary Art Scholarships; she won prizes in 1909 and 1910. Among her contributions to *The Paint Rag* was a design for a comb in enamel and tortoise shell. She took third place in a cover design competition for the 1911 New Zealand Industrial Exhibition Souvenir Number catalogue, run by *Progress* magazine, and other design awards followed. She exhibited regularly at the Canterbury Society of Arts. She taught at the Dunedin School of Art at King Edward Technical College from 1915 to 1924, and was art mistress at Christchurch Technical College from 1924 o 1960. She strove, Florence Akins remembers, "to give some culture to students from poorer families". She died in 1975.[136]

ENDNOTES

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29 Judy Siers (Curator) "James Walter Chapman-Taylor (1878-1958) in Onslow 1909 to 1954", *The Onslow Historian* 24 (1994), Onslow Historical Society, Wellington, 3

30 (Alice Beville Collins): Calhoun 2000, 131 ill, 132 ills; Calhoun 2004-5, 29 ill, 35 ills; Calhoun 2015, 158 ill, 261 ill

31 (Edith Collier): See David Edward Hutton biography, 324; Calhoun 2000, 27 ill, 104 portrait ill

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35 (Ida Eise): *AJHR* 1915 E-5, 32

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39 Calhoun 2000, 25 ill. Also Calhoun 2000, 118 ill

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Appendix: Simplicity vs Ornament

The call for simplicity by Arts & Crafts advocates is a surprise in a style so caught up with the need for ornament: a brief over-view follows and is, in and of itself, the story of the Arts & Crafts. Simplicity, freedom from Victorian decorative clutter, was sought and won, as the following quotes demonstrate:

A.W.N. Pugin:

> How many objects of ordinary use are rendered monstrous and ridiculous simply because the artist, instead of seeking the most convenient form, and then decorating it, has embodied some extravagance to conceal the real purpose for which the article has been made![1]

William Dyce or Richard Redgrave:

> This is a question that now naturally suggests itself. Our answer is, toward simplicity. And this opinion is founded on the close alliance of utility and simplicity, and the character of our race.[2]

M. Digby Wyatt:

> While the forms of these properties demonstrates her [nature] infinite power of complexity, the latter restrains the former, and binds all in beautiful simplicity.[3]

Christopher Dresser:

> As a principle, it will be found that the value of the manufactured article is dependent upon the knowledge displayed in the using and adorning the material, and not upon the amount of labour expended upon its construction. The same clay can be wrought into a thing of beauty or an object without comeliness, and the most welcome ornaments are usually both simple in character and sparingly used, for extravagance in ornament is as offensive as extravagance in dress.[4]

Japanese crests are usually more simple than our own.[5]

William Morris:

> I must say point blank, that unless we can elevate our design into this region of fancy and imagination, we were better to have no ornament at all; ...
>
> ... simplicity is the foundation of all worthy art; ...[6]

Walter Crane:

> ... plain materials and surfaces are infinitely preferable to inorganic or inappropriate ornament.[7]

Charles F. Annesley Voysey:

> Then, working always reasonably, with a sense of fitness, the result will be at least healthy, natural, and vital; even if it be ugly and in a way unpleasing, it will yet give some hope. The danger to-day lies

in over-decoration; we lack simplicity and have forgotten repose, and so the relative value of beautiful things is confounded. In most modern drawing-rooms confusion is the first thing that strikes one. Nowhere is there breadth, dignity, repose, or true richness of effect, but a symbolism of money alone. ...

... let us begin by discarding the mass of useless ornaments ... Reduce the variety of patterns and colours in a room. ...[8]

Canterbury Collge School of Art, Christchurch, New Zealand:

The designs at first will be simple modifications of the examples given, and later original designs based on New Zealand flora and fauna.[9]

Arthur Dewhurst Riley, Wellington, New Zealand:

In all cases in more advanced work students should make themselves acquainted with the various processes of workmanship, ... so that their designs may be practically adapted to execution in a given material. Instructors ... should recollect that there is more to be learnt from making a simple design well suited to its purpose than from elaborating the most ambitious drawing adapted to no purpose or process of execution.[10]

W. Fred:

Honesty and simplicity in the use of materials are the primary conditions of modern art handicraft.[12]

W.R. Lethaby:

Always remember that design does not necessarily imply decoration – service comes first.[13]

Frances Shurrock (Canterbury Collge School of Art 1924-49):

… emphasized simplicity – in the form mainly and a thorough-overall structure: the ornate never appealed to him simplicity (not the ornate). [13]

Douglas Lloyd Jenkins:[15]

The overriding fashion of the 1930s was for simplification. There were also parallel vogues for technology and efficiency, but the end result was a new, simplified house ... Simple was fashionable – modern even more so.

ENDNOTES

1 *True Principles* 1841, 23; "Pugin", 27
2 "Which Direction is Ornamental Art likely to take?": an unattributed article *Journal* VI (Jan 1852) no 35, 135
3 Lecture, 21 April 1852, An Attempt to Define the Principles which should determine Form in the Decorative Arts, 220
4 *The Art of Decorative Design* 1862 no51, 20-1; the Arts & Crafts belief in truth to materials
5 "Japanese Ornamentation", *The Builder* 13 June 1863, 423
6 "Lectures on Art and Industry: Textile Fabrics" July 1884; Morris *Works* XXII, 294
7 British Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue 1889, 7; see 129 col1
8 *Studio* I/6 (Sep 1893), 234
9 Canterbury Collge School of Art prospectus 1894, 5
10 NZ *AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 40
11 "The Artists' Colony at Darmstadt", *Studio* XXIV/103 (Oct 1901), 28
12 W.R. Lethaby, "The Teaching of Design", in F. Watson (ed) *The Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Education* Pitman 1921, 453
13 Letter from Chrystabel Aitken, 17 Mar 1993
14 *At Home: A century of New Zealand design* 2004, 66

Glossary

Chromolithography: colour printing using lithographic stones.

Constructional polychrome/Structural polychrome: the use of coloured materials to give structure to the exterior or interior of a building.

Conventionalism: the *Shorter Oxford* defines "conventional" in "Art" as "consisting in, or resulting from, an artificial treatment of natural objects; following tradition 1851", the date of the *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations* (London). The word "conventionalised" was universally disliked but no other word gained currency. In 1844 A.W.N. Pugin discussed "conventional" ornament. Pugin's ornamental preferences were fully conventionalised and almost starkly flat. The approach became the basis of the South Kensington design instruction. In 1882 Lewis Day would still regret that: "This idiomatic utterance in ornament has been called conventionality. But the term 'conventional' is not altogether a happy one." The phrase "flat nature-based design", instead of the words "conventionalised design", has been used. These designs were also termed "stylised", less often "abstracted".

Craft/Trade: William Morris, in his lecture on "The Lesser Arts", to a Trades' Guild (1877), talked of "handicraftsmen". The words "craft" and "trade" were still clearly used interchangeably, but became through Morris's and John Ruskin's influence to refer to separate activities; an unintentional result was that craft was then often viewed as an inferior activity.

Design: as used here, was appositely defined by Christopher Frayling (1987):

> [the word was used] in the restricted sense of a medium of communication between the ornamentist, or the artisan concerned with the processes of ornament, and the manufacturer – design as a kind of language. And they [the men of the first school of design] assumed that if contributors to the manufacturing process were proficient in this language (its principles and its historical usage), then the quality of the resulting manufactures would rise ... It was all very confusing. And the confusions have plagued discussions of "design" in Britain ever since: but the modern usage of "design" does seem to date from the muddled discussons of 1837. (16)

Diaper: an all-over pattern based on repeated units made up of "lines crossing diamond-wise, with the spaces filled up by parallel lines, leaves, dots, etc". (*Shorter Oxford*) The "geometrical or conventional pattern or design forming the ground of [a] fabric, or any similar pattern 1830". (*Shorter Oxford*)

Geometrical figures: formerly restricted to those motifs whose construction involved only the straight line and circle, all other curves being called mechanical.

Naturalism: a style or method, in literature and art, characterized by

close adherence to nature 1850. (*Shorter Oxford*)

Orientalism: Oriental wares might be from India, Egypt, Persia, China or later Japan.

"Ornament": "embellishment" or "features or work added for decorative purposes". (*Shorter Oxford*)

Ornament/Decoration: the words "ornament" and "decoration" were used interchangeably throughout the nineteenth century.

South Kensington system: the drawing, design and art teaching system instituted by the British government in 1837, and based in London's South Kensington area from 1857; in 1896 the London school became the Royal College of Art.

Abbreviations:

Calhoun 2000: Ann Calhoun *The Arts & Crafts movement in New Zealand 1870-1940: Women make their mark* Auckland University Press 2000

Calhoun 2004-5: Ann Calhoun *Simplicity and Splendour: The Canterbury Arts & Crafts movement from 1882*, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, 19 November 2004 – 27 February 2005 (exhibition catalogue)

Calhoun 2015: Ann Calhoun *Arts & Crafts Design: "Like Yet Not Like" Nature: Sources for a New Zealand Story*, ebook, 2015

NatLib, NZ: National Library of New Zealand collection, Wellington, New Zealand

ATL: Alexander Turnbull Library collection, Wellington, New Zealand

V&A: Victoria & Albert Museum, South Kensington, London

RCA: Royal College of Art, South Kensington, London

Journal: *Journal of Design & Manufactures*

Ruskin Works: John Ruskin *The Works of John Ruskin: Library edition* (1903-12), edited by E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 volumes

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Cowan: Cowan, James *Official Record of the New Zealand International Exhibition of Arts and Industries, held at Christchurch: A descriptive and historical account* Wellington, New Zealand, 1910

Spielmann: Spielmann, Sir Isidore *The British Government Exhibit at the New Zealand International Exhibition 1906-1907* British Government Committee 1908 (exhibition catalogue)

C&K: Cumming, Elizabeth & Wendy Kaplan *The Arts & Crafts Movement* London 1991

***AJHR*:** *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives,* New Zealand

***DNZB*:** *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*

ill: illustration

edn: edition

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Two separate lists of reference texts are given below: I: Basic Reference Texts, and II: Key Designers and Theorists. Additional references are included in the Endnotes. Further New Zealand sources can be found in Calhoun 2000, Bibliography. A list of books recommended by Arthur Dewhurst Riley for the Wellington Technical School (New Zealand) is included over page (*AJHR* 1898 E-5B, 40), and a list of publications known to have been owned by James Johnstone, head of design and craft at the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, New Zealand, from 1926-58, over page.

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Aslin, Elizabeth. *The Aesthetic Movement: Prelude to Art Nouveau* London 1969

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Bøe, Alf. *From Gothic Revival to Functional Form: A study of Victorian theories of design* New York & Oslo 1957

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(list supplied by Ngarita Johnstone)

James Johnstone's daughter Ngarita believes that her father will have brought some of these publications with him from Scotland. He also owned books on Maori art.

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