

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick

Permanent WRAP URL:

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/81961/>

Copyright and reuse:

This thesis is made available online and is protected by original copyright.

Please scroll down to view the document itself.

Please refer to the repository record for this item for information to help you to cite it.

Our policy information is available from the repository home page.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: wrap@warwick.ac.uk

WOMEN, CRAFT, AND THE OBJECT: BIRMINGHAM 1880-1930

Two volumes: volume I

Claire FitzGerald

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Warwick, Department of History of Art

April 2016

Contents

Volume I

Contents	i
Acknowledgments.....	ii
Declaration	iv
Abstract	v
List of Abbreviations.....	vi
List of Illustrations	vii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1 – Book-Illustration: The Foundational Craft of the ‘Birmingham School’	42
Chapter 2 – Christian Piety Materialised: The Spirit of Tempera	83
Chapter 3 – Glass Dynasties: The Politics of Stained Glass Making	127
Chapter 4 – Embroidered Teachings: Collaboration and Transmission	181
Conclusion	228
Appendix I.....	238
Appendix II	240
Appendix III.....	242
Bibliography.....	246
Unpublished Primary Sources	246
Published Primary Sources	246
Published Secondary Sources	255
Electronic Sources	270
Unpublished Secondary Sources	273

Volume II

Illustrations.....	
--------------------	--

Acknowledgments

Many individuals and institutions have contributed to the fruition of this doctoral project to whom I would like to express my gratitude. I benefitted from a much appreciated full Chancellor's scholarship awarded by the University of Warwick, as well as a grant from the department of History of Art during my first year.

I am particularly grateful for the guidance and expertise of my supervisors Prof. Louise Campbell and Prof. Michael Hatt. I also wish to thank Dr Rosie Dias and Prof. Paul Smith for all they have taught me over the last four years and for providing me with opportunities to present my research.

This thesis has relied on preceding scholarship, whose authors have kindly responded to my enquiries, in particular Alan Crawford, Peter Cormack, Morna O'Neill, Tanya Harrod and Melanie Unwin.

My thanks goes to the following institutions who have given me access to their collections, and the staff who accommodated my numerous requests, notably Martin Ellis, Victoria Osborne and Fiona Slatterly Clark at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Fiona Waterhouse and Dr Sian Vaughan at the Birmingham Institute of Art and Design archives, Paul Taylor and Phil Burns at the Library of Birmingham, Ian Gray, Maureen Waldron, and Joanne Taylor at the Sandwell archives, Helen Elletson at the William Morris Society, Rowan Bain at the William Morris Gallery, Maysie Chandler at the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists' archive, Judy Willcocks at the Central Saint Martins' archives, Philippa Tinsley at the Worcestershire County Museum, Jerry Rudman at Uppingham School, Tom Johnston at Earls High, Dudley, as well as the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Library and the National Art Library.

The ecclesiastical nature of many of the artworks related to this thesis has brought me into contact with members and friends of the clergy, who assistance deserves recognition. I would like to thank the Prioress Sr Shelagh Elizabeth Banks for permission to visit the Carmelite Monastery Quidenham and for the assistance of Sr Gillian Leslie, Edward Fellows, Dame Rachel Waterhouse, Rev. Catherine Grylls, Rev. Canon Dr Alison Joyce, John Pearson, Rev. Dr Neil S. Kendra, Kathleen Kinder, Rev. Fr Peter Phillips, and Dr John Salmon.

Members of local history societies and independent historians have been particularly solicitous and kind, namely Rodney West and Margaret Grenham of the Blaxhall Archive Group, Peter M. Rowe and Carol Maxwell of the Painswick Local History Society, Janet Keene of the Longworth & District History Society, John Dodge who made my visit to Ashton-under-Hill and Evesham memorable, Andy Mabbett of the West Midlands Bird Club, and particularly Arthur Rope.

I am indebted to the generosity of those who opened their homes, revealing their private collections and precious knowledge. My unreserved thanks goes to Lady Morrison for permission to view the Madresfield Court chapel and study its archive, and to Peter Hughes for facilitating my visit there, (the late) Margaret Till and her daughter Celia Till, Charlotte Gere, and Crispin Rope. These human encounters were central to the richness of my experience carrying out this PhD research, as best illustrated during my outings with Elaine Williams.

Finally, I would like to thank my partner Pierre Parrouffe and my parents Martin and Michèle for their continuous support and interest in my research, proving willing co-explorers of remote country churches, and crucial proof-readers of numerous drafts.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

Abstract

This thesis addresses the overlooked contribution of female graduates of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art to the Arts and Crafts movement, during the period of 1880 to 1930. Despite the special status which the Birmingham School enjoyed in its time, Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement as a whole has been relatively little studied. The role of women artists within this regional phenomenon has been even further neglected. Employing an object-led approach, this thesis uses artworks as the starting point and main vectors for the exploration of issues tied to materiality, technique, collaboration, authorship, politics, religion, regionalism and gender.

The work of Georgie Gaskin (1866-1934), Celia Levetus (1874-1936), Kate Bunce (1856-1927), Myra Bunce (1854-1919), Florence Camm (1874-1960), Margaret A. Rope (1882-1953), and Mary Newill (1860-1947) will be studied in detail. It will be argued that these women artists were *integral* to the renewal of book-illustration, the revival of the artistic technique of painting in tempera, stained glass making and embroidery. A web of interactions crucial to their professional success will be traced based on geographical proximity, shared workspaces, and social connections. Craftswomen's role as educators will also be investigated, revealing them as shapers and not merely followers or consumers of the movement.

Informed in particular by the theoretical writings of the philosophers Arthur C. Danto, Jacques Rancière and feminist art historian Griselda Pollock, this thesis will offer a valuable update to a field largely untouched by current academic debates and saturated with survey publications. Combined with extensive archival research and the close inspection of artworks, this study aims to go beyond the additive approach of reinsertion. It seeks to provide a critical discussion of the materialisations of women's participation in the formation of culture.

List of Abbreviations

BIAD	Birmingham Institute of Art and Design
BMSA	Birmingham Municipal School of Art
BMAG	Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
BMT	Birmingham Museums Trust
BL	British Library
BC	Bunce Collection
CMQ	Carmelite Monastery Quidenham
JSP	Joseph Southall Papers
LB	Library of Birmingham
LCSAC	London Central School of Arts and Crafts
MCA	Madresfield Court Archives
MARC	Margaret Agnes Rope Collection
MMP	May Morris Papers
SA	Sandwell Archives
SAC	School of Art Collection
SL	Smethwick Library
TWCC	T.W. Camm Collection
UBC	University of Birmingham Collections
V&A	Victoria and Albert Museum
VAMA	Victoria and Albert Museum archives
WMS	William Morris Society
WGA	Women's Guild of Arts
WGAA	Women's Guild of Arts Archive
WL	Women's Library

List of Illustrations

Figure 1.1 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>Horn-Book Jingles</i> (London: Leadenhall Press, 1896/7), black and white book-illustration, British Library (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	1
Figure 1.2 – Gertrude Bradley, <i>Songs for Somebody</i> by Dollie Radford (London: D. Nutt, 1893), black and white book-illustration, BL (BL, http://access.bl.uk/item/pdf/lsidyv3494e942)	2
Figure 1.3 – Charles Gere, <i>Russian Fairy Tales</i> , transl. from <i>The Skazki of Polevoi</i> by R. Nisbet Bain (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1892), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	2
Figure 1.4 – Arthur Gaskin, <i>Good King Wenceslas</i> by Dr. Neale (Birmingham: Cornish Bros, 1895), black and white book-illustration, BL (BL, http://access.bl.uk/item/pdf/lsidyv3475719d)	3
Figure 1.5 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , open page letter ‘K’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	3
Figure 1.6 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘R’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, Library of Birmingham (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	4
Figure 1.7 – Sidney Heath, <i>A First Book for Little Ones</i> (London: Griffith, Farran & Co., 1905), colour book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	4
Figure 1.8 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>History of the Horn-Book</i> by Andrew Tuer (London: Leadenhall Press, 1896), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	5
Figure 1.9 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘A’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	5
Figure 1.10 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘C’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	6
Figure 1.11 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘F’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	6
Figure 1.12 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘B’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	7
Figure 1.13 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘G’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	7

Figure 1.14 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘Y’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	8
Figure 1.15 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘O’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	8
Figure 1.16 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘I’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	9
Figure 1.17 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘T’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	9
Figure 1.18 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>A.B.C.: An Alphabet</i> , full-page illustration letter ‘Z’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	10
Figure 1.19 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>Divine and Moral Songs</i> by Isaac Watts (London: E. Mathews, 1896), colour book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	10
Figure 1.20 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>The Travellers and Other Stories</i> , 1898, pencil, watercolour and Chinese white on white laid or toned paper, Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT), 28 x 23 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	11
Figure 1.21 – Georgie Gaskin, ‘Of course for such a journey...’, <i>The Travellers and Other Stories</i> (London: James Bowden, 1898), colour book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	12
Figure 1.22 – Celia Levetus, <i>Captive Love</i> , c. 1898, pen and ink drawing, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	12
Figure 1.23 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>Stickphast Paste advertisement</i> , in <i>The Quest</i> 4 (November 1895), black and white illustration, BMT (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	13
Figure 1.24 – Unknown illustrator, <i>Bookbinding Department of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft</i> , in <i>The Quest</i> 2 (March 1895), BMT (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	13
Figure 1.25 – Celia Levetus, <i>Edward R. Taylor bookplate</i> , Sara Levetus album, c. 1893-1898, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	14
Figure 1.26 – Celia Levetus, <i>Violet Holden bookplate</i> , Sara Levetus album, 1894, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	15

Figure 1.27 – Gertrude Bradley, <i>Group Scene</i> , 1890s, pen and ink drawing, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	15
Figure 1.28 – Celia Levetus, <i>Ex Libris Charles Holme</i> , Sara Levetus album, 1895, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	16
Figure 1.29 – Celia Levetus, illustration to Edward L. Levetus’s ‘Vengeance’, in <i>Windsor Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly for Men and Women</i> (September 1899), p. 469	17
Figure 1.30 – William Smedley-Aston, <i>Georgie Gaskin</i> , c. 1900-1913, black and white photograph, in Annette Carruthers and Mary Greensted (eds), <i>Simplicity or Splendour: Arts and Crafts Living: Objects from the Cheltenham Collections</i> (London: Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museums in association with Lund Humphries, 1999), p. 43.....	17
Figure 1.31 – Celia Levetus, <i>William Holman Hunt Bookplate</i> , Sara Levetus album, 1899, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)....	18
Figure 1.32 – Celia Levetus, <i>Joe Burroughs Bookplate</i> , Sara Levetus album, c. 1895-1898, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	19
Figure 1.33 – Celia Levetus, <i>Verse Fancies</i> by Edward L. Levetus (London: Chapman & Hall, 1898), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	19
Figure 1.34 – Celia Levetus, <i>Illustrations for Ignacz Kunos’ Turkish Fairy Tales and Folk Tales</i> , 1896, pen and ink drawings, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	20
Figure 1.35 – Celia Levetus, <i>Songs of Innocence</i> (London: Wells Gardner & Co., 1899), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	20
Figure 1.36 – Celia Levetus, <i>Songs of Experience</i> , (London: David Nutt, 1902), title-page, black and white book-illustration with red lettering, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	21
Figure 1.37 – Georgie Gaskin, <i>Decorative Border</i> , Mary Newill, <i>Left page illustration</i> , and Sidney Heath, <i>Right page illustration</i> , in <i>A Book of Nursery Songs and Rhymes</i> by Sabine Baring-Gould (ed.) (London: Methuen & Co., 1895), black and white book-illustration with red lettering, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	22

Figure 1.38 – Celia Levetus, ‘Earth’s Answer’, in <i>Songs of Experience</i> by William Blake (London: David Nutt, 1902), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	22
Figure 1.39 – Celia Levetus, ‘The Schoolboy’, in <i>Songs of Experience</i> by William Blake (London: David Nutt, 1902), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	23
Figure 1.40 – Celia Levetus, <i>Asher I. Myers bookplate</i> , Sara Levetus album, c. 1895-1898, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)....	24
Figure 1.41 – Orovida Pissarro, <i>Original Drawing for Bookcover for A Boswell to her Cook</i> , c.1931, pencil and watercolour, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)25	
Figure 1.42 – Celia Levetus, <i>Portrait of Orovida Pissarro</i> , c. 1921, pencil drawing, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	25
Figure 2.1 – Kate and Myra Bunce, <i>Reredos</i> , 1902-1904, egg tempera on panel with embossed silver frame, paintings side panels: 38 x 67 cm, centre panel: 61 x 69 cm, reredos including frame measured at middle peak: 189 x 92 cm, St Mary’s, Longworth, Oxfordshire (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	26
Figure 2.2 – Kate Bunce and Myra Bunce, <i>Reredos</i> , 1913-1919, egg tempera on panel with embossed copper frame, paintings side panels: 30 x 69 cm, centre panel: 59 x 69 cm, reredos including frame: 280 x 92 cm, St Alban’s, Bordesley, Birmingham (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	26
Figure 2.3 – Charles M. Gere (paintings) and W. H. Bidlake (reredos), <i>Triptych</i> , 1902-4, egg tempera on panel, Madresfield Court Chapel, Malvern, dimensions unknown, in <i>Madresfield Court, Worcestershire</i> (Malvern: Elmley Foundation, s.d.), n.p.	27
Figure 2.4 – <i>Photograph of the Life Class at the BMSA</i> , c. 1887-1888, in <i>Arthur & Georgie Gaskin</i> (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 11 February – 21 March and Fine Art Society, London, 29 March – 30 April 1982), ed. George Breeze (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1981), p. 16	27
Figure 2.5 – Kate Bunce, <i>Portrait of a Woman</i> , 1884, oil on canvas, private collection, 61 x 51 cm (Biddle & Webb, Lot 1066, http://www.at-auction.co.uk/sourceimages_3/10669.jpg)	28

Figure 2.6 – Myra Bunce, <i>Ex Libris</i> , c. 1890-1900, black and white wood-engraving, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham collections (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	29
Figure 2.7 – Kate Bunce, <i>The Keepsake</i> , 1898-1901, egg tempera on canvas, BMT, 81.3 x 49.5 cm (BMT, http://www.bmagic.org.uk/objects/1928P156/images/137577)	29
Figure 2.8 – Kate Bunce, <i>Triptych</i> , 1926, egg tempera on panel, St Germain's, Edgbaston, Birmingham, main paintings side panel: 45.5 x 189.5 cm, centre panel: 117 x 189.5 cm, triptych including predella and frame: 255 x 239 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	30
Figure 2.9 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.1</i>	30
Figure 2.10 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.8</i>	31
Figure 2.11 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.1</i>	31
Figure 2.12 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.1</i>	32
Figure 2.13 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.1</i>	32
Figure 2.14 – Detail of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, <i>Proserpine</i> , 1882, oil on canvas, BMT, 19.5 x 57.8 cm (BMT, http://www.bmagic.org.uk/objects/1927P7/images/144650)	33
Figure 2.15 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.1</i>	33
Figure 2.16 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.1</i>	34
Figure 2.17 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.2</i>	35
Figure 2.18 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.2</i>	35
Figure 2.19 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.2</i>	36
Figure 2.20 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.2</i>	36
Figure 2.21 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.2</i>	37
Figure 2.22 – Kate Bunce, <i>Woman Sitting by the Edgbaston Pool</i> , c. 1885-1910, watercolour on paper, private collection of Ian Donovan (Photograph: Ian Donovan)	37
Figure 2.23 – Kate Bunce, 'Fairbrass and the Hedgehog', in <i>Fairbrass: A Child's Story</i> by T. Edgar Pemberton (Birmingham: Cornish Bros, 1895), black and white book-illustration, 13. 6 x 9.8 cm, Cadbury Research Library, UBC (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	38
Figure 2.24 – <i>Detail Fig. 2.2</i>	38
Figure 2.25 – Kate Bunce, 'Fairbrass and his Grandfather', in <i>Fairbrass: A Child's Story</i> by T. Edgar Pemberton (Birmingham: Cornish Bros, 1895), black and white book-illustration, 12. 8 x 9.8 cm, Cadbury Research Library, UBC (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	39

Figure 2.26 – Kate Bunce, <i>Tailpiece</i> , in <i>Fairbrass: A Child's Story</i> by T. Edgar Pemberton (Birmingham: Cornish Bros, 1895), black and white book-illustration, 12. 8 x 9.8 cm, Cadbury Research Library, UBC (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	39
Figure 2.27 – Unknown photographer, <i>Bunce Reredos, St Alban's, Bordesley</i> , c.1920-1921, in Birmingham, LB, DRO93/143/5, Newscuttings album, f16r (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald) .	40
Figure 2.28 – Unknown photographer, <i>Bunce Reredos, St Alban's, Bordesley</i> , c.1920-1921, in LB, DRO93/143/5, Newscuttings album, f16v (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	40
Figure 2.29 – Edmund H. New, <i>View of St Alban's</i> , c. 1900-1910, black and white wood-engraving, Library of Birmingham, DRO93/143/2, Newscuttings album, f17r (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	41
Figure 2.30 – Mary Lowndes, <i>Design for Stained Glass Window for St Saviour's, Saltley</i> , 1908, pencil and watercolour on tracing paper, Library of Birmingham, BDR/C6/1/75 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	41
Figure 2.31 - Sidney Meteyard, <i>Reredos, St Oswald's, Bordesley</i> , 1916, tempera on wood, in Alan Crawford (ed.), <i>By Hammer and Hand: the Arts and Crafts Movement in Birmingham</i> (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, c1984), p. 79	42
Figure 2.32 – Mary Newill, <i>Memorial Window</i> , 1906, stained glass, SS Mary and Ambrose, Edgbaston, side windows: approx. 122 x 45.5 cm, central window: 130 x 45.5 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	42
Figure 3.1 – ‘Stained Glass’, in The Bromsgrove Guild of Art, <i>Catalogue for the Exposition Universelle in Paris, 1900</i> (Printed at the Press of the Bromsgrove Guild, 1900), Worcestershire County Museums, Hartlebury Castle (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	43
Figure 3.2 – Florence Camm, ‘ <i>Boys attending Praemonstratensian Abbey for Instruction, XIIIth century</i> ’ part of <i>The History of Education in Halesowen series</i> , 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: © Alan Williams)	43
Figure 3.4 – Florence Camm, ‘ <i>Primitive education in the crafts at home, XVth century</i> ’ part of <i>The History of Education in Halesowen series</i> , 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: © Alan Williams)	44

Figure 3.4 – Florence Camm, ‘ <i>William White has the first Free School built, XVIth century</i> ’ part of <i>The History of Education in Halesowen series</i> , 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: © Alan Williams)	45
Figure 3.5 – Florence Camm, ‘ <i>Shenstone arriving at School, XVIIIth century</i> ’ part of <i>The History of Education in Halesowen series</i> , 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: © Alan Williams)	45
Figure 3.6 – Florence Camm, ‘ <i>The Building of the Church, XIth to XVth century</i> ’ part of <i>The History of Education in Halesowen series</i> , 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	46
Figure 3.7 – Florence Camm, ‘ <i>Two Scholars Holding the School Arms</i> ’ part of <i>The History of Education in Halesowen series</i> , 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, in John Billingham, <i>The Earls High School 1652-2000</i> (s.l.: s.n., 2000), bookcover	46
Figure 3.8 – Margaret A. Rope, <i>St Elizabeth, St Mary and St John the Baptist</i> , c.1918, stained glass, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead, side lancets: approx. 172 x 48 cm, central lancet: 174 x 53 cm (Photograph: Rafferty Fazakerly, https://www.flickr.com/photos/fazakerly/5296047799/in/photostream/)	47
Figure 3.9 – Margaret A. Rope, <i>Martyrs of the Shrewsbury Diocese, John Lindon memorial window</i> , c. 1928, stained glass, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead, approx. 150 x 180 cm (Photograph: Rafferty Fazakerly, https://www.flickr.com/photos/fazakerly/5296047799/in/photostream/)	48
Figure 3.10 – Margaret A. Rope, <i>St Thérèse of Lisieux</i> , 1930, stained glass, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead (Rafferty Fazakerly, https://www.flickr.com/photos/fazakerly/5321969222/in/photostream/)	49
Figure 3.11 – Margaret A. Rope, <i>St Winefride</i> , 1931, stained glass, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead (Photograph: Rafferty Fazakerly, https://www.flickr.com/photos/fazakerly/5321969222/in/photostream/)	50
Figure 3.12 – Florence Camm, <i>St Nicholas</i> , 1903, drawing in pencil with watercolour, BMT, with frame: 41 x 30.7 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	51

Figure 3.13 –Walter Camm posing as ‘Diligence’ with Florence Camm at his side, for two-light window by Florence Camm, <i>Courage and Diligence</i> , 1928, Hampton Lovett, Worcestershire, print from black and white glass negative, SA (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	51
Figure 3.14 - Florence Camm, <i>Detail of Courage and Diligence window</i> , 1928, Hampton Lovett, Worcestershire, SA (Photograph: digital photograph of digital scan of black and white glass negative © Sandwell archives).....	52
Figure 3.15 – Robert Newbery, <i>Hannah with the Infant Samuel</i> , 1911, south aisle, Church of St Elvan, Aberdare, in Martin Crampin, <i>Stained Glass from Welsh Churches</i> (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 2014), p. 159	52
Figure 3.16 – Thomas William Camm, <i>Circular</i> , c. 1916, print, SA (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	53
Figure 3.17 – Walter Camm (des.), in collaboration with Florence and Robert Camm (exec.), <i>The Legend of St Kenelm</i> , 1916, stained glass, St Kenelm’s Church, Halesowen (Photograph: © Alan Williams	54
Figure 3.18 – T.W. Camm, ‘The History of Education in Halesowen by Florence Camm’, c. 1931, printed Christmas Card, SA, BS-C/19/17 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	55
Figure 3.19 – Walter Camm (des.), <i>Design for Dignity in Labour</i> , Grove memorial window for St John’s, Halesowen, 1911, colour drawing to be executed in stained glass, BMT, including frame: 29 x 23 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	55
Figure 3.20 – Florence Camm, central panel of <i>St Margaret’s Well</i> intended for Grove family home, Halesowen, c. 1925-8, stained glass, 116.8 x 80 cm, private collection (Peter Nahum, http://www.leicestergalleries.com/19th-20th-century-paintings/d/florence-camm/21401)	56
Figure 3.21 – Florence Camm, <i>Design for the Dante and Gabriel Window</i> , 1911, BMT, in Colin Cruise, <i>Pre-Raphaelite Drawing</i> (New York: Thames & Hudson, c2011), p. 202	56
Figure 3.22 – Florence Camm, cartoons for <i>Halesowen Grammar School windows</i> , c.1931, black and white photograph, SA, T34-334 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	57
Figure 3.23 – <i>Employees at T.W. Camm cutting glass</i> , c. 1910-1930, black and white photograph, in John Burgin, ‘Thomas William Camm and his Family Designers and Makers of Stained Glass at the Studio in Smethwick 1885-1963’, MA Dissertation (City of Birmingham Polytechnic, 1984), Illustration XII	57

Figure 3.24 – <i>Employee at T.W. Camm selecting lead comes</i> , c. 1910-1930, black and white photograph, in Burgin (1984), Illustration X	58
Figure 3.25 – <i>T.W. Camm Showroom</i> , c. 1915, printed card, SA, BS-C/18/5 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	58
Figure 3.26 – <i>Lowndes & Drury employees drawing out the cutline and cutting glass pieces</i> , c. 1910, black and white photograph, VAMA (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	59
Figure 3.27 – <i>Lowndes & Drury employee sticking up</i> , c. 1910, black and white photograph, VAMA (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	59
Figure 3.28 – <i>Tools for painting glass and example of effects produced</i> , in Lawrence Lee, George Seddon, and Francis Stephens, <i>Stained Glass</i> (London: Mitchell Beazley, 1976), p. 183	60
Figure 3.29 – Halesowen Grammar School floor plan with indications of emplacement of Florence Camm windows added in red, 1931, in Billingham (2000), p. 37	60
Figure 3.30 – <i>View of the Assembly Hall at Earls High 4 November 2015</i> (Photograph: © Alan Williams)	61
Figure 3.31 – T.W. Camm, <i>Decorative glasswork for Halesowen Grammar School Assembly Hall</i> , 1931, view of the main entrance (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	61
Figure 3.32 – Florence Camm, <i>Stourbridge Grammar School windows</i> , 1931, black and white photographs of assembled cartoons, SA, T34-448 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	62
Figure 3.33 – Florence Camm, <i>Cartoon of Edward VI for Stourbridge Grammar School windows</i> , 1931, colour drawing, BMT, with frame: 103.4 x 57.8 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	62
Figure 3.34 – T.W. Camm, Circular including reproductions of designs and glass by Florence Camm: Mabinogian Legends; heraldry; panel from ‘Ancient Mariner’; Birmingham Historical subjects; St Nicholas Legends; Easter Morn; Sistrum Legends; Vision of St Etheldreda; St Lucien’s Vision of St Gamaliel; St Hubert; Courage, c. 1916, print, SA, BS-C/18/4 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	63
Figure 3.35 – Florence Camm, <i>Design for Holy Grail 18-lancet window for Princeton Graduate College</i> , c.1917, coloured drawing, BMT, with frame: 73.3 x 40.4 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	63

Figure 3.36 – Florence Camm, <i>Sir Galahad in Meditation</i> , 1917, stained glass, Cleveland Museum of Art, 94 x 40 cm, in H.G., ‘Two Panels of Modern English Glass’, <i>The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art</i> 5:5 (1 May 1918), p. 59.....	64
Figure 3.37 – Margaret A. Rope, <i>English Martyrs Window</i> , 1909-10, stained glass, Shrewsbury Cathedral (Photograph: Aidan McRae Thomson, https://www.flickr.com/photos/amthomson/7741577320/in/photostream/)	64
Figure 3.38 – Ellen Mary Rope, <i>Detail from Relief</i> , 1905-6, St Mary’s, Bolton-on-Swale (Photograph: Dave Webster, https://www.flickr.com/photos/davewebster14/3338008589/in/photostream/)	65
Figure 3.39 – Lowndes & Drury, <i>Lettice Street</i> , c. 1906, black and white photograph, VAMA (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	65
Figure 3.40 – Sister Margaret of the Mother of God (detail), c. 1928, digital photograph of a black and white photograph, Quidenham Carmel (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	
Figure 3.41 – Margaret A. Rope, <i>Cartoon for Ralph Crockett panel for Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead</i> , c. 1928, digital photograph of a photographic print, Shrewsbury Diocesan Archives (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	66
Figure 3.42 – Margaret A. Rope, <i>Magnificat</i> , c. 1925, stained glass, one of five panels originally at Woodbridge Carmel, now in enclosure at Quidenham Carmel (Photograph: © John Salmon)	67
Figure 3.43 – Margaret A. Rope, <i>Detail of Signature in East Window</i> , 1912-13, stained glass, St Peter’s church, Blaxhall (Photograph: Simon Knott, https://www.flickr.com/photos/norfolkodyssey/2633524520/in/photostream/)	67
Figure 3.44 – <i>Detail Fig. 3.37</i>	68
Figure 3.45 – <i>Detail Fig. 3.9</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	68
Figure 3.46 – <i>Detail Fig. 3.9</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	69
Figure 3.47 – Margaret A. Rope, ‘Visiting the Imprisoned’ detail of window of the Corporal Works of Mercy, c. 1913, stained glass, Shrine of the Sacred Heart and the English Martyrs, Tyburn Convent, Hyde Park Place, in <i>A Celebration of the Martyrs in Stained Glass</i> (London: Tyburn Convent, s.d.), n.p.	69
Figure 3.48 – <i>Detail Fig. 3.9</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	70

Figure 3.49 – <i>Detail Fig. 3.9</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	70
Figure 3.50 – <i>Detail Fig. 3.9</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	71
Figure 3.51 – <i>Detail Fig. 3.9</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	71
Figure 3.52 – <i>Detail Fig. 3.9</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	72
Figure 3.53 – Margaret A. Rope (des.), Margaret Edith Aldrich Rope (exec.), <i>St Thérèse of Lisieux</i> , c. 1950, stained glass, Church of the CMQ (Photograph: © John Salmon)	72
Figure 3.54 – <i>Detail of Photograph of Thérèse of Lisieux taken 7th June 1897</i> , in Pierre Descouvemont, <i>Thérèse and Lisieux</i> (Toronto: Novalis, 1996), p. 291	73
Figure 3.55 – <i>Detail Fig. 3.8</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	73
Figure 4.1 – May Morris, Mary Newill, and others, <i>The Owl</i> , 1901-1903, coloured wools on linen ground, BMT, on permanent loan from the BIAD, 214 x 155 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	74
Figure 4.2 – Mary Newill, four curtains and two pelmets, c. 1906, embroidered wools on linen, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, each curtain: 211 x 119.5 cm (Photograph: V&A, http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O315941/set-of-curtains-mary-j-newill/).....	76
Figure 4.3 – BMSA, <i>Embroidery class</i> , c. 1898 (in Anthea Callen, <i>Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870-1914</i> (New York: Pantheon Books, c1979), p. 121).....	76
Figure 4.4 – Mary Newill, <i>Embroidered cover for an illuminated address presented to John Thackray Bunce</i> , 1896, in Anonymous, ‘Studio-Talk’, <i>The Studio</i> 7:37 (April 1896), p. 178...	76
Figure 4.5 – <i>Indo-Dutch embroidery</i> , 17th century, in C. Stanley Clarke, ‘Indo-Dutch Embroidery of the Seventeenth Century’, <i>Needle and Thread</i> 2 (April 1914)	76
Figure 4.6 – May Morris, <i>Notes from Birmingham lectures</i> , c. 1899-1903, William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	77
Figure 4.7 – <i>Detail of Fig.4.1</i>	77
Figure 4.8 – Mary Newill, <i>Detail of bedcover</i> , c. 1908, coloured wools on linen ground, BMT, 239 x 234 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	78
Figure 4.9 – Mary Newill, <i>Super-altar Frontal</i> , c.1916, embroidered wools on linen, each embroidered panel 67 x 27 cm, Uppingham School Chapel, full altar cloth: 189.7 x 121.8 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	78

Figure 4.10 – Grace Christie, <i>Embroidery with Owl</i> , c. 1914, linen embroidered with coloured silks, V&A, London, 52.5 x 172 cm (Photograph: V&A, http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O17414/panel-christie-archibald-mrs/)	79
Figure 4.11 – <i>Royal School of Art Needlework workroom, Exhibition Road</i> , c. 1903, in Lynn Hulse, ‘Introductory Essay’ to <i>Royal School of Needlework Handbook of Embroidery</i> (1880) by Letitia Higgin ed. by Lady Marian Alford (Hampton Court Palace: Royal School of Art Needlework, 2010), p. 88.....	79
Figure 4.12 – May Morris, Mary Newill, and others, <i>Bed-hangings</i> , 1916, embroidered wool on linen, Cranbrook Art Museum, each panel: 195 x 68.6 cm (Photograph: Shoshana Resnikoff, ‘Cranbrook Sightings: Inside the Vault’, http://www.cranbrookart.edu/museum/wordpress/2014/03/happy-birthday-may-morris/)	80
Figure 4.13 – Mary Newill (des.), assisted by Violet and Edith Holden (exec.), <i>Gareth and Lynet</i> , 1893, embroidered wool and silk on fabric under glass, Victoria and Albert Museum, 57 x 206 cm, in Anonymous, ‘The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery: Third Notice’, <i>The Studio</i> 28:121 (April 1903), p. 181	80
Figure 4.14 – May Morris, Miss Yeats, Miss Wright and Miss Deacon, <i>Kelmscott Manor Bed-hangings</i> , 1891-2, Society of Antiquaries of London (Photograph: RobertTJW, ‘Pre-Raphaelite Reflections’, https://dantisamor.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/picture-49.png)	81
Figure 4.15 – May Morris (des.), Theodosia Middlemore (co-ex.), <i>Bed-hangings</i> , c.1900, hand-spun and hand-woven linen embroidered with natural dyed crewel wool, National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh, each panel: 191.5 x 146 cm (Photograph: National Museum Scotland, ‘May Morris Embroideries Fact File’, http://www.nms.ac.uk/explore/collections-stories/art-and-design/may-morris-embroideries/).....	81
Figure 4.16 – Mary Newill, <i>Embroidered Landscape</i> , c. 1924, current location unknown, in E. Ruth Rayner, ‘The Embroiderers’ Guild Exhibition’, <i>The Studio</i> 87:370 (January 1924), p. 21	82
Figure 4.17 – Lily Yeats, <i>Two Magpies on a Stone Wall</i> , c. 1910, silk embroidery on blue paplin ground, 25 x 35 cm (Photograph: Art Net, ‘Two Magpies’, http://www.artnet.de/k%C3%BCnstler/lily-yeats/two-magpies-on-a-stone-wall-PdLwCj3rmseRQUfh2C_JpA2)	82

Figure 4.18 – Mary Newill, <i>Una and the Red Knight and the Wandering Wood</i> , c. 1898 in Top o’ the Hill, Edmund Butler’s house in Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, in the <i>Modern British Domestic Architecture</i> (1901), p. 801.....	83
Figure 4.19 – Mary Newill, <i>Una and the Red Cross Knight and the Wandering Wood</i> , c.1898, as shown in the Paris Exhibition of 1900, in Aymer Vallance, ‘Arts and Crafts, British Decorative Art in 1899 and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Part III’, <i>The Studio</i> 18:81 (December 1899), p. 190	83
Figure 4.20 – Mary Newill, <i>Una and the Red Cross Knight and the Wandering Wood</i> , c.1898, wool and silk embroidery on silk and linen fabric with hessian and wool appliqué, in Worcestershire County Museum, Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire, 183 x 103 cm and 186 x 102 cm, in Yvonne O’Hara, ‘Mary Jane Newill: Arts and Crafts Pioneer Rediscovered’, MA dissertation (University of Warwick, 2008), Figs 18-19.....	84
Figure 4.21 – <i>Detail of Fig. 4.2</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	84
Figure 4.22 – <i>Detail of Fig. 4.2</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	85
Figure 4.23 – <i>Detail of Fig. 4.2</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	85
Figure 4.24 – <i>Detail of Fig. 4.9</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	86
Figure 4.25 – <i>Detail of Fig. 4.2</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	86
Figure 4.26 – <i>Detail of Fig. 4.2</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	87
Figure 4.27 – <i>Detail of Fig. 4.13</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	87
Figure 4.28 – Mary Newill, <i>Study of Ilex Trees</i> , c. 1895, in Supplement to <i>The Studio</i> (15 May 1895)	88
Figure 4.29 – Mary Newill, <i>Embroidered Bookcover</i> , 1896, in Anonymous, ‘The Arts and Crafts Exhibition, 1896, Part IV’, <i>The Studio</i> 9:46 (January 1897), p. 278.....	88
Figure 4.30 – Mary Newill, <i>Detail of rabbits in ‘Angel’s memorial window to Good R.D. Newill</i> , 1906, stained glass, St Peter’s Church, Wrockwardine (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)	89
Figure 4.31 – <i>Detail of Fig. 4.2</i> (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald).....	89
Figure 4.32 – Mary Newill, <i>Queen Matilda Sewing the Bayeux Tapestry</i> , 1898, three stained glass panels, The Anchorage, 137 Handsworth Wood Road, Birmingham, est. 70 x 40 cm, in O’Hara (2008), Fig. 48.....	90

Figure 4.33 – Sidney Meteyard, *'I am half-sick of shadows', said the Lady of Shalott*, 1913, oil on canvas, private collection, 76 x 14 cm (Photograph: Art Renewal Center, http://artrenewal.org/artwork/765/765/4702/i_am_half-sick_of_shadows_said_the_lady_of_shalott-large.jpg) 90

Introduction

Is it so wild a dream to think of it as being useful not only to the students themselves but to the community at large; to think of these students being encouraged to plan and, and in certain cases, to execute decorations for your public buildings, nay, to work at the designing of the public buildings themselves, to carve and paint the portraits of your noblest citizens, to design your sign boards and superintend everything which appertains to the beauty of your city?¹

This thesis addresses the overlooked contribution of female graduates of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art (BMSA) to the regional expression of the Arts and Crafts movement between 1880 and 1930. As will be made manifest, these craftswomen realised the painter William Rothenstein's (1872-1945) dream, expressed in the opening quote, of helping make the city of Birmingham, and others, more beautiful thanks to their artworks. W.R. Lethaby, director of the London Central School of Arts and Crafts, declared in 1901 that 'this [the Birmingham] school, in its great excellence and in the varied channels of its endeavours, is hardly a typical and representative institution.'² Despite the special status which the Birmingham School enjoyed in its time, its output and indeed Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement as a whole, have been relatively little studied. Women's participation and production within this region is even less charted despite an undeniable material legacy. This thesis will offer insight into the work of Georgie Gaskin (1866-1934), Celia Levetus (1874-1936), Kate Bunce (1856-1927), Myra Bunce (1854-1919), Florence Camm (1874-1960), Margaret A. Rope (1882-1953), and Mary Newill (1860-1947). It will be argued that these women artists were *integral* to the renewal of book-illustration, the revival of the artistic technique of painting in tempera, stained glass making and embroidery, crafts central to Birmingham's reputation amongst Arts and Crafts practitioners. Their affiliation to artistic bodies which marked the contemporary recognition of their accomplishments will be brought to light. The importance of such

¹ William Rothenstein, 'Address February 1908', in *Birmingham School of Art Addresses 1892-1912* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones & Son, s.d.), p. 196

² W.R. Lethaby, '*The Study and Practice of Artistic Crafts*': *An Address Delivered by – at the Birmingham Midland Institute on the 15th of February, 1901* (Birmingham: Printed at the Guild Press, 1901), p. 1

institutions in garnering social, financial and press support will emerge from the discussion of individual artworks. Where these contacts could not be made, the establishment of alternative personal networks enabled craftswomen to realise their ambitions. This thesis will trace a web of interactions based on geographical proximity, shared workspaces, and social connections. Attention will be paid to craftswomen's role as educators which ensured the transmission of ideas and skills to a following generation, revealing them as shapers and not merely followers or consumers of this movement.

This research responds to a gap in current literature on the participation of women in the British Arts and Crafts movement, particularly in Birmingham. It turns to feminist scholarship in view of the *challenge* this poses to existing disciplines.³ Feminist modes of inquiry, which amongst other things interrogate the underrepresentation of women artists, have been integrated within the art historical discipline over the last forty years.⁴ Scholarship on the British Arts and Crafts movement, however, has been largely untouched by these concerns. This is illustrated by the fact that more than thirty years after its publication in 1979, Anthea Callen's book *Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement, 1870-1914* remains the reference on this topic.

One explanation as to the dearth of recent literature on women artists of the Arts and Crafts movement is identified by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard. They note that 'the dialectical discourse between "high art" and "crafts", so important a part of the feminist art-historical project in the 1970s and 1980s, is no longer so central in the literature.'⁵ As feminist scholars moved on from the discussion of media-based hierarchical distinctions and their gendered implications, considered as widely addressed, they seem to have likewise distanced themselves from topics which proved fruitful to this sphere of interrogation. Nonetheless, women artists of the Arts and Crafts movement, for instance, still warrant further research.

³ A great example of the critical and self-reflexive approach this demands is given in Moira Roth, 'Teaching Modern Art History from a Feminist Perspective: Challenging Conventions, my Own and Others' (1987), in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000*, ed. Hilary Robinson (Oxford; Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 139-146

⁴ This by no means suggests that female artists are solely the concern of feminist scholars, or that feminism as theory is relevant to women only.

⁵ Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (eds), *Reclaiming Female Agency: Feminist Art History after Postmodernism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, c2005), p. 3

More recently, focused case-studies usually in the form of journal articles or essays in feminist anthologies have shed light on specific craftswomen.⁶ What is lacking, however, is a renewed interrogation of craftswomen's participation on a group-level, and not only as isolated exceptions. Did Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin's claim, back in 1976, that 'women as a group were not prominent in the English Arts and Crafts Movement' deter scholars from investigating the phenomenon on a larger scale?⁷ Stella Tillyard advanced another cautious interpretation of women's place within the history of the movement, noting that 'there were few female groups which were both professional and visionary.'⁸ She identified 'professional and semi-professional' craftswomen as occupying a 'half-way house' since 'women were encouraged to think of Arts and Crafts as a suitable field of employment, but not as a vehicle for radicalism.'⁹ Furthermore, Tillyard stated that 'most women involved in Arts and Crafts were concerned not with female emancipation or economic independence but with fashion.'¹⁰ This suggests a very specific yet unacknowledged definition of the 'professional' artist. The female craftsworker is employed and involved in an artistic activity identified as part of a movement of historical interest. Yet her perceived 'lack of radicalism' or insufficient pay push her outside of the general narrative of the movement's history. This thesis will challenge the validity of such statements on a regional basis, framed by a common geographical (Birmingham), institutional (BMSA graduates) and chronological (1880-1930) practice.

The longstanding hold of the idea of the 'separate spheres' (private realm of the domesticated female vs. public life of the professional male) on literature regarding the Victorian era might have contributed to the presumption that professional craftswomen were the exception. Clarissa Campbell Orr has observed that in actuality 'historians have found that these

⁶ See for instance Janice Helland, 'Frances Macdonald: The Self as Fin-de-Siècle Woman', *Woman's Art Journal* 14:1 (1993), pp. 15-22; Janice Helland, 'The Critics and the Arts and Crafts: The Instance of Margaret Macdonald and Charles Rennie Mackintosh', *Art History* 17:2 (June 1994), pp. 205-222; Ann O'Donoghue, 'Mary Lowndes – A Brief Overview of her Life and Work', *The Journal of Stained Glass* 24 (2000), pp. 38-52;

Elizabeth Cumming, 'Patterns of Life: The Art and Design of Phoebe Anna Traquair and Mary Seton Watts', in *Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935: The Gender of Ornament*, eds Bridgett Elliott and Janice Helland (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 15-34; Jan Marsh, 'May Morris: Ubiquitous, Invisible Arts and Crafts-Woman', in Elliott and Helland (2002), pp. 35-52

⁷ Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin (eds), *Women Artists: 1550-1950* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), p. 60

⁸ S. K. Tillyard, *The Impact of Modernism 1900-1920: Early Modernism and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Edwardian England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), p. 7

⁹ Ibid., p. 8

¹⁰ Ibid.

codes were honoured as much in the breach as in the observance.’¹¹ Late twentieth century re-evaluations have thus put into doubt ‘how accurate and useful the concepts of public versus private, male versus female, really are.’¹² Deborah Cherry has incisively argued that the theory of the separate spheres was in fact a discursive construction in reaction to increasingly vociferous Victorian women.¹³ But the examples presented so far are just a number of many factors which might justify the underrepresentation of women’s participation in this movement in extant publications. The very nature of the secondary literature on the Arts and Crafts movement seems to provide the most enlightening view as to how this omission has been perpetuated, as will emerge from an overview of its historiography.

The first half of the twentieth century is marked by the absence of scholarship on the Arts and Crafts movement. The High Modernists’ cult of abstraction, art’s autonomy, individualism, and technological progress rendered the historicising, political and richly decorated handmade objects of the Arts and Crafts movement of little interest.¹⁴ Nikolaus Pevsner’s seminal work *Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius*, first published in 1936, stood alone in its acknowledgement of the impact of the Arts and Crafts movement on Modernist British design. Pevsner’s vision of art history, however, fits into Lisa Tickner’s synthesis of Modernist scholars’ emphasis on ‘formalism and ahistoricism’ with a ‘reverence for the avant-garde and the individual artist-hero ... its sense of itself as objective and disinterested, its pursuit of universal values at once transcendent (of mundane social realities) and intrinsic (to the autonomous work of art, severed from the social circumstances of its production and circulation).’¹⁵ Indeed Pevsner’s narrative did not render any service to craftswomen, or indeed craftsmen either outside of a handful of elected designers and architects. As brought to light by feminist scholars, the Modernist discourse formed intricate links between

¹¹ Clarissa Campbell Orr, *Women in the Victorian Art World* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 4

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Deborah Cherry, *Painting Women: Victorian Women Artists* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 120-128

¹⁴ Christopher Reed offers an insightful analysis of how the mythology of Modernism impacted not only on the appreciation of art of the past, but also what made the grade of ‘modern’ in its own time. [Christopher Reed, *Bloomsbury Rooms: Modernism, Subculture, and Domesticity* (New Haven and London: Publ. for the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture, New York by Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 1-18

¹⁵ Lisa Tickner, ‘Modernist Art History: The Challenge of Feminism’ (1988), in Robinson (2001), p. 251

the concepts of artistic vocation and masculine sexuality.¹⁶ Griselda Pollock has argued that there was a break, rather than a continuation, in terms of gender relations after the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁷ Roszika Parker and Griselda Pollock have claimed that ‘the existence of women artists was fully acknowledged until the nineteenth century, but it has only been virtually denied by modern artists.’¹⁸

A fuller rediscovery of the Arts and Crafts movement had to wait until the second half of the twentieth century. The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) put together an exhibition of Victorian and Edwardian decorative arts in 1952, the first of its kind.¹⁹ This included many Arts and Crafts artefacts, particularly ecclesiastical metalwork. However, the crux of the literature on the movement occurred in the 1980s, the result of a practical revival in handicrafts in the 1970s which led to the growth of a market for Arts and Crafts products. The commercial impulse behind the reconnection at this time with the Victorians’ and Edwardians’ engagement with handicrafts, placed commercial art galleries at the forefront of the reappraisal of the historical Arts and Crafts movement. While valuable, this contribution to knowledge was driven by business parameters and subject to specific constraints.

The Fine Art Society in London is to be credited with the rediscovery of Birmingham’s Arts and Crafts school of artists in particular. The gallery’s 1969 exhibition *The Earthly Paradise: F. Cayley Robinson, F. L. Griggs and the Painter-Craftsmen of the Birmingham Group* was accompanied by a catalogue with an introductory essay by Charlotte Gere. As noted in its acknowledgments the exhibition was ‘probably the largest and most comprehensive showing of works by Birmingham artists of the Arts and Crafts movement since a previous

¹⁶ Carol Duncan was the first to offer a radical critique of how the avant-garde early twentieth century male painter ‘annihilated all that [wa]s human in his opponent’ (woman) by ‘asserting his own sexual will.’ [Carol Duncan, ‘Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth-Century Vanguard Painting’, in *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany*, eds Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), p. 297]

¹⁷ Griselda Pollock, *Avant-Garde Gambits, 1888-1893: Gender and the Colour of Art History* (London : Thames and Hudson, 1992), pp. 7-8

¹⁸ Roszika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 3. The theme was further explored by Pollock in her essay ‘Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity.’ [Griselda Pollock, ‘Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity’, in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, eds Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (Oxford: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 245-268]

¹⁹ Victoria and Albert Museum, *Exhibition of Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Arts: Catalogue* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1952)

exhibition in these [very same] galleries in 1907.²⁰ The project seems to have been largely facilitated by Charlotte Gere's connections with the Gere family by marriage to John Gere.²¹ Charles Gere (1869-1957) and half-sisters Margaret Gere (1878-1965) and Edith Payne (*b.* Gere, 1875-1969) were part of what was loosely referred to as 'the Birmingham Group' of artists. The exhibition's emphasis on works in tempera reflects the nature of the Gere siblings' production, as well as Charlotte and John Gere's taste as collectors.²² As pointed out by Charlotte Gere herself, availability of objects on loan reliant on social connections, the potential for sales, and the physical space of the gallery dictated what was presented to the public. Georgie Gaskin, for instance, was represented by her jewellery work alone, whereas it is the foundational role of book-illustration in her career as a craftswoman which will be addressed in the first chapter of this thesis. Small attractive pieces were privileged over large or fixed artworks such as stained glass, which is particularly difficult to display in a gallery setting. For a group of artists concerned with providing art as useful as it was beautiful there was a surprising absence of functional objects on show, the exhibits being mostly two-dimensional works to be hung on walls.

The implications of a commercial art gallery leading the historical reinsertion of the production of Birmingham artists of the Arts and Crafts movement to an audience/consumer of the second half of twentieth century are most apparent when considered in economic terms. The *Earthly Paradise* exhibition was establishing a new market. Following a first exercise such as this, galleries, commercial or non-commercial, would question the audience/consumer's reception in order to generate a future demand curve.²³ The audience's response to the queries would necessarily be modelled on the sample that had been made available. The initial offer

²⁰ *The Earthly Paradise: F. Cayley Robinson, F. L. Griggs and the Painter-Craftsmen of the Birmingham Group (exhibition catalogue, Fine Art Society, London, 30 June – 31 July 1969)*, ed. Charlotte Gere (London: Fine Art Society, 1969), p. 1. For a review of the 1907 exhibition see C. Napier-Clavering, 'Birmingham Painters and Craftsmen at the Fine Art Society's Galleries', *The Studio* 42-177 (December 1907), p. 215-222.

²¹ For more information on the family connection see Charlotte Gere's introduction for Malcolm Haslam, *Arts and Crafts Book Covers* (Shepton Beauchamp: Richard Dennis, 2012)

²² Christopher Riopelle and Xavier Bray, *A Brush with Nature: The Gere Collection of Landscape Oil Sketches* (London: National Gallery, 2003)

²³ This curve, in the case of the commercial gallery, would record prices determining the potential sale-value of such goods were they to be presented anew. For a non-profit establishment such as a public art gallery, the numbers they would be interested in would relate to visits and sales of catalogues and other derived merchandising. The logic of 'profitability' remains, it is just expressed in statistics which can be translated to 'impact' and 'public service,' upon which funding bodies allocate project financing.

would thus shape future demand, known as ‘want formation.’²⁴ Another parameter to take into consideration is that ‘demand does not refer solely to wants, but wants backed by money.’²⁵ It is therefore the audience/consumer with significant buying power who dictates what type of artworks will be shown in future, and what type of display is considered most effective for the appreciation of these artworks. ‘The politics of value’ as posited by the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai in his introduction to *The Social Life of Things*, ‘is in many contexts [such as this one] a politics of knowledge.’²⁶

Whilst essential, the historical reinsertion of the Arts and Crafts movement, particularly that of Birmingham artists was therefore subject to economic forces. The awakened public interest in Arts and Crafts objects in general was met in turn by survey books and exhibitions organised by public art galleries with accompanying publications, which were informed by perceived public demand. These, such as Elizabeth Cumming and Wendy Kaplan’s *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, issued in 1991 opted for a canonical approach, placing a strong emphasis on architecture. Likewise curators chose to reiterate a now increasingly familiar canon for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art’s 2004 exhibition *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Europe & America*, as well as the V&A’s major *International Arts and Crafts* exhibition in 2005, both immortalised by catalogue. Rosalind P. Blakesley contributes the most recent addition to these richly-illustrated introductory overviews.²⁷

The inherent bias against women artists in this type of canonical history of art has long been denounced by feminist scholars.²⁸ Pollock offers a definition of the canon as ‘the

²⁴ Paul Swanson, *An Introduction to Capitalism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 86

²⁵ Ibid., p. 90

²⁶ Arjun Appadurai, ‘Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value’, in *The Social Life of Things*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 6; For further discussion of this idea see Brian Spooner, ‘Weavers and Dealers: the Authenticity of an Oriental Carpet’, in *The Social Life of Things*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 195-235. PhD research answers to a quite different set of pressures and its value is assigned in terms of ‘originality’ and ‘academic relevance.’ These pressures, in turn, will necessarily affect the approach to artworks and the knowledge which it seeks to produce.

²⁷ Rosalind P. Blakesley, *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (London: Phaidon Press, 2006)

²⁸ See Linda Nochlin, ‘Why Have There Been no Great Women Artists?’, in *Art & Sexual Politics*, eds Thomas B. Hess and Elizabeth C. Baker (New York and London: Collier Macmillan, 1973); ‘Firing the Canon’, panel organised by Linda Nochlin for the Conference of Art Historians, New York, 1991; Nanette Salomon, ‘The Art Historical Canon: Sins of Omission’, in *(En)gendering Knowledge: Feminism in Academe*, ed. Joan Hartmann and Ellen Messer-Davidow (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), pp. 222-36; Adrian Rifkin, ‘Art’s Histories’, in *The New Art History*, ed. Al Rees and Frances Borzello (London: Camden Press, 1986), pp. 157-63; ‘Rethinking the Canon’, a collection of essays, *Art Bulletin* 78:2 (June 1996), pp. 198-217; Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the Canon: Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art’s Histories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999)

retrospectively legitimating backbone of a cultural and political identity, a consolidated narrative of origin, conferring authority on the texts selected to naturalise this function.’²⁹ The problem it poses for women artists is in its structural ‘discursive formation which constitutes the objects/texts it selects as the products of artistic mastery and, thereby, contributes to the legitimation of white masculinity’s exclusive identification with creativity and with Culture.’³⁰ The canon’s operation of exclusion is perfectly illustrated by the chronology of the movement included in the introduction to the *Encyclopedia of Arts and Craft: The International Arts Movement 1850-1920* edited by Kaplan in 1989.³¹ This has attempted the difficult task of narrowing down fifty years of artistic history to ‘significant’ events associated with a handful of male actors, notably John Ruskin (1819-1900), William Morris (1834-1896), C.R. Ashbee (1863-1942), and C.R Mackintosh (1868-1928).

Indeed, ‘the absence of any specific comment on the whole phenomenon of Arts and Crafts feminism’, about which Lisa Tickner and Deborah Cherry have thought-provokingly written, was one of the criticisms which Peter Cormack levelled at the catalogue of the 2005 V&A exhibition.³² Women’s politically-charged presence was more strongly felt in the National Portrait Gallery’s investigation of the Arts and Crafts movement behind the title *Anarchy & Beauty: William Morris and his Legacy 1860-1960*, held between October 2014 and January 2015. The show critically engaged with the conventional cut-off point of the movement with the advent of the First World War, expanding its reach to the 1951 Festival of Britain. For all its self-reflexive inclusiveness, however, the exhibition concept ironically perpetuated the model of the male genius protagonist, in part the fallout of a biographical approach.

This highlights another issue, which has been the preponderance of biographical writings in relation to the Arts and Crafts movement. The tendency has been to emphasise

²⁹ Pollock (1999), p. 3

³⁰ Ibid., p. 9

³¹ Wendy Kaplan (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Arts and Craft: The International Arts Movement 1850-1920* (London: Headline, 1989), pp. 14-15

³² Peter Cormack, ‘A Truly British Movement’, *Apollo* 161 (April 2005), p. 50. See Lisa Tickner, ‘Suffrage Campaigns: The Political Imagery of the British Women’s Suffrage Movement’, in *The Edwardian Era*, eds. Jane Beckett and Deborah Cherry (Oxford: Phaidon and Barbican Art Gallery, 1987), pp. 100-116; Lisa Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women: Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign 1907-14* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1987); Deborah Cherry, ‘Women Artists and the Politics of Feminism 1850-1900’, in Orr (1995), pp. 49-69; Deborah Cherry, *Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850-1900* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 1-58; for a richly illustrated exhibition-based publication see Irene Cockroft, *New Dawn Women: Women in the Arts and Crafts and Suffrage Movement at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century* (Compton, Surrey: Watts Gallery, 2005)

makers rather than their actual works. This is felt for instance in Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nunn's alternative canons of female Pre-Raphaelite and Arts and Crafts designers.³³ Popular biographies, such as Fiona MacCarthy's lives of artists like William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898), have responded to the interest in personalities.³⁴ But as poststructuralist theory has made manifest, 'there are problems in linking an artist's life to her work.'³⁵ There lingers a longstanding 'assumption that art by men explains the world, whereas art by women explains their life.'³⁶ This encourages a problematic overreliance on 'the details of women artists' lives' in interpreting the significance of their work, 'whereas the same is not true of the male artists to whom they are compared.'³⁷

A recurring weakness of biographical approaches to art history seems to lie in the lack of distinction 'between historical persons and art-historical persons,' a difference referred to by Anita Silvers.³⁸ This differentiation aims to 'sort relevant from irrelevant circumstantial historical evidence by treating the artist as a construct, an implied or apparent author.'³⁹ In the framework advanced by Silvers, the 'features of a work' are considered 'as purposeful rather than accidental' and 'the product of an artistic agent.'⁴⁰ Considering the production of the painter Artemisia Gentileschi's oeuvre, Silvers proposes that the 'documentation of her history as an artist, as distinct from her history as a person, lies in the works themselves.'⁴¹ Likewise, this thesis looks at artworks in order to document the history of art(ists), identifying purposeful features, rather than using artworks to illustrate an artist's history.

Silvers' description of the artist as 'construct' correlates with my understanding of 'gender,' and consequently 'woman,' as socially-constructed categories. Elizabeth Ann Dobie's

³³ Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nunn, *Women Artists and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement* (London: Virago, 1989); Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nun, *Pre-Raphaelite Women Artists* (London: Thames & Hudson, c1997)

³⁴ Fiona MacCarthy, *The Simple Life: C.R. Ashbee in the Cotswolds* (London : Lund Humphries, c1981); Fiona MacCarthy, *Eric Gill* (London : Faber, 1989); Fiona MacCarthy, *William Morris: a Life for our Time* (London: Faber and Faber, 1994); Fiona MacCarty, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination* (London: Faber, 2011)

³⁵ Kristen Frederickson and Sarah E. Webb (eds), *Singular Women: Writing the Artist* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, c2003), p. 5

³⁶ Pamela Allara, 'The Creation (of a) Myth' (1998), in Robinson (2001), p. 282

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10

³⁸ This distinction was introduced by several contemporary philosophers, notably Kendall Walton and Jenefer Robinson, see Anita Silvers, 'Has Her(oine's) Time Now Come?,' in *Feminism and Tradition in Aesthetics*, eds Peggy Zeglin Brand and Carolyn Korsmeyer (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), p. 293

³⁹ Silvers (1995), p. 293

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

definition of ‘experiential difference’ can be invoked here. Dobie argues that ‘due to the assignment of sex roles, women’s and men’s lives are socially structured in such a way as to provide disparate realities for each. As a result they have divergent perceptions and expectations of the world.’⁴² The artistic arguments behind the production studied in this thesis are considered in the terms articulated by Griselda Pollock, that ‘we all come embodied, located, classed, gendered, linguistically and ideologically captured by terms.’⁴³ While ‘each artist works in a singularity of history and location ... something is being said that may have meaning for all of us beyond its point of production.’⁴⁴ It is in this sense of the artwork’s reach ‘beyond its point of production’ that the independence from its maker is perceived.

Another tendency within extant scholarship, particularly some of the earlier publications, has been the perpetuation of a formalist method of analysis.⁴⁵ This led to a questioning of the relationship between different actors of contemporaneous artistic movements based on stylistic similarity or difference, presenting interesting overlapping networks of artists. The limits of this approach are reached however when the discussion revolves around claiming specific artists or works as ‘Aesthetic’ vs ‘Arts and Crafts’ or ‘Art Nouveau’ in a battle of labels. In this paradigm, an in-depth historically-grounded study of artworks is equally lacking. This absence of the object is particularly problematic considering the movement’s ‘love affair with the “object-world” of the decorative arts’, as put by Alan Crawford.⁴⁶

The publications on Birmingham’s Arts and Crafts movement reflect the trends outlined above. These essentially consist of catalogues for exhibitions organised by the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (BMAG) in the early 1980s. The first of these showcased the work of Edith Payne which did little to dispel the myth of the amateur Victorian female flower-painter.⁴⁷

⁴² Elizabeth Ann Dobie, ‘Interweaving Feminist Frameworks,’ in Brand and Korsmeyer (1995), p. 216

⁴³ Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the Histories of Art* (London and New York: Routledge, c1988, printed 2003), p. xxvi

⁴⁴ Pollock (2003), p. xxix

⁴⁵ Elizabeth Aslin, *The Aesthetic Movement* (London: Elek, 1969); Tim Benton and Sandra Millikin, *Art Nouveau 1890-1902* (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 1975); Edward Lucie-Smith, *The Story of Craft: The Craftsman’s Role in Society* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1981); Isabelle Anscombe, *Arts & Crafts Style* (London: Phaidon Ltd, 1991)

⁴⁶ Alan Crawford, ‘United Kingdom: Origins and First Flowering’, in *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Europe & America: Design for the Modern World*, ed. Wendy Kaplan (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004), p. 61

⁴⁷ Her work is presented as ‘delicate miniature studies of flowers and grasses ... minutely studied and lovingly expressed.’ [*Edith Payne 1875-1959* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 6 July – 19 August 1979), ed. George Breeze (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1979), p. 5]

This was followed by another retrospective, this time positioning Joseph Southall (1861-1944) as a central actor of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement. George Breeze here underlines Southall's 'strong character and individualism', choosing 'to stand apart from others and fight the battles that he regarded as important.'⁴⁸ The painter thus fits into the role of the 'Great Artist,' a 'unique' genius working outside of the establishment, a character whose pervasiveness in art historical literature has been critically challenged by Linda Nochlin.⁴⁹ The following *Arthur & Georgie Gaskin* exhibition provided the opportunity to reflect on husband-wife artistic partnerships. Georgie, on whom very little documentation has survived, is described as 'the organiser' and reportedly 'disliked the fact that everyone was so attached to her husband,' despite the fact she was 'greatly admired intellectually by other men.'⁵⁰ Attention is also brought to the peculiarity of her physical appearance, 'her striking red hair' being 'in fact a wig made from her own hair which had come out quite early in life due to an illness.'⁵¹ Terminology denoting artistic creativity is however absent from the presentation of Georgie Gaskin's life and works. The more satisfactorily archived biography of Arthur Gaskin enabled George Breeze to quote from Southall's recollections of his friend. This presented the familiar narrative of the precocious Arthur who 'drew from a mere child' under the supervision of his father, 'a decorative artist.'⁵² These early signs of artistry were combined with the fact that he was a 'born teacher.'⁵³ Some of the artworks thus brought to light, and more, were presented anew in Stephen Wildman's conceptualisation of a 'Birmingham School' based on the collections of the BMAG.⁵⁴ The local art gallery thus actively promoted the city's artistic heritage and provided crucial resources to future scholars, which are not to be undervalued. My critical assessment of the analysis in these catalogues signals however the need for more academic research.

⁴⁸ *Joseph Southall 1861-1944: Artist-Craftsman* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 8 August – 30 September and Fine Art Society, London, 14 October – 7 November 1980), ed. George Breeze (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1980), p. 17

⁴⁹ Linda Nochlin, 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists ? (1971)', in *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays*, ed. Linda Nochlin (Oxford: Westview, 1988), pp. 153-6

⁵⁰ *Arthur & Georgie Gaskin* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 11 February – 21 March and Fine Art Society, London, 29 March – 30 April 1982), ed. George Breeze (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1981), pp. 10-11

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 6

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 7

⁵⁴ Stephen Wildman, *The Birmingham School: Paintings, Drawings and Prints by Birmingham Artists from the Permanent Collection* (Birmingham: Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery, 1990)

Alan Crawford's *By Hammer and Hand: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Birmingham*, published in 1984, marked the highpoint of these investigations, bringing together essays authored by curators and scholars. Each section explores a type of craft, tempera painting being featured again under the heading of 'decorative painting', in addition this time to architecture, book-illustration, metalwork, and stained glass. Women artists are present in these writings. However, they tend to be introduced as secondary, either as students, wives, sisters, daughters or followers. An appreciation of their work as fully trained professional artists remains to be written. There is therefore ample room and a need for the field to be updated. The discipline has evolved, providing the impetus for renewed interrogations and approaches, and new empirical evidence has come to light as well. The continued interest in this heritage has started to be exploited anew by local history bodies, such as the Birmingham Victorian Society.⁵⁵ The West Midlands History Institute based at the University of Birmingham has also been an important centre for raising awareness of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts Movement. Its *History West Midlands* website and journal has included features on artists such as Florence Camm, whose work will be discussed in chapter three.⁵⁶ These tend to adopt an introductory tone, precluding detailed close-analysis of artworks, as adapted to their format and mainly non-academic readership.

An increased visibility of objects and of those authored by women has been achieved in the regionalist studies of Nicola Gordon-Bowe and Elizabeth Cummings.⁵⁷ Other critical publications include Lisa Tickner's aforementioned writings on the relationship between Suffrage politics and design.⁵⁸ Close-readings of artworks are prominent in Linda Parry's studies on Arts and Crafts textiles, as well as Peter Cormack's recent book *Arts and Crafts*

⁵⁵ See for instance its publication Phillada Ballard (ed.), *Birmingham's Victorian and Edwardian Architects* (Wetherby: Oblong Creative for the Birmingham and West Midlands Group of the Victorian Society, 2009)

⁵⁶ Sally Hoban, 'Florence Camm and the Camm Studio of Smethwick', *West Midlands History* 4 (Spring 2014); Hoban also authored a Ph.D. thesis titled 'The Birmingham Municipal School of Art and Opportunities for Women's Paid Work in the Arts and Crafts Movement' (University of Birmingham, 2013). Largely reliant on a quantitative and descriptive approach, it provides useful statistics on women's local employment connected to the decorative arts' trade. With no substantial archival research outside of the BIAD archive previously explored by John Swift, and no illustrations, it nonetheless offers a good synthesis of extant scholarship related to its subject emphasising social historical factors.

⁵⁷ Nicola Gordon Bowe and Elizabeth Cumming, *The Arts and Crafts Movements in Dublin & Edinburgh 1885-1925* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998); Elizabeth Cumming, *Hand, Heart and Soul: the Arts and Crafts Movement in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2006)

⁵⁸ Tickner (1987)

Stained Glass.⁵⁹ Imogen Hart's book *Arts and Crafts Objects*, published in 2010, offers a reappraisal of the history of the movement as viewed through objects.⁶⁰ Hart diagnoses a deficiency in the ways of examining and interpreting decorative art which have prevailed to date. Instead of looking at the politics of production, Hart seeks to bring attention to the experience which these objects offered to audiences of their time.

My thesis does not claim to follow this approach, however it is sensitive to Hart's critique of the 'homogenisation of Arts and Crafts objects' as a result of their categorisation as part of a movement. Hart argues that 'one example will often do just as well as another to illustrate the textually founded concept of a movement', thus questioning the coherence of such an entity.⁶¹ In another publication, Alan Crawford has also identified an omission to address the importance of 'purely decorative objects, stained glass, windows, embroideries' for example.⁶² Although I do not agree with the idea that any object can be reduced to being 'purely decorative,' Crawford is right to bring attention to the underrepresentation of certain crafts such as stained glass and embroidery within the scholarship on the Arts and Crafts movement. This thesis thus consciously chooses to study techniques and media which have been marginalised in extant literature.⁶³

⁵⁹ Linda Parry, *The Victoria & Albert Museum's Textile Collection: British Textiles from 1850 to 1900* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1993); Linda Parry, *Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005); Linda Parry, *William Morris Textiles* (London: V&A Publishing, 2013); Peter Cormack, *Arts and Crafts Stained Glass* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre, 2015)

⁶⁰ Imogen Hart, *Arts and Crafts Objects* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010). Although, as noted by Peter Stansky 'the reader is not provided with quite as much detailed analysis of particular works as would seem to be promised by the title.' [Peter Stansky, 'Arts and Crafts Objects: Review', *Victorian Studies* 54:1 (Autumn 2011), p. 157]

⁶¹ Hart (2010), p. 4. Arts and Crafts designers were themselves attentive to the variety of approaches and products associated with the 'Arts and Crafts' label. R. Catterson-Smith pragmatically suggested that: 'The movement, passing under the name of "Arts and Crafts," admits of many definitions. It may be associated with the movement of ideas characteristic of the close of the last century, and 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 of emotional as distinguished from merely skilled and technical labour: 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 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. ... and besides the definitions attempted above, there are still others, 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.' Robert Catterson-Smith quoted in Anonymous, 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the Grafton Gallery. Third and Concluding Notice.', *The Studio*, 37:157 (April 1906), p. 227

⁶² Crawford (2004), p. 61

⁶³ I therefore chose not to have a chapter devoted to metalwork and jewellery, although an important field of activity for Birmingham, due to a larger amount of publications already relating to this topic.

My contention is that the politics of production were an essential part of these artists' identity. They were central to the teaching which Birmingham artists, men and women, received at the School of Art. The school's then-headmaster Edward R. Taylor introduced design into the early stages of education instead of leaving it to advanced classes. He had observed 'that the course's focus on accurate laboured copying, often lasting several years, had withered any inventive ability that students had originally possessed when they finally began to study design.'⁶⁴ Taylor suggested in his 1890 book on *Elementary Art Teaching* that students would further benefit from producing designs 'directly in the material rather than reproducing them from drawings on paper.'⁶⁵

A crucial turning-point occurred when the School became the first in England to obtain municipal status in 1885. Financial responsibility of the School fell on Birmingham's rate-payers, relegating the Governmental Department of Science and Art's involvement to quality control and examination.⁶⁶ This increased independence was 'marked by more local entry scholarships, a mixed liaison with local industries, and a tendency to challenge the Department's definition of appropriate art and design education.'⁶⁷ This coincided with the opening of the School's purpose-built premises on Margaret Street. The inauguration of an extension in 1893 meant that Taylor finally had the means in place to offer more extensive

Furthermore, many female graduates of the Central BMSA showed an interest in designing for this media, but few actually executed any of these designs with the noteworthy exceptions of Georgie Gaskin and Katie Eadie. Indeed artistic training tied to metalwork and jewellery was the concern of a separate branch school, the Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths (of which more later) which catered to students already involved in the city's metal trade. For further reading see Arthur S. Wainwright, 'The Jewellery of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Gaskin', *The Studio* 61:254 (May 1914), pp. 293-301; Charlotte Gere and Geoffrey C. Munn, *Jewellery: Pre-Raphaelite to Arts and Crafts* (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 1989); Toni Lesser Wolf, 'Women Jewellers of the British Arts and Crafts Movement', *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 14 (Autumn 1989), pp. 28-45; *Finely Taught, Finely Wrought: The Birmingham School of Jewellery & Silversmithing, 1890-1990* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Museum and Art Gallery 19 September 1990 – 13 January 1991), ed. Terry Hunt (Birmingham: Birmingham School of Jewellery, 1990); Elyse Zorn Karlin, *Jewelry and Metalwork in the Arts and Crafts Tradition* (Atglen, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Publ. Ltd., 1993); Elizabeth S. Goring, 'Suffragette Jewellery in Britain', *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 to the Present* 26 (2002), pp. 84-99; *Arts & Crafts Metalwork* (exhibition catalogue, Blackwell, The Arts & Crafts House, 23 July – 2 November 2003), ed. Edward King (Bowness-on-Windmere: Lakeland Arts Trust, 2003); Hoban (2013), pp. 100-131

⁶⁴ George Rawson, 'The Arts and Crafts Movement and British Schools of Art', *The Decorative Arts Society 1850 to the Present* 28 (2004), p. 33

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 41. See Edward R. Taylor, *Elementary Art Teaching: an Educational and Technical Guide for Teachers and Learners* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1890), pp. 151-64

⁶⁶ John Swift, 'The Arts and Crafts Movement and Birmingham Art School 1880-1900', in *Histories of Art and Design Education: Cole to Coldstream*, ed. David Thistelwood (Harlow: Longman in assoc. with the National Society for Education in Art and Design, 1992), p. 23

⁶⁷ John Swift, *Changing Fortunes: the Birmingham School of Art Building 1880-1995* (Birmingham: ARTicle Press, 1996), p. 14

‘workshop training under teachers who’, importantly, ‘were also working practitioners, rather than certified art masters.’⁶⁸

Women artists’ adoption of personally-involved ways of making is what makes them recognisable as integral participants of this specific artistic scene. The work of the artists discussed in this thesis was the product of professionals, not dilettantes as gendered discourses of the time made believe. The artist’s control over all stages of production was the Arts and Crafts movement’s counter-response to the division of labour endemic to industrialised manufacturing. Involvement throughout the process of realisation was considered necessary in order to achieve an ethical, high-quality, and beautiful product. This approach to making was a political statement, signalling a hope for a different society. Minimising this aspect of the object would therefore be negating the very factor which brought recognition in the eyes of these women artists’ peers and contemporaries. This is why the methods and organisation of artistic labour will be integral to my case studies.

Partly in reaction, therefore, to the relative absence of the artwork in the aforementioned scholarship this thesis has adopted an object-led approach in its study of Birmingham craftswomen’s production. This approach also engages with ongoing debates and issues faced by the art historical discipline. One of the paradoxes of this field is that whilst its subject is material, its discussion is often conveyed by means of a different medium to its original form, or even examined without any material support. Logistics and even chance determine the engagement with the artwork and formation of knowledge.⁶⁹ At the 2012 Congress of the International Committee of the History of Art dedicated to the ‘Challenge of the Object’, Michael Yonan argued that ‘the privileging of idea over matter and vision over touch’ was characteristic of much of contemporary art-historical Anglo-American scholarship.⁷⁰ On these

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 39

⁶⁹ For further discussion see Stephen Murray, ‘The Crisis in Art History?’, *Visual Resources* 27:4 (2011), pp. 314-8.

⁷⁰ Michael Yonan, ‘The Suppression of Materiality in Anglo-American Art-Historical Writing’, in *The Challenge of the Object – Die Herausforderung des Objekts: 33rd Congress of the International Committee of the History of Art, Nuremberg, 15-20 July 2012, Part 1* (Nürnberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 2012-2013), p. 63. For related reading see Amanda Boetzkes’s useful survey of the rise of the concept of ‘the thing’ in art historical and visual studies in the last twenty years. Boetzkes thus critiques W.J.T. Mitchell’s ‘Found Objects’ in *What Do Pictures Want: The Lives and loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 113-4, Graham Harman’s *Tool Being: Heidegger and the Metaphysics of Objects* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 2002), and *The Quadruple Object* (Washington, DC: Zero Books, 2011), and Bill Brown’s ‘Thing Theory’, *Critical Enquiry* 28:1 (Autumn 2001), pp. 1-22. Boetzkes proposes a useful definition of the term of ‘thing’ as signalling in this context

grounds it is contended that the more distanced the viewer is from the actual object, the more room there is for its fictionalisation. This in turn facilitates interpretations based on a fantasy of the artwork, which could ultimately disserve the conservation of the objects themselves. For this reason this thesis privileges close-readings of a restricted number of objects, over the temptation to illustrate the full range of Birmingham craftswomen's production. My position has been to use objects as my starting point and ultimately as the main vectors to my discussion.⁷¹ In privileging an in-depth study of the materiality (the medium, tactile qualities, and technique) of these selected works, the intent is to initiate renewed and integrated readings, which in turn will better inform current beliefs about their authors and their role within a wider artistic development.

This research project relies on Arthur C. Danto's theory of 'embodied meanings' for its understanding of the interactive fabrics of 'form' and 'content', most fully articulated in his final publication *What Is Art*, issued posthumously in 2013. An essentialist, Danto posits that 'there has to be some reason for the members of the Art World to judge something to be art', contending the insufficiency of George Dickie's institutional theory of art.⁷² Danto proposes that artworks possess 'invisible properties' which differentiate them from non-artistic objects.⁷³ This 'invisible' factor is tied to meaning, as 'works of art are about something.'⁷⁴ The specificity of art is that the meanings are 'embodied in the object that had them.'⁷⁵ By extension, 'works of art are embodied meanings.'⁷⁶ The artist creates 'a world as well as an object, and one has to try to enter the world in order to see what parts of the physical objects are relevant.'⁷⁷ Danto posits a relationship between the materiality of the artwork and a meaning which remains in flux. Whilst

'the quasi-autonomy of objects: their power to invoke unconscious and seemingly alien libidinal desires; their independent circulation through economic strata (the descent from commodity, to discarded object, to accumulation, to found, recycled or upcycled object); their agency and power to elicit unanticipated associations.' [Amanda Boetzkes, 'Interpretation and the Affordance of Things', in *Heidegger and the Work of Art History*, eds Amanda Boetzkes and Aron Vinegar (Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate, 2014), p. 269]

⁷¹ This choice was motivated in part by a year spent working in museum collections, which made me value the power of objects in fostering the acquisition of new knowledge. For further reflection see Christopher Breward, Glenn Adamson, Liz Miller, and Marta Ajmar, 'The Value of Arts and Humanities Research to Life in the UK: A Museum Perspective', *V&A Online Journal* 1 (Autumn 2008)

⁷² Arthur C. Danto, *What Art Is* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), p. 33

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 37

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

the meaning in its ‘embodiment’ is linked to the physical object, ultimately it ‘is not at all material.’⁷⁸ It is up to the viewer therefore to ‘interpret the meaning-bearing properties in such a way as to grasp the intended meaning they embody.’⁷⁹

This thesis turns to T.J. Clark’s articulation of a ‘Social History of Art’ in the 1970s for the basic tenets from which to tackle this challenge. Clark’s postulate marked a turning-point for Anglo-Saxon art historical scholarship, becoming the new orthodoxy in which my research can be inscribed. Clark made a case for the inefficacy of formalist approaches dependent ‘on intuitive analogies between form and ideological content.’⁸⁰ The issue was not to refute any correspondence between form and content but for these analogies to be made ‘specific and overt.’⁸¹ Clark defined the field of ‘social history of art’ as ‘the process of conversion and relation ... what concrete transactions are hidden behind the mechanical image of “reflection”, to know *how* “background” becomes “foreground”; ... to discover the network of real, complex relations between the two.’⁸² He underlined that ‘these mediations are themselves historically formed and historically altered; in the case of each artist, each work of art, they are historically specific.’⁸³ Specificity, as achieved through close-readings of objects, is therefore key to providing the means to critically engage with an artwork’s meaningful historical and ideological transactions. Imogen Hart’s criticism of the tendency for arbitrary objects to represent the widely diverse artistic production referred to as the Arts and Crafts movement can be seen as adopting a similar stance.⁸⁴

Clark’s argument is informed by a Marxist analysis of society, a premise shared with feminist art historical interventions such as Griselda Pollock’s. Where these agendas diverge however, as nuanced by Pollock, is in feminism’s investigation of structural social equality based not only on class but also on gender as ‘neither of these forms of exploitation is reducible to the other.’⁸⁵ It is against the backdrop of a capitalist and patriarchal society that the production of Birmingham craftswoman must be understood. These factors do not operate along

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 38

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ T.J. Clark, *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1982, first publ. 1972), pp. 10-11

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 11

⁸² Ibid., p. 12

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Hart (2010), p. 4

⁸⁵ Pollock (2003), p. 27

parallel impermeable lines, but form a complicated knot of ‘social conflict.’⁸⁶ Borrowing one of Clark’s phrases, Lisa Tickner argues for the ‘need [for] a history of the “battlefields of representations,” which is something other than a history of style and facture (or handling) on the one hand and events and institutions on the other.’⁸⁷ The Arts and Crafts movement’s approach to art-making openly engaged with this socio-politico-economic context. The idea of integrating art and life was a central theme in Arts and Crafts writings, as expressed in the opening quote by William Rothenstein, denoting the political character of the movement.

This thesis’s interpretation of the ‘political’ nature and potential of the artworks produced by Birmingham women artists is based on Jacques Rancière’s theory of the ‘politics of aesthetics.’⁸⁸ This has been developed over the last fifteen years and is part of a push in philosophy which questions anew the fusion of art and life. The French philosopher defines aesthetics in terms of:

the system of *a priori* forms determining what presents itself to sense experience. It is a delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible of speech and noise, that simultaneously determines the place and the stakes of politics as a form of experience. Politics revolves around what is seen and what can be said about it, around who has the ability to see and the talent to speak, around the properties of spaces and the possibilities of time.⁸⁹

The philosopher refers to the political character of aesthetics as a ‘partage du sensible’, officially translated to a ‘distribution of the sensible.’ As a native French speaker I propose the

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Tickner (2001), p. 251

⁸⁸ In this aspect it is quite distinct from feminist art historical scholarship of the 1970s and 1980s, whose authors were concurrently involved in the Women’s Liberation Movement and integrated the concept of ‘the personal is political’ into their academic practice. [Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (London, New York: I.B. Taurus, 2010), pp. xi-xiii]

⁸⁹ While I quote the official English translations in the text, I will footnote the original French followed by my own translation. Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, transl. by Gabriel Rockhill (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), p. 13; ‘...comme le système des formes *a priori* déterminant ce qui se donne à ressentir. C’est un découpage des temps et des espaces, du visible et de l’invisible, de la parole et du bruit qui définit à la fois le lieu et l’enjeu de la politique comme forme d’expérience. La politique porte sur ce qu’on voit et ce qu’on peut en dire, sur qui a la compétence pour voir et la qualité pour dire, sur les propriétés des espaces et les possibles du temps.’ [Jacques Rancière, *Le partage du sensible: esthétique et politique* (Paris: La Fabrique-éditions, 2000), pp. 13-14]; My translation: ...as the register of forms *seemingly* determining what is to be felt. It is a cutting apart of time and spaces, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise, which simultaneously defines the location and stakes of the political as a form of experience. The political relates to what one sees and what one can say of it, to who has the competence to see and the qualities to say it, on the properties of spaces and the possibilities of time.

idea is more meaningfully conveyed by ‘sensuous sharing.’ This ‘partage du sensible’ operates as follows:

I call the distribution of the sensible the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it. A distribution of the sensible therefore establishes at one and the same time something common that is shared and exclusive parts. This apportionment of parts and positions is based on a distribution of spaces, times, and forms of activity that determines the very manner in which something in common lends itself to participation and in what way various individuals have a part in this distribution.⁹⁰

In his essay ‘The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics’ Rancière specifies that ‘the relationship between art and politics’ refers to ‘the meaning and import of the configuration of a specific sphere – the sphere of aesthetics – in the political distribution of the perceptible.’⁹¹ It can be viewed as a proposal which might ‘resolve the apparent conflict between aesthetic value and political’ diagnosed by Michèle Barrett, ‘by attempting to construct an explicit relationship between the two.’⁹² While Barrett formulated this position as evading the problem of ‘aesthetic value’, when used concurrently with Danto’s theory of ‘embodied meanings’ it may be argued that art’s aesthetic value lies in its nature as a harbourer of meanings. The fact that the located, gendered, and classed viewer activates the meanings from their specific position entails an openly subjective judgement of aesthetic value, coherent with a feminist approach.

⁹⁰ Rancière, transl. by Gabriel Rockhill (2004), p. 12; ‘J’appelle partage du sensible ce système d’évidences sensibles qui donne à voir en même temps l’existence d’un commun et les découpages qui y définissent les places et les parts respectives. Un partage du sensible fixe donc en même temps un commun partagé et des parts exclusives. Cette répartition des parts et des places se fonde sur un partage des espaces, des temps et des formes d’activité qui détermine la manière même dont un commun se prête à la participation et dont les uns et les autres ont part à ce partage.’ Rancière (2000), p. 12; My translation : I call sensuous sharing this system of sensuous evidence which simultaneously makes apparent the existence of the communal and the divisions which define its respective places and parts. A sharing of the sensuous therefore concurrently fixes a shared communal and its exclusive parts. This repartition of the parts and places is founded on a sharing of spaces, time and forms of activities, which determine the very manner in which the communal lends itself to participation and in how each and anyone partake in this sharing.

⁹¹ Jacques Rancière, ‘The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics’, in *Reading Rancière*, eds Paul Bowman and Richard Stamp (London and New York: Continuum, 2011), pp. 7-8

⁹² Michèle Barrett, ‘Feminism and the Definition of Cultural Politics’ (1982), in Robinson (2001), p. 311

Therefore as defined by Rancière, Birmingham craftswomen, similarly to their male peers, were giving form to ‘political’ statements through the making of artworks (*fabrique du sensible*). Craftswomen’s ‘sensuous sharing’ (*partage du sensible*) was ‘delimited’ from craftsmen in terms of the socio-historical specific expectations of their gender. The same statement is applicable to the production of craftsmen on its own terms. In his 2003 essay Rancière clarifies that ‘there is a politics because the common is divided ... this division is not a difference of levels.’⁹³ Thus the distinction/division between a craftsman’s and craftswoman’s production, or indeed that of any artist regardless of sex, should not be understood in hierarchical terms. It is, precisely, in its difference, in the artwork’s ‘part-ness’ in the ‘communal,’ that lies its interest. As enforced by Rancière, his concept of politics, aesthetics, and their relationship, functions on the premise of dissent. By participating in a ‘communal’ sharing in the form of artistic production, by interacting, collaborating and co-exhibiting, craftswomen were practising and expressing dissensus. Indeed, Rancière specifies ‘this “common” sensory quality is already the stage of dissensus.’⁹⁴

Birmingham craftswomen thus acquired a political voice at a time when legally they were still being silenced.⁹⁵ Rancière’s theoretical posture, as outlined above, is sympathetic to feminist interpretations of women artists’ ‘agency.’ These focus on putting forward women’s resistance within a patriarchal regime, daring to be ‘active subjects’ rather than exclusively ‘passive objects.’⁹⁶ But as Rancière views it, ‘political dissensus’ (as ‘resistance’ might be understood) ‘is not the appearance or the form that would be the manifestation of an underlying social and economic process ... [it] is the actual reality of politics, not its hidden cause.’⁹⁷ In this

⁹³ Jacques Rancière, ‘The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics’ (2011), p. 1

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2

⁹⁵ A few important dates relating to British women’s rights at this time : A Women’s Suffrage Petition was presented to the House of Lords in 1852 but was rejected. A legal reprieve came in 1857 when the Matrimonial Causes Act allowed divorce through law courts instead of private act of Parliament. The conditions favoured the husband still, who need only prove his wife’s adultery, whilst the wife had to provide evidence of her husband’s adultery, plus incest, bigamy, cruelty or desertion. The first debate in Parliament on women’s suffrage occurred in 1867 when John Stuart Mills tried to get the reform bill to grant women the vote amended. This was defeated. The National Society for Women’s Suffrage was founded that same year. The second Married Woman’s Property Act in 1882 gave women ownership over all property acquired by their own efforts. The third Married Woman’s Property Act of 1893 finally gave women control of all their own property. The National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies was formed in 1898. In 1918, the Voting Act gave voting privileges to British women over 30. Then in 1928, British women won equal voting rights to men. [Duke University Libraries, ‘Timeline: British Women in the 19th Century’, <http://library.duke.edu/exhibits/britishwriters/timeline.html>, consulted 22 January 2016]

⁹⁶ Broude and Garrard (c2005), p. 3

⁹⁷ Rancière ‘The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics’ (2011), p. 1

sense Rancière differs from a feminist analysis of artworks as *representations* of emancipatory ideas, implying a further problematic selective process in terms of works identified as such. In Rancièrian terms, craftswomen's agency, craftswomen's political artistic production, simply *was*. It was and remains part of *reality*, whatever historical erasure has been applied.

Rancière also contributes to the challenge of the discourse of the Victorian 'separate spheres', when he claims 'there is politics ... when the boundary separating the political from the social or the public from the domestic is put into question.'⁹⁸ He continues, 'politics is a way of re-partitioning the political from the non-political. This is why it generally occurs 'out of place,' in a place which was not supposed to be political.'⁹⁹ The Bunce sisters' studio and workshop in their home (as will be discussed in chapter two) is no longer interpreted as a safe space of domesticity, on the contrary it politicises and blurs the domestic, associating it with the public workplace. This thesis thus focuses on 'recogniz[ing] and claim[ing] the power and agency' that Birmingham craftswomen had and continue to have through their surviving artworks.¹⁰⁰

These considerations all fit within the wider question of how art, the individual, and society interact. As Rancière elsewhere explains, 'the autonomy of art, in the aesthetic regime, is heteronomy as well: art is posited as a specific sphere falling under a specific experience, but no boundary separates its objects and procedures from the objects and procedures belonging to other spheres of experience.'¹⁰¹ Rancière's definition of aesthetics recalls William Morris's vision of the unity of art and life, Morris's vision of the future in which all such distinctions would be collapsed, the artist-worker crafting his art, crafting an art of life. Rancière muses 'the solitude of the aesthetic experience was bound, from the very beginning, with the promise of a future community where there would be no more art or politics as separate spheres of experience.'¹⁰² He continues, 'this means that, from the beginning, aesthetics has its politics – which, in [Rancière's] terms, is a metapolitics, a manner of 'doing politics' otherwise than

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 4

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Broude and Garrard (c2005), p. 22

¹⁰¹ Rancière, 'The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics' (2011), p. 11. Rancière's 'aesthetic regime of art' as noted by Ben Highmore, relates to 'the form of art emerging at the end of the eighteenth century that fundamentally recognizes the sensorial realm' using Stendhal as his example. [Ben Highmore, 'Out of Place: Unprofessional Painting, Jacques Rancière and the Distribution of the Sensible', in *Reading Rancière* (2011), p. 99

¹⁰² Rancière 'The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics' (2011), p. 8

politics does.’¹⁰³ The thinker concludes that aesthetics achieves something that ‘will always be missed by the ‘merely political’ revolution: freedom and equality incorporated in living attitudes, in a new relationship between thought and the sensory world, between the bodies and their environment.’¹⁰⁴ The adoption of Rancière’s ‘politics of aesthetics’ thus pushes for a renewed reading of Arts and Crafts’ objects, and as is the focus of this thesis, craftswomen’s role in the Arts and Crafts movement.¹⁰⁵

The relationship between ‘individual needs and desires’ and ‘the needs and desires of others’ is central to Regenia Gagnier’s analysis of ideologies in *fin-de-siècle* Britain. Gagnier posits that ‘Morris and those associated with him were exemplary in bringing the Fine and the Good together.’¹⁰⁶ She defines ‘The Fine, also called Taste’ as ‘the capacity to make distinctions on the basis of individual choice and preference, the domain of the aesthetic,’ while ‘The Good is the realm of our conduct toward others, the domain of ethics and politics.’¹⁰⁷ As Ruth Livesey argues, in this belief system which as noted by Stephen Yeo referred to itself as the ‘religion of socialism’, ‘a writer or an artist – even a woman writer or artist – could conceive of herself as crafting the new life of socialism through her effortful aesthetic labour.’¹⁰⁸ This produced a “politicized aesthetic” in which both the manual labourer and the artist stood on the same aesthetic continuum. Both were struggling to bring forth the new life by producing objects that united all in a communal desire for the still greater beauty that could only exist under socialism.’¹⁰⁹ The moral character behind this production did not preclude private interest. Nor was it impermeable to the capitalist economy from within which it worked. This is explored in relation to the gifting of artworks in chapter two, or the conflicting agendas of running a

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 9

¹⁰⁵ Ben Highmore argues for the usefulness of Rancière’s writings for art historians, which relates to what appealed to me upon discovering Rancière’s writings. Highmore contends that ‘in treating art as sensible matter Rancière connects artworks to communities of people in ways that are compelling and materialist: ‘Human beings are tied together by a certain sensory fabric, a certain distribution of the sensible, which defines their way of being together; and politics is about the transformation of the sensory fabric of “being together”.’ [Highmore (2011), p. 108, quotes from Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, trans. George Elliott (London: Verso, 2009), p. 56]

¹⁰⁶ Regenia Gagnier, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalization: On the Relationship of the Part to the Whole, 1859-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 150-1

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ruth Livesey, *Socialism, Sex, and the Culture of Aestheticism in Britain, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 3-4; See Stephen Yeo, ‘A New Life: the Religion of Socialism in Britain, 1883-1896’, *History Workshop Journal* 4:1 (1977), pp. 5-56

¹⁰⁹ Livesey (2007), p. 4

business reliant on profit and the desire of working towards the common good discussed in chapter three.

Distinctions based on class and their implications in terms of education was one of the questions on which John Swift gathered statistics in his extensive survey of the BMSA's archive. Targeting the period of transformation and expansion which occurred between 1880 and 1920, Swift approached the archives in relation to the 'attitude and policy to women as students and staff', questioning whether the institution was 'typical of other art schools and of society in its treatment of women.'¹¹⁰ Swift notes the particular environment which the Central School of Art provided for middle class women as 'one of the few places where advanced study could be undertaken.'¹¹¹ Indeed all of the makers whose work is discussed in this thesis can be considered as middle-class and studied at the Central School, often full-time, some of them as mature students.

The BMSA's branch schools, on the other hand, had been purposively set up in view of attracting working class, mostly male students, in the twelve-to-thirteen age bracket, in a bid to 'advance the relationship of art to industry.'¹¹² Swift notes that 'female working class students at the Branch Schools were in the minority' an interpretation of statistics which he problematically extends to include the Central School on Margaret Street.¹¹³ The author also contends that 'those whose finances were more restricted studied to become teachers.'¹¹⁴ This statement needs to be nuanced on account of Mary Newill, who enjoyed one of the longest teaching careers' amongst Birmingham staff. In 1889, the year she completed her foundational artistic training and obtained her teacher's qualification, Newill inherited the large sum of two thousand pounds from her cousin Joseph Beattie.¹¹⁵ This would have enabled her to practise her craft without worrying about a regular income. This did not prevent her however from undertaking practical teacher training in one of the branch schools before being hired at the Central School.

¹¹⁰ John Swift, 'Women and Art Education a Birmingham's Art Schools 1880-1920: Social Class, Opportunity and Aspiration', *Journal of Art & Design Education* 18:3 (October 1999), p. 317

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Yvonne O'Hara, 'Mary Jane Newill: Arts and Crafts Pioneer Rediscovered', MA dissertation (University of Warwick 2008), p. 14

All of the female graduates considered in this thesis, notwithstanding the Bunce sisters whose attendance predated more extensive student archives, are recorded as having obtained full scholarships for part if not most of their studies. As will be discussed in chapter four, Mary Newill used part of an award to study life painting from the nude in Paris. The fact that women artists were prevented from accessing such training has been interpreted by feminist art historians as one of the means by which women were kept outside of the most highly valued field of history and allegorical painting, which relied on the ability to realistically depict naked bodies. Newill was welcomed back into the institution upon her return from Paris, implying the School's condonement of her professional ambition. This challenges Swift's appraisal that 'in general, the education offered to all students irrespective of background, was based on the idea of achieving well within their respective social expectations.'¹¹⁶ In light of Newill's middle-class origins, this would have implied marriage and birthing a family, rather than a career in the arts. Overall, Swift adopts a cautious position not unlike Anthea Callen's, concluding that 'the education offered was not intended to enable students to challenge their social or gendered background, but to enable them to become capable and skilled within it.'¹¹⁷

This thesis will counter-argue that the ideology of the Arts and Crafts movement which permeated the School's teachings gave students the opportunity to question social and gendered expectations. This gives weight to the scepticism in recent scholarship towards 'the idea that the middle class was a coherent and clearly defined social group.'¹¹⁸ The private expression of this was the celibate life which a number of Birmingham craftswomen led. Writing in 1895 Coralie Glynn declared, as summarised by Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn, 'that modern women were keen to disengage from both marriage and motherhood because of the ingrained gender inequality of moral and legal codes and that their primary objective lay in their personal and professional development as human beings.'¹¹⁹ These were women who were not interested in 'riding behind.'¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Swift (1999), p. 319

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Jane Hamlett, *Material Relations: Domestic Interiors and Middle-Class Families in England, 1850-1910* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 4

¹¹⁹ Coralie Glyn, 'Nature's Nuns', *Humanitarian* (1905), summarised by Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn, 'Gender and Sexuality', in *The Fin-de-Siècle World*, ed. Michael Saler (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), p. 506

¹²⁰ See Mary Lyndon Shanley, "'One must ride behind": Married Women's Rights and the Divorce Act of 1857', *Victorian Studies* 25:3 (Spring 1982), pp. 356-76

The Arts and Crafts ethos can be seen operating along the same lines as Michèle Barrett's vision of how feminism might be allied with art to facilitate social equalizing. Barrett calls to 'work towards the creation of a cultural milieu in which feminist vision is creatively consumed as well as imaginatively produced.'¹²¹ In this context, Barrett argues, 'an emphasis on aesthetic skills is in fact democratizing rather than elitist – for skills may be acquired – whereas the notion of an artistic 'genius' forbids the aspirations of anyone outside the small and specialized group.'¹²² The BMSA was similarly fostering the development of skills beyond the traditional conception of the genius (*i.e.* male) 'artist', which Swift's statistics demonstrate:

Until the extension opened, many female students won prizes in the traditional areas of drawing, painting and modelling, but after 1894, when new prizes were introduced for paper design work liked to crafts, the percentage for female winners fluctuated between 40 and 60 percent, with a peak of 74 percent in 1899-1900, with an average mid 60 percentile. ... their success in executed designs from 1890 onwards ... rang[ed] from 40 to 100 percent success, the local prizes won by female students between 1899 and 1900 accounted for 74 percent of the 157 listed awards, and this success was repeated in external awards. They were out-performing their male contemporaries.¹²³

This might not have determined most of these students' life trajectories following graduation, but it had the benefit of demonstrating to them, and others, that they had the skills to work in collaboration or in competition with their male peers. Rancière's description of the meaning of politics in his earlier work *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* provides a probing means of considering female students' performance at the School of Art:

Politics exists because those who have no right to be counted as speaking beings make themselves of some account, setting up a community by the fact of placing in common a wrong that is nothing more than this very confrontation, the contradiction of two worlds in a single world: the world

¹²¹ Barrett (2001), p. 313

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Swift (1999), pp. 319-20

where they are and the world where they are not, the world where there is something “between” them and those who do not acknowledge them as speaking beings who count and the world where there is nothing.¹²⁴

The examples selected for this thesis thus propose specific materialisations of a plurality of craftswomen’s ruptures with social and gendered expectations.

The regional focus of this thesis reflects a localised and specific flowering of an Arts and Crafts movement, largely shaped by the BMSA. By the end of the century the city’s urban landscape reflected its status as the ‘capital of the Midlands’, the product of an aggressive building policy and civic development carried out by Joseph Chamberlain, mayor from 1873 to 1876. The municipality’s concerns were wide-reaching and varied, from centralising gas and water management, to reforming education, providing access to free public libraries, building a public art gallery, setting up a university, providing parks and open spaces, to boasting the latest in terms of public transport. Historian Asa Briggs noted that ‘it was the clarion call of nonconformist ministers, particularly R.W. Dale at Carr’s Lane, the Baptist Charles Vince, and George Dawson ... which goaded citizens to social action’ starting from the 1850s.¹²⁵ Their influence on policy makers and population alike gave shape to Birmingham’s ‘civic gospel.’ But religion was just one aspect of the city’s fabric, its foundation relying on industry. The hand-made, small-scale and concerted approach to manufacture endorsed by the Birmingham School artists contrasted with the mechanised Birmingham trade.

Mostly related to the small metal trades, the introduction of gas-engines had seen the hand-press replaced by the power-press, which impacted on all stages of jewellery-making for instance.¹²⁶ Overall ‘the factory became the typical production unit.’¹²⁷ As to the specific case of jewellery, ‘two systems existed side by side ... there were big workshops catering for new mass markets for standardized products ... while some working jewellers still sat at their benches.’¹²⁸ The latter played ‘with their blowpipes and with delicate appliances and deft hands putting

¹²⁴ Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. Julie Rose (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 27

¹²⁵ Asa Briggs, *History of Birmingham: Vol. II Borough and City 1865-1938* (London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 3

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 40

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

together works of art' while the former produced "'gilt jewellery" – products by the gross, not necessarily of a shoddy character.'¹²⁹ This meant that Birmingham's 'labour force became divided into two groups – on the one hand skilled workers ... and on the other hand semi-skilled machine operatives.'¹³⁰ It is important to note that despite the deprecating connotation of 'Brummagem' as equivalent to cheap and lower-quality goods, the city's production catered to 'all classes in all walks of life ... to suit all income groups.'¹³¹ As will be explored in relation to Florence Camm's work in chapter three, Arts and Crafts stained glass making for example was closely connected with the trade.

The relationship between the BMSA and the local trades was complicated. The 'close relations' between the city's leading class and the working-class identified by Asa Briggs facilitated the establishment of the Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths, which fell under the aegis of the BMSA.¹³² The initial separation between 'art' and 'technical instruction' was abolished in 1901 and a headmaster was sought 'who could successfully bring the two areas together.'¹³³ Speaking of the BMSA's overall offer, Central and branch schools inclusive, Robert Catterston-Smith reflected in 1911 on:

the difficulties the School Committee has had to meet the needs of the workshops of the city, for on that subject there has been, all along, a continual flow of criticism. The School has been charged with not training students in such a way that they can enter a manufactory and take up the work there; that the School methods are slow ... and that the students are not taught the various styles, both ancient and modern, likely to be used in commerce. ...

But while the School tries to meet trade needs, it must not allow itself to make mere commercial tools of the students. It should endeavour to develop their

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 61

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 41

¹³² This was the outcome of arrangements initiated in 1888 between the Committee of the BMSA and the Birmingham Jewellers & Silversmiths Association for art instruction to be provided for employees in the trade. A space in a factory building was acquired in 1890. Members of the Association inserted a clause in their apprenticeship forms 'providing for the attendance at the School of the apprentices and of other youths up to the age of nineteen,' during evenings. [Briggs (1952), p. 1; Terry Hunt, 'The Early Years of the School', in *Finely Taught, Finely Wrought: The Birmingham School of Jewellery & Silversmithing, 1890-1990* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 19 September 1990 – 13 January 1991), ed. Terry Hunt (Birmingham : Birmingham School of Jewellery, 1990), p. 12]

¹³³ Hunt (1991), p. 12

thinking, feeling, and creative powers, whatever the factory system and the poor artistic taste of the general public may make of them afterwards.¹³⁴

The situation was virtually the same in 1930, when Harold Holden, director of art education for the city of Birmingham, noted that ‘charges may be laid against the school that the boys are not sufficiently skilled in the particular process for which an employer requires them.’¹³⁵ But Holden argued, ‘there would be no point in making a careful selection of the most artistic boys of the city if they were to become, or at any rate remain, mere mechanical operators.’¹³⁶ In order to produce ‘future leaders of the industry’, Holden considered that young students should be trained ‘in the development of the imagination and taste and the application of ideas to materials.’¹³⁷ For some the conflict would never be resolved, as the fundamentally incompatible Arts and Crafts rural romanticism ultimately led many of its artists to leave the city for the countryside.

Alan Crawford has noted how Birmingham had its own Arts and Crafts chronology. Due to favourable conditions, the movement took ‘such a hold that it was still as strong in the 1920s and 1930s as it had been in about 1900.’¹³⁸ The attention to particular geographical parameters grounds the analysis of the artworks in ‘immediate conditions of artistic production and reception’ as postulated by Clark. Lynne Walker’s analysis of the impact and formulation of urban spatiality on women’s artistic enterprises confirms the importance of geographical and political context.¹³⁹ When looking at women artists in Scotland in the nineteenth century, Walker concluded ‘that friendship intensified when plans, resources, studios, art training and/or professional activities were shared.’¹⁴⁰ Such proximity, however, would ‘not guarantee friendship or even mutual regard, and it is likely that familiarity ... prompted rivalry as much as companionship.’¹⁴¹ Hints of rivalry and conflict within Birmingham’s Arts and Crafts

¹³⁴ R. Catterson-Smith, ‘Birmingham Municipal School of Art’, in *Birmingham Institutions: Lectures given at the University*, ed. J. H. Muirhead LL.D. (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers Ltd., 1911), pp. 302; 304

¹³⁵ Harold Holden, *Jewellery, Enamelling, Silversmithing & Kindred Trades of Birmingham* (Birmingham: Birmingham School of Printing, 1930), p. 6

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 7

¹³⁸ Crawford (2004), p. 42

¹³⁹ Lynne Walker, ‘Vistas of Pleasure: Women Consumers of Urban Space in the West End of London 1850-1900,’ in Orr (1995), pp. 70-85

¹⁴⁰ Cherry (2000), p. 25. Refers to the then unpublished book by Janice Helland, *Professional Women Painters in Nineteenth-Century Scotland* (London: Ashgate)

¹⁴¹ Cherry (2000), p. 25

movement will be raised in chapter two relating to the erection of the Bunce reredos in St Alban's church in Birmingham.

The geographer Doreen Massey has made a case for 'the intricacy and profundity of the connection of space and place with gender and the construction of gender relations.'¹⁴² Massey notes that 'some of this connection works through the actual construction of, on the one hand, real-world geographies and, on the other, the cultural specificity of definitions of gender ... in terms of space-time.'¹⁴³ The conception of the female gender in some circles of *fin-de-siècle* Birmingham was clearly sympathetic to women's artistic training and professional practise of crafts, which will be discussed in more detail in chapter two. Outside of this specific context the odds were not so much in their favour, as emerges from the analysis of the erasure of the craftswoman from the history of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement in the first chapter of the thesis. The active nature of Massey's 'space-time', defined as a 'configuration of social relations within which the specifically spatial may be conceived of as inherently dynamic simultaneity,' underlines the deeper-seated implications of geographical and chronological location.¹⁴⁴ This has led me to highlight the opportunities which arose from the particular mix of inhabitants of Edgbaston in chapter two for instance, or the importance of the social and professional networks which Margaret Rope formed by means of shared workspaces in chapter three.

As already introduced, the gender of the maker is relevant to the socio-historical experience which produced the object. But as critically enunciated in Griselda Pollock and Roszika Parker's book *Old Mistresses*, the work of a 'female' artist should not be confused with the idea of an essentially 'feminine' art.¹⁴⁵ Indeed the language employed in the press in *fin-de-siècle* Britain tended to claim biologically-determined qualities of women's work, often as a means to discredit its value. This should not be read literally or understood as indicative of a biologically-determined inferior artistic production. The 'feminine' in the art of the craftswoman exists in relation to the socially-constructed discourse surrounding the author

¹⁴² Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 2

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 3

¹⁴⁵ Pollock and Parker (1981), pp. 3-8

which produces the maker's 'subjectivity.'¹⁴⁶ My use of the category of 'woman' does not presuppose that these individual artists shared a single 'female point of view' in their art either.¹⁴⁷ Deborah Cherry has criticised the tendency in art historical literature of the late twentieth century, to use the category 'women artists' as an alternative to 'the artist' (a universalising category generally understood as masculine). As argued by Cherry, this 'specifies a binary difference of sexuality while evading all other kinds of difference between women.'¹⁴⁸ The logic behind Rancière's writings that 'the universal exists only in the plurality of its particular modes, places, and operations' decisively dismisses the possibility of a universal belonging to *any* gender.¹⁴⁹

Likewise this study should not be mistaken as a collection of 'gender-based readings.' As justly critiqued by Pollock this 'means limiting the artist to what is projected onto her as her female gender from which derive (circumscribed) meanings in the artwork,' which I would hope to avoid. Instead, it is agreed that 'each artist works in a singularity of history and location from which, however, something is being said that may have meaning for all of us beyond its point of production and precisely because of its situated articulation as a singular subject position.'¹⁵⁰ For, 'the human subject ... is never entirely defined by sexuality or gender, nor ... ever entirely beyond it either.'¹⁵¹ The potential of feminism lies in its ability to deconstruct 'discursive formations' in order to lead 'to the production of radically new knowledges which contaminate the seemingly "ungendered" domains of art and art history.'¹⁵²

As we settle into the second decade of the twenty-first century, Griselda Pollock's concern voiced in 1988 seems still valid in relation to this field of art studies, namely that 'it is as if there is a will to cast feminist work in, and on, the histories of art back into the momentarily ruffled surface of the history of the late twentieth century as an intellectual curiosity, no longer relevant to current practices.'¹⁵³ In fact Pollock reiterated this critique in 2012 in a conference reflecting on the state of art history in the Anglosphere, highlighting the

¹⁴⁶ Joan Borsa, 'Frida Kahlo: Marginalization and the Critical Female Subject' (1990), in Robinson (2001), pp. 260-1

¹⁴⁷ Broude and Garrard (c2005), p. 2

¹⁴⁸ Cherry (2000), p. 2

¹⁴⁹ Bruno Bosteels, *The Actuality of Communism* (London and New York: Verso, 2011), p. 138

¹⁵⁰ Pollock (2003), p. xxix

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. xxxii

¹⁵² Pollock (1999), p. 26

¹⁵³ Pollock (2003), p. xviii

problem of an era conceived as ‘post-feminist.’¹⁵⁴ The false sense of living in a de-gendered society is shutting down interventions critical to the demonstration that, on the contrary, social relations remain largely determined by questions of gender. Kate Murdoch has suggested that the emphasis on the conflicts within feminist scholarship have been used to discredit *all* feminist forms of enquiry.¹⁵⁵ This is why this thesis does not align itself exclusively with any single strand of feminism, or indeed any other theoretical stance. The appeal of feminist scholarship as a critical tool is precisely in its ability to encompass a range of political, theoretical and methodological postures as a means of self-reflexivity. As previously enunciated by Lucy Lippard, it is from the conflictual yet respectful interaction of these practices that novel and enriched understandings will emerge.¹⁵⁶

My findings go against ‘gendered expectations in both style and subject’, suggesting that the Arts and Crafts movement did in fact liberate artists of all genders from some of the artistic conventions of their time.¹⁵⁷ This contests Anthea Callen’s thesis that women remained ‘outsiders’ within the Arts and Crafts movement based on a system of classification of craftswomen’s areas of activity according to class. This interpretation led Callen, in turn, to the damning conclusion that the movement was ironically reproducing a gendered hierarchy of the crafts in place of the traditional hierarchy of the arts it aimed to erase. Writing in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s Callen considered that ‘while offering women many positive features, the Arts and Crafts movement also insidiously perpetuated the class, sex and labour divisions inherent in late Victorian society.’¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Griselda Pollock, ‘Unexpected Turns: the Aesthetic, the Pathetic and the Adversarial in the Long Durée of Art’s Histories’, at conference ‘After the New Art History’, University of Birmingham: Journal of Art Historiography, Lecture Theatre Barber Institute of Fine Arts, 26 March 2012. Paradoxically, 2007 was declared the ‘year of feminism’ producing a series of conventions and exhibitions particularly in the USA. The contemporary artist Miwon Kwon who proposes that ‘the current enthusiasm for feminism reflects a desire to forge some sense of agency in relation not only to authoritarianism and intense violence but to the scale and force of geopolitical and economic transformations that make us feel pretty small. ... part of a broader turn to the 1960s and 1970s for some hope, to find something we feel we lack today.’ [Miwon Kwon in Rosalyn Deutsche, Aruna D’Souza, Miwon Kwon, Ulrike Müller, Mignon Nixon, and Senam Okudzeto, ‘Feminist Time: A Conversation,’ *Grey Room* 31 (Spring 2008), pp. 51-2]

¹⁵⁵ Kate Mondloch, ‘The Difference Problem: Art History and the Critical Legacy of 1980s Theoretical Feminism’, *Art Journal* 71:2 (Summer 2012), pp. 19-31

¹⁵⁶ Lucy R. Lippard, ‘Both Sides Now: A Reprise’, in *The Pink Glass Swan: Selected Essays on Feminist Art*, ed. Lucy Lippard (New York: The New Press, 1995), p. 267

¹⁵⁷ Broude and Garrard (c2005), p. 17

¹⁵⁸ Anthea Callen, ‘Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement,’ in *The Arts and Crafts Movement: The Victorian Society Conference 1978, Conference Handbook, University of Birmingham 15-17 September 1978*, p. 2. Callen’s thesis was first presented at The Victorian Society Conference of 1978 from whose handbook I will quote in exposing her argument, and then reiterated in more detailed form in the following publications: Anthea Callen, *Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870-1914*

Women's involvement in Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement cannot be made to fit into Callen's restrictive categories of activities and their perceived reach. This will be made evident from the web of social and professional networks craftswomen established for themselves, definitely blurring preconceptions about Victorian middle-class women. The chapter on stained glass will demonstrate the limits of Callen's argument that 'most of the crafts undertaken by such [middle-class] women were an extension of Victorian accomplishments and pastimes for ladies', 'often small-scale, delicate' and requiring 'little physical strength.'¹⁵⁹ Furthermore the participation of male alongside female students and staff in the production of jewellery, illustration and woodcarving, puts into doubt Callen's qualification of these crafts as 'feminine' on the basis of their adaptability to a domestic setting. The establishment of the Birmingham School's reputation within the Arts and Crafts movement thanks to its work in illustration contradicts Callen's claim that the practise of such a craft placed women 'in a position of physical and psychological isolation not dissimilar to that of working-class women outworkers.'¹⁶⁰

Ruth Livesey argues that 'Morris's concern with the rebirth of 'manly' art should not inasmuch be seen as an exclusionary tactic that prohibited women socialist activists and writers from working with his politics and aesthetics.'¹⁶¹ This is echoed by Gagnier who takes note of William Morris and Edward Carpenter's emphasis on virility and 'desire for the laboring body of the proletariat.'¹⁶² Crucially though:

the virile body in service of protecting others was ultimately chivalric,
aristocratic, rather than mass, and it was equally accessible to women: ...

(New York: Pantheon Books, c1979); Anthea Callen, 'Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement, *Oxford Art Journal* 3:1, Women in Art (April 1980), pp. 22-27; Anthea Callen, 'Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement' in *A View from the Interior: Feminism, Women and Design*, eds Judy Attfield and Pat Kirkham (London: The Women's Press, 1989), pp. 148-162. Callen proposes that craftswomen fit into four categories: 'first, the working class or peasant women who were organised and employed in the revival of traditional rural crafts, secondly, the aristocratic, upper- and middle-class women of comfortable means and appropriate leisure who were philanthropically engaged in the organisation both of the rural craft revivals, and of the artistic training and employment of destitute gentlewomen; thirdly, ... the destitute gentlewomen themselves, the ladies forced by circumstances to make an independent livelihood, either by waged art work in an employer's workshop or as outworkers, or freelance ... Finally, the fourth category covers the élite 'inner circle' of educated middle-class women, often related by birth or marriage to the key male figures within the vanguard of the movement.' [Callen (c1979), p. 2]

¹⁵⁹ Callen (1978), p. 3

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Livesey (2007), p. 15

¹⁶² Gagnier (2010), pp. 112-3

women in Morris are as virile as the men, and men are as protective of the weak as are women. ... it was labor that constituted the transformative power of the biological will in Morris and Carpenter. ... The laboring body in Morris and Carpenter is more akin to the maternal figures in [Alice] Meynell.¹⁶³

‘Creative labor’, Gagnier argues, ‘like “the pangs of labor” in childbirth, remains physiological in Morris and Carpenter,’ thus marking the act of art-making as idiosyncratic of both genders.¹⁶⁴

Tickner also comments on the relationship which women artists entertained with the chivalresque’s strong hold on Morrisian arts and crafts. It was this background which Tickner saw behind the stained glass designer and suffragette Mary Lowndes’ (1856-1929) ‘fusion of elements from the contemporary pageant with those from the political demonstration’ for the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies in 1908. Tickner proposes that:

Women had a special place in this idea, as the muses of medieval chivalry, as the weavers and stitchers and fixers of most of the bits and bobs required for the local pageant and as possessors of that ‘instinct for seemliness and refinement’ which would be their contribution to a world transformed and dignified by order and beauty.¹⁶⁵

Walter Crane’s (1845-1915) souvenir design for May Day 1909 used Joan of Arc as the allegorical body of Socialism wearing a breastplate and Phrygian cap, she ‘strangled the serpent of capitalism with one hand while holding the torch of enlightenment aloft with the other.’¹⁶⁶

For militant women, Joan of Arc was their protector and symbolised women’s ‘holy crusade.’¹⁶⁷

Tickner highlights how the French martyr:

was a universal female figure who eluded the categories in which women gained status ... she defied order, division and convention ... in her virginity, transvestism and military vigilance she subverted the order of femininity ... she transcended the limitations of her sex and yet it was from the position of

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Tickner (1987), p. 58

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 208

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 208-9

femininity – however unorthodox – that she posed a challenge to the English and to men.¹⁶⁸

Gendered discourse should not therefore be assigned the power to actualise a sexist agenda. Bridget Elliott and Janice Helland propose a pertinent alternative interpretation of the implications and use of the gendered connotations historically assigned to needlework at the turn of the twentieth century. They argue that:

...the gendered conflation of textiles – particularly embroidery – with the feminine suggests that somewhere within the softness of fabric and the intricacy of stitching lies an inherent relationship that cannot be signified or secured: it is always ‘excess’ and therefore external to more easily and rigorously defined concepts. Excess is elusive, defies categorization ... occupies the margins, but ... it is precisely in this marginal space that disruption ferments, always ready to dislodge the symbolic order and its dominant discourses. Thus, all decorative ornament including embroidery threatens to disturb that which has been designated high art even at the moment that the decorative is consigned to the margins.¹⁶⁹

Turning to the psycholanytical writings of Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva, Elliott and Helland demonstrate that discourses instrumentalised for disempowerment can precisely be overturned to become the means for subversive artistic self-affirmation. Without wishing to diminish Callen’s important contribution to scholarship, my position and the outcome of my research assents with Lynne Walker’s ‘sisterly response.’¹⁷⁰ The latter was the product of the survey of ‘360 organised Arts and Crafts groups (c.1880-1914)’ carried out by Walker and Alan Crawford.¹⁷¹ Walker persuasively argued that ‘instead of further alienating women, the Arts and Crafts Movement provided women with alternative roles, institutions and structures which they

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 210-11

¹⁶⁹ Elliott and Helland (2002), p. 5

¹⁷⁰ The discussion continued when Walker’s intervention elicited a response in Peter McNeil’s essay on ‘designing women.’ While acknowledging Walker’s assessment, McNeil maintained Callen’s line that ‘although the movement opened “new spaces for middle-class female involvement in the decorative arts”, it did not eradicate “gender-based categories”.’ [Elliott and Helland (2002), p. 7]

¹⁷¹ Lynne Walker, ‘The Arts and Crafts Alternative’, in Attfield and Kirkham (1989), p. 166

then used as active agents in their own history.’¹⁷² Their ‘design work led to financial and personal independence well beyond previous experience, enhancing women’s position and status in society in a much more fundamental way than has been conceded.’¹⁷³ Walker posits that ‘instead of alienation, the role of the craftworker ... produced feelings of competence and satisfaction in women.’¹⁷⁴ This is notably affirmed in May Morris’s writings which are extensively quoted in chapter four.

Walker argued that the movement’s ‘rejection of commercialism’ seems crucial in this development, as ‘its emphasis on the individual designer-craftworker provided an alternative way of working for women.’¹⁷⁵ The complicated relationship between the Arts and Crafts movement and the established trade which they indirectly hoped to affect, deserves further attention. The continued influence of a Modernist emphasis on the autonomy of art poses problems in coming to grips with the interaction of the categories of ‘artist’ and ‘worker.’ An example of this can be seen in Elizabeth Cumming’s analysis of Phoebe Anna Traquair (1852-1936) and Mary Seton Watts’ (1849-1938) artistic contribution. Endorsing the Modernist valuation of the vanguard (here referred to as the ‘official’ face of the movement) as implicitly of higher artistic merit, Cumming seeks to demonstrate the ‘modernity’ of Traquair and Watts’ posture. The ‘commercial’ is posited as the opposite of ‘art’, leading Cumming to propose that Traquair ‘positioned herself at the “art” end of the Arts and Crafts spectrum’ in order to claim her artistic merit.¹⁷⁶

In questioning the overall legacy of Callen’s landmark study, Jan Marsh notes that considering that Callen’s ‘objective was precisely to recover the women’s presence’ it seems rather ironic that ‘her work has resulted not in the inclusion of women in accounts of the Arts and Crafts movement, but in the creation of a separate sub-category, that of ‘Arts and Crafts Women.’’¹⁷⁷ Marsh’s criticism reflects the ‘difficulty’ enunciated by Pollock ‘that, in speaking

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 165

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 171

¹⁷⁶ Cumming (2002), p. 16

¹⁷⁷ Jan Marsh, ‘May Morris: Ubiquitous, Invisible Arts and Crafts-Woman,’ in Elliott and Helland (2002), p. 46. My thesis does make use of this category of ‘Arts and Crafts Women’ in its delimitation of the project’s research topic. This does not however equate with an exclusionist approach, emphasising instead their integrated and directive contribution to a movement, equally reliant on the activities of their male peers and supporters.

of and as women, feminism’ might be seen to confirm ‘the patriarchal notion that woman is the sex, the sign of gender, perpetually the particular and sexualised Other to the universal sign Man, who appears to transcend his sex to represent Humanity.’¹⁷⁸ This thesis, while similarly focusing on ‘Arts and Crafts Women’ does not assign ‘sex’ value to women only, adopting the equalizing view that *all* beings are ‘sexed’ in some way. This project also aims to go beyond the additive approach of historical reinsertion. It seeks to avoid tactics of (over)compensation of patriarchal sexism, such as the ‘feminist adulation of ... reclaimed “old mistresses”’ expressed in an ‘unrelenting critique of masculine culture’ elsewhere lambasted by Griselda Pollock.¹⁷⁹ Instead this thesis acts on the premise that identity and social relations are not defined only along binary lines, but that ‘the cultural field ... [is] a space for multiple occupancy where differencing creates a productive covenant.’¹⁸⁰

My findings confirm Birmingham craftswomen’s ongoing participation in culture. They concur with a body of feminist scholarship which has shown that women have exercised agency as artists, patrons, viewers and influencers of taste. Celia Levetus’s pro-active stance to disseminating her work and gaining patronage for example, discussed in chapter one, challenges Susan P. Casteras’ claim that ‘women needed male critics ... since it was unacceptable for women to be aggressive and seek out patrons, dealers, or publicity.’¹⁸¹ In fact women, similarly to men, were encouraged by Arts and Crafts leaders to reach for the professional ladder, as W.R. Lethaby advised Birmingham students in 1901:

The difficulty for both [men and women] is not in the suitability [of the craft] but in the entrance. There is nothing to be done but to knock at doors ... worry his [the established crafts(wo)man’s] life out of him for a chance.¹⁸²

At this stage it is worth presenting how the research for this thesis was carried out. The first step in my research was to identify and systematically catalogue Birmingham craftswomen’s artistic production, a previously neglected task involving substantial archival research. Early on in the

¹⁷⁸ Pollock (1999), p. 25

¹⁷⁹ Pollock (1999), p. xiv

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 11

¹⁸¹ Susan P. Casteras, ‘From “Safe Havens” to “A Wide Sea of Notoriety”’, in Susan P. Casteras and Linda H. Peterson, *A Struggle for Fame: Victorian Women Artists and Authors* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Center for British Art, 1994), pp. 14-15

¹⁸² Lethaby (1901), p. 7

process, the decision was taken to focus on artists who were professionally active over a number of years, whose work as regular exhibitors was reviewed in the press of the time, and who were members of various artistic societies and organisations. It is worth noting, therefore, that this study openly chooses outstanding, rather than average graduates of the BMSA. A survey of the extant literature and further archival research were concurrently carried out in order to assess which artworks were best supported by written documentation. Most importantly, I personally viewed as many of these artworks as possible in public collections including the BMAG, the William Morris Gallery, the Ashmolean Museum, the Worcestershire County Museum as well as private collections. Works of an ecclesiastical nature still *in situ* took me across the United Kingdom, from the West Midlands, to Worcestershire, Oxfordshire, Suffolk, Norfolk, Lanarkshire and Cheshire. Close observation and spending time with the artworks themselves is essential in an approach which wishes to establish the material and technical specificities of each object. When remaining in their original context, the experience of these spaces and their impact on the reception and functionality of the objects has been significant in further defining my interpretation. There is a self-avowedly subjective nature to this research, from the discretionary selection of the artworks and artists under scrutiny, as well as the observations gathered during a personal viewing of the objects in a context and time divorced from their origins. The case studies presented in this thesis were nonetheless selected with the intention to introduce examples representative of a wider practice and aesthetic, as well as for their value in discussing issues tied to politics, religion, gender and society encountered by their producers. In order to grant the attention which each artwork demands with this type of close reading, I elected to restrict each chapter to two main case studies.

The basic questions adopted for the analysis of each artwork were

- 1) How did this object come to be?
- 2) What constitutes its specificity?
- 3) How does it relate to a wider production?
- 4) What meanings are contained and revealed by this artwork?

The first question deals with an individual participative response within a broader socio-historical context, with a consideration of modes of labour. This includes biographical elements whilst maintaining that the author is not the only determining agent in the artwork's conception.

The consideration of the practical conditions in which the object was made appears particularly necessary in light of the Arts and Crafts Movement's emphasis on craftsmanship, 'pleasure in labour' and 'truthfulness to materials.'

Addressing the second question allows to appreciate the centrality of the object in conveying a cultural past and meanings which continue to have resonance in the present, as well as no doubt in the future. The object's meanings are unlocked by first analysing the materials and techniques used to produce the artwork so as to gain a better sense of 'what' the artwork physically consists of. The study of the object's material constitutive properties is then complemented by an examination of its surface visual characteristics. As posited in Erwin Panofsky's seminal method of iconographical and iconological description, neither of these stages is impermeable.¹⁸³ The third and fourth questions move across these different levels of interpretation, by relating them to immediately relevant historical conditions.

The first chapter of this thesis considers the art of book-illustration in Birmingham in the 1890s to 1900s. Women's involvement in the craft which would secure Birmingham's recognition as an important centre for the Arts and Crafts movement will be revealed by the close analysis of Georgie Gaskin's children's book *A.B.C.: an Alphabet* (1895) and a selection of bookplates produced by Celia Levetus collated in an album for her mother (c. 1900). The historical narrative of who the 'Birmingham School' of illustrators consisted of will be critically unpacked to reconsider its chronology and reveal an early bias which has tainted scholarship to date. Emphasis will be placed on the formative role which book-illustration played in the training of these artists in view of later articulating its impact on the other crafts they would concurrently and consequently practise. The material and technical specificities of these works will be discussed, raising the question of authorship in the context of a collaborative dynamic of production involving designer, engraver and printer. I will seek to demonstrate how these artists' book-illustrations successfully negotiated the balance between aesthetic and technical qualities, and audience appeal. It will be contended that they served as important overlooked

¹⁸³ Erwin Panofsky (transl. by Jás Elsner and Katharina Loren), 'On the Problem of Describing and Interpreting Works of the Visual Arts,' *Critical Inquiry* 38:3 (Spring 2012), p. 469. While I recognise the usefulness of Panofsky's concept of 'types', and agree with his perception of an 'intrinsic meaning' within the object, I do not abide however to his reliance on 'stylistic' classification as the 'corrective' means to determine which norms of interpretation should be applied to the artwork.

ambassadors for values of the Arts and Crafts movement by means of a juvenile readership which would grow up to be the next generation of supporters.

The second chapter will continue to explore women's involvement in Birmingham's revival of particular crafts, this time the under-researched *fin-de-siècle* rediscovery of painting in tempera where the division between fine and applied artist is most evidently subsumed. The discussion will centre on Kate Bunce's painted reredoses augmented by metalwork frames by her elder sister Myra Bunce for the churches of Longworth, Oxfordshire, and St Alban's in Bordesley, Birmingham, both dating from the second decade of the twentieth century. Familial collaboration and commemoration will be studied within the renewed tradition of the Anglo-Catholic church. The analysis of the intricate iconographical and symbolic programme of Bunce's paintings will lead to a discussion of the works' continued liturgical function today. These case studies will provide insight into the neglected importance of the Anglo-Catholic community in providing patronage for Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement.

Chapter three addresses female participation in Arts and Crafts stained glass design and making. Diverging methods of labour will be studied through the analysis of the series of windows for the Halesowen Grammar School made by Florence Camm between 1928 and 1931, and the windows for the Catholic Church of the Holy Name of Jesus in Birkenhead by Margaret A. Rope, carried out between c. 1918 and 1931. Both mature works, these were the result of over twenty years of professional experience for either artist. This creates a distance from the BMSA, yet as will be demonstrated the training acquired there shaped both craftswomen's work throughout their career. Camm's windows present an attempt to introduce changes to the male-dominated trade from within, whilst Margaret Rope developed an alternative female-dominated trajectory. The potential for financial self-sufficiency from craftwork will be interrogated. This will allow to explore the tension this created between the desire to raise the artistic status of the craft by distancing oneself from the profit-driven stained glass trade, and the reality of relying on one's artistic production to earn a living.

The final chapter is dedicated to embroidery, focusing on May Morris and Mary Newill as teachers of needlework at the BMSA. The collectively executed hanging of the *Owl*, designed by May Morris and stitched by students of the School under the direction of Mary Newill and other teachers between 1901 and 1904 will be closely studied, as well as Mary Newill's curtains

from c. 1906 now held in the V&A. The historical devaluation of embroidery, largely based on its ‘feminine’ associations, will be challenged within the context of the Arts and Crafts movement’s esteem for medieval traditions and particularly Birmingham’s development of professionalised Arts and Crafts embroidery. This will underline the importance of design in opposition to copying in view of obtaining credit for one’s craft. The study of the work of an artist on whom very little has survived in terms of professional and private life, will raise the challenges of attribution and the interpretation of the object. This chapter’s study of the transmission of skill from teacher to student, of an elder generation passing on the flame to its youth, will bring this thesis to its conclusion.

As will be established in this thesis, Birmingham women’s artistic labour enabled them to transcend social, political and religious expectations and create an imaginative space whose material anchor (the artwork) voiced actual change, through the productive (the act of making the artwork) as well as the contemplative (its aesthetic quality asserting and inspiring change). My project will concurrently address the meanings and roles of the object, with the artwork’s original cultural context, and where relevant, the impact of institutional context on a present understanding of the work, as in my opinion neither in isolation can offer a ‘totalizing explanation.’¹⁸⁴ My thesis seeks to make accessible previously unseen worlds. As posited by Marcel Proust, ‘thanks to art, instead of seeing only one world, our own, we see it under multiple forms, and as many as there are original artists, just so many worlds have we at our disposal.’¹⁸⁵ The artworks explored in this thesis not only serve to transport us into imaginary realms, but also help us in gaining valuable insight into the historical past they emerge from.¹⁸⁶ As Michael Ann Holly adeptly voices, ‘the materiality of works of art ... presents a challenge to ever seeing the past as over and gone.’¹⁸⁷ The hope is that in shedding light on these objects, their artistic and cultural value might be recognised, ensuring continued preservation of this

¹⁸⁴ See discussion of this issue in Broude and Garrard (1992), p. 20

¹⁸⁵ Marcel Proust, *The Past Recaptured*, quoted in Michael Ann Holly, *Panofsky and the Foundations of Art History* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984), unpaginated

¹⁸⁶ This echoes Nelson Goodman’s concept of ‘cognitive value’ articulated in his book *Ways of Worldmaking* (Indianapolis: Heckett, 1978), defined ‘as a work’s capacity to contribute to the “creation and comprehension of our worlds”.’ [Peggy Zeglin Brand, ‘Revisiting the Aesthetic-Nonaesthetic Distinction: The Aesthetic Value of Activist Art’, in Brand and Korsmeyer (1995), p. 247]

¹⁸⁷ Michael Ann Holly, ‘Stones of Solace’, in Francis Halsall, Julia Jansen and Tony O’Connor (eds), *Rediscovering Aesthetics: Transdisciplinary Voices from Art History, Philosophy, and Art Practice* (Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 57

heritage. This thesis will thus seek to make evident how a little-known historical artistic development continues to hold contemporary relevance.

Chapter 1 Book-Illustration: The Foundational Craft of the ‘Birmingham School’

Books had never been as popular and available as in post-industrialised Victorian England. A critical rise in literacy meant a much wider and socially varied audience. This growing demand was met by initiatives such as the Public Library Movement. The mechanised production of the various material components of the book, as well as the industrialisation of the processes involved in making them resulted in more and cheaper copies. The decoration of books, notably by means of illustration, was no exception to this rule. The taste for illustrated literature had been whetted by the period of the 1860s, known as the ‘Golden Age’ of book-illustration. This was embodied by the realistic and detailed drawings of the likes of John Everett Millais and Charles Keene, enjoyed by children and adults alike. Changes in manufacturing were however to alter the formal and aesthetic qualities of illustration. By the end of the 1890s, the traditionally reproductive means of the wood-engraved block had largely been abandoned by commercial printers. Followers of the Arts and Crafts movement identified this as one of the contributing factors to the demise of the ‘Book Beautiful.’ They considered that the formal qualities of the book were a direct reflection of its method of production. Several notables such as Emery Walker (1851-1933), William Morris, Charles Ricketts (1866-1931), Charles Shannon (1863-1937), Lucien Pissarro (1863-1944) and Charles Ashbee (1863-1942) concurrently sought to materialise their own vision of the ideal book in setting up private presses.

The concept of a ‘Birmingham School’ of illustrators emerged in the artistic press following an important submission of designs and works to the second exhibition held by the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in 1893. That year members of staff and students of the School showed a selection of over thirty works in the fourth exhibition held by the society in London. These included designs as well as executed works. The majority of the artworks which were submitted were designs for book-illustrations. Works by Florence Rudland, Sidney Heath (1872-?), Violet Holden (1873-?), Mary Newill and Winifred Smith were highlighted for having been executed at the school. Edmund New (1871-1931), who specialised in architectural drawings, contributed pen drawings with a book-plate drawing and proof. Designs which had already found a publisher were also shown. These comprised Georgie Cave France’s (later

Georgie Gaskin) decorative designs for the Leadenhall Press (Figure 1.1) and Gertrude M. Bradley's illustrations for Dollie Radford's *Songs for Somebody* (Figure 1.2). Charles M. Gere displayed pen drawings for the *Russian Fairy Tales* (Figure 1.3) to be published by Lawrence and Bullen, as well as his frontispiece for William Morris's *News from Nowhere*, in addition to illustrations for the Kelmscott Press *House of Wolfings*, a project which would not materialise. Arthur J. Gaskin showed his illustrations to the tale of *Good King Wenceslas* (Figure 1.4) and the *Hans Andersen Stories*.¹

When William Morris was asked for his opinion on the Arts and Crafts exhibition by an interviewer for the *Daily Chronicle*, he stated that 'The only thing that is new, strictly speaking... is the rise of the Birmingham school of book-decorators. These young men – Mr. Gaskin, Mr. New, and Mr. Gere – have given a new start to the art of book-decorating.'² Here begins the recognition of a 'Birmingham School of illustrators.' It became synonymous with black-and-white medievalising designs, showing strong affiliations with the Kelmscott Press. In reality, the Birmingham illustrators' production was varied, particularly once they had distanced themselves from the School of Art itself.

The renowned children's book-illustrator Walter Crane defined Birmingham's school as 'peculiarly English', 'both in method, sentiment, and subject.'³ Writing in 1896, Crane considered that it represented 'a sincere attempt to apply what may be called traditional principles in decoration to book illustration.'⁴ Similarly to Morris, Walter Crane identified Charles Gere, Edmund New and Arthur Gaskin as the 'leading artists of the Birmingham School.'⁵ He praised Henry Payne (1868-1940), Bernard Sleight (1872-1954) and Fred Mason 'for their romantic feeling in story illustrations.'⁶ Gertrude Bradley was noticed 'for her inventive treatment of crowds and groups of children.'⁷ Crane also appreciated Winifred

¹ Birmingham, Birmingham Institute of Art and Design (BIAD), School of Art collection (SAC), BMSA, Management Sub-Committee Minutes, volume III, 1890-1893, Minute 1088, Newscutting dated 24 October 1893, p. 288

² Anonymous, 'Art, Craft, and Life: A Chat with Mr. William Morris', *Daily Chronicle* (9 October 1893), reproduced in Tom Pinkney (ed.), *We Met Morris: Interviews with William Morris 1885-96* (Spire Books Ltd in association with the William Morris Society), p. 77; requested in 'The Birmingham Municipal School of Art', *The Studio* 2 (1894), p. 97

³ Walter Crane, *Of The Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New* (London and New York: G. Bell, 1905, 3rd edition, first published 1896), p. 207

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

Smith's 'groups of children and quaint feeling', as well as Georgie Gaskin's 'pretty quaint fancies in child-life.'⁸ His appraisal of these female illustrators adopts a vocabulary used in the press at the time to review the illustration of juvenile literature. The word 'quaint' for example is often employed. Crane equally perceived other strengths in the work of Mary Newill, whom he singled out for 'her ornamental rendering of natural landscape' referring to her 'charming drawing of Porlock.'⁹ He also commented on Celia Levetus's 'decorative feeling.'¹⁰

After first appearing in the press, William Morris's words of praise were reproduced a few months later in an extensive article on the BMSA in *The Studio* magazine's second volume of 1894.¹¹ The approval of none other than the father figure of the Arts and Crafts movement was an ideal means of promoting the activities of the Birmingham School. This singling out of the male artists is at odds however with the predominance of designs by female students and staff which illustrate *The Studio* article. The reiteration of Morris's words in subsequent published scholarship on the Birmingham illustrators has perpetuated the bias in favour of the men amongst the group.¹² Furthermore, the prevalence of William Morris's Kelmscott Press in the writing of the history of the Private Press movement of the 1890s has favoured illustrators directly associated with the Kelmscott Press, such as Charles Gere and Arthur Gaskin in the case of Birmingham. This leaves the women's contribution still to be fully rediscovered and evaluated.

Another factor which has participated in the erasure of Birmingham's women illustrators is the emphasis on their position as students and followers. Indeed this criticism applies not only to book-illustration but equally to the other crafts studied in this thesis. An advanced class in book-illustration taught by Arthur Gaskin was first advertised in the Birmingham School of Art programme for the academic year of 1894-5.¹³ This was

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Anonymous, 'The Birmingham Municipal School of Art. With Many Illustrations of Its Students' Work. I', *The Studio: An Illustrated Magazine of Fine and Applied Art* 2:9 (December 1894), p. 97

¹² Bill Waters, 'Book Illustrators', in *By Hammer and Hand: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Birmingham*, ed. Alan Crawford (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1984), pp. 85, 94-5

¹³ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, *Programme for the session 1894-95, beginning on Monday, 10th of September, 1894* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, 1894), p. 4

accompanied by the creation of a local prize category for book-illustration.¹⁴ It was typical of the School's policy that new members of staff were recruited from its student body. Arthur Gaskin had completed his artistic training not long before, in 1888.¹⁵ This would favour a spirit of collaboration and joint enterprise between staff and advanced students, which would notably be manifest in projects involving illustration. The opening of the illustration class should not however be viewed as the beginning of the School's activities in this field. Instead it marks its then publicly acknowledged achievement in this art which had its roots earlier in the decade. One should therefore be critical of the diminishing of women's work in illustration under the guise of their status of students. This chapter will start to address this neglected production by studying works by Georgie Gaskin and Celia Levetus.

After graduating from the BMSA in 1894 following eight years' attendance, Georgie Gaskin had her first book, *A.B.C. An Alphabet*, commercially published by Elkin Mathews of London and A.C. McClurg & Co in New York in 1895. It was printed by R. Ffolkard & Son in London. The volume comprises black-and-white illustrations incorporating text of Georgie Gaskin's invention. These are typical of the black-and-white book-illustrations for which the Birmingham School was known. The book opens with an *Ex Libris*, followed by a small frontispiece, illustrated dedication, and prologue, then features an illustrated title-page, and from there onwards each letter is presented on a double-page, with on the left hand-side a small vignette and to the right a full-page illustration with a small rhyme to go with the letter in question (Figure 1.5). Having exhausted the alphabet, Gaskin ends on a small epilogue and full-page illustrated credits, and finally a tail-piece signed G.E.C.G and dated 1895. Three different signatures appear throughout. The mark 'G.E.C.G' appears the most often, sometimes simplified to the initials 'G.C.G.', or in the case of the *Ex Libris*, the fuller signature 'G.C.Gaskin.' The pages measure 19 x 12 cm, with the small vignettes taking up 6 x 4.5 cm, and the illustrations with text 12 x 7 cm. The original edition is bound in olive green fabric, with the book's frontispiece imprinted in black relief on the front, the 'xyz' tail-piece set on the back,

¹⁴ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, BMSA, Prize List: arranged in the order of the Exhibition of Students' work, 1894 (Birmingham: Geo., Jones and Son, 1894) collated in *Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. IV (1893-1896), p. 12

¹⁵ *Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, With Notes as to Exhibition of Students' Works, 1888* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, nd), p. 8

while the spine is decorated with the letters ‘A’ ‘B’ and ‘C’ vertically aligned alternating with small juvenile figures and apple tree after the ‘C’ followed by the name of the publisher.¹⁶

The agreement with Elkin Mathews, as stated in a letter dated 30 August 189[5], was that each should take a half-share of ‘all net proceeds accruing from the sale of a book entitled “An A.B.C. Book”’ and furthermore ‘upon the day of publication the sum of ten pounds shall be paid to the author and this amount shall be added to the costs of production including paper, blocks, printing the blocks, advertisements and other needful outgoings which shall be defrayed to the publisher, and no profits shall be computed until these various charges have been repaid to the Publisher from the proceeds of the book.’¹⁷ The management of all the above lay with the publisher in addition to ‘the possession of the original drawings.’¹⁸ The contract thus protected the publisher from being out-of-pocket, making it all the more crucial for Georgie Gaskin that the book be successful.

The art of designing the book in line with Arts and Crafts ideals was theorised by actors of the private press movement in the late nineteenth century.¹⁹ Each in their own distinctive way, these artists sought to achieve harmonious designs, uniting concerns about typography and layout, with decoration and illustration.²⁰ William Morris thus wrote in 1895 that he had begun ‘printing books with the hope of producing some which would have a definite claim to beauty, while at the same time they should be easy to read and should not dazzle the eye, or trouble the intellect of the reader by eccentricity of form in the letters.’²¹ Under the aegis of the Eragny Press, T. Sturge Moore claimed in 1903 that the beautiful book provided an invaluable and stimulating escape from reality.²² He urged for the possession of fewer books ‘but those few

¹⁶ The copy described belongs to the Library of Birmingham.

¹⁷ Birmingham, BMT, Letter from Elkin Mathews to Georgie Gaskin 30 August, year unknown, assumed 1895.

¹⁸ Birmingham, BMT, Letter from Elkin Mathews to Georgie Gaskin 30 August, year unknown, assumed 1895

¹⁹ See for instance Lucien Pissarro in collaboration with Charles Ricketts *De la typographie et de l’harmonie de la page imprimée* (Paris, London, 1898), William Morris, ‘Note on his Aims in Founding the Kelmscott Press, 1895’ (Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1898), Charles Ricketts, *A Defense of the Revival of Printing* (London: Hacon & Ricketts, 1899), T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, *The Ideal Book or Book Beautiful: A Tract on Calligraphy, Printing and Illustration and on the Book Beautiful as a Whole* (Hammersmith: The Doves Press, 1900)

²⁰ See William Morris and Emery Walker, ‘Printing’, in *Arts and Crafts Essays, by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co, 1893), pp. 111-133; Reginald Blomfield, ‘Of Book Illustration and Book Decoration’, in *Arts and Crafts Essays* (1893), pp. 237-248

²¹ Morris (1898), p. 1

²² T. Sturge Moore, ‘Note on the Printed Book as a Work of Art’, in *A Brief Account of the Origin of the Eragny Press & A Note on the Relation of the Printed Book as a Work of Art* (Hammersmith: Eragny Press, 1903), pp. 6-7

shall be beautiful upon the table, on the shelf, in the hand: while we muse on the meaning the eye shall rest happily on the page where fair proportions have been sought and established between margin and text, between type and page.’²³ Indeed it would be ‘folly or misfortune to read ugly books, just as it is to read trash.’²⁴ For the people of the private presses, this meant combining the best of everything as they perceived it, whether in terms of design, materials, technique, all conducted in a collaborative manner within a small workshop environment.

Elkin Mathews was one of a handful of commercial publishers and printers sympathetic to the Arts and Crafts Movement’s ambition for the printed book. This commitment went against the logic of profit. As pointed out by Percy Muir, ‘The publisher of children’s books is and has always been confronted with the need to keep prices as low as possible’ meaning that when hand-work could be replaced by the machine, this was usually preferred.²⁵ The quality of the impression, ink and paper of Gaskin’s *A.B.C.* shows that Elkin Mathews was adopting a different strategy, privileging higher standards over cheapness. This is not to say that the machine was entirely absent in the process of making the illustrated book available to readers. The translation of Gaskin’s drawings onto the printed page relied on technology which the purist environment of the private press refused. On the other hand, in allowing for some compromise in the manufacturing process and materials, more copies of Gaskin’s book could enter the market than the rare privately-printed volumes. This enabled a wider dissemination of her illustrations, touching a larger audience of receptive juvenile readers.

In illustrating the alphabet, George Gaskin was investing a popular genre. Her specific interpretation of the pictorial alphabet, however, was quite unusual (Figure 1.6). This can be appreciated when compared to a similar illustration by her fellow schoolmate Sidney Heath (Figure 1.7). The latter was contained in *A First Book for Little Ones* and put on the market ten years later at a cost of one shilling. Gaskin’s *ABC: an Alphabet* is a small and precious volume, finely printed on thick paper. In contrast, Heath’s designs have been enhanced with bright details in colour. This takes the attention away from the cheaper quality of printing apparent from the bleeding of the dotted colours outside of the black contouring. Printed on thin shiny

²³ Ibid, p. 8

²⁴ Ibid, p. 9

²⁵ Percy Muir, *English Children’s Books 1600-1900* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1954), p. 175

paper, Heath's book was produced in large numbers as part of a monthly or annual subscription scheme. This provided a regular source of amusement for young children at a low cost. In contrast, Georgie Gaskin's book was proposing something more than light entertainment. It presents an endeavour to elevate children's books as works of art.²⁶

Some critics were sceptic as to whether such books would truly be enjoyed by children readers, as for instance the reviewer of Gaskin's *Horn-Book Jingles* (Figure 1.1) in the *Artist* magazine. The writer was critical of the introductory note on the history of the horn-book which he doubted 'the very small children for whom the Jingles are written, will listen attentively to.'²⁷ Although some of the imagery was praised, notably the 'charming' 'little figures', he could not 'see much, as a whole, to attract the little ones for whom it was planned' and furthermore 'many of the designs have a scrambling, scratchy effect.'²⁸ The reviewer for the *Art Journal* did not share this opinion, and considered the 'illustrations by Mrs. Gaskin' as 'remarkable and good.'²⁹

E.M. Field, writing in 1892 of the *Progress of Children's Literature in England*, commented that 'the nursery picture-book has a curious tendency to find its way to the drawing-room table and to the smoking-room lounge, even perhaps to the serious study shelf. And uncles and aunts who buy these charming productions "for the children" are frequently discovered to be themselves gloating over them in a corner.'³⁰ The adult reader would have been attracted by the technical and aesthetic quality invested in such books. A notice on Gaskin's *A.B.C.* in *The Studio* enforces this idea, describing the work as 'a dainty little picture-book for young children. Even those of a larger growth should take pleasure in the perusal of a work so charmingly illustrated and bound.'³¹

Georgie Gaskin explored the pictorial potential of the alphabet on several occasions. This interest seems to have been initiated by her participation in a contest organised by *The Studio* magazine in 1893. The contest called for illustrations to Andrew Tuer's forthcoming two volume *History of the Horn-Book*. Other Birmingham participants included Celia Levetus and

²⁶ Anne Lundin, 'Victorian Horizons: The Reception of Children's Books in England and America, 1880-1900', *The Library Quarterly* 64:1 (1994), p. 33

²⁷ Frederick Litchfield, 'Pages in Waiting', *The Artist: an Illustrated Monthly Record of Arts, Crafts and Industries* 19 (February 1897), p. 92

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Anonymous, 'Christmas Cards and Children's Books', *Art Journal* 144 (December 1896), p. 380

³⁰ E.M. Field, *The Child and his Book: Some Account of the History and Progress of Children's Literature in England* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton & Co., 1892), p. 314

³¹ Anonymous, 'Reviews of Recent Publications', *The Studio* 6:33 (December 1895), p. 194

Charles Gere. Georgie Gaskin's designs took the form of decorated initial letters and several full-page illustrations (Figure 1.8).³² She would revisit the theme of the horn-book in her *Horn-Book Jingles* published in 1896-7 at the Leadenhall Press in London and A.C. McClurg & Co in New York (Figure 1.1). This was no coincidence since Andrew Tuer was the publisher and printer behind the Leadenhall Press.

What imaginary world was Gaskin's *A.B.C.* book proposing, beyond its specific formal appeal? Contemporary alphabet books often followed a theme announced in their title. No unifying subject, notwithstanding the alphabet itself, is declared on Gaskin's cover. But a close study of the publication reveals a utopic programme, far removed from the industrialised city of Birmingham in which it was conceived. This echoed in part Morris's vision of England in his *News from Nowhere*, with similar ideas later voiced by W.R. Lethaby in his 1901 address at the Birmingham School of Art. On this occasion Lethaby called upon his audience in entrusting them with 'the beauty-sense of the community,' contending that 'good work done in this field is as noble a social service as effort in any other essential activity.'³³ He asked them to look on handicrafts as the 'most beneficial, most healthful and joyful of careers', whose pursuit would lead to the 'preservation of the natural beauty of our country, and the order of our civic life.'³⁴ The aim of art, as Lethaby saw it, was to give 'sweet, tidy towns, and smiling country under skies free from smoke...'³⁵ These ideas can be grouped under the label of 'Romantic Nationalism,' a movement which sought to 'reinforce their country's identity by idealising its past.'³⁶ For adherents to the Arts and Crafts this entailed a 'vernacular production with a moral imperative.'³⁷ As noted by Wendy Kaplan, 'national characteristics were often encoded into design to create a shared heritage of positive attributes.'³⁸ For a number of socialist critics this heritage was strongly associated with nature which alongside the past 'were turned to in order to

³² Andrew Tuer's history was published in two volumes in 1896 and contained works from other Birmingham artists, Charles Gere, Celia Levetus and Eunice Bloxcidge. Gaskin was one of the successful candidates, and she would explore the theme anew in *A.B.C.: an Alphabet* and her 1896-7 *Horn-Book Jingles*. [Anonymous, The Editor's Room: 'Awards in "The Studio" Prize Competitions. Illustration to a Work on the Horn Book. (A XIII.)', *The Studio* 3:18 (September 1894), pp. xvi-xviii]

³³ Lethaby (1901), p. 21

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Wendy Kaplan, 'Design for the Modern World', in *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Europe & America* (2004), p. 17

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

give strength and guidance in the battle against commercialism and to win a better society.’³⁹

Building on Ruskin’s ideas of nature, William Morris wrote that ‘man in the past, nature in the present seem to be bent on pleasing you and making all things delightful to the senses.’⁴⁰

Gaskin’s reader is thus transported into an imaginary pastoral play-world replete with references to the architecture and type of interior which artists of the Arts and Crafts movement sought for themselves. This was the ideal backdrop for the creation of objects which would provide enjoyment to themselves and others, and which as will be discussed in the final chapter, prompted a number of the Birmingham crafts(wo)men to move to the countryside.

An idealised rural environment is introduced from the first letter of the alphabet. The full-page illustration for the letter ‘A’ (Figure 1.9) shows a young girl standing on a lawn carpeted with flowers, reaching towards an apple-tree to fill a woven basket with the juicy red fruit. The house behind her with its red brick, white-painted sash windows and black-and-white timber framing, is an example of the Victorian revival of Queen Anne architecture, which emerged in the 1870s and carried on until the turn of the century. This movement was built on the desire to reconnect with a supposedly authentically English mode of building, borrowing freely from the past.⁴¹ It materialised the aspirations of a later generation of middle-class Victorians, who, as Mark Girouard neatly summarises, ‘looked at modern technology with suspicion.’⁴² Their ‘dislike of the present led them to the past, dislike of the town to the country. As an antidote to the present they recreated the past and an ideal world of pre-industrial simplicity, at once homely and Arcadian.’⁴³

The illustration to the letter ‘C’ presents the corresponding interior (Figure 1.10). A little girl sits on a sturdy low cupboard, whose visible metal hinges and castle-like keyholes bear the marks of Arts and Crafts furniture. The bottle-end glass window-panes which open onto the countryside have been decorated with light patterned curtains. Fresh air and light pour in.

Gaskin’s interior abides by William Morris’s recommendations in his lecture on ‘The Beauty of

³⁹ Peter C. Gould, *Early Green Politics: Back to Nature, Back to the Land, and Socialism in Britain, 1880-1900* (Brighton: The Harvester Press; New York: St Martin’s Press, 1988), p. 15

⁴⁰ William Morris, ‘Under an Elm-Tree; or, Thoughts in the Country-Side’, *Commonweal* (6 July 1889), quoted in Gould (1988), p. 15

⁴¹ Mark Girouard, *Sweetness and Light: The ‘Queen Anne’ Movement 1860-1900* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 1

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 5

⁴³ *Ibid.*

Life', delivered at the Birmingham School of Art in 1880. On this occasion, Morris claimed 'simplicity' as the means to abide the 'golden rule' of having 'nothing in your houses which you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful.'⁴⁴

Although the alphabet book may be associated with a controlled indoors classroom setting, it is the freedom of playing outdoors which dominates Gaskin's pictures. The confines of the sunflower-filled back-garden (Figure 1.11) are soon escaped to explore the actual countryside. The full-page illustration to the letter 'B' (Figure 1.12) takes place on the outskirts of town, with hills in the background criss-crossed by fences and trees, covered by bales of hay and sheep. Two children paddle barefoot in a stream, whose sinuous course echoes the intersecting lines of the mounds in the distance. The rural setting is associated with the farm, particularly its animals. A young girl wearing a milk-maid's hood chases a goose (Figure 1.13), while another feeds a hen and her chicks in the yard, a basket at her feet with the day's collection of eggs (Figure 1.14).

The pleasures of the sea-side holiday offer another form of relief from the grim reality of the industrialised Midlands. A girl and boy can be seen sitting by the sea-front gazing at the gulls and sailing-boats (Figure 1.15). Georgie Gaskin had expressed her particular affection for the sea-side in a letter written to her friend and patron Emmeline Cadbury in October 1913:

I wish I had a little refuge place by the sea to which one could flee for a week end or week & let the babes just pull up when ever [sic.] they need rest – but these things art [sic.] so much – but when one sees how a change of air seems to rebuilt little folk I often think parents should somehow combine to put a trustworthy elderly woman with a wee house by the sea & let her always be ready for every tired child or children – a sort of private convalescent home! & no fear of germs left by other little invalides [sic.] unknown.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ William Morris, 'The Beauty of Life', in *Hopes and Fears For Art: Five Lectures Delivered in Birmingham, London, and Nottingham, 1878-1881* (London: Ellis & White, 1882), p. 110

⁴⁵ Birmingham, Library of Birmingham (LB), Gaskin Papers, MS 2945/2/4/2, Fragment of letter from Georgie Gaskin to Mrs Cadbury 13 October 1913. Emmeline and William Adlington Cadbury were friends with the Gaskins. Georgie Gaskin designed and made some jewellery for them, and Arthur Gaskin instructed their eldest daughter Joy in drawing. [LB, Archives Online Catalogue, 'Letter from Georgie Gaskin to Emmeline, William and Joy Cadbury 8 March 1914 MS 2945/2/4/4', <http://calmview.birmingham.gov.uk/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=MS+2945%2f2%2f4%2f4>, consulted 27 December 2015]

The figure of the child itself is key to the narrative of pastoral innocence. In Britain changes in beliefs about the condition of childhood operated from around the middle of the eighteenth century. The ‘Romantic conceptions of the child of nature’ were widely endorsed in the Victorian age and were reflected in juvenile literature. The American psychologist and educator Stanley Hall thus argued that ‘in order for the child to develop its full nature, and to save us from “the omnipresent dangers of precocity” which exist in “our urbanised hothouse life...” the child must be positively incited to visit nature, “the true homes of childhood in this wild, undomesticated stage from which modern conditions have kidnapped and transported him”.’⁴⁶ The success of Kate Greenaway’s (1846-1901) books earlier in the century had stemmed from the escape it offered from Victorian urban ugliness substituted with ‘rural simplicity and promoted a cult of the innocence and charm of childhood.’⁴⁷ Gaskin can be seen as recuperating a tried and tested formula in her *A.B.C.: an Alphabet*. But whilst this might suggest a fear of a rapidly disappearing countryside and a romanticized vision of a lost England, the child in the *fin-de-siècle* imaginary was conjunctly ‘the bearer of all future hope.’⁴⁸ Sally Shuttleworth underlines this duality noting that the child becoming ‘an embodiment both of all past history and an expression of future possibility.’⁴⁹

Whilst play and the regenerative effect of nature are emphasised, the instructive nature of the *A.B.C.* book is not to be ignored. A little girl holds up an ink-stained sheet with wobbly letters demonstrating her attempts to write a letter to her father (Figure 1.16). An older girl has her dolls working on their letters, tracing them out on slates (Figure 1.17). The volume closes on a scene of a mother seated in an armchair with her daughter on her lap, helping her with an *A.B.C.* book (Figure 1.18). But this is about more than just basic literacy. Education was a hotly-debated topic throughout the nineteenth century, with the implementation of the Education Act in 1870 and the introduction of compulsory education in 1880.⁵⁰ The utilitarian values which carried early Capitalism pushed for schooling which would equip citizens with

⁴⁶ Sally Shuttleworth, *The Mind of the Child: Child Development in Literature, Science, and Medicine, 1840-1900* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 267-8, quotes from G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence, its Psychology and its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*, vol. I (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1904), pp. x-xi

⁴⁷ John Barr, *Illustrated Children’s Books* (London: The British Library, c1986), p. 59

⁴⁸ Shuttleworth (2010), p. 267

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Kimberley Reynolds, *Girls Only?: Gender and Popular Children’s Fiction in Britain, 1880-1910* (New York; London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), p. 5

skills desirable to the employer. This is not unlike the pressure Higher Education is increasingly under today, reflecting the market-based frame of neoliberal thought affecting education policies.⁵¹ This was opposed in various ways at the time by the likes of John Henry Newman (1801-1890), Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), Thomas H. Huxley (1825-1895), Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), as well as William Morris.⁵²

Offering a socialist standpoint shaped by his specific vision for the future of society, Morris saw the arts as the vector to remove the problematic dichotomy between the ‘academic’ and the ‘practical.’⁵³ Addressing students of the Birmingham School of Art, Morris declared ‘you cannot educate, you cannot civilise men, unless you can give them a share in art.’⁵⁴ He was essentially promoting a way of life. As underlined by Phillippa Bennett, Morris believed that ‘mundane tasks can thus “grow interesting and beautiful” if undertaken by those who know *how* to find interest and beauty in the details of life, an ability which is predicated on being accustomed from an early age to experience romance and beauty on a regular basis.’⁵⁵ Georgie Gaskin’s *A.B.C.: an Alphabet* can be seen as aspiring to provide this kind of educational experience for the young reader. Contrarily to the typical children’s book in which aesthetics were subject to cost, an artistic standard was being enforced here. Gaskin’s book would serve as an introduction to beautiful design, tickling the child’s fancy and curiosity with romantic pastoral scenes and games. Gaskin’s critical stance towards the education system was expressed in another letter to her friend Emmeline Cadbury. Herein Gaskin decried the emphasis placed at school on learning merely for examination:

...the moment a child shows signs of strain – is the moment to stop all or most lessons – the great aim in my mind, is to grow strong, sensible, gentle-hearted women, for the future will need them, as strong as possible! far better this gift

⁵¹ Phillippa Bennett, ‘Educating for Utopia: William Morris on Useful Learning versus ‘Useless Toil’, *The Journal of William Morris Studies* 20:2 (Summer 2013), p. 56

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 64

⁵⁴ William Morris (1882), p. 89

⁵⁵ Bennett (2013), p. 65. Quotes from William Morris, ‘Art and Socialism (1884)’, *Commonweal* 23 (year unspecified), p. 199

to them & to their future husbands than every degree & exam in the world &
the shattered nerves...⁵⁶

The short-term agenda of achieving successful quantifiable results was being privileged over the overall development of the individual. This utilitarian approach reflected a limiting vision of the citizen's potential to contribute to society. The erasure of humanist values by the Capitalist machine is echoed in Morris's lament against 'the mechanical drill ... being applied there [in this case a Board-school] to all varying capacities and moods.'⁵⁷ The emphasis placed on fantasy and imagination in Georgie Gaskin's illustrated books can be seen as an attempt to safeguard an idealist dimension within the child's life.

Although the Birmingham School is associated with black-and-white illustration, Georgie Gaskin aspired from the beginning to incorporate colour into her images. She wrote to her publisher: 'Suppose the ABC sells well enough / we can do a coloured edition later but / if the vell[um] takes colour nicely a few done / by hand wd be very novel - & ought / to be bought up...'.⁵⁸ No coloured edition of the *A.B.C.* was issued. A year later, however, Mathews published Gaskin's illustrations to Isaac Watts' *Divine and Moral Songs* (Figure 1.19) in colour. An edition on Japanese vellum was included this time.⁵⁹ A similar agreement was drawn up. An important difference was that the original drawings remained the 'property of the Author' in this case.⁶⁰ Gaskin was learning the ropes and had renegotiated the terms.

Edmund Evans was approached by Mathews to engrave and print in colour Georgie Gaskin's fourteen illustrations and designs for the front and back cover. The collaboration was reiterated in 1898 for Gaskin's *The Travellers and Other Stories*. This was quite an accolade, as Evans was known for his collaborations with Randolph Caldecott (1846-1886), Walter Crane and Kate Greenaway, all giants in the world of book-illustration by the 1890s. Indeed when it

⁵⁶ Birmingham, LB, Gaskin Papers, MS 2945/2/4/3, Fragment of letter from Georgie Gaskin to Mrs Cadbury 13 October 1913

⁵⁷ William Morris, 'Thoughts on Education under Capitalism', *Commonweal* (30 June 1888), as in May Morris (ed.), *William Morris: Artist, Writer, Socialist*, vol. II (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1936), p. 498, quoted in Bennett (2013), p. 59

⁵⁸ Undated letter from Georgie Gaskin to Elkin Mathews in the archives of the University of Reading, quoted in *Arthur & Georgie Gaskin* (exhibition catalogue, City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, 11 February – 21 March 1982; The Fine Art Society, London, 29 March – 30 April 1982), ed. George Breeze (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1981), p. 36

⁵⁹ *Arthur & Georgie Gaskin* (1981), p. 37

⁶⁰ Birmingham, BMT, Letter from Elkin Mathews to Georgie Gaskin 20 August 1896

came to the promotion of the *Travellers and Other Stories* in the press, the publisher made a point of naming Edmund Evans alongside Georgie Gaskin, unlike the other book announcements which only mentioned the illustrator.⁶¹

Walter Crane recalled that in the early 1870s, whilst in Rome, he would send ‘drawings ... made on card in black and white’ to Evans ‘who had them photographed on to the wood and engraved, returning [him] the proofs to colour. This method of working now beginning to supersede the old practice of drawing directly on the block for the engraver. It certainly had its advantages, not the least among which that of being able to retain the original drawings.’⁶² This process, known as ‘photoengraving,’ had been introduced in 1868. It further enabled original drawings to be reduced or enlarged, and even reversed on the block.⁶³ It was by these same means that Georgie Gaskin’s designs were translated to the final printed page in 1898.

A comparison between the Gaskin’s working drawing for a page of *The Travellers* (Figure 1.20) and the same page in the printed book (Figure 1.21) sheds light on the impact of Evans’ intervention in terms of line, orientation and colour. The original drawing reveals that the entire design of the page was conceived by Georgie Gaskin, including its layout, single-line frame, hand-drawn letters (her own words) which are well-married to the illustration occupying the top of the page. Unlike the other reproductions in this book, the orientation between the original and the illustration on this page has been inverted. The engraving appears much crisper than the drawing, as the slightly smudged pencil contours are transformed into firm thin black lines, which is particularly evident in the lettering. Whereas in the past, designers would have worked in black and white, colours being occasionally added by hand to the final illustration, with the use of colour-engraving the artist obtained control of an additional means of expression. Gaskin has used a white base for her figures, as transpires notably from the patch at the left one’s feet, which she has then coloured over in pastel tones, the odd touch of red adding a bit of brightness. The resulting illustration is closely faithful to the original, respecting even the nuances and shading. The engraver has however slightly amended the shape of the girl’s

⁶¹ ‘Mr. James Bowden’s New Publications,’ *The Athenaeum* 3711 (10 December 1898), p. 808; ‘Mr. James Bowden’s New Publications,’ *The Academy* (24 December 1898), p. 532. Evans’ firm would also translate into print the designs of other Birmingham illustrators, Gertrude Bradley and Winifred Smith.

⁶² Walter Crane, *An Artist’s Reminiscences* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1907), p. 148

⁶³ Barr (1986), p. 8

face in a manner strongly reminiscent of Kate Greenaway's infants in her first successful children's book *Under the Window* engraved and printed by Evans in 1879. This serves as a reminder of the collaborative nature of book-illustration.⁶⁴

Despite the use of the photograph to faithfully duplicate the original drawing onto the wooden block, another actual pair of hands was required to do the engraving. David Bland remarks that 'it is important to remember that illustration differs from most other forms of art in that it is judged in reproduction.'⁶⁵ The printed illustration reflects therefore not only the skills of the designer, but also those of the engraver, and the printer. Proofs would have been made to ensure that the correct amount of wood had been removed with the aid of a burin in order to recreate the original design. Each colour required a different block. The blocks would have been affixed onto a press in preparation for printing. Then would begin the tricky process during which the printer would apply a series of overlays and underlays to ensure the necessary variations of pressure to alter the density of colour in specific areas of the image. Richard-Gabriel Rummonds explains that 'the overlays were used to regulate the density of color, whilst the underlays and inlays' served 'to level the blocks ... in order to make them uniformly type-high.'⁶⁶ The ink would be applied to each block and by means of manual or mechanised pressure these would be transferred in succession onto the paper. If, as in Gaskin's case, the illustrator was not directly involved in the engraving and printing process, it was necessary that she nonetheless consider the technical and material restrictions of these stages in the conception of her book. Her design needed to be considerate of the engraver and printer's tasks. If the engraver is often forgotten in the discussion of book-illustrations, this is even more so the case for the printer.

Even within an increasingly mechanised mode of production, printing continued to rely on a lot of manual intervention and human skill. Writing in 1822, William Savage recommended that:

⁶⁴ Claire FitzGerald, 'Arts and Crafts Children's Book-Illustration: Birmingham Women Artists', MA thesis (University of Warwick, 2012), pp. 25-26

⁶⁵ David Bland, *The Illustration of Books* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), p. 14

⁶⁶ Richard-Gabriel Rummonds, *Nineteenth-Century Printing Practices: The Iron Handpress* (Oak Knell Press & the British Library, 2004), p. 649

the pressman will find it an advantage, if it be necessary to do full justice to an engraving, to have a good impression from the engraver, and place it before him as a pattern; and then arrange the overlays and tympan sheets, till he produces a fac simile in effect. But, as I observed before, his best lesson will be when he can obtain the assistance of the artist at the press side, as by that means he will obtain more instruction of what is required than by any other method.⁶⁷

Whilst the Arts and Crafts movement privileged wood-engraving, and some artists were prepared to work at a loss in their private presses rather than sacrifice artistic quality, commercial publishers were abandoning this method in favour of cheaper processes.⁶⁸ Wood-engravers could no longer only earn a living from book-illustration, but had to combine it ‘with commercial work for advertising’ and ‘ironically enough’, as James Hamilton notes, ‘with the teaching of wood-engraving.’⁶⁹ Although the Birmingham School of Art had the facilities and equipment for wood-carving since the inauguration of its Art Laboratories in 1893, students were not formally trained in the engraver’s craft.⁷⁰

Writing in 1932, Bernard Sleight reminisced on the originality and spirit of experimentation demonstrated at the school in the 1890s. A wood-engraving class given by Sleight was advertised in the School programme for 1903-4.⁷¹ Sleight commented however that his peers such as Henry Payne had earlier ‘showed an instinctive feeling for the right use of the wood block, in that it was made with Chinese white upon black paper, every stroke of the brush corresponding to a graver cut, and the result gives us a sparkle of light and a sense of colour very different from the usual pen drawings on white paper.’⁷² The conception of the form in

⁶⁷ William Savage, *Practical Hints on Decorative Printing* (1822), pp. 36-39, quoted in Rummonds (2004), p. 659

⁶⁸ James Hamilton, *Wood Engraving & the Woodcut in Britain c. 1890-1990* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1994), p. 27

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15

⁷⁰ This would have been particularly attractive to advanced middle-class female students. As daughters of ‘local ‘art industrialists’, many would not have had the practical and technical experience of students from a trades background who populated the evening classes and branch schools. [John Swift, ‘Birmingham Art School: Its Branch Schools and Female Students 1880-1900’, in *Made in Birmingham: Design & Industry 1889-1989*, ed. Barbara Tilson (Studley: Brewin Books, 1989), p. 56]

⁷¹ *Programme for the Session 1903-1904, Beginning on Monday, the 14th of September, 1903*, p. 8

⁷² Bernard Sleight, *Wood Engraving since Eighteen-Ninety* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd., 1932), pp. 37-8

terms of white on black can be found notably in some of Celia Levetus's early work (Figure 1.22).

Bernard Sleigh himself had served an apprenticeship with a local commercial wood-engraver and publisher from 1886 to 1892.⁷³ Other Birmingham illustrators of the 1890s who tried their hand at engraving would have learnt through trial and error. Charles Gere for instance received advice from William Morris who similarly had taught himself through experimentation in order to produce highly decorated hand-printed books from wood-engraved blocks.⁷⁴ Writing in 1932, Bernard Sleigh outlined two methods of wood-engraving in this tradition. Using a steel engraver on boxwood, the engraver could execute the design 'by means of white cuts on the black only; as if painted with Chinese white on dark paper', obtaining a result like Celia Levetus's original drawing (Figure 1.22). The other way was to cut away the wood 'leaving the black lines standing', shapes thus being 'outlined with fine white lines on black.'⁷⁵ There was no means of printing on the School premises. Nevertheless it became possible to reproduce designs on paper in an Arts and Crafts ethos from the summer of 1893, thanks to a collaboration with the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft.

The Birmingham Guild of Handicraft had formed in July 1890 under the aegis of the Kyrle Society. Its main object was 'to promote the practical application of Art to Industries & Handicrafts.'⁷⁶ The Guild initially had two workshops at the Lawrence Street Hall. It sought to make available premises and materials to members and associates. In addition to this it equally offered a range of classes in chip carving, brass work, carpentering, woodcarving, leatherwork, and modelling.⁷⁷ Upon obtaining new premises in 1893, there was discussion of extending the Guild's work and printing was thought of. Members of the Guild sought advice from William Morris and Emery Walker, and received promises of help from Arthur Gaskin, Charles Gere and Edmund New. The Report of the Executive Committee noted that 'the work which we are

⁷³ Roderick M. Barron, 'Imaginary Maps', <http://www.barron.co.uk/Imaginary+Maps+Pt+1/item1114>, consulted 16 February 2015

⁷⁴ Information provided by Charlotte Gere on 8 December 2014

⁷⁵ Bernard Sleigh, *A Handbook of Elementary Design* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd, 1930), p. 54

⁷⁶ Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Meeting of the Sub-Committee held at 33 Waterloo St on Tuesday 29th July 1890, p. 13

⁷⁷ The *Birmingham Daily Post* reported on September 27th 1890 that a 'largely attended meeting' had been held the previous evening at the Kyrle Society's Hall to make the newly established Guild known to the public and promote its 'recreative classes.' The proceedings were opened by C.R. Ashbee, who endorsed this enterprise and whose own Guild had served as a model in creating the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft. [Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, p. 31]

undertaking may supplement & be useful in many ways to the School of Art & there can be no doubt that the sympathy & co-operation of the School of Art will be of greatest value to the Guild.⁷⁸ It was noted that Arthur Gaskin and James Holliday were ‘prepared to undertake the general management of the department of the Guild.’⁷⁹ It was hoped that a wood-engraving branch would be started soon thereafter.

The actual printing press was purchased in June 1893, resulting in the foundation of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Press in 1894. Unfortunately there is no trace of which brand of press this was, the only certainty is that it was a hand-press. Hence arose the question of what should be the first item to be printed at ‘The Guild Press.’ It was ‘proposed to undertake the printing & publishing of a child’s Alphabet book with illustrations to be engraved on wood the designs for this are to be made by Miss France of the Municipal School of Art.’⁸⁰ This ‘Miss France’ was none other than Georgie Cave France, soon to become Mrs Gaskin. These dates and information nuance the version of events currently held in published scholarship, which asserts that J. M. Neal’s *Good King Wenceslas* (Figure 1.4), illustrated by Arthur Gaskin, ‘was the first production of the private press of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft, founded in 1894 at the Kyrle Hall by Arthur Dixon, Montague Fordham and C. Napier.’⁸¹

It is possible that the original plan was changed, and Georgie Gaskin found herself relegated to designing the ‘decorative leaflet advertising the book.’⁸² Her alphabet designs might alternatively have been used for a trial run without being issued. The next mention of the Guild Press in the society’s minutes relate that ‘Mr Dixon reported that certain members of the School of Art were desirous of having a Magazine printed, and it was provisionally decided that ... the Guild should charge at the rate of 1 penny for every 10 pages, and that Mr Gaskin who was

⁷⁸ Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Quarterly Meeting of the Guild held at 4 ½ Lower Priory Monday 10th April 1893, pp. 82-83. Neither Arthur Gaskin, Charles Gere nor Edmund New were members of the Guild at that time. Gaskin would be elected as member shortly thereafter. [Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Quarterly Meeting of the Guild held at the Royal Society of Artists New Street Thursday 28th June 1894, p. 101] As the wife of a Guild member, Georgie Gaskin was invited to attend the 1894 annual Guild Feast [Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Guild held at 33 Waterloo Street Tuesday 11th December 1894, p. 112]

⁷⁹ Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Quarterly Meeting of the Guild held at 4 ½ Lower Priory Monday 10th April 1893, p. 83

⁸⁰ Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Meeting of the Executive Committee held at 32 Waterloo St on Thursday 29th June 1893, p. 84

⁸¹ Niky Rathbone, ‘The Gaskins as Illustrators’, in *Arthur & Georgie Gaskin* (1981), p. 21

⁸² Ibid.

about to bring out a book should be charged at the same rate'.⁸³ The initial proposal to use Georgie Gaskin's designs for the first run of the Guild Press nonetheless implies a need to re-evaluate her position amongst the Birmingham School of illustrators as not so much a 'follower' of Arthur Gaskin, but a fellow artist whom the latter recognised as an equal.⁸⁴

If the Birmingham Guild's books have remained obscure, it is better known for its magazine *The Quest*. *The Quest* magazine was published by Cornish Brothers and printed in three hundred copies at the Guild's Press. Six issues were made between 1894 and 1896.⁸⁵ Georgie Gaskin was one of the few women artists invited to contribute to this mouthpiece for the Birmingham Arts and Crafts movement. She designed a vegetal decorative border for the first page of an article on 'Art in the House' in the magazine's third issue for July 1895. The next two issues featured two original advertisements for Stickphast Paste Sticks (Figure 1.23) by Georgie Gaskin. The magazine was known by artists of the Arts and Crafts movement

⁸³ Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Meeting of the Executive Committee held at 32 Waterloo St on Friday 16th March 1894, p. 94

⁸⁴ The question of women's involvement in the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft more generally deserves further attention, particularly in relation to its exclusively male offshoot 'The Brotherhood of the Quest.' The idea of the Guild being a form of brotherhood appears in the Guild's work, notably a 'chair which is really the first piece of furniture made by the Guild' bore 'on the plain leather back the inscription "Arts & Craft & Brotherhood "' [Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Quarterly Meeting of the Guild held at 4 ½ Lower Priory Monday 10th April 1893, p. 82] The Brotherhood of the Quest seems to have been initiated by the men of the School of Art who had come into closer contact with the Guild as a result of the printing press. The Minutes report in May 1894 that 'arrangements for holding an Exhibition in conjunction with certain members of the School of Art were discussed', and at the following meeting it is specified that these members are 'Mr Clavering & Mr New representatives of the Brotherhood of the Quest.' After agreeing upon 'the desirability of holding a joint exhibition in the centre of the Town', 'an executive committee consisting of Mr Dixon, Mr Wallis (or Miss Thomson), Mr Clavering, Mr Meteyard & Mr Fordham was elected to consider the question to arrange the exhibition.' [Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Meeting of the Executive Committee held at 33 Waterloo Road Tuesday 8th May 1894, p. 97; Birmingham, LB, , MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Quarterly Meeting of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft held at Kyrle Hall Tuesday 22nd May 1894, p.99] The exhibition catalogue signals that Miss Thomson was not needed on the committee, as Whitworth Wallis was able to fulfil his role, making it an exclusively male-led project. A list of the members of 'The Society of the Quest' is included, naming men who either trained, were still currently teaching at the School of Art, or the case of Arthur S. Dixon, sat on its Sub-Committee. The names which follow his are: L.[ouis] Fairfax-Muckley, Charles M. Gere, Sydney Meteyard, Claude Napier-Clavering (Hon. Sec.), Edmund H. New, Henry A. Payne, George T. Tarling, Ernest O. Treglown. Their work occupied a good half of the space, however some women did nominally feature. Notwithstanding Miss S. Pumphrey, a leather worker and bookbinder, and Miss M. Thompson, wood carver, who had been involved in the Guild from its beginnings, a couple of women from the School of Art were included in the show. Within a group display of 'wood blocks, wood engravings, and specimens of printing', which were probably of those used for the new magazine *The Quest*, feature a bookplate by Georgie Gaskin and one by Celia Levetus. [*Catalogue of an Exhibition of Pictures, Drawings in Black and White, Wood Engraving, Printing, Bookbinding, Leather-work, Wood-carving, Furniture, and Metal-work, by members of the Society of the Quest, and of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft, June 1894, Gallery of the Royal Society of Artists*, p. 10] Mary Newill and Violet Holden would be the only other two women illustrators whose work would feature in any of the six issues of *The Quest*. Both taught at the School of Art.

⁸⁵ Wildman (1990), p. 63

outside of Birmingham, and was even republished by Daniel Updike's Merrymount Press in the United States.⁸⁶

The presence of the work of women artists in the magazine of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft, and as discovered, the fact that a woman's work was considered for the Guild's first ever printed book, challenges the narrative of the exclusively-masculine world of the Guild. This transpires in the imagery used to publicise the Guild's activities, particularly in relation to the art of the book. The second issue of *The Quest* magazine included an article on the 'Manufacture and Handicraft, with some Account of the Guild of Handicraft in Birmingham.' The Guild's different sections are depicted therein in small black and white illustrations. The book-binding department is represented by a woman identifiable as Miss Pumphrey who was head of this department (Figure 1.24).⁸⁷

The venture of the private press was an uncertain one. Writing of Arthur Gaskin and Joseph Southall's work in *The Studio*, the art collector Laurence W. Hodson (1864-1933), regretted that 'there was no living wage for such black-and-white work as the "Shepherd's Calendar" drawings; with Morris's death the demand became even more precarious and was almost exclusively for less carefully studied work, done quickly, at a competitive price.'⁸⁸ In proposing their illustrations to commercial publishers outside of the exclusive private presses, Birmingham women illustrators were making the financially sounder choice. The embracement of colour was sympathetic to a juvenile audience. A new generation would thus be exposed to design produced within the Arts and Crafts' system of values, who might transform into adult customers. In addition to the aforementioned publications, Georgie Gaskin would further illustrate *Holy Christmas: Christmas Hymns* in 1896 and *Little Girls and Little Boys* in 1898. Her last book was *Tale of Six Little Travellers* issued in 1905, essentially a low-quality reprint by H. R. Alleson of part of her 1898 *The Travellers and Other Stories*. After the turn of the century however, her artistic efforts turned to the designing and making of jewellery, setting a business in partnership with her husband.

⁸⁶ Alan Crawford, 'The Arts and Crafts Movement', in Crawford (1984), p. 21

⁸⁷ Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes 1890-99, Meeting of the Executive Committee held at 32 Waterloo St on Friday 16th March 1894, p. 95

⁸⁸ Laurence W. Hodson, 'The Birmingham Group: Arthur J. Gaskin and Joseph Southall', *The Studio* 79:324 (March 1920), p. 4

If book-illustration strictly adhering to an Arts and Crafts way of making was difficult to maintain in the long-run, illustration in a wider sense served an important role in the representation and historiography of artistic networks of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The remainder of this chapter will study the function and use of the *Ex Libris* amongst Birmingham artists, looking more specifically at the work of Celia Levetus, a prolific designer of bookplates. These small black-and-white decorative labels became very fashionable in late nineteenth century Britain. Easily transferrable, these designs changed hands in many ways. They were exchanged from artist to commissioner, from artist to fellow artist, journeyed from collector to collector, to finally be admired in an album or in the volumes of a book-lover's private library. The small format and cheap medium of the printed bookplate contributed to its convenience and popularity as an artform. If left blank, it could be written out according to need. Used in this way, the *Ex Libris* can be viewed as a visiting card of sorts. Easily reproduced, it could become part of the actual book as an illustration. It might also appear in the pages of a magazine. Societies formed uniting appreciators of the bookplate, such as the *Ex Libris* Society in London, who issued their own journal.

A beautiful album of bookplates by Celia Levetus, which the artist assembled herself for her mother Sara Levetus, remains in possession of her descendants. Celia Levetus lovingly mounted twenty-seven *Ex Libris* of her design onto fifteen pages in a bound volume. These include bookplates reproduced in publications of the time, such as her early *Ex Libris* for Nelly H. Taylor, Violet Holden, Jennie Cohen or Florence Levetus which feature in Norna Labouchère's *Ladies' Book-plates* first published in 1895.⁸⁹ It equally collates previously unseen designs and a selection of these will be discussed for the first time in this case study. The majority of the bookplates are undated, and those that are range from 1894 to 1898. All are signed either by her full maiden name or initials, suggesting that they were produced sometime before 1902, the year in which she married Eric Nicholson.

Reproduced in black ink from engraved wood-blocks, they can be understood as small black-and-white tokens of friendships, tracing a web of familial and professional relationships. Their formal features and iconography will be studied alongside some of the artist's published

⁸⁹ Norna Labouchère, *Ladies' Book-plates: An Illustrated Handbook or Collectors and Book-Lovers* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1895)

book-illustrations. The gifting of illustrations will emerge as essential in achieving visibility in the eyes of renowned artistic figures of her time.⁹⁰ The samples selected for close analysis retrace the story of the foundational role of Levetus's training at the Birmingham School of Art, the importance of a support network for the success of the artist, to being noticed by influential members of the art world. They testify to how Levetus reached out to artists she admired, finally becoming part of the coterie around Esther (1870-1951) and Lucien Pissarro's Eragny Press.

One of Celia Levetus's early bookplates was for the BMSA's headmaster, Edward R. Taylor (Figure 1.25). Levetus attended the BMSA from 1892 to 1897. Unlike other members of the Birmingham Group who had grown up locally, Celia Levetus was born in Montreal and only lived in Birmingham from 1887 to 1902. Her connection with the city predated her residence there, as she had an uncle and other relatives in Birmingham whom she corresponded with as a child. In the census for 1900 she is registered as living at 33 Park Hill Road, Moseley, with her mother Sara, by then a widower, and siblings Edward, Florence, Daisy and Frank, her aunt Hannah Himes, and two live-in servants.⁹¹ Although Levetus does not appear to have socialised much with the artists usually associated with the Birmingham Group, she did find friends amongst some of the students who specialised in illustration.⁹² Her friendship with Violet Holden was immortalised by the design of an *Ex Libris* (Figure 1.26). The recurring figure of the reading seated woman appears here with attributes referring to Holden's occupation. A painter's palette and two brushes occupy the foreground above the Latin motto 'to work is to pray.' The extended back of the chair suggests the form of a painter's easel or maybe a Charles Rennie Mackintosh chair. A bond with Gertrude M. Bradley can be surmised from the presence of an original pen and ink drawing by Bradley in Levetus's private archive (Figure 1.27). These were formative years and Birmingham's art scene made a strong impact on the young artist. This is embodied in Levetus's bookplate for Edward R. Taylor.

⁹⁰ An interviewer remarked on Levetus' 'strong individuality and force of character.' [W.H. Bromhead, 'An Illustrator of Blake', *Art Journal* (August 1900), p. 239]

⁹¹ British National Archives 1901 census online, quoted in Joshua Large, 'The *Studio* and the Workshops: Amelia Levetus and the British Influence on the Applied Arts in Vienna', MA dissertation (Central European University Budapest 2003), p. 42

⁹² The 'Birmingham Group' has been considered as consisting of Charles Gere, Margaret Gere, Edith and Henry Payne, Joseph Southall, Mary Newill, Sidney Meteyard, Bernard Sleight, and Arthur and Georgie Gaskin.

In the image of its owner, Taylor's *Ex Libris* (Figure 1.25) contains a rich iconographical programme. This combines visual and textual elements to express not only its recipient's values, but also those of its designer and of the Birmingham School as a whole. Along its top is inscribed Taylor's personal motto 'Ars Longa Vita Brevis,' which translates from the Latin literally to 'art is long, life is short.' This can be understood as expressing the sentiment that 'art outlives human life.' It suggests a feeling of responsibility and legacy which fits with Taylor's role as an art educator. These words are supplemented by the city of Birmingham's motto 'Forward.' This conveys that Taylor, who was not a native Brummie, embraced the city's commitment to progress and forward-thinking. Prior to becoming headmaster of Birmingham's School of Art in 1878, Taylor had trained as a painter at the Burslem School of Art before joining the National Training Class for Art Masters at South Kensington. His work as a painter is referred to with the palette held in his left hand and his painter's smock. Taylor was made member of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists in 1879. The desire to inscribe him within a painterly lineage is further denoted by the Renaissance skullcap which Levetus has placed on his head, imitative of the fashion the painter George Frederick Watts (1817-1904) adopted in later years.

Edward Taylor's first educational appointment was as headmaster of the Lincoln School of Art in 1862. His students there obtained such promising results in the national art examinations that the school premises were extended.⁹³ A similar development would occur in Birmingham under his leadership. Edward R. Taylor's teaching methods and vision were instrumental in obtaining the continued financial and political support of Birmingham's civic elite. The Birmingham School of Art thus became the first in England to obtain municipal status in 1885. This was crowned by the opening of its own purpose-built premises on Margaret Street which were extended to accommodate its ever increasing student body in 1893. Taylor thus obtained the space and facilities to fully implement an Arts and Crafts approach to artistic training in which learning was enabled by making.⁹⁴ Students were encouraged to execute their designs in their respective materials in two art laboratories. Modelling and casting could now be

⁹³ Anonymous, 'Edward R. Taylor', *Edgbastonia* 14:155 (July 1894), p. 98

⁹⁴ Crawford (1984), p. 16

done on site, as well as a variety of metalwork activities, in addition to woodcarving.⁹⁵ Edward R. Taylor similarly adopted a workshop-based model when he co-founded the Birmingham Tile and Pottery Works in Smethwick with his son William Howson Taylor in 1898. Edward Taylor was actually reconnecting, on handicrafts terms, with his own father's trade as a pottery manufacturer in Hanley.⁹⁶ William, depicted in Levetus's bookplate with his father's hand on his shoulder, renamed the business after the Victorian critic John Ruskin in 1902. He took full control of the Ruskin Pottery following his father's death in 1912.⁹⁷

With so little biographical information available on Edward R. Taylor, some elements of the *Ex Libris* remain difficult to decipher. The horses and rider with the myrtle tree suggest a passage in the gospel of Zechariah which describes a vision in which the prophet saw 'a man riding upon a red horse ... stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom' with horses behind him. According to George Ferguson, 'this passage was interpreted as showing Christ, the man riding upon the red horse amid the Gentiles and followed by ... martyrs and confessors.'⁹⁸ In Christian symbolism the myrtle is usually understood as an 'allusion to the Gentiles who were converted by Christ.'⁹⁹ Edward R. Taylor's religious affiliation is unknown to the author, making this reference difficult to interpret further.

Another intriguing figure in the design is the young girl on the bottom left. Taylor is not known to have had a daughter, so could the sitter be seen as a reference to his role as Levetus's mentor? Taylor's gender-inclusive policy at the Birmingham School of Art was essential in making a practical workshop-style training available to women. This allowed them to circumvent the apprenticeship system traditionally reserved to men. As underlined earlier, the 'Birmingham School' identity is to be understood as the reflection of a co-educational

⁹⁵ Swift (1996), p. 13. In more detail, the Art Laboratory n°1 was to contain: a 'small muffle, with blast, for enamelling, annealing metal, etc.' to which another already existing muffle was to be added; a 'hot iron plate, for etching, etc.'; a 'pitch kettle'; 'etching baths'; a 'blow pipe and blower'; a 'lithographic press (16" x 24"...)'; and a 'small anvil on wooden block.' Art Laboratory n°2 would house: a 'muffle, with chamber 3" x 2" and with regulated blast, for terra cotta, glazed tiles, stained glass, etc.'; a 'forge (29" x 24" x 34" high), with bellows, anvil on wooden block, and other accompanying fittings'; an 'iron bench and vices'; a 'carpenter's bench, with screws, clamps, etc.' [Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. III, 11th July 1893, Minute 1026, p. 256]

⁹⁶ Roy Hartnell, 'The Contribution of Art – and of Design – to the Emergence and Establishment of a Civic Culture in Birmingham in the Late Nineteenth Century', Ph.D. thesis (Birmingham Polytechnic, 1992), p. 148

⁹⁷ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Cultural Services, 'Ruskin Pottery', www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/3751/ruskin_pottery_leaflet_part_1, consulted 27 December 2015

⁹⁸ George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 34

⁹⁹ Ibid.

environment. This was recognised by voices in the art world at the time. *The Studio* perceived Levetus's bookplate for Edward R. Taylor as a reflection of the Birmingham School's specific contribution to the contemporary renewal of the art of the bookplate, and that of illustration more generally. Gleeson White praised 'the use of the bold line, and the simplifying of details ... all excellent qualities.'¹⁰⁰ Taylor himself would continue to encourage Levetus in her work after she left the school in 1897. Upon graduating she went on to become a teacher of drawing at a private school. This prompted her to submit an article to the *Artist* magazine after five years of practice, reflecting on the continued inadequate and antiquated approach to teaching art to children. She reported her own attempts to implement more progressive methods of teaching and turned to Edward R. Taylor for feedback and advice.¹⁰¹

This was not the only art journal in which Celia Levetus's work was promoted. As evidenced by her *Ex Libris* for Charles Holme (1848-1923) (Figure 1.28), *The Studio* magazine was an important supporter of young artists active in the decorative arts. The bookplate is dated 1895, at which time Levetus was still a student. Prior to his involvement with the artistic press, Charles Holme had made a career in the trade of art and merchandise from Asia, during which he joined the designer Christopher Dresser (1834-1904) to form the firm of Dresser and Holme in 1879. A year after his retirement in 1893, Charles Holme set up his next venture by founding *The Studio* magazine. In 1895 he also took over the role of editor from Gleeson White. Celia Levetus's work had featured in the 1894 article on the Birmingham School in *The Studio*. Furthermore Holme had an affective link with the city of Birmingham since his wife Clara Benton was the daughter of the Birmingham brass founder George Benton.¹⁰²

Celia Levetus was not the only woman in her family to be linked with the magazine. Her aunt Amelia S. Levetus (1853-1938) was the Viennese correspondent for *The Studio* from 1902 to 1938.¹⁰³ Celia Levetus's illustrations to her brother's Edward L. Levetus's (1871-1950)

¹⁰⁰ Gleeson White, 'Some Recent Book-Plates', *The Studio* 7:36 (March 1896), p. 98

¹⁰¹ Celia Levetus, 'A Few Words on Elementary Art Training', *Artist: an Illustrated Monthly Records of Arts, Crafts and Industries* 33 (January 1902), p. 29

¹⁰² Julie F. Codell, 'Holme, Charles (1848-1923)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2008), <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/view/article/33950>, consulted 23 October 2014

¹⁰³ Born in Birmingham, Amelia Levetus had trained as a teacher at Cambridge before leaving for Vienna in the 1890s. There she became acquainted with Hungarian art critic Ludwig Hevesi and involved with artists, designers and supporters of the Secession. 'Levetus was also a significant figure in the fledgling women's movement in Vienna at the beginning of the 20th century, publishing and lecturing on the education and improvement of women, and of the working classes. She owned and taught at an English

poetry also appeared in contemporary art and leisure periodicals (Figure 1.29). In that respect, it would seem that her illustrative work featured more regularly in the press than that of other Birmingham women illustrators. This reinforces the thesis that social connections were vital to the prospering of a crafts(wo)man's career.

Bookplates serve to convey their owner's literary tastes and personal values, incorporating mottos and a variety of attributes, which might be compared to the tradition of painted portraiture. The presence of three young women in Charles Holme's bookplate (Figure 1.28) is indicative of his espousal of a budding generation of craftswomen. The three women wear examples of the 'Aesthetic dress,' which some of the Birmingham artists, such as Georgie Gaskin, are known to have adopted (Figure 1.30). Gone are the restricting corsets and crinolines to be replaced by clothing which is 'compatible to the figure' allowing 'maximum freedom of movement.'¹⁰⁴ Liberty & Company fabrics were favoured to achieve the desired softness and lightness in touch, but also in colour.¹⁰⁵ An artist's smock further adorns the painter's form in the rear-ground on the left of the vignette. The latter also carries a purse on her side, suggestive of her earning money for her work. A bold black shape grows on the canvas, steering clear of the stereotype of the female painter in water-colours. Her light face, hair and dress stand out from the dark curtain draped behind her, whilst the simple form of the easel contrasts with the peacock-feather-print fabric. Seated to the right, another woman is absorbed in reading an issue of *The Studio* magazine. The journal enjoyed a strong student, and indeed female readership, which this figure represents.¹⁰⁶ The periodical would have served as a source of inspiration,

language school where she also organised a conversation club, the John Ruskin Club, which boasted a diverse programme of events and guest lectures on British history, culture and politics and offered trips to the UK.' [University of Glasgow, Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning, The Catalogue, 'Amelia S. Levetus', <http://www.mackintosh-architecture.gla.ac.uk/catalogue/name/?nid=LevAS&xml=peo>, consulted 13 October 2014]

¹⁰⁴ Annette Carruthers and Mary Greensted (eds), *Simplicity or Splendour: Arts and Crafts Living: Objects from the Cheltenham Collections* (London: Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museums in association with Lund Humphries, 1999), p. 35

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 37

¹⁰⁶ Peter Altenberg [*nom de plume* for Richard Engländer] wrote a short poem titled 'Der Freund' evoking the Viennese female subscriber to *The Studio*: 'Once a month, always on the 15th, Jolanthe received from England the / latest number of "The Studio: an Illustrated Magazine of Fine and Applied Art." / On that evening Jolanthe would sit in a low armchair in the corner, in the soft light of an English standard lamp... / Her number of "The Studio" lay on her slender knees, and she slowly / turned over page after page, often turning back and pausing all over again. / She often paused for a very long time. / Then her husband said, Jolanthe...' / And she turned over more pages. / She never addressed him and never said, "Do look at this..." / He remained seated at the large table, smoked quietly, and relaxed after his days' work, / She remained seated in the low chair and went on turning over pages. / She saw the ecstatic, unworldly ladies of Burne-Jones, who seemed to / have just the tips of their toes on the ground; she also saw the wonderful, very / slim naked bodies in marble, various things in Ivory and chased copper, reliefs / in steel

providing easy access to models of artistic excellence, and pointed to current and emerging trends. More importantly, this type of reader would have hoped that her own work would feature in *The Studio*'s pages.¹⁰⁷

With a readership of sixty thousand, the magazine was a valuable platform for budding artists to raise their profile within the art world.¹⁰⁸ One means of gaining visibility was to participate in its art competitions. Historian Simon Houfe notes that the 1890s 'was probably the first time that book art, illustrations, covers, bindings or bookplates had been the subject of competitions, and more and more unknowns were trying to enter the field.'¹⁰⁹ Several of the Birmingham illustrators entered them successfully including Celia Levetus, who alongside her peers Georgie Gaskin, H. Isabel Adams and Kate Light, took away a prize for 'illustration to a work on the Horn Book.'¹¹⁰ A more direct means of disseminating one's work was to present it in person. Young women artists would have visited potential editors and publishers with folders containing examples of their designs, as lies at the right hand side's figure's feet in Holmes' bookplate. Celia Levetus was quite enterprising in putting her work forward to influential people, as will be demonstrated further.

It could be argued that Charles Holme's *Ex Libris* functions, in fact, as a self-portrait of the artist in addition to representing its commissioner's stance. The three figures, although of varied physical appearance, can be viewed as different facets of a same craftswoman. Indeed most of the Birmingham women artists were proficient in a variety of crafts, and in some cases pursued a pluri-disciplinary practice beyond their years of experimentation at the School of Art. This, it could be argued, was a defining criterion of the artist-crafts(wo)man. The tempera painter Maxwell Armfield (1881-1972) thus mused:

and gold, endless rich meadows with gigantic, isolated trees, water and / earth on rainy days ... ponds with irises as straight as candles, stark naked / virgins on horseback, flowers from Japan... / This 15th of the month was like a holiday, at any rate like another, quite / different day. / "I am in England," she felt, "in England..." [quoted in Large (2003), pp. 25-26]

¹⁰⁷ Ironically, whilst *The Studio* magazine espoused wood-engraved book-illustrations as emerging from the likes of the 'Birmingham School', its own issues were produced by means of 'new photochemical reproduction techniques' ensuring 'perfect facsimiles.' In fact 'it was the first British periodical of art to make full use of the new media', as claimed by Clive Ashwin, and 'their potential for a strikingly 'modern' look and mass production at relatively low cost.' [Large (2003), p. 12, quotes Clive Ashwin, 'The Early Studio and its Illustrations, *Studio International* 196 (1983), p. 22]

¹⁰⁸ Large (2003), p. 19

¹⁰⁹ Simon Houfe, *Fin de Siècle: the Illustrators of the 'Nineties* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1992), p. 5

¹¹⁰ Anonymous, 'Awards in "The Studio" Prize Competitions. Illustration to a work on the Horn Book. (A XIII)', *The Studio* 3:17 (August 1894), pp. xvi-xviii

every material is sufficient for the expression of a certain range of ideas which cannot be combined in just that way in any other medium ... the extent to which a medium may be legitimately stretched is a very open one, and is better avoided. The true craftsman will tend rather to increase the number of defined materials than to attempt to strain the bounds of any.¹¹¹

The third figure seated on the floor in the foreground provides the link between the fine art painter and the decorative arts embroiderer. The three figures when viewed as one, embody the juncture of 'high' and 'low' art which operated in the Arts and Crafts movement and was gathering momentum thanks to an international audience.

Change was in the air, and young artists like Celia Levetus could have hoped for the new century to bring about a society in which women would gain greater access to the professional and political arenas, starting with the vote. The embroiderer thus stares the viewer straight in the eye, a force to be reckoned with. There is however some caution in the choice of artistic disciplines depicted here. The figures are engaged in painting and embroidery, artistic occupations which had been traditionally considered as acceptable leisure activities for middle-class women. Although Birmingham female artists did not allow gender to dictate their craft, surface conservatism might have been considered as more strategic than an evident intent to overturn the order.

When considering Mary Seton Watts' oeuvre, Melanie Unwin notes that 'serious participation in the professions or commerce required careful negotiation for a middle-class Victorian woman if she were to avoid compromising her position in society and fulfil those duties it required.'¹¹² Unwin adapts Griselda Pollock's model of 'reference-deference-difference' articulated in her 1992 Walter Neurath Memorial lecture to interpret Watts' successful management of an artistic career alongside her renowned husband George F. Watts.¹¹³ Pollock developed this 'game-play' for the purpose of a renewed understanding of avant-gardism, as analysed through the career of Paul Gauguin. Her paradigm rests on a hierarchical relationship in which the artist occupying the 'lower' position first produces work

¹¹¹ Maxwell Armfield, 'Crafts and Design', *The Studio* 88:376 (July 1924), p. 10

¹¹² Melanie Unwin, 'Significant Other: Art and Craft in the Career and Marriage of Mary Watts', *Journal of Design History* 17:3 (2004), p. 237

¹¹³ Pollock (1992), p. 14

which explicitly ‘references’ the work of an established artist in view of entering the market, in the case of the Watts couple the established artist being George Watts. The aspirant, here Mary Watts, then marked her ‘deference’ by ‘the acceptance of shared artistic aims.’¹¹⁴ Finally, as identified by Unwin, Mary Watts implemented Pollock’s stage of ‘difference’ by proposing work which was ‘both legible in terms of current aesthetics and criticism, and also a definitive advance on that current position.’¹¹⁵ This strategy ensured that by ‘reference’, the new contender achieved ‘recognition that what you were doing was part of a [in this case an Arts and Crafts] project.’¹¹⁶ While minding that ‘deference and difference’ were ‘finely calibrated so that the ambition and claim of your work was measured by its difference from the artist or artistic statement whose status you both acknowledge (deference) and *displaced*.’¹¹⁷ It will be highlighted in the remainder of this chapter that Celia Levetus adopted similar strategies on different occasions in view of asserting her potential as an illustrator whose work could help advance the Arts and Crafts vision of the art of the book.

Celia Levetus thus employed ‘deference’ in contacting male artists she admired. One artist whose work she particularly respected was the Pre-Raphaelite painter William Holman Hunt.¹¹⁸ Levetus had admired two of Hunt’s paintings at the BMAG. His *Two Gentlemen of Verona, Valentine Rescuing Sylvia from Proteus* had been purchased in 1887. Nine years later this was followed by the *Finding of the Saviour in the Temple* gifted by the local politician Sir John Middlemore, 1st Baronet. Walter Crane had provided Celia Levetus with an introduction to visit William Holman Hunt’s studio in 1898.¹¹⁹ However this was not the first time Levetus had seen the painter in person. Holman Hunt had given a speech for the annual distribution of prizes at the Birmingham School of Art in February 1893. This coincided with Levetus’s first year at the school.

Levetus’s bookplate for Holman Hunt (Figure 1.31) dates from 1900. It marks a turning point in her work as an illustrator. In this design three allegorical female figures embody Holman Hunt’s motto of ‘Nature, Truth, Art.’ In his address to students of the Birmingham

¹¹⁴ Ibid; Unwin (2004), p. 238

¹¹⁵ Pollock (1992), p. 14; Unwin (2004), p. 238

¹¹⁶ Pollock (1992), p. 14

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Celia Levetus, ‘Notes on the Pre-Raphaelite Pictures in the Birmingham Art Gallery’, *Artist: an Illustrated Monthly Records of Arts, Crafts and Industries* 20 (October 1897), p. 473

¹¹⁹ London, BL, RP 3809(i), Letter from Walter Crane to Celia Levetus 11 October 1898

School of Art, the painter had stressed, ‘the great wisdom and joy in making Nature a friend, a confider of sacred secrets, and a constant Mentor.’¹²⁰ Roses grow at Nature’s feet to the left. To the right, Art is represented by the painter’s palette and brush. Art joins hands with Nature around Truth’s naked body emerging from a well of water. The latter borrows from a Christian tradition in which the well of water symbolises the Word and by extension the doctrine from the Word and therefore truth itself.¹²¹ In an article on Celia Levetus’s bookplates in the quarterly magazine *The Book of Book-Plates*, Richard Stewart differentiated between her earlier and later work, which may be identified as ‘difference’ in terms of her belonging to a ‘Birmingham School’ of illustrators. This can be appreciated when comparing her *Ex Libris* for Edward R. Taylor (Figure 1.25) with William Holman Hunt’s (Figure 1.31). In Richard Stewart’s words, ‘the earlier [is] drawn with a rich fatty line.’ This line is what creates an impression of ‘colour.’ In contrast her later work relies ‘more on a graceful and decorative arrangement of line.’¹²² Holman Hunt was not the only renowned artist Levetus came into direct contact with.

Celia Levetus effectively used the designing of bookplates and the gifting of her illustrated work as a means to engage with influential members of the art world. Walter Crane wrote to Levetus on Boxing Day in 1898 enthusing ‘How sweet of you to send me such a charming card of your own Design - & the original too!’ Crane reciprocated with a photograph of himself to match her previous gift of a photographed portrait, with the comment that ‘The good term deserves another & I add a little black & white sketch of my studio to emphasize my best wishes to you for xmas & the new year.’¹²³ Crane was keen to advise the young Birmingham illustrator, and a first invitation to visit his studio came with insight on the different kinds of ink that he used:

I used to use Lamp black rubbed down & mixed with water to the thickness I wanted: but this is not a fixed black. Roberson’s have rather a nice liquid

¹²⁰ William Holman Hunt, ‘An address delivered ... at the distribution of prizes to students of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art, 22 February 1893’, in *Fourteen Addresses Delivered to Students of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art Now the College of Arts and Crafts Margaret Street 1892-1924* (City of Birmingham School of Printing, 1942), p. 30

¹²¹ Bible Meaning, ‘Spiritual Meaning of Well, Fountain’, www.biblemeanings.info/info/Words/Geographical/Well.htm, consulted 26 June 2015

¹²² Richard Stewart, ‘The Book-Plate Designs of Miss Celia Levetus’, *The Book of Book-Plates* 1:3 (October 1900), p. 117

¹²³ London, BL, RP 3809(i), Letter from Walter Crane to Celia Levetus 26 December 1898

Indian Ink I have used, & also a black drawing ink, but this is not 'fixed'.

Then there is Higgin's drawing ink which is entirely black & bright, but I mention I never took to it. I have also used Reeves' Artists' Black, which they sell both 'fixed' & unfixed. I used this for most of the Shenson Drawings I think. It wants constant stirring ... & also clogs on the pen. On the whole I prefer Roberson's.¹²⁴

Walter Crane had in fact been aware of the Birmingham artist's work prior to these written exchanges. He inquired as an aside whether she remembered that he 'had a little design of [hers] in [his] book 'Decorative Illustration'.'¹²⁵ First published in 1896, Crane's book *Of the Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New* included Celia Levetus's bookplate for Joe Burroughs (Figure 1.32), a copy of which is equally pasted in her album for her mother Sara Levetus. Crane here identified Levetus as one of the 'leading artists of the Birmingham School.'¹²⁶ He had taken note of Levetus's potential as early as 1893, when he was one of the judges in *The Studio* magazine competition for designs for Andrew Tuer's *History of the Horn-Book*. Levetus was awarded first prize from amongst a hundred submissions.¹²⁷

It was not until February 1899 that Celia Levetus was able to take Crane up on his invitation to visit his studio and she came in the company of her sister.¹²⁸ This was probably her sister Florence, who was older than Celia by a year, and worked as a correspondence clerk.¹²⁹ The initial meeting between Levetus and Crane led to a correspondence of which traces remain up until 1904, revealing several other encounters. An invitation to celebrate the eve of the wedding of Beatrice Crane, Walter Crane's daughter, with Sydney Jeffree in June 1900 suggests that the initial master-student rapport extended into a more informal social interaction.¹³⁰ The

¹²⁴ London, BL, RP 3809(i), Letter from Walter Crane to Celia Levetus 11 October 1898. 'Fixed' entails solid pigment, whereas 'unfixed' ink would have already been mixed with a fluid.

¹²⁵ London, BL, RP 3809(i), Letter from Walter Crane to Celia Levetus 11 October 1898

¹²⁶ Crane (1905), p. 207

¹²⁷ Anonymous (September 1894), p. xvi

¹²⁸ London, BL, RP 3809(i), Letter from Walter Crane to Celia Levetus 7 February 1899

¹²⁹ Celia Levetus had five siblings altogether, including another sister, Daisy, 6 years younger than her, who earned her living as a pianoforte teacher. [British National Archives 1901 census online, quoted in Large (2003), p. 42] Both sisters were recipients of an *Ex Libris*, which evoke a fondness in the family for music.

¹³⁰ London, BL, RP 3809(i), Invitation to Beatrice Crane and Sydney Jeffree's pre-wedding party 22 June 1900. The last letter of this collection, dated 1904 warns that the Cranes would be out of the country for the New Year and therefore would not be holding their usual party, but that Celia Nicholson (then married) was welcome to visit at a later date, from which can be inferred that she would usually be amongst the New Year's guests.

relationship was based on an exchange of goodwill and small gifts. In the spirit of the Christmas season, Levetus sent Crane a book in 1899.¹³¹ Celia Levetus dispatched more of her illustration work in November 1902, including some of her bookplates in addition to a copy of her published illustrations to William Blake's (1757-1827) *Songs of Experience*.

Another influential artist with whom Celia Levetus had contact with was George Frederick Watts. A doodle by George F. Watts held in the BL's folder of letters signed by Celia Levetus bears the date October 8 1898 in Levetus's handwriting.¹³² G.F. Watts acknowledged reception of one of Levetus's books on 3 January 1900 commenting 'your little book is quite delightful! I am charmed by it.'¹³³ By that date, Levetus had illustrated Ignacz Kunos' *Turkish Fairy Tales and Folk Tales* in 1896, published by Lawrence and Bullen, as well as *Verse Fancies* in 1898 (Figure 1.33) to a text by her brother Edward Levetus, issued by Chapman & Hall. A couple of her designs for *Turkish Fairy Tales and Folk Tales* (Figure 1.34) had been awarded a 'National Book Prize' in the 1896 National Art Competition while Levetus was still a student at the Birmingham School of Art.¹³⁴ The book received positive reviews, notably in the *Artist* magazine whose writer considered that the nine full-page drawings demonstrated 'well thought out and harmonious decorative design.'¹³⁵ Levetus was no doubt quite confident in showing it to Watts. When Levetus sent the renowned painter another sample of her work, the latter wrote back stating 'I think your illustrations full of character & poetic inspiration but I should when we are in Town like to talk over some principles of form with you & think my experience might be of some use...'¹³⁶

The book in question would probably have been her interpretation of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* published by Wells Gardner Darton & Co. in 1899 in a miniature edition. Her choice of subject was audacious, as a reviewer of the time remarked 'nothing like them [Blake's poems] exists in our literature.'¹³⁷ Writing in response to receiving Levetus's

¹³¹ London, BL, RP 3809(i), Letter from Walter Crane to Celia Levetus 25 December 1899

¹³² London, BL, RP 3784

¹³³ London, BL, Letter from George F. Watts to Celia Levetus 3 January 1901

¹³⁴ *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1896* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, 1896), p. 4

¹³⁵ Anonymous, 'Some Fairy Tales', *Artist* 20 (August 1897), p. 399

¹³⁶ London, BL, RP 3784, Letter from George F. Watts to Celia Levetus 31 December 1901

¹³⁷ Bromhead (1900), p. 237. Celia Levetus' venture must have inspired fellow Birmingham student Geraldine Morris, who also illustrated Blake's *Songs of Innocence* in 1902. [Crawford (1984), p. 159]

illustrations to *Songs of Experience* in November 1902, Walter Crane mused ‘I have always had the feeling that Blake is almost unapproachable to illustrate – except by himself! Wasn’t that horrid.’¹³⁸ The artist echoed here the caution which W.H. Bromhead demonstrated in his overall positive review of Levetus’s work in the *Art Journal*. Bromhead jested that the title of his article ‘An Illustrator of Blake’ ‘challenges the question, “Was not Blake his own?”’.¹³⁹ William Blake’s biographer, Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909) equally accentuated the union between Blake’s drawings and his poems, remarking ‘in composition, colour, pervading feeling, they are lyrical to the eye, as the songs to the ear.’¹⁴⁰ Indeed Blake held a special position in the eyes of late nineteenth century artists who sought for a reconnection with a seemingly lost quality in the making and beauty of books. This is explicated by Walter Crane:

We seem to read in Blake something of the spirit of the Medieval designers ... he embodied its more daring and aspiring thought, and the desire for simpler and more humane conditions of life ... Blake, in these mixed elements, and the extraordinary suggestiveness of his work and the freedom of his thought, seems nearer to us than others of his contemporaries. In his sense of the decorative treatment of the page, too, his work bears upon our purpose.¹⁴¹

Blake’s illustrative work was nonetheless poorly appreciated in his time, and his ‘homemade’ books were ‘only disposed of with much difficulty.’¹⁴² Describing the genesis of Blake’s original illustrated books of verse, Bromhead narrates:

We know that Blake engraved the plates with his own hands, grinding and mixing his water-colours with carpenter’s glue, after a method revealed to him in a vision by Joseph the Second Carpenter; that the books were bound by Mrs. Blake; in short, that everything concerned with them, writing the poems, designing the pictures, engraving the plates, printing, binding, ink-making –

¹³⁸ London, BL, RP 3809(i), Letter from Walter Crane to Celia Levetus 29 November 1902

¹³⁹ Bromhead (1900), p. 237

¹⁴⁰ As quoted in Bromhead (1900), p. 237

¹⁴¹ Crane (1905), pp. 138-9

¹⁴² Bromhead (August 1900), p. 237

all, with the sole exception of the manufacture of the paper, was the work of the artist and his wife.¹⁴³

Blake thus developed a ‘new method of relief etching’ which he called ‘wood-cutting on copper’ and resembled wood-cutting in its effect.¹⁴⁴ The journalist conceded that ‘Blake’s own designs can never be widely known and disseminated’ due to his non-reproducible method of production, hence leaving an opening for other artists to endeavour to visually interpret his poetry.

Celia Levetus’s 1902 designs to Blake’s *Songs of Experience* were her final published children’s book-illustrations. Bromhead viewed them as ‘sincere and sympathetic, and of high technical value, and as such ... both interesting and legitimate.’¹⁴⁵ In comparison with her earlier work which conformed with the mediaevalist tendency of the Birmingham School, Bromhead considered that Levetus had here ‘burst through the severity of a fine, if singularly limited convention’ and that:

the artist has found herself that her work begins to be of interest in these pages ... the qualities she has set herself to gain include grace and flexibility of line, ease, and life ... and on the other hand, that she has sought to restrain that fatal tendency to over-decoration, not to mention a certain indifference to drawing so long as the decoration be right, that one has sometimes regretted in designs emanating from the school in question.¹⁴⁶

G. F. Watts’ criticism of Levetus’s illustrations to the *Songs of Innocence* were evidently taken into consideration in her second attempt to illustrate Blake’s poems. Published in 1902 by David Nutt, Levetus included the acknowledgement ‘This edition of the Songs of Experience is dedicated to G.F. Watts, R.A., to whose own great experience and kindly friendship I am so deeply indebted,’ again applying Pollock’s strategy of ‘deference.’¹⁴⁷ The two books differ not only in terms of the illustrations, but even in their format, quality of print, ink, and paper.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Bland (1962), p. 69

¹⁴⁵ Bromhead (August 1900), p. 239

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ William Blake, *Songs of Experience, with designs by Celia Levetus* (London: David Nutt, 1902), p. 6

Wells Gardner Darton & Co's miniature *Songs of Innocence* measures a slight 7.5 x 6 cm and was printed by R. Clay & Sons on the glossy paper favoured for commercial children's books, on which the ink unfortunately smudges (Figure 1.35). The overall effect is successful with Celia Levetus's black-and-white reduced illustrations bringing a valuable visual dimension to each poem. Unfortunately, the lack of care in the placement of the type and the plates affects the enjoyment of the designs themselves. The designs for the *Songs of Experience* on the other hand benefit from a higher quality of print. The printers Ballantyne, Hanson & Co, who were the printers used by Shannon and Rickett's Vale Press, have used a thicker matt paper which absorbs the ink and sets off the illustrations better.¹⁴⁸ These may be more fully appreciated also due to their size, since the page measures 22.7 x 13.5 cm.

Levetus's title-page for the *Songs of Experience* (Figure 1.36) suggests her ambition for her designs to be associated with the tradition of the Arts and Crafts book. The lettering is in red in contrast with the black line of the figurative elements, a device which had been used on the Birmingham School's title-page for Sabine Baring-Gould's *A Book of Nursery Songs and Rhymes* (Figure 1.37), to which Levetus had contributed. This combination of inks followed a precedent set by the Kelmscott Press and other private presses such as the Vale and Eragny Presses, formally 'referring' to established predecessors, as would be labelled by Pollock.

Whereas Levetus's illustrations to the *Songs of Innocence* relied largely on the recuperation of previously developed figures or even compositions, her full-page illustrations for the *Experience* poems are specifically designed in response not only to the subject but also to the character of the text. Sinuous forms are accentuated and the line is closer to that of copper etching (Figure 1.38), with a repetition of strokes. This differs from her single thicker line adopted in the *Songs of Innocence*, which intermingled the effects of a woodcut, a wood-engraving and a line-drawing. Celia Levetus pays tribute to the allegorical and mystical nature of Blake's poems by her inclusion of symbolist elements (Figure 1.36) in her illustration to the *Songs of Experience*, an aspect which furthermore denotes Watts' intervention and can be seen as another act of Pollockian 'reference.' Levetus's mature manner thus originally adapts the naturalism and detail of the illustrators of the 1860s with the symbolist language of the Pre-

¹⁴⁸ Lora Urbanelli, *The Book Art of Lucien Pissarro* (Wakefield, Rhode Island & London: Moyer Bell, c1994), p. 18

Raphaelite and continental Symbolist painters. By this means she reaches the stage of ‘difference’ hailed by Pollock as the final move in the young contender’s artistic ‘game-play.’

Although arguably the more original and ambitious of her printed productions, the *Songs of Experience* presents a disharmonious whole, more akin to a transitional rather than a final work in terms of the artist’s output in this medium. The decorative headers which accompany some of the poems remain in Levetus’s earlier manner (Figure 1.39), the figures and line jarring with the tone of the full-page images. It is almost as if the two types of decoration were addressed to a different audience, the cherubic features and juvenile character of the heading appealing to the younger child, whilst the full-page illustrations would have equally been appreciated by the older reader. One is left with the impression that if Celia Levetus had continued her work as an illustrator, she might have overcome this conflict to reach a more consistent scheme of book-decoration.

Indeed, following her marriage to Eric Nicholson in 1902, Celia Levetus turned her back on her work as an illustrator, transferring her efforts to writing novels. Her interest in art shifted to encouraging the work of fellow female artists. Her contacts with members of the art world could now serve to promote the projects of others. Fragments from Celia Levetus’s correspondence with Mary Seton Watts, archived with letters from George Watts to Levetus, illustrate this endeavour. It would appear that a friendship between both women was kindled following an invitation for Celia Levetus to visit the couple in Guildford, in January 1901.¹⁴⁹ Celia Levetus was keen to write about Mary S. Watts’ involvement in the decoration of the Watts Chapel in Compton, which relied on bringing the local community together under the auspices of the Home Association of Arts and Industries.¹⁵⁰ Mary Watts designed the project, whilst her husband had initiated and financed it.¹⁵¹ Another letter testifies to Celia Levetus’s continued interest and support of Mary Watts’ work. Watts expresses how ‘grateful’ she was for Levetus’s ‘kindness’ in orchestrating the visit of Miss Alice Rothenstein to Guildford.¹⁵² This would most likely have been Lady Alice Rothenstein (born Alice Mary Knewstub), an actress, who had married Sir William Rothenstein. Lady Rothenstein’s husband, William, was an

¹⁴⁹ London, BL, RP 3784, Letter from Mary S. Watts to Celia Levetus 3 January 1901

¹⁵⁰ London, BL RP 3784, Letter from Mary S. Watts to Celia Levetus Wednesday, undated

¹⁵¹ Unwin (2004), p. 241

¹⁵² London, BL, RP 3784, Letter from Mary S. Watts to Celia Levetus undated

influential figure in the art world, a renowned painter and Professor of the Royal College of Art. He was a close friend of Lucien Pissarro's, and it is reasonable to suppose that Celia Levetus met the Rothensteins at one of Pissarro's fortnightly at homes.¹⁵³ A portrait of Alice Rothenstein painted by the artist Eric Gill, which is kept at the National Portrait Gallery, illustrates the couple's interest in commissioning work from members of the Arts and Crafts movement. Mary Watts' effusive letter of thanks to Celia Levetus gives the impression that potential patronage resulted from the visit.

Celia Levetus was introduced to Lucien and Esther Pissarro at the Café Royal on Mafeking night, which marked the celebration of the lifting of the siege of Mafeking, South Africa, on 17 May 1900.¹⁵⁴ As a native French-speaker Levetus would have been a welcome addition to the Pissarro's circle. Lucien Pissarro, the eldest son of the French Impressionist painter Camille Pissarro (1830-1903), had settled in England in 1890. Several previous visits had persuaded him of the country's more favourable outlook on his work as a print-maker and illustrator than his French homeland. Publishers turned out however to be equally reticent to take on his projects for illustrated children's books, and if it had not been for his friendship with Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon whom he had met shortly after arriving, he might have abbreviated his stay.¹⁵⁵ John Whiteley notes that 'Ricketts, in particular, spoke French fluently, loved French art and shared Lucien's ambition to publish books illustrated with artistic woodcuts.'¹⁵⁶ Following Lucien Pissarro's marriage to Esther Bensusan in 1892, the couple set up the Eragny Press from their home, from which they were to produce books entirely by hand until 1914.

Beyond language and a love of the illustrated book, another commonality between the Pissarros and Celia Levetus was their Jewish heritage. Esther Pissarro had experienced a 'strict and restricting' upbringing in an orthodox Sephardic Jew household.¹⁵⁷ Lucien shared this Sephardic heritage, but neither of them planned to enforce the tradition in their own family life.

¹⁵³ Simon Shorvon, 'Lucien and Esther Pissarro at Home 1894-1914', in *Lucien Pissarro in England: The Eragny Press 1895-1914* (exhibition catalogue, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 8 January – 13 March 2011) ed. Ashmolean Museum (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2011), pp. 44-46

¹⁵⁴ Margaret Till, 'Square Memories', Hampstead Garden Suburbs, *Suburb News Summer* 88 (2005), <http://www.hgs.org.uk/suburbnews/sn88/sn-8.pdf>, consulted 26 March 2013

¹⁵⁵ *Lucien Pissarro in England* (2011), inner flap

¹⁵⁶ Jon Whiteley, 'The Art of the Eragny Press', in *Lucien Pissarro in England* (2011), pp. 15-16

¹⁵⁷ Shorvon (2011), p. 36

Simon Shorvon argues that ‘their art was not influenced in any way ... by the religion of their ancestors but both remained identifiably Jewish throughout their lives.’¹⁵⁸ Celia Levetus was similarly born Jewish and is not known to have been a strict practitioner of her faith either. She nonetheless was part of a distinct religious, cultural and social community. It was only in the course of the nineteenth century that Jewish people in Britain saw the repeal of all religious restrictions held against them, and achieved full political emancipation by 1890.¹⁵⁹ The experience of Victorian and Edwardian Anglo-Jewry was therefore that of a minority group.

Some of the names in the album of bookplates are indicative of this heritage, such as the *Ex Libris* for Jennie Cohen, or that of Asher I. Myers (1848-1902) (Figure 1.40). The latter is rich in Jewish symbolism, marking Myers’ service to his religious community. The bookplate features a seated patriarchal figure holding open the scroll of the Torah with one hand, whilst his son assists him with the other, and a daughter and younger child also listen to the reading. Two tomes of *The Jewish Chronicle*, dated 1870 and 1897 lie beneath the owner’s name, the ‘oldest and most influential Anglo-Jewish newspaper’ published in London. Myers was managing editor of the *Jewish Chronicle* until his death in 1902, having succeeded Abraham Bernisch (1814-1878) in 1878. Under Myers’ direction it became ‘one of the earliest Jewish newspapers to resort frequently to illustration.’¹⁶⁰ Celia Levetus’ *Ex Libris* for Myers bears testament to the Jewish publication’s support of the work of the women in her family.

Celia A. Levetus’ paternal grandmother, Celia Levetus (*b. Moss*, 1819-1873) had had poetry and fictional tales published in the *Jewish Chronicle* after having set up a boarding school for girls at the home in London, which she shared with her sister Marion Hartog (*b. Moss*, 1821-1907). When Celia Levetus’s great-aunt Marion became editor of the first Jewish women’s periodical in February 1855, the *Jewish Sabbath Journal: a Penny and Moral Magazine for the Young*, the then editor of the *Jewish Chronicle* Abraham Bernisch initially endorsed her initiative. A short-lived venture, the subscription magazine did enjoy fleeting success amongst Jewish women, not only as readers but also as contributors. One topic which

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 37

¹⁵⁹ Monica Bohm-Duchen, ‘The Jewish Background’, in *Solomon: a Family of Painters, Abraham Solomon 1823-1862, Rebecca Solomon 1832-1886, Simeon Solomon 1840-1905* (exhibition catalogue, Geffrye Museum, London 8 November – 31 December 1985, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery 18 January – 9 March 1986) (London: Inner London Education Authority, 1985), p. 8

¹⁶⁰ Richard Gottheil and Joseph Jacobs, ‘The Jewish Chronicle’, *JewishEncyclopedia.com*, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8630-jewish-chronicle-the>, consulted 10 October 2014

Hartog explored was ‘stories about women who became successful independent artists’, something which might well have inspired her great-niece Celia A. Levetus.¹⁶¹

The Pissarros became firm friends with Celia Levetus, her brother Edward, and his wife Gertrude Levetus. Celia Levetus’s niece Margaret Till recalled that the Pissarros would visit her parents in the 1930s at their home in North Square in the Hampstead Garden Suburbs.¹⁶² In 1905, when the Pissarros were seeking a suitable bookseller after a deal with Brown, Langham had fallen through, they relied on Edward Levetus’s experience to act as their intermediary with the bookdealer Simpkin, Marshall and Co.¹⁶³ Whilst Celia Levetus’s initial acquaintance was with Lucien and Esther, she developed a particularly close friendship with their daughter, the painter and etcher Orovida Pissarro (1893-1968). Orovida, as she would sign her works, followed in her father’s footsteps and experimented with ‘various methods of print-making ... wood-engraving, lithography and etching before developing her own method of making aquatints on zinc or copper plates.’¹⁶⁴ Orovida designed book-jackets for at least two of Celia Levetus’s novels published under her married name, Celia Nicholson. The first was *What Care I?* published in 1929 by Chapman & Hall, and later *A Boswell to her Cook* (Figure 1.41) issued by the same firm in 1931. Friendship was again materialised in the form of artistic gifts. A number of original drawings and cards by Orovida given to Celia are now part of the Ashmolean Museum’s collections in Oxford. The two women decided to rent a flat together for a month in January 1921 at 53 Strand-on-the-Green in Chiswick, where they both enjoyed drawing and writing. Letters from Celia Levetus to family members including caricatures evoke a bohemian lifestyle, in which creativity took precedence over household chores. A portrait of Orovida in profile from around that time, drawn in pencil, survives in one of Celia Levetus’s sketchbooks (Figure 1.42).

Ultimately, book-illustration functioned as a starting point for the Birmingham artists. It opened their eyes to the material and technical implications of their design. Whilst students at the School of Art, these women would have tried their hand at a variety of techniques and crafts.

¹⁶¹ Michael Galchinsky, ‘Marion Hartog’, Jewish Women Archive, *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia* (1 March 2009), <http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/hartog-marion>, consulted 29 May 2013

¹⁶² Till (2005)

¹⁶³ Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, Pissarro Collection, Letters from Edward Levetus to Esther Pissarro 3, 5 and 9 April 1905

¹⁶⁴ Teddington, Private Collection of Celia Till, ‘Orovida’ by Margaret Till, written October 1993

Some, such as Mary Newill and Georgie Gaskin would maintain a multi-media practice throughout their career, whilst gradually leaving book-illustration behind them. For many, as the annual prize lists and student exhibition catalogues show, book-illustration was their first experience of executed design. The nature of this craft appears decisive in this phenomenon. It was sufficiently small in scale to be easily made within the confines of the School. The material and technical requirements of book-illustration were manageable. Finally it was easy to disseminate thanks to its reproductive condition making it a rewarding craft for students to experiment with.

The formative role that book-illustration played for the artists of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement favoured the narrative quality and preference for the pictorial evidenced throughout their production. The high-visibility and appreciation for Pre-Raphaelite works in the city of Birmingham was no doubt a factor in this development. Indeed in formal terms, the importance of painting in the conception and expression of Birmingham Arts and Crafts can be viewed as one of its singular and defining characteristics.¹⁶⁵ The fact that Edward R. Taylor was himself a painter no doubt had its role to play. Underlying his work as an educator is the two-dimensional, figurative and narrative quality of drawing. The particularity of his approach lay in that he considered 'drawing [not] as a purely manipulative exercise', but 'as an inventive, designing skill.'¹⁶⁶ This feature dominates the artworks of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement, from one media to another, as will continue to be explored in various ways throughout this thesis.

The narrative quality of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement was more than just a formal characteristic. It reveals the extent of its aspirations, as William Morris had advised 'the select gathering of city fathers, in his speech at the opening of the Pre-Raphaelite Exhibition in 1891, that when artists "are telling a story" their paintings were suited "to decorate public buildings".'¹⁶⁷ As identified by Roy Hartnell, 'the idea had been developed by Edward Taylor and Benjamin Creswick at the Congress of the National Association for the Advancement of Art

¹⁶⁵ My thanks to Charlotte Gere for bringing this to my attention. In a similar vein, Alan Crawford has noted that the Birmingham Group, whilst rejecting the fine art paradigm, 'remained painters and often chose craft media with a pictorial character.' [Birmingham, University of Birmingham collections, Barber Fine Art Library, Alan Crawford, 'Painters and Patrons in 19th Century Birmingham', Xerox typescript of a lecture given at the RBSA 150 years of opening (1977), p. 20]

¹⁶⁶ Hartnell (1992), p. 164

¹⁶⁷ Quoted in Hartnell (1992), p. 199

and its Application to Industry, held in Birmingham in 1890, where they urged the use of narrative relief sculpture on public buildings to illustrate examples of civic achievement past and present.¹⁶⁸ Behind Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement, as introduced in relation to Gaskin's illustrations, was a very Victorian aspiration of 'improvement.' This pertained not only to the individual, but as these dreamers saw it, would extend to the larger community and maybe, one day, society as a whole. The importance of the relationship between Birmingham's crafts(wo)men and the city's civic leaders will be further discussed in the following chapter, in the context of the analysis of paintings by one of these leaders' daughters, Kate Bunce.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

Chapter 2 Christian Piety Materialised: The Spirit of Tempera

Notwithstanding black-and-white wood-engraved illustration, the Birmingham School similarly became impassioned with the rediscovery of another technique, painting in tempera. This undertaking is reminiscent of William Morris's earlier revival of other ancient crafts. Tempera was the main easel-painting technique used in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Italy, later succeeded by oil. Two methods existed, the Florentine and the Venetian. The Venetian required 'canvas or linen (homespun and hand-woven for choice), mounted upon a stretcher or board: whereas the Florentine mode [wa]s to ... paint direct[ly] on to a surface of prepared wood.'¹ One of the perceived advantages was that egg yolk, unlike oil, would not darken with time ensuring the continued brilliancy of colours.² Since 'tempera' literally means 'to dilute' and has been used to refer to diverging preparations and applications, the understanding of the Birmingham artists' recipe is based on the description formulated in the foundational rules of the Society of Painters in Tempera. Indeed most of the Birmingham artists who painted in tempera exhibited with the society and many were members as well. The definition of tempera herein proposed was of 'colours mixed with egg or size, or other similar substance, and to exclude colours mixed with gums or resins, or with vegetable or mineral oil.'³

Joseph Southall led Birmingham's experimentation with tempera from 1884, encouraging his peers to follow suit, notably Arthur Gaskin, Charles Gere, Margaret Gere, Sidney Meteyard (1868-1947), Kate Bunce, Bernard Sleight, and Maxwell Armfield. This was by no means an easy task. Laurence Hodson, a Wolverhampton industrialist and patron of the Birmingham Group, commented in *The Studio* that if it had not been for the encouragement of Sir William Blake Richmond (1842-1921) and other friends, Southall himself might not have pursued this endeavour.⁴ The fact that these painters did not necessarily apply the technique to decorative objects has contributed to its marginalisation in the history of the Arts and Crafts

¹ Aymer Vallance, 'The Revival of Tempera Painting', *The Studio* 23:101 (August 1901), p. 160

² Birmingham, Library of Birmingham, Joseph Southall papers [JSP], MS 588/9, Newscutting 'At Leighton House...', *Manchester Guardian* (24 April 1901), p. 4

³ Quoted in *The Earthly Paradise* (1969), p. 3

⁴ Hodson (1920), p. 7

movement, for whose reassessment George Breeze, and more recently Abbie N. Sprague have made a strong case.⁵

As far as the Birmingham artists were concerned, they were sailing through uncharted waters. They were initially unaware that, contemporaneously, a handful of London-based artists, including John D. Batten (1860-1932), were attempting a similar feat.⁶ Birmingham's civic pride favoured a strong sense of local artistic community, which might escape a contemporary vision of England focused on London, and even more so a twenty-first century globalised view of the world.⁷ In arguing for the importance of Birmingham possessing its own Municipal Art Gallery which could serve as a source of inspiration to designers, the industrialists Tangye brothers noted in 1880 that 'South Kensington is practically as far away as Paris or Munich.'⁸

They would combine forces with their London peers upon founding the Society of Painters in Tempera in 1901.⁹ The Society's first official exhibition was held at the Carfax Gallery in London, in 1905.¹⁰ Birmingham artists had already previously shown works in tempera, notably through the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists and the New Gallery in London, as well as under the aegis of Leighton House Society at Leighton House in Kensington.¹¹

Within the history of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement, and particularly its tempera revival, the work of the painter Kate Elizabeth Bunce deserves further attention. The absence of her work in the Fine Art Society's 1969 exhibition which reinstated the Birmingham School of Arts and Crafts makers left her rediscovery to George Breeze.¹² In a more extensive

⁵ George Breeze, 'Decorative Painting: *For the Common Good and Beauty of our Towns*', in Crawford (1984), pp. 61-83; Abbie N. Sprague, 'The Craftsman Painters of the Arts and Crafts Movement', Ph.D. thesis (University of Cambridge, 2010)

⁶ *Joseph Southall* (1980), p. 13

⁷ George Breeze identified this insularity of sorts as 'one of the negative characteristics of the Birmingham Group [being] its lack of interest in the main movements of European art of the time.' [*Joseph Southall* (1980), p. 13]

⁸ Quoted in Hartnell (1992), p. 153

⁹ The committee was formed of Christiana Herringham, Mrs Adrian Stokes, J.D. Batten, Walter Crane, Mr Garstin, Charles Gere, Mr Harvey, and Joseph Southall. [Birmingham, Library of Birmingham, JSP, MS 588/9, Newscutting 'A new society...', *Globe* (29 April 1901), p. 5]

¹⁰ Frank Rinder, 'London Exhibitions', *Art Journal* (August 1905), p. 252

¹¹ Joseph Southall is recorded as having shown works in tempera in 1895 at the Royal Academy and the New Gallery, which were notably admired by Ruskin and Burne-Jones. [Margaret M. Harvey, 'A Quaker Artist and Rebel', *Friends' Quarterly* 14:8 (October 1963), p. 355] For other instances see Birmingham, Library of Birmingham, JSP, MS 588/9, Newscutting 'Tempera Exhibition', *Manchester Guardian* (24 April 1901), p. 4; Newscutting 'Art of To-Day' Exhibition at the New Gallery, 2 May 1901, p. 12; Newscutting Royal Birmingham Society of Artists Exhibition, 13 May 1901, p. 49

¹² Breeze (1984), pp. 77-78

consideration of Bunce's work, the feminist scholars Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nunn situated her contribution within a study of Pre-Raphaelite women artists.¹³ This however had the effect of separating Bunce from Arts and Crafts design history. One of the purposes of this chapter is to therefore firmly reinsert Kate Bunce within this movement, which will open up a different way of looking at her work.

Writing of the BMSA in 1911, Robert Catterson-Smith (1853-1938) brought attention to the emergence of the 'Birmingham School' under Taylor's headmastership. Catterson-Smith described this school as 'animated by a love of the medieval schools of North Italy, a feeling which enabled its members to concentrate their energies and to keep free of the more nebulous modern spirit.'¹⁴ He noted that 'Sir Edward Burne-Jones and Morris were very much interested in and hopeful in the doings of these young artists.'¹⁵ Amongst the handful of names which he singled out, Kate Bunce was included as 'decorative painter.'¹⁶ The recognition of Kate Bunce's work in tempera more specifically was evidenced at the time by her presence amongst the founding members of the Society of Painters in Tempera formed in 1901.¹⁷

This chapter will concentrate on two tempera reredoses by Kate Bunce, which were worked in collaboration with her elder sister Myra Louisa Bunce who provided the metalwork frames. While considering the objects as a whole, the discussion will essentially focus on the paintings. The analysis will seek to bring forth the direct relationship between the artist's personal faith and the form, iconography and even arguably the technique of these artworks. The first to be considered will be the reredos in St Mary's church, Longworth (Figure 2.1), dated 1904-1906, and the second in St Alban's, Bordesley (Figure 2.2), made c. 1913-1919 (hereafter referred to as the 'Longworth' and 'St Alban's' reredoses). This in turn will help make a case for the understudied importance of Anglo-Catholic patronage in the flourishing of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement.¹⁸ A parallel will be drawn with Kate Bunce's book-

¹³ Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nunn, *Women Artists and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement* (London: Virago, 1989); Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nunn, *Pre-Raphaelite Women Artists* (London: Thames & Hudson, c1997)

¹⁴ Catterson-Smith (1911), pp. 293-4

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 294

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Jan Marsh, 'Bunce, Kate Elizabeth (1856-1927)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press (2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/64730>, consulted 18 January 2013

¹⁸ George Breeze comments on the fittingness of the Birmingham Group's work to Anglo-Catholic settings, thanks to its 'archaic manner', use of 'explicit symbolism' and depiction of 'birds and flowers' which 'amid the grime and dirt of the industrialised Victorian and Edwardian city also helped to evoke a

illustrations for the child's novel *Fairbrass: A Child's Story* (1895), building on the claim that illustration played a formative role for artists of the Birmingham School. The specific dynamics behind the production of the two Bunce reredoses will be contrasted with the making of a comparable work (Figure 2.3) designed by their peer Charles M. Gere for the private chapel at Madresfield Court. This will shed light on the ways in which the organisation of the manufacture of arts and crafts objects varied widely. The emphasis on processes and materials will contribute to the rehabilitation of tempera painting as a craft in place of its consideration as a form of easel painting.

Kate and Myra were two amongst four daughters of Rebecca Ann (*d.* 1891) and John Thackray Bunce (1828–1899).¹⁹ Their father was editor of the *Birmingham Post*, and friend and advisor to the men who transformed the politics and urban landscape of Birmingham in the 1870s and 1880s under the leadership of Joseph Chamberlain (1836–1914).²⁰ John Thackray Bunce was also involved in Birmingham's cultural activities notably as trustee of the Picture Gallery Fund at the Museum and Art Gallery and member of the board of the Municipal School of Art, where both daughters trained throughout the 1880s.²¹ It is important to note John Thackray Bunce's social and political connections, since these were directly linked to the patronage of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement. As brought to light by Alan Crawford, 'many of these patrons were in fact, either as councillors or as advisors, on the Museum and School of Art Committee ... The School was, in effect, a municipal subsidy to the Arts and Crafts, to the progressive element in Birmingham's art world at this time.'²² Crawford notes that 'it is not ... surprising to find a local authority supporting progressive art education. But in Birmingham it became at times a matter of direct patronage extended by the City on a scale

vision of a better world.' As will be argued in this chapter, the relationship between Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement and the Anglo-Catholic church was in fact tied to the direct involvement, either as artists or through committees, of individuals holding Anglo-Catholic beliefs. [Breeze (1984), p. 76]

¹⁹ Dates courtesy of Vicar Alison Joyce, Edgbaston Old Church, 22 January 2013.

²⁰ H. R. G. Whates, *The Birmingham Post 1857–1957: A Centenary Retrospect* (Birmingham: The Birmingham Post & Mail Limited, 1957), p. 1

²¹ Birmingham, University of Birmingham Collections (UBC), UB/MC/O/3, Anonymous, 'John Thackray Bunce', *Birmingham Faces and Places* 5:9 (January 1893), p. 144. Kate Bunce and Myra Bunce were amongst the students of the Birmingham School of Art who signed a petition to thank Louisa Anne Ryland for her gift towards providing for the building of the School of Art, c. 1884. [Birmingham, Library of Birmingham, MS 39/110; Marsh (2004)]

²² Birmingham, UBC, Barber Fine Art Library, Alan Crawford, 'Painters and Patrons in 19th Century Birmingham', Xerox typescript of a lecture given at the RBSA 150 years of opening (1977), p. 23

which the private patron could not hope to emulate.’²³ This was the case with the historical paintings commissioned from students in 1891 to decorate the Town Hall on the suggestion of John Thackray Bunce.²⁴

As previously introduced, Edward R. Taylor was the headmaster selected in 1878 by this committee led at that date by the architect John Henry Chamberlain seconded by Alderman William Kenrick.²⁵ Roy Hartnell, in his study of the relationship between the advent of Birmingham’s civic and artistic culture in the nineteenth century, argued that Taylor’s candidacy was retained partly because of his shared ‘prosperous industrial middle-class background’ with ‘most of the Birmingham Committee.’²⁶ In addition to being able to relate to the new headmaster, the city’s artistic cause was further aided by the fact that ‘the industrialists on the School of Art Committee found Ruskin’s moral crusade more compelling even than economic self-interest. They found themselves being seduced to adopt an anti-industrialist stance in one of the most industrialised towns in the world.’²⁷ The leaders of Birmingham life had in common the hope for a better future with the Arts and Crafts dream of a more socially just and beautiful world. As noted by Asa Briggs, up until the eve of the First World War Birmingham leaders believed that ‘out of a great metropolis of industry ... it might still be possible to create a modern Utopia.’²⁸ Although both parties’ vision itself was not the same, the optimistic spirit and urge to take action was similar. Taylor was thus given free rein to incorporate into the school curriculum William Morris’s reforming ideas on the status, role, practice and production of the decorative arts. Former student Kate A. Hall reported that ‘nearly every important family in the town had a representative on the student list’ at that time.²⁹ Students were encouraged to experiment with materials in crafting their own designs.³⁰ The directions

²³ Ibid., p. 24

²⁴ For more information on the paintings see Anonymous, ‘The Wall Paintings by Art Students in the Town Hall, Birmingham’, *The Studio* 1:6 (September 1893), pp. 237-40

²⁵ ‘Edward R. Taylor’ (1894), p. 99

²⁶ Hartnell (1992), p. 149

²⁷ Ibid., p. 141

²⁸ Briggs (1952), p. 115

²⁹ Kate A. Hall, *A Notable Art Master, An Appreciation of Edward R. Taylor* (Birmingham, 1913)

³⁰ This is conveyed in the School’s statement of philosophy which figures at the beginning of the yearly School programmes starting 1893. This ‘Explanatory Note’ remains unchanged until 1901 when the manner in which the information is ordered is slightly changed and the addition of ‘writing and illumination’ into the curriculum is given prominence. After Edward R. Taylor’s replacement as headmaster by Robert S. Catterson-Smith in 1903, the ‘Explanatory Note’ is replaced by a ‘Note on Design’ which militates for the importance of the ‘material’ and ‘process’ over drawing in the act of

which William Morris had suggested in his addresses to the School in 1879 and 1880 as President of the School of Art, were fully implemented by Taylor in 1893 with the inauguration of the 'Art Laboratories' introduced in the first chapter. This attracted former advanced students in returning to the School to gain the actual workshop experience which the Arts and Crafts approach to education promoted.

It would have been particularly novel for middle-class women. In Birmingham's case these were often the daughters of 'local art industrialists', who would not have had the practical and technical experience of students from a trades background who populated the evening classes and branch schools.³¹ Myra Bunce, for instance, returned to the School in 1893 after an absence of five years, and carried on attending as a mature student until 1900.³² Myra had previously enrolled from 1879, at which time Joseph Southall was also a student.³³ She appears to have continuously studied from 1879 until 1891, whereas Kate Bunce's attendance seems more sporadic.³⁴ Kate Bunce's name first appears in connection with the School of Art in 1885, when she successfully sat for exams and entered the National Competition for Art. Arthur Gaskin and Sidney Meteyard were amongst her cohort meaning that they would have known each other as fellow students, whereas most of the other women discussed in this thesis would have met them as teachers.³⁵ On a photograph of the Birmingham School of Art's Life class, dated c. 1887/1888 (Figure 2.4), both Bunce sisters (in the second row Myra Bunce with glasses seated to the left and second to last on the right side Kate seated as well) stand out from their colleagues in respect to their more advanced age.

Kate Bunce was noticed for her oil paintings, an artform in which she had already been exhibiting prior to her entry at the School of Art.³⁶ In June 2014, an event of historical note occurred when a painting by Kate Bunce (Figure 2.5) was put under auction by the Birmingham

Design. Both notes have been transcribed in Appendix I. [Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/8/1-2, Birmingham School of Art yearly programmes]

³¹ Swift (1989), p. 56

³² Birmingham, UBC, BU/30, Certificates of Examination for Myra Louisa Bunce dated 1885, 1888 and 1893; Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/14/1, Students records 1897-1914, pp. 6, 50, 149

³³ *Birmingham School of Art. Prize List for 1879*, pp. 6, 8, 12

³⁴ Myra Bunce consistently outperformed her younger sister at the School.

³⁵ *Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, 1886* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, 1885), pp. 10-11

³⁶ Two of these earned her bronze medals – one of 'drapery arranged on the antique figure' and the other of a 'head from life.' [*Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, 1886* (1885), p. 7]. Jan Marsh asserts that Kate Bunce first exhibited with the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists in 1874. [Marsh (2004)]

auction-house Biddle & Webb. Signed and dated 1884, this makes it the earliest painting by Kate Bunce known to date. It features a seated young woman dressed in nineteenth century Italian costume, rendered in oils in a rather conventional Victorian manner. Its condition shows some wear, and nothing is known of its original provenance. The seller (whose name for confidentiality reasons I was not able to obtain) had found it in their mother's attic in Birmingham, following her death. It was sold on 2nd July 2014 for a modest two hundred and fifty pounds. Despite its unremarkable artistic quality, this piece is of interest for it predates by a year Kate Bunce's entry at the School of Art. When considered in relation to her known later paintings, this fanciful portrait illustrates the School's impact on her work. Examination and award listings show a shift towards the applied arts, particularly decorative painting.³⁷

This should not however be understood as a mere transposal of paint from canvas to furnishing, or even to the actual fabric of a building. Bunce was being educated at the School in a whole new approach to painting, one in which it stood on equal footing with the supposedly 'non-fine' arts. This meant that the consideration of the painting materials became as important as the painted image itself. This application of the concerns of the designer to the work of the painter was not a 'dumbing-down' of the 'fine' art of painting. Rather, it demonstrated the Arts and Crafts Movement's ambition to raise the quality and status of the decorative arts and ultimately to do away with the distinction between the 'fine' and the 'applied' arts inherited from the Renaissance. The School thus brought aspects of traditional 'fine' art training in direct contact with the more practical concerns of the craftsworker. Both art categories would mutually benefit from this broadening of their respective teaching curricula.

This was manifest in the particular emphasis which the Birmingham School placed on life drawing, as will be further discussed in relation to stained glass in chapter three. In view of raising artistic standards, becoming adept in portraiture and modelling was considered essential. To achieve this, life classes were no longer exclusive to those predestined to produce large realistic historical and allegorical paintings. Fellow student Mary Newill had to go to Paris to have the opportunity to study from the full nude in 1893, as will be elaborated in chapter four.

³⁷ She was awarded a 2nd prize of £2 for her 'designs for decoration of corridor wall in the School of Art.' ['Prizes announced in programme for session 1885-86', in *Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, 1886* (1885), p. 25]

Three years later in 1896, Kate Bunce was awarded three National Book Prizes for ‘time studies of figures from the nude.’³⁸ This suggests that at that date the BMSA had opened its nude life study classes to women as well as men.

For the Bunce sisters, their home seems to have been as important as the school of art in terms of their work as artists. The Bunce household revolved around the arts as transpires from the contents of their library as well as the presence of a studio and workshop.³⁹ The atmosphere is represented in Myra’s *Ex Libris*, which functions as a self-portrait (Figure 2.6). The bookplate presents the figure of a seated woman reading a book with Myra’s name inscribed at the bottom. The reader is dressed in loose-fitting medieval-inspired clothing which agrees with the neo-gothic arches of the window. The curtains patterns and richly ornamented bell of the columns are indicative of a late nineteenth century interior. The dress and setting suggest an appreciation for the Pre-Raphaelite painters and the style of the Gothic revivalist Augustus W. N. Pugin (1812-1852). The tree branches visible on the other side of the glass in the bookplate evoke the leafiness of the Edgbaston suburb in which the Bunce family lived.

Thanks to, but also because of their socio-economic position, the Bunce sisters were able to practise their craft in the comfort and respectability of their home. As unmarried women, both continued to live with their father following the death of their mother in 1891. They then maintained the house following their father’s death in 1899. It was only when Myra herself passed away in 1919 that Kate moved from 24 Priory Road to 10 Holly Road, still in Edgbaston.⁴⁰ A successful journal editor with stock and annuities in the city’s Gas and Water Corporation, John Thackray Bunce passed on a handsome inheritance to his daughters.⁴¹ One thousand nine hundred pounds were left over of Myra’s share when she died twenty years later, which she bequeathed in entirety to Kate.⁴² Kate possessed a fortune of over eleven thousand pounds, in addition to property, stock shares, duties and material belongings at her death in

³⁸ *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art Committee of Council on Education, 1896* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, 1896), p. 4

³⁹ Birmingham, UBC, BU/31, Kate and Myra Bunce Library Catalogue, f1v

⁴⁰ Marsh (2004)

⁴¹ Birmingham, LB, Register of Wills July-December 1899, ‘John Thackray Bunce’ 29 July 1899, pp. 7-9

⁴² Birmingham, LB, Register of Wills January-Jun 1919, ‘Myra Louisa Bunce’ 23 February 1919, p. 127

1928.⁴³ This kind of capital, and the mode of living evidenced in the family's personal papers, is indicative of an upper-middle-class standing.

The Bunce sisters were nonetheless disturbing the conventional pictorial modes of expression for ladies, such as drawing, small water-colours or oils, or embroidery which could easily have been carried out in the parlour. In contrast, the material requirements of Kate's tempera painting and Myra's metalwork, made a dedicated workspace necessary. The double function of their home as a private as well as a professional space makes its location all the more relevant. Doreen Massey's claim that the 'configuration of social relations within which the specifically spatial' functions 'as [an] inherently dynamic simultaneity,' gives new meaning to the fact that many of the Birmingham School's most successful artists lived in the neighbourhood of Edgbaston.⁴⁴ The Bunces' neighbours included large numbers of Birmingham's merchants and industrialists.⁴⁵

An affluent suburb, Edgbaston's firm sense of community was voiced in its own freely distributed journal, the *Egbastonia*, started in 1881. This featured pieces on important local figures, notably politicians, industrialists such as the Cadburys, influential members of the clergy, and members of the art scene such as headmasters Edward R. Taylor, his replacement Robert Catterson-Smith, or Whitworth Wallis (1855-1927) keeper of the Art Gallery and Museum. John Thackray Bunce himself was the object of an article. Local business and events, sporting or other, were advertised, and art exhibitions in Birmingham as well as cultural societies received coverage. The magazine sought to inform not only on local affairs, but further aimed to make readers aware of national developments, particularly in relation to art by providing extracts and summaries of segments from various British art journals. Following the turn of the century, the question of women's suffrage came to prominence in the magazine, and thoughts about the impact of technology and modernisation also rose to the fore.⁴⁶ The

⁴³ Birmingham, LB, Register of Wills January-June 1928, 'Kate Elizabeth Bunce' 8 February 1928, pp. 173-5

⁴⁴ Massey (1994), p. 3

⁴⁵ Briggs (1952), p. 70

⁴⁶ Its editor lamented in 1905 that 'if it were not for the vanity of the world, which still wishes from time to time to have its portrait painted, many rising artists would find it difficult to live. The increase in the demand for more expensive and more fleeting luxuries which characterises the modern age may have something to do with it, and it is probably that a number of well-to-do citizens, who in the old days were wont to buy a good picture from time to time, without considering the price too closely, prefer, in these days of high pressure, to lay out their surplus cash in the purchase of a motor car, with its unending

Edgbastonia advertised itself at the outset as catering to the specific ‘tastes of its inhabitants’ meaning that its emphasis on art reflected the fabric of the Birmingham neighbourhood in the *fin-de-siècle*.⁴⁷ As regular entertainers, the Bunce sisters would have benefitted from showing their work to interested neighbours and other visitors from further afield. In terms of fellow artists, the Gaskins, the Paynes, Florence Camm, the Holden sisters, Mildred Peacock, and on a regular basis Mary Newill were all guests at the Bunce dinner table.⁴⁸ Joseph Southall also lived in Edgbaston.

Following a trip to Italy in 1883, Southall taught himself how to mix and manipulate tempera in isolation for eight years before passing on his knowledge to other Birmingham artists who shared his fascination for the Italian Primitives.⁴⁹ Unfortunately no exchanges between Kate Bunce and Joseph Southall are to be found to date which could shed light on the particulars of how Bunce acquired her technique. It would seem plausible, however, in view of their geographical proximity and shared social relations that she learnt either directly from him or from others who had received his advice. Indeed, unlike other crafts for which Birmingham was recognised, a practical class on tempera painting was never opened at the School of Art. Instead there seems to have been an informal agreement by which students were occasionally invited to Southall’s studio for demonstrations in how to work with tempera.⁵⁰ Southall did give a public lecture at the School in 1908 in which he sketched a history of painting based on changes in technique, speaking notably of tempera.⁵¹

Southall initially had only the instructions of Charles Lock Eastlake’s *Materials for a History of Oil Painting* (1847) to guide him, later hearing of Christiana Herringham’s (1852-1929) translation, first published in 1899, of Cennino Cennini’s fifteenth-century *Book of Art*.⁵²

expenditure for wear and tear, and accidents, and compensation for slaughtered dogs.’ [Vandyck Brown, ‘Brush & Palette’, *Edgbastonia* 25:293 (October 1905), pp. 234-5]

⁴⁷ Anonymous, ‘Introductory’, *Edgbastonia* 1:1 (May 1881), pp. 1-2

⁴⁸ Birmingham, UBC, BU/29, John Thackray Bunce Dinner Lists with Menus. The Newills lived at number 7 Priory Road, just down the road from the Bunces at number 24, and appear to have been good friends as the whole family would regularly be invited over.

⁴⁹ Breeze (1980), pp. 6-13

⁵⁰ Alan Crawford, ‘The Birmingham Setting: A Curious Mixture of Bourgeoisie and Romance’, in *By Hammer and Hand* (1984), p. 28

⁵¹ Birmingham, LB, JSP, MS 588/13, manuscript notes for Lecture on Painting at the School of Art 4 June 1908

⁵² Joseph E. Southall, ‘Grounds Suitable for Painting in Tempera’, in *Papers of the Society of Painters in Tempera Vol. I 1901-1907*, ed. M. Sargent-Florence (London: Society of Painters in Tempera, 1928), p. 1. It is worth noting that Eastlake includes a short passage on the tradition of triptychs, pp. 479-480.

The particularities of Joseph Southall's self-taught method of painting in tempera are detailed in his correspondence with the journalist Hugh Stokes who ran a richly illustrated article on the artist in *The Lady's Realm* in 1904.⁵³ The *Papers of the Society of Painters in Tempera* provide further valuable insight on the preparation of materials and techniques its members, including Kate Bunce, adapted either literally from Cennini's treatise or through experiments resulting from the study of the works of old tempera masters.⁵⁴ It is on these grounds that the materiality of Kate Bunce's paintings has been analysed.⁵⁵

Kate Bunce's production between 1887 and 1926 includes works of both a secular and religious nature, in a range of formats and media, from watercolour, to oil, tempera and book illustration. Jan Marsh notes that even in her secular paintings the 'female figures are pale and languid ... in a static manner more suited to sacred objects.'⁵⁶ This can be appreciated for instance in her c. 1900 painting *The Keepsake* (Figure 2.7), illustrating Dante Gabriel Rossetti's (1828-1882) poem 'The Staff and Scrip.' It refers to a passage after the death of the pilgrim 'Then stepped a damsel to her side/ And spoke and needs must weep:/ For his sake, lady, if he died/ He prayed of thee to keep/ This staff and scrip.'⁵⁷

Of her identified ecclesiastical decorative works which remain *in situ*, three are of particular interest for this chapter. One is the already mentioned Longworth reredos (Figure 2.1), painted in tempera on wood divided into three panels with the Virgin and Child, the Crucifixion and the Entombment, completed in 1904. Then follows the St Alban's reredos (Figure 2.2) put into place in 1919, formed of five panels painted in tempera. The two external function as shutters, which when closed dismiss St Alban and St Patrick and attending angels to leave the central painting of the Madonna and Child in full view. Third is the 1926 triptych for

⁵³ Birmingham, LB, JSP, MS 588/26, MS 588/28-29. These draft notes for Southall's letter to Hugh Stokes have been transcribed in Appendix II. For a copy of Hugh Stokes, 'A Modern Gozzoli', *The Lady's Realm* (31 August 1904), pp. 17-24, see MS 588/9, pp. 84-86.

⁵⁴ Sargeant-Florence (1928); John D. Batten (ed.), *Papers of the Society of Mural Decorators & Painters in Tempera, Second Volume, 1907-1924* (Brighton: Dolphin Press, 1925)

⁵⁵ The following writings have supported my understanding of the materials and technique involved in Kate Bunce's tempera paintings: Daniel V. Thompson, Jr., *The Practice of Tempera Painting* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., c1936); A. P. Laurie, *The Painter's Methods & Materials* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1988), pp. 177-184; Jill Dunkerton 'Technical Note: Joseph Southall's Tempera Paintings', in *Joseph Southall 1861-1944* (1980), pp. 18-24

⁵⁶ Marsh (2004)

⁵⁷ The College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, Pat Hagen, 'Programme for class on Women Pre-Raphaelite Artists' (Spring 2003), <http://faculty.css.edu/phagen/hon4777pr/4777women2.htm>, consulted 21 January 2013

St Germain's, Edgbaston, in which the artist opted for a traditional triptych format with an additional locking mechanism (Figure 2.8). The Lord in Glory blesses the congregation with St Germain kneeling at his feet on the left and St Ambrose on his right, while angels flock from panels on both sides. The main subject is complemented by a predella where five panels convey two narrative scenes interspersed with symbols. All three were gifted by the artist to Anglo-Catholic parishes of her choice.

It is no coincidence that Kate Bunce's most important decorative paintings were intended for the church. The Bunces were faithful attendees of the Anglo-Catholic Edgbaston Old Church, a short walk down the road from their home. Kate Bunce appears to have been particularly observant and actively involved in religious debates of the time, as emerges from an undated script for an opinion piece on 'The Endowment of the Irish Roman Catholic Clergy' buried amongst the pages of her recipe book. One passage is especially revealing of her beliefs where she declares 'I neither am a Roman Catholic nor do I sympathise with the doctrines of the Roman Church. I am a member of the English Church, and hold the doctrines of Christianity, as taught by the Church of England, believing her teaching to be in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the ancient church.'⁵⁸ This was probably delivered at a meeting of the Birmingham Debating Society of which Kate Bunce was a member.⁵⁹ Bunce's statement aligns with the discourse of the mid-century Anglican Oxford Movement. One of its strongest proponents, John Henry Newman (1801-1890), occupied an important place in the Bunces' library, in addition to residing nearby in Edgbaston in the Birmingham Oratory which he founded in 1849 following his conversion to Roman Catholicism.⁶⁰

In her essay on 'Women and Church Art', Lynne Walker identifies a 'feminisation' of the Anglican Church between 1870 and 1914 when 'women's presence, activities and values became dominant.'⁶¹ Walker explains this 'widely recognised cultural phenomenon' as the result, in part, of an institutional strategy to keep congregation numbers up 'in the face of the

⁵⁸ Birmingham, UBC, BU/28, Kate Bunce Recipe Book

⁵⁹ Elizabeth Crawford, *'From Frederick Street to Winson Green': The Women's Suffrage Movement in Birmingham 1866-1918* (London: E. Crawford, 2000), p. 8

⁶⁰ The importance of John Henry Newman's ideas to the Bunces is evident from their ownership of a large number of his writings in their home library. [Birmingham, UBC, BU/31, Kate and Myra Bunce Library Catalogue, f15r]

⁶¹ Lynne Walker, 'Women and Church Art', in *Churches 1870-1914*, eds Teresa Slade and Andrew Saint (London: The Victorian Society, 2011), p. 121

general decline in church attendance, the robust expansion of Roman Catholicism and the proliferation of Nonconformist places of worship.’⁶² Anglican churches thus provided a ‘socially sanctioned public sphere’ for middle-class women who were seeking involvement outside of their home.⁶³ With an increase in female patronage, women artists were also increasingly favoured. Walker remarks on a shift towards the professionalization of the female church designer, when ‘the amateur artist with some training in drawing and painting and a strong family connection to the church’ was generally replaced after 1880 by artists having trained in co-educational art schools.⁶⁴

Walker endorses Jan Marsh’s view that ‘for artists such as the Birmingham-trained Kate Bunce, religious faith made a space for women where they could work creatively but modestly, without the bruising competition of exhibition or critical exposure.’⁶⁵ There is indeed a ‘strong family connection’ in the case of St Mary’s in Longworth, and furthermore both this reredos and that in St Alban’s, Bordesley, serve as memorials to deceased relations.⁶⁶ But Kate Bunce did not merely work in private or protected spaces, as might be understood from Walker’s quote from Jan Marsh. Elsewhere, the latter documents the painter displaying ‘regularly at the major English venues in Birmingham, London, Liverpool, and Manchester until 1912.’⁶⁷ In fact ‘The Adoration’ for SS Mary and Ambrose, Edgbaston was shown at the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists’ Spring Exhibition in 1891 and the central panel of the St Alban’s reredos at the Centenary Opening Exhibition in 1913.⁶⁸ Furthermore, whilst sacred, the space provided by the ecclesiastical building remains public and hence open to viewers’ critical gazes. As will be later

⁶² Ibid., p. 123

⁶³ Ibid., p. 122

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 135

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 136

⁶⁶ On the bottom part of the frame of the Longworth reredos reads the latin inscription “Ad majorem Dei gloriam et in piam memoriam Edithae Annae Johannis Thackray Bunce” (To the greater glory of God and in loving memory of Edith Ann and John Thackray Bunce) – Kate and Myra’s older sister (who died aged 28 in 1878) and their father (d. 1899). Bunces occupied at one time “Longworth Lodge” and the church already held earlier monuments to their family. The extant sources are confusing in their record of whom the reredos commemorates. I trust the latin inscription on the work. [A. Illingworth (ed.), *The Life and Work of John Richardson Illingworth, M.A., D.D.: As Portrayed by His Letters and Illustrated by Photographs* (London: John Murray, 1917), p. 108; Marsh (2004)] There appears to be no family tie with St Alban’s, rather the artist’s choice of location can be seen as the acknowledgement of a strong Anglo-Catholic local community. The St Alban’s reredos commemorates anew John Thackray Bunce and his daughter Edith Ann, in addition to his wife Rebecca Ann and Myra herself.

⁶⁷ Marsh (2004)

⁶⁸ Birmingham, Royal Birmingham Society of Artists’ Archives, information provided 24 March 2013. Up until now the dating of the St Alban’s reredos had been equated with when it was put into place, in 1919. The discovery of the exhibition of part of the work in 1913 therefore provides a more accurate dating for the reredos.

discussed in relation to the St Alban's reredos, the admission of an artwork into a place of worship was by no means a given.

Bunce's choice of decorative artform reflects contemporary ecclesiastical fashion. Michael Hall in his study of the relationship between Victorian church buildings and the Anglican discourse between 1850 and 1870, relates the rise in popularity of the reredos with the Tractarians' emphasis on the Eucharist in the ritual, and hence the chancel and altar where this takes place.⁶⁹ Ecclesiological writings at the turn of the twentieth century shed light on the panorama of British church interiors following the great Anglican revival. Francis Bond, writing about the decoration of the chancel, traced the painted reredos back to the Roman catacombs where it was frequently to be found. He deplored a native tradition where the architectural supplanted the painted or sculptured reredos.⁷⁰ John Wright's 1908 survey of predominantly nineteenth century altar decorations illustrated the preponderance of elaborate sculptured schemes mostly in stone, but also wood or alabaster, the designs of architects Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) and George Frederick Bodley (1827-1907) dominating the market.⁷¹ J. Wickham Legg saw over-enthusiastic nineteenth century restorations as the main culprits behind the disappearance of the 'painting in the centre of the altar.'⁷² The Victorian British painter would thus have had to turn to the Continent for models in the triptych form.⁷³

What stands out, as has been pointed out by Clare Willson, is the general absence of the 'fine' artist's involvement in church decoration. The architect would provide plans not only for the building's structure but equally for its interior fittings which were then executed by skilled tradesmen.⁷⁴ It is amongst the Pre-Raphaelites, with their focus on allegorical and

⁶⁹ Michael Hall, 'What Do Victorian Churches Mean? Symbolism and Sacramentalism in Anglican Church Architecture, 1850-1870', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 59:1 (March 2000), p. 85. On the relationship between ritual and architecture see also Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: from Newman to Martineau, 1850-1990* (London: Oxford University Press; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962); James Stevens Curl, *Book of Victorian Churches* (London: English Heritage, 1995); *Victorian Church Art (exhibition catalogue, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, November 1971-January 1972)*, ed. Victoria and Albert Museum (London: H.M.S.O., 1971)

⁷⁰ Francis Bond, *The Chancel of English Churches: The Altar, Reredos, Lenten Veil, Communion Table, Altar Rails, Houseling Cloth, Piscina, Credence, Sedilia, Aumbry, Sacrament House, Easter Sepulchre, Squint, etc.* (London: Oxford University Press, 1916), pp. 66, 73-74

⁷¹ John Wright, *Some Notable Altars in the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1908)

⁷² J. Wickham Legg, *English Church Life from the Restoration to the Tractarian Movement: Considered in Some of its Neglected or Forgotten Features* (London, New York, Bombay, Calcutta: Longmans, Green and Co., 1914), pp. 127-128

⁷³ Bond (1916), p. 69

⁷⁴ Clare Willson, *Mural Painting in Britain 1840-1940: Image and Meaning* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), p. 214. For examples of painted reredos produced in this way see the triptych of carved oak with coloured

religious themes and interest in experimenting with the decorative arts, that one must look for nineteenth century precedents to the Bunce reredos. Dante Gabriel Rossetti's triptych *The Seed of David* (1858-64) at Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff inspired Edward Burne-Jones' two versions of a triptych for St Paul's Church in Brighton, painted in 1861, all of them in oil on canvas.⁷⁵

The Pre-Raphaelites' admiration for the Primitives no doubt attracted them to the triptych format. Scholars have remained intrigued as to why this did not lead them to pursue seriously the technique of tempera originally used for this type of decorative painting.⁷⁶ Writing in *St Mark's Rest* of Carpaccio's portrait of two Venetian ladies with their pets in the Correr Museum, John Ruskin noted 'it is in tempera, however, not oil: and I must note in passing that many of the qualities which I have been in the habit of praising in Tintoret and Carpaccio ... are ... either in tempera altogether, or tempera with oil above. And I am disposed to think that ultimately tempera will be found the proper material for the greater number of most delightful subjects.'⁷⁷

A close study of the first of Kate Bunce's reredoses will reveal how this technique was fully implemented by the following generation of artists. In June 1902, John Richardson Illingworth (1848-1915), the rector of the village of Longworth in Oxfordshire, wrote a letter to an unidentified friend declaring that:

The chief event since we last met has been the arrival of the two Miss Bunce. Some of their work is really beautiful, and glorious in colour. One paints, and the other frames in silver, and her proposal for the reredos is a triptych with the Madonna and Child on the left, the Crucifixion in the middle, and Entombment on the right, all three being crowded with adoring angels, all scarlet and gold.⁷⁸

and gilded mahogany panels made in 1897 by Thompson of Petersborough to the designs of the architect Sir A. W. Blomfield, with painting and gilding executed by Messrs. Buckeridge and Floyce, in Old St. Pancras Church, London. See also the work of Charles E. Buckeridge (1864-98) for instance his reredos in All Saints Church, Richard's Castle, Ludlow.

⁷⁵ *Victorian Church Art* (1971), p. 107

⁷⁶ Sprague (2010), pp. 106-107

⁷⁷ John Ruskin, *St Mark's Rest* (Sunnyside: George Allen, 1877), p. 39

⁷⁸ Illingworth (1917), p. 112

The reredos (Figure 2.1) found its place above the small church altar two years later in mid-June of 1904.⁷⁹ The well-crafted frame and back of the Longworth reredos make it impossible without disassembling the work to determine the type of wood, nor indeed the number of pieces used to form the three panels, or whether these were secured with battens glued onto their backs as recommended by Cennini.⁸⁰ Likewise, the St Alban's reredos is attached to the wall behind the altar in such a manner that nothing of its structure may be observed from the rear. The white gesso ground is visible in the Longworth reredos in areas where the paint has chipped, all the more vulnerable because it has been neither waxed nor varnished (Figure 2.9). Bunce might have followed Southall's recommendation 'to have strips of linen, glued to the wood before the gesso is laid on.'⁸¹ In some parts small flecks of green where the gold leaf has peeled off suggest *terre verte* was used as the base colour in this case (Figure 2.9). It would seem that the artist entirely covered the ground of the Longworth and St Alban's memorials with a layer of gold leaf unlike the later triptych in St Germain's, Edgbaston. There is evidence of later interventions to the Longworth panels where a dirtied taint of gold paint has been applied notably over some of the white pearls (Figure 2.9). A marked difference in the brightness, density and shine of the colours can be detected between the St Germain's triptych, which appears much worse for wear than the earlier Longworth and St Alban's reredos. The St Germain triptych's blues seems to have practically washed away, the whites faring not much better and the greens have cracked. Also in this case pencil outlines under the paint are often visible (Figure 2.10).

These differences support my belief that both commemorative reredoses benefitted from a full gold leaf undercoat, which according to Cennini and equally echoed by Southall, provided a superior grip for the tempera mixture and could explain their better conserved colours.⁸² Their smaller size as well as their sentimental value could have made it an affordable precaution.⁸³

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 163

⁸⁰ Christiana Herringham (translated from the Italian), *The Book of Art of Cennino Cennini: A Contemporary Practical Treatise on Quattrocento Painting* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1922), p. 229

⁸¹ Southall (1928), p. 5

⁸² Southall (1928), p. 6

⁸³ The 1926 Triptych for St Germain's was designed specifically for the inauguration of this new church consecrated to Anglo-Catholic worship as transpires from its subject. It marks a festive occasion rather than the commemoration of a loss. Its larger size might be related to its public nature, *i.e.* the bringing together of a community in a new building to the glory of God, while the smaller format of the two memorial reredos conveys a feeling of intimacy and private devotion. It is also worth noting that Kate Bunce's eyesight in 1926 had diminished to the extent that she was unable to make a sketch of the triptych to accompany the application for faculty. No doubt this would have impacted on the execution of

The observable correlations between the Longworth and St Alban reredoses, whether in their measurements, the fact that both were framed by Myra, their related iconography, and as argued here the tempera technique, all point to a similar process of production. Notwithstanding the laborious preparation that went into setting a ground for the tempera mixture itself, once the colours came to be added this brought on a challenge of its own. Restorer Jill Dunkerton notes that:

pigments bound in egg yolk cannot be applied in thick, impastoed brush strokes because the evaporation of the water and subsequent loss of bulk causes shrinkage, cracking and eventually flaking. The colour must be built up gradually in thin superimposed layers. These can be applied in fairly rapid sequence but if an area is worked over before it is sufficiently dry the paint beneath picks up on the brush and comes away ... making it impossible to soften and fuse the brush strokes while the paint is wet as in oil painting. Therefore some form of hatching or stipple is necessary...⁸⁴

In her article on the tempera revival, which focuses on the artists Joseph Southall and Christiana Herringham, Hannah Spooner argues that 'their goal was to renew painting's spirituality, which they saw to be sullied by sentiment, dishonest practice and laziness.'⁸⁵ The mixing agent of the egg was viewed in Christian terms as the 'symbol of the resurrection and source of life and nourishment.'⁸⁶ Spooner equally identifies a concern with permanence which shines through their meticulous approach to the technique.⁸⁷ This feeds the author's interpretation of Southall's pictorial manner which emphasises line and colour rather than the 'atmosphere' and 'relief' preferred by many of his contemporaries, in conjunction with his view that 'by freezing details for our attention' it would allow us 'to see the spiritual reality of nature with the artist's help.'⁸⁸ The tempera painter Marianne Stokes (1855-1927) articulated this idea of a 'spiritual' quality in working with tempera, describing it as 'a medium which lends itself most to spirituality,

the painting as well. [Birmingham, LB, BDR/C6/1/513, Letter from churchwarden P. Greenaway to Charles Ekin, Esq. 29 March 1926]

⁸⁴ Dunkerton (1980), p. 20

⁸⁵ Hannah Spooner, 'Pure Painting: Joseph Southall, Christiana Herringham and the Tempera Revival', *The British Art Journal* 4:2 (Summer 2003), p. 49

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Spooner (2003), p. 52

⁸⁸ Spooner (2003), p. 54

sincerity, and purity of colour.’⁸⁹ She pursued, ‘much of the charm of quattrocento art is due, not only to the spirit of the time, but also the medium which does not allow irreverent work. An impatient nature will never find its best medium in tempera.’⁹⁰ A staunch Quaker, Joseph Southall did not share Kate Bunce’s Anglo-Catholic faith.⁹¹ A ‘spiritual realism’, if of a different nature, seems nonetheless to be at the forefront of the Longworth and St Alban’s reredoses.

An unsigned and undated document in the Longworth and District History Society archives supplies the name and religious significance of the one-hundred-and-eight species of flower littered across the foreground of the painting.⁹² Indeed, William Waters notes that:

nature worship was central to Victorian Christianity. John Keble’s *The Christian Year*, published in 1827, was hugely popular ... Keble’s two sources of Divine revelation, the Bible and Nature, are the bedrock to his themes. ... Largely following Wordsworth and the Romantic poets, there is a strong element of pantheism in Victorian religion. Keble’s view of nature in his poetry was to release religious emotion. A similar impulse was behind the arts applied to beautifying church building.⁹³

The literature referred to in the key to Bunce’s reredos is either liturgical, or of a poetical nature, as well as books on the popular and religious meaning of flowers, with references to John Ruskin, and several extracts from Mrs Anna Brownell Jameson’s *Legends of the Madonna* first published in 1852. The roses at the foot of the Cross in the central panel, for instance, refer to the Rose-briar of which supposedly the Crown of Thorns was made (Figure 2.11). Allegedly,

⁸⁹ Marianne Stokes quoted in Vallance (1901), p. 164

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ William A. Cadbury, *A Testimony to the Life of Joseph Southall* (London: Friends’ Home Service Committee, 1946)

⁹² Longworth, Longworth and District History Society Archives, ‘Longworth Reredos – The Adoration’. The document quotes exclusively mid to late nineteenth century authors, which strongly suggests an end or turn of the century dating. A list of the contents of Kate and Myra Bunce’s home library points to either perfect source matches or similarly themed books to those referred to [Birmingham, UBC, BU/31, Catalogue of the Library of Myra and Kate Bunce]. Such a detailed knowledge of the symbolism of the picture, from the appearance of the figures, to the choice of flowers, and icons on the frame suggests to me that the painter either wrote it herself or at least provided the information. This impression is further grounded by the fact that the document resembles an archival typescript describing the St Alban’s reredos, in terms of phrasing, ink colour, typeset and layout. [Birmingham, LB, DRO93/140, Notes on Kate Bunce’s reredos at St Alban’s]

⁹³ William Waters, *Angels & Icons: Pre-Raphaelite Stained Glass, 1850-1870* (Worcester: Seraphim Press Ltd, 2012), p. 22

‘the drops of blood that fell from it to the ground blossomed into roses’, explanation supplemented by a passage from Miss Caruther’s *Flower Lore* (1879) which claims that “Men saw the thorns on Jesus’ brow, But angels saw the roses.”⁹⁴ The two Angels whose hands cup Christ’s feet and gesture towards the roses propose a close pictorial interpretation. While strictly abiding to religious convention, particularly in regard to the figures, the artist has put biological accuracy first and privileged local species in her choice of flora and fauna. In the hand of the Child, a rock thrush replaces the eastern blue thrush referred to in the scriptures (Figure 2.12). This realistic depiction of nature is literally at the service of the spiritual, as the bird on the Child’s palm refers to ‘the Soul, or the spiritual as opposed to the material.’⁹⁵ The variety and naturalism of the flowers is reminiscent of earlier Pre-Raphaelite works, notably Sir John Everett Millais’ *Ophelia* (1851-2). These paintings could be explored as a herbarium exemplifying a Victorian enthusiasm for collecting and classifying. But it is John Ruskin’s concept of ‘truth to nature’ which offers the most fruitful basis for the interpretation of the role of nature in this type of art.

Ruskin articulated the idea of ‘truth to nature’ in his seminal text *Modern Painters*, with which Kate Bunce and her peers were familiar. After discussing the qualities required of the viewer in order to recognise this ‘truth in nature’, Ruskin proposed a rather abstract definition of this ‘truth’ in which he declared that:

so it is with external Nature: she has a body and a soul like man; but her soul is the Deity. It is possible to represent the body without the spirit ... it is possible to represent the spirit in its ordinary and inferior manifestations ... it is possible to represent the spirit in its secret and high operations; and this shall be like only to those to whose watching they have revealed. All these are truth; but according to the dignity of the truths he can represent or feel, is the power of the painter, – the justice of the judge.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ ‘Longworth Reredos – The Adoration’, p. 7

⁹⁵ ‘Longworth Reredos – The Adoration’, p. 4

⁹⁶ John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, Vol. II (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1848, 4th edition, first published 1846), pp. 55-6

In further sections Ruskin provided practical advice on how this ‘truth’ might be represented in painting. When considering vegetation in particular, he advised:

it will be best to begin as nature does, with the stems and branches, and then to put the leaves on. ... I do not mean to include every kind of foliage which by any accident can find its way into a picture, but the ordinary trees of Europe ... I do not propose to examine the characteristics of each tree; it will be enough to observe the laws common to all.⁹⁷

Whilst he emphasised overarching qualities, he nonetheless suggested that ‘nature takes great care and pains to conceal this uniformity in her boughs.’⁹⁸ It was therefore the painter’s task to successfully balance the general impression with relevant detailing. Based on this understanding, flowers serve a deeper purpose in Kate Bunce’s painting than mere ornamentation or realism. She plucks them out of the background to give them primary importance as they refer to a rich and diverse array of sources, revealing archaeological, artistic, literary, botanical and theological interests. All these participate in Bunce’s interpretation of the ‘spirit’ of nature.

But whilst this might all seem in the continuation of the first generation of Pre-Raphaelite painters, the reinstatement of Kate Bunce in art historical literature as a follower of the Pre-Raphaelites creates an over-simplified view of her artistic contribution. Jan Marsh and others have brought attention to the formal similarities between her work and that of Dante Gabriel Rossetti for example.⁹⁹ Whilst the precedent set by Rossetti, and even more so Edward Burne-Jones is undeniably recognisable, it is important to note *how* Kate Bunce recuperated these features.¹⁰⁰ These formal similarities, as visible in the Longworth reredos where

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 380

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 381

⁹⁹ Birmingham, LB, JSP, MS 588/9, Newscutting ‘Le Salon des Anglais en 1901’, *La Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (Paris, August 1901), p. 52; Marsh and Nunn (1989), pp. 124-5; Marsh and Nunn (c1997), p. 145; John Christian (ed.), *The Last Romantics: The Romantic Tradition in British Art, Burne-Jones to Stanley Spencer* (London: Lund Humphries in assoc. with the Barbican Gallery), p. 103

¹⁰⁰ Edward Burne-Jones became the School of Art’s Honorary President in 1885. He wrote to the then-Vice-President of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists, Julius Alfred Chatwin, who had convinced him to accept the post ‘if it were thought desirable that I should visit the School, or meet the artists or pupils in some quiet way, without pomp or circumstance, it would be a delight for me.’ He further wrote to his friend William Kenrick, ‘all the time I am in the town I should like to work hard at the Schools – to see the students, separately if it is possible and give time to each of them ... look at their designs and discourse with them about the ancients...’ [quoted in Hartnell (1992), pp. 161-2]

‘Rossettian women’ lurk amongst the standing angels (see comparison Figure 2.13 and Figure 2.14), take on a different meaning when interpreted in a religious context.

Indeed ecclesiastical art relies on pictorial conventions in order for the subject to be recognised by the devotee. Here the artist strips the original portraits of their individual quality as Rossetti’s model’s features provide an impersonal template for ‘Angel x or y’, in a Christian theology of the body as a ‘vessel of the spirit.’¹⁰¹ Already under Rossetti’s brush, his sitters’ beautiful features were used to convey the ‘emotive qualities’ of the painter rather than her own, the faces of Elizabeth Siddal and Jane Morris, notably, appearing in his oeuvre like a recurring trope.¹⁰² This discredits George Breeze’s dismissal that Kate Bunce’s faces are ‘somewhat lacking in characterisation.’¹⁰³ Instead it is contended that Bunce deliberately propels even further a process of ‘iconization’ begun in Rossetti’s work, as the beauty of the Pre-Raphaelite woman serves a Godly master in the Longworth reredos.

If the features of Bunce’s figures, and equally her depiction of nature clearly belong to the nineteenth century, the artist’s Anglo-Catholic faith seeks to invoke a much older lineage. Her depiction of the Virgin and Child in the left panel refers to an Antique literary and iconographical tradition chronicled in Mrs Jameson’s *Legends of the Madonna*. Kate Bunce’s Mary is thus of ‘middle stature’ with an ‘oval face’, ‘brilliant eyes’ (though of a blue rather than ‘olive tint’), ‘arched and black’ eyebrows, her hair ‘a pale brown’, brought out by a ‘complexion fair as wheat’ true to Nicephorus Callistus’s description in his *Church History* (Figure 2.12).¹⁰⁴ The painter again follows Jameson’s guidance on the ‘proper dress’ of ‘a close red tunic, with long sleeves; and over this a blue robe or mantle’ with the prescribed veil. The Child’s wispy translucent tunic mirrors Jameson’s note of his clothing ‘in the Greek and early pictures.’¹⁰⁵ The Christ in the central Crucifixion panel is beardless according to his earliest representation ‘on most ancient Christian monuments ... from the second or third centuries down to the tenth.’¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Richard Tarras, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (London: Pimlico, c1991), p. 139

¹⁰² Andrew Wilton, ‘Symbolism in Britain’, in *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones & Watts: Symbolism in Britain 1860-1910* (exhibition catalogue, Tate Gallery, London, 16 October 1997 – 4 January 1998; Haus der Kunst, Munich, 30 January – 26 April 1998; Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, 15 May – 30 August 1998), eds Andrew Wilton and Robert Upstone (Tate Gallery Publishing, 1997), p. 19

¹⁰³ Breeze (1984), p. 78

¹⁰⁴ Jameson refers to Byzantine historian Nicephorus Callistus’s *Ecclesiasticae Historicae* (13-14th c) in the quote reproduced in ‘Longworth Reredos - The Adoration’, p. 4

¹⁰⁵ ‘Longworth Reredos - The Adoration’, p. 4

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9

From the 1850s the Pre-Raphaelite painters had started to extend their conception of the painting beyond the surface of the canvas to include the picture's frame.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, references to the origins of the Christian faith continue on the frame of the reredos where the signs of the Evangelists feature along its top, St Matthew as the Angel and St Mark as the Lion above the Adoration, followed by four early Christian symbols – the Phoenix, the Fish, the Lamb, and the Pelican, above the Crucifixion, tailed by St Luke as the Ox and St John as the Eagle above the Entombment (Figure 2.15). It is this *combination* of iconographical references to an early Christian pictorial language in a relatively contemporary form, which constitutes Kate Bunce's engagement with the Ecclesiological Society's pursuit of a 'revived Catholic Churchmanship,' rather than 'mere antiquarianism.'¹⁰⁸ Although the silver frame was worked by Myra with a rose wreath of her invention, the roundels were Kate's design.¹⁰⁹ Myra's use of metal deviated here from her Birmingham colleagues who preferred to use gesso to create picture frames in moulded relief.¹¹⁰ As noted by George Breeze in relation to Southall, 'it was because he endeavoured to make his work decorative that he frequently designed the frames for his pictures, sometimes carving parts of them himself.'¹¹¹ This was not just a case of dabbling in the decorative arts to add ornamental value to the easel painting. It was *core* to the Arts and Crafts conception of painting as part of a united undistinguishing family of the visual arts.

Independence from Papal infallibility offered scope for individual interpretation in the Anglican reconnection with the Pre-Reformation Catholic ceremonial and its ornaments.¹¹² In Kate Bunce's work this expresses itself with the Madonna occupying a significant place in her pictorial program, most explicitly in the Longworth reredos. A reredos when placed on the high

¹⁰⁷ Judith Brockhurst, 'Holman Hunt's Picture Frames, Sculpture and Applied Art', in *Re-Framing the Pre-Raphaelites: Historical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. Ellen Harding (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), p. 233

¹⁰⁸ Davies (1962), p. 120

¹⁰⁹ London, William Morris Society (WMS), Women's Guild of Arts archive (WGAA), Box II, folder 12a, Letter from Myra Bunce to Mary Sloane 12 May 1914

¹¹⁰ See for instance the gesso frames for Joseph Southall's paintings, usually hand-gilded by his wife Anna Elizabeth Baker. [Charlotte Gere, 'Gleams of Gold: The Fortunoff Collection of Paintings by Joseph Southall', *Apollo* (April 2005), p. 79]

¹¹¹ *Southall* (1980), p. 16

¹¹² Anglicanism rejects this aspect of Roman Catholic dogma which views the Pope as ordained by God and incapable of error. Anglicans consider the Pope as subject to the 'passions of man' and therefore as an usurper of authority which they associate with an 'over-systematization in theology.' Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious: Themes and Personalities of the Catholic Revival in Anglicanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 190. The argument that in conversely not being recognized as 'Catholic' by Rome, the Anglo-Catholics gained in independence is put forward by Davies (1962), pp. 121-122.

altar traditionally has a Crucifixion as its main subject, flanked by other episodes from the life of Jesus, or attending saints. Some nineteenth-century designs substitute this for the institution of the Holy Communion. If situated on a side altar, a figure of Christ would replace the Crucifixion.¹¹³ The left hand panel of Kate Bunce's Longworth reredos presents a devotional Virgin and Child where a scene from the Passion could be expected in response to the Crucifixion and Entombment (Figure 2.16). The Lady's erect position offers a contrasting vision to her usually subordinate form behind the prominent Child on her lap. In fact the Child which she holds with a single arm is given equal importance to the apple in her right palm 'symbolis[ing] that she is the second Eve.'¹¹⁴ Another element linking Mary with the older scriptures is her foot crushing the serpent's head. The artist thus conforms to a Catholic interpretation of Genesis 3:15 based on the 1609 Douay–Rheims Bible's translation 'she shall bruise thy head', a phrase which is reproduced in the Longworth document.¹¹⁵ This interpretation identifies Mary as God's chosen instrument to destroy the work of Satan, while other translations recognised at the time by Protestantism used a masculine pronoun read as a reference to Christ. It seems that the Virgin is the true object of Adoration of the reredos, with all the attending angels' gazes directed towards her accentuating the symbolism of the decorative elements.

In light of this assessment, the repeated quotations from Mrs Anna Brownell Jameson's *Legends of the Madonna* in the Longworth document take on a new meaning. According to Sheridan Gilley, Mrs Jameson was 'one of the earliest to propagate a taste in England for Italian and German primitives.'¹¹⁶ Jameson played a crucial role in interpreting Catholic church art with a feminist tinge for a Protestant audience who had awakened to the aesthetic and ritual appeal of Catholic church following the crisis within the Church of England.¹¹⁷ An advocate of 'moderate feminism', Jameson believed in an equality of the sexes 'founded on the Gospel of Christ' in 'protest against a double moral standard.'¹¹⁸ The 'strongly feminine streak in Catholic

¹¹³ Bond (1916), p. 82

¹¹⁴ 'Longworth Reredos - The Adoration', p. 4

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Sheridan Gilley, 'Victorian Feminism and Catholic Art: The Case of Mrs Jameson', in *The Church and the Arts*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers for The Ecclesiastical History Society, 1992), p. 386

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 385

devotion and piety' appealed to her and informs her interpretation of Catholic art which evokes 'a vast range of human experience, much of which calls forth the deepest sympathy, especially the sympathies most accessible and natural to women.'¹¹⁹ Kate Bunce proposes a pictorial equivalent to Jameson's art historical writings in which she reclaims the importance of the Virgin in an Anglican context. In saturating her symbolism rather than the composition itself with references to the Madonna, Bunce similarly adopts a 'moderate' approach which requires an extended observation of the painting to retrieve this meaning. Likewise this helps promote prolonged devotion.

In Kate Bunce's reredos for St Alban's church in Birmingham, the Virgin is placed this time in the central panel (Figure 2.2). The focus of the composition however is clearly the Child who rests on a bed of angel's feathers, whilst his mother's hands are clasped in prayer (Figure 2.17). The Virgin's gaze is strangely elusive, as if she were lost in contemplation, whereas the six surrounding angels have their eyes locked on the Infant. Indeed the Infant's prominence is even supported in the artistic form of the painting, which is reminiscent of children's book-illustrations. The stylistic debt to the Pre-Raphaelites, and their haunting strong and statuesque women is superseded here by the cherubic features of the angels and the overall shorter, rounder and essentially juvenile proportions of the figures, as in the pages of books for children.

If the manner of the figures of St Alban's reredos clearly departs from the earlier Longworth memorial, both paintings do have in common a similar *use* of imagery, particularly the use of flowers and fruit as emblems.¹²⁰ Flora is again primarily associated with the Virgin. She is literally cloaked with flowers and fruit, as on her collar is 'the wild flower, "Our Lady's Mantle"; on the sleeves the wild strawberry, a fruit dedicated to the Blessed Virgin; [and] on the girdle the wild dodder, "Our Lady's Garters".' Other specimens further populate the panel, as it is intended to represent the Virgin 'inside her garden (hortus inclusus).' Within it grow 'the red and white Roses [which] are her flowers', and more specially the Lily, a staple of scenes of the

¹¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 385-386

¹²⁰ My use of the 'vocabulary of symbolism' is based on M.D. Anderson's use of terminology in his book on the medieval imagery of British churches. He distinguishes between three types: (1) the 'symbol' which 'expresses abstract idea' such as 'the Pelican in her piety [being] the symbol of Man's redemption through the Atonement of Christ'; (2) the 'emblem' which 'is used as an alternative to direct portrayal of a person'. Hence 'the Agnus Dei is the emblem of Christ'; and (3) the 'attribute' which 'identifies the image of a sacred person but has no individual significance.' [M.D. Anderson, *The Imagery of British Churches* (London: John Murray, 1955), p. xiv]

Annunciation, ‘while the Iris is dedicated to her, and the Veronica is the flower of faith.’ Plants are not only emblematic of the Virgin but also perform as narrative symbols in the form of the ‘May crowns’ on the ‘hovering Angels’ heads, ‘the hawthorn being supposed one of the trees from which the crown of thorns was made.’¹²¹

Bunce further sows her floral rhetoric to the outer panels, where the shamrock serves as an attribute to St Patrick on the far left (Figure 2.18). This overlaps with a narrative layer of symbolism as the description of the reredos states that:

St Patrick used the shamrock as an emblem of the Holy Trinity. When he landed in Ireland in A.D. 433, the people would not be convinced and were ready to stone him. He said to them: “Is it not as possible for the Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost, as for these leaves, to grow upon a single stalk?”

Then the people were immediately convinced.¹²²

Lying at the Saint’s feet are the Crozier and Mitre, symbols of him being a Bishop. Also on the ground, the ‘Calvary Clover’ bears a red stain on its leaf ‘supposed to be the Blood of our Lord, which fell there because the clover grew beneath the Cross.’¹²³ The reredos’s outer right panel dedicated to St Alban, the church’s patron, is equally in bloom with a ‘Palm of Victory’ lying near the saint ‘in the shape of a victor’s crown; close by, the Poppy, emblematic for the quiet sleep of death, and the everlasting flower typical of eternal life; Veronica for faith, and over all, the Cross, the symbol of a never-dying faith.’ Myra Bunce’s bronze frame extends the theme with a border ‘based on the Shamrock.’¹²⁴

The overgrowth of flowers and their symbolism supported my argument for the Virgin being the implied main subject of the Longworth reredos. Equivalently, the various species of bird which flutter across the St Alban’s reredos play an important role in my analysis of the centrality of the Child. As previously mentioned, a single bird appeared in the Longworth painting, the rock thrush which rested in the Child’s hand. Christian culture follows a long tradition in associating birds with the human soul. Some scholars, as reported by Lucia

¹²¹ Birmingham, LB, DRO93/140, Notes on Kate Bunce’s reredos at St Alban’s, f2

¹²² Ibid., f1r

¹²³ Ibid., f1r

¹²⁴ Ibid., f3

Impelluso, consider the bird more specifically to be ‘a direct symbol of Christ.’¹²⁵ The thirty-two different species of birds depicted in the St Alban’s reredos can be interpreted as an equivalent number of testaments to Christ’s presence. Their absence from the two outer panels inhabited by St Alban and St Patrick reinforce their connection to the Infant, towards which all the angels and smaller winged creatures gravitate in the central and two adjacent panels.

The species of bird are all identified in an unsigned and undated typescript document, part of St Alban’s parish archives held at the Library of Birmingham.¹²⁶ It is similar in design to the key for the Longworth reredos. Some of the birds have a religious connotation. The two pigeons at the feet of the kneeling angel on the bottom right of the central panel, are referred to in the Bible, hence ‘a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons’ (Figure 2.19) were ‘offered in the Temple after a birth, according to the law of Moses.’¹²⁷ The crossbill to their right is ‘said to have tried to peck the nails out of the hands of Our Lord, as He hung on the Cross; thus, the crossed bill, and thus the bird’s colour (red) from the Precious Blood which flowed over him.’¹²⁸ On the second panel from the left, to the right of the Lute-playing angel’s left hand soars the stormy petrel (Figure 2.20), which owes its name to St Peter ‘(stormy Peter) who walked on the water.’¹²⁹

Other species seem to have been included because the artist had a fondness for them, for instance the golden oriole to the right of the king fisher in front of the robe of the angel kneeling to the left of the central panel (Figure 2.21). The document states that ‘this bird, though not gifted with much song keeps its nest in beautiful order.’¹³⁰ Likewise, it is anecdotally stated that the curlew standing behind the two red robins (Figure 2.19) is ‘a Scotch bird with a mournful cry, likened by the Scotch natives to the cry of a lost soul.’¹³¹ Indeed the birds’ song participates in the auditory quality of the painting. Their chorus harmonises with the ‘singing and playing’ of the ‘Praising Angels’ in the second and fourth panels, who pull on the strings of a lute and harp.¹³² Most of the named varieties of bird however are not distinguished by having a particular

¹²⁵ Lucia Impelluso, *Nature and its Symbols* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004), p. 288

¹²⁶ Birmingham, LB, DRO93/140, Notes on Kate Bunce’s reredos at St Alban’s

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, f2

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, f2

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, f1r

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, f2

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*, f1r, f3

religious connotation or musicality. Another criteria seems to have been that of geographical specificity, as it is stipulated that these are in part ‘English singing birds.’¹³³ For instance the gold-crest visible in the fourth panel is ‘the smallest English singing bird.’¹³⁴

The Edgbaston Pools, a local bird-watchers’ paradise, was in close walking distance from Kate Bunce’s house meaning that she might have observed these in real life. A watercolour by the artist includes a backdrop similar to the view on the preserved shores of the Edgbaston Pools (Figure 2.22), suggesting that she spent time there. Andy Mabbett of the West Midlands Bird Watchers Society imparted to me that not all of the species depicted in the reredos may be seen around Birmingham. The crested tit on the second panel (Figure 2.20), for instance, does not nest in these regions.¹³⁵ Another equally interesting peculiarity in Bunce’s depiction of these birds, is that their scale in relation to one another is not accurate.¹³⁶ The chaffinch, shown here of similar proportions to the blackbird in front of it (Figure 2.21), is usually much smaller with a median size of fifteen centimetres unlike the larger blackbird which averages twenty-five centimetres.¹³⁷ Therefore, whilst the form and colouring of their plumage is recognisable, the overall effect cannot be termed naturalistic.

These issues in terms of realism were probably due to the fact that the artist consulted illustrations of birds in books. The illustrations in Victorian ornithology guides were in fact often based not on the observation of birds in nature, but instead copied either from stuffed birds or their emptied-out skins. This affected the apprehension of their shape and pose.¹³⁸ Indeed Rev. F.O. Morris’s *A History of British Birds* resided on the Bunce studio’s bookshelf.¹³⁹ Published in several volumes, one includes coloured engravings of the coal tit, blue tit, crested tit, and great tit, which in turn flutter to the upper right of the second panel of the reredos.¹⁴⁰ This may have been supplemented by the study of F. Edward Hulme’s *Natural History Lore*

¹³³ Ibid., f1r

¹³⁴ Ibid., f3

¹³⁵ E-mail correspondence with Andy Mabbett, 21 March 2014

¹³⁶ My thanks to Diane James for bringing this to my attention; information corroborated by Andy Mabbett, 21 March 2014.

¹³⁷ Alan J. Richards, *British Birds: A Field Guide* (Newton Abbot, London, North Pomfret: David & Charles, 1979), pp. 177, 137

¹³⁸ Information provided by Andy Mabbett, 5 March 2014

¹³⁹ Birmingham, UBC, BU/31, Kate and Myra Bunce Library Catalogue, f93v

¹⁴⁰ Rev. F.O. Morris, *A History of British Birds*, vol. I (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1862), across pp. 194, 202, 198, 190

and *Legend* which was also part of the Bunces' library.¹⁴¹ Hulme compiles beliefs related to numerous natural and mythical creatures from a variety of antique, and medieval sources combined with contemporary folklore. Some of the birds represented in the St Alban's reredos had previously received Hulme's attention, notably the swallow, wren, nightingale, king fisher and robin.¹⁴² Whereas Kate Bunce associated the crossbill with the removal of the nails from Jesus's crucified form, Hulme tied this same legend to the robin whose red breast would be the result of drops of the 'Sacred Blood.'¹⁴³ Kate Bunce's painting does nonetheless correspond with Hulme's text in its engagement with a range of beliefs and traditions, clearly not all exclusively religious.

The illustration of literary sources in general is important in appreciating the narrative quality of Bunce's St Alban's painting. As introduced in the first chapter, many of the Birmingham craftswomen's early works at the School were designs for book-illustration. Some were to specialise in this skill, as previously discussed, whilst others turned to different media. Kate Bunce's only known published illustrations were to a Birmingham Cornish Brothers 1895 edition of *Fairbrass: A Child's Story* written by the Edgbastonian theatre historian and playwright Thomas Edgar Pemberton (1849-1905).¹⁴⁴ The crossover between Kate Bunce's earlier work in black-and-white illustration and the St Alban's reredos is undeniable. The artist enriched Pemberton's story with four full-page illustrations, in addition to decorations in the form of chapter-headings, ornamental letters and tailpieces.

These correspondences are firstly formal. The St Alban's angels' full cheeks, large wide-set eyes, thin overarching brows, snub little noses, and rosebud mouths finished off by large chins, echo young Fairbrass's face. The boy's full-face portrait, as he spies on a hedgehog, reappears in the form of an angel to the top left of the central panel of the reredos (Figure 2.23 and Figure 2.24). Even Fairbrass's centre-parted variation of a pageboy hairstyle adorns all of

¹⁴¹ Birmingham, UBC, BU/31, Kate and Myra Bunce's Library Catalogue, f28v

¹⁴² F. Edward Hulme, *Natural History Lore and Legend* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1895), pp. 247-252, 255-260

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 250

¹⁴⁴ W.J. Lawrence and Rev. Nilanjana Banerji, 'Pemberton, Thomas Edgar (1849-1905)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eds H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 508. Kate Bunce's illustrations to Thomas E. Pemberton's text seems to have been the result of personal acquaintance. Mr Pemberton, his wife, and daughters were guests at the Bunce household. [Birmingham, UBC, Bunce collection [BC], BU/29, Dinner list] Thomas Pemberton was a drama critic for the *Birmingham Daily Post* as of 1882. [Lawrence and Banerji (2004), p. 508]

the angels' heads. As to the angels in profile (Figure 2.17), the precedent can be found in the scene where Fairbrass watches over his grandfather (Figure 2.25). Whilst Fairbrass is definitely a male character, his appearance does include some feminine attributes, particularly his pretty face and hair. This reflects in part the fashion of keeping little boys' hair long, and in some cases dressing them in skirts until they were 'breeched' between the age of four and eight, marking their social gendering.¹⁴⁵ This attitude to the young male child's dress reflected the Victorian association between early childhood and the feminine. In her analysis of nineteenth century literature, Catherine Robson argues that 'perfect childhood is always exemplified by a little girl.'¹⁴⁶

This androgyny in features is fitting to the depiction of angels, who are asexual beings. Androgyny and hermaphroditism were of strong interest throughout the nineteenth century, from scientific studies, to sociology, literature and the visual arts. The androgyne, as described by Shearer West, was 'multi-faceted and could just as easily embody the tensions between the sexes as it could stand as a metaphor for homosexual love.'¹⁴⁷ But while the androgynous figures of male painters might be seen as homosexual expression, as in the art of Simeon Solomon, or a 'love-affair with himself' as for Egon Schiele, no such self-representation is applicable to the female painter Kate Bunce.¹⁴⁸ As underlined by West, 'although in essence, the androgyne was both sexes, the figure was most often represented as a feminized male.'¹⁴⁹ Rather, Bunce's use of androgynous angels seem to point to the Italian Renaissance, in line with Walter Pater's exploration of androgyny in the work of Leonardo da Vinci, in his *Studies in the Renaissance* (1873).¹⁵⁰

Bunce's admiration of the Italian Renaissance painters is particularly evident in her depiction of the Virgin in the St Alban's reredos (Figure 2.17). The latter wears 'the traditional colours' with a red gown, covered by a blue mantel trimmed in white, similarly to the Virgin of the Longworth reredos. The attribute of the 'star that typifies her' also adorns her lower right

¹⁴⁵ V&A Museum of Childhood, 'Boy's dress', <http://www.museumofchildhood.org.uk/collections/clothing/boys-dress/>, consulted 28 March 2014

¹⁴⁶ Catherine Robson, *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girl of the Victorian Gentleman* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 5

¹⁴⁷ Shearer West, *Fin de Siècle* (London: Bloomsbury, 1993), p. 84

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 77, 84

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 71

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 77

shoulder, although in this case it is reminiscent of a dandelion floret.¹⁵¹ Her head is equally ‘covered by a light veil’ and surrounded by a gold-leaf nimbus adorned with relief stars. However, whilst the St Alban’s Virgin shares the ‘pale brown’ hair, ‘eyes grey set far apart’ and ‘complexion [of] a clear pallor with an expression of great calm and peace’ with the Longworth Mary (Figure 2.16), her actual face bears little resemblance. The St Alban’s Virgin instead evokes Fra Angelico’s soft round-faced Madonnas. These facial features are therefore borrowed from an artistic precedent presenting an abstract idealised beauty, in contrast with the characterful traits of the Longworth Virgin which appear more like a revisited portrait.

The exchange between Kate Bunce’s St Alban’s painting and her illustrations to *Fairbrass* extends beyond formal similarities. If read alongside the study of the Bunce reredos, Pemberton’s allegorical fairytale enables the retrieval of another layer of meaning. The story of *Fairbrass* is a simple tale written by Pemberton for his children. It nevertheless contains a powerful message on the importance of religion in reconnecting with core social values in a Victorian society driven by the Capitalist desire for financial gain. Indeed, Kate Bunce’s questioning of this orthodoxy was reflected in her own readings. Walter Crane personally addressed Kate Bunce a copy of the newly issued *Fabian Essays in Socialism* in 1890.¹⁵² In his letter, Crane noted ‘I gathered that you were particularly interested in some of the questions with which the Essays deal.’¹⁵³

Returning to Pemberton’s text, the story is told from the boy Fairbrass’s perspective, and opens with the scene of his birth, making him the latest addition to an already large brood. Similarly, Bunce’s composition as previously noted gravitates around the Child. Fairbrass’s chubby limbs in the tailpiece to the first chapter (Figure 2.26) appear like the St Alban’s Infant’s form (Figure 2.17). Fairbrass lives in a ‘Little House’ at the foot of a hill, whilst his estranged grandfather is alone in a ‘Big House’ on the hillside, the whole overseen at the top by ‘God’s House (with the beautiful blue ceiling on the top of it).’¹⁵⁴ Three equivalent levels can be defined in the context within which Kate Bunce’s work resides. The reredos can be seen as the ‘Little House’, placed in a side chapel of the ‘Big House’ which is St Alban’s church, itself part

¹⁵¹ Birmingham, LB, DRO93/140, Notes on Kate Bunce’s reredos at St Alban’s, f2

¹⁵² Birmingham, UBC, BC, BU/7, letter from Walter Crane to Kate Bunce dated 30 January 1890

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ T. Edgar Pemberton, *Fairbrass: A Child’s Story* (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers, 1895), p. 11

of the world, 'God's House.' This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that Fairbrass is happiest in the Little House's garden, where he seeks solace from a poor and overcrowded household.¹⁵⁵ Likewise, the Virgin's garden is the setting for the painting's three inner panels at the heart of which Jesus sleeps.

By the age of eight, Fairbrass learns that he is dumb, explaining the reason why he is unable to communicate with the rest of his family.¹⁵⁶ Instead he has been given the 'gift of comprehending dumb tongues' which allows him to talk with trees, flowers, animals and inanimate objects alike.¹⁵⁷ Due to Fairbrass's inability to speak, creatures and humans feel comfortable confiding their secrets to him.¹⁵⁸ His first friendship is with twin poplars, followed by a variety of flowers. But somehow he admires the numerous birds even more, amongst whom the blackbird, tits, swallows, bullfinches, swifts and nightingales find a happy perch in the garden when they grow tired of discovering the world by sky.¹⁵⁹ These varieties, amongst others listed by the author, all make their way into Kate Bunce's reredos.

Fairbrass's companions from nature are able to enlighten him on the realities of life. They inform him on the nature of 'Business' which causes such strain on his parents' relationship. Indeed Pemberton does little to hide his disillusionment with Industrialisation as he describes the world as prisoner of 'a Never-Tiring, Day and Night, Heart and Brain, Man-Manufactured Tormentor, whose name is "Money".'¹⁶⁰ Financial duress is the cause of much concern for mother and father early on in the novel. However when they come to inherit the grandfather's fortune, richness only results in greater discontent and new worries cause a rift between the couple.¹⁶¹ Not only does this industrialised society facilitate material hardship for some, but it equally corrupts the morality of others. Amongst a series of illustrations of how

¹⁵⁵ Pemberton would have been well aware of Birmingham's issues brought on by 'rampant demographic and territorial growth.' Victor Skipp describes how 'the older parts of the town, most of which were already descending into slumdom, soon became quite impossibly congested, dilapidated and unhealthy. Meanwhile ... new districts of factories, workshops and houses were springing up on every side, with scarcely a hint of public control or planning.' In contrast, Edgbaston was protected from 'this process of industrial advance at the cost of environmental and social amenity' thanks to its status as a private estate, the property of the Calthorpes. [Victor Skipp, *The Making of Victorian Birmingham* (Birmingham: Victor Skipp, 1983), pp. 7, 79]

¹⁵⁶ Pemberton (1895), p. 20

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 8

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 21

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 16

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 5

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 133

people are being led astray in this toxic environment, Pemberton warns of the perils of drink. He chastises young clerks for their daily visits to ale houses where they engage in foolish behaviour.¹⁶² Young ladies who frequent such places are even more at fault, one of them being described as ‘terribly loud, forward, and altogether vulgar.’¹⁶³

As a child Fairbrass is shielded from such frequentations. Instead he is taken to ‘a fine old church very near to his home’ every Sunday.¹⁶⁴ Many of the teachings of the Bible appear ‘mysterious’ to him. The greatest mystery however, is:

why people who, for an hour or two on Sunday, became so fervent about brotherly love, forgiveness of enemies, and prayers for mercy – who week after week seemed to make strong resolutions to amend shortcomings, and for ever after to lead the lives of saints – should, on Monday morning, behave precisely as it all this had never taken place?¹⁶⁵

The assertion of the importance of cultivating a personal relationship with God similarly features on the archival document describing Kate Bunce’s reredos. On the back of one of the pages of the typescript is a handwritten passage from Charlotte Brontë’s novel *Villette*. The extract in question conveys the Catholic priest Paul Emmanuel’s words to the main character Lucy Snowe, a Protestant. Hence Emmanuel pleads:

We abase ourselves in our littleness, and we do right; yet it may be that the constancy of one heart, the truth and faith of one mind according to the light He has appointed, import as much to Him as the just motion of satellites about their planets, ... of suns around that mighty unseen centre...¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 39-40

¹⁶³ Ibid., p. 42. Birmingham’s fight against drink was led by The Birmingham Temperance Society, founded in 1830. It was later joined by the ‘Birmingham Band of Hope which encouraged people to sign “the total abstinence pledge”, and from 1855 by a Prohibitionist body known as the United Kingdom Alliance.’ Skipp notes that ‘most nonconformist and many Anglican churches became involved in one branch or another of the movement.’ Temperance Hotels and Coffee Rooms were established to provide alternative spaces for socialising. But the ‘battle against drink was also the battle for respectability’ part of ‘the mission to re-christianize the masses’ and foster ‘self-improvement.’ Some of the Birmingham artists were known to be teetotallers, such as Joseph Southall, the Gaskins, and it would also seem the Camms. [Skipp (1983), p. 150]

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 51

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 53

¹⁶⁶ Birmingham, LB, DRO93/140, Notes on Kate Bunce’s reredos at St Alban’s, fl v

This written appeal to individual devotion outside of the institution of the mass is pictorially materialised in Bunce's painting which invites prayer and reflection around the figure of the Holy Child.

The inability to apply the lessons from God to everyday life is particularly upsetting to Pemberton's Fairbrass in regard to his father and grandfather who attend service together but sit at separate pews.¹⁶⁷ He hopes that a 'very constant and very silent member of the congregation, known as the Kneeling Knight' might provide an answer.¹⁶⁸ This knight is actually a stone statue that has been in the church for hundreds of years. Thanks to Fairbrass's gift the knight speaks to him. Such prolonged prayer has resulted in the knight's ability to read churchgoers' minds, making him the best candidate to answer Fairbrass's question 'whether religion is really any good to people.'¹⁶⁹ Fairbrass naively believes that religion is defined by attending mass, but he is not alone in his misunderstanding.¹⁷⁰ Ensues the knight's observation of the superficial concerns which distract all massgoers from hearing the true message of God.¹⁷¹ Amongst many examples of the thoughts which occupy the congregation's minds, a particularly compelling instance spurs the knight to reflect on the importance of writers and artists, who 'seldom know the amount of good they do.'¹⁷² He illustrates this opinion with the story of a young poet whose work had been criticised by the press, as a result of which he questioned his vocation. Unbeknownst to the poet, the young widow standing next to him had found great comfort in his verse so that 'while the poet's eyes welled over with mortification, hers swam with gratitude to the unknown writer who had so helped her.'¹⁷³ The knight ends his tale with the moral that 'work well meant and honestly done is never thrown away, though those who do it may be the last to know it.'¹⁷⁴ This precept of 'work well meant and honestly done' very much echoes William Morris's concept of 'pleasure in labour' and the connection between a renewed approach to making art and an improved society.¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁷ Pemberton (1895), p. 55

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 57

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 60

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 61

¹⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 61-69

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 71

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 73

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 74

¹⁷⁵ A. Clutton-Brock, *William Morris, his Work and Influence* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1914), pp. 15-19

Spiritual and social values permeate Kate Bunce's creative process. In Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo's (1851-1942) unpublished *History of the Arts and Crafts Movement*, the influential architect and designer declares that 'the modern catholicity [to be understood as inclusiveness] of spirit induces association, not for the sake of gain from the pursuit, but for the sake of a gain to that social purpose towards which the arts minister.'¹⁷⁶ Contemporary architect and designer Henry Wilson (1863-1934) tied the 'social purpose' that Mackmurdo and others located in the arts, with religion, claiming that 'art is the expression of divine thoughts in terms of beauty' and 'religion the expression of that thought in terms of conduct.'¹⁷⁷ Wilson lamented the position of the Church which 'has been captured by commercialism.'¹⁷⁸ Thus 'artists are waiting for the opportunity of dedication, an opportunity which never comes, because the companies stand in the way' of 'the duty of the artist [which is] to devote his best work to the highest cause.'¹⁷⁹

The jeopardization of the quality of British design as a consequence of a capitalist mode of production is intrinsic to the Arts and Crafts Movement's socialist agenda to improve the workman's conditions of labour and therewith his output, which it associates with a Ruskinian interpretation of the medieval Guilds. Both contemporary and later scholars have pointed out the discrepancies between ideology and practice in the Arts and Crafts movement. Despite the best of intentions, collaborative work was sometimes not so different from the reviled divided labour within industrialised manufacture. Rather than considering this as a deficiency, this should instead be seen as an opportunity to investigate the rich diversity in ways of making, even within the Arts and Crafts movement. This variety, it is contended, reflects the *individuality* of each object, a highly valued quality amongst Arts and Crafts practitioners.

The Longworth and St Alban's reredoses, the product of two pairs of hands, were neither commissioned nor sold on the open market. This is not to suggest that as unpaid work it

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in S. K. Tillyard, *The Impact of Modernism 1900-1920: Early Modernism and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Edwardian England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), p. 14

¹⁷⁷ Henry Wilson, 'Art and Religion', *The Architectural Review* 6:37 (December 1899), pp. 276. W.R. See Lethaby's similar contention quoted in chapter I, p. 49.

¹⁷⁸ Wilson (1899), p. 278. Journalist Hugh Stokes is similarly critical of 'the standard of modern Church art' which he sees as 'deplorably low ... tawdry and meretricious in colour and design' and therefore is left baffled as to why Joseph Southall 'does not find his letter-box full of commissions for ecclesiastical decoration.' Hugh Stokes, 'The Modern Gozzoli', *The Lady's Realm* 8 (1904), pp. 20-21, in Birmingham, LB, Presscuttings album, MS 588/29, pp. 84-86

¹⁷⁹ Wilson (1899), pp. 278, 277

is 'unprofessional' and that of the 'amateur' female artist. Rather, it is important because the artist was thus liberated from the constraints of the demands of a patron or projected buyer which come with financial investment. In this manner it fulfils Wilson's desire for qualified artists to put their skills to the service of the Church, and likewise enacts Mackmurdo's vision of financially disinterested artistic collaboration. Precise details on the making of the Longworth and St Alban's reredoses have not survived. From the little information which is available, in conjunction with the study of the object and knowledge of similar artworks of the period, a rough outline of the process may be attempted.

Kate Bunce would probably have started out with a coloured sketch for each section. When these met her satisfaction they would have been enlarged in order to make full-scale cartoons. In the case of the Longworth reredos, it is probably around this stage that the Illingworths would have visited the Bunce studio to ensure that the proposition was suitable for the church. Two years elapsed between the Reverend Illingworth's letter quoted earlier and when the piece was finally put into place. The painter would have then proceeded to its slow execution, starting with the preparing of the panels with a gilt gesso ground, followed by the meticulous succession of coats of tempera. It is unknown whether Kate or Myra worked the wooden form of the reredos itself, or if they required the services of a carpenter. Myra's decorative frames in the form of embossed silver plaques in the first instance, and bronze in the second, were finally screwed onto the wood. The frame's simplicity of form and choice of symbols complements rather than competes with the paintings. The choice of silver for Longworth brings out the colder tones of the paintings, importantly the dark blue which is used for the Virgin's cloak. The bronze of the St Alban's frame harmonizes with the flesh tones, making the form of the Infant stand out, as well as adding to the glow of the gold nimbuses.

The precepts of the Arts and Crafts ideology are respected on every count. The designer and executant are one, embodying the ideal of the artist-crafts(wo)man. The artwork is conceived in relation to its intended setting, appropriate in size and fitting in its simplicity to a small country-parish altar. The painter is true to her materials in her informed use of tempera. Both craftswomen worked side by side in their shared studio and workshop of which they were mistresses. Such a coherent design, collaborative mode of production and harmonious result

was by no means a given, even amongst followers of the Arts and Crafts movement. Another reredos executed at the same time provides an interesting point of comparison.

Lord Beauchamp, an important patron of the Arts and Crafts, employed Birmingham artists to decorate his private chapel at Madresfield Court. Letters to him from these artists provide a relatively detailed, albeit one-sided, account of the proceedings.¹⁸⁰ Beauchamp put Charles Gere in charge of overseeing the scheme and the painter's part of their correspondence shows him quite confident in making suggestions. The aristocrat approved Gere's idea of a new reredos (Figure 2.3).¹⁸¹ It seems however that Beauchamp already had his heart set on the architect William Henry Bidlake (1861-1938) for its design.¹⁸² Gere's repeated concerns about Bidlake's work culminate in his comment:

My own feeling is that we should only use ornament where it can be executed by the designer himself, or by a workman who is capable of doing something other than the ordinary architectural carving, which is so utterly lifeless & dull. I hope that a good deal may be done with gilded gesso work, for that part of could be perfectly carried out by Mrs Payne.¹⁸³

Bidlake's design was carved in wood by the Cheltenham firm Martyn & Co. and the gilding done by Birmingham man Mr T. Tanner, with Gere's involvement in the gessoing process. Its ornate character caused repeated delays in its execution, which at one point seems to have completely put its patron off the idea of it.¹⁸⁴ What is of interest here is that Bidlake's vision, which clearly clashed with Gere's, nonetheless dictated the specifications for the triptych. On 29 June 1902 Gere noted his 'alarm' on receiving the measurements for the size of his paintings, particularly the centre panel at 5ft x 3ft (152.4 x 91.4 cm).¹⁸⁵ While the designs for the side panels, the 'Reaper' on the left and the 'Vinedresser' on the right, were quickly settled on, the main subject posed considerable problems. Initially to be the 'Institution of the Eucharist', the design saw many amendments and was finally entirely rejected much to Gere's 'distress'.¹⁸⁶ The

¹⁸⁰ Malvern, Madresfield Court Archives [MCA], Box A5 V

¹⁸¹ Malvern, MCA, Letter from Charles M. Gere to Lord Beauchamp, 29 December 1901

¹⁸² Malvern, MCA, W. H. Bidlake to Lord Beauchamp, 8 January 1902

¹⁸³ Malvern, MCA, Gere to Beauchamp, 19 April 1902

¹⁸⁴ Malvern, MCA, Gere to Beauchamp, 27 September 1902

¹⁸⁵ Malvern, MCA, Gere to Beauchamp, 29 June 1902

¹⁸⁶ Malvern, MCA, Gere to Beauchamp, 2 January 1903

decisive version shows the Christ standing in classical architectural surroundings, the Eucharist hinted at with the table laden with grapes, bread and decanters behind him. The backdrop shows the Holy City, flanked by standing angels on either side holding wedding garments in acknowledgment of the commission being a nuptial gift from Lady Beauchamp to her husband.¹⁸⁷ Mrs Payne is credited with the gilt halos and robe details of the painting.¹⁸⁸ The fragmented nature of production and demanding modes of collaboration which the Madresfield Chapel reredos involved shows us a reality that is far removed from Mackmurdo's idealistic vision of associative work. Kate Bunce's artistically liberating position outside of the market might have facilitated her full devotion and control over all stages of conception and production, with no sub-contracted external intervention.

The history of the St Alban's reredos, which can be considered as the artist's most accomplished ecclesiastical work, is testament to Kate Bunce's determination for her art to become part of the public realm and serve a greater purpose. Notice was given in the local press that on Saturday 19th June 1919, the eve of St Alban's patronal festival, the church had been 'enriched by the gift of a beautiful painted reredos ... at which Miss Kate Bunce was present.'¹⁸⁹ Placed behind the altar of the St Patrick side-chapel, the crisp blue, red and golden hues of its five panels, combined with the glow of Myra's bronze frame, make it an attractive feature to contemplate.¹⁹⁰ A screen had been erected at the entrance of the chapel in 1914, creating a closed-off and more intimate space.¹⁹¹ This added privacy fosters a fitting atmosphere of communion with the reredos which equally serves as a family memorial. Photographs taken of the chapel in 1920-1921 show the original setting in which the reredos was displayed (Figure 2.27 and Figure 2.28). Furthermore, The Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament was moved to St Patrick's chapel in 1938.¹⁹² The iconography of the painting presages the specific function the chapel was to take on. Hence the Child holds 'in one hand the corn and grapes, which represent the Bread and the Wine in the Blessed Sacrament', instead of the bird that filled the Longworth

¹⁸⁷ *The Earthly Paradise* (1969), p. 5

¹⁸⁸ Malvern, MCA, Gere to Beauchamp, 5 November 1903

¹⁸⁹ Birmingham, LB, DRO93/143/4, St Alban's Newscuttings album, f. 13r

¹⁹⁰ It should be noted that whilst the reredos is overall in very good condition, the framing has lost some of its original relief as the result of over-enthusiastic polishing. [Information provided by Edward Fellows, 21 January 2013]

¹⁹¹ Private correspondence with Dame Rachel Waterhouse, 24 March 2014

¹⁹² Dame Rachel Waterhouse, *St Alban & St Patrick Church Pamphlet* (s.d.)

Infant's palm.¹⁹³ According to St Alban's current churchwarden, Edward Fellows, the reredos participates in the ritual of the liturgy in a larger sense, particularly during the period leading up to Easter. In Ordinary Time four candles are usually placed equally spaced in front of the reredos, on either side of the Tabernacle, whose crucifix aligns with the Child's hand in the painting. Added at a later date the tabernacle unfortunately obstructs a frontal view of the central panel. On Maundy Thursday, the main altar is stripped and electric lighting replaced by lit candles throughout the church. The congregation gather in the side chapel for mass in honour of Good Friday.¹⁹⁴

If the Bunce reredos seems today like a fixture of St Alban's church, it did not enter its premises easily. Work on the reredos started prior to 1913, when its central panel was publicly displayed. It is unclear when it was fully completed, but it appears that Kate Bunce had been campaigning for some time before 1919 for her gift to be accepted. Correspondence surrounding the application for faculty reveals that it would have been initially offered before 1907, when the architect Arthur Stansfield Dixon (1856-1929) was churchwarden.¹⁹⁵ On the 8th of June 1919 a Vestry meeting occurred where Vicar Francis Underhill and churchwardens George E. Hefferd and W.P. Edgerton decided to accept the gift and apply for faculty. The Faculty application bears the same date and was approved on 14th June by H.R. Birmingham. A note at the bottom of the document states 'Let a Faculty issue after due notice [be] given unless good cause be shown to the contrary, [signed] John S. Dugdale, 15 July 1919.'¹⁹⁶

A public notice of the intended faculty application, signed by the registrar Joseph Bennett Clarke, Esq., dated 17th July, was posted on the church door on Sunday 20th July, giving until the 3rd August for any legitimate opposition to be voiced.¹⁹⁷ The same Mr Clarke, on becoming aware of St Alban's incumbents' intention to apply for faculty, had contacted Arthur Dixon on the 7th July to share this information, in the apparent hope that Dixon might intervene in this process.¹⁹⁸ Clarke's address 40 Waterloo Street, was just a few numbers up from 32-33 Waterloo Street, where the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft's Executive Committee would

¹⁹³ Birmingham, LB, DRO93/140, Notes on Kate Bunce's reredos at St Alban's, f2

¹⁹⁴ Information provided by Edward Fellows on 21 January 2013.

¹⁹⁵ Birmingham, LB, BDR/C6/289, Faculty for the erection of a reredos in St Alban's

¹⁹⁶ Dugdale was 'Master of Arts, Vicar General in Spirituals of the right Reverent Father in God, Henry Russell.' [Birmingham, LB, BDR/C6/289, Faculty for the erection of a reredos in St Alban's]

¹⁹⁷ Birmingham, LB, BDR/C6/289, Petition for the faculty for the erection of a reredos in St Alban's

¹⁹⁸ Birmingham, LB, BDR/C6/289, Letter from Arthur S. Dixon to Mr Clarke 10 July 1919

meet.¹⁹⁹ Dixon responded on the 10th of July stating that when he had had his say as churchwarden ‘when this Reredos was first proposed’, he had ‘formed then a decided opinion which [had] not since changed.’ Unable to ‘give a fresh impartial opinion’ he ‘thought the best thing would be to ask the Bishop himself to take the responsibility of deciding’ on the basis of a photograph.²⁰⁰ Based on the wording of the letter, and the fact that the offer of the reredos was renewed more than a decade after it was first proposed, it would seem that Dixon’s opinion of the work was unfavourable. No doubt he would have used his vote as churchwarden and status as a respected member of the parish to originally convince his peers to decline Kate Bunce’s gift.²⁰¹ A day later, Dixon passed on the Bishop’s message that he ‘did not think it possible to refuse the application.’²⁰² Whether these were the Bishop’s exact words, or whether they were tainted by Dixon’s own feelings, the overall reticent response to the reredos in some quarters cannot be mistaken.

Why was Arthur Dixon, a fellow craftsman and Anglo-Catholic, so openly hostile to the insertion of the Bunce reredos in St Alban’s church? One would assume that artists working in the same ethos would on the contrary support each other. Additionally, their shared identification with a minority faith in a city where the general feeling was not entirely friendly towards Anglo-Catholics would suggest affinities.²⁰³ No definite answer is to be found from archival research. A possible explanation may be derived from the politics of late-Victorian religious patronage. Stained glass historian Martin Crampin notes that most church buildings and restorations were privately funded in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Decoration and furnishings were provided as ‘thank-offerings by the living’, or more often as

¹⁹⁹ Birmingham, LB, MS 3516, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft Minutes Book

²⁰⁰ Birmingham, LB, BDR/C6/289, Letter from Arthur S. Dixon to Mr Clarke 10 July 1919

²⁰¹ Birmingham, LB, DRO 93/143/1, St Alban’s newspaper cuttings album, f15r

²⁰² Birmingham, LB, BDR/C6/289, Letter from Arthur S. Dixon to Mr Clarke 11 July 1919

²⁰³ The brothers and priests, James and Tom Pollock, founded the mission of St Alban’s in 1865. In its humble beginnings the ‘wooden tabernacle’ from which they officiated would be assailed with ‘stones and other handy missiles’ by ‘young ruffians’ of this poverty-stricken district, as well as the more intimidating raids by ‘Protestant mobs’. Their dedication paid off when influential Tractarian friends, amongst whom Frederick Lygon the 6th Earl of Beauchamp, enabled the creation of the independent District of St Alban the Martyr in 1871. Thereforth service was held in a second temporary building on Leopold Street. In the early days of the mission wealthy Edgbastonians also provided financial support. The permanent church, which still stands today, was designed by the High Church architect John Loughborough Pearson (1817-1897). The foundation stone was laid in 1880 but the consecration was delayed until 1899. [Birmingham, LB, ‘Birmingham: The City and the See, Looking Back Through Sixty Years’, *The Church Times* (October 7, 1921), p. 17, in Acc.2005.018, box 4, album 34, EP 93, St Alban’s Newscuttings; MS 741/20, The Foundation Stone of the New Church of St Alban the Martyr; ‘A Brief history of St Alban the Martyr’, www.saintalban.co.uk/history.html, consulted 2 April 2014; Private correspondence Dame Rachel Waterhouse, 23 February and 24 March 2014]

memorials to deceased family members. In a religious context, these gifts served a double function, both as an act of piety, but also as ‘a public display of benefaction in buildings used by a large section of the community, often located at its very centre.’²⁰⁴ The act of gifting in this sense is tied to wealth, power and status.

The value and function of commodities for the rising middle-class was at the heart of the American Victorian sociologist and economist Thorstein Veblen’s *Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899). According to Veblen social stratifications reflected social and economic utility. In this system high-status manifested itself in economically unproductive occupations, whilst low-status went with economic productiveness. The middle-class’s desire for upwards social-mobility was reflected in their habits of consumption. This was linked to emulating the ‘taste’ of the upper-class by discriminating ‘with some nicety between the noble and the ignoble in consumable goods.’²⁰⁵ Veblen referred to this process as ‘conspicuous consumption.’ In this framework, the individual’s consumption was not a private matter. It had a direct bearing on his or her public image. By extension, the individual’s offering of an art-commodity to be consumed by the community was a means for the new industrialists to assert their social status. A possible answer thus emerges to the puzzle of Arthur Dixon’s negative reaction to the Bunce reredos.

The Dixon family were important members of St Alban’s congregation, and, following this logic, would have wished to maintain sole claim to conspicuous benefaction within their parish. Kate Bunce’s proposed reredos could therefore have been perceived as an act of rivalry against Arthur Dixon’s own artistic offerings to the church. Dixon had designed six great brass candlesticks for the church, which were made by the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft in 1902. These were followed in 1904 by a censer, incense boat and spoon, again designed by Dixon and executed by the Guild. A new pulpit of his was also installed in 1907. Arthur Dixon is additionally to be credited for a beaten copper and silver processional cross made in the same period.²⁰⁶ In line with this interpretation, the Bunce reredos’ function as a family memorial was

²⁰⁴ Martin Crampin, *Stained Glass from Welsh Churches* (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 2014), p. 142

²⁰⁵ Thorstein Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (London: Unwin Books, 1970), p. 32

²⁰⁶ Birmingham, LB, Acc.2005.018, Box 4, EP 93, Prescutings album, ‘St Alban’s Patronal Festival’, p. 77

therefore all the more disagreeable considering that the Bunces did not, unlike the Dixons, have any direct relationship with St Alban's church.

From an art historical perspective, on the other hand, the presence of the Bunce reredos in St Alban's is symbolic of Kate Bunce's integral participation in Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement. In addition to the Dixon metalwork executed by the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft, the church was further decorated with Arts and Crafts windows by Henry Payne and Sidney Meteyard.²⁰⁷ Also, the Lady Chapel in the north transept is separated from the aisle by wrought iron screens made by the Bromsgrove Guild and saved from St Patrick's church. Furthermore, amongst the pages of one of the former parish archive keeper's albums is pasted a black and white engraved illustration of St Alban's church by Edmund New (Figure 2.29).²⁰⁸ Therefore the church building's fabric and decoration, and, as noted in relation to the Bunce reredos, the community's ritual, continue to engage with products of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts movement.

St Alban's church was part of what was locally known as the 'Biretta belt', which included the other east Birmingham Anglo-Catholic parishes of Holy Trinity in Bordesley, St Saviour's in Saltley, St Agatha's in Sparkbrook, and St Aidan's, St Oswald's, St Gregory's and St Benedict's in Small Heath.²⁰⁹ Many of these were touched by the Arts and Crafts movement either in terms of the architecture of the edifices or their content. Enquiries were made by the vicar of St Saviour in view of obtaining the funds to order a window from the London stained glass maker Mary Lowndes (Figure 2.30).²¹⁰ St Agatha's church was designed by William Henry Bidlake in 1899 in the 'Perpendicular tradition, as refined by Bodley,' with the detailing

²⁰⁷ Henry Payne was commissioned in 1904 to produce a two-light 'Te Deum' window in the Apse. This was a gift from Howard Taylor Radcliff, a lifetime supporter of St Alban's, to commemorate the Pollock brothers whose portraits appear in the windows. Two windows on either side with for subjects 'Venite' and 'Benedicite' were added in 1926, the work of Sidney Meteyard, gifted by James Frederick Deeming. [Rachel Waterhouse, *St Alban & St Patrick Church Pamphlet*; LB, BDR/C&/1/539, Design for a Stained Glass Window by Sidney H. Meteyard]

²⁰⁸ Birmingham, LB, DRO 93/143/2, St Alban's Newscuttings Album f17r. The Bromsgrove Guild was established in the village of Bromsgrove in 1898 under the impetus of the local art school's headmaster Walter Gilbert, a former student of the Birmingham School of Art. An initial partnership was drawn up with 'a local landowner called William Whitehouse and the firm of Birmingham architects, Crouch and Butler'. Commissions, particularly in its early years, were carried out by members in their own studios and workshops in Bromsgrove, Birmingham, London or elsewhere. The Guild remained active for seventy years. [Quintin Watt (ed.), *The Bromsgrove Guild: an Illustrated History* (Warwick: Bromsgrove Guild, 1999), pp. 11-12]

²⁰⁹ 'St Aidans 1861-1909', Church History, <http://www.allsaintsonline.co.uk/history/history1.php>, consulted 11 December 2015

²¹⁰ Birmingham, LB, BDR/C6/1/75 St Saviour, Saltley, Coloured Sketch on Tracing Paper of Stained Window Design by Mary Lowndes

of its towers reminiscent of John D. Sedding's (1838-1891) Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, London.²¹¹ St Aidan's clergy house was designed in 1903 by Arthur S. Dixon for the wood-carver and silver designer Claude Napier-Clavering (1869-1938), who sat on the committee of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft.²¹² Nearby in St Oswald's church a reredos by Sidney Meteyard (Figure 2.31) was installed in 1916, as well as a banner of his design, his brother Oswald being an Anglo-Catholic curate there.²¹³

Another example of the grouping of Birmingham Arts and Crafts works is to be found in SS Mary and Ambrose in Edgbaston. Of Anglo-Catholic denomination in its beginnings, it now serves a diversified congregation. Fanny Gertrude Newill, one of Mary Newill's sisters, was married to Reverend Arthur G. Lloyd in 1893 who acted as vicar of SS Mary and Ambrose from its dedication in 1905 until 1915.²¹⁴ Following Fanny Newill's death in 1897, Mary Newill produced a memorial altar-cloth which was placed in SS Mary and Ambrose's church.²¹⁵ A joint application was made in 1906 for a three-light memorial window by Mary Newill (Figure 2.32) and two panels painted in oil by Kate Bunce.²¹⁶ The introduction of Kate Bunce's work into the church was probably the result of her close friendship with Newill. A further two panels by Bunce would be added afterwards, completing the cycle of the Passion. Next to Newill's window in the Lady Chapel was later installed another memorial made in the 1920s by a student of the Birmingham School of Art, Richard Stubbington (1885-1966). Stubbington had trained under Henry Payne and succeeded him as instructor in stained glass in 1909, perpetuating an Arts and Crafts approach to stained glass. The most sumptuous and extensive decorative scheme by Birmingham Arts and Crafts artists, in this case conceived as a whole, is the aforementioned Madresfield Court chapel. Commissioned by Lady Beauchamp in honour of her husband, William Lygon, 7th Earl of Beauchamp, it was likewise the result of an Anglo-Catholic desire

²¹¹ Trevor Mitchell, 'W.H. Bidlake', in *Birmingham's Victorian and Edwardian Architects*, ed. Phillada Ballard (Wetherby: Oblong for the Birmingham and West Midlands Group of the Victorian Society, 2009), p. 386

²¹² Andy Foster, 'A.S. Dixon', in Ballard (2009), p. 593

²¹³ Breeze (1984), p. 79

²¹⁴ Birmingham, LB, EP65/17/3, *Katherine Lloyd by her Friends* (London: Cox & Wyman Ltd, 1973), p. 14

²¹⁵ Birmingham, LB, EP 65/4/2/2, 'Extract from Edgbastonia. February, 1900. Edgbastonia Past and Present. The Rev. A.G. Lloyd, M.A.'

²¹⁶ George Breeze notes that 'the Faculty at the church dated 22 March 1906 appears to indicate that two of the panels had been completed prior to the faculty application, and two subsequently.' [Breeze (1984), footnote 78, p. 143]

for a beautified place of prayer. As previously footnoted, Lord Beauchamp's father, Frederick Lygon, 6th Earl of Beauchamp, had also championed the Anglo-Catholic community in Birmingham as a patron of St Alban's church.

These instances bring forward an important Anglo-Catholic source of patronage of the Birmingham Arts and Crafts movement. Although acknowledged in George Breeze's essay on decorative painting, the role of Anglo-Catholicism has not been part of the general narrative of the genesis of the Arts and Crafts movement in Birmingham. The prevailing understanding of the emergence and flourishing of this movement has underlined the non-conformist religious backdrop behind the civic gospel which was key to the political encouragement and financial support of the city's arts.²¹⁷ This narrative seems to have adopted Asa Briggs's identification of 'three special features of mid-nineteenth-century Birmingham which exercised an important influence on its subsequent history.'²¹⁸ The first being 'the strength of nonconformity, the second, the dominance of industry and the wide range of local trades and occupations, and third the close relations, both economic and social, between masters and men' which form the backdrop to Birmingham's politics and 'revolution in municipal government.'²¹⁹ This prism, however, cannot be applied to the decoration of religious edifices considering the iconoclastic stance of the non-conformists. An important religious patronage came instead from Anglo-Catholic quarters, often as has been shown, the result of direct connections between Arts and Crafts artists and the High Church.

While Kate Bunce's reredos, as the tempera work of her contemporaries, relied on an ancient technique, and as discussed borrowed from early Christian iconography, the actual quality of her drawing was very much of its time. In fact this participated in making this type of work accessible to a modern audience. A reviewer of the tempera paintings displayed at Leighton House in 1901 commented that 'the rich, soft colouring of their early Italian models is enhanced by the greater accuracy of modern drawing.'²²⁰ The crafts(wo)men's re-appropriation

²¹⁷ Alan Crawford, 'The Birmingham Setting', in Crawford (1984), pp. 34-36

²¹⁸ Briggs (1952), p. 1

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Birmingham, LB, JSP, MS 588/9, Newscutting 'A Recovered Art', unknown journal (18 April 1901), p. 1

of ancient crafts and forgotten techniques will continue to be explored in the following chapter in relation to stained glass.

Chapter 3 Glass Dynasties: The Politics of Stained Glass Making

Birmingham Arts and Crafts stained glass designers benefitted from the proximity of a rich industry in the manufacturing of stained glass, with Chances Brothers nearby in Oldbury. Materials for making windows were thereby easy to procure for the designers. In terms of actual design, the city of Birmingham had been a centre for the production of stained glass windows from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Francis Eginton (1737-1805) is recorded as having set up a business in glass painting in 1784. By the mid-nineteenth century demand for stained glass was high in the wake of the Gothic revival, spurring an increase in the number of artists involved in this craft.¹ It was at this time that John Hardman senior (1766-1844) was persuaded by A.W.N. Pugin to expand his metalwork business by opening a stained glass workshop. This became one of the most important firms in stained glass design in Britain, trading in Birmingham under the name of Hardman & Co.² At his death, Pugin would be succeeded as chief designer by Hardman's nephew, John Hardman Powell (1832-95).³

The desire to recreate the effect of medieval windows in the nineteenth century spurred archaeological inquiries into the materials from which they were made. The period saw a reaction in general against the approach to stained glass design as a form of oil-painting which had arisen from the sixteenth century onwards, disregarding the medium's inherent properties. In 1849 the barrister and stained glass connoisseur Charles Winston (1814-1864) had samples of medieval glass analysed and enlisted Edward Green of James Powell & Sons, Whitefriars Glass Works to reproduce an equivalent product based on the results.⁴ The aim was to make a similar range of colours and textures available again to artists. Powell's glass went under the name of 'Antique.' Several similarly-minded manufacturers developed types of mouth-blown glass in the late nineteenth century based on historical examples which would be favoured by Arts and Crafts makers. E.S. Prior (1852-1932) developed his 'Early English' Prior glass in 1889, produced by the firm of Clayton & Bell, which imitated the thick irregularity and sheen of medieval glass.⁵ When Lowndes & Drury began their collaboration, they sought to create an

¹ Martin Harrison, *Victorian Stained Glass* (London and Melbourne: Barrie & Jenkins, 1980), p. 12

² Martin Harrison, 'Stained Glass: *Windows on Another World*', in Crawford (1984), p. 119

³ Harrison (1980), p. 26

⁴ Harrison (1980), p. 23

⁵ Lynne Walker, 'E.S. Prior 1852-1932', Ph.D. thesis (Birkbeck College, London University 1978), p. 228

equivalent and approached James Hetley & Co. The resulting product became known as ‘Norman slab.’ W.E. Chance Bros, who were sole agents for Hetley & Co, made their own version as well in Birmingham.⁶

A crucial difference separated the mid-century Gothicists and followers of the Arts and Crafts movement in their appreciation of medieval glass. Designers working in the tradition of the mid-century were focused on its *formal* qualities. In contrast, Arts and Crafts makers sought ‘an authentic modern approach to stained glass, based on its traditions without slavishly imitating its historical forms.’⁷ Their ambition relied on having access to raw materials of the same quality as they admired in old windows, and particularly in achieving the same mastery of the craft which they identified in the medieval glaziers. In other aspects, however, they were very much the product of their time. The reliance on photographic portraits for the pose, and strikingly the faces of their glass figures, is a clear example of this.

One of the first Birmingham stained glass makers in the Arts and Crafts tradition was in fact a female member of the Birmingham School. Better known for her work in embroidery, Mary Newill appears to have taught herself how to execute stained glass designs. A pioneer in this sense, she gained commissions for windows at the turn of the century under the aegis of the Bromsgrove Guild (Figure 3.1). Her position is unusual in terms of gender as well. As first noted by Peter Cormack, and further emphasized by Nicola Gordon Bowe, ‘hardly any women had been employed during the nineteenth century revival of stained glass, in its late 1830s pioneering antiquarian phase, in the developing workshops of the 1860s, or in the increasingly industrialized firms of the 1870s and 1880s.’⁸ The professional nature of Newill’s activities in this field is verified by her lease of a studio at 21 Livery Street next door to Henry Payne’s.⁹

⁶ Peter Cormack, *Arts and Crafts Stained Glass* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre, 2015), p. 96

⁷ Peter Cormack, ‘Recreating a Tradition: Christopher Whall (1849-1924) and the Arts & Crafts Renaissance of English Stained Glass,’ in *Art and the National Dream: The Search for Vernacular Expression in Turn-of-the-Century Design*, ed. Nicola Gordon Bowe (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993), p. 16

⁸ Nicolas Gordon Bowe, ‘Wilhelmina Geddes (1887-1955), Stained Glass Designer’, in *Women Designing: Redefining Design in Britain Between the Wars*, eds Jill Seddon and Suzette Wordon, (Brighton: University of Brighton, c1994), p. 64; see *Women Stained Glass Artists of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (exhibition catalogue, William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, 7 December 1985 – 2 March 1986), ed. Peter Cormack (London: Borough of Waltham Forest Libraries & Arts Department, 1985)

⁹ Harrison (1984), p. 122

Henry Payne opened a class in stained glass at the BMSA in 1902. Under Payne's direction, a younger generation of women and men would acquire the practical skills to make stained glass of their own design. The genealogy of the Birmingham School Arts and Crafts stained glass leads however outside of the West Midlands, to the artist Christopher Whall (1849-1924) and Lowndes & Drury's Glass House in London. Payne received formal training from Whall at the London Central School of Arts and Crafts (LCSAC), as well as gaining practical experience in Mary Lowndes and Alfred John Drury's (1868-1940) premises.¹⁰ The multiple connections and exchanges between the Birmingham School and these London institutions will be drawn out in this chapter with the discussion of two sets of windows by two students of Henry Payne's, Florence Camm and Margaret Agnes Rope.

Florence Camm was raised in Smethwick where her father, Thomas William Camm, had a stained glass business. T. W. Camm was a former employee of Chance Brothers who went on to set up an independent workshop with his brothers, and from c.1899 on his own.¹¹ The steady demand for stained glass ensured financial rewards which could not be relied upon with other crafts. Whether continuing the family business as in Florence Camm's case, or providing the main income for a religious community as Margaret Rope would end up doing, both artists in focus in this chapter achieved financial self-sufficiency through their craft. As will be explored, this created a tension between the desire to raise the artistic status of the craft by distancing oneself from the profit-driven stained glass trade, and the reality of relying on one's artistic production to earn a living.

This chapter will delve into these dynamics of labour through the analysis of the series of windows for the Halesowen Grammar School (Figure 3.2-Figure 3.7) made by Florence

¹⁰ Prior to Payne's contact with Lowndes & Drury, Charles M. Gere had in fact been one of the first artists to collaborate with the firm. Peter Cormack notes how 'Gere's only known stained glass, three two-light windows for St Paul's Church, Hampstead, Birmingham, was painted by the artist himself and made in the Park Walk workshop in 1897.' [Cormack (2015), p. 97]

¹¹ Thomas William Camm worked for Chances' glassworks from 1849, aged 10, at first 'wheeling fuel to the furnaces.' He sketched during his spare time under the encouragement of the head of the ornamental department Dr Sebastian Evans. He obtained formal artistic training by attending drawing classes with the Society of Artists in Birmingham as well as following a literary class at the Birmingham and Midland Institute. By the age of twenty-one he had become 'one of the principal artists at Chances glassworks.' Following the closure in 1865 of the ornamental department at Chances', Thomas Camm carried on his work in Smethwick with his brothers John and Alfred which led to their setting up in 1866 what became the successful stained glass business of Camm Bros. As of 1889 Thomas W. Camm decided to establish his own independent firm, T.W. Camm Studio, in Smethwick, his siblings setting up across the street as Camm & Co. [Elaine Williams, 'Florence Camm: Negotiating Success', MA dissertation (University of Birmingham, 2009), pp. 10-11]

Camm between 1928 and 1931, and the windows for the Catholic Church of the Holy Name of Jesus in Birkenhead (Figure 3.8-Figure 3.11) by Margaret A. Rope, carried out between c. 1918 and 1931. Both are mature works, the result of over twenty years of professional experience for either artist. Whilst Camm's career presents an attempt to introduce changes to the male-dominated trade from within, Margaret Rope developed an alternative woman-centered trajectory. From shared London studios to the gatherings of the Women's Guild of Arts, and later a Carmelite convent, Rope preferred to work with other women in bringing her vision to life. These two case studies will present the particularities and commonalities which both these Arts and Crafts approaches to stained glass materialised. From originality to compromise, the technical, material and formal specificities of each work will help determine what constituted a Birmingham-trained contribution to the revival of stained glass, in both secular and religious contexts.

Before embarking on a close-reading of artworks, it is beneficial to establish the nature of the training Florence Camm and Margaret Rope received at the BMSA. This would provide the foundations for the artistic spirit and methods which animated both women's work throughout their long-spanning careers. Florence Camm's name first appears in the School's publications in 1892.¹² Aged eighteen, it is reported that her work was accepted by the department of science and art 'for the art class teacher's and third grade certificates.'¹³ This suggests that she had received prior artistic instruction through other channels in order for her work to meet third grade (*i.e.* the highest) standards. The cost of her studies was covered by free studentships from 1895 to 1899, and then 1903 to 1904, in addition to receiving a maintenance allowance of twenty pounds per year for some of this period.¹⁴ The student records provide

¹² Her elder brother Walter Camm also attended the school. He is listed in the student records as attending evening classes in the years 1898-9, 1899-1900, 1901-2, and 1904-5, as well as following a Special Architectural Course in 1898-99. [Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, *Student Records*, SA/AD/14/1, Session 1898-99, p. 51; Session 1899-1900, p. 100; Session 1901-02, p. 203; Session 1904-05, p. 377]

¹³ *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1892* (Birmingham: Hudson and Son, 1892), p. 5

¹⁴ *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1895* (Birmingham: Hudson and Son, 1895), pp. 5, 8; *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1899* (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1899), p. 5

insight into Camm's attendance and which course she followed.¹⁵ Interestingly she chose to enrol on the special architectural course in 1897, delivered weekday evenings with the requirement to attend an additional two hours on a chosen afternoon.¹⁶ 'Architectural fitness' was a key concern in the Arts and Crafts' conception of stained glass design, as articulated by Christopher Whall.¹⁷ For Whall the 'revived interest in building' and stained glass were interrelated, in line with a 'widespread awakening to principles of simplicity, sincerity, and common sense in the arts of building generally.'¹⁸ He associated this with the 'interest in materials for their own sake, and a revived practice of personally working in them and experimenting with them.'¹⁹ In addition to being passed on through Payne, Whall's ideas would have reached students such as Florence Camm thanks to the publication of his practical handbook on stained glass. First issued in 1905, this remained a much-reprinted reference for practitioners throughout the twentieth century.²⁰

Camm's first national prize was not for glass however, but for designs for jewellery.²¹ Studying at the School of Art gave her the opportunity to work in a variety of media.²² Her main interest prior to 1902 appears to have been in metalwork, particularly in the form of caskets.²³

¹⁵ Florence Camm attended full-time from 1898 to 1903, after which she seems to have taken a year out to resume training in the 1904-5 session. She then enrolled again for the weekday evening and three afternoons of classes in 1906-7 and finally only evenings in the 1908-9 session. Despite her apparent absence from the student records after 1909, John Swift dates 1912 as her final year at the School. This amounts to twenty years of intermittent attendance at the BMSA. [Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, *Student Records*, SA/AD/14/1, Session 1898-99, p. 51; Session 1899-1900, p. 100; Session 1901-2, p. 203; Session 1902-3, p. 258; Session 1904-5, p. 377; Session 1905-6, p. 441; *Student Records*, SA/AD/14/2, Session 1906-7, p. 7; Session 1908-9, p. 146; *The Birmingham School of Art Archives 1880-1900: An Exhibition to Celebrate the Centenary of the City of Birmingham* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Central Library Exhibition Hall, 25 September – 14 October 1989) ed. John Swift (Birmingham: Birmingham Polytechnic Institute of Art and Design, 1989), p. 9]

¹⁶ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/14/1, *Student Records*, Session 1897-1898, p. 7

¹⁷ Christopher Whall's far-reaching influence on the field of stained glass within the Arts and Crafts movement has been the object of much of Peter Cormack's publications. See *Christopher Whall 1849-1924: Arts & Crafts Stained Glass Worker* (exhibition catalogue, Walthamstow, William Morris Gallery, 17 November 1979 – 3 February 1980), ed. Peter Cormack (London: Libraries and Arts Department, London Borough of Waltham Forest, 1979); Cormack (1993), pp. 15-42; Cormack (2015)

¹⁸ Christopher Whall, *Stained Glass Work* (London: G.P. Putman & Sons, 1920), pp. 240-1

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Christopher Whall, *Stained Glass Work* (London: John Hogg, 1905)

²¹ *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards ... 1896* (1896), p. 4

²² She won two National Book Prizes for water colours in the South Kensington annual art competition in 1897, as well as later trying her hand at designing for embroidery. [*City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1897* (Birmingham: Buckler Bros, 1897), p. 4; *Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1900* (Birmingham: Guild Press, 1900), no 584, p. 23]

²³ She displayed a design for a casket in copper, enriched with champlevé enamel in the 1896 Student Exhibition as well as a modelled design for casket, 'to be worked in silver and enamel: figures, repoussé to be screwed on; background chased and enamelled' in 1898. The following year she obtained a prize in the national art competition for a modelled design of a casket, and in 1900 obtained a bronze medal for

Upon submitting designs for a stained glass window in 1902, her ability was immediately recognised with the award of a silver medal and book prize.²⁴ The display of a finished panel depicting 'St Ursula and Cyriacus' in the 1903 Student Exhibition marks the transition from design to execution, as she continued to win prizes.²⁵ Unfortunately none of her early student glass panels can be traced, although some of the designs remain in the collections of the BIAD and the BMAG (Figure 3.12).

Eight years Florence Camm's junior, Margaret Agnes Rope started training at the School of Art at the age of seventeen, enrolling half-way through the 1899-1900 Session for the winter term. Both women sat in some of the same classes and took similar exams.²⁶ Rope paid the highest fees at ninety shillings for one term in Class I, which means that she was studying full-time.²⁷ Thanks to the quality of her work she was awarded a full scholarship for the following session, which was renewed throughout her studies until 1909, outstanding the occasional additional charge of twenty or forty shillings to cover the cost of materials used, and

the design of bronze caskets, described in the student exhibition catalogue as 'silver, chased, decorated with enamel and jewels' and in 'steel, slightly chased.' She further won a book prize for designs for enamelled panels in 1901 and displayed a design in colour for a plaque in Limoges enamel in 1902 [*Birmingham Municipal School of Art: Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1896* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones & Son, 1896), no 803, p. 29; *Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1898* (Birmingham: Birmingham Guild of Handicraft, 1898), no 278, p. 13; *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards ... 1899* (1899), p. 4; *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1900* (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1900), p. 3; *Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1900* (Birmingham: Guild Press, 1900), no 431, p. 19, no 672, p. 29; *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1901* (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1901), p. 4; *Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1902* (Birmingham: Percival Jones Ltd, 1902), no 331, p. 18]

²⁴ *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths and Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1902* (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1902), pp. 3, 4. One would have been 'The Quest of the Hound' and the other a coat of arms from 'The Stall Plates of the Knights of the Order of the Garter – 1348-1485'. [*Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue ... 1902* (1902), no 588, p. 29, no 595, p. 30]

²⁵ *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths and Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1903* (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1903), p. 3. The cartoon and detailed colour scheme for this panel are in the BIAD archives, SA/AT/20/1/19. In 1903 she was awarded a gold medal for more designs for stained glass windows. These would have depicted 'St Ursula', 'The Prodigal Son', 'St Nicholas' and 'The Quest of the Hound.' In 1906, a finished stained glass panel secured her yet another national book prize. [*Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1903* (Birmingham: Percival Jones Ltd, 1903), nos 1048-9, 1054, 1065, 1068, 1120, pp. 46-47, 50; *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths and Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1906* (Birmingham: Percival Jones Ltd, 1906), p. 4]

²⁶ *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards* (1901), p. 9; *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards ... 1902* (1902), pp. 7, 9

²⁷ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/14/1, *Student Records*, Session 1899-1900, p. 130

the 1906-7 Session when she paid six pounds per term.²⁸ During her studies she showed an interest in wood-engraving, enamelling and stained glass. Once Henry Payne's advanced class in stained glass opened in 1902, Rope found the craft to which she would dedicate her life. This was reflected in her submissions to the South Kensington annual National Art Competitions, as she won a silver medal for 'designs for stained glass with specimens in material' in 1905, followed by two more silver medals for stained glass designs in 1907 and 1908.²⁹

The BMSA's class in stained glass was a response to W.R. Lethaby's examiner's report following a visit to the school in 1900. Lethaby was then director of the LCSAC where the craft of stained glass was taught by Christopher Whall from 1896.³⁰ The exchange between the institutions went both ways, as prior to the establishment of the LCSAC the London Education Board had sought advice from Edward R. Taylor, recognising Birmingham as 'the best example in England of what can be done in the way of art teaching under proper conditions.'³¹ Lethaby, in turn, saw the potential for a practical stained glass workshop to be held in Birmingham in view of the prominence of stained glass design in the school's activities.³² The plan was for

²⁸ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/14/1, *Student Records*, Session 1900-1901, p. 182; Session 1901-1902, p. 235; Session 1902-03, p. 291; Session 1903-4, p. 351; Session 1904-5, p. 415; SA/AD/14/2, Session 1906-7, p. 36; Session 1907-8, p. 101; Session 1908-9, p. 169

²⁹ *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths and Branch Schools*, by the Government Board of Education, 1905 (Birmingham: Percival Jones Ltd, 1905), p. 3; *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths, and Branch Schools*, by the Government Board of Education, 1907 (Birmingham: Hudson and Son, 1907), p. 3; *Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of awards made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths, and Branch Schools*, by the Government Board of Education, 1908 (Birmingham, 1908), p. 3

³⁰ Lethaby became the first principal of the London Central School of Arts and Crafts in 1893 until resigning in 1911. [A.R.N. Roberts, *William Richard Lethaby 1857-1931* (London: County Council Central School of Arts & Crafts, 1957), p. 25; A. Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary* (London: Duckworth, 1985), p. 235]

³¹ Report of the Technical Education Board to the London County Council, 1896, quoted in Hartnell (1992), p. 193

³² Birmingham and London were not the only cities with Design Schools offering practical training in stained glass making. The Glasgow School of Art offered provided tuition in making stained glass compositions from 1893, although in a rather different manner with a strong use of opalescent glass. Norman Macdougall from the Cottier and Guthrie Studios was in charge for a year before being jointly succeeded by Harry Roe and William Stewart. The Dublin Art School also preceded Birmingham in opening a class in stained glass in 1901 under the tuition of A.E. Child, who had worked for Christopher Whall in London. In Wales, on the other hand, William Grant Murray who was appointed headmaster of the Municipal School of Art and Crafts in Swansea in 1909 'tried repeatedly to establish a course to teach stained glass design and manufacture, complaining that "it was an insult to the nation that no stained glass was made in Wales".' This fell on deaf ears as it was only in 1935 that Howard Martin 'was invited to teach a part-time evening class at the School.' [Michael Donnelly, *Glasgow Stained Glass: A Preliminary Study* (Glasgow: Glasgow Museums and Art Galleries, 1981), p. 31; Nicola Gordon Bowe, 'Dublin', in Nicola Gordon Bowe and Elizabeth Cumming (eds), *The Arts and Crafts Movements in Dublin & Edinburgh 1885-1925* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), p. 82; Crampin (2014), p. 11; quotes from

‘every part of the trade of designing, staining and setting up in lead of windows [to] be taught and carried out.’³³ Since no ‘teacher, familiar with all these processes and also acquainted with and in sympathy with the best traditions at present prevailing in the country’ could be found, the School’s Management Sub-Committee decided to train one of their existing staff.³⁴ The sub-committee elected Henry Payne to attend Christopher Whall’s class in stained glass at the LCSAC for three months starting in April 1901, as well as a workshop under his guidance.³⁵ The usual length for apprenticeship with Whall in the shop at Lowndes & Drury’s premises in Fulham was twelve months, at a fee of one hundred pounds. He agreed to attempt in Payne’s case an accelerated course of three months at a cost of fifty pounds.³⁶ Whall made his reservations clear in a letter to Payne dated 17 April 1901, following a delay in taking him on due to falling ill:

I have no desire more at heart than that of promoting and advancing the Art of Stained Glass – I live for it. But I notice a great danger growing up from the establishment of easy means of obtaining a half-hearted training in Technical Schools – equipped with which the students would propose to start practising or teaching the art. I cannot countenance any such thing; and it is only because I gather from others and from my talk with yourself, that the danger would not exist in your case, that I can contemplate what you propose.

After twenty years of severe training and discipline I begin to feel justified in acting as a teacher myself ... three months ... is a very short time for what you contemplate and must be employed most strenuously in the right direction to make a man, even so capable as I understand you are, fit to teach the Art.

... I have seen of late years some terribly ignorant and slipshod work done in Stained Glass, from the thing being loosely taken up even by men well known

Maurice Broady, ‘A Vision Fulfilled: The Start of the Welsh Stained Glass Tradition’, *The Journal of Stained Glass* 9:2 (1991-3), p. 199]

³³ Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AD/2/6, BMSA, Management Sub-Committee Minutes, vol. VI, 10th July 1900, Minute 1897, p. 9

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AD/2/6, BMSA, Management Sub-Committee Minutes, vol. VI, 12th February 1901, Minute 2006, p. 96

³⁶ Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AD/2/6, BMSA, Management Sub-Committee Minutes, vol. VI, 1st April 1901, Minute 2045, pp. 135-7

in the Arts and it would be no kindness to you or the good town of Birmingham to run any risk of contributing to it.³⁷

Whall's criticism embodies the Arts and Crafts position in terms of taking up a new craft. Arts and Crafts practitioners aimed to bring together the best of both worlds (*i.e.* the trade apprenticeship and the Art School classroom) to design in harmony with the material. This entailed, on the one hand, a mastery of drawing allied with a creative vision freed from the orthodoxies of the trade. On the other hand, sufficient technical knowledge acquired through practical experience of all stages of production was desired. It was inconceivable for the time required for a full workshop apprenticeship to be added on to the standard three to four years of foundational training in an art school. Whall had received formal training in drawing and painting, similarly to Payne and the students he planned to train. They therefore had technical and conceptual skills in approaching design for stained glass which a tradesman would not.

As described by Lawrence Lee, 'those achieving the position of designers in this [*i.e.* trade] tradition have tended to become bound by equally rigid ideas about design, design for them being an extension of many years of technical training.'³⁸ W.R Lethaby articulated a posture shared by many followers of the Arts and Crafts movement, contending that 'too many great businesses are allowed to carry on on old reputations, to change their character, cheapen, and decline, without seemingly any effort being made to re-vitalise their output by art.'³⁹ It is not therefore a simple question of hate of the 'machine', but rather a deeper critique of the lack of creativity and beauty, as they saw it, fostered by a profit-driven system of production. Reaching the right balance in transmitting elements from both sets of skills in a limited time-frame was the challenge teachers such as Henry Payne had to face.

This implied changes not only to the typical Art School curriculum but additionally the adaptation of facilities, transforming the conventional classroom setting into a practical workshop space. Payne's teaching at the BMSA would therefore have been experimental, particularly in the first years when Camm and Rope joined his class. In fact this condition was to be encouraged, according to the tempera painter John D. Batten, who declared that 'the whole

³⁷ Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AD/2/6, BMSA, Management Sub-Committee Minutes, vol. VI, 23rd April 1901, Minute 2077, pp. 159-160

³⁸ Lawrence Lee, *Stained Glass* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 75

³⁹ Lethaby (1901), p. 18

basis of a modern school must necessarily be experimental. Master and students would be fellow experimenters ...The master would no doubt direct the experiments and see to it that a faithful record of failure and success was kept.’⁴⁰

Once Payne’s own training was completed in late July, the school facilities needed to be made fit. The Cartoon Room was to be equipped for the purposes of the class for stained glass and materials purchased. The initial plan had been to adapt the furnace for baking terra-cotta in the Art Laboratory no.2 in order to fire the painted glass. Payne recommended instead that a new furnace be purchased to be used in the classroom itself, in line with what he had experienced in Lowndes & Drury’s workshop.⁴¹ Other equipment included tables for setting out and leading windows as well as tools such as blow-pipes. It was the intention ‘to collect in the room for Stained Glass a certain number of examples of stained glass as well as reproductions of cartoons, photographs of windows.’⁴² Students were expected to cover the cost of their materials at an average estimated rate of ten shillings a year.⁴³

The physicality of the craft is reflected in the tools and premises required. As finely described by Sarah Purser (1848-1943), founder of Dublin’s An Túr Gloine (Tower of Glass), ‘You cannot do it [stained glass] in a romantic studio with silk cushions, but must work in a grubby workshop, and must have kilns, and a large stock of glass and lead etc., and someone to cut and glaze for you. All this is troublesome and expensive, and it is obvious no young artist uncertain of his orders could embark on it.’⁴⁴ The practical class in stained glass at the Birmingham School was therefore an invaluable opportunity for students to try their hand at this craft without the level of commitment of the trade apprenticeship. This also held implications in terms of social class, as the trade was the domain of the working class, which women from a middle-class background such as Margaret Rope could not have entered without compromising their social respectability.

⁴⁰ J.D. Batten, ‘The Practice of Tempera Painting’, *The Studio* 84:357 (December 1922), p. 309

⁴¹ Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AD/2/6, BMSA, Management Sub-Committee Minutes, vol. VI, 9th July 1901, Minute 2127, p. 202

⁴² Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AD/2/6, BMSA, Management Sub-Committee Minutes, vol. VI, 10th July 1900, Minute 1897, p. 10

⁴³ Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AD/2/6, BMSA, Management Sub-Committee Minutes, vol. VI, 10th July 1900, Minute 1897, p. 11

⁴⁴ From Sarah Purser’s speech at An Túr’s twenty-fifth anniversary celebration, reproduced in Elisabeth Coxhead, *Daughters of Erin* (London, 1962), pp. 142-3, quoted in Nicola Gordon Bowe, ‘Wilhelmina Geddes 1887-1955. Her Life and Work – A Reappraisal’, *Journal of Stained Glass* 18:3 (1988), p. 280

Although the original plan was for Payne's class to be opened in September 1901, it was not advertised in the school programme until 1902-3, a fact which has been overlooked in current literature.⁴⁵ Payne maintained this class therefore from 1902 to 1909, at which date it was taken over by his former pupil Richard Stubbington. Class was held on Fridays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 2-30 to 4-30 p.m., and every evening of the week from 7:15 to 9:15 p.m..⁴⁶ It was advertised as such:

In the practice of stained glass it often happens that one man does cartoons, another traces them on the glass, a third leads the pieces together.

In the stained glass class, Students are encouraged to learn the whole of their craft. If a Student wishes to paint on glass, he is here taught to cut the glass for painting on, and to lead it up when it is painted; he thus learns how cutting and leading influence the design and painting of a window (as they do most vitally).

The Students are also taught, side by side with their craft practice, the elements of design, and are encouraged to make patterns for "quarries" and for diapers and accessories of dress and ornament in figure subject windows.

Those who shew special aptitude are encouraged to practice original composition, using the life class of the School for studies, the model being posed specially for them.

The study of nature as the basis of the higher forms or ornament is insisted on.⁴⁷

A particular strength associated with the Birmingham School was the quality of the figure drawing in the work of Henry Payne and his students. This had been brought to the attention of Birmingham artists in 1890 with a paper on the topic of 'The Figure in Design' given by the

⁴⁵ Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AT/8/2, Birmingham School of Art yearly programmes, Volume 2, *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Programme for the Session 1902-3*, p. 13; Peter Cormack mistakenly writes that the class was opened during the session of 1901-2. [Cormack (2015), p. 113]

⁴⁶ Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AT/8/2, Birmingham School of Art yearly programmes, Volume 2, *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Programme for the Session 1902-3*, p. 13

⁴⁷ Birmingham, BIAD, SA/AT/8/2, Birmingham School of Art yearly programmes, Volume 2, *City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Programme for the Session 1902-3*, p. 19

stained glass designer Henry Holiday (1839-1927) during the Birmingham Art Congress.⁴⁸

Holiday developed the idea in his 1896 book *Stained Glass as an Art*. A reviewer of the book in the *Builder* magazine thus argued that 'the predominance of figure study for modern glass promises us a double emancipation. It overthrows the medieval precedent, and at the same time it overthrows the system of production of stained glass as a mere trade.'⁴⁹ The mastery of modelling and figure drawing was central to the qualities which stained glass makers with a formal artistic training put forward in order to distinguish themselves from the formulaic output of workers of the trade. As noted by a contemporary art critic, 'a window to be a work of art must be the work of an artist.'⁵⁰

The BIAD archives contain numerous sketches and drawings by Florence Camm from the life class, in line with Christopher Whall's advocacy of 'drawing from the model.'⁵¹ Furthermore, there is extensive evidence of the use of life models as the basis for the figures in the windows produced by T.W. Camm. A number of photographs have survived, notably of Walter Camm posing in which we can see Florence adjusting his posture (Figure 3.13). Upon comparison with the completed stained glass window (Figure 3.14) it emerges that the use of a life model, as recorded in photograph, served as a means to ensure naturalism not only in the pose but furthermore in the face. Portraiture can be seen as one of the defining features of Arts and Crafts stained glass windows. It needs to be specified that the features are worked in harmony with the overall manner and content of the window, unlike the more literal translations proposed by some contemporaries. An example of the latter is Robert Newbery's *Hannah with the Infant Samuel* which reproduces a photographic portrait of the windows' donor's late wife as Hannah (Figure 3.15).⁵²

⁴⁸ Cormack (2015), p. 14

⁴⁹ From the *Builder* magazine (13 February 1897), p. 137, quoted in Cormack (2015), p. 14. The point was further laboured by Fred Miller who argued that 'the drawing of a figure for a window should be as good as though it were for a picture; ... to wilfully reproduce the ignorance of a mediaeval monk is to exhibit a shallow, misplaced veneration.' [Fred Miller, *The Training of a Craftsman* (London: Virtue & Co Ltd, 1898), p. 123]

⁵⁰ T.M. Legge, 'A Note on the Stained-Glass of Henry A. Payne', *The Studio* 61:251 (March 1914), p. 128

⁵¹ Whall read a paper on the subject before the Liverpool Art Club in 1891. Mary Lowndes similarly 'stressed the importance of life drawing as the basis of figure design in windows' in the 1890s. [Harrison (1980), p. 66; *Women Stained Glass* (1985), p. 2]

⁵² Crampin (2014), p. 159

The sense of dissent which spurred followers of the Arts and Crafts Movement, as first formulated by William Morris in the 1860s, is perfectly encapsulated in Fred Miller's denunciation:

All the Arts crafts have suffered from manufacture. The individual is lost sight of in the "firm," just as though Art could be produced by a Co.! The men who do the work are "hands," and the designers "cartoonists," who have just sufficient knowledge to draw conventional figures of saints after well-recognised patterns. It not infrequently happens that the "firm" does not have a fresh cartoon made for each window executed, but a head taken, say, from St. Mark and put on the body of St. Luke ... saving money ... The colouring of the window is either done in a purely arbitrary manner, or is left to the glazier, who, I am bound to admit, does not always do it as badly as might be.⁵³

Deliberately distancing themselves from the ways of the trade was part of T.W. Camm's marketing strategy.⁵⁴ In her analysis of the 'paradoxical discourses surrounding the late-Victorian mass-market [literature of] romance', including a study of William Morris's texts, Anna Vaninskaya contends that 'the commercial origin of the middle-class New Romance was an almost taboo subject.'⁵⁵ This is similarly demonstrated by the Camms' effort to 'erase all traces of the ... modern material provenance' (*i.e.* the fact that T.W. Camm was a product of commercial stained glass designing) in the public image they constructed.⁵⁶ Only the more original and often medievalising designs were usually selected to represent the firm's work. This reflected the type of commission the business wished to attract and the profile they sought to convey. A typical circular (Figure 3.16) for 'Thomas William Camm: Artist and Craftsman'

⁵³ Miller (1898), p. 120-2

⁵⁴ Lawrence Lee's offers a useful definition of what stained glass artists meant by the trade: 'When free-lance artists refer to "the trade" they are usually thinking of those firms that make church furniture and/or windows as an impersonal commercial enterprise for the benefit of directors and shareholders. However conscientiously such a management carries out its self-imposed high standards, it cannot, in the last resort, allow the artist final say in matters of policy.' [Lee (1967), p. 88]

⁵⁵ Anna Vaninskaya, *William Morris and the Idea of Community: Romance, History and Propaganda 1880-1914* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), p. 4

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

post-1912 has as sub-header its 'Artists: Florence Camm, Robert Camm, Walter H. Camm.'⁵⁷

The advertisement states that:

the Stained Glass Craft is pursued throughout at this Studio, from simple glazing for new Churches, to the most intricate of subject compositions. ... The artists of Mr. Thomas William Camm's Studio have exhibited yearly at the Royal Academy, and at the 1911 International Exhibition held at Turin, in Italy (the country of Art), secured thrice the highest award of Grand Prix, and were the only Stained Glass Artists, English or Foreign, to obtain this award. These same artists ... have an exceptional knowledge of the material in which they are making, having been brought up amongst Stained Glass which the firm has been making for over half a century.⁵⁸

The text was recycled within slightly different layouts and choices of designs to produce circulars in view of attracting new business. These promote the bespoke high-quality original work which the artists preferred to make. Ironically, the type of commission this form of advertisement would have secured would probably have been for the more generic and affordable windows required by urban parishes. The larger and more challenging projects were consistently the result of word of mouth and introductions from previous patrons, as we will shortly see in the discussion of Florence Camm's windows for Halesowen Grammar School.

Another circular printed c. 1916-1918 to advertise the availability of memorials betrays a certain frustration at some patrons' lack of understanding of the nature of their work. Here it was declared that 'it costs no more to have your window done by an artist-craftsman of proved ability – but no artists will submit specially-made designs in competition without a fee, as this practice has now become the hall-mark of trade firms offering only the work of inferior and fettered craftsmen.' It was further underlined that 'from the time an artist is commissioned the work becomes a matter of careful study and devotion, so the value of the work is proportionate.'⁵⁹ Fred Miller had likewise commented on the financial repercussions of the lack

⁵⁷ The siblings always listed their names alphabetically to avoid nominal hierarchy.

⁵⁸ Smethwick, Smethwick Library (SL), Sandwell archives (SA), T.W. Camm collection (TWCC), BS-C/19/17/iii, Circular for Thomas William Camm Studio

⁵⁹ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/19/17/iii, Circular advertising 'Memorials'

of consideration for the stained glass artist, noting that ‘many men will give from £500 to £1,000 for a portrait of themselves, and think that £100 quite enough to provide a painted window, though the cost of production in the latter case is many, many times what the painter has to spend on canvas and colours.’⁶⁰

The visual components of printed advertisements were crucial in the development of the T.W. Camm Studio’s artistic identity. In the circular last mentioned they chose to reproduce the distinctive and original narrative memorial window depicting the legend of St Kenelm designed in 1916 by Walter Camm for St Kenelm’s church in Halesowen (Figure 3.17). The use of the term ‘studio’ in the firm’s name ‘T.W. Camm Studio’ and in reference to their premises, which in turn appeared right onto the signature pane in their stained glass windows, associated them with the traditional painter’s studio. This can be read as a deliberate attempt to situate themselves, as artist-crafts(wo)men, on a par with the fine artist. In a relatable manner, Margaret Rope made a point of putting artistic quality before considerations of cost. She wrote to her friend, the painter Mary Sloane, ‘as a matter of fact in doing sketches we don’t really ever consider much about “cutting our cost according to cloth” but just put in what we feel inclined to from other points of view.’⁶¹ The contemporary stained glass artist Oscar Paterson (1863-1934) similarly accentuated the creative nature of the craft. He thus nebulously claimed that ‘the best examples of modern domestic stained glass owe their excellence not to any intrinsic quality of execution, but simply to the versatile inventive faculty of the designer ... not merely a facility or deftness in drawing, but the superior qualities of education, inventive faculty, and poetic temperament.’⁶² A paradox thus emerges between the stained glass makers’ desire to raise their status by distancing themselves from the profit-driven thinking of the trade, and the reality of maintaining a business and aiming for financial remuneration appropriate to their artistic labour.

While the T.W. Camm firm was critical of the perceived status and monetary value of the artworks they produced, they were not inasmuch challenging the capitalist and bourgeois orthodoxies which underpinned the commodification of art. Rather, they aimed for the increased value and recognition of the commodities that *they* produced. This reflected Thomas W.

⁶⁰ Miller (1898), p. 130

⁶¹ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12b, Letter from Margaret A. Rope to Mary Sloane 12 May

⁶² Oscar Paterson, ‘Modern Domestic Stained Glass’, in *Modern British Domestic Architecture & Decoration*, ed. Charles Holme (London, Paris, New York: The Studio, 1901), p. 26

Camm's own journey as a boy from a working-class background sent to work at the age of ten, to setting up his own business and sending his children to the School of Art for further education. Thomas W. Camm's successful realisation of the entrepreneurial dream, in which social class barriers could be re-negotiated through the acquisition of professional status and wealth, is symbolised by the house he bought for his family on top of Lightwoods Hill, Bearwood, in 1905. Located next to Lightwoods Park, the Camms could enjoy the cleaner air above the polluted smog produced by the local Smethwick industry.⁶³

This stance was compatible with Thomas Camm's Labour politics. Studying the different types of Labour groups which emerged in Birmingham in the 1880s, historian Asa Briggs noted a 'Lib-Lab alliance.' This referred to an association between working men with the locally successful Liberals. Briggs notes that 'the Lib-Labs proclaimed working-class interests but they were not doctrinaire socialists, and were content to follow Liberal leadership.'⁶⁴ Indeed Thomas W. Camm campaigned for the local Liberal candidate of the general elections in 1892.⁶⁵ Whilst his children's individual political positions are unknown, their continuation of their father's business under the name T.W. Camm Studio shows their agreement with the business model that he had set up. Indeed the Camm enterprise seems to embody Lethaby's analysis that 'where it may seem impossible or even unadvisable to attempt to change the character of a given manufacture, it might often be found delightfully interesting, and unexpectedly profitable, to have an experimental business within an established business. A "quality" department in a "quantity" business.'⁶⁶

⁶³ My thanks to Elaine and Alan Williams for bringing this to my attention.

⁶⁴ Briggs (1952), p. 194

⁶⁵ Williams (2009), pp. 4-5

⁶⁶ Lethaby (1901), p. 20. This type of labour politics which supported a liberal capitalist agenda by compromising its socialist roots was precisely what William Morris was afraid of. Stephen Yeo analyses that 'Morris' fear was that theories of reform, which already had a stronghold and which were based upon the enlargement and extension of the existing State, would come to dominate and to define Socialism. He knew how necessary such theories were for capitalism's survival, how inevitable their multiplication was, and what an available mould for counterfeiting socialism they provided. ... such theories might easily eclipse all other meanings of socialism and suppress the real, mass, beneficiaries of socialism (communism), in the interests of a newish class, or layer, of persons whom he did not much like.' This 'palliating' class which Morris defined in the *Commonweal* in July 1885, seems to fit Thomas Camm's new socio-economic position as a skilled artisan having set up a successful business, as Morris saw it 'a new middle class' acting 'as a buffer between the proletariat and their direct and obvious masters; the only hope of the bourgeois for retarding the advance of Socialism.' [Stephen Yeo, 'Socialism, the State, and some Oppositional Englishness', in *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920*, eds Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 368-9]

The ‘superior qualities of education, inventive faculty, and poetic temperament’ hailed by Oscar Paterson can be appreciated in Florence Camm’s windows for Halesowen Grammar School, today known as Earls High. This series of five subject panels, supplemented with various decorative elements, were designed and drawn by Florence Camm in 1928 for the school’s new Assembly Hall.⁶⁷ They were made at the T.W. Camm Studio in Smethwick in collaboration with her brothers Walter (1881-1967) and Robert Camm (1878-1954), between 1928 and 1931. Indeed each panel is signed as such, crediting Florence Camm with the design and a production in collaboration with Robert and Walter as well as studio assistants. Photographs of the five larger panels were used to represent the firm’s work in the form of a seasonal greetings card sent out to their clientele (Figure 3.18). The windows are therein described as ‘dealing with the educative influences throughout the centuries in Halesowen,’ the first panel (Figure 3.6) showing ‘the building the of the church, XIth to XVth century,’ the second (Figure 3.2) ‘Boys attending Praemonstratensian Abbey for instruction, XIIIth century,’ the third (Figure 3.3) ‘Primitive education in the crafts at home, XVth century,’ the fourth (Figure 3.4) depicts ‘William White has the first Free School built, XVIth century’, the fifth (Figure 3.5) ‘Shenstone arriving at School, XVIIIth century’, and the sixth panel (Figure 3.7) which is not reproduced on the card, is said to show ‘the first portion of Halesowen Grammar School, behind figures of two scholars holding the School Arms.’⁶⁸ The design and exact choice of subjects did not however start out as such.

Letters from T.W. Camm to all parties involved in the making of these windows enable us to retrace a detailed timeline of the commission. These letters were addressed to the patron, George Frederick Grove, Esq. of Halesowen, his son Harold Grove, A.J. Butler the architect responsible for the extension building of the Halesowen Grammar School in which the windows were to be placed, the school representative A.W. Priestley, Esq., in addition to the builder A.J. Simmonds from Stourbridge. On 9th July 1929 the design n°12881 was sent to George Frederick Grove, Esq. This followed the firm’s practice whereby each order was allocated a number, with every design part of the order assigned an identification of its own as well. An alumnus of the

⁶⁷ The older part of the building dated from 1908. [*Halesowen: The Official Guide* (London: J. Burrow & Co, 1933), p. 13]

⁶⁸ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/19/17/vi, Printed reproductions of photographs of the Halesowen Grammar School windows in form of a card

school, Grove had approached the Camms with the idea of presenting a series of figurative windows to decorate the new assembly hall. This appears to have been done without going through the intermediary of the architect. This went slightly against the usual procedure in which the architect would act as go-between the client and the stained glass artist, the architect sub-contracting the artist in effect.⁶⁹

This can be explained by the fact that the Camms had established a relationship of patronage with the Grove family predating 1911. G.F. Grove had inherited and increased the buttons manufacturing business his father James Grove had successfully established in 1857.⁷⁰ The Groves were an important Halesowen family, their presence being traceable back to the thirteenth century.⁷¹ G.F. Grove's first known order from T.W. Camm was for a window depicting *Dignity in Labour* (Figure 3.19) for Halesowen parish church. This was designed by Walter Camm in 1911, as well as the narrative window *Of the Legend of St Kenelm* (Figure 3.17) for St Kenelm's church in Halesowen in 1916. The design of later figurative commissions for the Grove family went to Florence Camm, starting with a three-light domestic window including one depicting *St Margaret's Well*, c. 1925-28 (Figure 3.20). Whilst the *Dignity and Labour* window was being made Grove went to the considerable trouble to view the Camms' display in the Turin International Exhibition of Art and Labour of 1911.⁷² It is worth noting that Florence's work was strongly represented there. This included a number of small panels in addition to her prize-winning six-light window of *Dante and Gabriel* (Figure 3.21).⁷³

The windows for the Assembly Hall were not the G.F. Grove's first act of benefaction towards the School either. The woodland known as the Earls which sloped down from the school grounds forming the valley of the Stour had been presented to the institution by Grove at an earlier date.⁷⁴ The estimated cost for the execution of the Halesowen Grammar School stained glass design was seven-hundred and thirty guineas at the start, a sum which would be further raised in actual final costs. Prices were calculated according to size, with a percentage

⁶⁹ Lee (1967), p. 83

⁷⁰ *Halesowen: The Official Guide* (London: J. Burrow & Co, 1929), p. 18

⁷¹ James Davenport, *The Grove Family of Halesowen* (London: Methuen & Co, 1912), p. xi

⁷² Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/16, Letter book 1910-12, Letter to Henry Hillman, Esquire, 19th September 1911 'Turin Exhibition', p. 794

⁷³ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/16, Letter book 1910-12, 'Turin Exhibition. Description of the leaded glass at the ends of the corridors in the English House at Turin Exhibition' 26 April 1911, pp. 693-4

⁷⁴ *Halesowen: The Official Guide* (London: J. Burrow & Co, 1931), p. 8

allocated to design and a rate per square foot of glass depending on the quality of the material. The initial plan was to have all the panels clustered together within a single window formed of five upper and lower lights. This would have been not unlike Florence Camm's design for the 1911 Turin Exhibition which was composed of three upper and three lower panels.⁷⁵

The upper panels for Halesowen Grammar School were to depict, from left to right, the arms of Halesowen Abbey, the badge of the school, the figure of St John the Baptist upon a shield, followed by the arms of Worcestershire and of Staffordshire. The lower lights would offer a panel with a 'youth attending Halesowen Abbey for instruction in the 13th century,' followed by 'Primitive education at home in the crafts (supposition being that the education of more primitive times would be bent towards fitting a youth for his trade in life)', the central panel then was to show 'William White having the free school built in the 16th century,' with in fourth position 'Shenstone arriving at school' in the 18th century, and finally the building of Halesowen church.⁷⁶ Furthermore, 'above these panels' were to be 'little inserts carrying the idea of each panel further. The first shows the clog almanac with a scroll and parchment. The second the plane and hammer. The third the square and compass. The fourth a Rock and the fifth Mallet, chisel and trowel.'⁷⁷ Florence Camm suggested inserting the 'arms of the donor and probably a ribbon giving the date and the conditions under which the window was presented' in the base of the last light.⁷⁸ For this purpose, the patron had lent her a 'steel engraving of the Grove crest' and a 'drawing of the School Arms' which were returned upon completion of the design on 26th October 1928.⁷⁹ Letters in the T.W. Camm archive show that it was not unusual for patrons to lend source material which they wished to see incorporated in the commissioned piece, particularly literary works in the case of narrative pieces.

The initial suggested price having visibly been disputed by the commissioner, Camm proposed a reduced estimate of six hundred and seventy-five pounds. Further adaptations were expected however with the addition of a 'sketch of two children' in modern dress 'looking up

⁷⁵ Only the lower three panels seem to have survived and are currently displayed in the BMAG.

⁷⁶ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter from T.W. Camm Studio to G.F. Grove, 9 July 1929, p. 355

⁷⁷ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter from T.W. Camm Studio to G.F. Grove, 9 July 1929, p. 355

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter from T.W. Camm Studio to G.F. Grove, 26 October 1929, p. 481

on the medieval panels.⁸⁰ This was to be based on ‘an actual boy and girl scholar of the school’ to be photographed at the institution.⁸¹ The artist queried on these grounds whether this might be met with a ‘little extra’ payment, since the designer noted ‘it will be very difficult to carry out the window profitably at the £675/0/0 let alone adding to the work in same.’⁸² Upon approval of the design, the firm asked the patron for a payment of ten per cent of the account.⁸³ Although, as formerly discussed, the Camms wished to be respected as artists, this did not change the fact that they were at the head of an enterprise which needed to be profitable to ensure their survival and that of their employees.⁸⁴

Whereas a stained glass window’s format would usually be determined by the opening and tracery afforded in the existing building, in this case construction had not yet started. There was therefore room for flexibility with the woodwork that was to surround the glass. The architect however was slow in communicating the exact measurements for the large windows as the stained glass panels were initially intended to fit into one of these.⁸⁵ Work on the glass stalled for a month.⁸⁶ Consultation with Butler resulted in the architect declaring the original design ‘impracticable’ (sic.) in size and ‘a new and more comprehensive scheme was submitted to Mr Grove on January 8th 1930.’⁸⁷ This proposed instead that each of the historical subjects be inserted into five of the six large windows which were to feature in the Assembly

⁸⁰ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter from T.W. Camm Studio to G.F. Grove, 19 November 1929, p. 512

⁸¹ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter from T.W. Camm Studio to G.F. Grove, 21 November 1929, p. 513; Co-education was still a recent development at the school, having been controversially initiated c.1906. The school motto is thought to date from the turn of the twentieth century, prior to 1905. The school badge was a 1912 invention of the headmaster Mr. Dickinson. [John Billingham, *The Earls High School 1652-2000* (s.l.: s.n., 2000), pp. 20, 32]

⁸² Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter from T.W. Camm Studio to G.F. Grove, 19 November 1929, p. 512

⁸³ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter from T.W. Camm Studio to G.F. Grove, 19 November 1929, p. 512. The rate seems to have been revised at a later date from which the rules of payment were: ‘(1) A preliminary payment of 25% of the estimated cost of the window, when the design is approved and the order given. (2) A second instalment of 25% when the full sized cartoons are prepared. (3) A third, penultimate, payment of 25% when the glass approached completion. (4) The final payment of the remaining 25% after the window is fixed in position.’ [Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/18/26, Terms of business for progress payments, undated]

⁸⁴ Walter Camm’s business acumen transpires from the speculative letters he would send out to potential customers, as well as the direct tone used when chasing up late payments, or seeking damages when breakages occurred during transport.

⁸⁵ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter from T.W. Camm Studio to G.F. Grove, 14 January 1930, p. 582

⁸⁶ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter from T.W. Camm Studio to G.F. Grove, 14 January 1930, p. 582

⁸⁷ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter draft from T.W. Camm Studio to A.J. Butler and G.F. Grove, undated, p. 677

Hall, with their associated armorial shields whilst the remainder of the glass would be ornamented with geometrical glazing.⁸⁸ A photograph of the cartoons taken c. 1931 shows what this would have looked like (Figure 3.22). Grove's gift to the school was thus extended to encompass the whole of the glass of the Assembly Hall, including a sixth window above the platform (Figure 3.7). This was to be similarly glazed with a geometrical pattern with ornamental details in the lower part to balance it out in relation to the other five.⁸⁹ The estimated cost thus rose to '£907/10/00 plus £100/0/0 for the extra subject panel of modern children as supporters of the School Badge with the Old School in the background, making a grand total of one thousand and seven pounds ten shillings.'⁹⁰ Camm and the architect were in agreement on maintaining the presence of the Grove crest in the scheme, suggesting to have it in 'the half windows at the end of the Hall placing the Donor's inscription on one of the main windows.'⁹¹ T.W. Camm were also commissioned for the iron frames to support the lights at an additional fee of £99/14/8.⁹² Indeed the firm varied its activities, making not only stained glass windows, but also offering its services for mural decoration, metal work, ecclesiastical fittings, mosaic and opus sectile.⁹³ This reflected the practice of other stained glass makers, who in light of the high demand for interior furnishings (principally ecclesiastical) had extended their range, much to the annoyance of architects.⁹⁴

Progress was further delayed by the unfortunate death of the commissioner, G.F. Grove. His son, Harold Grove, with whom the Camms had previously also maintained correspondence, took over responsibility for the commission. The design was therefore sent for his inspection on 27th June 1930 marking almost a year since the project had been initiated.⁹⁵ T.W. Camm preferred for the patron to visit in person to ensure full satisfaction with the project rather than

⁸⁸ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter draft from T.W. Camm Studio to A.J. Butler and G.F. Grove, undated, p. 678

⁸⁹ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter draft from T.W. Camm Studio to A.J. Butler and G.F. Grove, undated, p. 678

⁹⁰ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Letter signed Thomas William Camm to Harold Grove, undated, p. 787

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Letter signed Thomas William Camm to A.J. Butler, 25 February 1930, p. 1000

⁹³ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/18/4, Album containing circulars for T.W. Camm

⁹⁴ Crampin (2014), p. 130

⁹⁵ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Unsigned letter draft from T.W. Camm Studio to Harold Grove, 27 June 1930, p. 774

risking dissatisfaction after completion.⁹⁶ A couple of outgoing letters renewing the invitation for Harold Grove to come to the Studio in Smethwick are indicative of this procedure.

Former employee Eve Loach described T.W. Camm's premises in an interview in 1983 referring to 'the cutting and leading room and the kiln room ... building where the "acidizing" was done', whilst a separate workshop was used for painting on the glass.⁹⁷ Craftsmen and women carefully selected the glass 'continually, looking for special fragments ... streaks, bubbles, textures, gradations of tone.'⁹⁸ Photographs show employees at work, cutting and selecting came (Figure 3.23-Figure 3.24). This contrasts with the showroom, photographs of which were reproduced as a Christmas card sent out to patrons (Figure 3.25). The latter cultivated the impression of the artist's studio, the walls entirely covered with designs and cartoons, and sparsely furnished with a table and a couple of nonchalantly placed chairs. This is the space in which Harold Grove would have been received.

Once the design had been approved by all concerned and ordered by the patron, it could be drawn up to size as a cartoon. Those for the Halesowen Grammar School windows unfortunately have not survived. Precision was necessary since the cartoon would be the model from which the cut-line was traced. Some form of transparent linen or paper was used to draw the cut-line which provided the 'final leading pattern, bar arrangement, and panel divisions.'⁹⁹ After the pieces of glass had been selected they had to be cut to shape following the cut-line (Figure 3.26). Once these were ready they were put together to form the window. This was known as 'sticking up,' basically sticking the glass to the easel with beeswax with the cut-line stuck underneath as a guide (Figure 3.27).¹⁰⁰ The artist would then proceed with the painting.

Line work such as the head, hands or drapery could be done 'by laying out the glass on the cartoon and tracing the lines indicated thereon' and was thus referred to as 'tracing.'¹⁰¹ Different types of brushes were used to create the desired painted effects (Figure 3.28). A large 'mop brush' was used to apply the paint and 'dispersed quickly over the required areas with the

⁹⁶ Williams (2009), p. 8

⁹⁷ John Burgin, 'Thomas William Camm and his Family Designers and Makers of Stained Glass at the Studio in Smethwick 1885-1963', MA Dissertation (City of Birmingham Polytechnic 1984), p. 12, quoted in Williams (2009), pp. 8-9

⁹⁸ Burgin (1984), p. 16, quoted in Williams (2009), p. 9

⁹⁹ Lee (1967), p. 37

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 40

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 44

badger softener.’¹⁰² To produce a ‘continuous opaque scum’ the badger was dragged in a smooth gesture, whilst jabbing created ‘a broken, stippled tone.’¹⁰³ The pigments having dried, ‘parts [could] be removed by brushing them away with a hog-hair brush, or, in the case of thin lines, with the stick sharpened to a point.’¹⁰⁴ After this first painting, a second painting would occur following firing. The general principle therefore is to firstly apply pigment, ‘first by traced work and then by tones, secondly to scratch out ‘parts of the above by a stick, comb or hog-hair brush,’ and finally accentuate with additional lines and tones.’¹⁰⁵

The window was now ready to be permanently assembled by the means of lead comes which held the jigsaw of pieces together. The leads create the black lines which punctuate the coloured glass. These were central to the Arts and Crafts consideration of the window from its very conception. Writing in 1898, Fred Miller recommended that ‘the leads should so far as practicable outline the design. The design should, therefore, be simple and sculpturesque; a large style of design should be chosen, and the attention should not be dissipated by a wealth of trivialities.’¹⁰⁶ Whilst there is plenty of detailing in Florence Camm’s windows, she uses lead lines to create a hierarchy within the composition.

This can be observed in her panel showing the ‘Education of the Primitive Crafts in the Home’ (Figure 3.3). The figures in the foreground are contoured by the lead lines, making their form stand out from their surroundings. This is emphasised by the use of deep blue and yellow glass for the clothing, a minimal amount of detailing having been added by paint to create volume and creases. A thin fragment of ruby acts as the boy’s belt. Another tiny bit of green pot-metal sparkles at the craftsman’s elbow, contrasting with his outfit and suggesting feed for the horse outlined in the background. Camm hence uses small pieces of pot-metal as accents in her composition, showcasing their jewel-like quality. She effectively plays with the various effects obtainable by paint to modulate the light and suggest texture in the remainder of the glass. ‘Stippled matt’ has been used for the piece of glass above the flames forming the bottom part of the window-frame. ‘Scrub-shading’ is employed for the lower sides of the window-

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Lee (1967), p.45

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Miller (1898), p. 117

frame to suggest the sunlight entering the craftsman's workshop. This contrasts with the 'badgered matt' of the upper part of the frame ornamented with horseshoes. Indeed, excessive use of coloured glass could result in obscuring too much light, similarly to the heavily painted windows which Arts and Crafts makers criticised.¹⁰⁷

While artists would have been drawn to the high-quality mouth-blown coloured glass, this was accordingly much dearer than clear machine-made glass.¹⁰⁸ Colour impacted not only on the appearance of the material but also its composition, as various metallic oxides lie behind different tones. Christopher Whall commented on the varying hardness of glass. He explained that the softer the glass, and subsequently the easier to handle, the more expensive it was. Whall noted that 'the "whites" are mostly very hard, the reason being I suppose that the makers don't consider them of so much importance as the more precious tints and use more cullet in making them, that is to say, glass that has been used before and is boiled up again.'¹⁰⁹

On 20th September 1930, Camm wrote to Butler to invite him to inspect progress as 'the ornamental portions of the windows' for which the artists had sizes were 'practically finished.'¹¹⁰ The cartoon for the first subject panel was also completed at that time with the glass being painted, and two more cartoons were 'approaching completion.'¹¹¹ By mid-December 1930 the windows were in the process of being leaded-up.¹¹² They were finally fixed in August 1931 once the building was finished.¹¹³ One or more employees would have been sent over to fix the stained glass windows into the building's openings. The bar positions would be 'marked on the inside of the window jambs and mullions' and then 'a recess ... chiselled out enough to take the ends of the bars.'¹¹⁴ Little copper ties which had been pasted onto the comes were

¹⁰⁷ Joshua Reynolds west window for the New College in Oxford window was deemed particularly offensive. [Miller (1898), p. 115; Lewis F. Day, *Windows: A Book About Stained and Painted Glass*, 3rd edition (London: B.T. Batsford, 1909), pp. 393-4]

¹⁰⁸ Mary Clerkin Higgins, 'Origins, Materials and the Glaziers' Art', in Virginia Chieffo Raguin, *The History of Stained Glass: The Art of Light Medieval to Contemporary* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), p. 41

¹⁰⁹ London, National Art Library, C. W. Whall, Letters & Papers, 86.QQ.22(4), Draft for appeal for the conservation/repair of 14th century windows at York, 1920, p. 5

¹¹⁰ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Letter signed W.H.C. to A.J. Butler, 20 September 1930, p. 837

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/26, Letter Book 1928-1931, Letter signed W.H.C. to Harold Grove, 18 December 1930, p. 914

¹¹³ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/27, Letter Book 1931-1933, Letter signed Walter Camm. to A.J. Butler, 13 August 1931, p. 181

¹¹⁴ Lee (1967), p. 54

‘brought round the bar, twisted off and bent down out of sight.’¹¹⁵ Finally, a mixture of sand and cement would be painted onto the spaces between the grooves and the window, ‘inside and out, thus making the whole structure firm and watertight.’¹¹⁶

The pictorial programme created a narrative of the history of education in Halesowen, emphasising illustrious characters who had a connection with the school. The Oxford-educated poet, William Shenstone (1714-1763) features as a schoolboy in one of the panels. Somewhat of a local celebrity, Shenstone was known for his poem ‘The Schoolmistress’, a fitting reference in light of the window’s emplacement.¹¹⁷ The original sequence agreed upon in 1928 and reproduced in print (Figure 3.18) is different to the composition as photographed c.1931 (Figure 3.22), and further changed today. The initial order agreed with G.F. Grove emphasised the ecclesiastical roots of Halesowen’s access to education, starting with a window depicting the local parish church. This reflected the donor’s piety and prominence in the religious community as an important patron of the church. The connection was also significant in terms of the history of Grove’s patronage of T.W. Camm. As previously mentioned, the firm had been commissioned by G.F. Grove for a memorial window in Halesowen’s church in 1911 (Figure 3.17). In addition to the donors’ values, the design incorporates ideas identifiable with the Arts and Crafts movement. The fifteenth century is thus represented by craftsmanship, referring to the Ruskinian ideal of the medieval artisan (Figure 3.3). Florence Camm has depicted a blacksmith in view of Halesowen’s history as a centre for small scale metal industry, particularly nail-making. The design’s emphasis on girls’ education results in historical inaccuracy with the presence of two female students in the panel showing Shenstone arriving at the school in the eighteenth century, when it was open to boys only (Figure 3.5). The programme thus proposed a progression from church, to abbey, craftsmanship, free schooling, to the fostering of the arts and co-education.

The cartoons for the window as shown on a photograph dating c.1931 offer a somewhat different story (Figure 3.22). In this version, the sequence starts with the scene of teaching in the ‘Boys Attending Abbey for Instruction, XIIIth century’ with the ‘Building of Halesowen

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ *Halesowen* (1929), pp. 9-10

Church, XIth-XVth century' placed at the very end, rather than at the beginning. The narrative is similar in acknowledging the ecclesiastical origins of Halesowen's education system. But whereas in the former version the parish church was positioned as the basis from which the community had grown, in the definitive design it marks the position of the present-day in the narrative's chronology. Religion therefore 'frames' the history of education in Halesowen, on the left and right.

The windows as visible today are different again (Figure 3.29). The third and fourth panel have been interchanged. The order presented in the old photograph is initially respected, starting with 'Boys attending Praemonstratensian Abbey for Instruction, XIIIth century', followed by the 'Primitive Educations in the Crafts at Home, XVth century', however it then skips to 'Shenstone arriving at School, XVIIIth century' and is followed by the panel which should actually have preceded it, showing 'William White has the first Free School built, XVIth century', ending with 'Building of Halesowen Church, XIth to XVth century.' As to the two children holding up the school arms, they are now hidden away from sight within the confines of a storage space, whereas this panel was originally meant to be set above the stage. Furthermore, all but the bottom section of decorative quarries below the panels have disappeared. The upper armorial elements have been bereft of their inscriptions and hang isolated far above each subject panel (Figure 3.30).

The fragmented and disordered state of the windows appears to be the result of the terrible fire which struck the school in 1952. The assembly hall was particularly affected, its roof completely destroyed with substantial smoke and heat damage to the windows.¹¹⁸ Thankfully Florence Camm's subject panels survived and after being restored and cleaned were rehung, albeit in the wrong order. The salvaging of these artworks compensates for the disruption of the original narrative. Based on the description of the overall work ordered from T.W. Camm in the firm's correspondence it would seem that the hall was at one time entirely filled with decorative diamond-shaped quarries resembling those below the subject panels today.

¹¹⁸ Billingham (2000), p. 49

Two sections have survived on either side of the hall's main doorway which give an indication of the overall effect (Figure 3.31). The glass is formed of a pattern of clear-diamond quarries with thin borders connected together by small leaded crosses. The sporadic use of yellow, blue, and green glass breaks the monotony of the design, with additional details painted in linework. A 'Birmingham School' touch can be recognised in the section to the right of the door from the inside. A small hornbook featuring the alphabet has been inserted in the centre of the composition. This is reminiscent of Georgie Gaskin's book-illustrations discussed in the first chapter and suggests that Florence Camm might have also submitted for *The Studio*'s 1893 competition for the illustration of Andrew Tuer's *History of the Hornbook*.

These were not the only windows which Florence Camm designed for school premises. She produced original windows for the Stourbridge Grammar School's assembly hall shortly thereafter (Figure 3.32-Figure 3.33).¹¹⁹ In this case the windows were formed of three registers, and similarly were largely made of clear glass diamond quarries with some figurative sections. The subjects followed a medieval theme, with the representation of English saints, kings and queens with elements of heraldry. These, like the Halesowen School windows, were typical of Florence Camm's secular work. Her original designs, as reproduced in T.W. Camm's printed advertisements (Figure 3.34), favoured literary or historical subjects steeped in medieval imagery. Reminiscent of the Pre-Raphaelite quality identified with Birmingham School book-illustration of the 1890s, Florence Camm's *oeuvre* carried on this imagery beyond the Second World War.

One particularly intriguing design labelled as Florence Camm's remains in the collections of the BMT. This is for an eighteen-lancet-window based on the quest for the Holy Grail, intended for Princeton University's Graduate College (Figure 3.35). T.W. Camm was invited to submit the design in c. 1917 by the American architect, Ralph Adams Cram (1863-1942), who had been appointed consulting architect to Princeton in 1906. The president of the

¹¹⁹ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/27, Letter Book 1931-1933, Letter signed Walter Camm. to Harold Grove, 13 August 1931, p. 180; A circular reproduces a design for a window representing 'Courage' labelled as Redland College, Bristol. A teacher training college at the time, the institution was subjected to multiple mergers, finally being incorporated as St Matthias' campus part of the University of the West of England. This was closed in July 2014, with no indication of whether the windows still exist. [Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/19/15/iii, Printed circular; Evan Williams, 'St Matthias Campus – a brief history', 4 August 2014, University of the West of England website, <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/comingtouwecampusmapsandinformation/stmatthiascampus/historyofstmatthiascampus/abriefhistory.aspx>, consulted 6 November 2015]

university at the time wished to ‘bring more order to the planning and transform Princeton ... modelling it on Oxford University.’¹²⁰ Cram was a strong admirer of the work of English artists of the Arts and Crafts movement, as he similarly found inspiration in the architecture of medieval Europe.¹²¹ Correspondence suggests that T.W. Camm had approached Cram’s firm in 1912 when he was designing the neo-gothic St Alban’s Cathedral for Toronto. As the project stagnated, Cram invited T.W. Camm to get back in touch in two to three years and submit examples of their recent work. In August 1915 therefore, Walter Camm enquired anew with an illustration of his design for the *Legend of St Kenelm* (Figure 3.17) in St Kenelm’s church in Halesowen, which had been commissioned by G.F. Grove.¹²² Although the commission for the Princeton Graduate College hall ultimately went to the American stained glass maker Charles J. Connick (1875-1945), Cram seemed to have been keen for the Camms’ work to be seen in the United States.¹²³

Cram was instrumental in the Cleveland Museum of Art’s acquisition of two stained glass panels, one by Florence Camm (Figure 3.36) and the other by Walter Camm, in 1917. Peter Cormack suggests that these were sample panels sent along with the design for Princeton University.¹²⁴ Correspondence indicates however that the cartoons for the Cleveland Museum windows were sent on another occasion, the panels shipping separately at a later date.¹²⁵ Both depict Sir Galahad, Florence’s showing him wearing early Gothic armour, kneeling on a ground of poppies with an angel hovering behind him. His grey mantle and armour are offset by the ‘veritable glory of light’ emanating from the seven different colours used for the vegetation, helmet and angel’s robe and wings.¹²⁶ This seems to have opened up an American market for the Camms’ work. Florence Camm signed cartoons for a series of windows for St John’s in

¹²⁰ Ethan Anthony, *The Architecture of Ralph Adams Cram and His Office* (New York; London: Norton, 2007), p. 152

¹²¹ Anthony (2007), p. 9

¹²² Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/19, Letter Book 1915-1917, Walter Camm to Messrs. Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson 8 August 1915

¹²³ SA, Black Country History Catalogue, ‘T.W. Camm, Stained Glass Artist, Smethwick’, http://blackcountryhistory.org/collections/getrecord/GB146_BS-C/, consulted 7 March 2014; Ralph Adams Cram, ‘The Revival of Stained Glass,’ *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 5:5 (1 May 1918), pp. 56-7

¹²⁴ Cormack (2015), p. 224

¹²⁵ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/20, Letter Book 1917-1920, Walter Camm to Ralph Adams Cram 19th March 1917, p. 52

¹²⁶ H.G., ‘Two Panels of Modern English Glass,’ *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 5:5 (1 May 1918), p. 56

Lattingtown, New York, in 1924 commissioned by the American financier J. Pierpont Morgan.¹²⁷ The firm finally collaborated with Cram himself in 1928, when Walter Camm designed a set of four windows on King Arthur for the Mercersburg Academy Chapel in Pennsylvania, which were executed in collaboration with Florence and Robert Camm.¹²⁸

Florence Camm's exact role and position in the family business of T.W. Camm is difficult to pinpoint prior to 1912 and rests on uneven evidence up to her death in 1960. Time books covering the period of 1918 to 1936 have survived in which the time spent on orders has been logged. Whilst the order numbers can, for the most part, be matched to those listed in the order book which covers the period of 1904 to 1927, this does not give any indication of what aspect of the production she was involved in. This has to be evaluated on the basis of whether her signature features on the back of the design for a window, a large number having been entrusted to the BMAG. In addition to the design, it is important to identify if she signed the cartoon as well, with a substantial collection preserved at the local archives in Smethwick. Finally, we need to take into account which aspect of the work she is credited with on the stained glass windows themselves.

Her rise within the firm seems to have followed the traditional workshop apprenticeship trajectory. Whilst her formal artistic training at the Birmingham Municipal was recognised she needed to prove herself on the job. This started with the shading of faces and figures and drawing up of cartoons.¹²⁹ The success of her *Dante and Gabriel* window at the International Exhibition in Turin in 1911 was an important step in this direction. Her elder brother Walter remained the main designer at T.W. Camm Studio after their father's death in 1912.¹³⁰ The First World War would upset this order of things when Walter was sent to the front, leaving Florence and Robert to carry on in his absence. The book of wages kept by the firm shows an increased presence of female staff who stepped in to fill the shoes of the men who were at war, and

¹²⁷ Smethwick, SL, SA, TWCC, BS-C/6/23, Letter Book 1923-1925, T.W. Camm to Ralph Adams Cram 20th April 1925, p. 722

¹²⁸ Ann F. Howey and Stephen R. Reimer, *A Bibliography of Modern Arthuriana (1500-2000)* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006), p. 626, crediting as source Muriel Whitaker, *The Legends of King Arthur in Art* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1990/95), p. 303

¹²⁹ Burgin (1984), p. 21, Referred to by Williams (2009), p. 13

¹³⁰ The official announcement in the press was that 'The business of craftsman in stained glass and leaded glass which the late Thomas William Camm founded ... is being continued by his sons, Robert Camm and Walter H. Camm, with the assistance of Florence Camm.' [Anonymous, 'Trade Notes', *The British Architect* (30 August 1912), p. 15, quoted in Williams (2009), p. 68

remained afterwards.¹³¹ These were notably recruits from amongst Florence Camm's most talented students from Smethwick Junior Technical School.¹³² This was not readily accepted however, as told by former employee Eve Loach, 'there was the difficulty of many men, at that time, in accepting women as co-workers.'¹³³

This order seems to have been slightly upset with the return of Walter Camm at the close of the war, who took the helm anew. This would possibly explain the conflicting claims of authorship of certain designs. The physical windows would always give the name of the designer followed by those who had made it. There are occasions in which the glass gives Walter as the designer, a version which is corroborated in the correspondence with the commissioner, whilst the actual drawn design is labelled as Florence's as well as the cartoon. This can be explained in terms of division of labour when the difference concerns the cartoon only, but in the cases in which the design is involved as well, the verdict is more problematic.

The high visibility of Florence's designs in the firm's circulars (Figure 3.34) following the First World War seem indicative of an increased prominence in the family business. The nature of these designs, of which the Halesowen Grammar School windows are reflective, is worth noting. These tended to be for one-of-a-kind orders, many domestic or commemorative, whose originality is supported by photographs showing models posing for the various figures. Walter Camm's more strongly Pre-Raphaelite figure work, on the other hand, became part of the firm's stock vocabulary reused for a number of ecclesiastical windows throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. This difference might be explained by the fact that Florence attended the School of Art for a much longer period than her brother, giving her more scope to work on designs which were not dictated by commission. As an elder son, Walter was expected to carry on his father's business. As long as this was assured, and with another son as a backup, no equivalent pressure was put on Florence as a female offspring. Ideally she would find domestic bliss through marriage. In the meantime, she could indulge in further training in the arts.

¹³¹ My thanks to Elaine Williams for sharing this information with me. Peter Cormack describes a comparable increase in Veronica Whall's importance in her father Christopher Whall's business. The final decade of Christopher Whall's career encompassed the First World War with staff shortages and a 'subsequent "boom" in war memorial commissions.' Cormack notes how 'the collaboration was formally recognised in 1922 when the studio became incorporated under the name of "Whall & Whall Ltd", the title retained until Veronica Whall's retirement in 1953.' [Cormack (1993), p. 37]

¹³² Florence Camm was an art teacher at Smethwick Junior Technical School from 1912 to 1919. [*Women Stained Glass* (1985), p. 6]

¹³³ Burgin (1984), p. 23, quoted in Williams (2009), p. 33

Crucially, Florence Camm did not marry, remaining in her father's house, which following his death she shared with Walter and his wife. Earning her own wage entailed that she had the means to live independently, but she chose not to. Florence Camm continued to make stained glass for T.W. Camm Studio well into the 1950s before she passed away in 1960.¹³⁴

The Birmingham School of Art remained a focal point and source for work or introductions for graduates such as Georgie Gaskin or Celia Levetus, as we have seen in chapter one, and Mary Newill as will be examined in chapter four. As stated by W.R. Lethaby in addressing himself to students of the school, 'where a special bias is gained in a school, it is likely to be heart-breaking work to attempt to apply it in the world without private introductions to producers.'¹³⁵ In contrast, once Margaret Rope had completed her training she seems to have maintained no further connection with Birmingham. This would have been a precious support network to lose, and neither could she rely on entering a family-run business as in Florence Camm's case. Margaret Rope did nonetheless have valuable family connections which facilitated her early commissions and would ensure continued patronage throughout her career. After graduating in 1909, Rope worked on commissions from her home at The Priory in Shrewsbury. Her family's close relationship with the Catholic Church in Shrewsbury was especially crucial to her professional, as well as private life.

Her father, Henry John Rope (1847-1899), a doctor, had befriended Ambrose Moriarty (1870-1949), a catholic 'curate (1894-1900) and administrator at the Shrewsbury Cathedral (1900-1934), co-adjutor bishop from 1932 and succeeding to the See of Shrewsbury itself on the death of Bishop Singleton in 1934.'¹³⁶ Whilst Dr Rope had 'remained a staunch Anglican, a churchwarden at St Mary's, Bishop Allen received his wife into the Catholic Church on February 19th 1901 just over a year after her husband's death.'¹³⁷ Four of Agnes Maud Rope's

¹³⁴ Williams (2009), p. 53

¹³⁵ Lethaby (1901), p. 5

¹³⁶ Peter Phillips, 'A Family Recorded in Glass, the Windows of Margaret Rope in Shrewsbury Cathedral,' *Midland Catholic History* 16 (2009), p. 31

¹³⁷ Ibid., pp. 31-2. Historian Barrie Trinder notes that in the second half of the 19th century 'the hegemony of the Church of England continued' in Shrewsbury, 'although the principal dissenting denominations were usually accorded a considerable measure of respect within the community.' There are grounds to believe that 'substantial numbers of Roman Catholics were worshipping in Shrewsbury by 1851.' Work on the town's Roman Catholic cathedral began in 1853, three years after the drawing up of the diocese. Paid for by John Talbot, 16th earl of Shrewsbury (1791-1852), 'the initial designs were by A.W.N. Pugin (1812-52)' and continued by Edward Welby Pugin (1824-75) following the former's death, the cathedral was consecrated in 1856. [Barrie Trinder, 'Shrewsbury 1780-1914', in eds W.A. Champion and A.T.

(1857-1948) six children, including Margaret, would follow suit shortly thereafter. Bishop Samuel Webster Allen (1844-1908), who had been ordained in 1897, was in fact Ambrose Moriarty's uncle.¹³⁸ When Fr Moriarty was seeking a designer for a memorial window to his uncle, Bishop Allen, he entrusted Margaret Rope with the commission for the Cathedral West Window over the initial proposal of Alphege Pippet.¹³⁹ The window, which commemorates the death of the English martyrs (Figure 3.37), was executed between 1909 and 1910.¹⁴⁰ This first major project marked the beginning of Fr Moriarty's lifelong support and patronage of Margaret Rope.

The second important factor in Rope's familial context was the presence of artistic family members. The strongest influence came from her aunt Ellen Mary Rope (1855-1934).¹⁴¹ Ellen Mary was a professional sculptor, modeller and plaster designer (Figure 3.38). She was taught to draw in the 1870s by John Ruskin's former student and social reformer, Octavia Hill (1838-1912). Her artistic training continued at the Slade, where she chose to specialise in sculpture under the tuition of the French sculptor Alphonse Legros (1837-1911).¹⁴² When Margaret A. Rope moved to London she would have had the advantage of receiving guidance and encouragement from her aunt, by then an established artist.

As demand increased Margaret Rope left Shrewsbury to rent a studio at Lowndes & Drury's Glass House as of 1911 (Figure 3.39).¹⁴³ She would be assisted by her younger cousin from Blaxhall, Margaret Edith Aldrich Rope (1891-1988) who had trained with Karl Parsons (1884-1934) at the Central School.¹⁴⁴ In later years Margaret Edith was instrumental in the production of Margaret Agnes Rope's designs.¹⁴⁵ The structure of Lowndes & Drury's Glass

Thacker, *A History of Shropshire: Shrewsbury, General History and Topography* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer for the Institute of Historical Research, 2014), p. 262]

¹³⁸ Information on relation provided by Rev. Fr Peter Phillips, archivist for the Shrewsbury Diocese. David M. Cheney, 'Bishop Samuel Webster Allen', <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/ballens.html>, consulted 22 October 2015

¹³⁹ Phillips (2009), p. 31

¹⁴⁰ Phillips (2009), p. 31

¹⁴¹ Her uncle George Thomas Rope (1846-1929) was a landscape painter and naturalist.

¹⁴² Arthur Rope, 'The Poet Sculptor Ellen Mary Rope', in *Blaxhall's Creative Past : Snapshots of Village Life*, ed. Blaxhall Archive Group (Lavenham : Lavenham Press, 2009), pp. 71-2

¹⁴³ Arthur Rope, 'Life of Margaret Agnes Rope (Marga)', <http://www.arthur.rope.clara.net/margabio.htm>, consulted 6 February 2013

¹⁴⁴ Cormack (2015), p. 249

¹⁴⁵ A letter from Ellen Mary Rope to her nephew Harry Rope (Margaret Agnes's brother), indicates that the three women shared a close relationship. When Margaret Agnes Rope took on the orders in 1923, she was sorely missed by her cousin who moved quarters from Lettice Street to live and work across the river with friends at 66 Deodar Road, next door to her aunt who had her house and studio at no 61. [Rope (2009), p. 78]

House offered numerous advantages, both practical and social. Peter Cormack describes a ‘collegial atmosphere’ in the purpose-built workshops of Lettice Street in Fulham. The upper floor ‘contained five studios ... suitable for glass painting’, with ‘fully equipped workshop space (kiln, glazing workshop, glass racks, office, etc.)’ on the ground floor.¹⁴⁶ Individual artists who rented a studio, either for the duration of a commission or on a rolling basis, had full access to the ‘technical facilities and the workforce of craftsmen-glaziers.’¹⁴⁷ Cormack notes that the more technical aspects required by ‘particular firing and glazing’ were delegated by the artist to the experienced craftsmen on site.¹⁴⁸ The Glass House established a reputation ‘as the principal centre of progressive stained glass in London.’¹⁴⁹ It fostered a collaborative working environment as ‘the artists frequented each other’s studios, examining windows in progress, discussing artistic and technical issues or simply socialising.’¹⁵⁰

Peter Cormack’s recent survey of Arts and Crafts stained glass makes a strong claim for the overlooked prominence of women artists in this craft.¹⁵¹ In 1909 Mary Lowndes proudly stated that ‘women are taking their part with men in the front ranks of the new movement; though it is probable that twenty years ago there was not among artists a single woman glass painter.’¹⁵² The Glass House was an important anchor in the formation of Margaret A. Rope’s network of female artist friends, although there is no known record of interaction with Mary Lowndes. Rope shared a studio there with Caroline Townshend (1878-1944), who had trained

¹⁴⁶ Cormack (2015), p. 248

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 249

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 249-250

¹⁵¹ See Cormack (2015). This is in the continuation of his seminal exhibition for the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow in 1985, documented by his catalogue *Women Stained Glass* (1985).

¹⁵² Mary Lowndes, in *Programme of the Procession of Women’s Trades & Professions to the Albert Hall, 27th April 1909, part of the Quinquennial Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance*, quoted in *Women Stained Glass* (1985), p. 1. Lowndes was ‘one of the first women to embark upon a full-time career as a stained glass artist’ in the mid-1890s. Her early work was done in collaboration with Britten & Gilson of Southwark, ‘glass manufacturers who ... offered facilities for artists to work on their own commissions in stained glass.’ It was this experience which motivated her to establish her own enterprise, in collaboration with Alfred J. Drury. Cormack’s argument positions Mary Lowndes’ at the centre of women stained glass artists, invoking Lowndes’s involvement in the campaign for Suffrage. Cormack however problematically conflates here Lowndes’ political activities, with the idea that her presence at the Glass House was ‘especially appealing to women artists.’ It needs to be nuanced that whilst the choice for a woman to pursue a professional career in the arts within a firmly patriarchal society can be understood as an ideologically feminist intervention this is not to be automatically equated with suffragist or proto-feminist politics. Reaching for financial independence and challenging the prevailing Victorian idea of the domesticized woman is not the same thing as political activism. [*Women Stained Glass* (1985), p. 1; See Lisa Tickner re Lowndes’ involvement with the Artists’ Suffrage League in Tickner (1987), pp. 19-20; Cormack (2015), p. 252]

with Christopher Whall at the LCSAC between 1900 and 1903. Townshend was one of the Glass House's original tenants in 1906.¹⁵³

The WGA would be another, if not more, beneficial source for contact with other professional women.¹⁵⁴ Founded in 1907 and based along the same lines as the Art Workers' Guild, the WGA aimed to bring together women principally involved in designing and working in the applied arts. The intent was to share ideas and keep track of each other's production, as well as gaining contacts with a wider artistic community. The Guild's activities, which continued until the 1940s, included gatherings of a social nature, cultural excursions, private and semi-private exhibitions, and a rich programme of lectures delivered by internal and external speakers. Margaret's aunt, Ellen Rope, was honorary secretary of the Guild for a while, and reportedly held a party for London members of the Guild on 24th May 1914.¹⁵⁵ Margaret Rope had recently joined at that time and would have been part of the festivities, just a couple of months shy of the outbreak of the Great War which would affect everyone's activities. A current member's recommendation and submission of samples of recent work were necessary to be considered for membership.¹⁵⁶ The stained-glass artist Mabel Esplin (1874-1921) wrote to commend Margaret A. Rope's work as 'exceedingly good' as well as nominating Caroline Townshend.¹⁵⁷ The sculptor Dorothy Anne Aldrich Rope (1883-1970), another cousin from Blaxhall, was elected member at the same time. Margaret Edith Aldrich Rope would follow in 1917. On July 20th 1919 both Margaret Agnes and Margaret E. Aldrich Rope invited London members 'to see stained glass at their studio, The Glass House, Lettice Street, Fulham.'¹⁵⁸ By the end of the decade, the Guild had acquired a small contingent of stained-glass artists, with the

¹⁵³ *Women Stained Glass* (1985), p. 9

¹⁵⁴ Mary Lowndes was one of the founding members of the Women's Guild of Arts, part of the provisional committee in 1907 but resigned in 1913 and would therefore have been on her way out or already gone at the time that Margaret A. Rope joined in December 1913. [London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, loose files, Draft of letter inviting members]

¹⁵⁵ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 2, The Women's Guild of Arts. Annual Report, 1914

¹⁵⁶ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 7, Rules

¹⁵⁷ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12a, Letter from Mabel Esplin to Mary Sloane 21 October 1913. Mabel Esplin was the daughter of a wealthy manufacturer from Manchester. She studied at the Slade before attending the London Central School of Arts and Crafts, where she was taught by Whall as well as his pupil Karl Parsons, and Alfred Drury. Similarly to Lowndes, Esplin was active in the Women's Suffrage Movement. [*Women Stained Glass* (1985), p. 8]

¹⁵⁸ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 5a, Women's Guild of Arts. Annual Report, 1919

additions of Wilhelmina Geddes (1887-1955) in 1919 and another Irishwoman, Ethel Mary Rhind (1887-1952), in 1920.¹⁵⁹

A letter from Margaret A. Rope to the painter Mary Sloane (1867-1961) asserts the importance of being part of such a network, when she thanked Sloane for sending over potential patrons. Rope noted how business was strong and ‘things have gone up a great deal lately & seem to be still rising.’¹⁶⁰ Deborah Cherry employed the powerful concept of ‘matronage’ when analysing the support system upon which nineteenth-century women artists relied. Victorian women painters were propelled by fellow ‘women friends, relatives, and clients.’¹⁶¹ The WGA thus appears as a structured development of the Victorian individual artist’s personal networks.

Unlike other Birmingham craftswomen who were assimilated into existing male-driven social structures, Margaret Rope therefore mostly functioned within alternative majoritively female environments. In her important survey of twentieth century crafts in Britain, Tanya Harrod applies Homi Babha’s concept of ‘third space’ to the crafts’ practice of early twentieth century women. In a context of studies on cultural difference, Babha locates hybridity within a ‘third space’ which ‘displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom.’¹⁶² Harrod argues that this type of space was carved ‘between the better defined activities of fine art and design.’¹⁶³ Economically, this provided ‘an important ... income for middle-class women in a time of social and economic stasis for women in general.’¹⁶⁴ Harrod identifies a recurring compounding factor in the fact that ‘a marked number of these women makers [as typified by the Ropes and Florence Camm] never married – a characteristically modern decision being made for the first time in the inter-war years – and were thus able to

¹⁵⁹ Geddes still lived in Dublin at that time, moving to London in 1925. She decided to rent a studio at the Glass House ‘as a result of meeting Margaret Aldrich Rope on her 1922 visit’ through the sculptor Sophia Rosamond Praeger. [Gordon-Bowe (1988), p. 283, fn 41 p. 293.] Sophia Rosamond Praeger (1867-1954) was mentored by Ellen Mary Rope and shared the same master, Alphonse Legros. Born in Ireland, she trained in London and Paris in the 1890s and was an early champion of the work of Wilhelmina Geddes. Praeger was also politically involved, notably in advancing the cause of women’s emancipation. [Joseph McBrinn, ‘A Populous Solitude’: the life and art of Sophia Rosamond Praeger, 1867-1954,’ *Women’s History Review* 18:4 (September 2009), pp. 577, 580-1]

¹⁶⁰ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12b, Letter from Margaret A. Rope to Mary Sloane 12 May

¹⁶¹ Cherry (1993), p. 102

¹⁶² Homi Babbha, ‘The Third Space’, in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. J. Rutherford (Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), p. 211

¹⁶³ Tanya Harrod, *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century* (New Haven and London: Published for The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts by Yale University Press, 1999), p. 117

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

work without the problematic responsibility of childcare and of running a conventional household.¹⁶⁵ Harrod's claim of this being a 'modern' phenomenon needs to be nuanced in light of the evidence provided by other Birmingham craftswomen, as will be discussed in relation to Mary Newill in the following chapter, and further considered in the conclusion of this thesis. The particular demographical situation of the inter-war period also should be taken into consideration in the interpretation of craftswomen not marrying at this time. Women's matrimonial prospects, whatever their occupation, were reduced by the large casualties in male lives in the war.

These social ties, from Margaret Rope's connections with members of the Shrewsbury diocese, to the artistic network she developed in London, were crucial to the realisation of the windows for the Church of the Holy Name in Birkenhead, which will be the focus of the remainder of the chapter. In 1923 Margaret Rope made the life-changing decision to become a nun and joined the enclosed religious order of the Carmelites, becoming Sister Margaret of the Mother of God (Figure 3.40).¹⁶⁶ Her career as a stained glass artist was not over however. Sister Gillian Leslie writes that:

after completing her canonical novitiate, Sister Margaret was encouraged to continue with her stained glass work by the Prioress, Mother Mary of Christ (1887-1969), who provided her with the facilities she needed to make this possible. The Woodbridge community was thriving but materially poor and for much of this period, until World War II intervened, Sister Margaret's work was virtually supporting it at the financial level.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Following her departure Margaret Edith retained her cousin's former studio at Lowndes & Drury for a while, before moving in the mid-twenties near to her aunt Ellen Mary Rope's in Putney. There an alternative centre for female stained glass artists formed. Margaret Edith was in the same building as Caroline Townshend and her apprentice Joan Howson (1885-1964) who had moved to 61 Deodar Road in 1926. Margaret Edith would later move down the road to number 81, and when this was bombed during the Second World War, found new accommodation and work premises at 89 Deodar Road. During the post-war years she was assisted by her pupil and life partner Clare Dawson, a former pupil of Wilhelmina Geddes and whom Margaret Agnes had also helped. [Cormack (2015), p. 284; *Women Stained Glass* (1985), pp. 10, 24; Clare Dawson, 'Notes on a Great Artist', *Journal of Stained Glass* 13:3 (1961-2), pp. 490-2]

¹⁶⁷ Sr Leslie Gillian, Carmelite Monastery Quidenham (CMQ), 'The Margaret Rope Windows', <http://quidenhamcarmel.org.uk/margaret-rope-windows>, consulted 29 July 2014

Peter Cormack records that ‘arrangements were made whereby Lowndes & Drury supplied glass, cut it according to Sister Margaret’s cartoons, sent it to Woodbridge for painting and then fired and glazed it on its return to the Glass House.’¹⁶⁸ Archives from Lowndes & Drury have survived including some ledgers stating details of the work undertaken by the firm on behalf of artists. This provides information on some of Sr Margaret’s windows, notably those for the Catholic Church of the Holy Name in Birkenhead, Oxton.¹⁶⁹ Sr Margaret retained as much control as possible over the making of her windows, providing detailed cartoons (Figure 3.41) and instructions on the type of glass she wished to use based on her knowledge of the materials which Lowndes & Drury had in stock. Painting the glass allowed her to intervene at an intermediary stage of production to ensure the glaziers would successfully realise her vision. Most of the contact with the actual materials was however devolved to others.

Four windows by Margaret Rope decorate the church of the Holy Name of Jesus in Birkenhead, built by Edmund Kirby in 1898-9. This is one of the most important groupings of her works outside of the Shrewsbury Cathedral, the Kesgrave family church and the church at Quidenham Carmel. A three-light window of *St Elizabeth, St Mary and St John the Baptist* (Figure 3.8) is to be seen above the altar in the Lady Chapel in the Church of the Holy Name, installed c. 1918.¹⁷⁰ A six-light window of the *English Martyrs of the Shrewsbury Diocese* (Figure 3.9) was commissioned c. 1928 filling the remainder of the chapel openings.¹⁷¹ A further two lancets depicting *St Thérèse of Lisieux* (Figure 3.43) and *St Winefride* (Figure 3.11) were installed in the main aisle c.1931.¹⁷² The Birkenhead church thus contains works carried out at different times, rather than a cohesive set from a single commission.

¹⁶⁸ *Women Stained Glass* (1985), p. 12

¹⁶⁹ Other family connection with Birkenhead: From 1896 Ellen Mary Rope produced work for the Della Robbia Pottery, possibly thanks to her friendship with the Garretts who knew the pottery’s founder, Harold Rathbone. [Elizabeth Crawford, *Enterprising Women: The Garretts and their Circle* (London: Francis Boutle, 2002), p. 290]

¹⁷⁰ The cartoons for the St Elizabeth, St Mary and St John the Baptist lancets remain in the collections of the BMAG.

¹⁷¹ The window would have definitely been installed by 1930 as one of its panels was reproduced in a drawing in Mary G. Cardwell, *Blessed John Plessington* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1930), p. 14

¹⁷² ‘Taking Stock: Catholic Churches of England and Wales, Birkenhead – Holy Name of Jesus,’ <http://taking-stock.org.uk/Home/Dioceses/Diocese-of-Shrewsbury/Birkenhead-Holy-Name-of-Jesus>, consulted 21 September 2015

These artworks function as markers of the developments in the artist's work and beliefs. The same phenomenon can be observed in Shrewsbury Cathedral and the church in Kesgrave.¹⁷³ These two churches are closely connected to the Rope family, as their place of worship, and commemoration in the case of Kesgrave. The windows at Quidenham Carmel, some of which were made for their former convent in Woodbridge, can likewise be understood as symbols of Margaret Rope's belonging to the religious community (Figure 3.42). These structures function as spiritual, and in the case of the convent, as physical homes to the artist and her work. Based on the subjects and form of the Birkenhead windows, I will argue that these should be similarly considered as a programme encapsulating some of the core elements of Margaret Rope's *oeuvre*. Furthermore, this case study will demonstrate how the artist's faith and spiritual journey ran parallel to, and to some extent was infused into her art. This will be made evident from the analysis of her choice and treatment of subjects.

The details of the commissions are unfortunately lost, particularly records relating to the patron John Lindon (1847/8-1927). Neither is the dating of the three windows supported by clear documentation. The difference in treatment of the three windows is coherent with the development of the artist's work over the course of a decade or so, particularly when one compares the *St Elizabeth, St Mary and St John the Baptist* group with the two lancets of *St Thérèse* and *St Winefride*. John Lindon, a wealthy member of the congregation, had commissioned the first three panels to decorate the Lady Chapel which he gifted, along with other furnishings, in memory of his mother and wife.¹⁷⁴ He would have been able to admire the work of Margaret Rope already present in the Shrewsbury Cathedral, which might have influenced his choice of artist. Lindon's gift can be seen along the same lines as explored in the

¹⁷³ The following works by Margaret A. Rope may be admired in Shrewsbury Cathedral: six-light West window of the *English Martyrs*, 1910; three-light window in the south aisle depicting *The Visitation with St Cecilia*, c.1911; War memorial for the Cathedral porch in the form of a wooden plaque with a plaster figure of Our Lady above; two-light and tracery *Soldier* window, c.1917; *Baptistery* window, c. 1917; in the south sanctuary, *Eucharistic Congress* window, c. 1921; north sanctuary Sarah Ann Moriarty memorial window, c. 1923; Sacristy window commemorating Ambrose Moriarty's appointment as Bishop of Shrewsbury, 1934. At the Holy Family and St Michael Roman Catholic Church in Kesgrave, two small porch windows depicting St Margaret and St Catherine, south nave window, south sanctuary window, east window depicting *St Michael and the Holy Family*; and window in west wall of north transept extension of *SS Thomas More and John Fisher*, erected c. 1931; *Lumen Christi* panel, as well as framed cartoons for windows of St Thérèse of Lisieux, Birkenhead; a Lad carrying loaves and fishes, Blagowan, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Lanark; St Bernard, Llanarth; St Francis, Lanarth; St George, Cliften Hampden; Blessed Ralph Sherwin, Rome; Tyburn roundels.

¹⁷⁴ 'Taking Stock ...', consulted 21 September 2015

previous chapter. This brought attention to the nature and function of private ecclesiastical patronage in light of the tendency for most church buildings and restorations to be privately funded in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Martin Crampin notes that ‘the continuation of patronage at a particular church sometimes also provided the circumstances for churches to be filled with the work of a single maker.’¹⁷⁵ This definitely applies to Shrewsbury Cathedral, the Holy Family and St Michael’s church in Kesgrave, and the church of the Holy Name of Jesus in Birkenhead.

When John Lindon himself passed away, he had made provision in his will for further stained glass windows to be added to the church. He entrusted the Bishop of Shrewsbury (then Hugh Singleton) with nine hundred pounds ‘for adding eight stained-glass windows in substitution for the present plain lead lights in the chapel attached to the church of the Holy Name ... any surplus to be used for ... decoration at the discretion of the Bishop.’¹⁷⁶ With no directives as to the choice of artist or subjects of the windows, this was left to be decided by the Bishop who turned again to Margaret Rope. The subject of the martyrs of the diocese of Shrewsbury was chosen for the chapel, and it would seem that some money was left over in order for Margaret Rope to carry out the further two panels in the aisle.

Some details on the length and cost of production have survived. Once the designs and cartoons had been drawn out by Sr Margaret, these would have been sent over to the Glass House where, following her directives, the glass was selected and cut. Lowndes & Drury’s annual budget balance sheets list the types of glass they had in stock between 1902 and 1917, providing a template for what probably prevailed into the 1920s.¹⁷⁷ Antique Glass in sheets, Norman slab, Early English, H.H. slabs (Henry Holiday ‘Puddles’), and Silver White Glass would therefore have been on hand. The glass was then sent to Sr Margaret in Woodbridge for her to apply the detailing in paint, before sending the pieces back to London for firing. Records show that Sr Margaret was charged twenty-nine pounds twelve shillings in August 1928 for the

¹⁷⁵ Crampin (2014), p. 142

¹⁷⁶ Anonymous, ‘Will: Mr. J. Lindon’, *The Tablet: The International Catholic News Weekly* (21 May 1927), p. 19, accessed online <http://archive.thetablet.co.uk/article/21st-may-1927/19/will>, consulted 22 October 2015

¹⁷⁷ London, Victoria & Albert Museum Archives (VAMA), Lowndes & Drury archives, GB 73 AAD/2008/1/6, Accounts and related correspondence for Lowndes & Drury (Nov 1893-Feb 1928)

firing of some glass for Birkenhead.¹⁷⁸ It should be taken into consideration that painted glass would usually need to be refired at least once, as part of the pigment would be destroyed by the heat.¹⁷⁹ The questions remains open as to whether the glass would have been sent back to Sr Margaret for a further coat of paint, or if she entrusted this to someone else. There is almost a two-year gap before the next record of work being done for Sr Margaret's Birkenhead commission. It would be plausible therefore that the firing carried out by Lowndes & Drury in 1928 relates to the martyrs' window in the Lady Chapel, especially if cost according to size is considered. Further elements intended for Birkenhead were glazed and fired in February 1930 at a cost of fourteen pounds, nineteen shillings and sevenpence.¹⁸⁰ Work carried on into 1931 with a final record of glass being fired in March of that year at a cost of seven pounds, three shillings and sixpence.¹⁸¹ It seems plausible that these were the *St Thérèse* and *St Winefride* panels. Transport and insurance need to be added to these outgoings, as well as the final expense of sending someone over to fix the windows.

Notwithstanding the logistical challenge and cost the arrangement with Lowndes & Drury presented, with risks of breakage during transport by rail, Rope's life of religious seclusion presented further obstacles in the business of making stained glass. In a letter to her brother Rev. Henry ('Harry') Rope (1880-1978) written in 1936, Sr Margaret warns that as a Carmelite she was 'not allowed to write anything for outside ... also my/our [*i.e.* the convent] name must not be made known in connexion with the window.'¹⁸² Indeed the east window in St Peter's church in Blaxhall, dating from c.1912/13 is the single known window attributed to Margaret Rope which she signed (Figure 3.43). This is in stark contrast with the artists of the T.W. Camm Studio who would always fully sign their windows so that those who admired them would know where to enquire. As previously mentioned, they would circulate printed advertisements of their work, were able to raise their profile through participating in the local artistic community, and wrote to potential customers offering their skills. Margaret Rope, on the

¹⁷⁸ London, VAMA, GB 73 AAD/2008/1/15 Ledger containing brief details of artists, work undertaken for clients etc. (1926-1937), p. 39

¹⁷⁹ Lee (1967), p. 45

¹⁸⁰ London, Victoria and Albert Museum archives, GB 73 AAD/2008/1/15, Ledger containing brief details of artists, work undertaken for clients etc. (1926-1937), p. 39

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 143

¹⁸² Quidenham, CMQ, Margaret Agnes Rope collection [MARC], Letter from Sr Margaret to Harry Rope, 13 August 1936

other hand, could not make her art known. This poses the question of how she was able to secure commissions since self-promotion was prohibited. One hypothesis would be that the other Rope women, whose reputation was well-established by that time, recommended Sr Margaret's work to potential customers whilst keeping her identity safe. Her brother Harry might also have acted on her behalf. This clearly seems to have been the case for her window of St Ralph Sherwin made for the Venerable English College in Rome, in 1936, a time when Harry was an archivist there. As evident in the case of Birkenhead, the continued support of the Shrewsbury clergy also occasioned commissions.

The Birkenhead windows revisit themes which prevail throughout Margaret Rope's work and which distinguish her output from that of her contemporaries. This is particularly true of the subject of martyrdom which she returned to on numerous occasions over the course of three decades. The etymology of the Christian understanding of the 'martyr' refers back to the ancient Greek word *μάρτυς* in the sense of 'a witness who testifies to a fact of which he has knowledge from personal observation.'¹⁸³ This came to mean a 'witness of Christ', a 'person who, though he has never seen nor heard the Divine Founder of the Church, is yet so firmly convinced of the truths of the Christian religion, that he gladly suffers death rather than deny it.'

¹⁸⁴ In England, resistance to the Reformation between 1534 and 1729 resulted in hundreds of instances of martyrdom and persecution of individuals harbouring Catholic beliefs. The process of recognition of the English and Welsh Catholic martyrs began following the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 which repealed all Penal Laws against them. This led to the beatification of English martyrs on 29 December 1886 by Pope Leo XIII, with further candidates beatified on 13 May 1895 by Pope Leo XIII, and as Margaret Rope would have been well aware, on 15 December 1929 by Pope Pius XI. Indeed the majority of the martyrs depicted in the Birkenhead window were selected from those beatified in 1929. The congregation would no doubt have appreciated how topical this work was.

¹⁸³ Charles G. Herbermann, Edward A. Pace, Condé B. Pallen, Thomas J. Shahan, John W. Wynne et al. (eds), *The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), vol. 9, p. 736

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

Jan-Melissa Schramm notes that martyrdom held an ethical appeal with cut across Victorian conflicts of doctrine, as ‘the ideas of duty and selfless resignation epitomised by the sacrifice of the martyr remained important’ to aspire to.¹⁸⁵ This made its way into literature, as Maureen Moran argues, ‘the physical and psychological torments of heroic martyrs’ were ‘stock features of popular Victorian fictions by both Catholic and Protestant authors.’¹⁸⁶ It is important to consider the contentious nature of Rope’s window. Anti-Catholic feelings prevailed in early-twentieth century England, and the beatification of Catholic martyrs in 1929 was sure to have revived amongst some a sense of ‘Papal Aggression.’ Moran notes how in Victorian times ‘suspicion of Catholics as creatures of divided loyalty – to King and to Pope – was well embedded in the national psyche ... in ways that reinforced the Church of Rome as a dangerous religious *and* secular opponent.’¹⁸⁷

The anti-Catholic prejudices of the nineteenth century carried into the following century, as studied by John Wolffe. Wolffe underlines the importance of long-term participation in anti-Catholic organisations.¹⁸⁸ But ‘the survival of such anti-Catholic old retainers’ was not the only impulse behind the perpetuation of ‘Victorian perspectives and attitudes’, younger men had their role to play as well. Steve Bruce has suggested that ‘organised anti-Catholicism has obtained a disproportionate amount of its leadership and support from people of relatively low social class in religious groups marginalised by existing ecclesiastical and political structures.’¹⁸⁹ Particularly relevant to Birkenhead, Liverpool’s ‘long-run sectarian’ leanings were inhospitable to Catholic ritualism.¹⁹⁰

Anti-Catholic feelings were based on more than just religious discord. They were linked to issues of politics, identity and prosperity, as ‘the welfare of Britain ... was believed to be contingent on faithful adherence to Protestantism, and Roman Catholic countries held to suffer

¹⁸⁵ Jan-Melissa Schramm, *Testimony and Advocacy in Victorian Law, Literature, and Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 145

¹⁸⁶ Maureen Moran, *Catholic Sensationalism and Victorian Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), p. 131

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5

¹⁸⁸ John Wolffe, ‘Change and Continuity in British Anti-Catholicism, 1829-1982’, in Frank Tallett and Nicolas Atkin eds, *Catholicism in Britain and France Since 1789* (London and Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1996), p. 73

¹⁸⁹ See Bruce, ‘Militants and the Margins: British Political Protestantism’, *Sociological Review* 34 (1986), pp. 97-811, quote in text by Wolffe (1996), p. 70

¹⁹⁰ Wolffe (1996), p. 70. For further reading see P.J. Waller, *Democracy and Sectarianism: A Political and Social History of Liverpool 1868-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1981)

materially because of their perceived religious declension.¹⁹¹ This notably led to an interpretation of Germany's 'despicable conduct' during the First World War as the consequence of 'her casting off of Protestant faith and growing espousal of ... Rome's ... anti-Christian influence.'¹⁹² Wolffe further notes that 'during the inter-war period there was a continuing readiness to set national and international life in a Protestant perspective.'¹⁹³

In each case Margaret Rope carefully adapted the choice of saints in accordance with the window's locality, as well as tailoring her formal treatment to the architectural setting.¹⁹⁴ Her window for Birkenhead brings together the figures of nine martyrs born in the area which would become the Shrewsbury diocese, all martyred between 1582 and 1689.¹⁹⁵ The upper four lancets of the Birkenhead martyrs window depict, from left to right, Ralph Crockett kneeling towards the Virgin Mary 'Queen of Martyrs', who herself defers to Christ 'King of Martyrs', with Thomas Holford similarly facing the Lord in prayer.¹⁹⁶ This marks the hierarchical primacy of Christ, since although the martyrs form the main body of the window, the attention to 'Catholic lives of saints were meant primarily as spurs to imitate the life of Christ.'¹⁹⁷

The four lower lancets feature Margaret Ward and Richard Martin, Edward Campion and Robert Wilcock, John Plessington, Robert Johnson and John Shert, all standing. The artist has clearly named each martyr so that they would be identifiable to the viewer. The arms of their place of birth and decease are also included, as well as symbols referring to the nature of their death which is dated and represented in a small narrative scene. Text, symbol, heraldry, portrait and narrative are thus effectively combined to convey the identity of the martyr. These elements, barring the narrative, are integrated into a single plane in the case of the two upper

¹⁹¹ Wolffe (1996), p. 75

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 76

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Windows by Margaret Rope depicting English Catholic martyrs may be seen at Shrewsbury Cathedral, the Shrine of the Sacred Heart and the English Martyrs at Tyburn, the church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead, the Venerable English College in Rome, and Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church, Latchford.

¹⁹⁵ 'Taking Stock ...', consulted 21 September 2015

¹⁹⁶ Ralph Crockett was born in Barton, Cheshire, and ordained at Rheims in 1586. He was arrested on arrival in England and imprisoned in London before being hanged, drawn, and quartered in Chichester, during the Elizabethan persecution. Bl. Thomas Holford, the son of a Protestant minister, was born in Aston, Cheshire. He went to Rheims where he was ordained in 1583 after converting to Catholicism. Upon returning to Cheshire he was seized and hanged for being a priest at Clerkenwell. Both martyrs were beatified in 1929. [John J. Delaney and James Edward Tobin (eds), *Dictionary of Catholic Biography* (London: Robert Hales Ltd, 1962), pp. 299, 567]

¹⁹⁷ Mary Heimann, *Catholic Devotion in Victorian England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 163

windows. The height of the four lower lancets allows for the inclusion of narrative scenes in a separate panel at the bottom, in a manner similar to her martyrs window in Shrewsbury Cathedral. The scenes are placed at eye level making them fully legible to church goers.

Virginia Chieffo Raguin has noted how ‘for the church-going public, the private experience of reading and viewing was repeated in community experience as these same book illustrations inspired the monumental arts of stained glass, mural painting and framed reproduction.’¹⁹⁸ In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the pictorial arts ‘were important means of expressing shared values’ in a society ‘which strove to forge a common culture.’¹⁹⁹ Special attention will be paid to analysing which aspects of the saints’ lives the artist chose to depict and how these are represented.

The lives of saints, also known as ‘hagiography’, formed a long-standing tradition within the category of biographical writings with a didactic purpose.²⁰⁰ These ranged from the more scholarly, but nonetheless still popular, Jacobus de Voragine’s *Golden Legends*, the widely printed Alban Butler’s *Lives of Saints*, first published in 1756-9, Richard Challoner’s *Memoirs of Missionary Priests* issued in 1924, to illustrated children’s books such as Mrs Lang’s *The Book of Saints and Heroes* of 1912. There is therefore a literary model, as well as an artistic tradition going back to medieval times, which underpins Margaret Rope’s interpretation of martyrdom. Maureen Moran notes how in fictional literature ‘Catholic sensationalism’ placed particular emphasis ‘on the shocking horrors of bodily torture.’²⁰¹ In this way sympathy was garnered ‘for rebellious individuals persecuted under either faith system.’²⁰² Catholic authors were able to reconcile disobedience with heroism by suggesting ‘potentially self-serving or tyrannical motivations’ behind a legal system which endangered social cohesiveness.²⁰³

Indeed, Margaret Rope’s first martyrs’ window in Shrewsbury Cathedral provides graphic illustrations of the violence endured by the English martyrs in her small narrative panels beneath each saint (Figure 3.44). The static pose of the central figures reinforces the feeling of a

¹⁹⁸ Virginia Chieffo Raguin, *The History of Stained Glass: The Art of Light Medieval to Contemporary* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), p. 26

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Velma Bourgeois Richmond, ‘Hagiography’, in *Encyclopedia of Life Writing: Autobiographical and Biographical Forms*, ed. Margaretta Jolly (London, Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2001), pp. 411-2

²⁰¹ Moran (2007), p. 137

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

passive, enduring state. They turn their gaze upwards to ponder the ‘universal dimensions’ of their faith, with at its apex the ‘symbol of Christ as the Lamb, slain yet standing above the heavenly Jerusalem’, with the entire universe below, from oceans to the sun, moon and stars, land, plants, and birds.²⁰⁴ Margaret Rope employs the same three-tier structure for her Birkenhead martyrs window. Her interpretation of the subject and formal treatment is however markedly different.

Rope instead chooses to bring the viewer’s attention to the heroic acts preceding death. Symbols are used to allude to the means of their physical demise, rather than literal representation. This starts, on the left, with a scene of Margaret Ward helping Fr Richard Watson to escape from Bridewell prison (Figure 3.45). Ward is shown handing Watson a coil of rope, which she has managed to smuggle in with her on a visit. She stands tall in profile with a decisive look on her face, as the priest looks down at the rope. This fanciful representation of a medieval prison, with black and white tiling and red velvet curtains, relies on symmetry to accentuate the central position of the window depicted within it. This is emphasised by how the glass has been cut, creating a circular fragment on which the window has been painted in between the two figures. The leadwork traces a thick black circle connecting both characters by creating a line along their faces. This brings attention to the action, in which the priest would clamber through the opening and scale down the wall, as pictured in the quarry right above the window. Ward’s refusal to reveal Watson’s hideout resulted in her being hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn in 1588.²⁰⁵ Her fate can be understood by bringing together the fragmented indications incorporated into the main lancet (Figure 3.46). Here Margaret Ward stands with her hands joined in prayer, a rope slung over her arm. A small roundel on level with her head refers to the torture she endured, with her body hanging from a wall. The accessory to her act of heroism was ultimately the same that would be used for her death, as suggested by the gallows represented at the top of the window with the noose ready. Richard Martin, who stands to the right of Margaret Ward, was similarly convicted for aiding priests during the Elizabethan

²⁰⁴ Mother McMonagle, ‘Margaret Rope’, reproduction of an article in the Shrewsbury Chronicle (Lent/Easter 2012), <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/cathedral/margaret-rope>, consulted 27 October 2015

²⁰⁵ Delaney and Tobin (1962), p. 1187. Ward was beatified in 1929.

persecution. They were five to be put to death on the same occasion at Tyburn.²⁰⁶ In actual fact, this was not the first time Margaret Rope chose to illustrate the story of Margaret Ward's martyrdom. Rope produced twenty roundels in grisaille c. 1913, commemorating the Tyburn martyrs for the Shrine of the Sacred Heart and the English Martyrs at Tyburn. A panel labelled 'visiting the imprisoned' (Figure 3.47), which is part of the window of the *Corporal Works of Mercy*, similarly shows Margaret Ward with a basket handing Fr Watson a rope made of torn fabrics. Born in Congleton, Cheshire, Margaret Ward is one of only two of the forty martyrs of England and Wales canonised by Pope Paul VI in 1970 to have a connection with the diocese of Shrewsbury.²⁰⁷ The other is John Plessington, who forms the subject of the third main lancet to the right.

Before him, however, Margaret Rope has depicted Edward Campion and Robert Wilcox in the second lancet. Campion and Wilcox were both Catholic priests originating from the diocese of Shrewsbury who were martyred for their work for the church. They are shown in the main lancet talking merrily together, while a noose around each of their necks presages their grim fate. Born Gerard Edward, the priest 'renamed himself Edward Campion in honour of St Edmund Campion, the esteemed Jesuit missionary who was martyred at Tyburn, London, in December 1581.'²⁰⁸ Edward Campion would follow suit only seven years later. He was part of the group of the 'Oaten Hill' martyrs, also known as the 'Canterbury Martyrs.' The group included Robert Wilcox, and all four were hanged, drawn, and quartered at Canterbury on 1st October 1588.²⁰⁹ Canterbury Cathedral is recognisable by its towers in the skyline, viewed from a north-west angle, in Margaret Rope's narrative panel (Figure 3.48). She has elected to depict the moment when Wilcox climbed up the ladder to the gallows. The first to depart, he turns back to look down at his three companions also dressed in white gowns. Wilcox declares 'I am going to heaven before you where I will carry the tidings of you coming after me.' The text is inscribed onto small pieces of white glass in the background above an eager crowd of bystanders. The executioner and guard wear red robes of a loose interpretation of Elizabethan

²⁰⁶ Delaney and Tobin (1962), p. 761

²⁰⁷ Diocese of Shrewsbury, 'Saint Margaret Ward', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/st-margaret-ward>, consulted 27 October 2015

²⁰⁸ Diocese of Shrewsbury, 'Blessed Edward Campion', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/blessed-edward-campion>, consulted 27 October 2015

²⁰⁹ Diocese of Shrewsbury, 'Blessed Robert Wilcox', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/blessed-robert-wilcox>, consulted 27 October 2015

clothing, with on their chests the inscription 'ER' intersected by a crown to refer to Queen Elizabeth the First.²¹⁰

The stained glass maker has singled out John Plessington in the third lancet, who stands beneath the figure of Christ. Plessington faces upwards and holds the chalice. The connection between the Host and Christ is conveyed by the device of a shimmery blue smoke which forms its way up to the crown at the top of the lancet (Figure 3.49). The materialisation of smoke in the glass medium allows the artist to trace visual links, enforcing a narrative. It is significant that this device should appear in a window depicting beatified martyrs, as Monsignor Guardini described the holy smoke as 'the offering of a sweet savor which scripture itself tells us is the prayers of the Saints,' incense being a 'symbol of prayer.'²¹¹ Although Plessington would not be canonized (*i.e.* recognised as a saint) until 1970, as a beatified soul he could intercede on the behalf of those who prayed in his name, thus conveying their prayers to Christ.

The priest is shown in the panel below handing out the Holy Communion to a group of kneeling faithful in a private home (Figure 3.50). A manservant holds his ear to the door standing guard against priest-catchers. Originally from Dimples in Lancashire, St John 'exercised his ministry in Cheshire and North Wales.'²¹² He was one of the six martyrs 'accused of treason in the "Popish Plot", which had been fabricated by Titus Oates ... in the late part of the 17th century.'²¹³ The battlements of the city of Chester are shown in a small roundel above Plessington's head, as the place where he was hanged, drawn, and quartered after having been kept prisoner in the Castle Gaol for nine weeks.²¹⁴ His burial place in St Nicholas' churchyard, in Burton, is depicted in another roundel. A similar format has been used to the other side illustrating the fount of Holywell, the local place of pilgrimage near which Plessington used to

²¹⁰ Indeed the Catholic 'Canterbury Martyrs' should not be confused with the Protestant Martyrs of Canterbury, who were executed under the previous reign of Queen Mary between 1555 and 1558.

²¹¹ Monsignor Guardini, *Sacred Signs* (St Louis: Pio Decimus Press, 1956), quoted in Matthew D. Herrera, 'Holy Smoke – The Use of Incense in the Catholic Church', *Adoremus Bulletin* 17:10 (February 2012), online edition <http://www.adoremus.org/0212Herrera.html>, consulted 5 January 2016

²¹² Diocese of Shrewsbury, 'St John Plessington', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/st-john-plessington>, consulted 27 October 2015

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Cardwell (1930), p. 21

minister.²¹⁵ The cauldron above this signifies ‘the boiling of the quarters.’²¹⁶ Margaret Rope has integrated the cryptic inscription of ‘no priest’ and ‘no religion’ into her design, extracted from the speech which John Plessington gave prior to his death. Herein he is quoted stating ‘If you will consider either the Old or New Testament (for it is the basis of religion) for no priest or religion, St. *Paul* tells us in Hebrews, the viith and 12th. The priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the law, and consequently the priesthood being abolished, the law and religion is quite gone.’²¹⁷ Plessington’s speech was later printed with copies still in circulation today.²¹⁸

The final lancet commemorates the plight of Robert Johnson and John Shert (Figure 3.51). Both were amongst the nineteen priests who were put on trial at Westminster in 1581 in the context of the ‘Plot of Rome and Rheims.’ The case sought to proclaim that the priests were not being condemned for their faith ‘but for conspiring against the Queen, an accusation which they adamantly denied.’²¹⁹ Despite lack of evidence all were found guilty, and the executions went ahead. Johnson and Shert were detained until the 28th of May 1583, when they were removed alongside another Shrewsbury priest, Blessed Thomas Ford. Johnson went last after ‘after being forced to watch the quartering of Blessed John Shert.’²²⁰ Shert’s body lies in the foreground of Rope’s narrative panel (Figure 3.52), the greyish flesh and rigidity of his members pronouncing him dead in contrast with the glow of his nimbus. Robert Johnson, meanwhile, stands on the platform ready for the rope to tighten around his neck. His hands clasped in prayer, his final words are inscribed in the glass above him, ‘Oh happy Thomas, thy blessed soul, pray for me,’ thus referencing fellow Shrewsbury priest, Thomas Ford.

²¹⁵ In fact bones believed to be John Plessington were recently uncovered at Holywell and a bid is being made for DNA analysis to determine whether the circumstantial evidence collected by the University of Edinburgh can be scientifically confirmed. [BBC News, ‘Bid to prove Holywell pub skeleton is St John Plessington’, 20 October 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-east-wales-34578488>, consulted 27 October 2015]

²¹⁶ Cardwell (1930), p. 14

²¹⁷ Richard Challoner, *Memoirs of Missionary Priests* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd, 1924; republished Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers Ltd, 1969), p. 542

²¹⁸ Individual copies of the speech were privately printed in 1679 and the speech was also recorded in full in Bishop Challoner’s *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*. [Cardwell (1930), p. 21]

²¹⁹ Diocese of Shrewsbury, ‘Blessed Robert Johnson’, <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/blessed-robert-johnson>, consulted 27 October 2015

²²⁰ Ibid. Whilst Johnson was beatified in 1886, Shert’s self-sacrifice would officially be recognised in 1929. [Delaney and Tobin (1962), pp. 627, 1055]

Margaret Rope's martyrs' window for Birkenhead offers a rich programme in a highly-legible and aesthetically-pleasing form. It adheres to the Arts and Crafts ideal of working *with* the material, rather than *against* it. The black lead comes espouse the different forms, accentuating the human figures. This helps create structure and hierarchy within the composition. These thick lines are reminiscent of the Birmingham School's black and white wood-engraved illustrations, which Margaret Rope also produced. The artist has worked with a rich palette of coloured glass, fully exploiting the technical advances in manufacture. The rich ruby, dark blue and pot-metal greens are complemented with light yellows to deep oranges which exploit the tonal range achievable with silver stain. Less conventional pinks and greys have been added to the traditional colours. Pieces have been selected which display particular effects, such as the streaky glass visible in the upper panes. But whereas her earlier window of *St Elizabeth, St Mary and St John the Baptist*, displays the turn-of-the-century Birmingham School desire to include every particularity which the media could offer from glass type to painterly treatment, the martyrs window shows selective restraint. This is especially noticeable in the increased presence of white diamond-shaped quarries which help lighten the composition. More particularly, these white pieces have not been interfered with, unlike her former preference for heavily-stippled whites. Rope's developing relationship with stained glass is reflective of tendencies visible in the work of her contemporaries as the twentieth century wore on. Thinner and clearer glass takes over, as the emphasis shifts onto the coloured light effects created by the material, rather than the formal composition itself. The window thus formulates an original history of regional martyrdom.

This is continued in Rope's panel of *St Winefride*, a secondary patron of the Diocese of Shrewsbury (Figure 3.11). Originally from Wales, where she died in 650, St Winfride's connection with Shrewsbury was initiated in 1138 when her relics were transferred to the Benedictine abbey in Shrewsbury where they were enshrined and venerated.²²¹ The red Welsh dragon can be seen emerging from the right of St Winefride's back in the window. In the stories of St Winefride's life which multiplied in the 12th century, it is claimed that 'the young Caradog, a chieftain of Hawarden, had fallen in love with Winefride but she shunned his advances. He

²²¹ Diocese of Shrewsbury, 'St Winefride', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/st-winefride>, consulted 28 October 2015

pursued her as she fled to the church that St Beuno, her uncle, had built and in a rage he cut off her head.²²² Legend has it that a fragrant spring suddenly appeared in the place where her head hit the ground. This would be given the name of Holywell (Tre Ffynnon), Clwyd, and became a place of pilgrimage. The fount of water spurts at the bottom of Rope's panel, while the repeated set of crutches help form a decorative border in reference to the sick and infirm who sought relief at Holywell. When the see was first established in 1851, Holywell fell within the Diocese of Shrewsbury, which explains its place within a pictorial programme of the history of the diocese.²²³ In a miraculous turn of events, St Beuno brought St Winefride back to life by placing her severed head back onto her shoulders. Margaret Rope has followed the convention in referring to this resuscitation by tracing a thin line across the middle of Winefride's neck. The palm held in her right hand honours this victory as a martyr. St Winefride embraced her second lease of life by becoming a nun and later an abbess, as symbolised by the staff in her left hand. Despite the saint's black habit, the overall effect of the window is quite light. This is the result of the quality of glass, but also of its treatment by the artist. The glass employed is thinner than in Rope's earlier windows, increasing its translucency. The insertion of pieces of white glass in the border as well as in the main panel design further favours luminosity.

The prominence of martyred priests amongst Rope's choice of saints can be tied to her vocation as a Carmelite nun. As such, one of her principal duties would have been to pray for priests.²²⁴ A direct reference to the Carmelite order is evident in her panel of *St Thérèse of Lisieux* (Figure 3.4310). The window commemorated a local benefactor, Isabel Ana Fernandez Deblunes, who died in 1928. St Thérèse, one of several daughters in a deeply Catholic French household, had followed the example of her elder sisters by entering Lisieux Carmel at the young age of fourteen and professed her vows in 1890.²²⁵ The beatification of St Thérèse (1873-1897) by Pope Pius XI in 1923, followed by her sanctification as Teresa-of-the-Child-Jesus in 1925, and declaration as Patroness of the Missions in 1927 were recent events at the time of the

²²² Ibid.

²²³ In 1895 Holywell was incorporated into the Diocese of Menevia, and since 1987 the shrine has belonged to the Diocese of Wrexham. [Diocese of Shrewsbury, 'St Winefride', consulted 28 October 2015]

²²⁴ *One Hundred Saints: Their Lives and Likenesses Drawn from Butler's "Lives of the Saints" and Great Works of Western Art* (Boston, New York, London: Bulfinch Press, 1993), p. 269

²²⁵ Mary Frohlich (ed.), *St Thérèse of Lisieux: Essential Writings* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2003), p. 10

window's conception.²²⁶ 1928, the year of its design, coincided with Sr Margaret's taking on the final orders, marking the end of her five-year-long religious novitiate.²²⁷ This artwork can therefore be seen as a commentary on current events, in terms of the artist's personal life as well as those affecting the wider Catholic community.

The cult of Thérèse of Lisieux was quick to take hold in the wake of her death. A year later her autobiographical *Story of the Soul* was published along with letters and poetry. The book soon crossed international borders, thirty-three thousand copies of the French edition being distributed within ten years as well as editions in six other languages including English.²²⁸ Part of her appeal lay in the attributes she embodied, namely 'childlikeness,' 'the transformation of suffering into love', and 'sisterhood.'²²⁹ The latter would particularly have spoken to Sr Margaret whose artistic and religious life had relied on networks of female friendship. Thérèse of Lisieux similarly produced creative works, painting and writing several plays and poems within her short life.²³⁰ The Carmelite motto '*Zelo zelatus sum pro Domino Deo exercituum*' features at the bottom of Rope's panel, surrounding the order's shield. Taken from the Prophet Elijah, this translates from the Latin as 'With zeal have I been zealous for the Lord God of hosts.' Elijah was claimed as a symbolic founder of the order, partly due to his 'historical link with the geographical site of Mount Carmel where the first Carmelite hermits established themselves "beside the spring of Elijah".'²³¹ The Carmelites also related to Elijah on a spiritual level in his 'prophetic spirit and passionate defense of "the God of Israel before whom I stand".'²³²

The theme of the host intermingled with the ritual use of incense is illustrated along the window's border. Starting at the bottom, incense boats on either side are followed by candles serving to light the content of the thurible swinging in Thérèse's hands, succeeded by the key to

²²⁶ *One Hundred Saints* (1993), p. 270

²²⁷ Quidenham, CMQ, MARC, Unsigned typed document with information for obituary

²²⁸ Frohlich (2003), p. 28; Several editions came out in English in the early twentieth century: T.N. Taylor (ed.), *Soeur Thérèse of Lisieux, The Little Flower of Jesus* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1912); T.N. Taylor (ed.), *Soeur Thérèse of Lisieux, The Little Flower of Jesus* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1924).

²²⁹ Frohlich (2003), p. 28

²³⁰ Ibid., pp. 10-11; Pierre Descouvermont, *Thérèse and Lisieux* (Toronto: Novalis, 1996), p. 196

²³¹ Sr Gillian Leslie, 'The Margaret Rope Windows', <http://quidenhamcarmel.org.uk/margaret-rope-windows>, consulted 28 October 2015

²³² Ibid. A two-panel window of Elijah was designed by Sr Margaret for the church of Quidenham Carmel, and later carried out by Margaret Edith Aldrich Rope.

open the tabernacle containing the Host, with a candle symbolising its adoration outside of mass, culminating with a chalice in which the bread is served during mass. These elements confirm that Margaret Rope was familiar with the life of Thérèse of Lisieux, who was assigned to help in the sacristy for two years, cleaning the candles and the censer as well as preparing the sacred vessels.²³³ Indeed the tabernacle was ‘the centre of her contemplative life’, following in the footsteps of Teresa of Avila, the Spanish foundress of the reformed Carmelite Order.²³⁴ Teresa of Avila had considered the celebration of mass and return of the Blessed Sacrament into the tabernacle as the symbol of the foundation of a new Carmel. This is further alluded to in Margaret Rope’s inclusion of the priest standing in front of the altar at the top of the window as if to say mass. Rose petals fall down from Thérèse’s habit, referring to her posthumous mission which she foresaw at the end of her life, declaring ‘You will see... it will be a shower of roses’ from heaven.²³⁵ This would be emphasized in Margaret Rope’s later window of *Thérèse of Lisieux* for the church at Quidenham Carmel (Figure 3.53). Pierre Descouvemont has noted how the shape of Thérèse of Lisieux’s face was altered in the illustrations to her *Story of the Soul* and the various pictures and postcards circulated by the Carmelites of Lisieux.²³⁶ Her defined and rather square jaw-line as shown in photographs, was rounded, transforming her features to match the perceived softness of her personality. Sr Margaret’s portrait of Thérèse of Lisieux is truthful to her appearance as photographed, seemingly based on a likeness taken on 7th June 1897 (Figure 3.54).

The detailed iconography and symbolism in Margaret Rope’s windows allow to appreciate the extensive research which went into her designs, and which members of the church today interpret as a testament to her commitment to the Catholic faith. Her interest in theology was evident prior to becoming a nun. She notably studied the work of St Thomas in length.²³⁷ Once she entered enclosure ‘silence, recollection, and the struggle for inner transformation’ took over her mind.²³⁸ Learning from textual sources played an important part,

²³³ Descouvemont (1996), p. 174; Her work as Sacristan was discussed in her autobiography, with an illustration of her standing at a table with the holy vessels. [Taylor (1912), p. 126]

²³⁴ Descouvemont (1996), p. 188

²³⁵ Sr Gillian Leslie, ‘The Margaret Rope Windows’, consulted 28 October 2015

²³⁶ Descouvemont (1996), p. 314

²³⁷ Quidenham, CMQ, MARC, Extracts from Fr Henry Rope’s diaries in relation to his sister

²³⁸ Mary Jo Weaver, *Cloister and Community: Life Within a Carmelite Monastery* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), p. 15

as on a typical day a Carmelite nun would recite the ‘Divine Office with its specified hours of prayer; spent two hours in private; did spiritual reading; and participated in the regular activities of community life (work, recreation, study, and household tasks).’²³⁹ This was ‘a life dedicated to prayer’, which ‘could be a full-time occupation’ in view of keeping the ‘counsels of perfection’ which referred to the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience.²⁴⁰ Rope’s training in the Arts and Crafts tradition which emphasised manual labour in artistic production can be seen as compatible with the vow of poverty which ‘is predicated on the willingness to support oneself with the work of one’s hands.’²⁴¹ The maintenance of her link with an Arts and Crafts ethos is evidenced by the fact that she brought books authored by Arts and Crafts practitioners with her to the convent. Margaret Rope’s copy of W.R. Lethaby’s *Medieval Art: From the Peace of the Church to the Eve of the Renaissance 1312-1350* (1911) and Lewis F. Day’s *Stained Glass* (1913) remain in the library at Quidenham Carmel.

Additional connections can be established between the work which Margaret Rope carried out for the church of the Holy Name in Birkenhead and the windows which she designed for her Carmelite community, first in Woodbridge and then Quidenham. The striking frontal figure of the Virgin Mary in earliest three-lancet window in Birkenhead (Figure 3.8) has been revisited within a panel commemorating the foundation of Woodbridge Carmel in 1927 (Figure 3.42). This was part of a series of four panels illustrating ‘the Carmelite foundations from which the Woodbridge monastery had descended (Avila [Spain], Paris [France], Notting Hill [London], Woodbridge [Sussex]).’²⁴² Sr Margaret thus helped create a visual identity and history for the English Carmelite community. It could be argued that this institutional programme was in dialogue with Margaret Rope’s own artistic narrative. This would bring additional meaning to the fact that the panel which borrows the Virgin originally designed for Birkenhead is the one associated with her new home. A formal link is created between her ecclesiastical art prior to enclosure and her stained glass following the embracement of her vocation. Another instance of this type of dialogue between Margaret Rope’s artworks can be seen in the Birkenhead Virgin panel.

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 45

²⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 75-6

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 46

²⁴² Sr Gillian Leslie, ‘The Margaret Rope Windows’, consulted 17 December 2015

In this version the Virgin (Figure 3.8) stands with her hands elevated in prayer staring fixedly ahead as a ray descending from the Holy Spirit in form of a dove above her marks her miraculous pregnancy with Christ. Her feet crush the serpent, similarly to Kate Bunce's depiction of the Virgin Mary in Longworth. Water flows beneath her referring to the legend of Mary's Well, the location where the Annunciation supposedly took place. The tree of Jesse grows in the lower panel alluding to early religious depictions in which the tree often ascended vertically to Mary, with Christ either in her arms or at the top.²⁴³ Most intriguing though, are the crowned 'M' letters on either side of the tree at the very bottom of the window (Figure 3.55). These clearly refer to Mary's title of 'Queen of Heaven.' The lettering is the same however to Margaret Rope's signature at the bottom of the window in Blaxhall, where the initials 'A' and 'R' have been integrated into the letter 'M' (Figure 3.43). Whilst this could just be the consequence of the artist's distinctive script, it creates nonetheless an interesting formal affiliation.

A lineage is created from Margaret Rope's only signed work in the locality in which the other branch of the Rope family resided, to a window in a church of her own native diocese of Shrewsbury, leading to an artwork honouring the history of her new community in Woodbridge. By this means the viewer is able to break through the secret of Sr Margaret's identity as author. Margaret Rope's recuperation of her earlier design of the Virgin Mary in a window destined for the enclosed space of the convent is a figurative means of bringing something of the outside world in with her. The religion required that in becoming a Carmelite nun Margaret Rope sever all ties with the external world.²⁴⁴ In taking on the orders she was prepared to sacrifice her art for the greater gift of fully serving God. Ultimately this would not be required of her, to the pleasure of the communities and visitors who continue to enjoy her windows today.

²⁴³ See for example 'Tree of Jesse', *Speculum humanae salvationis*, Kremsmünster, Library of the Convent, Cod. 243, fol. 55r, c. 1325-30, reproduced in Susanne Wittekind, 'Visualizing Salvation: The Role of Arboreal Imagery in the *Speculum humanae salvationis* (Kremsmünster, Library of the Convent, Cod. 243', in *The Tree: Symbol, Allegory, and Mnemonic Device in Medieval Art and Thought*, eds Pippa Salonus and Andrea Worm (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), p. 124

²⁴⁴ Especially during her early novitiate, Margaret Rope reverted to the authority of the Mother Prioress, who monitored ingoing and outgoing letters and authorised visits. When family members came to the Carmel they would meet her in a visitor's parlour. The nun was protected from the outside gaze by a wooden screen, a veil furthermore covering her face.

Chapter 4 Embroidered Teachings: Collaboration and Transmission

In comparison with the crafts considered in previous chapters, the gendered discourse surrounding embroidery is inextricable from its history and appreciation.¹ Britain held a long tradition of needlework as part of young girls' education. This went through a series of reforms throughout the Victorian era. In the early nineteenth century, needlework was in fact 'the only craft consistently included in the early years of the elementary schools ... for the girls.'² Not only was gender a key factor in Victorian and Edwardian audiences' consideration of embroidery, but social class also determined which aspect of the craft would be learnt, produced, and consumed by the individual. This was reflected in the hierarchical subdivision of the different types of needlecraft practised by women. "'Plain needlework" was considered appropriate for the poor man's wife,' whereas 'embroidery was the diversion and accomplishment of the lady.'³

Despite its conception as a foremost female occupation, 'Needlework in schools was examined by the entirely male inspectorate.'⁴ This created a problematic disjuncture between those in a position to appreciate the quality of a student's embroidered work, namely women who would have had a practical knowledge of the craft, and the men socially considered as qualified to be the judges. This prompted the formation of 'Ladies' committees' and 'Prize Schemes' in view of 'rais[ing] the standard of needlework teaching in the schools.'⁵ The instruction nevertheless remained generally monotonous, with an emphasis on proficiency rather than creativity.⁶

Needlework's association with women identified it with the domestic realm. Linda Parry notes how with the emergence of Britain's industrial middle class, 'more money became available for clothing and the decoration and furnishing of the home. Comfort, warmth and

¹ Judith Butler brings attention to Luce Irigaray's analysis of sexual difference as articulated by language, in which she argues that 'the feminine is the signification of lack, signified by the Symbolic, a set of differentiating linguistic rules that effectively creates sexual difference.'¹ Irigaray's theory, which subscribes to binary relations, would identify the discursive marking of embroidery as 'feminine' as evidence of and simultaneously grounds for its exclusion. [Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge Classics, 2008), p. 38]

² George Sutton, *Artisan or Artist?: A History of the Teaching of Arts and Crafts in English Schools* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1967), p. 73

³ Sutton (1967), p. 73

⁴ Ibid., p. 77

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., p. 81

prosperity were the characteristics of the best mid-Victorian interiors.’ The material excess embodied by the accumulation of interior fabrics ‘showed prosperity’ which was perceived as security.⁷ In Birmingham, embroidery was a flourishing business. In the late nineteenth century the firm of Jones & Willis on Edmund Street was one of the twenty-two ‘Fancy Repositories’ registered in the local trade records.⁸ In addition to private buyers, a high demand came from the Church. An illustrated catalogue of Jones & Willis’s wares dating from 1889 advertises a variety of textiles, from the small alms bag and book marker, to altar cloths and tapestries.⁹ These reproduce typical commercial naturalistic floral motifs interspersed with heraldry. In the wake of the Anglo-Catholic revival and the Catholic Emancipation act, embroidery was in high demand from the Church again, after having largely fallen into disfavour following the Reformation. In parallel to commercial enterprises, this opened avenues of work for women outside of the trade.

Associations such as The Ladies’ Ecclesiastical Embroidery Society, founded in 1854, executed the designs of church architects, including the Gothic revivalists Augustus Welby Pugin, George Edmund Street (1824-1881), and George Frederick Bodley whose designs encompassed the buildings’ furnishings. The Royal School of Art Needlework was another important Victorian institution. Founded in 1872 by Helen Welby and Lady Marion Alford (1817-1888), it enjoyed the patronage of Queen Victoria’s daughter, Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein (1846-1923). The School was ‘started with the dual purpose of improving the standard of commercial embroidery and “providing suitable employment for educated women”’.¹⁰ Students were offered practical training until ready to carry out paid work in a

⁷ Linda Parry, *The Victoria & Albert Museum’s Textile Collection: British Textiles from 1850 to 1900* (Victoria & Albert Museum, 1993), p. 9. Rozsika Parker has demonstrated the gendered implications of such ‘comfort’ particularly for women of the middle class. Embroidery became the means for these women to materially fulfil their duty to love their husbands, since ‘love could not be expressed sexually or passionately.’ Parker reveals a dark undercurrent to all this apparent ‘comfort’, arguing that it was the manifestation of a ‘profound distress and insecurity’ as ‘middle-class women were increasingly dependent on their husband for economic security, for social status and for love.’ [Parker (2010), pp. 154-5]

⁸ Linda Cluckie, *The Rise and Fall of Needlework: its Socio-Economic and Cultural Aspects* (Bury St Edmunds: Arena Books, 2008), p. 62; Repositories referred to art equipment shops of the nineteenth century, which notably began to produce their own magazines including needlework patterns to help with sales. [Parker (2010), p. 169]

⁹ Jones & Willis, *Abridged Illustrated Catalogue of Art Furniture, Hangings and Embroidery Manufactured by Jones & Willis* (Birmingham: Jones & Willis, 1889); John Hopper, Inspirational, ‘Newton, Jones and Willis Embroidery Work’, 28 January 2011, <http://thetextileblog.blogspot.co.uk/2011/01/newton-jones-and-willis-embroidery-work.html>, consulted 3 November 2015

¹⁰ Linda Parry, *Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), p. 142

protected environment. The school gave form to William Morris's 'admiration for seventeenth-century crewel embroidery' with an 'emphasis on quality materials', referred to as 'Art Needlework'.¹¹ It would commission 'designs from the leading architects, artists and designers of the day', which students would then anonymously execute.¹² In addition to William Morris this included Edward Burne-Jones, Alexander Fisher (1864-1936), Sir Frederick Leighton (1830-1896), and Walter Crane, but also the rarely mentioned Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932).¹³ By 1880 the school had opened 'several branches in the provinces, mostly established in leading department stores of major towns.'¹⁴ Messrs. Manton, Sons, & Gilbert were the agents for Birmingham.¹⁵

Although often overlooked as a 'minor art', needlework held a special position within the Arts and Crafts movement. Walter Crane described it as '*distinctive* ... because of the peculiar charm and delicate beauty of needlework ... *distinguished*, because of the skill, taste, and devotion of individual craftswomen who have raised the standard of accomplishment.'¹⁶ Crane further argued that it also had the 'advantage over many other arts that it requires but little space. Its materials are few, light, and portable; it is an art that can be practised anywhere, requiring no expensive plant, or even any special sort of workshop or studio.'¹⁷

Despite needlework's historical association with women, the general literature on the Arts and Crafts movement has focused on William Morris's role in the revival of embroidery. William Morris's personal interest in the craft combined with his firm's production of embroidered altar frontals, church hangings, and other ecclesiastical linens were an important

¹¹ Parker (2010), p. 183

¹² Dilys Blum, 'Ecclesiastical Embroidery c. 1896 attributed to Walter Crane', *Bulletin – Philadelphia Museum of Art* 86 (Spring 1990), p. 16

¹³ Joan Edwards, *Gertrude Jekyll: Embroiderer, Gardener and Craftsman* (Dorking: Bayford Books, 1981), p. 10

¹⁴ Callen (1979), p. 115

¹⁵ L.Higgin, *Handbook of Embroidery, Published by Authority of the Royal School of Art Needlework etc.* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1880), p. 106. The recognition of women's professional contribution to the field was complicated however by issues tied to both gender and social class. Notwithstanding the prestige pieces embroidered by the Royal School, the institution was criticised for its 'use of inferior designs' and the fact that 'its products were too expensive.' Callen argues that 'this patronising attitude not only contains the degrading notion that even when practising a profession ladies had to be given tolerant charitable assistance to make a decent living, but it also implies ... that, if allowed to complete on the open, lower-class embroidery market, ladies would be forced back into the state of destitution they sought to escape because of the inadequate wages offered to working-class embroiderers.' [Callen (1979), p. 102]

¹⁶ Walter Crane, 'Needlework as a Mode of Artistic Expression', Part I, *The Magazine of Art* 22 (1898), p. 144

¹⁷ Crane (1898), p. 147

contribution to the heightened interest in artistically accomplished needlework. Rozsika Parker is critical however of how Morris has been lauded in design histories with ‘changing the face of Victorian embroidery single-handedly.’¹⁸ Parker, in alignment with Anthea Callen’s thesis about women’s contribution to the Arts and Crafts Movement in a wider sense, argues that while Morris provided an impulse and theories, these were in fact implemented by others. It is some of these practitioners, including William Morris’s daughter, May, who will be brought forward in this chapter.

In terms of late-Victorian innovations in the teaching of embroidery in an institutional context, present literature has generally emphasised the Glasgow School of Art’s importance. The embroiderers Jessie Newbery (1864-1948) and Ann Macbeth (1875-1948) have been credited as having provided a ‘new impetus’ for embroidery in the 1890s.¹⁹ Birmingham’s educational and artistic contribution to Arts and Crafts embroidery at this same period remains overlooked. The class in embroidery announced at the BMSA as of 1893 was as follows:

NEEDLEWORK *Syllabus*: Design in reference to the requirements of needlework: Outline work, appliqué, *acupictae*, etc. The selection and arrangement of colour. The materials in which embroidery is worked: Floss and twisted silks, gold and silver threads, linen thread and wool: on grounds of linen, wool, and silk. Embroidery of materials in frames. Embroidery of materials held in the hand. Position of the needle in making stitches. Varieties of stitches: Chain stitch, crewel and feather stitches, satin stitch, tapestry stitch, stem stitch, couching, darning, etc., etc. Effects of stitches in relation to materials into which they are worked. Methods of stitching different materials

¹⁸ Parker (2010), p. 180

¹⁹ Barbara Morris, *Victorian Embroidery* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1962), p. 142; Jessie Newbery and Ann Macbeth applied to embroidery the belief that artworks ‘should grow spontaneously out of the materials and techniques used’ and that designs should be ‘completely of [their] own period, owing nothing to past forms.’ In the latter respect they went a step further in developing a new embroidered language than the Birmingham School who remained more faithful to historical precedents. [Fiona C. MacFarlane and Elizabeth F. Arthur, *Glasgow School of Art Embroidery 1894-1920* (Glasgow: Glasgow Museum and Art Galleries, 1980), in Foreword by Alasdair A. Auld]; for more details on Jessie Newbery and Ann Macbeth’s embroidery as taught at the Glasgow School of Art see Liz Bird, ‘Threading the Beads: Women in Art in Glasgow, 1870-1920’, in *Unchartered Lives: Extracts from Scottish Women’s Experience, 1850-1982*, ed. Glasgow Women’s Studies Group (Glasgow: Pressgang, 1983), pp. 98-117; Constance Howard, *Twentieth-Century Embroidery in Great Britain to 1939* (London: B T Batsford, 1985), pp. 30-32; Parker (2010), pp. 185-187

together. Embroidery in relief. Embroidery on open grounds – like net, etc.

Embroidery allied to tapestry weaving. Lace design.²⁰

Anthea Callen has noted that whereas ‘most government schools of design were entirely devoted to theoretical design instruction, institutions such as the Royal School [of Art Needlework] taught only the practical side,’ leaving the craftswoman unqualified to fully carry out an original project in embroidery.²¹ The Birmingham embroidery curriculum seems unique therefore at this time in offering formal training to students, (on paper) irrespectively of social background, which combined notions of design with practical instruction. This adhered to Ruskin’s precept that ‘artistic manual labour was a necessary activity for the fully developed human being, whether a member of the upper, the middle, or of the working, classes.’²² Mary J. Newill was the Birmingham School of Art’s main teacher of embroidery from the 1890s to the 1920s. Her connection with the school began as a student, followed by teacher training in one of its branch schools. This reflects the institution’s policy to favour former students with in-house knowledge of its Arts and Crafts ethos in the selection of its teaching staff. This preference might be explained by the fact that, as argued by George Rawson, art masters who had qualified with the ‘National Course of Instruction’ typically ‘had no claims to being artists or designers, but, having been educated in the kind of work which would gain Department grants, were more likely to concentrate their efforts on good examination results rather than encouraging the improvement of design.’²³ It is Newill’s contribution as a craftswoman and educator that will form the main body of this chapter, in order to explore Birmingham’s role in the professionalisation of Arts and Crafts embroidery.

Two artworks will be closely analysed. This will begin with the consideration of the showpiece known as *The Owl* (Figure 4.1), a project initiated by May Morris and collaboratively realised with Mary Newill and other members of staff, along with a number of Birmingham students between 1901 and 1903. The second case study will be a set of curtains of Mary Newill’s design (Figure 4.2) made c. 1906, intended for her home. The discussion of these

²⁰ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, *Programme for the Session 1893-94, Beginning on Monday, the 11th of September, 1893* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son), p. 17

²¹ Callen (1979), p. 102

²² Rawson (2004), p. 35

²³ Ibid., p. 32

works will touch upon the issues of authorship, collaborative labour, and the transmission of skills. Rozsika Parker has criticised how ‘embroidery is all too often treated only in terms of technical developments’ and as such ‘the iconography of women’s work is rarely given the serious consideration it deserves.’²⁴ My analysis will endeavour to address both these facets, paying close attention to ways of making, materials, technique, as well as the visual qualities of both pieces. The embroideries’ function and setting, the one intended for public display, and the other for private domestic use, will further inform the interpretation of these artworks’ ‘embodied meanings’ and ‘politics of aesthetics.’

Mary Newill joined the BMSA as a student in 1885. Her work quickly stood out, as she obtained a 1st prize worth one pound in a six-hour-long demonstration of her skills in painting objects in 1886, the first of many awards.²⁵ She sat for exams including painting in monochrome, shaded drawing from the cast, shading from models, perspective drawing, painting in oils, drawing from the life, as well as evaluation in art history, design, studies from memory of ornament and of architectural styles.²⁶ She completed her foundational artistic training in 1889, in conjunction with qualifying as a teacher.²⁷ Newill was one of six women who integrated the newly opened ‘Scheme for the instruction in art subjects at the Bristol Street Board School, of the Female Pupil Candidate Pupil Teachers under the Birmingham School Board’ as an assistant teacher under the supervision of Fred Mason and Sidney Meteyard.²⁸ In the session of 1892-93, Newill was one of three graduates from the programme whose efforts were rewarded by a post as assistant teacher at the Central School. She started out at a salary of sixty pounds a year for eleven hours of work per week over the course of the academic year

²⁴ Parker (2010), p. 12

²⁵ *Birmingham ... Prize List, 1886* (1885), Prizes announced in programme 1885-6, p. 26. Newill was also awarded the Samuel Messenger, Birmingham Midland Institute prize of ‘£5 for best drawing of the human figure’ which she shared with Fred Mason at £2 10s. each [*Birmingham ... Prize List ... 1888* (nd) Prizes announced in programme for session 1887-88, p. 48]

²⁶ *Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, 1887* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, 1887), pp. 10,12; *Birmingham ... Prize List ... 1888* (nd), pp. 8, 11, 13, 43

²⁷ *Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, With Notes at to the Exhibition of Students’ Works, 1889* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, nd), p. 8. Myra Bunce and Henry Payne also saw their works for the ‘Art Class Teacher’s Certificate’ accepted that same year. The latter two are announced as having obtained their certificate in 1888. [*Birmingham ... Prize List ... 1889* (nd), p. 43] Myra Bunce does not seem to have made use of her teaching qualification at the school.

²⁸ Intriguingly no equivalent programme was set up to train male teachers, their prior experience or gender convincing the board that they would be apt to do the job. Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/8/1, *Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Birmingham, Programme for the Session 1889-1890, commencing on 9 September 1889*

1892-3.²⁹ Ten years later, this was raised to one hundred pounds a year.³⁰ As a junior staff-member she would probably have assisted at first with some of the elementary sections of the curriculum, rather than specialized classes.³¹ A class in needlework was first advertised in the School programme in 1893, in fact predating by a year Jessie Newbery's class at the Glasgow School of Art. It was taught by Mary Newill at the Central School on Margaret Street until 1922, at which date she was succeeded by Miss G. Catell with a different syllabus.³²

Newill continued to develop her skills as a craftswoman throughout her career as an educator, her name appearing in the student records as late as 1908.³³ The award of a John Skirrow Wright Scholarship, worth one hundred and eighty pounds, allowed her to spend the period of 1 October 1896 to 30 September 1897 drawing from the life in Paris.³⁴ Newill started out at the Atelier Montparnasse under Luc-Olivier Merson (1846-1920) and Raphaël Collin (1850-1916). Collin's connections with Japan would no doubt have appealed to Newill's interest in Japanese design.³⁵ Her decision to study in Paris seems however to have been motivated by the wish to draw from the nude male model, which no school would authorise at the time in Britain. The Académie Julian was known for this, as well as the Académie Colarossi under Messrs Courtois and Girardot, for which Newill left the Montparnasse Atelier.³⁶ Whether this would have been given prior approval by the Birmingham School of Art's board or not,

²⁹ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/3, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. III, 22nd November 1892, Minute 977, p. 210. In August 1893 it was decided that she should teach an additional evening per week for a further £10 per year. [Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/3, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. III, 3rd August 1893, Minute 1059, p. 267. This would prove to be a bit much, and on 26th November 1895, 'the Chairman reported that Miss Mary J. Newill had on account of pressure of other work, asked to be released from some of her teaching.' [Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/4, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. IV, 26th November 1895, Minute 1316, p. 153]

³⁰ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/7, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VII, 13th January 1903, Minute 2564, p. 265

³¹ In this respect I am cautious of Yvonne O'Hara's conclusion that Mary Newill became assistant teacher of needlework in 1892. [O'Hara (2008), p. 14]

³² O'Hara (2008), p. 21 [O'Hara references The School Programme of 1922-23, p. 11]. Constance Howard however refers to Isabel Catterson-Smith's new methods of teaching embroidery at the Birmingham School of Art in the 1920s. [Howard (1985), p. 91]

³³ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, Student Records, volume 2, SA/AD/14/2, p. 106

³⁴ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/4, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. IV, 24th November 1896, Minute 1400, pp. 214-5

³⁵ Raphaël Collin was part of a circle of artists, collectors and merchants in Paris who shared their passion for Japanese art over monthly "Japanese Dinners" initiated by Samuel Bing, and attended by Edmund de Goncourt, Alexis Rouart, James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Ary Renan, Raymond Koechlin, Blondeau and a few others. [Raphaël Collin, 'Tadamasa Hayashi: Some Recollections', in *Illustrated Catalogue of the important collection of Paintings, Water Colors, Pastels, Drawings and Prints, collected by ... Tadamasa Hayashi, etc.* (New York, 1913)]

³⁶ Colarossi's is referred to as 'Collarossione' in the School minutes. [Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/4, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. IV, 9th February 1897: 1433, p. 245]

Newill was determined to achieve the same level of training as her male peers back in Britain. This follows the logic articulated in the two previous chapters, in which the Arts and Crafts movement's ambition to raise the status and quality of overlooked crafts hinged on a firm foundation in the traditionally esteemed skills of drawing and modelling.

Mary Newill also appears to have taken a leave of absence from teaching at the School of Art between 1898 and 1901. During this period she implemented the second stage of her training as a craftswoman-teacher by gaining practical experience through remunerated work. She obtained commissions through the Bromsgrove Guild, producing original embroidery and stained glass designs. This allowed her to extend her experimentation in a professional context, outside of the facilities of the School of Art. While Newill expressed a preference for stained glass she also considered trying her hand at tempera painting 'with a view to mural decoration.'³⁷ There is no evidence that she carried through this idea. It is of interest in the sense that she expressed this intent following her first trip to Florence during which she would have admired the paintings of the Italian Primitives.³⁸ Newill thus adopted a similar course to her male peers Joseph Southall, Arthur Gaskin and Charles Gere, whose decisions to work in tempera were fuelled by voyages to Italy. In line with the Arts and Crafts approach to working in contact with materials, the direct communion with historical pieces provided the impulse behind these artists' desire to revive old techniques. As teachers, Newill and her colleagues would endeavour to facilitate the closest equivalent learning experience they could provide within the school's classrooms and workshops.

The large embroidered work known as the *Owl* (Figure 4.1) remains on permanent loan to the BMT by the BIAD. Its pale cream-coloured linen ground is populated by various animals, birds, and types of flower embroidered in coloured wools contained within a network of tendrils. At its centre-left is an owl, to which the piece owes its given name. The design provides an invaluable window into the history and practices of the Birmingham School of Art in the field of embroidery and needlework. It is in fact a 'piece of concerted work,' reportedly

³⁷ Aymer Vallance, 'Arts and Crafts, British Decorative Art in 1899 and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Part III', *The Studio* 18:81 (December 1899), p. 186

³⁸ Ibid.

‘designed by the School class.’³⁹ The latter element is crucial. Constance Howard notes that at the turn of the century, ‘the advocates of original design were few, although there were many technically skilled artists who could copy superbly.’⁴⁰

May Morris therefore stood out when she argued in 1893 that ‘if needlework is to be looked upon seriously, it is necessary to secure appropriate and practicable designs. Where the worker does not invent for herself, she should at least interpret her designer.’⁴¹ Another contemporary embroiderer, Mary Elizabeth Turner (1854-1907), added to this that ‘modern designers are often ill adapted to the requirements of embroidery.’⁴² This she explained by the fact that ‘many of the people who design for embroidery do not understand it.’⁴³ The involvement of executants and particularly students in the conception of the *Owl* was therefore outstanding from the norm, even within the Arts and Crafts movement which sought to bring together the designer and the maker.

May Morris was first invited to lecture at the School in the Session of 1899-1900.⁴⁴ She lectured in Birmingham for four consecutive Sessions until 1903. In her final year, the time she was able to set aside for visits to Birmingham was diminished, so that she came in for four days only. Mary Newill would have been with her in the classroom, notably on the Wednesdays with which her own hours coincided.⁴⁵ May Morris had been involved in teaching embroidery since 1888 when she advertised ‘private lessons in embroidery, particulars on application’ in the *Hobby Horse*.⁴⁶ In 1897, she became an ‘advisor to the embroidery classes of Maggie Briggs at the Central School of Arts and Crafts.’⁴⁷ Particulars on the curricula were not provided in the annual programmes except to note the availability of ‘a considerable collection of fine examples

³⁹ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/7, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VII, 14th January 1902, Minute 2272, p. 20

⁴⁰ Howard (1985), p. 39

⁴¹ May Morris, ‘Of Embroidery,’ in *Arts and Crafts Essays*, by *Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co, 1893a), p. 220

⁴² Mary E. Turner, ‘Of Modern Embroidery,’ in *Arts and Crafts Essays*, by *Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co, 1893), p. 356

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/8/1, *Programme for the Session 1899-1900, Commencing on Monday 11th September 1899*, p. 7

⁴⁵ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AT/8/2, ‘City of Birmingham. Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Programme for the Session 1902-3’, p. 13

⁴⁶ Linda Parry, *William Morris Textiles* (London: V&A Publishing, 2013), p. 40

⁴⁷ Parry (2013), p. 40

of needlework' on site.⁴⁸ These were supplemented by occasional visits to the South Kensington museum.⁴⁹ Former assistant Ellen Wright took on the class in 1899 under May Morris's direction. A notable difference was that the advertisement for the class now included design.⁵⁰ As pointed out in the introduction to this chapter, design was part of the Birmingham School of Art's programme from its inception in 1893. Attention was paid to this aspect of the craft at the LCSAC from 1900 to 1905. This suggests that May Morris's time at the Birmingham School of Art convinced her that similar elements could be introduced into the London Central School's curriculum.

From 1900, the LCSAC's embroidery lessons comprised 'blackboard demonstrations, tracing and transferring designs, and the practical applications of the various kinds of stitches in handwork and framework.' Furthermore, since students were 'admitted without extra payment to the Drawing and Design Class, they [were] expected to make use of the privilege, and to prepare their own designs for execution in the class.'⁵¹ The design schools in Manchester and Leicester also benefitted from May's teaching before she embarked on a lecture tour in the United States from winter 1909 to spring 1910.⁵² May's outlook on embroidery was far-reaching, and, importantly, achieved through direct interaction with students and fellow practitioners.

May Morris would have identified Mary Newill as an ally in infusing the Birmingham School's embroidery and needlework curriculum with Arts and Crafts ideals. Both women were of a similar age – born in 1862, May Morris was Newill's junior by two years. It is highly probable that they would have met previously in London through the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. May Morris displayed with them from the first exhibition in 1888 and would continue to do so regularly. Her name is listed as a member of the society from 1889.⁵³ Mary Newill's work first appeared in their show in 1893, on the occasion of their fourth exhibition. On the 27th

⁴⁸ London, Central Saint Martins', *Prospectus and Time Table, The Central School of Arts and Crafts, 316, Regent Street, London, W., Second Session, 1897-8*, p. 7

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ May Morris became less involved from 1905 to 1907, when she was recorded as a 'visiting' staff-member. [London, Central Saint Martins', *London County Council Central School of Arts and Crafts, 316, Regent Street, W., Prospectus and time table, 6th Session, Commencing Sept. 23rd, 1901*, p. 7; Parry (2013), p. 40]

⁵² Parry (2013), p. 40

⁵³ Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Second Exhibition, 1889* (London: ACES, 1889), p. 19

October 1897, the year of the Society's next exhibition, Mary Newill was elected a member of the society.⁵⁴ The two women's acquaintance through this forum no doubt participated in a spirit of collaboration in their work at the Birmingham School of Art.

The origin of the *Owl* embroidery can be traced back to October 1901 when Mary Newill was allocated a budget of '£10"10"0 in the provision of wool for completing the hanging recommended by Miss May Morris.'⁵⁵ A few months into the project, Morris would state that:

there have been difficulties to contend with, and I have been surprised to find that some of the students seemed unwilling to sink their personality in a joint production which should do the class and each individual member of it great credit if undertaken in a properly artistic spirit. But, owing to the energy of Miss Newill and some of the students who are willingly seconding her, the difficulties are being overcome, and the project, after languishing for a long time, promises well at last.⁵⁶

The *Owl* was displayed two years in a row, in 1903 and 1904, at the Birmingham School of Art Students' Exhibition, held in the rooms of the Birmingham Royal Society of Artists in New Street. It was placed in the Great Room, in which were usually exhibited executed and generally outstanding designs.

In this context it was referred to as a 'coverlet' which gives it a different functionality to its otherwise assumed purpose as a hanging. Mary Newill herself referred to it as a curtain.⁵⁷ If understood as a bedspread it would have been conceived to be as functional in this capacity as beautiful. It would have been placed on the flat, and depending on the bed might not have been entirely visible. It follows that this would have been reflected in its design which offers decorative details which can be appreciated from various standpoints. Thomasina Beck, a practising embroiderer, notes that 'a coverlet will show off the textures of stitchery far better on the surface of a bed than hung on a wall.'⁵⁸ In this light it was an advantage that I got to view

⁵⁴ O'Hara (2008), p. 18; information given to her by Alan Crawford.

⁵⁵ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/6, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VI, 8th October 1901, Minute 2216, p. 272

⁵⁶ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/7, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VII, 14th January 1902, Minute 2272, p. 20

⁵⁷ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/7, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VII, 13th January 1903, Minute 2564, pp. 263-4

⁵⁸ Thomasina Beck, *The Embroiderer's Flowers* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1992), p. 56

the embroidery on a trestle table in the museum storage facilities, rather than on a gallery wall. The *Owl* never seems to have been used in a domestic context, returning to the School of Art collections following its display in different venues. Its functionality as a ‘coverlet’ was not realised, underlining its nature as a (nonetheless impressive) student exercise.

In both catalogues the Birmingham embroidery is credited as having been designed and worked by May Morris, Mary J. Newill, Mrs J.W. Moore, teacher of needlework for the Wednesday evening class, and Eunice E. Bloxcidge (whose post Newill had taken over in 1901) are equally acknowledged.⁵⁹ Then ensue, in alphabetical order, the names of the thirty students who executed different parts of the coverlet.⁶⁰ This highlights one of the issues which the Arts and Crafts movement with its love of collaboration set up for art historians, namely authorship. Unlike the Renaissance *bottega*, in which the contributions of assistants and apprentices were hidden behind the name of the master, Arts and Crafts practitioners sought to give credit where credit was due. However, as brought up in relation to Florence Camm’s work for T.W. Camm Studio, identifying the individual ‘hand’ of the artist in collaborative ventures is another story. The *Owl* embroidery was the first of several instances in which May Morris and Mary Newill would collaborate. Their professional relationship developed into a friendship which lasted until Morris’s death.⁶¹

One of the most interesting qualities of the *Owl* coverlet is how it *combines* features of both Mary Newill’s and May Morris’s embroidered work. This can be appreciated by visually comparing the Birmingham piece with other surviving examples or reproductions of both artists’ designs for needlework. This material evidence is all the more crucial in light of an overall dearth of written documentation. It is unfortunate that despite the length and success of Mary Newill’s career as an artist and teacher, very little record of this has subsisted. The fact that Newill never married, and her family’s lack of descendants, have played a crucial role in

⁵⁹ Also formerly a student at the school, Eunice Bloxcidge had assisted Mary Newill with the execution of her two hangings shown at the Paris Exhibition in 1900.

⁶⁰ These students are E.A. Banks, E. Bark, E. Brown, M. Burn, K. Cavenagh, F.M. Cockran, M.E. Collins, K.E. Duckworth, A. Fellows, E.P. Franklin, L.L. Gollins, A. Heynes, A. Holland-Smith, M. Janeck, E.M. Lermitt, A.M. Le Roy, M. Lloyd, M.A. Lowe, M.A. Massie, E. Middlemore, A. Patchett, B.M. Pritt, G.A.L. Pritt, M. Powell, G.E. Robertson, R. Robins, M. E. Tuckley, N.E. Wheeler, K.A. Whitcombe, M. Wragg. [*Birmingham ... Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students’ Work, 1903* (1903), no 934, p. 41; *Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students’ Work, 1904* (Birmingham : Percival Jones Ltd, 1904), no 898, p. 44]

⁶¹ Mary Newill was one of the friends May Morris included in her will, choosing to bequeath her a ‘jewel of [her] making.’ [London, William Morris Gallery, 39/1953 J468, May Morris’s will, p. 2]

the disappearance of archival sources. It is worth noting that ‘the pursuit of an education leading to a teaching career for a woman in the early 20th century,’ ‘meant a commitment to a certain lifestyle.’⁶² She would be ‘expected to pursue her career single-mindedly, as if it were a religious vocation.’⁶³ In order to remain in her profession ‘she could not marry nor have children.’⁶⁴

May Morris’s artistic contribution has been better conserved. This is in part thanks to her parents’ reputation as well as her role in the Morris & Co. firm, whose importance within the history of British design was well documented and subsequently researched. By publishing several articles in addition to her handbook on needlework, May Morris ensured that her ideas would achieve posterity. It is therefore notably by means of references to Mary Newill in collaborative projects in which May Morris’s participation is retrievable, that Newill’s own contribution can be located. A similar approach can be applied to the iconographical and formal analysis of the *Owl* embroidery in order to determine the nature of both craftswomen’s input.

May Morris sought to inspire pride in the embroiderer and her work. This followed a renewed consideration of the craft of the needle. The revival of embroidery in the Arts and Crafts movement encompassed every aspect of the craft, from design, to technique and mode of labour. Its initial point of reference was the middle-ages when embroidery and tapestry had been considered of a similarly high status to painting or sculpture, and carried out by men and women alike for royal and religious patrons.⁶⁵ For William Morris, and consequently those who adhered to his vision, medievalism ‘represented a dream of pre-capitalist production in which designer and executor were one, and production and consumption not separated.’⁶⁶ English ecclesiastical embroidery produced between the years 900 to 1500 is known under the generic term of *Opus Anglicanum*. This corresponded to a golden age for English embroidery which was highly prized on the European market, particular from the late twelfth to mid-fourteenth

⁶² Peter Smith, ‘Another Vision of Progressivism: Marion Richardson’s Triumph and Tragedy’, *Studies in Art Education* 37:3 (Spring 1996), p. 172

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ May Morris was an expert in British medieval embroidery and published a series of articles for the Burlington Magazine on *Opus Anglicanum* in 1905. [Walthamstow, William Morris Gallery, Joan Edwards, ‘May Morris, embroiderer 1862-1938’, p. 105]

⁶⁶ Parker (2010), p. 20

centuries.⁶⁷ The simple aesthetic of these medieval models was valued over the painterly ‘realism’ which dominated later needlework.

Arts and Crafts embroiderers were particularly critical of the highly popular Berlin wool work of the nineteenth century. This involved wools being worked in a single and uniform stitch ‘predetermined by the weave of the backing canvas,’ usually on the basis of ready-drawn patterns, requiring little talent or creativity.⁶⁸ Amongst the ‘most frequently repeated scenes were stories which turned on the paternal power of God (and man).’⁶⁹ This was technically and iconographically too restrictive and uncondusive to creativity from an Arts and Crafts point of view. The point of working *with* the materials was to enjoy their full breadth, not to constrain the stitch to the weave of the ground. In this vein, May Morris argued that embroidery was an art-form which ‘had been alienated from its basic roots.’⁷⁰

Despite May Morris’s irregular presence at the Birmingham School of Art – she initially came in for six visits during the year; ‘each visit for two mornings, two afternoons and one evening’ – she took her teaching responsibilities to heart.⁷¹ In a letter dated 26th May 1900 to the School secretary, Preston Hytch, Morris made detailed suggestions on ‘a certain revision of the examples and odds and ends that hang round the Embroidery room in the School.’⁷² She upheld that students ‘should constantly have under their eyes a small selection of ... textile designs ... arranged historically’ and ‘nothing superfluous or unrelated about the room.’⁷³ She proposed to use ‘large detailed photographs, facsimile coloured drawings, and, when possible, actual examples’ recommending ‘a list of some embroideries from the V. & A. Museum.’⁷⁴ May Morris defended her reliance on ‘old examples, as modern embroidery, being a dilettante pastime, has little distinct character, and is, in its best points, usually imitative.’⁷⁵ These recommendations echoed the practical advice contained within May Morris’s handbook

⁶⁷ Parker (2010), p. 40

⁶⁸ Callen (1979), p. 113

⁶⁹ Parker (2010), p. 161

⁷⁰ Callen (1979), p. 114

⁷¹ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/6, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VI, 1st April 1901, Minute 2047, p. 140. May Morris was paid at a rate of £60 per year. [Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/6, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VI, 10th July 1900, Minute 1902, p. 27]

⁷² Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/A0/2/5, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. V, 14th June 1900, Minute 1883, p. 291

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ May Morris (1893a), p. 222

Decorative Needlework published in 1893.⁷⁶ Although other manuals on embroidery had been issued earlier in the century, May Morris's stood out by being 'the first book by a professional designer who was also a practising embroiderer.'⁷⁷ Photographs taken of the embroidery class at the Birmingham School of Art at the turn of the century show designs and instructions on the blackboard with wording that 'mentions constructing with the help of geometry and the arrangement of masses' (Figure 4.3).⁷⁸

The Management Sub-Committee responded to May Morris's interest in the improvement of the standards of teaching at the School by recommending she act as examiner for the Award of Local Prizes in 'Needlework and Designs therefor', in 1901.⁷⁹ The confidential report submitted in January 1901 sheds lights on the criteria which she considered as essential to produce good needlework. Her main 'regret' was to 'see students with talent and (occasional) enthusiasm achieve so little in the year', which she attributed to 'want of method' and a 'hurried or careless temper.'⁸⁰ May Morris considered it crucial to pursue embroidery with 'due method and soberness' in a 'workmanlike way.'⁸¹ Another identified weakness was the figure work, whereas 'on the whole, small and delicate treatment in embroidery has been more successful than bolder treatment.'⁸² She conceded that 'embroidery is, no doubt, an extra subject for most of those who attend the class, but even so, I cannot help thinking that they might concentrate themselves rather more in this subject without doing any harm to their other studies.'⁸³

The lack of renewal in the needlework curriculum, which since its advertisement in the programme for the Session of 1893-4 had remained, on paper, unchanged, might explain in part why students put their best efforts elsewhere. Anthea Callen incisively proposes that needlework had 'become more of a sexual characteristic than a craft.'⁸⁴ As other crafts were

⁷⁶ May Morris, *Decorative Needlework* (London: Joseph Hughes & Co, 1893c), p. 6

⁷⁷ Edwards (1981), p. 14

⁷⁸ Callen (1979), p. 121

⁷⁹ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/6, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VI, 27th November 1900, Minute 1976, p. 80

⁸⁰ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/6, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VI, 12th February 1901, pasted onto p. 105, 'Proof. – Private for the information of the Management Sub-Committee alone. Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Examiner's Report, 1901', pp. 19-20

⁸¹ Morris (1893c), p. 121

⁸² Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/6, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VI, 12th February 1901, pasted onto p. 105, 'Proof. – Private for the information of the Management Sub-Committee alone. Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Examiner's Report, 1901', pp. 19-20

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Callen (1979), p. 97

opening up to women in the wake of the Arts and Crafts movement, they might have been tempted to break away from the gendered stigma attached to embroidery. When the Female School of Design in London opened classes for both practical embroidery and lacemaking around 1905, attendance was so low with an average of three or four girls per class that they closed at Easter 1906.⁸⁵ At the turn of the century, May Morris was however making her presence felt in Birmingham, not only in the classroom environment, but also in the tasks she set.

Elementary students were invited to make ‘studies of flowers and foliage.’⁸⁶ Students were also encouraged to take better advantage of the School’s library. Morris stressed the importance of ‘stimulating their invention by material collected from all possible sources, actual and historical’ if they ‘expect[ed] to produce interesting design.’⁸⁷ The ‘best work’ managed to be ‘fresh and delicate’ and vitally ‘the execution and choice of materials in harmony with the design.’⁸⁸ She valued simplicity over ‘any striking originality: a genuine love of sweet form and colour, and ability to express the feeling in unaffected work.’⁸⁹ May Morris thus evaluated Birmingham students according to the ideal that ‘executive skill and the desire of and feeling for beauty, realized in a work of definite utility, are the vital and essential elements of this as of all other branches of art, and that no one of these elements can the embroideress neglect or overlook if her work is to have life and meaning.’⁹⁰

These were the qualities which shaped the iconography of the *Owl* embroidery. The compositional device of the swirling tendrils provides a repetitive pattern which is adorned by unique detailing. This follows May Morris’s principle that in order to achieve a harmonious design, ‘the subordination of one form to another in some way is essential; there must be some leading lines and forms, that, from their central position or broader massing, attract the eye more than others.’⁹¹ This conception of design in which ‘symmetrical repeating patterns of abstract shapes’ were valued over literal naturalism, owed a lot to the architect designers Augustus W.

⁸⁵ Callen (1979), p. 99

⁸⁶ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/2/6, *Management Sub-Committee Minutes*, vol. VI, 12th February 1901, pasted onto p. 105, ‘Proof. – Private for the information of the Management Sub-Committee alone. Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Examiner’s Report, 1901’, p. 19

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Morris (1893c), dedicatory note

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92

Pugin and Owen Jones (1809-1874).⁹² Symmetry also played an important role in William Morris's work. His wallpapers, such as *Spring Thicket*, *Triple Net* or *Autumn Flowers* all display 'reflectional properties, but their floral arrangements still drift freely and retain balance continuously throughout the designs.'⁹³

Contrast was considered to be equally important by May Morris, and this could be attained 'by opposing delicate tracery or smaller forms to the principal masses of striking or broad forms, such opposition presenting a rich and pleasing variety to the eye.'⁹⁴ In this way a balance was struck between 'subtle repetition' and symmetry.⁹⁵ This was referred to as 'powdered design', meaning 'a design dotted or powdered over the surface at regular intervals.'⁹⁶ The use of tendrils as a means to structure an embroidery design, in accordance to the rules outlined above, is demonstrated in designs for the book cover *Love is Enough* by May Morris held at the Bodleian Library.⁹⁷ Early embroidered book covers by Mary Newill show a similar use of swirling organic motifs in her design (Figure 4.4).⁹⁸

This use of vegetation is reminiscent of late seventeenth century English crewelwork embroidery, an acknowledged historical source amongst Arts and Crafts designers.⁹⁹ The revival of interest for this type of textile in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was evident from the market demand for sets which were used on antique four-poster beds or 'split up and used as curtains on windows.'¹⁰⁰ The V&A acquired a number of these, notably on Walter Crane's recommendation that they 'would be very useful for the Circulation Department as examples for needlework students.'¹⁰¹ The late seventeenth and early eighteenth century

⁹² Parry (1993), p. 11

⁹³ Clare E. Horne, *Geometric Symmetry in Patterns and Tilings* (Abington: Woodhead Publishing Ltd in association with The Textile Institute, 2000), p. 2

⁹⁴ Morris (1893c), p. 94

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 96

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ London, Women's Library (WL), May Morris Papers (MMP), 7/MMO/1/159, Black and White Photograph Taken by Elizabeth Masterman of a Design by May Morris, medieval in feel, with flowers and leaves intertwined, from an object held and photographed at the Bodleian Library, Oxford University

⁹⁸ See Mary Newill's embroidered bookcover for the Kelmscott Chaucer exhibited at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition in London, 1896, and reproduced in 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition, 1896, Part IV', *The Studio* 9:46 (January 1897), p. 278; as well as her embroidered cover for the retirement illuminated address presented to John Thackray Bunce, reproduced in 'Studio-Talk', *The Studio* 7:37 (April 1896), p. 178

⁹⁹ Parry (2013), p. 26. Historicism was prevalent amongst designers from a range of different backgrounds, with the borrowing of patterns derived from Renaissance, Elizabethan, Jacobean and Gothic ornament. [Parry (1993), p. 10]

¹⁰⁰ V&A, Search the Collections, 'Bed Curtain', <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O77562/bed-curtain-unknown/>, consulted 23 November 2015

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

crewelwork hangings were themselves ‘heavily influenced by contemporary Indian embroideries imported into Europe by the East India Company.’¹⁰² Indeed the more delicate lines of the *Owl* embroidery seem closer to their Eastern antecedents.

The art collector Sidney Cockerell (1867-1962), a friend of May Morris’s, owned a seventeenth century Indo-Dutch specimen (Figure 4.5) which she might have seen. In this example one finds swirling stems, typical of this type of work, from which grow a variety of flowers in a similar fashion to the *Owl* embroidery.¹⁰³ These were usually worked either in a ‘fine chain stitch on white cotton fabric’ or in ‘satin and other stitches on white cotton, satin or silk.’¹⁰⁴ Furthermore a black outline was usually employed similarly to Arts and Crafts embroidered works. A fragment of a seventeenth century Turkish embroidered hanging which belonged to Mary Newill, now in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, shows that Newill also admired this type of work.¹⁰⁵ The *Owl*’s organic motifs can also be viewed as a freer interpretation of William Morris’s characteristic use of the acanthus leaf throughout his work. The latter was clearly influenced by medieval tapestries in its application to embroidery.¹⁰⁶

Fragments of notes May Morris prepared for her lectures at the Birmingham School of Art have survived. These combined sketches with brief written comments. One page in particular contains a bird design (Figure 4.6) which is very similar to the five birds which are embroidered at the top of the coverlet (Figure 4.7).¹⁰⁷ The embroidered birds’ one-legged pose closely copies Morris’s original drawing. Linda Parry comments on how ‘many of May’s later designs include birds’, a preference which the manager of the Morris & Co. Oxford Street shop mentioned in a letter of July 1896.¹⁰⁸ The association between birds and textile design featured in the Morris family home. The ‘bird’ fabric sold by Morris & Co. had originally been designed by William Morris in 1877 to hang in Kelmscott House in London.¹⁰⁹ The distinctive presence

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ C. Stanley Clarke, ‘Indo-Dutch Embroidery of the Seventeenth Century’, *Needle and Thread* 2 (April 1914), p. 31

¹⁰⁴ Clarke (April 1914), p. 31

¹⁰⁵ See Part of a hanging made in Turkey, 17th century, linen embroidered with silk in regular surface darning, given by Miss Ethel C. Newill, V&A Museum, CIRC.92-1953

¹⁰⁶ Oliver Fairclough and Emmeline Leary, introduction by Barbara Morris, *Textiles by William Morris and Morris & Co., 1861-1940* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), p. 10

¹⁰⁷ Walthamstow, William Morris Gallery, J561 (verso), Lecture notes by May Morris previously in folder labelled ‘Birmingham’

¹⁰⁸ Parry (2013), p. 39

¹⁰⁹ Text within the exhibition ‘Love is Enough: William Morris and Andy Warhol,’ Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, viewed 5 June 2015

of an owl also has a precedent within Morris & Co.'s production with Henry Dearle's design for *The Owl* portière c.1890, executed by Mrs Battye. The choice of British species of bird is a characteristic equally found in Birmingham work, as notably discussed in chapter two in relation to Kate Bunce's painted reredos for St Alban's church. Indeed this was precisely what May Morris admired in Mary Newill's embroidery. In her essay on embroidery first published in the Ghent Exhibition catalogue of 1913, May Morris singles out works by Newill 'composed of flowers and fruit and birds and beasts.'¹¹⁰ This indicates that both craftswomen shared an affection for this type of iconography. Two examples of such work by Mary Newill have survived. The first is a bedcover made c. 1908 depicts an owl with birds, moths and flowers (Figure 4.8) held at the BMAG. But Newill's use of these motifs can most poignantly be appreciated in her embroidered altar cloth for the private chapel of Uppingham School in Rutland (Figure 4.9).

My location and attribution of this previously unknown artwork could be key in further identifying Mary Newill's hand in the *Owl* and WGA's bed-hangings, the latter which will be discussed later. Left today in a sad state of disrepair, the Uppingham altar-cloth nonetheless shows signs of its former glory. A tree functions as the main motif for each of the three panels which constitute the frontal. The left panel is further decorated with pomegranates, whereas the central panel includes grapes and birds, and the right panel is ornamented with grapes. The

¹¹⁰ May Morris, 'Embroidery', in *Ghent International Exhibition 1913, Catalogue of the British Arts and Crafts Section* (London: Board of Trade Exhibitions Branch, 1913), p. clxxiv. May Morris's definition of Mary Newill's contribution to English embroidery in the 1913 Ghent Exhibition catalogue provides a valuable counterpart to the impression created by the remaining works by Newill. The embroideries which survive today offer a biased sample consisting essentially of large figurative and narrative designs. Figurative work is thus probably over-represented with the conservation of costly exhibition pieces. Examples of Newill's simpler designs intended for domestic use are no doubt long gone. Speaking of the work of Glaswegian textile designers of the 1890s to 1920s, Elizabeth Bird probingly comments 'the objects women produce have been consumed by being used, rather than preserved as a store of exchange-value. Pots get broken and textiles wear out.' Their existence is to be guessed at from a letter by Peter Floud, an expert on William Morris and the former keeper of archives at the Victoria and Albert Museum and later Head of Department of Circulation. In view of borrowing embroideries by Mary Newill for the 'Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Arts' exhibition of 1953, Floud commented that although he wished to get in touch with a couple of the Birmingham churches, 'the work which they possess is all on the large side, whereas in some ways Miss Newill's smaller work was perhaps more important.' It would seem that sixty years onwards, even these large ecclesiastical embroideries have disappeared. Indeed of the number of churches for which Newill produced cloths, palls, reredoses and hangings, the private chapel of Uppingham School is the only place to have responded positively to my enquiries. [Elizabeth Bird, "Threading the Beads: Women Designers and the Glasgow Style 1890-1920," unpublished conference paper, 1983 quoted in Cluckie (2008), p. 6; London, Victoria and Albert Museum archives, MA/I/N495, Letter from Peter Floud to Edward J. Newill dated 15th May 1951]

scheme is essentially carried out in blue, greens and reds by means of short and long stitches, and darning.¹¹¹

May Morris considered the birdlife and flora which populated Newill's later work to 'have a certain woodland sentiment about them, [which] manifest what is to my mind a quality of great value in that continuance of the English tradition.'¹¹² May Morris's association of value with a continued national tradition expresses the legacy of her father's idea of England. As Peter Faulkner has previously demonstrated, this was shaped both by English history and by the English landscape.¹¹³ The embroidered flora visible in the *Owl* hanging similarly belongs to English wild gardens and the countryside. This reflects a taste for native varieties in opposition to the imported flowers in the Victorian greenhouse.¹¹⁴ The love of wild gardening, which developed into the English cottage garden was initiated by William Robinson (1838-1935), whose search for horticultural simplicity ran parallel with the ideas espoused by the Arts and Crafts movement. The 'gaudy' exotic flowers in the Berlin woolwork so strongly condemned by William Morris and adepts of Art Needlework echoed 'the blazing colours to be seen in the new

¹¹¹ The Uppingham work is undocumented outside of its inclusion on a manuscript list for exhibition which can be dated c.1916 [London, WMS, WGAA, Box II, folder 13c, handlist of embroideries by Newill for exhibition]. Its origins and history can only be deduced from sparse material evidence. As a textile furnishing, and furthermore in a private chapel, no faculty would have been required. This eliminates what is often the only means of dating, attributing and identifying the commissioner and cost of ecclesiastical artworks. It is probable that the embroidery was commissioned by a parent of a student of the school and gifted to the institution. Its style seems however out of place with the school's main chapel and is much too small for its imposing main stone altar. The measurements of the cloth however fit perfectly with the small wooden altar in the side War Memorial chapel. After much planning, this was inaugurated in 1922 as a means of commemorating the lost lives of the Academy's fallen students and staff. The embroidery itself would have been completed at an earlier date since it was listed for display in 1916. It is unclear whether some of the furnishings might have been delivered whilst discussions were prolonged as to the precise emplacement and design of the chapel itself. A window for this possibility is opened by the aforementioned incongruities in the construction of the altar cloth. Having been kept in a humid environment, whole sections of the embroidery have perished, with bits of thread further missing over much of its surface. These however have revealed the tracing of the design drawn onto the cream-coloured ground which provide outlines where the coloured wools have disappeared. In terms of the overall construction of the piece, the embroidered linen panels have been mounted onto a white damask. A fringed cord has been sewn along the bottom of the cloth, an ornament which seems at odds with the usual absence of added decorations to Newill's embroideries. A same cord, minus the fringing, has been used to outline the three panels. Furthermore, the fringing actually covers some of the embroidery of the central panel. Once lifted it revealed a truncated bird and flowering. It appears unlikely that the embroiderer would deliberately hide part of her design. It might be that a later intervention resulted in the shortening of the central panel, tucking part of it inside a new backing cloth. The patchwork of mismatched textiles which form the full altar cloth concur with the impression of modifications made at a later date. The back part of the cloth consists of a machine-woven shiny cream damask, whilst the section which would cover the top of the altar is of another much whiter thinner cloth, which again contrasts with the darker linen forming the ground on which the actual embroidery is set on the front.

¹¹² Morris (1913), p. clxxiv

¹¹³ Peter Faulkner, 'William Morris and the Idea of England', *Kelmscott Lecture 1991* (London: William Morris Society, 1992), p. 6

¹¹⁴ Parry (1993), p. 13

‘geometric’ layouts of the garden,’ part of the trend for formal landscaping which predominated until the late nineteenth century.¹¹⁵ Not only were practitioners of the Arts and Crafts movement integrating contemporary landscaping trends into their work, they were also honouring the historical relationship between gardening and embroidery.

Thomasina Beck notes how ‘in the past, the verb ‘to flower’ meant the same as to embroider, and for many people embroidery is still synonymous with flowers.’¹¹⁶ This association was depicted in literary and pictorial sources much admired by followers of the Arts and Crafts movement. Sandro Botticelli’s Flora in his *Primavera* is ‘radiant in a flowing, flower-embroidered gown.’¹¹⁷ Similarly Chaucer ‘conjoins up the dazzling appearance of the young squire in the ‘Prologue’ to the Canterbury Tales: Embroudered was he, as it were a mede,/ All ful of fresshe floures whyte and red.’¹¹⁸ William Morris ‘was fascinated by the power of Flora to transform the earth with her embroidery’ which he depicted in his *Flora* tapestry of 1884.¹¹⁹ He extolled that ‘embroidery is gardening with silk and gold thread.’¹²⁰

The art of embroidered gardening required a particular approach to flora, as apparent from the writings of the following generation of Arts and Crafts needleworkers. The embroiderer and cultivator of irises Louisa Pesel (1870-1947) advocated that ‘the successful gardener does not use *all* the plants that exist, but experience has taught him or her to select and put together the *right* plants – right in texture, scale and colour and this is a necessary part of the best embroidery.’¹²¹ May Morris further told students that ‘draw flowers you must. The flower borders you draw for embroidery can only be a rough sort of note, or symbol of the loveliness of garden or field; but the symbol reminds us very pleasantly of spring and summer.’¹²² This

¹¹⁵ Beck (1992), p. 81

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 7

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 26

¹²⁰ Quoted in Edwards (1981), p. 1

¹²¹ From notes for a course on design and colour in embroidery, quoted in Edwards (1981), p. 11. Joan Edwards tells us that ‘Like Gertrude Jekyll, Louisa Pesel travelled in the Levant, living for several years in Athens where she was Principal of the Royal Hellenic Schools of Needlework and Lace [until 1907] and collected Greek Island and Turkish embroideries. Wherever she went she made a beautiful garden and cultivated irises, becoming as noted amongst gardeners for her irises as she was amongst embroiderers for her sense of colour and good technique.’ (p. 11) ‘She was elected the first president of the Embroiderers Guild of England in 1920, and appointed Mistress of Broderers of Winchester Cathedral in 1938.’ [University of Leeds, ‘Louisa Pesel Collection’, <http://ulita.leeds.ac.uk/major-collections/louisa-pesel-collection/>, consulted 19 May 2015]

¹²² Quoted in Edwards (1981), p. 15

relationship is perhaps best embodied in Gertrude Jekyll's career, first as a painter and embroiderer, and best known for her innovative approach to practical garden design which she explicated in a series of publications.¹²³ Jekyll's formal training as a fine art painter and designer enabled her to transcend disciplines as expressed in her consideration of the soil as a 'canvas on which the gardener paints or embroiders a picture, already more or less complete in his mind, using for his pigments the plants that best suit his purpose.'¹²⁴

The natural form is treated in conventional terms in the *Owl* embroidery. May Morris warned that the craftswoman's work 'should merely recall nature, not absolutely copy it' echoing her father's belief.¹²⁵ May continued 'the living flower should inspire a living ornament in h[er] brain, certain characteristics being dwelt upon, but the forms all simplified, leaves flatly arranged, stems bent into flowing curves to fill the required spaces.'¹²⁶ On this basis designers would create their own distinctive manner depending on the conventions they elaborated from their study of nature. Contemporary embroiderer Grace Christie (1872-1938), for instance, typically incorporated similar flora and bird-life to those of the *Owl* coverlet in her own work (Figure 4.10). For this purpose she 'would draw meticulous details of butterflies, birds and plants before using them in her design.'¹²⁷ The result is quite distinctive however from the Birmingham School's interpretation of the same theme. This approach to the natural form contrasts with the quest for 'three-dimensional realism' which dominated textiles of the mid-century, with flowers an important motif throughout the 1850s and 1860s.¹²⁸ In practical terms, May Morris's instructions were to:

work the same spray in flat and simple colours, say in two shades at most for a leaf, either one side of the leaf light and the other dark, or both sides shaded

¹²³ Gertrude Jekyll's contribution to the field of embroidery has been largely forgotten, and Joan Edwards is to be credited for her re-insertion. The recognition she enjoyed at the time is manifest from the inclusion of some of her designs, alongside renowned male designers, among the 'prepared designs' which the Royal School of Art Needlework offered to execute on commission. Jekyll also formed an important study collections of old samplers and patchwork bed-covers at a time when this type of work had largely fallen out of favour and was being destroyed, a collection from which she bequeathed many items to the Victoria and Albert museum.

¹²⁴ Quoted in Edwards (1981), p. 15

¹²⁵ Morris (1893c), p. 84

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Howard (1985), p. 92

¹²⁸ Parry (1993), p. 10

up from dark to light colour; flower-petals treated in the same way with very light shading, and with a firm outline to render the pattern clear.¹²⁹

A firm understanding of colour was considered as equally as important as composition. The same rules of ‘harmony, contrast, repetition’ were to be applied as to form.¹³⁰ A simple colour scheme was to be preferred, particularly for the beginner, ‘consisting, perhaps, merely of one predominating colour with a few touches of another for a relief.’¹³¹ The cream-coloured linen of the *Owl* embroidery acts as a neutral ground from which touches of bright colour stand out. Various shades of green dominate the palette, although May Morris warned against ‘the yellowish-brown green of a sickly hue that professes to be ‘artistic.’¹³² This was a clear dig at the greenery-yallery colours associated with the Aesthetic movement. Colour was also considered in terms of conservation, with provision for fading leading to Mary E. Turner’s recommendation to choose ‘strong good colours’ which would last.¹³³

The choice of materials, in this case wool on linen, was equally addressed in May Morris’s writings. Materials needed to be of good quality, but their combination was even more important.¹³⁴ Materials determined which work method or stitches were most appropriate. Morris noted that wool was more attractive than silk in terms of cost, making ‘it suitable for the commoner uses of life, where lavishness would be out of place.’¹³⁵ In terms of grounds, linen was preferred to cotton, although both were labelled as ‘good grounds for wool-work’ particularly for ‘large scale’ work.¹³⁶ Linen was said to have the advantage of ‘scarcely any limitations in treatment’, a ‘loose large texture’ being ideal for hangings for example.¹³⁷ May Morris further praised the fabric’s potential to ‘be worked equally well in the hand, or in a frame, and usually the more it is handled the better it looks.’¹³⁸

This would certainly have been achieved in the case of the *Owl* embroidery, which was the result of more than thirty different pairs of hands. Its size allowed more than one woman to

¹²⁹ Morris (1893c), p. 30

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 114

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Morris (1893c), p. 111

¹³³ Turner (1893), p. 361

¹³⁴ May Morris, ‘Of Materials’, in *Arts and Crafts Essays* (1893b), p. 365

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 375

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 372

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 370

¹³⁸ Ibid.

embroider it at one time. As to the optimal technique in these materials, Morris recommended ‘a variety of close and curious stitches within bold curves and outlines,’ exactly what the *Owl* presents to the eye. Unlike other works by May Morris or Mary Newill, the *Owl* incorporates a wide range of stitches. This includes details made out of French knots, raised knots, bullion knots, rope stitch, chain stitch, buttonhole stitch, solid fly, as well as covering areas in encroaching satin stitch, long and short stitch, running stitch, stem stitch and link stitch. In this sense it can be viewed as a platform for each contributor to showcase their technical skills, similarly to the function of young girls’ samplers in the seventeenth century.¹³⁹

The *Owl* is the outcome of collaborative labour, from its conception to its execution. This artwork materialises the transmission of skills from one generation of craftswomen to the next. This implied a workshop practise similar to the one May Morris ran for her father’s firm. From 1885, May Morris was fully responsible for the Morris & Co. embroidery department, whose operations she led from Kelmscott House. She took on a managerial role, discussing commissions with clients, either agreeing upon a stock design or creating something new. She produced time and cost estimates, and further oversaw the production by the team of skilled embroiderers. Jan Marsh suggests that in its early days most of the embroidery ‘was done [anonymously] by the needlewomen as outwork in their own homes.’¹⁴⁰ May Morris continued to participate in execution as well, embroidering many of the commissions herself, particularly ‘show’ pieces. Her pupils and apprentices, whose names appeared with hers in the Arts and Crafts Exhibitions, would probably have worked by her side at Kelmscott House and later Hammersmith Terrace on these types of commission. There ‘the embroiderers all sat around a large table working with the fabric held loosely.’¹⁴¹ Likewise in the making of the *Owl*, several students could have worked stitches onto the ground at the same time, requiring a high-level of awareness of each other’s rhythm and gestures, to avoid a tug-of-war. This differed from the Royal School of Art Needlework’s preference for stretching the fabric onto a frame, as shown

¹³⁹ Jennifer Harris, ‘Embroidery in Women’s Lives 1300-1900’, in *The Subversive Stitch* (exhibition catalogue, Manchester, Whitworth Art Gallery 7 May – 17 July 1988), ed. unspecified (Manchester: Whitworth Art Gallery & Cornerhouse, 1988), p. 12

¹⁴⁰ Jan Marsh, *Jane and May Morris: A Biographical Story 1839-1938* (London, New York: Pandora Press, 1986), p. 168

¹⁴¹ Joan Hardick, *The Yeats Sisters: A Biography of Susan and Elizabeth Yeats* (London and San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins, 1996), p. 122

for example in a photograph of the Royal School of Art Needlework's workroom with two women working on a same piece in the right foreground (Figure 4.11).

The project of the *Owl* was designed by May Morris and concertedly executed and overseen by Mary Newill and the other teachers, Mrs J.W. Moore and Miss Eunice E. Bloxcidge. Newill acted as main supervisor so that the students carried it out as agreed. Newill's directive authority was not only as a teacher but as a professional craftswoman who had previously carried out large scale commissions, as for instance her hangings for Edmund Butler's house, of which more afterwards. In a professional context embroiderers could not have afforded the time to realise complex works of this size on their own.¹⁴² The educational value of a project like the *Owl* hanging – in terms of artistic and technical skills, as well as an experiment in collaborative work on a large scale – meet the Arts and Crafts ideal of 'afford[ing] art social utility.'¹⁴³ It also served to showcase the outstanding activities carried out at the Birmingham School.

With the *Owl* the Birmingham School proposes a progressive work model shaped by women designers. In this respect it significantly differs from the Royal School of Art Needlework who at this period usually followed the instructions of male designers who had little experience of needlework themselves. Indeed the School's credo was that 'nothing should be left to the imagination of the stitcher ... each must copy humbly and faithfully the design which should always be placed before her.'¹⁴⁴ In opposition, therefore, to May Morris's previously cited advice that 'where the worker does not invent for herself, she should at least interpret her designer.'¹⁴⁵ As embroiderers in training, the Birmingham students were not making their own original designs at this stage. But their participation in the realisation of the *Owl* hanging was a step in this direction. The diversity in the stitching and colour palette suggests that there was some freedom in terms of execution, in alignment with Morris's principles.

¹⁴² Fellow teacher of embroidery Eunice E. Bloxcidge helped Mary Newill execute her hangings for Butler's house. Newill also worked in collaboration with Anne Heynes, who was also a member of the Women's Guild of Arts and an assistant teacher in embroidery at the Leicester Municipal School of Art from 1904. [Vallance (December 1899), p. 190; London, WMS, WGAA, Box II, folder 13c, Handlist of embroideries by Newill for exhibition ; Information on Anne Heyne's position at the Leicester Municipal School of Art provided by Frances Lund, Assistant Archivist, De Montfort University, Leicester]

¹⁴³ Steven Adams, *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (London: The Apple Press, 1987), p. 124

¹⁴⁴ Parker (2010), p. 184

¹⁴⁵ Morris (1893a), p. 220

Rozsika Parker attributes the Royal School's approach to 'the fear of failing to be feminine,' part of her wider argument that failure to comply with a patriarchal vision of femininity in the Victorian era would have endangered women socially and financially.¹⁴⁶ Female embroiderers of the first generation of the Arts and Crafts movement, such as Jane Morris (1839-1914), Georgiana Burne-Jones (1840-1920), Mary Crane or Catherine Holiday mostly worked to designs by their husbands.¹⁴⁷ Thomasina Beck claims that 'until the twentieth century, few embroiderers were concerned if they were unable to draw and design their own patterns. Many found their inspiration in the limitless store of motifs in the herbals and beautiful illustrated flower books known as *florilegia*.'¹⁴⁸ In this respect May Morris and Mary Newill represent a second generation of Arts and Crafts embroiderers who executed and displayed their *own* designs. Not only this, but within that group of practitioners they are amongst the few female embroiderers who were known by their own Christian name, rather than their husband's for those who were married. Phoebe Traquair, Una Taylor, Mary Buckle and Mary Gemmel similarly received personal recognition.¹⁴⁹ They differed from their mothers in having had the advantage of receiving formal training in drawing and design in governmental design schools, whose curricula had been curated in view of the application of these skills.

Another essential difference lies in the public acknowledgement of every contributor to the Birmingham embroidery. A foundational characteristic of the Royal School of Art Needlework was to afford anonymity to gentlewomen in need of remunerated work, resulting in the erasure of the female makers. In contrast, all contributors to the making of the *Owl* were named on the two occasions when it was displayed in Birmingham. This cannot be explained by a difference in social class, as many of the students in Newill's class would have been from a middle-class background which aspired to gentility. Instead the difference is ideological, adhering to the practice espoused by the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. This wished for the designers and executants to be known unlike the tendency for their work to go uncredited behind the name of a firm, as found in trade exhibitions of the time.¹⁵⁰ May Morris and Mary

¹⁴⁶ Parker (2010), p. 184

¹⁴⁷ Edwards (1981), p. 19

¹⁴⁸ Beck (1992), p. 9

¹⁴⁹ Parry (2005), p. 68

¹⁵⁰ Walter Crane, 'Of the Revival of Design and Handicraft', in *Arts and Crafts Essays* (1893), pp. 5-6

Newill's commitment to the values of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, of which as previously mentioned both were members, highlights the important role the Society played in the development of their careers.

Indeed, the eleventh exhibition of Arts and Crafts provided a renewed occasion for May Morris to collaborate with Mary Newill and involve Birmingham students in another joint venture. On this occasion, the Society of Arts and Crafts was invited to hold their 1916 exhibition in the rooms of the Royal Society of Arts at Burlington House. The display was to include a series of rooms furnished and decorated to a theme. One was a 'Lady's Bedroom' to be fitted by the WGA.¹⁵¹ May Morris was a driving force of this artistic Guild founded in 1907. Mary Newill was invited to become a member in its foundational year, and was followed by other Birmingham women artists. Despite being based in Birmingham, Mary Newill appears to have been quite active in the organisation, her name regularly appearing in the minute book for 1913 to 1917.

Furthermore, Newill was one of the few internal Guild lecturers. On March 11th 1912 a meeting was held at Studio 3, in Lansdowne House, on Lansdowne Road in Notting Hill 'by invitation of Miss Bowerley and Miss M.A. Sloane, when a demonstration [was] given by Miss M.J. Newill on "The Methods of Teaching Embroidery Adopted at the Birmingham Municipal School of Art."¹⁵² It 'was illustrated by numerous examples of works done by Miss Newill's pupils, and was followed by questions and a valuable discussion.'¹⁵³ In light of the success of her first presentation, Mary Newill elaborated on the topic a year later during a meeting held at Clifford Inn Hall in London on 14 March 1913, during which she 'read a Paper on "Embroidery & the Methods of Teaching Employed at the Birmingham Municipal School of Art"' supplemented by an interesting set of slides showing memory drawings and designs done in the elementary school by children, under Mr Catterson[-]Smith's system.'¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 5b, Women's Guild of Arts. Annual Report, 1916

¹⁵² London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 1, Women's Guild of Arts invitation card to meeting 11 March

¹⁵³ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 5a, The Women's Guild of Arts. Annual Report, 1912.

¹⁵⁴ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 2, WGA Minute book Jan 10th 1913-May 18th 1917, Meeting at Clifford Inn Hall on Friday March 14th. 1913. Newill's introduction of Birmingham's brand of art teaching to members of the Guild made its mark. When penning down her thoughts on the Guild's involvement in training disabled and discharged soldiers in a craft, Mary Sloane remarked that 'there's an opening for the views of (say) Mr. Catterson-Smith – with popular soldiery illustrations' and wondered whether 'the Birmingham folks' could 'be set on ...to talk.' Catterson-Smith had replaced Edward R. Taylor as head of the school in 1903 and remained at its helm until 1920. Originally from Dublin, he started out as a painter and illustrator. As a young man he worked 'as an assistant to William Morris,

The combination of exhibits which formed the 'Lady's Bedroom' in 1916 was organised around a bed made for the Guild by the Cotswolds furniture designer and maker Ernest Gimson with 'hangings to be worked by the embroideresses of the WGA (Figure 4.12).'¹⁵⁵ Before the announcement had been officially made to all guild-members, May Morris had been exchanging ideas with Mary Newill. In a letter dated April 9th Newill wrote to the Guild secretary, the painter Mary Sloane, 'I shall be so very proud to work under her [May Morris's] directions. I quite agree Embroidery does need a guiding head just now.'¹⁵⁶ The hangings were credited in the exhibition catalogue as having been worked by May Morris, Mary J. Newill, Dora Webb, G. Cattell, A.B. Simpson, Isobel [sic.] Catterson-Smith, Mrs Moore, Nan Hornby, M. Dalton and W. Edelstein.¹⁵⁷ None of these names, outstanding May Morris and Mary Newill, appear under the list of members of the WGA. It would therefore appear that Newill again found willing volunteers at the Birmingham School of Art.

Similarly to the *Owl* embroidery, the chosen materials were wool on linen. In this case the wools had been 'dyed under William Morris's direction.'¹⁵⁸ The exhibition catalogue

preparing drawings for printing at the Kelmscott Press.' Catterson-Smith taught a Thursday evening class at the London Central School of Arts and Crafts c. 1899, lecturing 'on certain underlying principles of design followed by a nature study, which was then adapted to the requirements of the students' individual crafts.' He later 'took to silversmithing' which led him to become Headmaster of the Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths before succeeding Taylor at the Central School. The new headmaster believed that 'design is *evolved* rather than TAUGHT ... It should not be taught apart from the material to be used.' In agreement with other proponents of the Arts and Crafts movement, Catterson-Smith believed that 'each material has its own special quality, which must be used and retained in any design which is worth a straw. And it is in that direction we must *look*, along with the careful study of nature, if we *really want* to do work of value.' In order to assist students in meeting this ideal, the headmaster developed a method of teaching design which relied on 'drawing from memory and mind picturing.' This proposed an alternative to the conventional teaching of drawing 'by means of the direct imitation of objects and examples.' Students were made to observe a projected lantern slide before reproducing it from memory. Memory was not 'merely a storehouse' for Catterson-Smith, rather he linked it to imagination and creation, an unconscious power which could be unleashed. This was precisely what had struck Sloane in Newill's presentations of the work carried out in Birmingham. Sloane wished that the Guild could similarly nurture soldiers' 'art-creative powers' in order for 'this work [to be] different from the dead-alive kind so much over-running every school and possible place.' [London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 13c, unsigned and undated writings headed 'Bethnal Green'; Fiona MacCarthy, *The Simple Life: C.R. Ashbee in the Cotswolds* (London: Lund Humphries, 1988), p.108; Theresa Gronberg, 'William Richard Lethaby and the Central School of Arts and Crafts', in eds Sylvia Backmeyer and Theresa Gronberg, *W.R. Lethaby 1857-1931: Architecture, Design and Education* (London: Lund Humphries, 1984), p. 18; R. Catterson-Smith, *Birmingham Municipal School of Art: Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths: two addresses delivered at the Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths on 19th January 1903*: (II) "Some Remarks on the Examiner's (Mr. H. Wilson's) Report," p. 19; Catterson-Smith (1903), p. 20; R. Catterson-Smith, *Drawing from Memory and Mind Picturing* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1921), p. 1; Smith (1996), p. 176; John Swift, 'Visual Memory Training: A Brief History and Postscript', *Art Education* 30:8 (December 1977), p. 25]

¹⁵⁵ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12c, The Women's Guild of Arts call for participants in the Arts and Crafts Exhibition July 1916

¹⁵⁶ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12b letter from Mary Newill to Mary Sloane 12 April

¹⁵⁷ London, WL, MMP, 7/MMO/1, ED:346, Elizabeth Masterman's notes on the catalogue

¹⁵⁸ London, WL, MMP, 7/MMO/1, ED:346, Arts and Crafts Exhibition catalogue 1916, p. 215

stressed how the WGA had ‘purposefully avoided’ ‘elaboration and luxury.’¹⁵⁹ It cannot be said however that the bed-hangings were a cheap affair. Listed at £170, this was markedly more expensive than Mary Newill’s *Gareth and Lynet* (Figure 4.13) hanging which Newill valued at one hundred pounds in 1893.¹⁶⁰ Her brother Edward Newill wrote to the V&A Keeper that the one hundred pounds had accounted only for the cost of labour ‘with nothing for the design or the materials.’¹⁶¹ At a rate of 4 and a half (old) pence an hour this entailed that four hundred and forty-four hours were spent by Mary Newill in association with Eunice Bloxidge in making the fully embroidered *Gareth and Lynet* panel.¹⁶² If calculated at a similar rate, one could estimate that the WGA bed-hangings were the outcome of roughly seven hundred and fifty-five hours’ work in its execution. The curtains were first displayed in London, and the left curtain was reproduced in the *Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art* of 1917. An American audience discovered them at the Detroit Society Exhibition of British Arts and Crafts in 1920, which then toured in other large American cities in 1921.¹⁶³ They were purchased in 1922 by the Detroit newspaper magnate George Booth for his own home, later to be gifted by Booth and his wife Ellen Scripps Booth to the Cranbrook Art Museum in Michigan.¹⁶⁴

Colourful British garden birds, squirrels, and flowers are organised amid two trees on a cream-coloured ground. The same pattern is essentially repeated twice, with the exceptions of the colouring of the squirrels sitting in each tree and the three birds at their foot in the foreground. This design appears as a freer interpretation of the bed-hangings which May Morris originally designed for her father’s bed at Kelmscott Manor in 1891 (Figure 4.14). These were collaboratively executed with Lily Yeats (1866-1949) and Ellen Wright, and shown at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition of 1893.¹⁶⁵ A long-lost second interpretation of this design, this time worked essentially in gradations of blue, was recently acquired by the National Museums of Scotland in Edinburgh (Figure 4.15). In this case May Morris made them in collaboration with her friend and patron Theodosia Middlemore for the Middlemores’ house on the island of Hoy

¹⁵⁹ London, WL, MMP, 7/MMO/1, ED:345, Arts and Crafts Exhibition catalogue 1916, p. 113

¹⁶⁰ London, VAMA, MA/I/N495 Letter from Edward J. Newill to Peter Floud 16 May 1951

¹⁶¹ London, VAMA, MA/I/N495 Letter from Edward J. Newill to Peter Floud 16 May 1951

¹⁶² London, VAMA, MA/I/N495 Letter from Edward J. Newill to Peter Floud 16 May 1951

¹⁶³ Parry (2013), p. 40

¹⁶⁴ Parry (2013), p. 140

¹⁶⁵ Parry (2005), p. 80

in Orkney.¹⁶⁶ The structuring trellis in the background has been abandoned in the WGA's version (Fig. 4.12) creating a less cluttered effect. The form of the tree is more suggested than realistic and the birds are also further stylized. Linda Parry compares this 'clarity' in design, and the hanging's technique and colouring with nineteenth-century Chinese pictorial embroideries.¹⁶⁷ The structuring motif of the tree, and more particularly fruit-bearing trees often recurred in William Morris's embroidery designs as first seen in the *If I Can* hanging of the 1850s.¹⁶⁸ J. H. Dearle, his chief assistant and later manager of the Merton Abbey works, explored the theme anew as late as 1919 in a set of six embroidered panels depicting apple, cherry, lemon, orange, pear, and plum trees which were worked by Helen, Lady Lucas-Tooth.¹⁶⁹

Mary Newill's Uppingham altar cloth (Figure 4.9) was clearly also derived from these models. Newill would have worked on it contemporaneously to the curtains for the Lady's Bedroom exhibit. Completed by 1916, since it was proposed for display that year, it is unfortunate that no actual date of conception can be found for the Uppingham cloth. This prevents from establishing whether Newill took notice of the Morris & Co. tree design after seeing May's drawing for the WGA curtains, or whether Newill's own interpretation of this motif had reminded May of its appeal. What does emerge from the study of the works discussed up until now is that proximity, collaboration, and exchanges between craftswomen complicate the notions of authorship and attribution, particularly when written archives are limited.

Whereas the first part of this chapter has focused on embroideries intended for public display and connected to education, the following section will look at what Mary Newill created for her own private enjoyment. This second case study presents a set of four curtains and two pelmets by Mary Newill held in the collections of the V&A (Figure 4.2). They were gifted to the institution by Charles Gere in 1953 upon Ethel Newill's (1878-1959) suggestion. The curtains are currently dated c.1906 and are known to have hung in Mary Newill's home in Painswick. They fulfilled a decorative as well as a functional role in a domestic setting. After Newill's departure from the BMSA there are no institutional records to palliate the absence of a

¹⁶⁶ National Museum of Scotland, 'Rare May Morris Curtains saved for Scotland', Art Fund, 23 July 2014, <http://www.artfund.org/news/2014/07/23/may-morris-curtains-saved-for-scotland>, consulted 23 November 2015

¹⁶⁷ Parry (2013), p. 41

¹⁶⁸ Fairclough and Leary (1981), p. 27

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

personal archive. These curtains can be considered the most creative of Newill's surviving embroidery designs. Unfortunately nothing is known of their history and how they were made. The analysis therefore relies on a study of the materials, technique and formal qualities of the work based on a close visual inspection in the V&A's Clothworker's Centre. This seeks to bring to light the type of design Mary Newill could produce when working outside of the constraints of a commission. There is no record of the curtains having been exhibited during Newill's lifetime, which underlines their domestic use. The stitching gives the impression of having been made by a single hand, presumably hers alone. The discussion of this artwork also allows to draw attention to Newill's later life, which has escaped scholarship to date.

Mary Newill moved to the Cotswolds in 1926 following her retirement from the BMSA. She remained in Painswick until her death in 1947. She thus joined the diaspora of Birmingham crafts(wo)men who had fled the bustle of the city to lead a quiet life in the countryside. Charles and Margaret Gere counted amongst Newill's neighbours. The siblings had established themselves in Painswick in 1904 from where they continued to paint. Five years later Henry and Edith Payne settled a mere seven miles away in Amberley.¹⁷⁰ Henry Payne set up a stained glass workshop in his garden. The rural environment might have participated in Payne's decision to form the Guild of St Loe in 1921. This was created according to Arts and Crafts principles in view of undertaking work in frescoes, stained glass windows, embroidery and mosaics.¹⁷¹ Further Birmingham presence could be found at Bourton-on-the-Hill, where the Arts and Crafts architect Charles Edward Bateman (1863-1947) moved to in 1922 after retiring from the family practice of Bateman & Bateman on New Street. His attention fell on the town's church, for which he commissioned a painted reredos from Sidney Meteyard.¹⁷²

Newill's curtains depict a landscape which is evocative of the one she would have appreciated outside of her Cotswolds home. This might have been inspired by a visit to the Geres' or the Paynes' prior to her move, or alternatively the dating might be reconsidered. The only other comparable example of a landscape embroidery by Newill was displayed in the

¹⁷⁰ Crawford (1984), pp. 122, 126

¹⁷¹ Rachel Moss, *Edward Payne: 1906-1931* (London: Moss & Glass, 1995), p. 3

¹⁷² Chris Upton, 'Hand-Crafted Idealism', *Birmingham Post* (14 October 2011)

<http://www.birminghampost.co.uk/lifestyle/hand-crafted-idealism-3917251>, consulted 22 May 2015

Embroiderers' Guild inaugural exhibition in 1924 (Figure 4.16).¹⁷³ The Cotswolds attracted quite a community of artists of the Arts and Crafts movement in general. Writing of the pull of the 'simple life', Peter Gould notes that it was not only nature but also ideas about the social landscape which attracted newcomers:

social relations that were 'natural' were posed as an alternative to those that were associated with urban, and middle-class, life. Such relations ... were found welcome to some of those who found convention irksome. Contact with people who knew little or nothing of the modes of 'civilised' behaviour and who were 'close to nature' was attractive to some who felt disenchanted with the niceties of 'civilisation.'¹⁷⁴

Although the rural society which these artists discovered had its own rules and was not necessarily as welcoming as envisaged, it nonetheless provided a reprieve from the more strictly regimented urban codes of conduct. Going 'Back to Nature' involved the breaking down of barriers between human beings, the sexes, humans and animals, and humans and other manifestations of nature.'¹⁷⁵ William Morris had made the Cotswold Manor House of Kelmscott his home, which May Morris took as her sole residence after 1923. A number of Birmingham artists' names feature in the Kelmscott Manor visitor's book for 1889 to 1904. The first to visit were Arthur Gaskin accompanied by Joseph Southall in Easter of 1893. Georgie France (soon to be Gaskin) visited later in the year, followed by Edmund New in 1897. Charles Gere is also listed as a returning caller at the turn of the century.¹⁷⁶ These visits were all definitely on the invitation of William Morris, whereas the absence of Mary Newill's name seems to confirm that she came into contact with May Morris independently.

The furniture makers Ernest (1863-1926) and Sidney Barnsley (1865-1926), from Birmingham, joined by Ernest Gimson (1864-1919), originally from Leicester, were among the first to set up workshops in the Arts and Crafts tradition in this part of the country. They started

¹⁷³ E. Ruth Rayner, 'The Embroiderers' Guild Exhibition', *The Studio* 87:370 (January 1924), p. 18

¹⁷⁴ Gould (1988), pp. 19-20

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 76

¹⁷⁶ London, BL, William Morris Papers, Add MS 45412, Kelmscott Manor Visitors' Book 1889-1904

out in Pinbury Park in 1893 and later moved to Sapperton.¹⁷⁷ The small village of Chipping Camden nearby was transformed by the arrival of Charles R. Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft in 1902. This pastoral idyll also attracted Fabian socialist reformers Sidney (1859-1947) and Beatrice Webb (1858-1943), who became neighbours of the Ashbees' shortly after their arrival.¹⁷⁸ Katharine Adams (1862-1952), a recognised bookbinder, had a workshop with the help of two or three female assistants in Broadway.¹⁷⁹ These crafts(wo)men all had in common their urban roots, as city-dwellers who shared a desire for 'the Simple Life' of the countryside.¹⁸⁰ Philippe Mairet, quoting an unnamed 'well-known artist who lives among the Cotswold Hills' commented that 'all of these ... had come to work in something the same spirit: it is a deeply poetic spirit, dominated by great sincerity in technique and reverence for tradition.'¹⁸¹

Although slightly isolated in their daily life, they were not entirely disconnected from the metropolis and definitely remained in touch with the art world. The Birmingham artists had retreated to the area later in life, but continued to produce and exhibit art locally and further afield. The London Cotswold Gallery organised three consecutive exhibitions of water colours and drawings by Cotswold artists between 1921 and 1923.¹⁸² The first was essentially an exhibition of the work of the Birmingham Group, bringing together artworks by Arthur Gaskin, Charles and Margaret Gere, Edmund New, Henry and Edith Payne, in addition to the non-Brummies Frederick L. Griggs and William Rothenstein.¹⁸³ In the preface to the catalogue for

¹⁷⁷ Judith B. Tankard, *Gardens of the Arts and Crafts Movement: Reality and Imagination* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2003), p. 45. All three had initially trained as architects, Ernest Gimson at Sedding's office in London, where he had met Ernest Barnsley, whose younger brother Sidney worked for Shaw.

¹⁷⁸ MacCarthy (1988), p. 58

¹⁷⁹ MacCarthy (1988), p.105

¹⁸⁰ Fiona MacCarthy rightly points out that this was by no means a 'simple' concept. 'Central to this vision was the generous, hopeful theory, essentially important in the Arts and Crafts communities, that the labourers of Britain, stunted in the city, would, in a new setting of dignity and harmony, develop their creative instincts to the fullest.' A main concern 'was unravelling the complicated strands of human intercourse, so that human beings, whatever their age, sex, class or education, could communicate freely and directly.' [MacCarthy (1988), pp. 10-11]

¹⁸¹ Philippe Mairet, 'The Landscape Paintings of C.M. Gere and H.A. Payne', *The Studio* 80:330 (September 1920), p. 43

¹⁸² This was run on Frith Street by the art historian Joseph Alexander Finberg (1866-1939). Finberg had worked as an illustrator for *The Graphic* and the *Illustrated London News* before becoming an art critic for several papers. He was put in charge in 1906 of the Turner Bequest by trustees of the National Gallery. [Luke Herrmann, 'Finberg, Alexander Joseph (1866-1939)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/view/article/33129>, accessed 12 May 2015]

¹⁸³ See *The First Exhibition of Water Colour and Other Drawings by Cotswold Artists (exhibition catalogue, 5th October – 5th November 1921, London, The Cotswold Gallery)*. Frederick L. Griggs (1876-1938) was an illustrator and print-maker. After visiting Campden in 1903 for his work illustrating the

the second show, the author noted that on the first occasion ‘it was not then possible to measure the change that has come over public taste’ particularly that for the ‘individuality’ of these artists’ work.¹⁸⁴ Indeed, although many artists of the Arts and Crafts movement found kindred spirits in the Cotswolds, there was never a Cotswold School as such.

The most extensive acknowledgement of the high level of artistry and craftsmanship to be found in the area, from the turn of the century to the 1930s, arose from the large exhibition held at the Alcuin Press in Chipping Camden in 1932. This brought together pieces by younger artists such as the cloth dyers and weavers Dorothy Larcher (1882-1952), Phyllis Barron (1890-1964) and Ethel Mairet (1872-1952), as well as a strong representation of the older generation including May Morris and Ernest Gimson. The president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Raymond Unwin (1863-1940), stressed in his introduction to the catalogue ‘the need for recalling the importance of craftsmanship’ and ‘the extent of production and of culture which hand-work can sustain.’¹⁸⁵ Numerous artworks by the Birmingham people were on show, with examples by (the then late) E.H. New, Henry Payne, his son Edward Payne, (the late) Arthur Gaskin, Georgie Gaskin, Charles and Margaret Gere, and Mary Newill, who by this date had moved to the area. Newill was one of the few whose works were not for sale, showing pen drawings for illustration, a landscape and an embroidered bedspread.

The drawn landscapes which Newill included in the 1932 exhibition would probably have evoked a similar scenery to the one depicted in her V&A curtains (Figure 4.2). A white ivy-covered house and side buildings nestle amongst trees on a hilly terrain, with a small river snaking around it. Some rabbits hide in the grass to the left whilst a flock of birds fly across the sky. Newill has used a dark blue linen ground, similarly to her bed cover at the BMAG (Figure 4.8). It would not be impossible that these at one time formed a full unit. This coincidentally was a colour highly favoured by William Morris and May Morris. The latter commended on how in embroidery ‘blue is one of the pleasantest to have constantly under one’s eye’,

Oxfordshire and Cotswold volume of the *Highways and Byways* guide, he came back the following year and settled in Campden for life [MacCarthy (1988), p. 117]. For a review of the exhibition see R.H. Allerton, ‘The Cotswold Gallery’, *The Studio* 82:344 (November 1921), pp. 220-222.

¹⁸⁴ H.P.R.F, *The Second Annual Exhibition of Water Colour and Other Drawings by Cotswold Artists* (Exhibition catalogue, 27 September – 21 October 1922, London, *The Cotswold Gallery*), p. 3

¹⁸⁵ *An Exhibition of Selected Works by Artists and Craftsmen of the Cotswolds held at the Alcuin Press, Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire, 6th August – 3rd September 1932* (Campden: The Alcuin Press, 1932)

particularly indigo.¹⁸⁶ Although iconographically quite different from the works made in collaboration with May Morris, the latter can still indirectly be linked to Newill's curtains. Indeed Newill's curtains are not unlike Lily Yeats' *Two Magpies* (Figure 4.17), made c. 1910. Lily Yeats had lived in Bedford Park and trained in embroidery with May Morris. This had led to her becoming an employee of Morris & Co. between 1886 and 1894.¹⁸⁷ Yeats later managed the embroidery department for the Dun Emer Industries in Dundrum from 1902, before setting up her own under the aegis of the Cuala Industries initially within the same premises.¹⁸⁸ Similarly to Newill's curtains, Yeats has chosen a dark blue ground, leaving much of it free from stitchery, picking comparable green, brown and blue threads. She has also preferred simplicity in terms of technique, mostly employing straight stitches applied in neat lines to create fields of colour.

Each of Newill's four curtains is made from two long panels of unbacked linen sewn together with black thread forming the ground on which the landscape has been drawn in coloured wools. The dimensions of the two pelmets suggest that there might have originally been another two of these to conceal the full length of the curtain fittings. One is covered with birds, which would have provided a fitting continuation either of the left or right hand part of the curtains. The other extends the top of the two central trees. Instead of disguising the seams, Newill has chosen to highlight the construction, displaying the Arts and Crafts emphasis on the 'mark of the hand.'¹⁸⁹ Thick black link stitches mark the passage from one panel to the next, which is reiterated with an even wider horizontal black line along the bottom of the curtains. Black outlining has also been used around the foliage of the various trees, reminiscent of Japanese prints. For followers of the Arts and Crafts movement, the appeal of Eastern art was as much aesthetic as in terms of its attitude, 'in which no barriers between the various branches of the arts were perceived.'¹⁹⁰ The designer Selwyn Image continued to uphold Japanese prints as a model for the consideration of 'masses in form and colour clearly silhouetted against the

¹⁸⁶ Morris (1893c), p. 108

¹⁸⁷ Parry (2005), p. 123

¹⁸⁸ Hardwick (1996), pp. 122-124, 154-164

¹⁸⁹ See Jennifer Harris, 'The Primacy of Handwork,' in *William Morris Revisited: Questioning the Legacy* (exhibition catalogue, Manchester, Whitworth Art Gallery, 26 January – 7 April 1996, London, Crafts Council Gallery, 2 May – 30 June, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 26 October – 7 February 1997), ed. unspecified (London: Crafts Council, 1996), pp. 25-37

¹⁹⁰ Parry (1993), p. 11

background or against one another' in embroidery as late as 1914.¹⁹¹ Christopher Dresser had earlier turned to Japanese embroidery for a 'flatness of treatment and evenness of distribution' independent from the canons of European art.¹⁹²

Indeed it is their 'flatness of treatment' which would have made Newill's curtains appear as 'modern' to her contemporaries.¹⁹³ This had a precedent in Newill's embroidered work. Newill had previously been inspired to experiment with the method of *appliqué* in her wish 'to emulate the effect of Japanese prints.'¹⁹⁴ This can be seen in her *Una and The Red Cross Knight* and *The Wandering Wood* hangings which were commissioned from her through the Bromsgrove Guild for the architect Edmund Butler's house, known as Top o' the Hill in Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham. Two versions of these designs appear to have been made. One can be dated c.1898 and was shown at the Paris Exhibition in 1900 (Figure 4.18–Figure 4.19). The other, which presents an inverted and seemingly incomplete working of the design, is now in the collections of Worcestershire County Museum at Hartlebury Castle (Figure 4.20).

The hangings illustrate scenes from Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and are representative of Newill's more strongly narrative work of the late nineteenth century. *The Studio* magazine reported how:

the ground of the panels, which are divided by bands of dark oak some four inches broad, is a cloth of a light chocolate tint. The design is carried out, in green serge *appliqué* for the foliage of the trees, light linen for the figures and the castle behind them, while the outline and certain details are in embroidery.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ Selwyn Image, 'A Few Thoughts on Designing for Embroidery', *Needle and Thread* 1 (January 1914), p. 27. This essentially reiterates his article 'On Designing for the Art of Embroidery', in *Arts and Crafts Essays* (1893), pp. 414–420

¹⁹² Cluckie (2008), p. 28

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Vallance (December 1899), p. 186. The Scottish embroider Jessie Newbery also showed an interest in the method of *appliqué*. She introduced into her teaching the use of 'appliqué of simple shapes with designs often composed mainly of lettering and needleweaving,' although the exact date of when she incorporated this into her programme is unknown. [Howard (1985), p. 30] The reproduction of Mary Newill's hangings in *The Studio* magazine seems to have made a strong impression on Joan Drew, whose embroidered panel *Castle on Cliff*, dated 1912, in the Embroiderers' Guild collection, is very close in design.

¹⁹⁵ Anonymous, 'British Decorative Art in 1899 ... Part III' (1899), p. 186

It is important to note that Newill was not directly imitating Japanese works, but derived from them her own original designs. Indeed, neither Spenser's text nor the Cotswolds countryside could be farther from Japan. In this use of the technique, the materials dictate the economical iconography and flattened effect it produces. The only relief derives from the contrasting textures of the different textiles employed. For a work falling under the category of embroidery, there is very little thread to be seen. This use of *appliqué* is a far cry in this regard from her 1893 *Gareth and Lynet* panel, fully-embroidered with fine threads, or indeed the works made in collaboration with May Morris.

In Newill's later homage to Japanese design as claimed of the V&A curtains, the large colour masses are in this case entirely worked in stitches. It appears that large sections of the curtains were worked loose in the hand, executed in a mixture of stem stitches and buttonhole stitches in interlocking rows. The poplar trees in the background and the green orbs jutting out from the branches of the juniper tree in the foreground are striking in their simplicity of design and execution. For her poplar tree in the first curtain from the left, Newill uses small vertical black stitches of up to three rows at a time, to create the volume of the tree. Depth and variety of texture are achieved by alternating between a lighter and darker tone of green and a dark blue, all applied in neat horizontal rows of stem stitches (Figure 4.21). She has similarly limited her palette to two shades of blue and a green, also applied in small alternating patches to depict the shrubbery in the background to the right of the fourth curtain. In this case these have been organised solely into vertical rows in encroaching satin stitch with sections in black demarcating one bush from another (Figure 4.22). The foliage of the two large juniper trees which occupy the foreground of the two central curtains employ a comparable treatment of colour. Newill has again adopted a tri-tonal palette, here preferring three shades of blue. The colours are likewise applied by sections, however Newill has used the indigo ground to offset her thread in this instance, instead of entirely covering it (Figure 4.23). Lines of stem stitches thus radiate from the trees' branches to evoke clusters of leaves.

Newill's curtains are interesting in how they combine formal elements of her other works with the simplified treatment described above. This can be appreciated notably when comparing her birds with those of the Uppingham altar-cloth. The Uppingham birds are true to tone and densely stitched, creating an impression of texture and volume (Figure 4.24). On the

other hand, the V&A birds appear flat (Figure 4.25), the thread imitating the effect of the white wood-engraved line with the dark ground left apparent. The highly-detailed small rose-bush in the foreground is a further example (Figure 4.26), being very similar to the one in her *Gareth and Lyneth* panel (Figure 4.27). Each leaf is individually represented. Close attention has likewise been paid to the flowers with the addition of small dots for the pistils. Newill has nonetheless adopted some shortcuts. In her earlier work, Newill used darning with stitches radiating outward from the centre in a manner imitative of the veining of a leaf. For her curtains she instead suggests the structure of the leaf with a simple zigzag of her thread. This can actually be considered as a technical innovation, as Newill is essentially loosening up the traditional satin stitch which consists of working straight stitches closely together across a shape. The attempt to recreate some of the natural texture of the plant in *Gareth and Lynet* has been reduced in this instance to a two-dimensional suggestion of its shape. The artist is moving away from the prescribed stitches which are still used by embroiderers today.

A change has also operated in terms of her use of colour. In the bush of the *Gareth and Lynet* panel each leaf was worked in two colours, a lighter green at the centre making way to a darker tone. This treatment is consistently applied to the whole plant in a somewhat stiff manner. In contrast, Newill has considered colour in terms of areas instead of individual units for her bush in her V&A curtains. Alternating patches of different shades of green and blue evoke the colours of the plant overall and bring it to life. The hangings employ a more restricted palette overall than her other works. A sense of unity is attained by means of repeated colour schemes. The light blues of the river are repeated in the sky, whereas the brownish-reddish tones of the rabbits' fur are echoed in the beech trees, meanwhile the same dark blues, greens and black have been used for the shrubbery to the right and the small poplar trees. The lighter yellowish-greens of the birch trees' leaves is recuperated for the bushes surrounding the house.

Composition and technique therefore participate in a greater freedom in design. This extends to the actual subject. Newill has detached herself from literary sources, leaving behind the imaginary medieval realms of Chaucer and Spenser. The prominence of these types of legends lent Newill's art of the 1890s its strong narrative character, which participated in the identification of a Pre-Raphaelite influence within the Birmingham School. Instead nature can be seen as the primary source for the V&A curtains, providing a template for original work.

This landscape rich with trees recalls Newill's black and white drawings from nature reproduced in *The Studio* in 1895 (Figure 4.28). Her decorative trees in particular, a recurring motif in her work in print, were praised for their 'simplicity' as well as her ability to reproduce 'patterns' rather than 'imitations' of nature.¹⁹⁶

Newill's curtains bring together the experience of designing and creating in a variety of materials. They demonstrate the artist's ability to think across media, from book-illustration to stained glass and embroidery. Furthermore, they can be seen as encompassing aspects of Newill's artistic journey, from smaller student works to more ambitious professional designs. This can be seen notably in terms of influences. Japanese wood-cut prints inspired her early work in illustration which carved its own identity within the Birmingham School of illustration. It was an effect which she in turn sought to translate to embroidery, as previously discussed in relation to her hangings shown at the Paris Exhibition of 1900.

The overlap between textile and print is not only in terms of a common formal model. In Newill's case it is also expressed in the physicality of the object. Some of her earliest known works in embroidery were book-covers (Figure 4.29). As such, these function as an extension of the type of work she produced for the pages inside the book. This link with a narrative content is reflected in the highly figurative nature of her earlier embroidery work. The human figure is a recurring feature in these, irrespective of Walter Crane's reservations as to the suitability of the subject to needlework. The latter warned that 'the expression is apt to be distorted by the buckling of the material under the tension of the stitches, and of course the slightest twist of a line or displacement of feature makes all the difference.' He thus concluded that 'in needlework, as in other things, there is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous.'¹⁹⁷ Newill's knowledge of the materials she designed for meant that she ensured that her designs, even of faces, would translate properly in any given media once executed.

Contemporary designers wrote about parallels between designing for stained glass and embroidery, both of which Newill worked with. Fred Miller compared the process of leading pieces of coloured glass together to patchwork, asserting the primacy of colour in designing for

¹⁹⁶ E.B.S., 'Some Aspects of the Work of Miss Mary L. Newill', *The Studio* 5:26 (May 1895), p. 59

¹⁹⁷ Crane (1898), p. 148

both crafts.¹⁹⁸ Particularly when considering large-scale embroidery to be viewed from afar, this would similarly rely ‘on efficient disposition of masses.’ Selwyn Image recommended looking at fourteenth or early fifteenth century stained-glass designs as a model in how to ‘keep our masses in form and colour clearly silhouetted against the background or against one another.’¹⁹⁹ The use of the dark lead-lines as a means to structure the window’s design is mirrored in Newill’s use of black outlining when working with *appliqué* or within a stitched scheme as with her V&A curtains.

But whilst both crafts rely on a similar structural approach to form based on colour distribution, their respective specificities were essential to an Arts and Crafts approach to design. This can be appreciated when comparing a recurring motif in Newill’s work carried out, one the one hand in stained glass, and on the other in embroidery. Two rabbits can be seen in the lower left panel of Newill’s *Angel’s Memorial Window to Good R.D. Newill* in St Peter’s Church, Wrockwardine, completed in 1906 (Figure 4.30). Newill similarly included two rabbits in her V&A curtains (Figure 4.31). Although presumably made around the same time, the drawing has been adapted to the material it was intended to be executed in.

The stained glass rabbits have been painted in black onto white glass, with additional etching to achieve shading. They serve a decorative purpose similarly to the surrounding flowers, for the most part also rendered in clear glass. The glass rabbits are depicted by means of the drawn line, emphasising the rounded volume of their form with heads almost as large as their bodies. This ensures that when light shines through the clear glass, the painted shape of the rabbits stand out. When depicting the same animal in needlework, the artist has focused on texture over form. In contrast with the monochromatic stained glass animals, the embroidered rabbits are worked in variety of shades of brown. The direction and relief of the fur is rendered by lines of stem-stiches applied alongside each other in varying light browns. These differences in tone provide the colour equivalent to the greyscale shading used in the stained glass. The embroidered rabbit is more sensorial, inviting the viewer to touch it. This highlights the role which handling plays in the appreciation of textile works.

¹⁹⁸ Miller (1898), pp. 113-5. The stained glass artist Wilhelmina Geddes would exhibit needlework panels, ‘sometimes derived from small stained glass panels,’ executed to her design by her sister Ethel Geddes. [Gordon Bowe (1988), p. 279, fn 29 p. 293]

¹⁹⁹ Image (January 1914), p. 27

By means of its subject, Mary Newill's stained glass panel *Queen Matilda Sewing the Bayeux Tapestry* (Figure 4.32) establishes a relationship between stained glass and embroidery. One of a pair of three-light windows, it was commissioned through the Bromsgrove Guild in 1898. It remains at The Anchorage, 137 Handsworth Road, in Handsworth. In it Queen Matilda is assisted by ladies-in-waiting, with the famous tapestry transposed to glass draped throughout the three panels.²⁰⁰ Newill suggests the weight and folds of the hanging by means of diagonal pieces of leading which divide the tapestry into segments of glass. But even more than the visual evidence which this artwork provides of Newill's own relationship with both crafts, the image of the craftswoman conveyed in the window is of particular interest. Although an idealised scene from the past, it can be interpreted in terms of how a practitioner wished her craft to be viewed in her own time and in the future.

The Arts and Crafts bookbinder T.J. Cobden-Sanderson advised that 'it is with this new world, not with the old world, that the movement and ourselves have now to do.'²⁰¹ Following T. Crook's interpretation, Cobden-Sanderson's quote underlines the 'self-conscious' relationship these artists had with tradition. The latter was to be 'put in service of the future' in that sense actually breaking away from the past.²⁰² This would have resonated with women, such as Newill, whose tenacity and artistic practise convey the dream of a new dawn in which women would truly enjoy the egalitarian values which motivated many of the Arts and Crafts projects.²⁰³ The women in the stained glass window work as a team, as Mary Newill, May Morris and their students would have on the *Owl* and WGA bed-curtains, both of which were displayed as professional work. This offers, for its time, a novel consideration of the labour which produced the Bayeux Tapestry.

In Victorian days, the Bayeux Tapestry was usually read 'through the filter of nineteenth-century embroidery practice' and viewed as an individual effort ... rather than as a

²⁰⁰ Throughout the nineteenth century the Bayeux Tapestry was attributed to Queen Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror but is now considered to have been commissioned by a Norman patron from an English workshop. [Harris (1988), p. 21]

²⁰¹ T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, p. 31, quoted in T. Crook, 'Craft and the Dialogics of Modernity: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Late-Victorian and Edwardian England,' *Journal of Modern Craft* 2:1 (2009), p. 25

²⁰² Crook (2009), p. 25

²⁰³ There is evidence that Mary Newill showed an interest in attending at least one of the meetings at the Hammersmith Socialist League branch. [Walthamstow, William Morris Gallery, Letter from May Morris to Kate Faulkner, undated]

workshop production,’ as the product of an aristocratic amateur ‘rather than as professional work.’²⁰⁴ In terms of the Victorian idea of the medieval embroiderer, May Morris noted how the embroiderers usually figured in medieval manuscripts with an old hand-loom, ‘carding, spinning, weaving, and embroidering, sitting in pretty gardens, the blue sky overhead, with garlands or jewels in their hair, and graceful gowns on their bodies.’²⁰⁵ This she opposed to the Victorian ‘weaving-sheds, where every hour spent in the hot exhausted air among the clutter and crash of machinery is an undeserved penance to the work-girls.’²⁰⁶

In her stained glass panel, Newill proposes an original interpretation of the medieval embroidering chatelaine which can be seen as embodying her own conception of the craftswoman. This aspires to incorporate the high level of skill and creative work associated with the isolated aristocratic medieval embroiderer, within an improved contemporary workshop practice which would practically affect the Edwardian working and middle class. She shows the women working the cloth loose in the hand, a manner suited to stitches such as ‘chain-stitch (when done with a simple needle) and several other looped stitches’, as well as darning and stitching.²⁰⁷ As previously mentioned of Newill’s curtains, this was a work method which the artist preferred for her own embroideries, in opposition to the stitches used in stiffer work such as Berlin wool-work which required a frame.

Newill’s depiction of the medieval embroidering Queen and her assistants contrasts with fellow member of the Birmingham Group, Sidney Meteyard’s interpretation of a fictional aristocratic embroiderer in his painting *‘I am half-sick of shadows’, said the Lady of Shalott*, dated 1913 (Figure 4.33). Based on Lord Tennyson’s poem, Meteyard’s Lady of Shalott has forsaken her task, her embroidery frame held loose in her hand while her body sinks backwards in despondency. Needlework is inextricably associated with her suffering, as subject to a curse she must continually weave images on her loom without being able to look out directly at the world. The Lady of Shalott ‘is so dedicated to art and so isolated from the outside world that its eventual impact brings total destruction.’²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ Harris (1988), p. 21

²⁰⁵ Morris (1893c), p. 73

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 12

²⁰⁸ Christine Poulson, ‘Death and the Maiden: The Lady of Shalott and the Pre-Raphaelites’, in *Re-Framing the Pre-Raphaelites: Historical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. Elen Harding (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), p. 179

The focus of Meteyard's painting however is on the Lady's corporeal form which overwhelms the composition. She awakens the viewer's desire whilst suffering from her own sexual repression. The abandoned embroidery symbolises her domestic and spiritual imprisonment, as invoked in the quote 'I am half-sick of shadows.' Compared to nineteenth century representations of the Lady of Shalott, Meteyard's 'represents a more sympathetic response to female frustration in the face of a society resolutely dominated by patriarchal values and social codes.'²⁰⁹ Christine Poulson argues that 'Meteyard's picture was exceptional in suggesting any kind of critique of the status quo' which she interprets in light of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts' 'liberal political atmosphere, tending towards socialism' in which 'women played an active part.'²¹⁰ Meteyard's compassion for an oppressed female character was no doubt informed by his wife, jewellery maker and enameller, Kate Eadie who took an active stance on female suffrage.²¹¹ Crucially, however, Meteyard's Lady of Shalott's activity as an embroiderer is not taken seriously but presented as a punitive pastime, happily set aside. In this respect Meteyard perpetuates the Victorian dichotomy suggested by Parker, of femininity/embroidery versus masculinity/professionalism.²¹² This contrasts with Kate Eadie's own interpretation of Tennyson's poem in a Limoges enamel-work plaque. Eadie's Lady of Shalott is shown *in the act of weaving*, while Lancelot rides by.²¹³ Likewise, the *making* of an artwork of great symbolic and historic importance is at the heart of Newill's depiction of Queen Matilda and her team of embroiderers, whose activity and its result take pride of place in the overall composition. These craftswomen show *active* women in their designs, whilst their male counterpart represents the female as *passive*.

Mary Newill's depiction of the embroiderer of the Middle Ages recalls a period before the Renaissance's separation between the 'fine arts' and the 'crafts', which enabled the devaluation of embroidery.²¹⁴ It also invokes to a time when the stigma of female amateurship had not yet become attached to the craft. Jennifer Harris offers a succinct summary of some of

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 183

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 184

²¹¹ A privately owned necklace of Eadie's design bears the Suffrage colours of white, green and purple, an overtly militant choice. ['Kate Eadie Arts and Crafts Suffragette Necklace, Amethyst, Silver and Enamel', Collectors Weekly, 2012, <http://www.collectorsweekly.com/stories/59420-kate-eadie-arts-and-crafts-suffragette-n>, consulted 3 June 2015]

²¹² Parker (2010), pp. 214-5

²¹³ Poulson (1995), p. 193, fn 19

²¹⁴ Parker (2010), p. 40

the shifts described in Rozsika Parker's critical history of the links between embroidery, evolving conceptions of the feminine, and social class. This identifies the origin of British embroidery's association with female amateur work within the late sixteenth century.²¹⁵ Harris relates that 'during the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), wives of new social class of 'gentleman' 'reflected the family's newly-acquired status by withdrawing from active participation in trade and by providing visual evidence, in the form of embroidery, of their increased leisure.'²¹⁶ Conjunctly, 'women's independent professional involvement in the craft was on the wane.'²¹⁷ Not only was the status and professional practice of embroidery evolving, but the function of embroideries themselves changed. The seventeenth century saw the transformation of the sampler into an 'educational exercise' carrying moral weight in fashioning 'feminine' virtues such as patience and obedience.

Harris notes that 'by the mid-eighteenth century the feminine ideal had acquired explicit class connotations, defined not in terms of economics but by a style of living and mode of behaviour associated with the aristocratic lady.'²¹⁸ Furthermore, 'the introduction of a division of labour in craft industries' emerging more clearly at that time 'often turned out to be a division in terms of gender, with the male as the designer or 'head', and the woman as the 'hands', the executant of his ideas.'²¹⁹ In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the ideal of 'domestic femininity' which accompanied the rise of the industrial bourgeoisie saw embroidery transformed into a means to remain 'industrious' as women were pushed out of the professional sphere.²²⁰ This was materialised in the abundance of embroidered cloths which filled Victorian middle-class interiors. The labour and skill of the embroiderer was embodied in highly worked small pieces. Male commentators were quick to dismiss the artistic value of this type of work, M.H. Baillie Scott commenting that 'a multitude of stitches is often admired as an evidence of the patience of the worker, who has sacrificed so many hours in producing a result which might have been obtained directly and simply by some other method.'²²¹

²¹⁵ Harris (1988), p. 12

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 10

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 11

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 13

²¹⁹ Ibid., p. 15

²²⁰ Ibid., p. 19

²²¹ M.H. Baillie Scott, 'Some Experiments in Embroidery', *The Studio* 28:122 (1903), p. 279

Even within the Arts and Crafts movement male designers continued to conceive work which craftswomen would then execute. In Birmingham, Henry Payne and Charles Gere showed an interest in designing for embroidery, but found skilled needlewomen to materialise them for them. Gere's altar frontal and two embroidered banners for the private chapel at Madresfield Court were thus made by the Misses Munn, the seven daughters of a former Rector of Madresfield.²²² Henry Payne's painting *The Enchanted Sea* was carried out in embroidery by the student Amy Ward in 1899.²²³ Upon considering, then, the Arts and Crafts Movement's historical contribution to embroidery, Parker concludes that '...whatever criticism can be levelled at [it] in terms of sexism and elitism, it was [nonetheless] instrumental in raising the standard of hand embroidery and allowing women to recognise the value of their work, not as mere evidence of the femininity which would enable them to attain male financial support, but as something which actually earned them money.'²²⁴ Parker's valuation of female emancipation focuses on financial independence through remunerated labour. Mary Newill was financially secure thanks to her salary as a teacher and the inheritance referred to in the introduction. But the possibility, as for any artist still today, of living solely from one's artistic production does not seem like a useful gauge of emancipation.

This study has shown that women themselves were the agents in raising the standard of hand embroidery, effectively nuancing the formulaic narrative of William Morris's role in the revival of this craft. It has shown that women were not only the 'hands' but could also be the 'head.' As their own designers, they proposed renewed compositions and iconography, combined with skill in execution. Women also appear as the main actors in disseminating this revival in needlework as teachers, shaping curricula to facilitate the emergence of a new fully qualified and inventive generation of professional embroiderers. The value of their contribution can more effectively be appreciated when considered in terms of Rancière's 'politics of

²²² *The Earthly Paradise* (1969), p. 5

²²³ This was praised in *The Studio* for the 'power and decorative qualities' it had acquired in being carried out in a larger scale. 'The greater part of the area is occupied by solid embroidery in crewels, while the ground material which is of the colour of light brown Holland, is left to serve, outlined in needlework only, for the faces and hands of the figures, for parts of the costume of the principal figure, the shell-craft in which she is seated, and the sails of the boat in the middle distance. The prevailing colours of the composition are a pale fawn tint for the draperies and grey green for the sea, with black and deep purple-brown for the emphasising of certain of the minor details.' [Anonymous, 'British Decorative Art in 1899, and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition (IV)', *The Studio* 18:82 (January 1900), p. 278]

²²⁴ Parker (2010), pp. 184-5

aesthetics' outlined in the introduction. Rather than trying to shoehorn these craftswomen into the category of 'professional' (conventionally defined according to a male experience) as the means to recognise their work, it seems more pressing to bring attention to the 'social' nature and value of their art which has been demonstrated throughout this and the previous chapters.

There was however a limit to these craftswomen's reach. The appreciation for the type of embroidery taught and produced by Mary Newill seems to have petered out after the First World War. With the exception of the 1932 exhibition in Chipping Camden, Newill appears to have stopped sending out embroidery for display after 1917. May Morris, and similarly Mary Newill, had dedicated their life to raising the quality of embroidery and particularly to imparting the knowledge gained from their practice to the next generation of craftswomen. As educators, they had had to manage a complicated inheritance in which embroidery split members of their gender between those who viewed it 'as the major cause of women's unhappiness, while others insisted that it was their sole solace.'²²⁵ Both had participated in the creation and life of the WGA in the desire to provide a formal association between practitioners of a range of crafts, including embroidery, in view of asserting the worth and joy they found in their work and that which it could afford to others.

Their inclusive approach to education and the arts, which is reflected in the accessible and practical tone of May Morris's writings, could not overcome the 'progressive' stance of a younger generation of needleworkers. Joan Edwards describes the process by which 'the *avant-garde* embroiderer had begun to look with disapproval at art needlework.' By 1933 'according to many writers, embroidery was either colourful, spontaneous, and *unconscious*, like peasant embroidery; or else it was, like art needlework, contrived, artificial, and *conscious*. ... Crewel work had become the whipping boy of the progressive embroiderer.'²²⁶ In a letter addressed to Georgie Gaskin c.1932-4, May Morris lamented 'I go on embroidering because I must, but nobody wants my work, though, honestly, it is better than ever and I put lots of birds into the designs. Doesn't it seem a pity? And nobody wants what I write. I've had refusals that dishearten me.'²²⁷

²²⁵ Parker (2010), p. 148

²²⁶ Joan Edwards, *Crewel Embroidery in England* (London & Sydney: BT Batsford Ltd, 1975), p. 193

²²⁷ Birmingham, LB, MS 2945/2/3/5, Fragment of an undated letter from May Morris to Georgie Gaskin, c. 1932-4

In her essay on embroidery for the catalogue of the British Arts and Crafts Section at the Ghent International Exhibition of 1913, May Morris had heralded the embroidery of the Birmingham School of Art as marking the beginning of ‘another chapter in the long history of the domestic arts of our country.’²²⁸ Her praise responded to an innovative approach to embroidery newly adopted at the school. This development practically implemented theories in education articulated by the school’s headmaster Robert Catterson-Smith. Students were encouraged to work out designs directly in needlework, without the preliminary step of drawing on paper. Unfortunately no examples of these experiments seem to have survived nor been reproduced in print. Ironically this would mould the type of ‘unconscious’ work described by Joan Edwards which pushed the likes of May Morris and Mary Newill off the market.

Catterson-Smith’s daughter, Isabel Catterson-Smith, went on to teach embroidery at the Birmingham School of Art. According to Constance Howard, Isabel ‘advocated the working of stitchery straight on to the material, embroidering ideas based on plants.’²²⁹ Discussing the application of her father’s principles to embroidery in the elementary stages of teaching in 1922, Isabel Catterson-Smith described how students ‘approached embroidery with “a happy playfulness” and from this initial freedom went on to make more restrained but highly imaginative designs.’²³⁰ May Morris and Mary Newill would have struggled to find students then willing to execute an imposed design. Having successfully instilled the idea that women embroiderers could be their own designers, freedom of interpretation was no longer enough for the new generation.

²²⁸ Morris (1913), p. clxxvi. The same essay was reproduced in the catalogue for the Paris Exhibition of 1914.

²²⁹ Howard (1985), p. 91

²³⁰ Refers to an article by Isabel Catterson-Smith in Mrs Rolleston (ed.), *The Embroiderers* (1922), in Joan Edwards, *Crewel Embroidery in England* (London & Sydney: BT Batsford Ltd, 1975), p. 190

Conclusion

This thesis began by questioning the narrative of the history of the Arts and Crafts movement and the lack of acknowledgement of Birmingham's contribution to this development. It took issue with the proclivity of survey-type publications, whose canonical approach has avoided an in-depth engagement with artworks. In terms of current debates, this project's regional framework can be related to the need to valorize the 'local' in the face of an increasingly 'globalized' art world. Some of today's artists lament that international 'solidarity' comes at the expense of honouring 'specificity.'¹ Contemporary practitioner Ulrike Müller underlines 'the specific locus of our lived relationships, on which our practice is built', warning that 'decontextualization leads to misunderstandings.'² This critique of the current effects of globalization echoes the issues of homogenisation and distortion identified in some historical studies. It seems important therefore that art historical scholarship should give weight to located and contextualised approaches in order to prevent new courses of erasure in the future.

Within the context of Birmingham, it was decided to emphasise the role of women, a further marginalised set of contributors. Let us return to Casteras' and Nochlin's claim, quoted in the introduction, of the absence of a significant involvement of women on a 'group' level in the Arts and Crafts movement. Can it be stated, at the conclusion of this study, that craftswomen in Birmingham formed a 'group'? It would be wrong to assert that Birmingham-trained craftswomen formed a *concerted* group whose impact might be evaluated within group identity parameters. While in many cases overlapping, these women's networks and professional trajectories were distinctive. These Birmingham craftswomen occupied different types of workspaces and responses to a 'unified' approach to making. They diverged in terms of religion, which, as discussed in relation to Kate Bunce and Margaret A. Rope, could strongly impact on their art. What has been demonstrated nonetheless is their considerable and meaningful contribution to a regional artistic phenomenon.

The joint consideration in this thesis of several of these artists' work, in opposition to the format of the single-artist monograph, has made it possible to bring to light certain trends within a complex social web of artistic activity. A rallying element might be found in John

¹ Aruna D'Souza in Deutsche et al. (Spring 2008), p. 44

² Ulrike Müller in Deutsche et al. (Spring 2008), p. 47

Ruskin's formulation of the characteristics of gothic art in the 'The Nature of Gothic' as revisited by Jacques Rancière. The French thinker notes that Ruskin's interpretation of the gothic is 'the art of men who execute with their hands the work of their mind, free men, capable of feeling pleasure in executing, in accordance with their idea, these ornaments destined to be lost amongst the profusion of figures.'³ It is in this vein that the Birmingham women artists' contribution can be recognised, not as individual figures of 'genius,' but as participants in an artistic and social movement collectively working towards something 'more' than the public recognition of the self. Elizabeth Ann Dobie has argued that 'those who participate in the discourse wield a powerful influence on how sex and gender are viewed.'⁴ Throughout this thesis the meanings interpreted from the selected artworks have asserted Birmingham craftswomen's political 'power' as understood in terms of Rancière's theory of the 'politics of aesthetics.'

In chapter one Georgie Gaskin demonstrated an artistic investment in the child's education. Her imagery and text combined ideas encompassing 'natural romanticist' and socialist attachments to nature and the land, in view of an improved English society. The child is seen as a figure of hope in these dreamers' plans for a better world. These artists were playing the long-game, investing in the following generation. An idealised past shapes the vision of the future, in reaction to their engagement with their present circumstances. Gaskin worked with a commercial publisher in realising her designs, showing that a 'qualitative' approach within a 'quantitative' industry (to recuperate Lethaby's phrase) was possible. Celia Levetus's *Ex Libris* were studied as an address-book of sorts, tracing the artist's sources of patronage and support. The use of Griselda Pollock's framework of 'reference-deference-difference' shone light on Levetus's self-marketing strategy, skills which she later applied to supporting other female artists. The turn of the century held promises of a new dawn, which Birmingham-trained craftswomen were keen to seize.

³ Rancière, *Aisthesis* (2013), p. 170. 'C'est surtout l'art d'hommes qui exécutent de leurs mains le travail de leur pensée, d'hommes libres, capables de ressentir de la joie à exécuter, selon leur idée, ces ornements destinés à se perdre dans la profusion de figures.' [Rancière, *Aisthesis* (2011)]; My translation: It is in particular the art of men who manufacture with their hands the working of their mind, free men, able to feel pleasure in making, following their design, these ornaments destined to be lost amongst the profusion of figures.

⁴ Elizabeth Ann Dobie, 'Interweaving Feminist Frameworks,' in Brand and Korsmeyer (1995), p. 229

Chapter two delved into the depth of symbolism, and richness and plurality of sources feeding the meanings of sacred objects. Marsh and Walker's interpretation of religious spaces as creating a safe non-competitive environment for middle-class women's artistic expression was put into doubt. Their interpretation seems reliant on the premise that the 'feminisation' of the Church is equivalent to its domestication, problematically enforcing the concept of the 'separate spheres.' On the contrary, when considering artistic gifting as a power-wielding act of conspicuous benefaction, this feminisation takes on a publicly competitive tone – whether the work is remunerated or not. The importance of the politics of production in the consideration of artworks issued from the Arts and Crafts ethos introduced the conflict between 'artistic' and 'commercial' work, as manifest in the making of the Madresfield altarpiece.

This theme was pursued in the third chapter, showing the great lengths Sr Margaret went to in order to ensure a unity within the production of her stained glass windows from the enclosure of the convent. The Arts and Crafts approach associated artistry with the designer's involvement in, or at least supervision of, all stages of production. This was by no means the Romantic vision of the bohemian artist working in isolation in the comfort of a tastefully decorated studio. As discussed in relation to Georgie Gaskin's book-illustrations, the final product which reached its juvenile readers had required the specialised skills of not only the designer but equally the engraver and printer. The stained-glass craft continued to involve a team of glaziers even in a production model which sought to avoid division of labour. It was a physical, messy, noisy and hot business, with risks of cuts or of burning one's hands on freshly fired glass. The conflict between stained glass making's strong history as a trade and the Arts and Crafts desire to raise its artistic status shaped the T.W. Camm Studio's marketing.

Collaborative and collective ventures were central to the Arts and Crafts approach to art-making. This was in part due to the ambitious nature of some of these projects, as evident from the scale of the embroideries discussed in chapter four. This could develop into long-term partnerships and friendships as shown with Mary Newill and May Morris. It also reflected Arts and Crafts guild-socialism which cultivated the bonding experience afforded by collaboration. Despite the sexist narrative surrounding Arts and Crafts guilds, these brotherhoods were not as

exclusive of their sisters as might be thought.⁵ As footnoted in chapter one, the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft involved women as committee members, teachers, head of department, and exhibitors. Likewise, chapter three and four referenced Mary Newill's work through the Bromsgrove Guild, which afforded her remunerated opportunities at the outset of her career. Attention has also been brought to the WGA referring to Margaret A. Rope and Mary Newill's membership in chapters three and four. Georgie Gaskin also became a Guild member in its formative year, Kate Bunce joined in 1908, and Myra Bunce became an associate member in 1914.⁶ Scholarship has emphasised the fact that the Art Worker's Guild did not admit women members until the second half of the twentieth century. The men's guild was nonetheless open to collaboration with fellow craftswomen.

The Art Worker's Guild lent a room from their premises 'rent free' to the WGA for their meetings, as well as holding joint meetings on occasion, for example on the question of 'Banners' or 'Clothing', both occurring in 1919.⁷ The secretary of the WGA noted in 1908 that 'the end of the year saw a crowded meeting at Clifford Inn Hall, kindly lent by the Art Worker's Guild, under the presidency of Mrs Watts. Among the speakers were Mrs Watts, Mr Lethaby, Mrs Herringham, Mr Walter Crane, Miss Lowndes, Mr Halsey Ricardo & Mr Will Rothenstein.'⁸ These male designers' willingness to contribute to the WGA's constitutive meeting shows support and respect of craftswomen's role in the movement. The discourse and perception surrounding interaction between members of either guild nonetheless highlights divergent and conflicting positions. H.J.L.J. Massé in his 1935 history of the Art-Worker's Guild referred to the men's association as the 'parent' organisation, the WGA coming under the category of 'offshoot', similarly to the Junior Art-Worker's Guild.⁹ The question of gender in relation to membership and participation created dissent within the WGA itself. A motion was raised that 'distinguished men or women who have rendered signal services to Art or to whom

⁵ For an example of this type of narrative see H.J.L.J. Massé, *The Art-Worker's Guild, 1884-1934* (Oxford: Art Worker's Guild, 1935)

⁶ The archive contains printed list of members for the years 1911, 1912, 1914, 1920, with Kate Bunce, Georgie Gaskin, Mary Newill and Margaret A. Rope still listed as members in 1920; London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 2, WGA Minute book Jan 10th 1913-May 18th 1917, Committee Meeting 15 May 1914

⁷ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 5a, Women's Guild of Arts. Annual Report, 1912; Box 1, folder 1, Invitation from the Art-Workers' Guild for a joint meeting on "Banners" to be held on 31 October at 6 Queen Square; Box 1, folder 5a, Women's Guild of Arts. Annual Report, 1919.

⁸ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 3, Secretary's Report 1908, pp. 1-2

⁹ Massé (1935), pp. 28-29

the Guild is indebted may be invited to join the Guild as honorary associates.’¹⁰ This followed an initiative submitted in the name of thirty-seven members, including Birmingham artists Kate Bunce, Georgie Gaskin, and Mary Newill.¹¹ It led to much contention, and its instalment in 1913 resulted in the resignation of eleven of its members in protest, including the tempera painters Mary Sargent Florence and Marianne Stokes. Several other members took this opportunity to write to the Committee to share their views and reasons for supporting the proposal. One of them was Pamela Coleman Smith who identified this wish to keep men out as ‘an attempt to make this Guild into a purely woman’s affair – which it was never originally started as.’¹² Another anonymous member took out some of her frustration at some of her peers, writing ‘I loathe the thought of suffrage sex war being brought into it and warmly welcome new lecturers who have studied their subject.’¹³ The Guild seems to have rallied around an egalitarian stance, preaching inclusion rather than segregation. At the General Annual Meeting in 1913, the Vice-Chairman, asserted that:

The Guild has in the first place its ideal, and in the second, its material and immediate aim; it affirms the importance of the Arts as one of the assets, I won’t say of a cultured Society, but of a merely decent and self-respecting Society – the importance of the Arts as we see them in our best dreams, lighted by the enthusiasm and sacrifice of labour, the pride and happiness of creation, unclouded by complications of commercial necessities.

Its material object is, in gathering together representatives of the different arts, to be of use to the members of the Guild, a usefulness which partly consists of our encouraging each other to think in common, to watch the progress of each other’s work and the work of those moving on similar (and dissimilar) lines, and to do everything possible to bring ourselves in touch with the best thought, the best work, of the world outside our circle. ...

¹⁰ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 7, Rules

¹¹ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 2, WGA Minute book Jan 10th 1913-May 18th 1917, Annual General Meeting held at Clifford’s Inn Hall, December 12 1913

¹² London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12a, Letter from Pamela Coleman Smith to May Morris 22 January 1913

¹³ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12a, Letter from anonymous member to the Committee

Now, the Art Workers' Guild for reasons of their own are unable to admit women, but as far as our Guild is concerned, there is no principle involved in keeping men at a distance. It is undeniable that the principal workers in most crafts are men, and from the first our Guild has felt that the best authorities in every branch of Arts and Crafts should, regardless of sex distinction, be encouraged to come into our midst and talk to us in the intimate and comrade-like way that is so stimulating to an artist's work capacity.

I may add that the members of the Art Workers' Guild have, on more than one occasion invited a woman to speak before them when she was a known authority on her subject. ... We must meet, we must discuss, we must brush up against other people. For, after all, the inspiration derived from the experience of so small a body would very soon come to an end if not enriched from other sources. This body of ours does, in its own small way, stand as an expression of the necessity for gathering together and concentrating the energies of creative artists, and I think we have already accomplished something of our immediate aim, which is, to socialize our art, as it were, by some sort of record of work done year by year, and by an exchange of experience and of thought.¹⁴

That same year the illustrator Ethel Everett wrote that she considered that 'our great art should be ideally human and neither man nor woman should be excluded from anything connected with it ... to get a feminine element into art is a mistake.'¹⁵ These craftswomen aimed for a consideration of their work on equal terms alongside that of men artists. During a meeting held in November 1913, attention was brought to a notice of the upcoming Leipsig exhibition sent from the women's section of book production. The response was clear-cut as 'the hon. secs. were directed to write on behalf of the committee, explaining their thanks and explaining their objection on principle to supporting any separate section for women in art exhibitions.'¹⁶ The

¹⁴ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 5a, The Women's Guild of Arts. Annual Report, 1913

¹⁵ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12a, Letter from Ethel Everett to Mary Sloane 1913

¹⁶ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 2, WGA Minute book Jan 10th 1913-May 18th 1917, Committee Meeting November 27 1913

Guild had sent a similar response to an earlier invitation from the Edinburgh Exhibition to exhibit in the women's section.¹⁷ In a letter to May Morris dated 22 January 1913, the painter Pamela Coleman Smith reflected on the original objects of the WGA, underlining that 'the chief reason why I originally joined the Guild was the fact that it made the point of asking its members not to send to exhibitions only for women as it lowered the standard of work.'¹⁸

Coverage of women's art exhibitions in the artistic press might have contributed to the desire to avoid the segregation of their work and hence its consideration on different terms. Reviewing the 1900 Women's Exhibition, a journalist for the *Art Journal* noted the display 'may perhaps revive the old discussion ... as to whether women's work equals that of men, or whether it is inferior, or whether – which is perhaps the safest line to take when discussing the subject with a woman and wishing to conciliate truth with courtesy – it is different.'¹⁹ A professional network such as the WGA was invaluable in fostering feelings of legitimacy, belonging, facilitating patronage and providing women with opportunities to exhibit. The intent of the organisation was not for members to 'only come once or twice a year to vote at elections, but to all the meetings, in a spirit of comradeship, eager to give out some of your own mental activity and to absorb that of your fellows.'²⁰ It was all the more important for the unmarried craftswoman who could not rely on the social recognition and support afforded by marriage and motherhood.

Writing of women artists in the Late Victorian and Edwardian period, Lisa Tickner argues that 'it was understood that the serious pursuit of art was incompatible with the demands of marriage and domesticity – it unsexed women and made them 'irritable, restless, egotistical' just as the attributes of womanliness were incompatible with the production of good art.'²¹ Most of the Birmingham craftswomen discussed in this thesis – Kate Bunce, Myra Bunce, Florence Camm, Margaret Rope and Mary Newill – did not pursue matrimony or motherhood. Although

¹⁷ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 13c, Women's Guild of Arts letter of reply to Edinburgh Exhibition

¹⁸ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12a, Letter from Pamela Coleman Smith to May Morris 22 January 1913

¹⁹ Birmingham, LB, Papers of William Bennett, MS 705/6/31, E.F.V., 'The Woman's Exhibition', *Art Journal* (1900), p. 219

²⁰ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 3, Secretary's Report 1908, pp. 4-5

²¹ Tickner (1987), p. 13

potentially ‘unsexed’ since they were not contributing to procreation, their gender continued to nonetheless impact on their opportunities, resulting in a double punishment of sorts.

Information on the circumstances and decisions which led them to lead a celibate life is unavailable. It seems problematic however to ascribe this to a ‘modernity’ of spirit as Tanya Harrod does, as referred to in chapter three, or to claim that this was new to the inter-war period. If we consider a few dates, born in the mid-1850s the Bunce sisters would have been at an age to marry as of the 1870s. Their friend Mary Newill, who was born in 1860, similarly could have been wed as early as 1880. Likewise, the tempera painter Margaret Gere never married either, living with her half-brother Charles Gere throughout her adult life. Maybe this was not such a ‘modern’ phenomenon after all. Amongst those who did marry, such as Georgie Gaskin, Edith Payne, or Katie Eadie, having a fellow craftsman as their partner seems to have facilitated the continuation of their artistic activities. Their craft was no longer their sole or main occupation however. Mary Newill for example took part in the Women’s Guild of Art’s activities despite having to travel down to London from Birmingham. The married Georgie Gaskin, on the other hand, maintained her membership for years but rarely could make it to events. In fact her general lack of involvement within the Guild informed her decision to send in her resignation in January 1922.²² Should this inasmuch be taken as evidence of the ‘separate spheres’, the single craftswoman being absorbed into the professional and public realm, whilst the married craftswoman returned to the domestic fold?

This thesis has demonstrated, on the contrary, the limitations of such oppositional binary readings. The ‘political aesthetics’ of the selected Arts and Crafts objects disrupt their clear categorisation or that of their makers. This research has enforced how crucial material and visual evidence is when dealing with artists whose presence has been historically erased. The importance of the object is heightened when archival evidence is unavailable to establish their reinsertion. The factors of anonymity and ephemerality in women’s artistic production further complicate this effort.²³ Patricia Mainardi, in her provocative essay on American quilt-making,

²² In fact her general lack of involvement within the Guild informed her decision to send in her resignation in January 1922, stating that she had ‘only attended one meeting since she joined’ and saw ‘no prospect of her being able to do so in the future.’ [London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12c, Letter from Georgie Gaskin to Mary Sloane 16 January 1921]

²³ Regarding anonymity see Callen (c1979), p. 9; for ephemerality see Tickner (1987), pp. 21, 56, 71

denounced ‘the fabric of lies that has been spread over their work – the distortion of the “quilting bee” into the false idea that quilts were “collective art” instead of the work of individual women, and ... the lies about their anonymity’ where signatures were clearly visible on the quilt.²⁴

The anonymity which the collective facilitated might in fact be sought after in some cases. Chapter four considered how anonymity was a key concern to Arts and Crafts practitioners of the late nineteenth century. Anonymity was desirable to some, such as the ladies of the Royal School of Art Needlework, as it offered protection to women for whom paid activity led to social stigmatisation. In contrast, members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society were actively fighting anonymity so that all contributors to an artistic endeavour would receive recognition, as illustrated in the case of the *Owl* hanging. This public acknowledgment in turn ensured future commissions, as with the WGA hangings. The double-edged sword of anonymity continues to touch women artists today, particularly those involved in collective activities. “Gertrude Stein”, one of the founding members of the Guerrilla Girls, explains how anonymity can be a strategy to ‘shift focus on issues’ rather than ‘the individual identities of the members.’ The ‘downside’ on the other hand, Stein warns, ‘is that our individual efforts remain invisible to the outside world. You cannot list the shows and projects of the group on your résumé ... However, this M.O. has the benefit of equalizing the contributions of all members of the collective regardless of art-world status.’²⁵

As enunciated by Stein, ‘status’ continues to pose an issue in the quest to realise art, in this case explicitly tied to gender. Followers of the Arts and Crafts movement located the problem with the conception in the Renaissance of the category of ‘artist’ itself, as noted by Lethaby:

Artists as a special class were invented when art decayed and became scarce.

When all production was Art, it was unnecessary to pamper an artist; the great architects, as we should call them, of the Middle Ages, only called themselves

²⁴ Patricia Mainardi, ‘Quilts: The Great American Art’, in Broude and Garrard (1982), p. 332

²⁵ “Gertrude Stein” et alia, ‘Guerrilla Girls and Guerrilla Girls BroadBand: Inside Story’, *Art Journal* 70:2 (Summer 2011), p. 98

masons and carpenters, and they and the sculptors and painters were only paid ordinary master-craftsmen's wages.²⁶

As long as questions of status and hierarchy continue to impact on the conception and discussion of art and its makers, the Arts and Crafts movement will remain a rewarding subject of study in its propositions for a more socially-just and artistically-rich society. It is hoped that this thesis has made a positive case for the place of craftswomen within this conversation, the merit of Birmingham's contribution to an internationally-renowned movement, the gain to art-historical scholarship in studying lesser-valorized artforms, and for the importance of the contextualised and historicised object in exploring these unseen worlds.

²⁶ Lethaby (1901), p. 2

Appendix I

Explanatory Note

‘The extension of the Central Municipal School of Art will be completed by September 11th, 1893, and includes nine additional, large class rooms, in addition to a ladies’ common room, administrative offices, etc. It will be seen from this Programme that morning, afternoon, and evening classes are held at the Central School on five days a week, from September to June, and at thirteen of the Branch Schools on five evenings a week, from September to May. The hours of meeting and the fees are so arranged as to be suited to all classes of the community – craftsmen, designers, manufacturers, purchases, teachers. The main object of the School is to make workmen better workmen. The subjects of instruction are grouped with this view; they bear directly on the local trades. (p. 3)

Every Student’s course of study is arranged, separately, and to bear on his or her occupation. The enlargement of the building has enabled the Committee to make further and adequate arrangements for qualified Students to carry out their designs, and to receive the necessary technical instruction, in the processes named on pp. 12, 16, and 17 of this Programme.

Designers, architects, and others thus have the opportunity not only of studying design, but of actual practice in executing their designs in the respective materials – an opportunity often not open to them in the course of their daily work.’

September, 1893²⁷

Note on Design

‘Ornamental design has no existence apart from some material or process; consequently, knowledge of a material or process is of the first importance in learning to design.

The planning of ornament is of secondary importance, compared with the right use of a material.

²⁷ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/8/1, *Programme for the session 1893-94, beginning on Monday, the 11th of September, 1893* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son), p. 3

Generally speaking, it is craftsmanship – i.e., the cunning use of a material rather than laborious work – which gives charm to ornament; but this must not be allowed to drift into the mere exhibition of cleverness.

A design made in one material may sometimes be applied to another; but to do this satisfactorily a complete knowledge of the material into which the design is to be translated is necessary. Such adaptations are not advisable, since the greater difference made between one craft and another the better.

The above fundamental principle will be justified if certain crafts are considered. A basket, for instance, is a useful shape made of interwoven canes, which are generally so arranged as to make a pleasant pattern; but the arrangement should not impair the utility or strength of the basket. A piece of cast glass does not usually bring out the pleasant quality of the glass; but a piece of blown glass, manipulated by the blower, nearly always does. Again, the sharpness and crispness of carved stone-work differ from the pulpy easiness of modelled clay.

When a decoration interferes with the utility of a material or object, it is of the nature of an excrescence rather than of art.

Ingenious invention should never be in excess of feeling.

The old or traditional tools are the best to use. Time has proved them the most applicable to certain materials, and they will consequently be found expeditious.

It should be remembered that what are called conventional forms are not *made* by exaggerations or simplifications of natural forms *to suit the fancy*, but that the best of them result from the limitations of material, the use of certain tools, and the modifications arising from their repetition over long periods of time.

The foregoing note is not intended in any way to lessen the necessity for extremely careful drawing, painting and modelling from *Nature*. Nature supplies an infinity of forms and colours quite unimaginable to those who have not studied her.²⁸

²⁸ Birmingham, BIAD, SAC, SA/AD/8/2, *Programme for the session 1903-04, beginning on Monday, the 14th of September, 1903* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son), verso front cover

Appendix II

Tempera Method

Design the picture carefully on a small scale first in black & white then in colour – making the spacing of it beautiful.

Draw details from nature

Make full size- cartoon

Prepare ground of gesso

Trace outline onto ground

Mix colours with yolk of egg & water.

Lay warm under painting in flat tints

Lay flat tints of local colours

Shade with pure colours

High lights with body colour where Chinese W has been used.

All be painted sable brushes in a fluid manner, No impasto

31. VIII. 1904 JESouthall²⁹

Tempera Technique 30.VIII.'04

Just make small designs including small sketch of colour – this should settle the arrangement of the spaces and form the pattern of the picture –

Then make drawings from life of all the separate figures and parts of the work and make a full size cartoon of the picture with all the outlines upon it-

Next trace the outline onto the ground of the panel or canvas thus avoiding any necessity of alteration or scraping out for the tempera picture should be carried out with perfect knowledge of what is to be done from the first.

Having traced the outline the painting is begun with powder colours mixed with a medium consistenc[y] of yolk of egg and water in equal quantities – Dipping the brush in water from time to time over the ground it is as well to pass first of all a thin fluid ash of Chinese (zinc) white – though this is not necessary so far only transparent colour is to be laid.

²⁹ Birmingham, LB, JSP, MS 588/28, Tempera method

Then should be laid on the under painting of warm colours – mostly raw sienna varying according to the colour to be laid over them.

This under painting is done in flat washes broadly stippled on, one over another – never attempting to reach great depth at one coat – for tempera must be worked with many coats one over another to maintain the luminosity.

The coats dry rapidly

Then over these warm colours (without shading) lay (in quite flat tints) in the same way the local colours red purple blue green &c &c either transparently or semi-transparently, by being mixed with a little Chinese white – always taking care that the warm underpainting is perceptible through the local colour – in Flesh painting terre verte is used for half tints – raw umber in shades and a little pink over all. But a chapter on flesh painting would be necessary to describe it fully.

Thus the colour scheme & the tones of the whole work are completed. There remains only the modelling or shading to be done & this should be done with the pure local colour green shaded with green red with red & so on.

Thus it will be seen that each colour will be most warm & sunny on the lights.³⁰

³⁰ Birmingham, LB, JSP, MS 588/29, Tempera method

Appendix III

The foundational members of the Women's Guild of Arts and the elected members in order of their election

1907	Katharine Adams	book-binder
	Mary Batten	carver & gilder
	Julia Bowley	wood-carver
	Nelia Casella	glass enameller
	J.C. Chance	decorative sculptor
	Grace Christie	embroideress & tapestry
weaver		
	M. Sargent Florence	fresco painter
	Emily Ford	decorative painter
	Agnes Garrett	house decorator
	Countess Feodora Gleichen	sculptor
	Elinor Hallé	enameller & medallist
	Christiana J. Herringham	tempera painter
	Margaret M. Jenkin	sculptor
	Florence K. Kingsford	illuminator
	Mary Lowndes	stained glass painter
	May Morris	embroideress and jeweller
	S.T. Prideaux	book-binder
	Eleanor Row	wood-carver & leather- worker
	Marianne Stokes	painter
	Annie L. Swynnerton	painter
	M.E. Turner	embroideress
	M.S. Watts	designer & modeller
	Alice B. Woodward	designer & illustrator
	E. Bateson	sculptor

	Evelyn De Morgan	painter
	Georgie Cave Gaskin	jeweller
	Ethel F. Gill	gilder
	Jane Morris	embroideress
	Ella L. Moore	embroideress
	Mary J. Newill	embroideress & glass-painter
	Ethel Offer	illuminator
	Ada P. Ridley	carver & gilder
	Eliza M. Southall	embroideress
	Liza Stillman	pastellist
	Marie Stillman	painter
	E.C. Woodward	metal-worker
1908	Edith Breary Dawson	enameller & painter
	Esther M. Moore	sculptor
	Kate E. Bunce	painter
	Edith Goodman	embroideress
	Jean Carré Hadaway	jeweller
	Louisa Preece	metal-worker
	E.M. Rope	sculptor
	Pamela Colman Smith	painter
	Alys Fane Trotter	decorative painter
	Anne Heynes	embroideress
	Clara Tustain	embroideress
	Helen Bedford	painter
	Annie Garnett	weaver
	Mary A. Sloane	painter-etcher
	M.D. Spooner	painter
	Phoebe Stabler	sculptor
	Maud Beddington	painter
	Mabel Esplin	stained-glass worker

	Camilla Edith Harwood	tempera painter
	Violet G.M. Ramsay	jeweler
1909	Lallie Ionides	illuminator
	E.K. Martyn	decorative painter
	Winifred Austen	painter-etcher
1910	Rose Barton	painter
	C.I. Newman	jeweller
	Ethel F. Everett	illustrator
	Letty Graham	metal-worker
	Gertrude Bayes	sculptor
	Anna Simons	writer
1911	Ethel Armitage	lace-worker
	Ruby Winifred Bailey	sculptor
	Louise Jacobs	lithographer
	Amelia M. Bowerly	painter-etcher
	Lola Frampton	embroideress
	Estella Canziani	painter
	M.V. Wheelhouse	illustrator
1912	H. Mabel White	sculptor
	Margaret Kemp-Welsh	painter-etcher
Feb. 1913	Myra K. Hughes	painter-etcher
Dec. 1913	Caroline C. Townshend	stained-glass worker
	Dorothy A.A. Rope	sculptor
	Margaret Agnes Rope	stained-glass worker
1915	Lillian M. Frost	writer
Feb. 1917	Louise Powell	pottery painter
	M.E. Aldrich Rope	stained-glass worker
	Eve Simmonds	embroideress
April 1917	Elsie M. Henderson	lithographer
May 1917	Alice Gimson	jeweler

	Joan Kingsford	illustrator
May 1919	Katherine Grasett	weaver
Dec. 1919	Mabel C. Barnes	painter-etcher
	Marta Caroline Bowerley	illuminator
	Eleanor Freda Derrick	illustrator
	Wilhelmina Margaret Geddes	stained-glass worker
	Kate Elizabeth Olver	illustrator
	Edith L. Patterson	painter-etcher
	Helen Frazer Rock	sculptor
1920	Ethel Mary Rhind	stained-glass worker
1921	Julia E. Alsop	painter-etcher
	Madeline Green	painter-etcher
	Muriel Dawson	illustrator
	Phyllis Gardner	illustrator & wood-carver
	Dorothy E.G. Woollard	painter-etcher
May 1923	Elizabeth Cowen	weaver
1924	Charlotte Laurenson ³¹	

Committee

Hon. President	Mrs G.F. Watts (1916)
Chairman	C.J. Herringham (1913?); Miss May Morris (1916)
Hon. Treasurer / Hon. Secretary	Miss Mary Sloane (1909-1924)
Hon. Secretary	Miss May Morris (1907-1909); Mrs R. Frampton (1916) ³²

³¹ London, WMS, WGAA, Box 1, folder 2, WGA Minute book Jan 10th 1913-May 18th 1917; London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, Roll

³² London, WMS, WGAA, Box 2, folder 12c, The Women's Guild of Arts July 1916; folder 13c, Women's Guild of Arts regarding Edinburgh Exhibition, 1913(?)

Bibliography

Unpublished Primary Sources

Birkenhead, Shrewsbury Diocesan archives, Margaret Agnes Rope collection

Birmingham, Royal Birmingham Society of Artists, Exhibition catalogues

Birmingham, Institute of Art and Design archives, School of Art collection

Birmingham, Library of Birmingham, Birmingham Guild of Handicraft papers; Joseph Southall papers; Gaskin papers; Parish archives; Wills

Birmingham, University of Birmingham Collections, Bunce collection

Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire County Museum, Bromsgrove Guild of Art archives

London, British Library, Celia Levetus correspondence

London, National Art Library, C. W. Whall papers

London, Central Saint Martins', London Central School of Arts and Crafts archive

London, Victoria & Albert Museum archives, Lowndes & Drury archive; Mary Newill object files

London, William Morris Society, Women's Guild of Arts archive

London, Women's Library, May Morris papers

Longworth, Longworth and District History Society Archives, 'Longworth Reredos - The Adoration'

Malvern, Madresfield Court Archives, Box A5 V

Quidenham, Carmelite Monastery Quidenham, Margaret Agnes Rope collection

Smethwick, Smethwick Library, Sandwell archives, T.W. Camm collection

Teddington, Celia Till private collection

Walthamstow, William Morris Gallery, May Morris papers

Published Primary Sources

Allerton, R.H., 'The Cotswold Gallery', *The Studio: An Illustrated Magazine of Fine and Applied Art* 82:344 (November 1921), pp. 220-222

An Exhibition of Selected Works by Artists and Craftsmen of the Cotswolds held at the Alcuin Press, Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire, 6th August – 3rd September 1932 (Campden: The Alcuin Press, 1932)

Anonymous, 'Art Centres – Birmingham', *Artist* 33 (January 1902), pp. 98-99

Anonymous, 'Birmingham Artists at the Royal Society of Artists' Autumn Exhibition', *The Birmingham Magazine of Arts and Industries* 1:2 (1897), pp. 51-53

Anonymous, 'British Decorative Art in 1899, and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition (IV)', *The Studio* 18:82 (January 1900), pp. 247-281

Anonymous, 'Christmas Cards and Children's Books', *Art Journal* 144 (December 1896), p. 380

- Anonymous, 'Edward R. Taylor', *Edgbastonia* 14:155 (July 1894), pp. 97-105
- Anonymous, 'Introductory', *Edgbastonia* 1:1 (May 1881), pp. 1-2
- Anonymous, 'Mr. James Bowden's New Publications,' *The Athenaeum* 3711 (10 December 1898), p. 808
- Anonymous, 'Mr. James Bowden's New Publications,' *The Academy* (24 December 1898), p. 532
- Anonymous, 'Newill, Miss Mary J.', *The Studio Year Book of Decorative Art 1909* (London, Paris, and New York: The Studio, 1909), pp. 89-91
- Anonymous, 'Noteworthy Handicrafts', *Art Journal* (June 1908), pp. 181-184
- Anonymous, 'Reviews of Recent Publications', *The Studio* 6:33 (December 1895), pp. 187-194
- Anonymous, 'Some Fairy Tales', *Artist* 20 (August 1897), p. 399
- Anonymous, 'South Kensington (Art) Royal Exhibitions and Scholarships, 1893', *The British Architect* 40:8 (25 August 1893), p. 128
- Anonymous, 'Studio-Talk', *The Studio* 7:37 (April 1896), p. 178
- Anonymous, 'The Art Movement: Ecclesiastical Art at Nottingham', *The Magazine of Art* (January 1898), pp. 106-109
- Anonymous, 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition, 1896, Part IV', *The Studio* 9:46 (January 1897), pp. 262-285
- Anonymous, 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the Grafton Gallery. Third and Concluding Notice', *The Studio* 37:157 (April 1906), pp. 213-229
- Anonymous, 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery: Third Notice', *The Studio* 28:121 (April 1903), pp. 179-185
- Anonymous, 'The Birmingham Municipal School of Art. With Many Illustrations of Its Students' Work. I', *The Studio* 2:9 (December 1894), pp. 90-99
- Anonymous, 'The Teaching of Art in Birmingham', *The Birmingham Magazine of Arts and Industries* 1:1 (1901), pp. 27-28
- Anonymous, 'The Wall Paintings by Art Students in the Town Hall, Birmingham', *The Studio* 1:6 (September 1893), pp. 237-40
- Armfield, Maxwell, 'Crafts and Design', *The Studio* 88:376 (July 1924), pp. 9-14
- Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Second Exhibition, 1889* (London: Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, 1889)
- Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Fourth Exhibition, 1893* (London: Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, 1893)
- Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Seventh Exhibition, 1903* (London: Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, 1903)
- Bate, Percy, *The English Pre-Raphaelites: their Associates and Followers* (London: George Bell, 1901)
- Batten, John D., 'The Practice of Tempera Painting', *The Studio* 84:357 (December 1922), pp. 298-311

- Batten, John D. (ed.), *Papers of the Society of Mural Decorators & Painters in Tempera, Second Volume, 1907-1924* (Brighton: Dolphin Press, 1925)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art: Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1896* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones & Son, nd)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1900* (Birmingham: Guild Press, 1900)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1902* (Birmingham: Percival Jones Ltd, 1902)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1903* (Birmingham: Percival Jones Ltd, 1903)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art, Catalogue of the Exhibition of Students' Work, 1904* (Birmingham: Percival Jones Ltd, 1904)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of awards made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths, and Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1908* (Birmingham: Birmingham Municipal School of Art, 1908)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, 1886* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, 1885)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, 1887* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, 1887)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, With Notes as to Exhibition of Students' Works, 1888* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, nd)
- Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Prize List, With Notes as to the Exhibition of Students' Works, 1889* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, nd)
- Bond, Francis, *The Chancel of English Churches: The Altar, Reredos, Lenten Veil, Communion Table, Altar Rails, Houseling Cloth, Piscina, Credence, Sedilia, Aumbry, Sacrament House, Easter Sepulchre, Squint, etc.* (London: Oxford University Press, 1916)
- Bromhead, W.H., 'An Illustrator of Blake', *Art Journal* (August 1900), pp. 237-239
- Brown, Vandyck, 'Brush & Palette', *Edgbastonia* 25:293 (October 1905), pp. 231-236
- Burne-Jones, Georgiana, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones* (New York and London: The Macmillan Company, 1904)
- Cadbury, William A., *A Testimony to the Life of Joseph Southall* (London: Friends' Home Service Committee, 1946)
- Castle, Egerton, *English Book-Plates: An Illustrated Handbook for Students of Ex-Libris* (London and New York: George Bell & Sons, 1892)
- Catalogue of an Exhibition of Pictures, Drawings in Black and White, Wood Engraving, Printing, Bookbinding, Leather-work, Wood-carving, Furniture, and Metal-work, by members of the Society of the Quest, and of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft, June 1894, Gallery of the Royal Society of Artists*
- Catterson-Smith, R., *Birmingham Municipal School of Art: Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths: two addresses delivered at the Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths on 19th January 1903: (II) "Some Remarks on the Examiner's (Mr. H. Wilson's) Report"*

Catterson-Smith, R., 'Birmingham Municipal School of Art', in *Birmingham Institutions: Lectures given at the University*, ed. J. H. Muirhead LL.D. (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers Ltd., 1911), pp. 273-316

Catterson-Smith, R., *Drawing from Memory and Mind Picturing* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1921)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1892 (Birmingham: Hudson and Son, 1892)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1895 (Birmingham: Hudson and Son, 1895)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1896 (Birmingham: Geo. Jones and Son, 1896)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1897 (Birmingham: Buckler Bros, 1897)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, the Department of Science & Art of the Committee of Council on Education, 1899 (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1899)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1900 (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1900)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central & Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1901 (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1901)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths and Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1902 (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1902)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths and Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1903 (Birmingham: Buckler and Webb Ltd, 1903)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths and Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1905 (Birmingham: Percival Jones Ltd, 1905)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards Made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths and Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1906 (Birmingham: Percival Jones Ltd, 1906)

City of Birmingham, Birmingham Municipal School of Art, List of Awards made to Students of the Central School, Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths, and Branch Schools, by the Government Board of Education, 1907 (Birmingham: Hudson and Son, 1907)

Clarke, C. Stanley, 'Indo-Dutch Embroidery of the Seventeenth Century', *Needle and Thread* 2 (April 1914), pp. 29-31

- Clutton-Brock, A., *William Morris, his Work and Influence* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1914)
- Cobden-Sanderson, T. J., 'Of Art and Life', in *Art and Life, and the Building and Decoration of Cities: a Series of Lectures by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Delivered at the Fifth Exhibition of the Society in 1896* (London: Rivington, Percival & C., 1897)
- Cobden-Sanderson, T.J., *The Ideal Book or Book Beautiful: A Tract on Calligraphy, Printing and Illustration and on the Book Beautiful as a Whole* (Hammersmith: The Doves Press, 1900)
- Cobden-Sanderson, T. J., *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (Hammersmith: Hammersmith Publishing Society, 1905)
- Collin, Raphaël, 'Tadamasa Hayashi: Some Recollections', in *Illustrated Catalogue of the important collection of Paintings, Water Colors, Pastels, Drawings and Prints, collected by ... Tadamasa Hayashi, etc.* (New York, 1913), unpaginated
- Cox, Mabel, 'Arts and Crafts Exhibition', *Artist* 26 (September 1899), pp. 176-184
- Cram, Ralph Adams, 'The Revival of Stained Glass,' *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 5:5 (1 May 1918), pp. 56-7
- Crane, Walter, 'Of the Revival of Design and Handicraft: with Notes on the Work of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society', in *Arts and Crafts Essays* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co., 1893), pp. 1-21
- Crane, Walter, 'Needlework as a Mode of Artistic Expression, Part I', *The Magazine of Art* 22 (1898), pp. 144-148
- Crane, Walter, *The Bases of Design* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1902)
- Crane, Walter, *Of The Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New* (London and New York: G. Bell, 1905)
- Crane, Walter, *An Artist's Reminiscences* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1907)
- Davenport, James, *The Grove Family of Halesowen* (London: Methuen & Co, 1912)
- Day, Lewis F., *Windows: A Book about Stained and Painted Glass* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1909)
- Dearmer, Rev. Percy, *The Parson's Handbook* (London: Grant Richards, 1899)
- Dixon, Arthur, 'Manufacture and Handicraft. With Some Account of the Guild of Handicraft in Birmingham', *The Quest* 2 (November 1894), pp. 21-27
- E.B.S., 'Some Aspects of the Work of Miss Mary L. Newill', *The Studio* 5:26 (May 1895), pp. 56-63
- Edgerton, Giles, 'Is there a Sex Distinction in Art?', *The Craftsman* 14:3 (June 1908), pp. 239-51
- Field, E. M., *The Child and his Book: Some Account of the History and Progress of Children's Literature in England* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton & Co., 1892)
- Halesowen: The Official Guide* (London: J. Burrow & Co, 1929)
- Halesowen: The Official Guide* (London: J. Burrow & Co, 1931)
- Halesowen: The Official Guide* (London: J. Burrow & Co, 1933)
- Hall, Kate A., *A Notable Art Master, An Appreciation of Edward R. Taylor* (Birmingham, 1913)

- Herringham, Christiana (translated from the Italian), *The Book of Art of Cennino Cennini: A Contemporary Practical Treatise on Quattrocento Painting* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1922)
- H.G., 'Two Panels of Modern English Glass', *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 5:5 (1 May 1918), pp. 56, 59
- Higgin, L., *Handbook of Embroidery, Published by Authority of the Royal School of Art Needlework etc.* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1880)
- Hill, Joseph and Midgley, William, *The History of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists* (Birmingham: The Society & Cornish Brothers Ltd., 1928)
- Hodson, Laurence W., 'The Birmingham Group: Arthur J. Gaskin and Joseph Southall', *The Studio* 79:324 (March 1920), pp. 2-11
- Holden, Harold, *Jewellery, Enamelling, Silversmithing & Kindred Trades of Birmingham* (Birmingham: Birmingham School of Printing, 1930)
- Holman Hunt, William, 'An address delivered ... at the distribution of prizes to students of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art, 22 February 1893', in *Fourteen Addresses Delivered to Students of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art Now the College of Arts and Crafts Margaret Street 1892-1924* (City of Birmingham School of Printing, 1942), pp. 29-54
- Holme, Charles (ed.), *Arts and Crafts: A Review of Work executed by Students in the leading Art Schools of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Special Autumn number of *The Studio*, 1916)
- H.P.R.F., *The Second Annual Exhibition of Water Colour and Other Drawings by Cotswold Artists (Exhibition catalogue, 27 September – 21 October 1922, London, The Cotswold Gallery)*
- Hulme, F. Edward, *Natural History Lore and Legend* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1895)
- Hurst, Oakley, 'The Landscape Paintings of Charles M. Gere', *The Studio* 59: 244 (July 1913), pp. 87-95
- Illingworth A. (ed.), *The Life and Work of John Richardson Illingworth, M.A., D.D.: As Portrayed by His Letters and Illustrated by Photographs* (London: John Murray, 1917)
- Image, Selwyn, 'On Designing for the Art of Embroidery', in *Arts and Crafts Essays* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co., 1893), pp. 414-420
- Image, Selwyn, 'A Few Thoughts on Designing for Embroidery', *Needle and Thread* 1 (January 1914), pp. 26-28
- Jackson, Holbrook, *The Eighteen Nineties: a Review of Art and Ideas at the Close of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Grant Richards Ltd., 1913)
- Jones & Willis, *Abridged Illustrated Catalogue of Art Furniture, Hangings and Embroidery Manufactured by Jones & Willis* (Birmingham: Jones & Willis, 1889)
- Labouchère, Norna, *Ladies' Bookplates: An Illustrated Handbook for Collectors and Book-Lovers* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1895)
- Legg, J. Wickham, *English Church Life from the Restoration to the Tractarian Movement: Considered in Some of its Neglected or Forgotten Features* (London, New York, Bombay, and Calcutta: Longmans, Green and Co., 1914)
- Legge, T.M., 'A Note on the Stained-Glass of Henry A. Payne', *The Studio* 61:251 (March 1914), pp. 128-131

- Lethaby, W.R., *'The Study and Practice of Artistic Crafts': An Address Delivered by – at the Birmingham Midland Institute on the 15th of February, 1901* (Birmingham: Printed at the Guild Press, 1901)
- Levetus, Celia, 'Notes on the Pre-Raphaelite Pictures in the Birmingham Art Gallery', *Artist: an Illustrated Monthly Records of Arts, Crafts and Industries* 20 (October 1897), pp. 467-473
- Levetus, Celia, 'The Birmingham School of Art. – The Annual Exhibition of Students' Works', *Artist: An Illustrated Monthly Record of Arts, Crafts, and Industries* 29 (September 1900), pp. 439-444
- Levetus, Celia, 'A Few Words on Elementary Art Training', *Artist: an Illustrated Monthly Records of Arts, Crafts and Industries* 33 (January 1902), pp. 25-29
- Litchfield, Frederick, 'Pages in Waiting', *The Artist: an Illustrated Monthly Record of Arts, Crafts and Industries* 19 (February 1897), pp. 86-93
- Mairet, Philippe, 'The Landscape Paintings of C.M. Gere and H.A. Payne', *The Studio* 80:330 (September 1920), pp. 42-49
- Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, *Arts and Crafts Essays* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co, 1893)
- Miller, Fred, 'Women Workers in the Art Crafts', *Art Journal* (1896), pp. 116-18
- Miller, Fred, *The Training of a Craftsman* (London: Virtue & Co Ltd, 1898)
- Moore, T. Sturge, 'Note on the Relation of the Printed Book as a Work of Art', in *A Brief Account of the Origin of the Eragny Press & A Note on the Relation of the Printed Book as a Work of Art* (Hammersmith: Eragny Press, 1903), pp. 6-14
- Morrell, Dora M., 'Beauty in Common Things', *Brush and Pencil* 5:5 (February 1900), pp. 222-225, 227-232
- Morris, May, 'Of Embroidery,' in *Arts and Crafts Essays, by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co, 1893a), pp. 212-223
- Morris, May, 'Of Materials', in *Arts and Crafts Essays, by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co, 1893b), pp. 365-375
- Morris, May, *Decorative Needlework* (London: Joseph Hughes & Co, 1893c)
- Morris, May, 'Embroidery', in *Ghent International Exhibition 1913, Catalogue of the British Arts and Crafts Section* (London: Board of Trade Exhibitions Branch, 1913), pp. clxii-clxxxvii
- Morris, May, 'La Broderie', in *Arts Décoratifs de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande: Exposition organisée par le Gouvernement Britannique, Palais du Louvre, avril-octobre 1914* (London: H.M.S.O., 1914), pp. 147-156
- Morris, Rev. F.O., *A History of British Birds, vol. I* (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1862)
- Morris, William, 'The Beauty of Life', in *Hopes and Fears For Art: Five Lectures Delivered in Birmingham, London, and Nottingham, 1878-1881* (London: Ellis & White, 1882), pp. 71-113
- Morris, William, *City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery: Address on the collection of paintings of the English Pre-Raphaelite School delivered by – in the Museum and Art Gallery on Friday, October 2nd, 1891* (Birmingham: E. C. Osborne and Son, 1891)
- Morris, William, 'Note on his Aims in Founding the Kelmscott Press, 1895' (Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1898)

- Napier-Clavering, C., 'Birmingham Painters and Craftsmen at the Fine Art Society's Galleries', *The Studio* 42:177 (December 1907), p. 215-222
- Paterson, Oscar, 'Modern Domestic Stained Glass', in Charles Holme (ed.), *Modern British Domestic Architecture & Decoration* (London, Paris, New York: The Studio, 1901), pp. 24-26
- Pemberton, T. Edgar, *Fairbrass: A Child's Story* (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers, 1895)
- Pissarro, Lucien and Ricketts, Charles, *De la typographie et de l'harmonie de la page imprimée* (Paris and London, 1898)
- Rayner, E. Ruth, 'The Embroiderers' Guild Exhibition', *The Studio* 87:370 (January 1924), pp. 17-21
- Richmond, William Blake, 'Art and its Purposes': *An Address Delivered in the Town Hall, Birmingham, October 21st, 1908* (Birmingham: Birmingham Midland Institute, 1908)
- Ricketts, Charles, *A Defense of the Revival of Printing* (London: Hacon & Ricketts, 1899)
- Rothenstein, William, 'Address February 1908', in *Birmingham School of Art Addresses 1892-1912* (Birmingham: Geo. Jones & Son, s.d.)
- Ruskin, John, *Modern Painters*, Vol. II (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1848, 4th edition, first published 1846)
- Ruskin, John, *St Mark's Rest* (Sunnyside: George Allen, 1877)
- Salaman, Malcolm C., *British Book Illustration Yesterday and To-day* (London: The Studio, 1923)
- Sargent-Florence, M., *Papers of the Society of Painters in Tempera Vol. I 1901-1907* (London: Society of Painters in Tempera, 1928)
- Scott, M.H. Baillie, 'Some Experiments in Embroidery', *The Studio* 28:122 (1903), pp. 279-284
- Sketchley, Rose E. D., 'The Reign of Woman in the World of Art', *Argosy: A Magazine of Tales, Travels, Essays and Poems* (February 1901), pp. 47-64
- Sketchley, Rose E.D., *English Book-Illustration of To-Day: Appreciations of the Work of Living English Illustrators with Lists of their Books* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., Ltd., 1903)
- Sleigh, Bernard, *A Handbook of Elementary Design* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd, 1930)
- Sleigh, Bernard, *Wood Engraving since Eighteen-Ninety* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd., 1932)
- Southall, Joseph E., 'Grounds Suitable for Painting in Tempera', in *Papers of the Society of Painters in Tempera Vol. I 1901-1907*, ed. M. Sargent-Florence (London: Society of Painters in Tempera, 1928), pp. 1-7
- Stewart, Richard, 'The Book-Plate Designs of Miss Celia Levetus', *The Book of Book-Plates* 1:3 (October 1900), pp. 117-8
- Taylor, Edward R., *Elementary Art Teaching: an Educational and Technical Guide for Teachers and Learners* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1890)
- Taylor, T.N. (ed.), *Soeur Thérèse of Lisieux, The Little Flower of Jesus* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1912)

Taylor, T.N. (ed.), *Soeur Thérèse of Lisieux, The Little Flower of Jesus* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1924)

The Editor's Room: 'Awards in "The Studio" Prize Competitions. Illustration to a Work on the Horn Book. (A XIII.)', *The Studio* 3:18 (September 1894), p. xvi

The First Exhibition of Water Colour and Other Drawings by Cotswold Artists (exhibition catalogue, The Cotswold Gallery, London, 5th October – 5th November 1921, London), ed. unspecified (London: Cotswold Gallery, 1921)

The New Gallery, Fourteenth Summer Exhibition (London: Richard Clay & Sons, 1901)

The New Gallery, Fifteenth Summer Exhibition (London: Henry Good & Son, 1902)

The New Gallery, Eighteenth Summer Exhibition (London: Henry Good & Son, 1905)

The New Gallery, Twentieth Summer Exhibition (London: Henry Good & Son, 1907)

The New Gallery, Twenty-First Summer Exhibition (London: Henry Good & Son, 1908)

The Third Annual Exhibition of Water Colours by Cotswold and Other Artists (exhibition catalogue, The Cotswold Gallery, London, 10th October – 31st October 1923) ed. unspecified (London: The Cotswold Gallery, 1923)

The Yellow Book: An Illustrated Quarterly 9 (April 1896)

Triggs, Oscar Lovell, *Chapters in the History of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (Chicago: The Bohemia Guild of the Industrial Art League, 1902)

Turner, Mary E., 'Of Modern Embroidery', in *Arts and Crafts Essays, by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co, 1893), pp. 355-364

Vallance, Aymer, 'The National Art Competition, 1891', *Art Journal* (November 1891), pp. 335-340

Vallance, Aymer, 'A Provincial School of Art', *Art Journal* (November 1892), pp. 344-348

Vallance, Aymer, 'The National Art Competition, 1898', *Art Journal* (January 1898), pp. 621-625

Vallance, Aymer, 'Arts and Crafts, British Decorative Art in 1899 and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Part III', *The Studio* 18:81 (December 1899), pp. 179-196

Vallance, Aymer, 'The Revival of Tempera Painting', *The Studio* 23:101 (August 1901), pp. 154-165

Wainwright, Arthur S., 'The Jewellery of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Gaskin', *The Studio* 61:254 (May 1914), pp. 293-301

Wallis, Whitworth and Chamberlain, Arthur Bensley (eds), *City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery Illustrated Catalogue of the Permanent Collection of Paintings and Sculpture and the Pictures in Aston Hall and Elsewhere* (Birmingham: Hudson & Son, 1904)

Whall, Christopher, *Stained Glass Work* (London: John Hogg, 1905)

Whall, Christopher, *Stained Glass Work* (London: G.P. Putman & Sons, 1920)

White, Gleeson, 'Some Recent Book-Plates', *The Studio* 7:36 (March 1896), pp. 93-98

Wilson, Henry, 'Art and Religion', *The Architectural Review* 6:37 (December 1899), pp. 276-278

Wright, John, *Some Notable Altars in the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1908)

Wright, William Henry Kerley, 'Modern Book-Plate Designers: C. Levetus', *Journal of the Ex-Libris Society* 7 (1897), pp. 108-112

Published Secondary Sources

Adams, Steven, *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (London: The Apple Press, 1987)

Allara, Pamela, 'The Creation (of a) Myth' (1998), in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000*, ed. Hilary Robinson (Oxford; Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 280-8

Albutt, Roy, *An Introduction to Stained Glass Window Workers and Makers of Birmingham School of Art* (Persore: Roy Albutt, 2013)

Anderson, M.D., *The Imagery of British Churches* (London: John Murray, 1955)

Anscombe, Isabelle, *A Woman's Touch: Women in Design from 1860 to the Present Day* (London: Virago, 1984)

Anscombe, Isabelle, *Arts & Crafts Style* (London: Phaidon Ltd, 1991)

Anthony, Ethan, *The Architecture of Ralph Adams Cram and His Office* (New York; London: Norton, 2007)

Appadurai, Arjun, 'Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value', in *The Social Life of Things*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, New York, and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 3-63

Armitage, E. Lidall, *Stained Glass: History, Technology and Practice* (London: Leonard Hill, 1959)

Armstrong, Barrie and Wendy, *The Arts and Crafts Movement in the North West of England* (Wetherby: Oblong, 2005)

Arthur & Georgie Gaskin (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 11 February – 21 March and Fine Art Society, London, 29 March – 30 April 1982), ed. George Breeze (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1981)

Arts & Crafts Metalwork (exhibition catalogue, Blackwell, The Arts & Crafts House, 23 July – 2 November 2003) ed. Edward King (Bowness-on-Windmere: Lakeland Arts Trust, 2003)

Aslin, Elizabeth, *The Aesthetic Movement* (London: Elek, 1969)

Babbha, Homi, 'The Third Space', in J. Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), pp. 207-221

Ballard, Phillada (ed.), *Birmingham's Victorian and Edwardian Architects* (Wetherby: Oblong Creative for the Birmingham and West Midlands Group of the Victorian Society, 2009)

Barr, John, *Illustrated Children's Books* (London: The British Library, c1986)

Barrett, Michèle, 'Feminism and the Definition of Cultural Politics' (1982), in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000*, ed. Hilary Robinson (Oxford; Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 308-13

Beck, Thomasina, *The Embroiderer's Flowers* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1992)

- Bennett, Phillippa, 'Educating for Utopia: William Morris on Useful Learning versus 'Useless Toil', *The Journal of William Morris Studies* 20:2 (Summer 2013), pp. 54-72
- Benton, Tim and Millikin, Sandra, *Art Nouveau 1890-1902* (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 1975)
- Billingham, John, *The Earls High School 1652-2000* (s.l.: s.n., 2000)
- Bing, S., 'Where Are We Going?, 1897-8', in *Form and Function: A Source Book for the History of Architecture and Design 1890-1939*, eds Tim and Charlotte Benton (London: Crosby Lockwood Staples, 1975), pp. 19-20
- Bird, Liz, 'Threading the Beads: Women in Art in Glasgow, 1870-1920', in *Unchartered Lives: Extracts from Scottish Women's Experience, 1850-1982*, ed. Glasgow Women's Studies Group (Glasgow: Pressgang, 1983), pp. 98-117
- Blakesley, Rosalind P., *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (London: Phaidon Press, 2006)
- Bland, David, *The Illustration of Books* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962)
- Blum, Dilys, 'Ecclesiastical Embroidery c. 1896 attributed to Walter Crane', *Bulletin – Philadelphia Museum of Art* 86 (Spring 1990), pp. 16-21
- Boetzkes, Amanda, 'Interpretation and the Affordance of Things', in *Heidegger and the Work of Art History*, eds Amanda Boetzkes and Aron Vinegar (Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 269-292
- Bohm-Duchen, Monica, 'The Jewish Background', in *Solomon: a Family of Painters, Abraham Solomon 1823-1862, Rebecca Solomon 1832-1886, Simeon Solomon 1840-1905* (exhibition catalogue, Geffrye Museum, London 8 November – 31 December 1985, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery 18 January – 9 March 1986) (London: Inner London Education Authority, 1985), pp. 8-11
- Borsa, Joan, 'Frida Kahlo: Marginalization and the Critical Female Subject' (1990), in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000*, ed. Hilary Robinson (Oxford; Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 257-73
- Bosteels, Bruno, *The Actuality of Communism* (London and New York: Verso, 2011)
- Brand, Peggy Zeglin, 'Revisiting the Aesthetic-Nonaesthetic Distinction: The Aesthetic Value of Activist Art', in Peggy Zeglin Brand and Carolyn Korsmeyer (eds), *Feminism and Tradition in Aesthetics* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), pp. 245-272
- Breeze, George (ed.), *Joseph Southall 1861-1944: Artist-Craftsman* (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery, 1980)
- Briggs, Asa, *History of Birmingham: Vol. II Borough and City 1865-1938* (London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1952)
- Briggs, Asa, *Victorian Cities* (London, New York, Victoria, Ontario, and Auckland: Penguin, 1990)
- Broady, Maurice, 'A Vision Fulfilled: The Start of the Welsh Stained Glass Tradition', *The Journal of Stained Glass* 9:2 (1991-3), pp. 197-215
- Brockhurst, Judith, 'Holman Hunt's Picture Frames, Sculpture and Applied Art', in ed. Ellen Harding, *Re-Framing the Pre-Raphaelites: Historical and Theoretical Essays* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), pp. 231-251

- Broude, Norma and Garard, Mary D. (eds), *Reclaiming Female Agency: Feminist Art History after Postmodernism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, c2005)
- Butler, Judith, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge Classics, 2008)
- Callen, Anthea, 'Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement,' in *The Arts and Crafts Movement: The Victorian Society Conference 1978, Conference Handbook, University of Birmingham 15-17 September 1978*
- Callen, Anthea, *Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870-1914* (New York: Pantheon Books, c1979)
- Callen, Anthea, 'Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement, *Oxford Art Journal* 3:1, Women in Art (April 1980), pp. 22-27
- Callen, Anthea, 'Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement' in *A View from the Interior: Feminism, Women and Design*, eds Judy Attfield and Pat Kirkham (London: The Women's Press, 1989), pp. 148-162
- Cardwell, Mary G., *Blessed John Plessington* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1930) 1985)
- Carruthers, Annette and Greensted, Mary, *Good Citizen's Furniture: The Arts and Crafts Collections at Cheltenham* (London: Lund Humphries, 1994)
- Carruthers, Annette and Greensted, Mary (eds), *Simplicity or Splendour: Arts and Crafts Living: Objects from the Cheltenham Collections* (London: Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museums in association with Lund Humphries, 1999)
- Casteras, Susan P., 'From "Safe Havens" to "A Wide Sea of Notoriety"', in Susan P. Casteras and Linda H. Peterson, *A Struggle for Fame: Victorian Women Artists and Authors* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Center for British Art, 1994), pp. 7-34
- Challoner, Richard, *Memoirs of Missionary Priests* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd, 1924; republished Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers Ltd, 1969)
- Chalmers, F. Graeme, *Women in the Nineteenth-Century Art World: Schools of Art and Design for Women in London and Philadelphia* (Westport, Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 1998)
- Cherry, Deborah, *Painting Women: Victorian Women Artists* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993)
- Cherry, Deborah, 'Women Artists and the Politics of Feminism 1850-1900', in *Women in the Victorian Art World*, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 49-69
- Cherry, Deborah, *Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850-1900* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000)
- Cheshire, Jim, *Stained Glass and the Victorian Gothic Revival* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press; New York: distr. in the USA by Palgrave, 2004)
- Cheshire, Jim, 'Space and the Victorian Ecclesiastical Interior', in *Craft, Space and Interior Design, 1855-2005*, eds Sandra Alfoldy and Janice Helland (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 27-44

- Christian, John (ed.), *The Last Romantics: The Romantic Tradition in British Art, Burne-Jones to Stanley Spencer* (London: Lund Humphries in assoc. with the Barbican Gallery)
- Christopher Whall 1849-1924: *Arts & Crafts Stained Glass Worker* (exhibition catalogue, Walthamstow, William Morris Gallery, 17 November 1979 – 3 February 1980), ed. Peter Cormack (London: Libraries and Arts Department, London Borough of Waltham Forest, 1979)
- Catalogue of an Exhibition of Modern Tempera, 17th January to 7th February 1938* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 17th January to 7th February 1938), ed. A.E. Whiteley (Birmingham: BCMAG, 1938)
- Clark, T.J., *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1982)
- Cluckie, Linda, *The Rise and Fall of Needlework: its Socio-Economic and Cultural Aspects* (Bury St Edmunds: Arena Books, 2008)
- Cockroft, Irene, *New Dawn Women: Women in the Arts and Crafts and Suffrage Movement at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century* (Compton: Watts Gallery, 2005)
- Cooper, Roger, 'Bernard Sleight, Artist and Craftsman, 1872-1954', *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 to the Present* 21 (1997), pp. 88-102
- Cormack, Peter, 'Recreating a Tradition: Christopher Whall (1849-1924) and the Arts & Crafts Renaissance of English Stained Glass,' in *Art and the National Dream: The Search for Vernacular Expression in Turn-of-the-Century Design*, ed. Nicola Gordon Bowe (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993), pp. 15-42
- Cormack, Peter, 'A Truly British Movement', *Apollo* 161 (April 2005), pp. 48-53
- Cormack, Peter, *Arts and Crafts Stained Glass* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre, 2015)
- Cowen, Panton, *A Guide to Stained Glass* (London: Michael Joseph, 1985)
- Crampin, Martin, *Stained Glass from Welsh Churches* (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 2014)
- Crawford, Alan (ed.), *By Hammer and Hand: the Arts and Crafts Movement in Birmingham* (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, c1984)
- Crawford, Alan, 'The Arts and Crafts Movement in Context', in *The Decorative Arts in the Victorian Period*, ed. Susan M. Wright (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1989), pp. 89-96
- Crawford, Alan, 'Ideas and Objects: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain', *Design Issues*, 13:1 (Spring 1997), pp. 15-26
- Crawford, Alan, 'United Kingdom: Origins and First Flowering', in *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Europe & America: Design for the Modern World*, ed. Wendy Kaplan (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004), pp. 20-67
- Crawford, Elizabeth, *'From Frederick Street to Winson Green': The Women's Suffrage Movement in Birmingham 1866-1918* (London: E. Crawford, 2000)
- Crawford, Elizabeth, *Enterprising Women: The Garretts and their Circle* (London: Francis Boutle, 2002)
- Crook, T., 'Craft and the Dialogics of Modernity: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Late-Victorian and Edwardian England,' *Journal of Modern Craft* 2:1 (2009), pp. 17-32
- Cruise, Colin, *Pre-Raphaelite Drawing* (New York: Thames & Hudson, c2011)

- Cumming, Elizabeth, 'Patterns of Life: the Art and Design of Phoebe Anna Traquair and Mary Seton Watts', in *Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935: The Gender of Ornament*, eds Bridgett Elliott and Janice Helland (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 15-34
- Cumming, Elizabeth, *Hand, Heart and Soul: the Arts and Crafts Movement in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2006)
- Curl, James Stevens, *Book of Victorian Churches* (London: English Heritage, 1995)
- Danto, Arthur C., *What Art Is* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013)
- Davies, Horton, *Worship and Theology in England: from Newman to Martineau, 1850-1990* (London: Oxford University Press; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962)
- Davies, Stuart, *By the Gains of Industry: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery 1885-1985* (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1985)
- Davis, Oliver, 'The Politics of Art: Aesthetic Contingency and the Aesthetic Affect', in *Rancière Now: Current Perspectives on Jacques Rancière*, ed. Oliver Davis (Cambridge, Malden: Polity Press, 2013), pp. 155-168
- Dawson, Clare, 'Notes on a Great Artist', *Journal of Stained Glass* 13:3 (1961-2), pp. 490-491
- Delaney, John J. and Tobin, James Edward (eds), *Dictionary of Catholic Biography* (London: Robert Hales Ltd, 1962)
- De Laperrière, Charles Baile (ed.), *The Society of Women Artists Exhibitors 1855-1996 : A dictionary of artists and their works in the Annual Exhibitions of The Society of Women Artists* (Hilmarion Manor Press, 1996)
- Descouvermont, Pierre, *Thérèse and Lisieux* (Toronto: Novalis, 1996)
- Deutsche, Rosalyn (et al.), 'Feminist Time: A Conversation,' *Grey Room* 31 (Spring 2008), pp. 32-67
- Dillingstone, F.W., 'Sacred Art and Philosophy', in *Christianity and the Visual Arts*, ed. Gilbert Cope (London: The Faith Press Ltd., 1964), pp. 52-61
- Dobie, Elizabeth Ann, 'Interweaving Feminist Frameworks,' in *Feminism and Tradition in Aesthetics*, eds Peggy Zeglin Brand and Carolyn Korsmeyer (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), pp. 215-234
- Donnelly, Michael, *Glasgow Stained Glass: A Preliminary Study* (Glasgow: Glasgow Museums and Art Galleries, 1981)
- Dowling, Linda, *The Vulgarization of Art: The Victorians and Aesthetics Democracy* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1996)
- Duncan, Carol, 'Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth-Century Vanguard Painting', in *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany*, eds Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), pp. 293-314
- Edith Payne 1875-1959* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 6 July – 19 August 1979), ed. George Breeze (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1979)
- Edwards, Joan, *Crewel Embroidery in England* (London & Sydney: BT Batsford Ltd, 1975)
- Edwards, Joan, *Gertrude Jekyll: Embroiderer, Gardener and Craftsman* (Dorking: Bayford Books, 1981)

- Elliott, Bridget and Wallace, Jo-Ann, *Women Artists and Writers: Modernist (Im)positionings* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994)
- Fairclough, Oliver and Leary, Emmeline, *Textiles by William Morris and Morris & Co., 1861-1940* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981)
- Faulkner, Peter, *William Morris and the Idea of England, Kelmscott Lecture 1991* (London: William Morris Society, 1992)
- Ferguson, George, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (Oxford University Press, 1961)
- Finely Taught, Finely Wrought: The Birmingham School of Jewellery & Silversmithing, 1890-1990* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Museum and Art Gallery 19 September 1990 – 13 January 1991), ed. Terry Hunt (Birmingham: Birmingham School of Jewellery, 1990)
- Foster, Andy et al., *Birmingham* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)
- Frederickson, Kristen and Webb, Sarah E. (eds), *Singular Women: Writing the Artist* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, c2003)
- Frohlich, Mary (ed.), *St Thérèse of Lisieux: Essential Writings* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2003)
- Gagnier, Regenia, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalization: On the Relationship of the Part to the Whole, 1859-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)
- Gere, Charlotte and Munn, Geoffrey C., *Jewellery: Pre-Raphaelite to Arts and Crafts* (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 1989)
- Gere, Charlotte, 'Gleams of Gold: The Fortunoff Collection of Paintings by Joseph Southall', *Apollo* (April 2005), pp. 76-81
- Gere, Charlotte, *Artistic Circles: Design & Decoration in the Aesthetic Movement* (London: V&A Publishing, 2010)
- Gilley, Sheridan, 'Victorian Feminism and Catholic Art: The Case of Mrs Jameson', in *The Church and the Arts*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers for The Ecclesiastical History Society, 1992), pp. 381-391
- Girouard, Mark, *Sweetness and Light: The 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-1900* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977)
- Gould, Peter C., *Early Green Politics: Back to Nature, Back to the Land, and Socialism in Britain, 1880-1900* (Brighton: The Harvester Press; New York: St Martin's Press, 1988)
- Gordon Bowe, Nicola, 'Maxwell Armfield, 1881-1972: An Account of his Decorative Art', *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 to the Present* 12 (1988), pp. 26-37
- Gordon Bowe, Nicola, 'Wilhelmina Geddes 1887-1955. Her Life and Work – A Reappraisal', *Journal of Stained Glass* 18:3 (1988), pp. 275-304
- Gordon Bowe, Nicola, 'Wilhelmina Geddes (1887-1955), Stained Glass Designer', in Jill Seddon and Suzette Wordon (eds), *Women Designing: Redefining Design in Britain Between the Wars* (Brighton: University of Brighton, c1994), pp. 64-70
- Gordon Bowe, Nicola and Cumming, Elizabeth, *The Arts and Crafts Movements in Dublin & Edinburgh 1885-1925* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998)
- Goring, Elizabeth S., 'Suffragette Jewellery in Britain', *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 to the Present* 26 (2002), pp. 84-99

- Gray, A. Stuart, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary* (London: Duckworth, 1994)
- Gronberg, Theresa, 'William Richard Lethaby and the Central School of Arts and Crafts', in *W.R. Lethaby 1857-1931: Architecture, Design and Education*, eds Sylvia Backmeyer and Theresa Gronberg (London: Lund Humphries, 1984), pp. 14-23
- Guardini, Monsignor, *Sacred Signs* (St Louis: Pio Decimus Press, 1956)
- Hall, Michael, 'What Do Victorian Churches Mean? Symbolism and Sacramentalism in Anglican Church Architecture, 1850-1870', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 59:1 (March 2000), pp. 78-95
- Hamilton, James, *Wood Engraving & the Woodcut in Britain c. 1890-1990* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1994)
- Hamlett, Jane, *Material Relations: Domestic Interiors and Middle-Class Families in England, 1850-1910* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010)
- Hardick, Joan, *The Yeats Sisters: A Biography of Susan and Elizabeth Yeats* (London and San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins, 1996)
- Harris, Jennifer, 'Embroidery in Women's Lives 1300-1900', in *The Subversive Stitch* (exhibition catalogue, Manchester, Whitworth Art Gallery 7 May – 17 July 1988), ed. unspecified (Manchester: Whitworth Art Gallery & Cornerhouse, 1988), pp. 8-33
- Harris, Jennifer, 'The Primacy of Handwork,' in *William Morris Revisited: Questioning the Legacy* (exhibition catalogue, Manchester, Whitworth Art Gallery, 26 January – 77 April 1996, London : Crafts Council Gallery, 2 May – 30 June, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 26 October – 7 February 1997), ed. unspecified (London: Crafts Council, 1996), pp. 25-37
- Harrison, Martin, *Victorian Stained Glass* (London and Melbourne: Barrie & Jenkins, 1980)
- Harrod, Tanya, *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century* (New Haven, London: Published for The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts by Yale University Press, 1999)
- Hart, Imogen, *Arts and Crafts Objects* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010)
- Hartnell, Roy, 'The Contribution of Art – and of Design – to the Emergence and Establishment of a Civic Culture in Birmingham in the Late Nineteenth Century', Ph.D. thesis (Birmingham Polytechnic 1992)
- Harvey, Charles and Press, Jon, *William Morris: Design and Enterprise in Victorian England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991)
- Harvey, Margaret M., 'A Quaker Artist and Rebel', *Friends' Quarterly* 14:8 (October 1963), pp. 353-361
- Haslam, Malcolm, *Arts and Crafts Book Covers* (Shepton Beauchamp: Richard Dennis, 2012)
- Hay, Jonathan, 'The Mediating Work of Art', *Art Bulletin* 89:3 (September 2007), pp.435-459
- Heimann, Mary, *Catholic Devotion in Victorian England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995)
- Heilmann, Ann and Llewellyn, Mark, 'Gender and Sexuality', in *The Fin-de-Siècle World*, ed. Michael Saler (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 503-517
- Helland, Janice, 'Frances Macdonald: The Self as Fin-de-Siècle Woman', *Woman's Art Journal* 14:1 (1993), pp. 15-22

- Helland, Janice, 'The Critics and the Arts and Crafts: The Instance of Margaret Macdonald and Charles Rennie Mackintosh', *Art History* 17:2 (June 1994), pp. 205-222
- Higgins, Mary Clerkin, 'Origins, Materials and the Glaziers' Art', in *The History of Stained Glass: The Art of Light Medieval to Contemporary*, Virginia Chieffo Raguin (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), pp. 32-55
- Highmore, Ben, 'Out of Place: Unprofessional Painting, Jacques Rancière and the Distribution of the Sensible', in *Reading Rancière*, eds Paul Bowman and Richard Stamp (London and New York: Continuum, 2011), pp. 95-110
- Holly, Michael Ann, 'Stones of Solace', in *Rediscovering Aesthetics: Transdisciplinary Voices from Art History, Philosophy, and Art Practice*, eds Francis Halsall, Julia Jansen and Tony O'Connor (Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 51-65
- Horne, Clare E., *Geometric Symmetry in Patterns and Tilings* (Abington: Woodhead Publishing Ltd in association with The Textile Institute, 2000)
- Houfe, Simon, *The Dictionary of British Book Illustrators and Caricaturists, 1800-1914* (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 1978)
- Houfe, Simon, *Fin de Siècle: the Illustrators of the 'Nineties* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1992)
- Howard, Constance, *Twentieth-Century Embroidery in Great Britain to 1939* (London: B T Batsford, 1985)
- Howes, J. (ed), *Craft History One: Celebrating the Centenary of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (Bath: Craft History, 1988)
- Howey, Ann F. and Reimer, Stephen R., *A Bibliography of Modern Arthuriana (1500-2000)* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006)
- Hunt, Tristram, *Building Jerusalem: The Rise and Fall of the Victorian City* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004)
- Hynes, Samuel, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1968)
- Impelluso, Lucia, *Nature and its Symbols* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004)
- Joseph Southall 1861-1944: Artist-Craftsman* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 8 August – 30 September and Fine Art Society, London, 14 October – 7 November 1980), ed. George Breeze (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1980)
- Kaplan, Wendy (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Arts and Craft: The International Arts Movement 1850-1920* (London: Headline, 1989)
- Kaplan, Wendy, 'Design for the Modern World', in *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Europe & America: Design for the Modern World*, ed. Wendy Kaplan (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004), pp. 10-19
- Lago, Mary, *Christiana Herringham and the Edwardian Art Scene* (London: Lund Humphries Publishers, 1996)
- Laurie, A. P., *The Painter's Methods & Materials* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., c1960, 1988)

- Lawrence, W.J. and Banerji, Rev. Nilanjana, 'Pemberton, Thomas Edgar (1849-1905)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eds H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 508
- Lee, Brian North, *Bookplates by Edmund Hort New* (London: Bookplate Society, 1999)
- Lee, Lawrence, *Stained Glass* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967)
- Lee, Lawrence, *The Appreciation of Stained Glass* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971)
- Lee, Lawrence, Seddon, George and Stephens, Francis, *Stained Glass* (London: Mitchell Beazley, 1976)
- Lesser Wolf, Toni, 'Women Jewellers of the British Arts and Crafts Movement', *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 14 (Autumn 1989), pp. 28-45
- Lippard, Lucy R., 'Both Sides Now: A Reprise', in *The Pink Glass Swan: Selected Essays on Feminist Art*, ed. Lucy Lippard (New York: The New Press, 1995), pp. 266-277
- Little, Bryan, *Birmingham Buildings: The Architectural Story of a Midland City* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971)
- Livesey, Ruth, *Socialism, Sex, and the Culture of Aestheticism in Britain, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)
- Lucie-Smith, Edward, *The Story of Craft: The Craftsman's Role in Society* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1981)
- Lundin, Anne, 'Victorian Horizons: The Reception of Children's Books in England and America, 1880-1900', *The Library Quarterly* 64:1 (1994), pp. 30-59
- MacCarthy, Fiona, *A History of British Design 1830-1970* (London, Boston and Sydney: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1972)
- MacCarthy, Fiona, *All Things Bright and Beautiful* (London, 1972)
- MacCarthy, Fiona, *The Simple Life: C.R. Ashbee in the Cotswolds* (London: Lund Humphries, c1981)
- MacCarthy, Fiona, *British Design since 1880: A Visual History* (London: Lund Humphries, 1982)
- MacCarthy, Fiona, *Eric Gill* (London: Faber, 1989)
- MacCarthy, Fiona, *William Morris: a Life for our Time* (London: Faber and Faber, 1994)
- MacCarty, Fiona, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination* (London: Faber, 2011)
- MacFarlane, Fiona C. and Arthur, Elizabeth F., *Glasgow School of Art Embroidery 1894-1920* (Glasgow: Glasgow Museum and Art Galleries, 1980)
- Mainardi, Patricia, 'Quilts: The Great American Art', in *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany*, eds Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), pp. 331-346
- Mainardi, Patricia, 'Art History: "Research that 'matters'"', *Visual Resources* 27:4 (2011), pp. 305-307
- Marsh, Jan, *Jane and May Morris: A Biographical Story 1839-1938* (London and New York: Pandora Press, 1986)

- Marsh, Jan, 'May Morris: Ubiquitous, Invisible Arts and Crafts-Woman, in *Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935: The Gender of Ornament*, eds Bridgett Elliott and Janice Helland (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 35-52
- Marsh, Jan, 'Bunce, Kate Elizabeth (1856–1927)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/64730>, consulted 18 January 2013
- Marsh, Jan and Nunn, Pamela Gerrish, *Women Artists and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement* (London: Virago, 1989)
- Marsh, Jan and Nunn, Pamela Gerrish, *Pre-Raphaelite Women Artists* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998)
- Massé, H.J.L.J., *The Art-Worker's Guild, 1884-1934* (Oxford: Art Worker's Guild, 1935)
- Massey, Doreen, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994)
- McBrinn, Joseph, 'A Populous Solitude': the Life and art of Sophia Rosamond Praeger, 1867-1954,' *Women's History Review* 18:4 (September 2009), pp. 577-596
- Mondloch, Kate, 'The Difference Problem: Art History and the Critical Legacy of 1980s Theoretical Feminism', *Art Journal* 71:2 (Summer 2012), pp. 19-31
- Moran, Maureen, *Catholic Sensationalism and Victorian Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007)
- Morris, Barbara, *Victorian Embroidery* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1962)
- Morrison, Barbara June, *The Saga of the Renowned Guild of Decorative Arts* (Birmingham: Mr. & Mrs. A.J. Morrison, 1969)
- Moss, Rachel, *Edward Payne: 1906-1931* (London: Moss & Glass, 1995)
- Muir, Percy, *English Children's Books 1600-1900* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1954)
- Murray, Stephen, 'The Crisis in Art History?', *Visual Resources* 27:4 (2011), pp. 314-318
- Naylor, Gillian, *The Arts and Crafts Movement: A Study of its Sources, Ideals and Influence on Design Theory* (London: Studio Vista, 1980)
- Nelson, Robert S. and Shiff, Richard (eds.), *Critical Terms for Art History* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003)
- Neiswander, Judith, *The Cosmopolitan Interior: Liberalism and the British Home, 1870-1914* (New Haven and London: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2008)
- Nochlin, Linda, 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists ? (1971)', in *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays*, ed. Linda Nochlin (Oxford: Westview, 1988), pp. 145-178
- O'Donoghue, Ann, 'Mary Lowndes – A Brief Overview of her Life and Work', *The Journal of Stained Glass* 24 (2000), pp. 38-52
- One Hundred Saints: Their Lives and Likenesses Drawn from Butler's "Lives of the Saints" and Great Works of Western Art* (Boston, New York, and London: Bulfinch Press, 1993)
- Orr, Clarissa Campbell, *Women in the Victorian Art World* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995)
- Osborne, June, *Stained Glass in England* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993)

- Panofsky, Erwin (transl. by Jás Elsner and Katharina Loren), 'On the Problem of Describing and Interpreting Works of the Visual Arts,' *Critical Inquiry* 38:3 (Spring 2012), pp. 467-482
- Parker, Rozsika and Pollock, Griselda, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981)
- Parker, Rozsika, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (London, New York: I.B. Taurus, 2010)
- Parkins, Wendy, *Jane Morris: The Burden of History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, c2013)
- Parry, Linda, *The Victoria & Albert Museum's Textile Collection: British Textiles from 1850 to 1900* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1993)
- Parry, Linda, *Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005)
- Parry, Linda, *William Morris Textiles* (London: V&A Publishing, 2013)
- Phillips, Peter, 'A Family Recorded in Glass, the Windows of Margaret Rope in Shrewsbury Cathedral,' *Midland Catholic History* 16 (2009), pp. 31-38
- Pinkney, Tom (ed.), *We Met Morris: Interviews with William Morris 1885-96* (Reading: Spire Books Ltd in association with the William Morris Society, 2005)
- Pollock, Griselda, 'Artists Mythologies and Media Genius, Madness and Art History', *Screen* 21:3 (1980), pp. 57-96
- Pollock, Griselda, *Avant-Garde Gambits, 1888-1893: Gender and the Colour of Art History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992)
- Pollock, Griselda, 'Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity', in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, eds Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (Oxford: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 245-268
- Pollock, Griselda, *Differencing the Canon: Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art's Histories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999)
- Pollock, Griselda, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the Histories of Art* (London and New York: Routledge, c1988, printed 2003)
- Poulson, Christine, 'Death and the Maiden: The Lady of Shalott and the Pre-Raphaelites', in Elen Harding (ed.), *Re-Framing the Pre-Raphaelites: Historical and Theoretical Essays* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), pp. 173-194
- Preziosi, Donald (ed.), *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- Raguin, Virginia Chieffo, *The History of Stained Glass: The Art of Light Medieval to Contemporary* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003)
- Rancière, Jacques, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. by Julie Rose (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999)
- Rancière, Jacques, *Le partage du sensible: esthétique et politique* (Paris: La Fabrique-éditions, 2000)
- Rancière, Jacques, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, transl. by Gabriel Rockhill (London and New York: Continuum, 2004)

- Rancière, Jacques, 'The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics', in *Reading Rancière*, eds Paul Bowman and Richard Stamp (London and New York: Continuum, 2011), pp. 1-17
- Rancière, Jacques, *Aisthesis: Scènes du régime esthétique de l'art* (Paris: Editions Gallilée, 2011)
- Rancière, Jacques, *Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art*, transl. by Zakir Paul (London and New York: Verso, 2013)
- Rawson, George, 'The Arts and Crafts Movement and British Schools of Art', *The Decorative Arts Society 1850 to the Present* 28 (2004), pp. 28-55
- Reed, Christopher, *Bloomsbury Rooms: Modernism, Subculture, and Domesticity* (New Haven and London: Publ. for the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture, New York by Yale University Press, 2004)
- Reiss, Athene, 'Beyond 'Books for the Illiterate': Understanding English medieval wall paintings', *British Art Journal* 9:1 (Spring 2008), pp. 4-14
- 'Rethinking the Canon', a collection of essays, *Art Bulletin* 78:2 (June 1996), pp. 198-217
- Reynolds, Kimberley, *Girls Only?: Gender and Popular Children's Fiction in Britain, 1880-1910* (New York; London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990)
- Richards, Alan J., *British Birds: A Field Guide* (Newton Abbot, London, and North Pomfret: David & Charles, 1979)
- Richardson, Margaret, *Architects of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (London: Trefoil Books, 1983)
- Richmond, Velma Bourgeois, 'Hagiography', in *Encyclopedia of Life Writing: Autobiographical and Biographical Forms*, ed. Margaretta Jolly (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2001), pp. 411-412
- Rifkin, Adrian, 'Art's Histories', in *The New Art History*, eds Al Rees and Frances Borzello (London: Camden Press, 1986), pp. 157-63
- Riopelle, Christopher and Bray, Xavier, *A Brush with Nature: the Gere Collection of Landscape Oil Sketches* (London: National Gallery, 2003)
- Roberts, A.R.N., *William Richard Lethaby 1857-1931* (London: County Council Central School of Arts & Crafts, 1957)
- Robson, Catherine, *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girl of the Victorian Gentleman* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001)
- Rope, Arthur, 'The Poet Sculptor Ellen Mary Rope', in *Blaxhall's Creative Past: Snapshots of Village Life*, ed. Blaxhall Archive Group (Lavenham: Lavenham Press, 2009), pp. 71-106
- Roth, Moira, 'Teaching Modern Art History from a Feminist Perspective: Challenging Conventions, my Own and Others' (1987), in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000*, ed. Hilary Robinson (Oxford; Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 139-146
- Rowell, Geoffrey, *The Vision Glorious: Themes and Personalities of the Catholic Revival in Anglicanism* (Oxford, New York, Toronto, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 190-191
- Rummonds, Richard-Gabriel, *Nineteenth-Century Printing Practices: The Iron Handpress* (Oak Knell Press & the British Library, 2004)

- Salomon, Nanette, 'The Art Historical Canon: Sins of Omission', in *(En)gendering Knowledge: Feminism in Academe*, eds Joan Hartmann and Ellen Messer-Davidow (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), pp. 222-36
- Schramm, Jan-Melissa, *Testimony and Advocacy in Victorian Law, Literature, and Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- Service, Alastair (ed.), *Edwardian Architecture and its Origins* (London: Architectural Press, 1975)
- Shanley, Mary Lyndon, "'One must ride behind': Married Women's rights and the Divorce Act of 1857", *Victorian Studies* 25:3 (Spring 1982), pp. 356-76
- Shorvon, Simon, 'Lucien and Esther Pissarro at Home 1894-1914', in *Lucien Pissarro in England: The Eragny Press 1895-1914* (exhibition catalogue, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 8 January – 13 March 2011) ed. Ashmolean Museum (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2011), pp. 35-48
- Showalter, E., *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (London: Virago, 1992)
- Shuttleworth, Sally, *The Mind of the Child: Child Development in Literature, Science, and Medicine, 1840-1900* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010)
- Silvers, Anita, 'Has Her(oine's) Time Now Come?', in Peggy Zeglin Brand and Carolyn Korsmeyer (eds), *Feminism and Tradition in Aesthetics* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), pp. 279-304
- Skipp, Victor, *The Making of Victorian Birmingham* (Birmingham: Victor Skipp, 1983)
- Smith, Paul and Wilde, Carolyn (eds), *A Companion to Art Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002)
- Smith, Peter, 'Another Vision of Progressivism: Marion Richardson's Triumph and Tragedy', *Studies in Art Education* 37:3 (Spring 1996), pp. 170-183
- Spooner, Brian, 'Weavers and Dealers: the Authenticity of an Oriental Carpet', in *The Social Life of Things*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 195-235
- Spooner, Hannah, 'Pure Painting: Joseph Southall, Christiana Herringham and the Tempera Revival', *The British Art Journal* 4:2 (Summer 2003), pp. 49-56
- Stansky, Peter, 'Arts and Crafts Objects: Review', *Victorian Studies* 54:1 (Autumn 2011), pp. 157-158
- "Stein, Gertrude" et al., 'Guerrilla Girls and Guerrilla Girls BroadBand: Inside Story', *Art Journal* 70:2 (Summer 2011), pp. 88-101
- Sutherland Harris, Ann, and Nochlin, Linda (eds), *Women Artists: 1550-1950* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976)
- Sutton, George, *Artisan or Artist?: A History of the Teaching of Arts and Crafts in English Schools* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1967)
- Swanson, Paul, *An Introduction to Capitalism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013)
- Swift, John, 'Visual Memory Training: A Brief History and Postscript', *Art Education* 30:8 (December 1977), pp. 24-27
- Swift, John, 'Birmingham and its Art School: Changing Views 1800-1921', *Journal of Art & Design Education* 7:1 (1988), pp. 5-29

- Swift, John, 'Birmingham Art School: Its Branch Schools and Female Students 1880-1900', in *Made in Birmingham: Design & Industry 1889-1989*, ed. Barbara Tilson (Studley: Brewin Books, 1989), pp. 49-64
- Swift, John, 'The Arts and Crafts Movement and Birmingham Art School 1900-1900', in *Histories of Art and Design Education: Cole to Coldstream*, ed. David Thistlewood (Harlow: Longman in association with the National Society for Education in Art and Design, 1992), pp. 23-37
- Swift, John, 'Women and Art Education a Birmingham's Art Schools 1880-1920: Social Class, Opportunity and Aspiration', *Journal of Art & Design Education* 18:3 (October 1999), pp. 317-326
- Tankard, Judith B., *Gardens of the Arts and Crafts Movement: Reality and Imagination* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2003)
- Tarras, Richard, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (London: Pimlico, c1991)
- The Arts & Crafts Movement: Artists, Craftsmen & Designers, 1890-1930 (exhibition catalogue, London, The Fine Art Society in association with Haslam and Whiteway Ltd, 2nd – 27th October 1973)*, introduction by Lionel Lambourne (London: s.n., 1973)
- The Arts and Crafts Movement in America 1876-1916* (exhibition catalogue, Art Museum, Princeton University, The Art Institute, Chicago, Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., 1972), ed. Robert Judson Clark (Princeton University Press, 1972)
- The Birmingham School of Art Archives 1880-1900: An Exhibition to Celebrate the Centenary of the City of Birmingham* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Central Library Exhibition Hall, 25 September – 14 October 1989) ed. John Swift (Birmingham: Birmingham Polytechnic Institute of Art and Design, 1989)
- The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church*, eds Charles G. Herbermann, Edward A. Pace, Condé B. Pallen, Thomas J. Shahan, John W. Wynne et al. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910)
- The Earthly Paradise: F. Cayley Robinson, F. L. Griggs and the Painter-Craftsmen of the Birmingham Group* (exhibition catalogue, Fine Art Society, London, 30 June – 31 July 1969), ed. Charlotte Gere (London: Fine Art Society, 1969)
- Thompson, Jr., Daniel V., *The Practice of Tempera Painting* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., c1936)
- Tickner, Lisa, 'Suffrage Campaigns: The Political Imagery of the British Women's Suffrage Movement', in *The Edwardian Era*, eds. Jane Beckett and Deborah Cherry (Oxford: Phaidon and Barbican Art Gallery, 1987), pp. 100-116
- Tickner, Lisa, *The Spectacle of Women: Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign 1907-14* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1987)
- Tickner, Lisa, 'Modernist Art History: The Challenge of Feminism' (1988), in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000*, ed. Hilary Robinson (Oxford; Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 250-7
- Tillyard, S. K., *The Impact of Modernism 1900-1920: Early Modernism and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Edwardian England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988)

- Trinder, Barrie, 'Shrewsbury 1780-1914', in *A History of Shropshire: Shrewsbury, General History and Topography*, eds W.A. Champion and A.T. Thacker (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer for the Institute of Historical Research, 2014)
- Unwin, Melanie, 'Significant Other: Art and Craft in the Career and Marriage of Mary Watts', *Journal of Design History* 17:3 (2004), pp. 237-250
- Urbanelli, Lora, *The Book Art of Lucien Pissarro* (Wakefield, Rhode Island and London: Moyer Bell, c1994)
- Vaninskaya, Anna, *William Morris and the Idea of Community: Romance, History and Propaganda 1880-1914* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010)
- Veblen, Thorstein, *Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (London: Unwin Books, 1970)
- Victoria and Albert Museum, *Exhibition of Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Arts: Catalogue* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1952)
- Victoria and Albert Museum, *Victorian Church Art: (Catalogue of an) Exhibition, November 1971-January 1972* (London: H.M.S.O., 1971)
- Walker, Lynne, 'The Arts and Crafts Alternative', in *A View from the Interior: Feminism, Women and Design*, eds Judy Attfield and Pat Kirkham (London: The Women's Press, 1989), pp. 163-174
- Walker, Lynne, 'Vistas of Pleasure: Women Consumers of Urban Space in the West End of London 1850-1900,' in *Women in the Victorian Art World*, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 70-85
- Walker, Lynne, 'Women and Church Art', in *Churches 1870-1914*, eds Teresa Slade and Andrew Saint (London: The Victorian Society, 2011), pp. 121-144
- Waller, P.J., *Democracy and Sectarianism: A Political and Social History of Liverpool 1868-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1981)
- Waters, William, *Angels & Icons: Pre-Raphaelite Stained Glass, 1850-1870* (Worcester: Seraphim Press Ltd, 2012)
- Watt, Quintin (ed.), *The Bromsgrove Guild: An Illustrated History* (Warwick: Bromsgrove Guild, 1999)
- Weaver, Mary Jo, *Cloister and Community: Life Within a Carmelite Monastery* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002)
- Weedon, C., *Feminist Practice and Post-Structuralist Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987)
- West, Shearer, *Fin de Siècle* (London: Bloomsbury, 1993)
- Whates, H. R. G., *The Birmingham Post 1857-1957: A Centenary Retrospect* (Birmingham: The Birmingham Post & Mail Limited, 1957)
- Whitaker, Muriel, *The Legends of King Arthur in Art* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1990/95)
- Whiteley, Jon, 'The Art of the Eragny Press', in *Lucien Pissarro in England: The Eragny Press 1895-1914* (exhibition catalogue, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 8 January – 13 March 2011) ed. Ashmolean Museum (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2011), pp. 13-24
- Wildman, Stephen, *The Birmingham School: Paintings, Drawings and Prints by Birmingham Artists from the Permanent Collection* (Birmingham: Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery, 1990)

Willsdon, Clare, *Mural Painting in Britain 1840-1940: Image and Meaning* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000)

Wilton, Andrew, 'Symbolism in Britain', in *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones & Watts: Symbolism in Britain 1860-1910* (exhibition catalogue, Tate Gallery, London, 16 October 1997 – 4 January 1998; Haus der Kunst, Munich, 30 January – 26 April 1998; Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, 15 May – 30 August 1998), eds Andrew Wilton and Robert Upstone (Tate Gallery Publishing, 1997), pp. 11-34

Wittekind, Susanne, 'Visualizing Salvation: The Role of Arboreal Imagery in the *Speculum humanae salvationis* (Kremsmünster, Library of the Convent, Cod. 243)', in *The Tree: Symbol, Allegory, and Mnemonic Device in Medieval Art and Thought*, eds Pippa Salonus and Andrea Worm (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), pp. 117-142

Wolffe, John, 'Change and Continuity in British Anti-Catholicism, 1829-1982', in *Catholicism in Britain and France Since 1789*, eds Frank Tallett and Nicolas Atkin (London and Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1996), pp. 67-83

Women Stained Glass Artists of the Arts and Crafts Movement (exhibition catalogue, William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, 7 December 1985 – 2 March 1986), ed. Peter Cormack (London: Borough of Waltham Forest Libraries & Arts Department, 1985)

Yeo, Stephen, 'A New Life: the Religion of Socialism in Britain, 1883-1896', *History Workshop Journal* 4:1 (1977), pp. 5-56

Yeo, Stephen, 'Socialism, the State, and some Oppositional Englishness', in *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920*, eds Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 331-387

Yonan, Michael, 'The Suppression of Materiality in Anglo-American Art-Historical Writing', in *The Challenge of the Object – Die Herausforderung des Objekts: 33rd Congress of the International Committee of the History of Art, Nuremberg, 15-20 July 2012, Part 1* (Nürnberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 2012-2013), pp. 73-66

Zimmerman, Enid, 'Art Education for Women in England from 1890-1910 as Reflected in the Victorian Periodical Press and Current Feminist Histories of Art Education', *Studies in Art Education* 32:2 (Winter 1991), pp. 105-116

Zorn Karlin, Elyse, *Jewelry and Metalwork in the Arts and Crafts Tradition* (Atglen, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Publ. Ltd., 1993)

Electronic Sources

Anonymous, 'A Brief history of St Alban the Martyr', www.saintalban.co.uk/history.html, consulted 2 April 2014

Anonymous, 'St Aidans 1861-1909', Church History, <http://www.allsaintsonline.co.uk/history/history1.php>, consulted 11 December 2015

Anonymous, 'Taking Stock: Catholic Churches of England and Wales, Birkenhead – Holy Name of Jesus,' <http://taking-stock.org.uk/Home/Dioceses/Diocese-of-Shrewsbury/Birkenhead-Holy-Name-of-Jesus>, consulted 21 September 2015

Anonymous, 'Will: Mr. J. Lindon', *The Tablet: The International Catholic News Weekly* (21 May 1927), p. 19, accessed online <http://archive.thetablet.co.uk/article/21st-may-1927/19/will>, consulted 22 October 2015

Barron, Roderick M., 'Imaginary Maps', <http://www.barron.co.uk/Imaginary+Maps+Pt+1/item1114>, consulted 16 February 2015

BBC News, 'Bid to prove Holywell pub skeleton is St John Plessington', 20 October 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-east-wales-34578488>, consulted 27 October 2015

Bible Meaning, 'Spiritual Meaning of Well, Fountain', www.biblemeanings.info/Words/Geographical/Well.htm, consulted 26 June 2015

Blaugrund, Annette et al., 'Whither the Field of Nineteenth-Century Art History?', *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide: A Journal of Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture* 1:1 (Spring 2002), online journal, <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/spring02/85-spring02/spring02article/190-whither-the-field-of-nineteenth-century-art-history>

Breward, Christopher, Adamson, Glenn, Miller, Liz and Ajmar, Marta, 'The Value of Arts and Humanities Research to Life in the UK: A Museum Perspective', *V&A Online Journal* 1 (Autumn 2008)

Cheney, David M., 'Bishop Samuel Webster Allen', <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/ballens.html>, consulted 22 October 2015

Codell, Julie F., 'Holme, Charles (1848–1923)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2008), <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/view/article/33950>, consulted 23 October 2014

Duke University Libraries, 'Timeline: British Women in the 19th Century', <http://library.duke.edu/exhibits/britishwriters/timeline.html>, consulted 22 January 2016

Galchinsky, Michael, 'Marion Hartog', Jewish Women Archive, *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia* (1 March 2009), <http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/hartog-marion>, consulted 29 May 2013

Glasgow, University of, Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning, The Catalogue, 'Amelia S. Levetus', <http://www.mackintosh-architecture.gla.ac.uk/catalogue/name/?nid=LevAS&xml=peo>, consulted 13 October 2014

Gottheil, Richard and Jacobs, Joseph, 'The Jewish Chronicle', *JewishEncyclopedia.com*, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8630-jewish-chronicle-the>, consulted 10 October 2014

Gylén, Marko, 'Punctuations... Towards a Philosophy of Jewellery (A preliminary sketch – on the way to larger aesthetics of suspension)' (2009), http://www.saimia.fi/koru3/docs/Gylen_Punctuations.pdf, pp. 9-10, consulted 6 July 2015

Herrera, Matthew D., 'Holy Smoke – The Use of Incense in the Catholic Church', *Adoremus Bulletin* 17:10 (February 2012), online edition <http://www.adoremus.org/0212Herrera.html>, consulted 5 January 2016

Herrmann, Luke, 'Finberg, Alexander Joseph (1866–1939)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/view/article/33129>, accessed 12 May 2015

Hopper, John, Inspirational, 'Newton, Jones and Willis Embroidery Work', 28 January 2011, <http://thetextileblog.blogspot.co.uk/2011/01/newton-jones-and-willis-embroidery-work.html>, consulted 3 November 2015

'Kate Eadie Arts and Crafts Suffragette Necklace, Amethyst, Silver and Enamel', *Collectors Weekly*, 2012, <http://www.collectorsweekly.com/stories/59420-kate-eadie-arts-and-crafts-suffragette-n>, consulted 3 June 2015

Leeds, University of, 'Louisa Pesel Collection', <http://ulita.leeds.ac.uk/major-collections/louisa-pesel-collection/>, consulted 19 May 2015

Leslie, Sr Gillian, 'The Margaret Rope Windows', <http://quidenhamcarmel.org.uk/margaret-rope-windows>, consulted 28 October 2015

McMonagle, Mother, 'Margaret Rope', reproduction of an article in the *Shrewsbury Chronicle* (Lent/Easter 2012), <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/cathedral/margaret-rope>, consulted 27 October 2015

Rope, Arthur, 'Ellen Mary Rope, sculptor', <http://www.arthur.rope.clara.net/EMR.htm>, consulted 28 August 2013

Rope, Arthur, 'Life of Margaret Agnes Rope (Marga)', <http://www.arthur.rope.clara.net/margabio.htm>, consulted 6 February 2013

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Cultural Services, 'Ruskin Pottery', www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/3751/ruskin_pottery_leaflet_part_1, consulted 27 December 2015

Scotland, National Museum of, 'Rare May Morris Curtains saved for Scotland', *Art Fund*, 23 July 2014, <http://www.artfund.org/news/2014/07/23/may-morris-curtains-saved-for-scotland>, consulted 23 November 2015

Shrewsbury, Diocese of, 'Blessed Edward Campion', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/blessed-edward-campion>, consulted 27 October 2015

Shrewsbury, Diocese of, 'Blessed Robert Johnson', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/blessed-robert-johnson>, consulted 27 October 2015

Shrewsbury, Diocese of, 'Blessed Robert Wilcox', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/blessed-robert-wilcox>, consulted 27 October 2015

Shrewsbury, Diocese of, 'Saint Margaret Ward', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/st-margaret-ward>, consulted 27 October 2015

Shrewsbury, Diocese of, 'St John Plessington', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/st-john-plessington>, consulted 27 October 2015

Shrewsbury, Diocese of, 'St Winefride', <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/saints-and-martyrs/st-winefride>, consulted 28 October 2015

St. Scholastica, The College of, Duluth, Pat Hagen, 'Programme for class on Women Pre-Raphaelite Artists' (Spring 2003), <http://faculty.css.edu/phagen/hon4777pr/4777women2.htm>, consulted 21 January 2013

Till, Margaret, 'Square Memories', *Hampstead Garden Suburbs, Suburb News Summer* 88 (2005), <http://www.hgs.org.uk/suburbnews/sn88/sn-8.pdf>, consulted 26 March 2013

Upton, Chris, 'Hand-Crafted Idealism', *Birmingham Post* (14 October 2011) <http://www.birminghampost.co.uk/lifestyle/hand-crafted-idealism-3917251>, consulted 22 May 2015

V&A, Search the Collections, 'Bed Curtain', <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O77562/bed-curtain-unknown/>, consulted 23 November 2015

V&A Museum of Childhood, 'Boy's dress', <http://www.museumofchildhood.org.uk/collections/clothing/boys-dress/>, consulted 28 March 2014

Williams, Evan, 'St Matthias Campus – a brief history', 4 August 2014, University of the West of England website, <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/comingtouwe/campusmapsandinformation/stmatthiascampus/historyofstmatthiascampus/abriefhistory.aspx>, consulted 6 November 2015

Unpublished Secondary Sources

Burgin, John, 'Thomas William Camm and his Family Designers and Makers of Stained Glass at the Studio in Smethwick 1885-1963', MA Dissertation (City of Birmingham Polytechnic, 1984)

FitzGerald, Claire, 'Arts and Crafts Children's Book-Illustration: Birmingham Women Artists', MA thesis (University of Warwick, 2012)

Hoban, Sally, 'The Birmingham Municipal School of Art and Opportunities for Women's Paid Work in the Arts and Crafts Movement', Ph.D. thesis (University of Birmingham, 2013)

Large, Joshua, 'The Studio and the Workshops: Amelia Levetus and the British Influence on the Applied Arts in Vienna', MA dissertation (Central European University Budapest, 2003)

'Love is Enough: William Morris and Andy Warhol,' Exhibition wall text, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, viewed 5 June 2015

O'Hara, Yvonne, 'Mary Jane Newill: Arts and Crafts Pioneer Rediscovered', MA dissertation (University of Warwick, 2008)

Sprague, Abbie N., 'The Craftsman Painters of the Arts and Crafts Movement', Ph.D. thesis (University of Cambridge, 2010)

Walker, Lynne, 'E.S. Prior 1852-1932', Ph.D. thesis (Birkbeck College, London University, 1978)

Waterhouse, Rachel, *St Alban's & St Patrick's Church Pamphlet*

Williams, Elaine, 'Florence Camm: Negotiating Success', MA dissertation (University of Birmingham, 2009)

WOMEN, CRAFT, AND THE OBJECT: BIRMINGHAM 1880-1930

Two volumes: volume II

Claire FitzGerald

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Warwick, Department of History of Art

April 2016

Illustrations

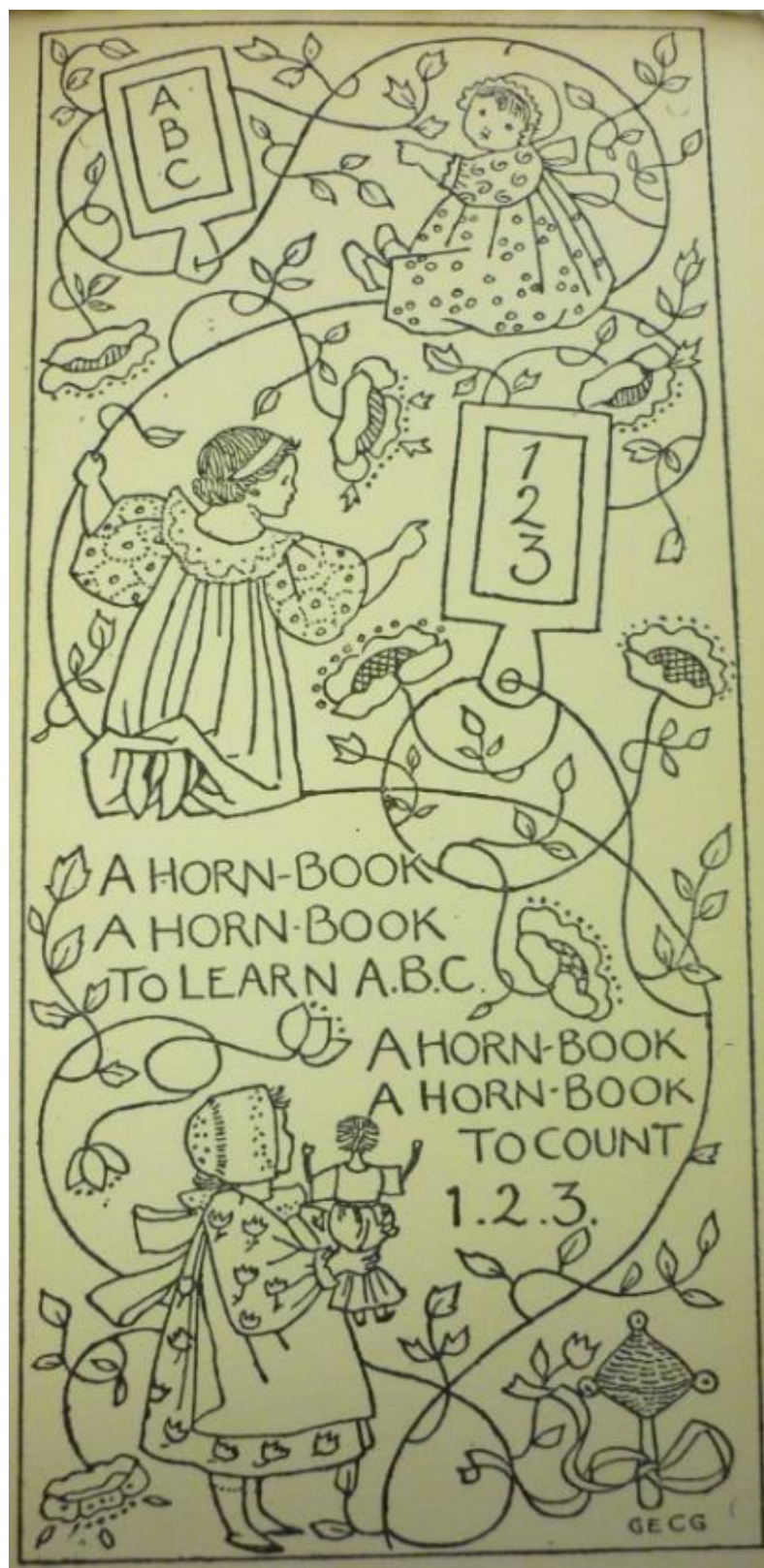


Figure 1.1 – Georgie Gaskin, *Horn-Book Jingles* (London: Leadenhall Press, 1896/7), black and white book-illustration, British Library (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

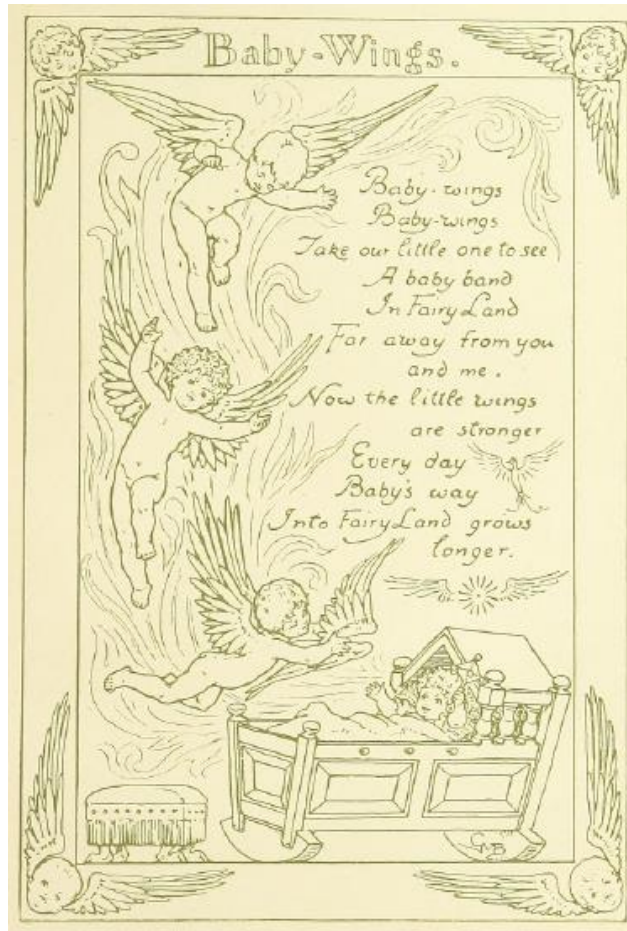


Figure 1.2 – Gertrude Bradley, *Songs for Somebody* by Dollie Radford (London: D. Nutt, 1893), black and white book-illustration, BL (BL, <http://access.bl.uk/item/pdf/lsidyv3494e942>)



Figure 1.3 – Charles Gere, *Russian Fairy Tales*, transl. from *The Skazki of Polevoi* by R. Nisbet Bain (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1892), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.4 – Arthur Gaskin, *Good King Wenceslas* by Dr. Neale (Birmingham: Cornish Bros, 1895), black and white book-illustration, BL (BL, <http://access.bl.uk/item/pdf/lsidyv3475719d>)

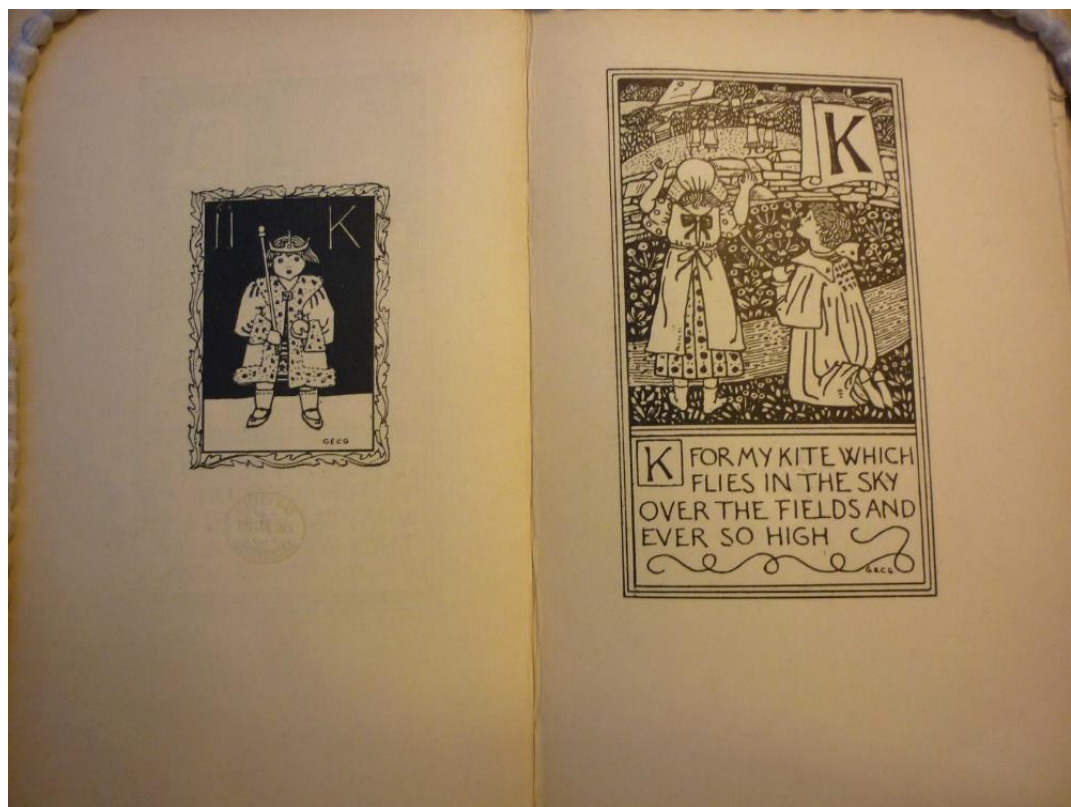


Figure 1.5 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, open page letter 'K' (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.6 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter 'R' (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.7 – Sidney Heath, *A First Book for Little Ones* (London: Griffith, Farran & Co., 1905), colour book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.8 – Georgie Gaskin, *History of the Horn-Book* by Andrew Tuer (London: Leadenhall Press, 1896), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.9 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter 'A' (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

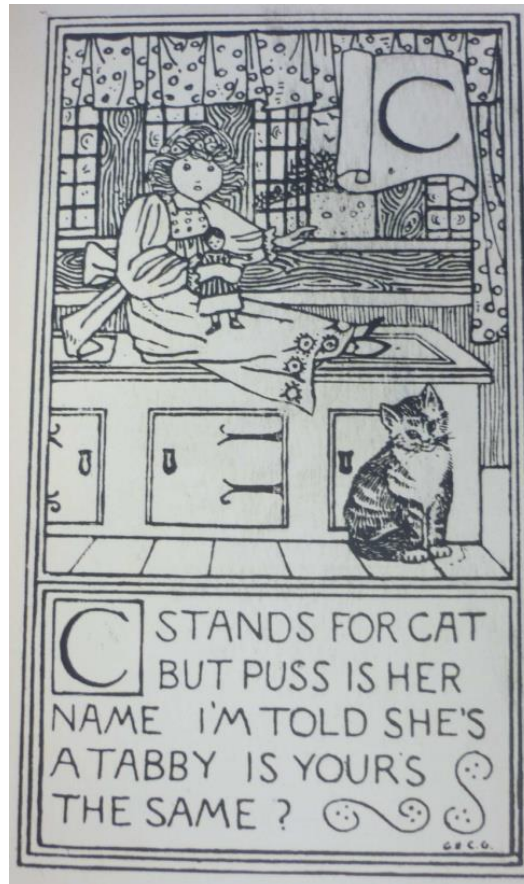


Figure 1.10 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter 'C' (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.11 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter 'F' (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.12 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter ‘B’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

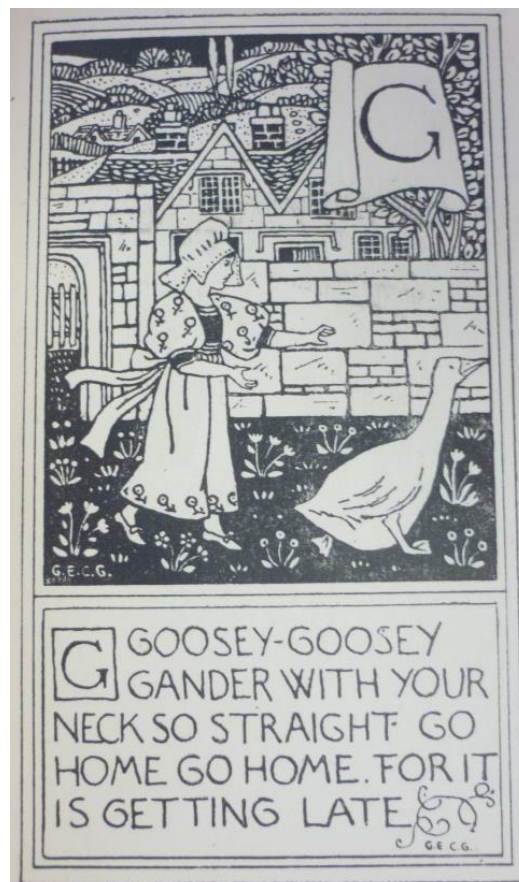


Figure 1.13 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter ‘G’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.14 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter ‘Y’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.15 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter ‘O’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

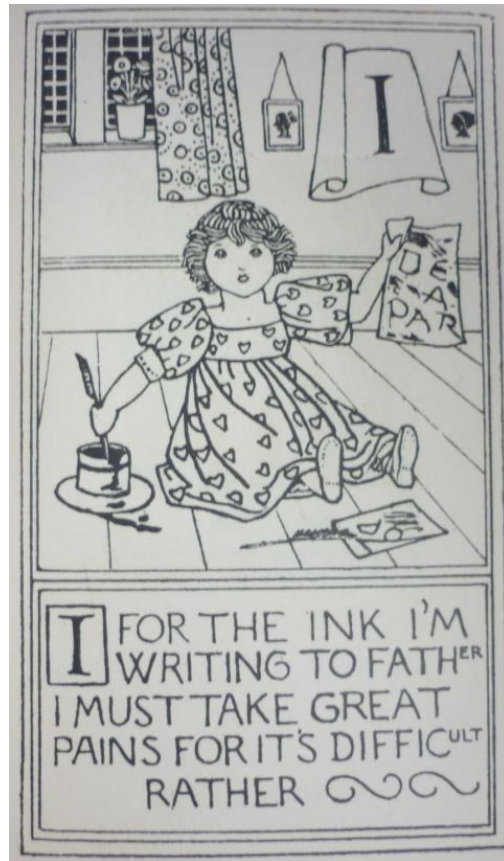


Figure 1.16 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter 'I' (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

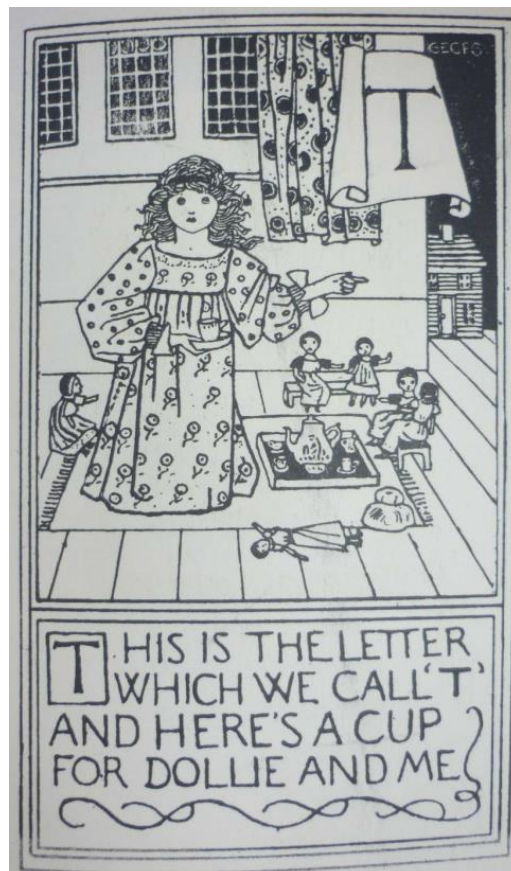


Figure 1.17 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter 'T' (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.18 – Georgie Gaskin, *A.B.C.: An Alphabet*, full-page illustration letter ‘Z’ (London: E. Mathews, 1895), black and white book-illustration, LB (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

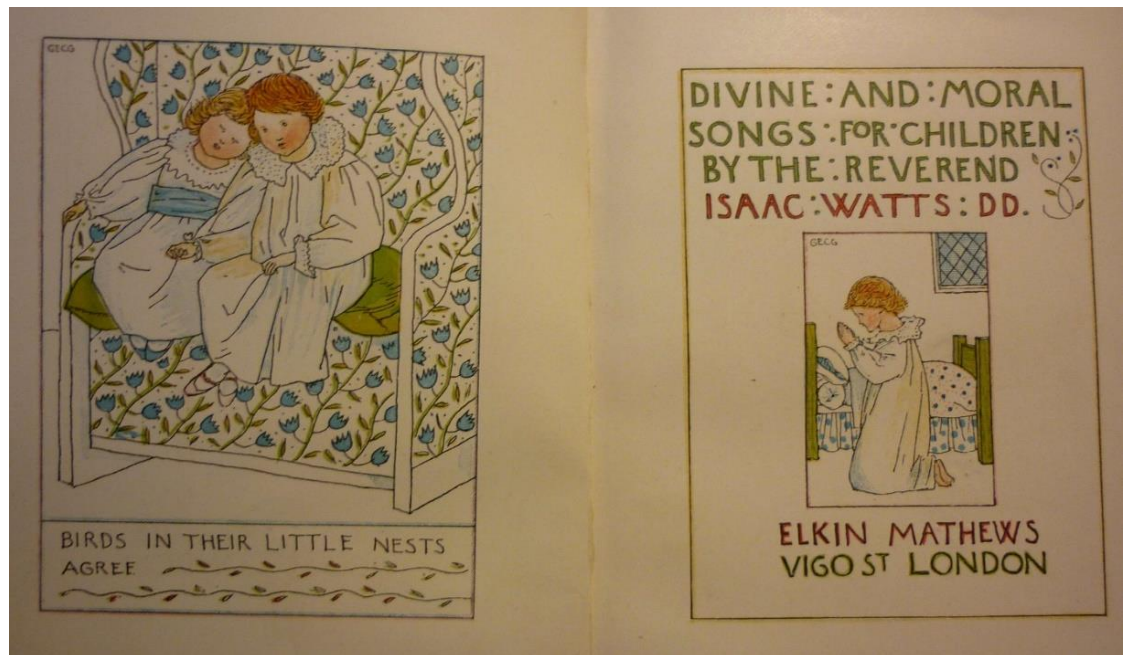


Figure 1.19 – Georgie Gaskin, *Divine and Moral Songs* by Isaac Watts (London: E. Mathews, 1896), colour book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

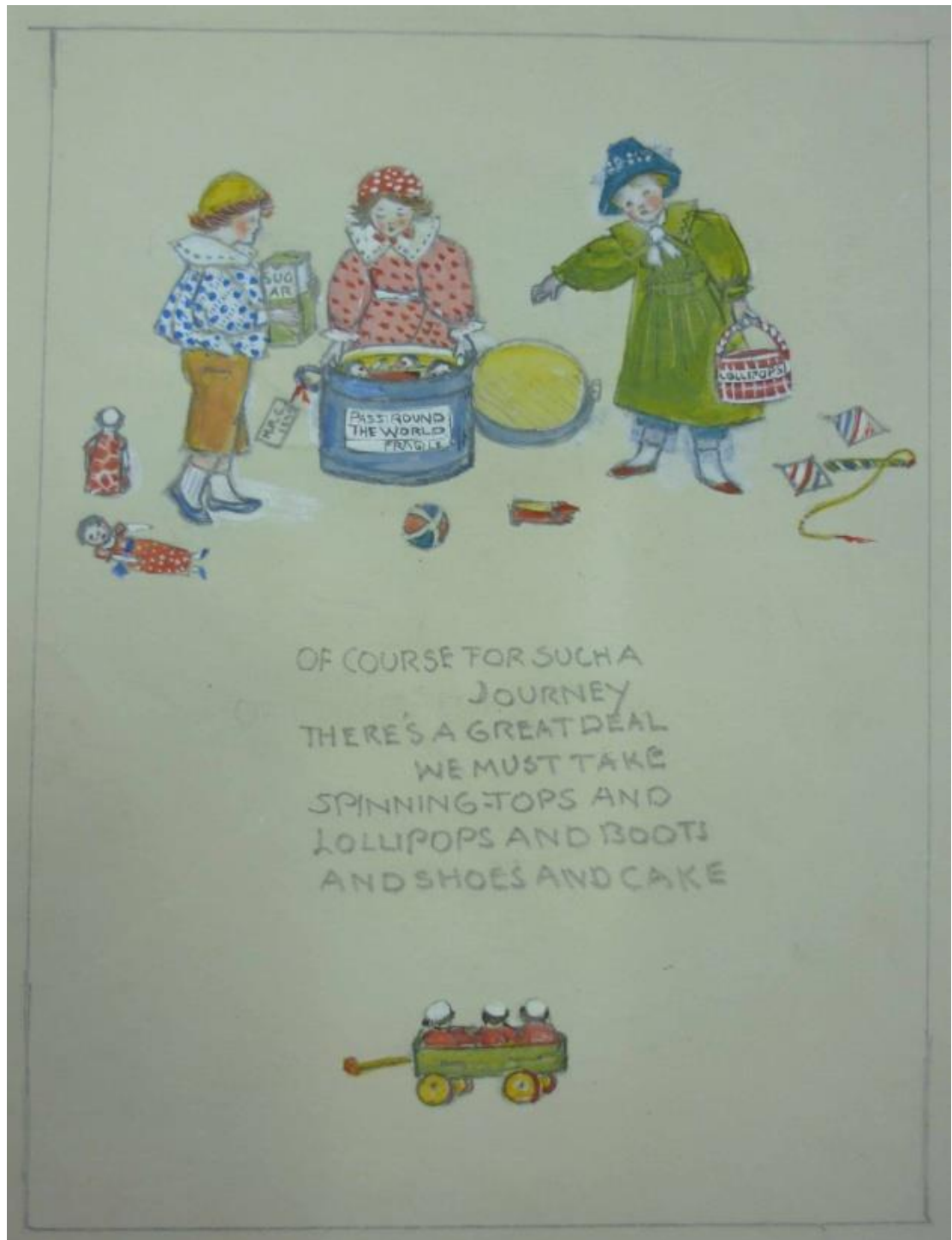


Figure 1.20 – Georgie Gaskin, *The Travellers and Other Stories*, 1898, pencil, watercolour and Chinese white on white laid or toned paper, BMT, 28 x 23 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

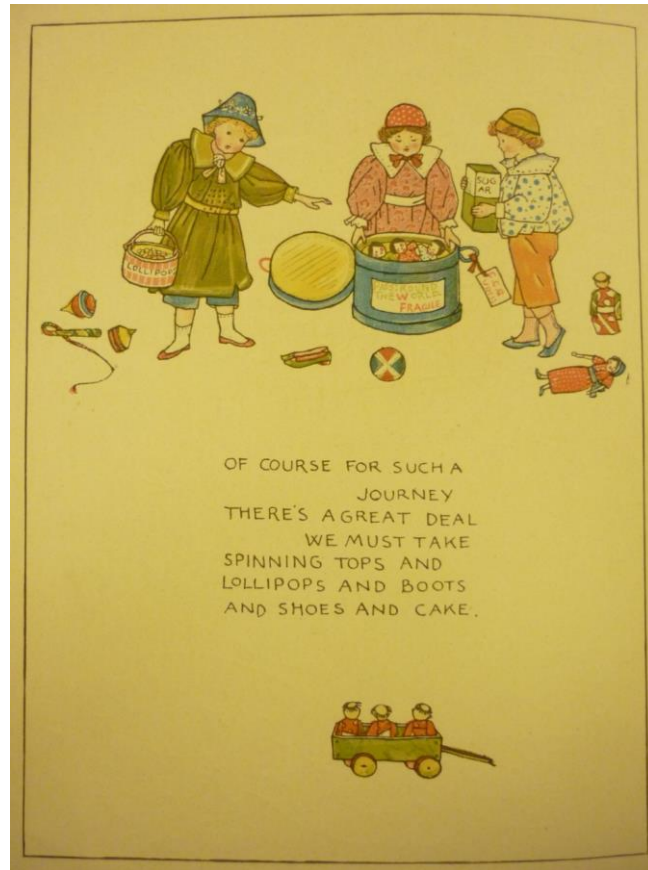


Figure 1.21 – Georgie Gaskin, 'Of course for such a journey...', *The Travellers and Other Stories* (London: James Bowden, 1898), colour book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.22 – Celia Levetus, *Captive Love*, c. 1898, pen and ink drawing, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.23 – Georgie Gaskin, *Stickphast Paste advertisement*, in *The Quest* 4 (November 1895), black and white illustration, BMT (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

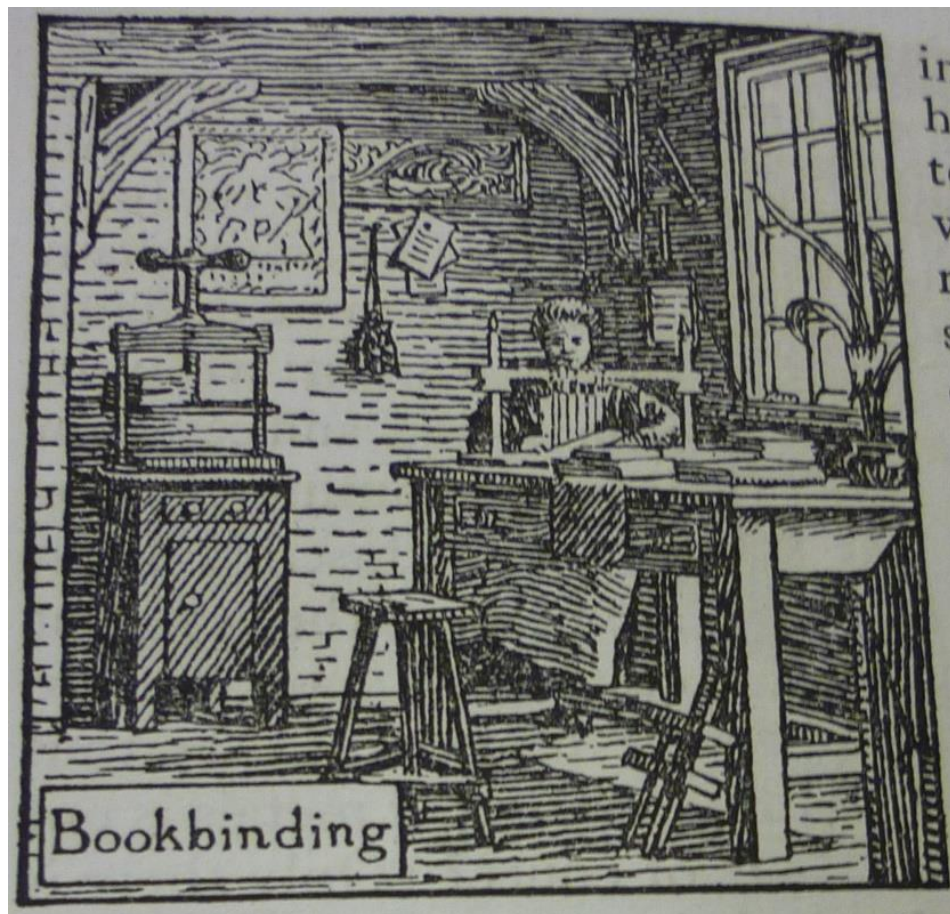


Figure 1.24 – Unknown illustrator, *Bookbinding Department of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft*, in *The Quest* 2 (March 1895), BMT (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

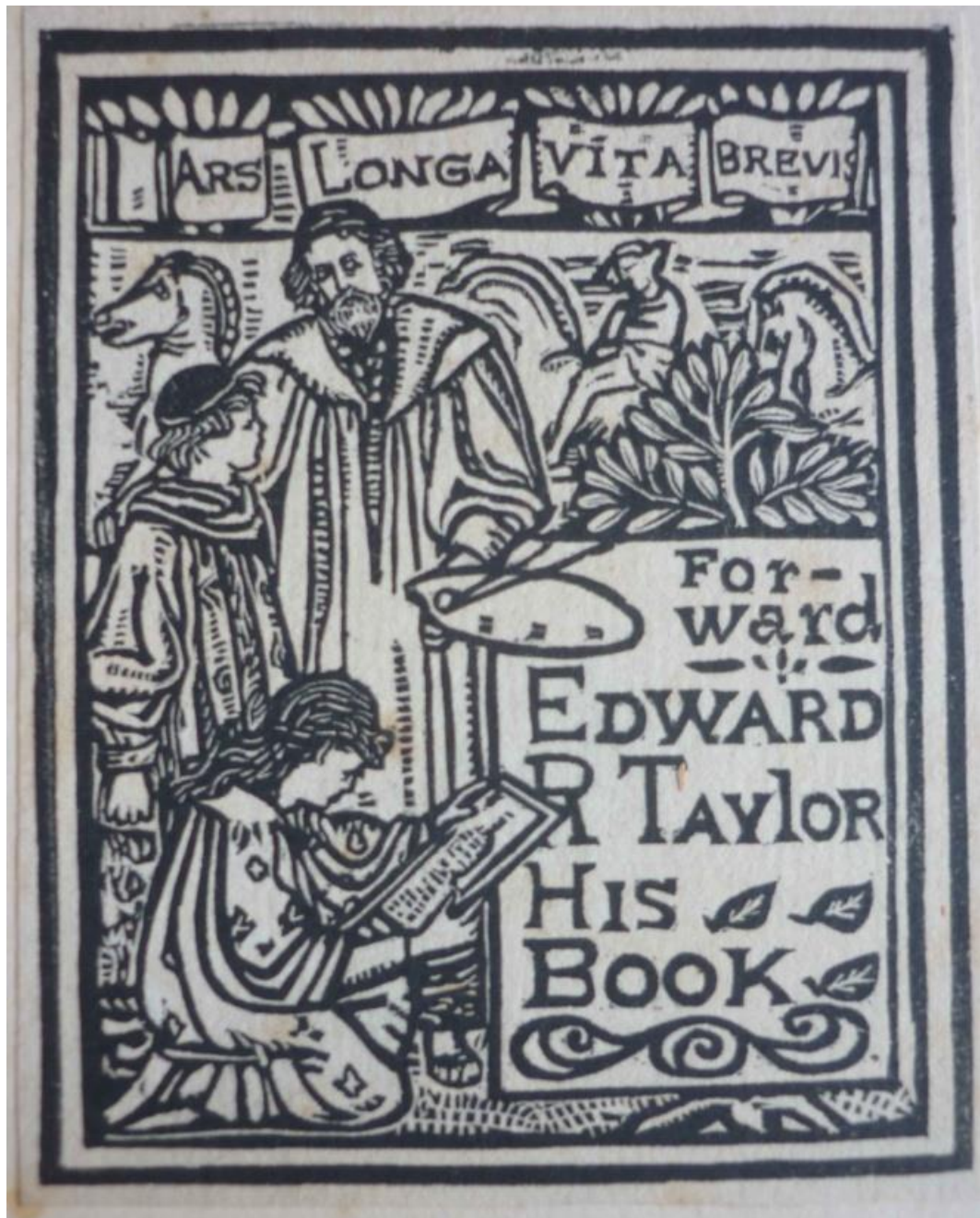


Figure 1.25 – Celia Levetus, *Edward R. Taylor bookplate*, Sara Levetus album, c. 1893-1898, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

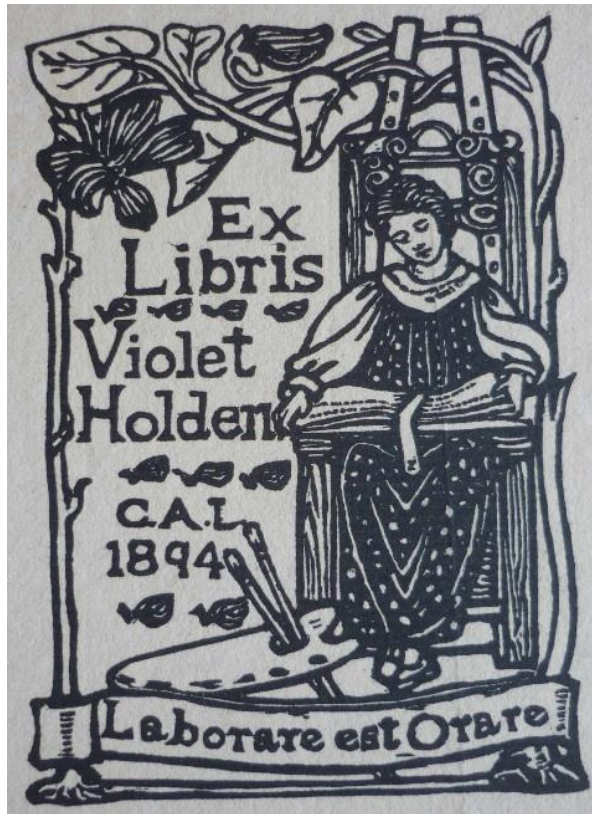


Figure 1.26 – Celia Levetus, *Violet Holden bookplate*, Sara Levetus album, 1894, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.27 – Gertrude Bradley, *Group Scene*, 1890s, pen and ink drawing, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.28 – Celia Levetus, *Ex Libris Charles Holme*, Sara Levetus album, 1895, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.29 – Celia Levetus, illustration to Edward L. Levetus's 'Vengeance', in *Windsor Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly for Men and Women* (September 1899), p. 469



Figure 1.30 – William Smedley-Aston, *Georgie Gaskin*, c. 1900-1913, black and white photograph, in Annette Carruthers and Mary Greensted (eds), *Simplicity or Splendour: Arts and Crafts Living: Objects from the Cheltenham Collections* (London: Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museums in association with Lund Humphries, 1999), p. 43



Figure 1.31 – Celia Levetus, *William Holman Hunt Bookplate*, Sara Levetus album, 1899, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.32 – Celia Levetus, *Joe Burroughs Bookplate*, Sara Levetus album, c. 1895-1898, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.33 – Celia Levetus, *Verse Fancies* by Edward L. Levetus (London: Chapman & Hall, 1898), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.34 – Celia Levetus, *Illustrations for Ignacz Kunos' Turkish Fairy Tales and Folk Tales*, 1896, pen and ink drawings, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.35 – Celia Levetus, *Songs of Innocence* (London: Wells Gardner & Co., 1899), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

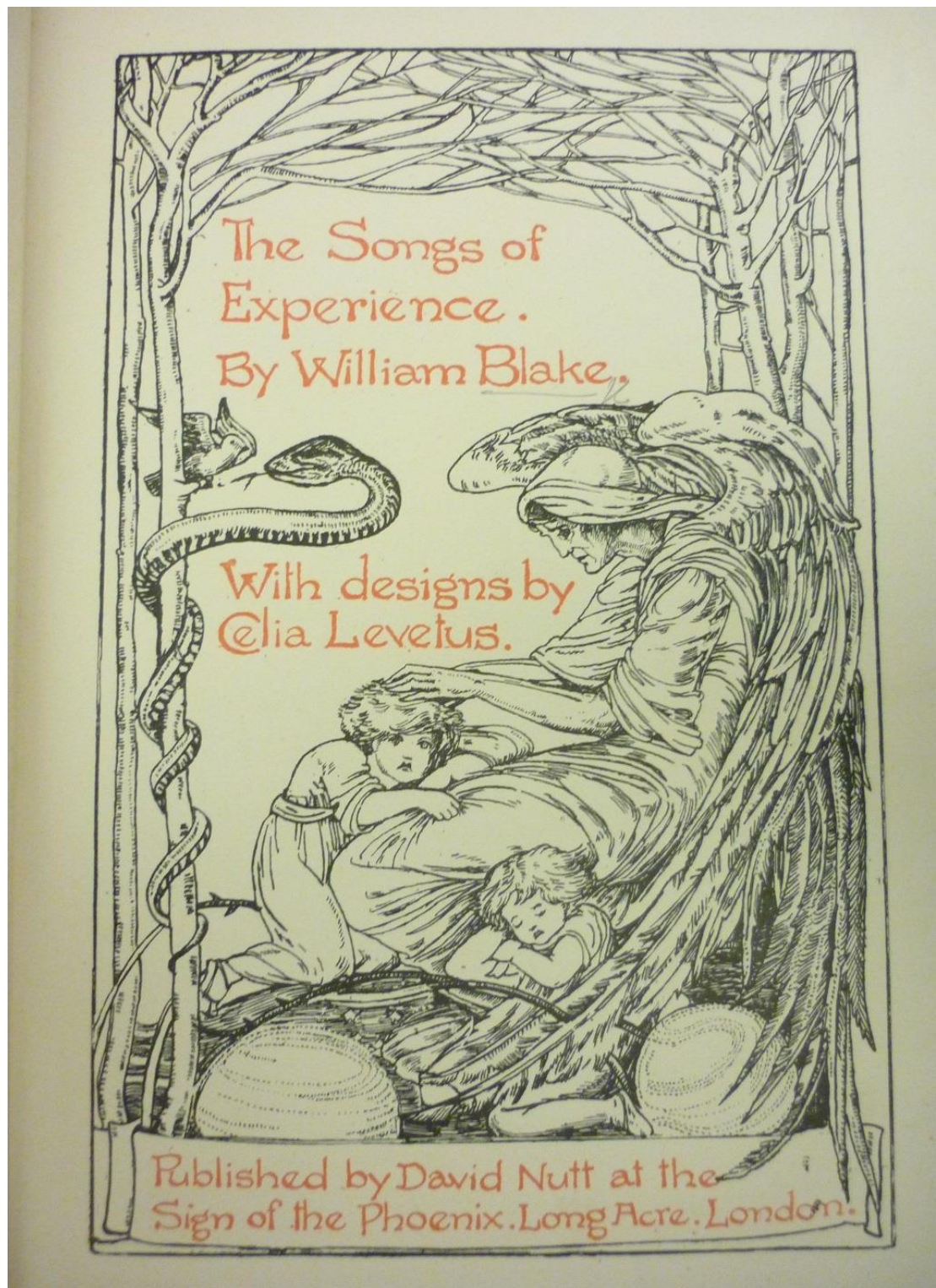


Figure 1.36 – Celia Levetus, *Songs of Experience*, (London: David Nutt, 1902), title-page, black and white book-illustration with red lettering, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

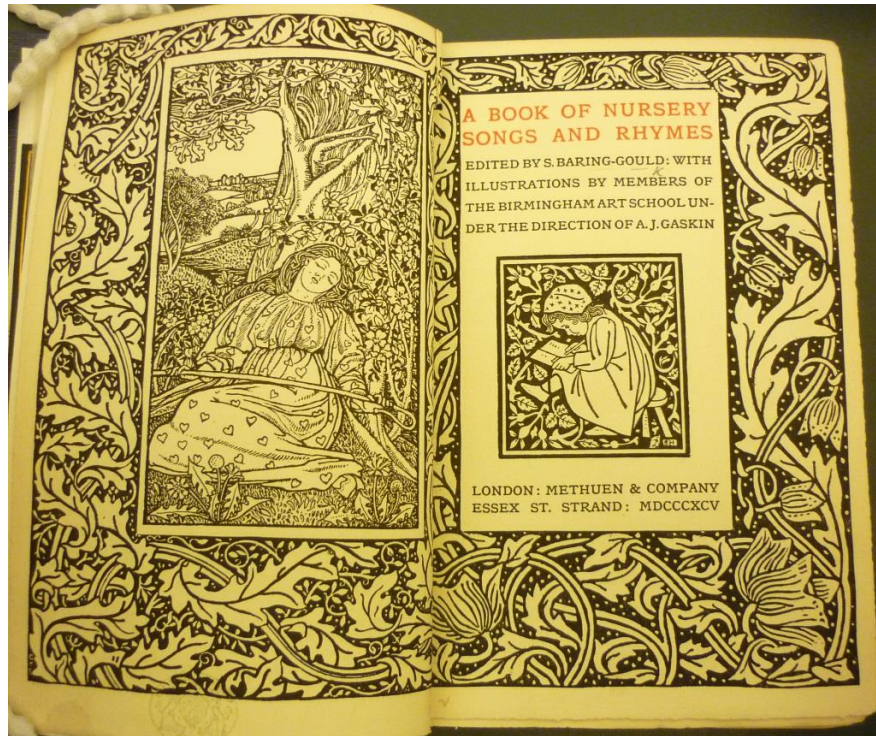


Figure 1.37 – Georgie Gaskin, *Decorative Border*, Mary Newlll, *Left page illustration*, and Sidney Heath, *Right page illustration*, in Sabine Baring-Gould (ed.), *A Book of Nursery Songs and Rhymes* (London: Methuen & Co., 1895), black and white book-illustration with red lettering, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.38 – Celia Levetus, 'Earth's Answer', in *Songs of Experience* by William Blake (London: David Nutt, 1902), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



I LOVE to rise in a summer morn,
 When the birds sing on every tree ;
 The distant huntsman winds his horn,
 And the skylark sings with me :
 O what sweet company !

But to go to school in a summer morn,—
 O it drives all joy away !
 Under a cruel eye outworn,
 The little ones spend the day
 In sighing and dismay.

Ah then at times I drooping sit,
 And spend many an anxious hour ;
 Nor in my book can I take delight,
 Nor sit in learning's bower,
 Worn through with the dreary shower.

Figure 1.39 – Celia Levetus, 'The Schoolboy', in *Songs of Experience* by William Blake (London: David Nutt, 1902), black and white book-illustration, BL (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.40 – Celia Levetus, Asher I. Myers bookplate, Sara Levetus album, c. 1895-1898, black and white wood-engraving, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

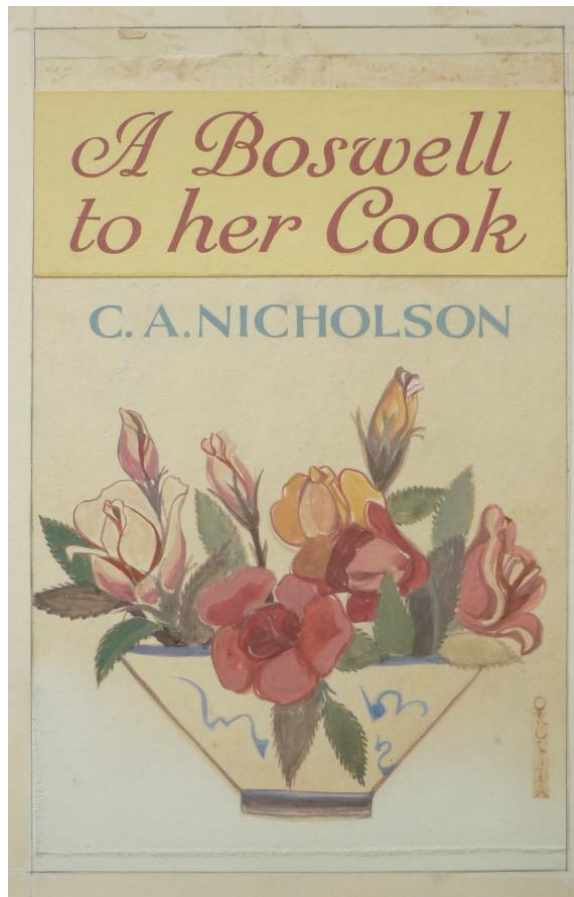


Figure 1.41 – Orovida Pissarro, Original Drawing for Bookcover for *A Boswell to her Cook*, c.1931, pencil and watercolour, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 1.42 – Celia Levetus, *Portrait of Orovida Pissarro*, c. 1921, pencil drawing, private collection of Celia Till (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 2.1 – Kate and Myra Bunce, *Reredos*, 1902-1904, egg tempera on panel with embossed silver frame, paintings side panels: 38 x 67 cm, centre panel: 61 x 69 cm, reredos including frame measured at middle peak: 189 x 92 cm, St Mary's, Longworth, Oxfordshire (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 2.2 – Kate Bunce and Myra Bunce, *Reredos*, 1913-1919, egg tempera on panel with embossed copper frame, paintings side panels: 30 x 69 cm, centre panel: 59 x 69 cm, reredos including frame: 280 x 92 cm, St Alban's, Bordesley, Birmingham (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

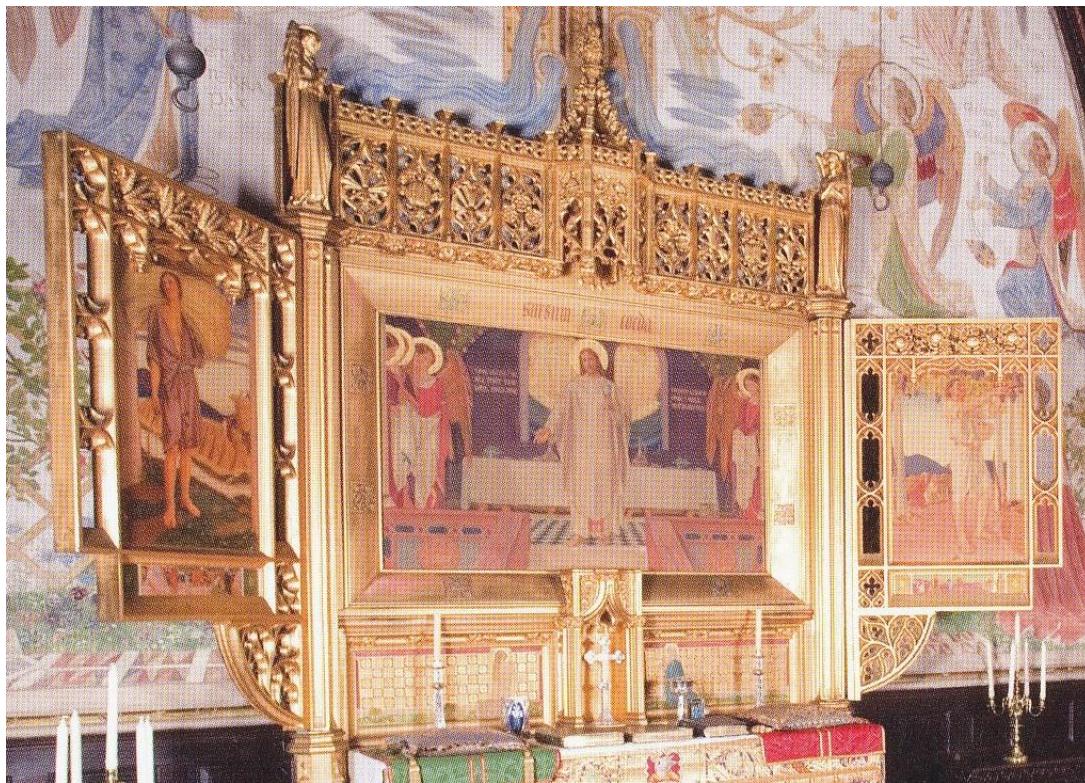


Figure 2.3 – Charles M. Gere (paintings) and W. H. Bidlake (reredos), *Triptych*, 1902-4, egg tempera on panel, Madresfield Court Chapel, Malvern, dimensions unknown, in *Madresfield Court, Worcestershire* (Malvern: Elmley Foundation, s.d.), n.p.



Figure 2.4 – *Photograph of the Life Class at the BMSA, c. 1887-1888*, in *Arthur & Georgie Gaskin* (exhibition catalogue, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 11 February – 21 March and Fine Art Society, London, 29 March – 30 April 1982), ed. George Breeze (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1981), p. 16



Figure 2.5 – Kate Bunce, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1884, oil on canvas, private collection, 61 x 51 cm (Biddle & Webb, Lot 1066, http://www.at-auction.co.uk/sourceimages_3/10669.jpg)



Figure 2.6 – Myra Bunce, *Ex Libris*, c. 1890-1900, black and white wood-engraving, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham collections (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 2.7 – Kate Bunce, *The Keepsake*, 1898-1901, egg tempera on canvas, BMT, 81.3 x 49.5 cm (BMT, <http://www.bmagic.org.uk/objects/1928P156/images/137577>)



Figure 2.8 – Kate Bunce, *Triptych*, 1926, egg tempera on panel, St Germain's, Edgbaston, Birmingham, main paintings side panel: 45.5 x 189.5 cm, centre panel: 117 x 189.5 cm, triptych including predella and frame: 255 x 239 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

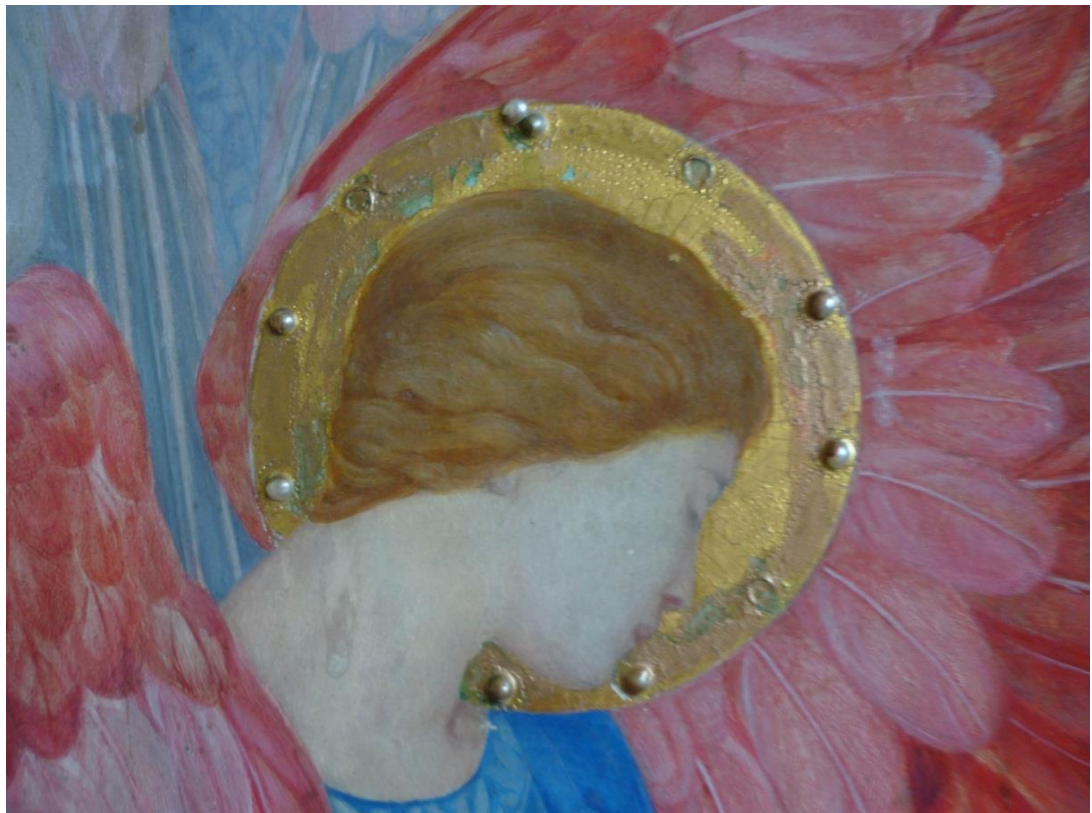


Figure 2.9 – Detail Fig. 2.1



Figure 2.10 – *Detail Fig. 2.8*



Figure 2.11 – *Detail Fig. 2.1*



Figure 2.12 – *Detail Fig. 2.1*

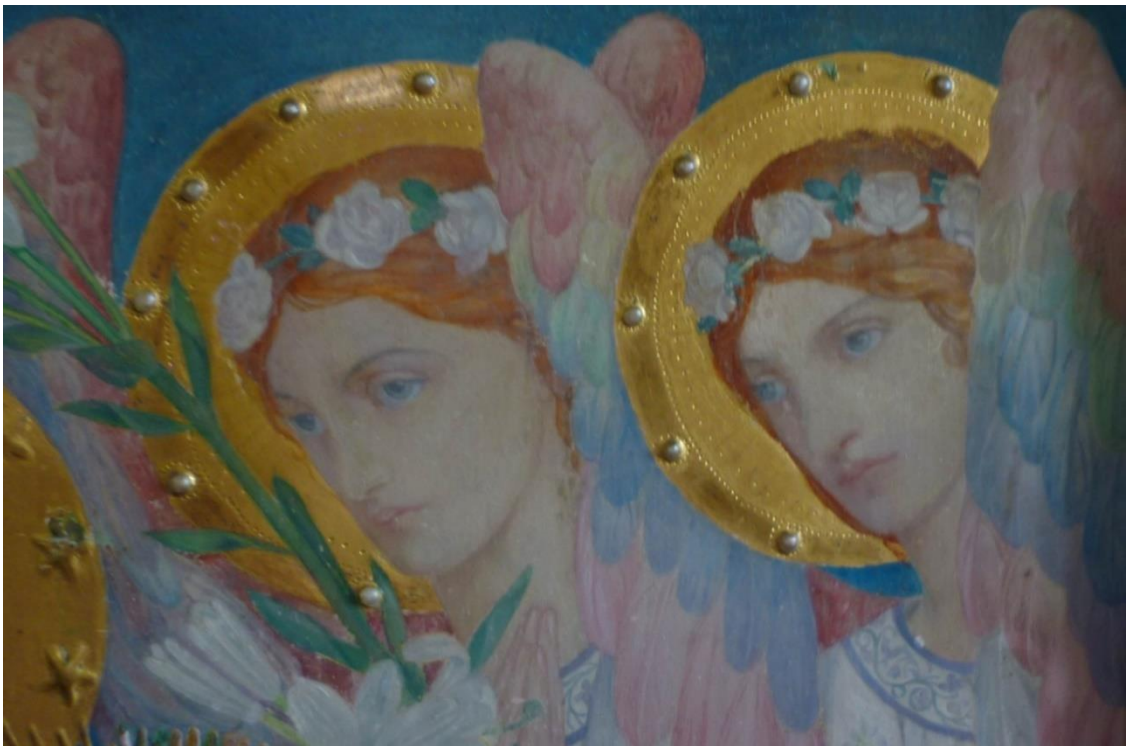


Figure 2.13 – *Detail Fig. 2.1*



Figure 2.14 – Detail of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Proserpine*, 1882, oil on canvas, BMT, 19.5 x 57.8 cm (BMT, <http://www.bmagic.org.uk/objects/1927P7/images/144650>)

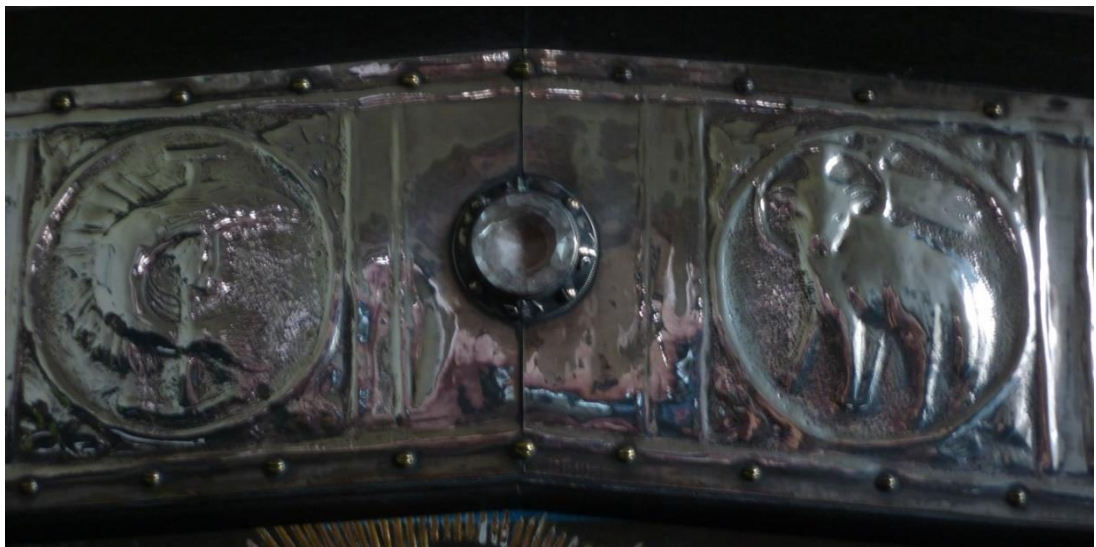


Figure 2.15 – Detail Fig. 2.1



Figure 2.16 – *Detail Fig. 2.1*



Figure 2.17 – *Detail Fig. 2.2*



Figure 2.18 – *Detail Fig. 2.2*



Figure 2.19 – *Detail Fig. 2.2*



Figure 2.20 – *Detail Fig. 2.2*



Figure 2.21 – *Detail Fig. 2.2*



Figure 2.22 – Kate Bunce, *Woman Sitting by the Edgbaston Pool*, c. 1885-1910, watercolour on paper, private collection of Ian Donovan (Photograph: Ian Donovan)



Figure 2.23 – Kate Bunce, 'Fairbrass and the Hedgehog', in *Fairbrass: A Child's Story* by T. Edgar Pemberton (Birmingham: Cornish Bros, 1895), black and white book-illustration, 13.6 x 9.8 cm, Cadbury Research Library (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 2.24 – Detail Fig. 2.2



Figure 2.25 – Kate Bunce, ‘Fairbrass and his Grandfather’, in *Fairbrass: A Child’s Story* by T. Edgar Pemberton (Birmingham: Cornish Bros, 1895), black and white book-illustration, 12.8 x 9.8 cm, Cadbury Research Library (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

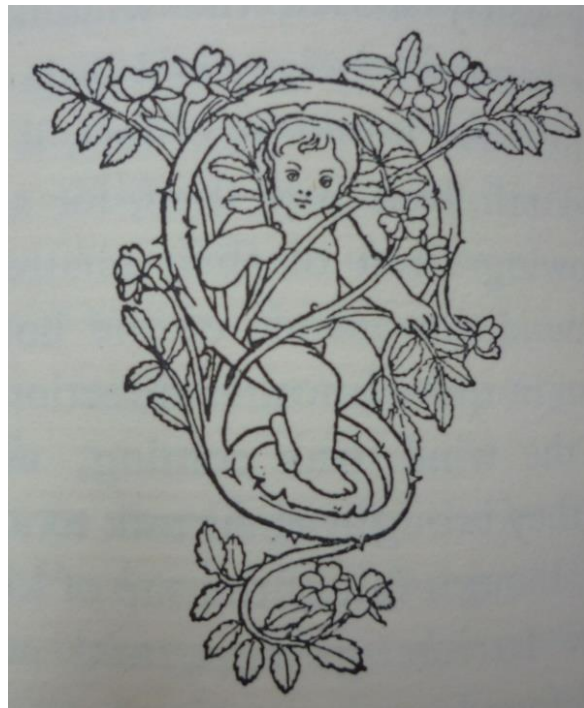


Figure 2.26 – Kate Bunce, *Tailpiece*, in *Fairbrass: A Child’s Story* by T. Edgar Pemberton (Birmingham: Cornish Bros, 1895), black and white book-illustration, 12.8 x 9.8 cm, Cadbury Research Library (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 2.27 – Unknown photographer, *Bunces Reredos, St Alban's, Bordesley*, c.1920-1921, in Birmingham, Library of Birmingham, DRO93/143/5, Newscuttings album, f16r (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 2.28 – Unknown photographer, *Bunces Reredos, St Alban's, Bordesley*, c.1920-1921, in Birmingham, Library of Birmingham, DRO93/143/5, Newscuttings album, f16v (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 2.29 – Edmund H. New, *View of St Alban's*, c. 1900-1910, black and white wood-engraving, Library of Birmingham, DRO93/143/2, Newscuttings album, f17r (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 2.30 – Mary Lowndes, *Design for Stained Glass Window for St Saviour's, Saltley*, 1908, pencil and watercolour on tracing paper, Library of Birmingham, BDR/C6/1/75 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

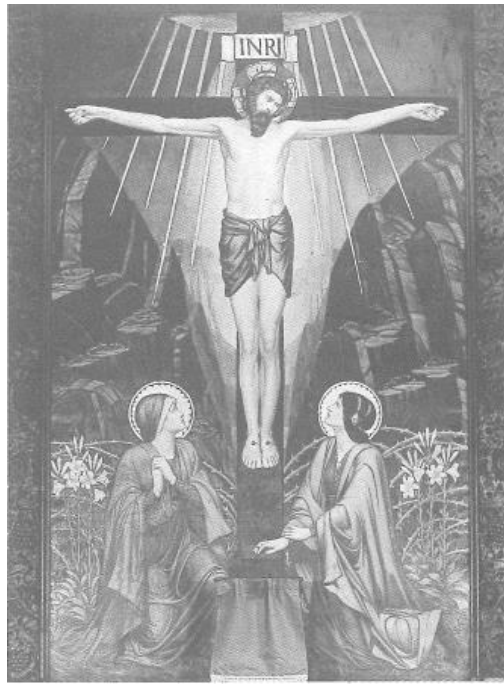


Figure 2.31 – Sidney Meteyard, *Reredos*, St Oswald's, Bordesley, 1916, tempera on wood, in Alan Crawford (ed.), *By Hammer and Hand: the Arts and Crafts Movement in Birmingham* (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, c1984), p. 79

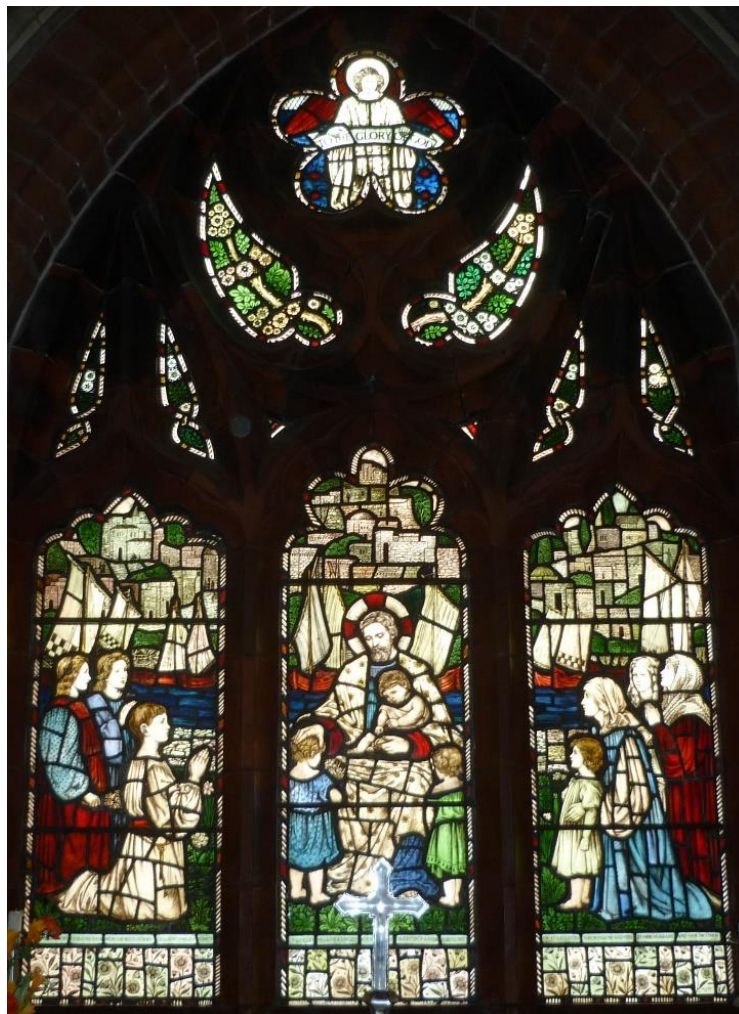


Figure 2.32 – Mary Newill, *Memorial Window*, 1906, stained glass, SS Mary and Ambrose, Edgbaston, side windows: approx.. 122 x 45.5 cm, central window: 130 x 45.5 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

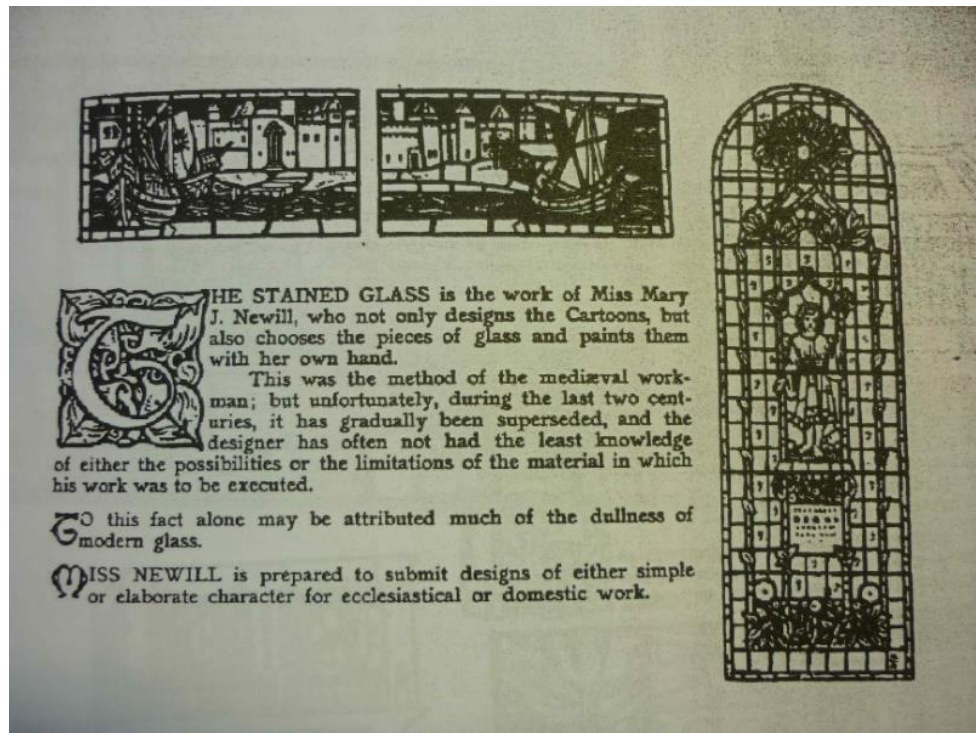


Figure 3.1 – ‘Stained Glass’, in The Bromsgrove Guild of Art, *Catalogue for the Exposition Universelle in Paris, 1900* (Printed at the Press of the Bromsgrove Guild, 1900), Worcestershire County Museums, Hartlebury Castle (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.2 – Florence Camm, ‘Boys attending Praemonstratensian Abbey for Instruction, XIIIth century’ part of *The History of Education in Halesowen series*, 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: © Alan Williams)



Figure 3.3 – Florence Camm, ‘Primitive education in the crafts at home, XVth century’ part of *The History of Education in Halesowen series*, 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: © Alan Williams)



Figure 3.4 – Florence Camm, ‘William White has the first Free School built, XVIth century’ part of *The History of Education in Halesowen series*, 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: © Alan Williams)



Figure 3.5 – Florence Camm, ‘Shenstone arriving at School, XVIIIth century’ part of *The History of Education in Halesowen series*, 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: © Alan Williams)



Figure 3.6 – Florence Camm, ‘The Building of the Church, XIth to XVth century’ part of *The History of Education in Halesowen series*, 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, 125 x 63.5 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.7 – Florence Camm, ‘Two Scholars Holding the School Arms’ part of *The History of Education in Halesowen series*, 1928-31, stained glass, Earls High School Halesowen, in John Billingham, *The Earls High School 1652-2000* (s.l.: s.n., 2000), bookcover



Figure 3.8 – Margaret A. Rope, *St Elizabeth, St Mary and St John the Baptist*, c.1918, stained glass, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead, side lancets: approx.. 172 x 48 cm, central lancet: 174 x 53 cm (Photograph: Rafferty Fazakerly, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fazakerly/5296047799/in/photostream/>)

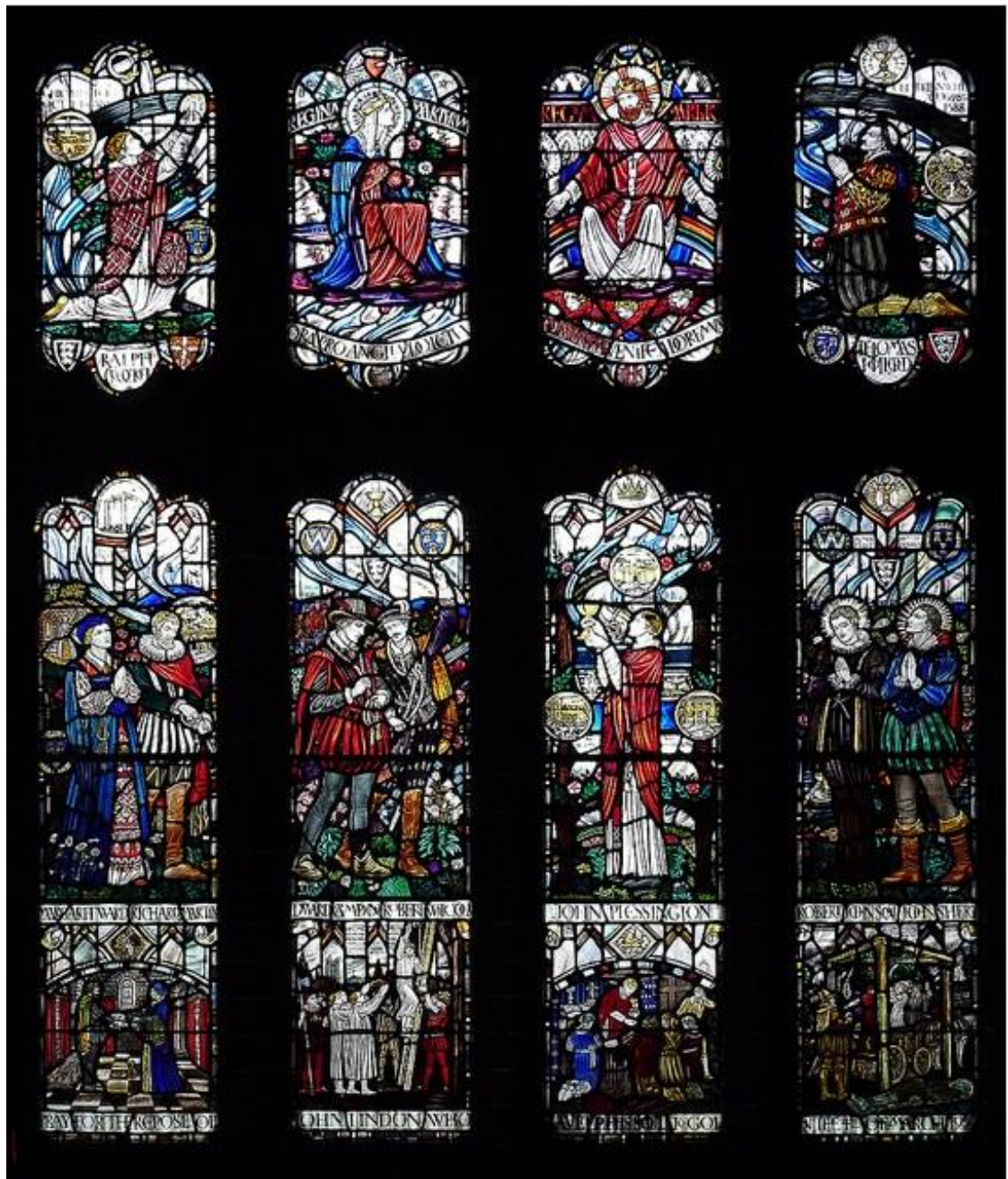


Figure 3.9 – Margaret A. Rope, *Martyrs of the Shrewsbury Diocese, John Lindon memorial window*, c. 1928, stained glass, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead, approx. 150 x 180 cm (Photograph: Rafferty Fazakerly, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fazakerly/5296047799/in/photostream/>)



Figure 3.43 – Margaret A. Rope, *St Thérèse of Lisieux*, 1930, stained glass, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead (Rafferty Fazakerly, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fazakerly/5321969222/in/photostream/>)



Figure 3.11 – Margaret A. Rope, *St Winefride*, 1931, stained glass, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead (Photograph: Rafferty Fazakerly, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fazakerly/5321969222/in/photostream/>)

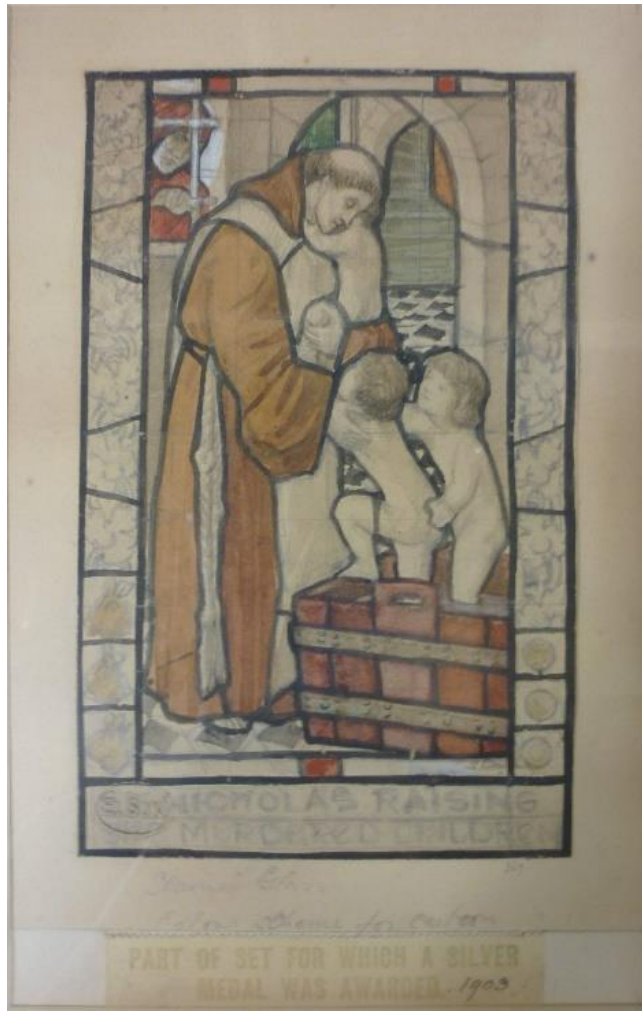


Figure 3.12 – Florence Camm, *St Nicholas*, 1903, drawing in pencil with watercolour, BMT, with frame: 41 x 30.7 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

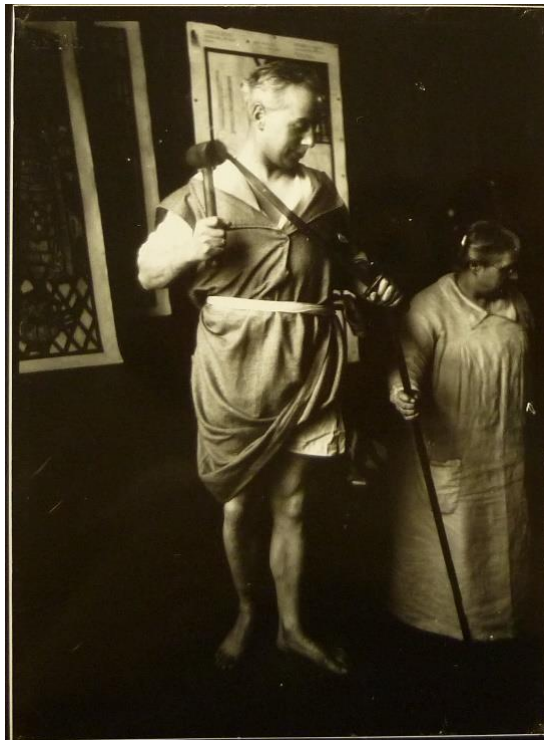


Figure 3.13 –Walter Camm posing as ‘Diligence’ with Florence Camm at his side, for two-light window by Florence Camm, *Courage and Diligence*, 1928, Hampton Lovett, Worcestershire, print from black and white glass negative, SA (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.14 - Florence Camm, *Detail of Courage and Diligence window*, 1928, Hampton Lovett, Worcestershire, SA (Photograph: digital photograph of digital scan of black and white glass negative © Sandwell archives)



Figure 3.15 – Robert Newbery, *Hannah with the Infant Samuel*, 1911, south aisle, Church of St Elvan, Aberdare, in Martin Crampin, *Stained Glass from Welsh Churches* (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 2014), p. 159

THOMAS WILLIAM CAMM

Artist and Craftsman

Artists: FLORENCE CAMM, ROBERT CAMM, WALTER H. CAMM

The Stained Glass Craft is pursued throughout at this Studio, from simple glazing for new Churches, to the most intricate of subject compositions.

Heraldic and Historical Stained Glass for Colleges, Schools and Public Buildings.

Local Legends sympathetically embodied in windows.



When enquiring for suggestions mention approximate size and shape of windows, and any details which will enable us to suggest suitable subjects.

The cost of a window depends upon firstly the size and secondly the degree of complexity of the figure composition.

The artists of Mr. Thomas William Camm's Studio have exhibited yearly at the Royal Academy, and at the 1911 International Exhibition held at Turin, in Italy (the country of Art), secured thrice the highest award of Grand Prix, and were the only Stained Glass Artists, English or Foreign, to obtain this award.

These same artists are prepared to make any Memorial you require. They have an exceptional knowledge of the material in which they are working, having been brought up amongst Stained Glass which the firm has been making for over half a century.

Only Address:

THE STUDIO, HIGH STREET, SMETHWICK.

Near Birmingham

Telegrams: "Studio, Birmingham."

Telephone: 616 Smethwick.

R.T.O.

Figure 3.16 – Thomas William Camm, *Circular*, c. 1916, print, SA (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.17 – Walter Camm (des.), in collaboration with Florence and Robert Camm (exec.), *The Legend of St Kenelm*, 1916, stained glass, St Kenelm's Church, Halesowen (Photograph: © Alan Williams)

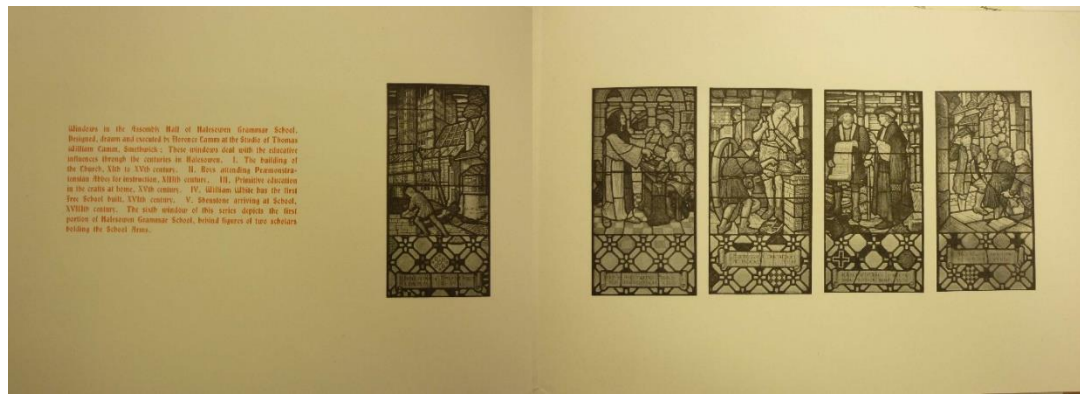


Figure 3.18 – T.W. Camm, 'The History of Education in Halesowen by Florence Camm', c. 1931, printed Christmas Card, SA, BS-C/19/17 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.19 – Walter Camm (des.), *Design for Dignity in Labour*, Grove memorial window for St John's, Halesowen, 1911, colour drawing to be executed in stained glass, BMT, including frame: 29 x 23 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.20 – Florence Camm, central panel of *St Margaret's Well* intended for Grove family home, Halesowen, c. 1925-8, stained glass, 116.8 x 80 cm, private collection (Peter Nahum, <http://www.leicestergalleries.com/19th-20th-century-paintings/d/florence-camm/21401>)

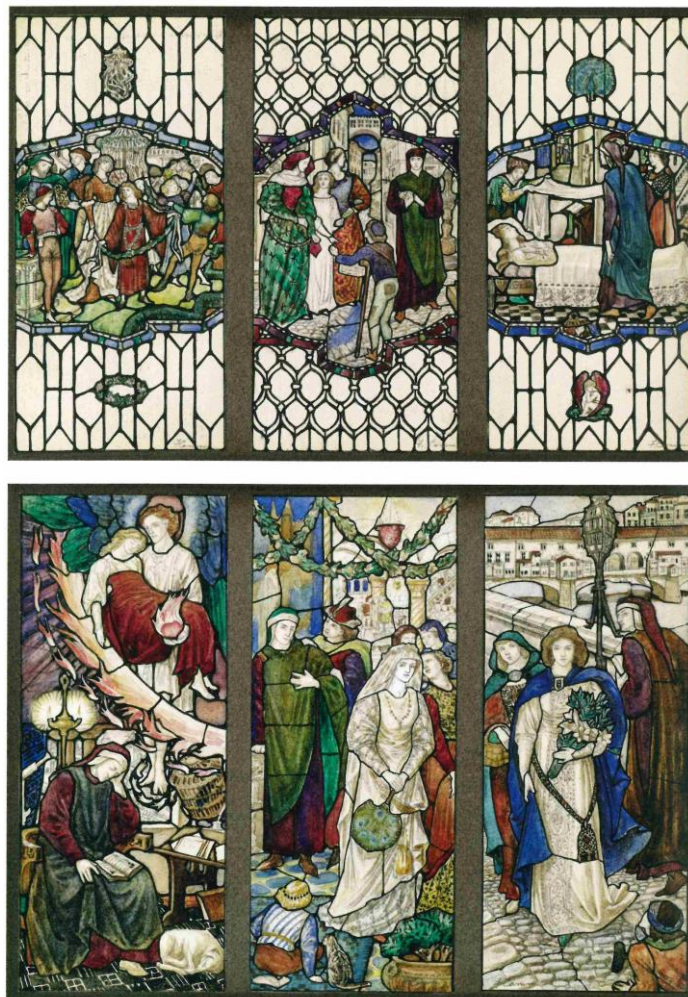


Figure 3.21 – Florence Camm, *Design for the Dante and Gabriel Window*, 1911, BMT, in Colin Cruise, *Pre-Raphaelite Drawing* (New York: Thames & Hudson, c2011), p. 202



Figure 3.22 – Florence Camm, cartoons for *Halesowen Grammar School* windows, c.1931, black and white photograph, SA, T34-334 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

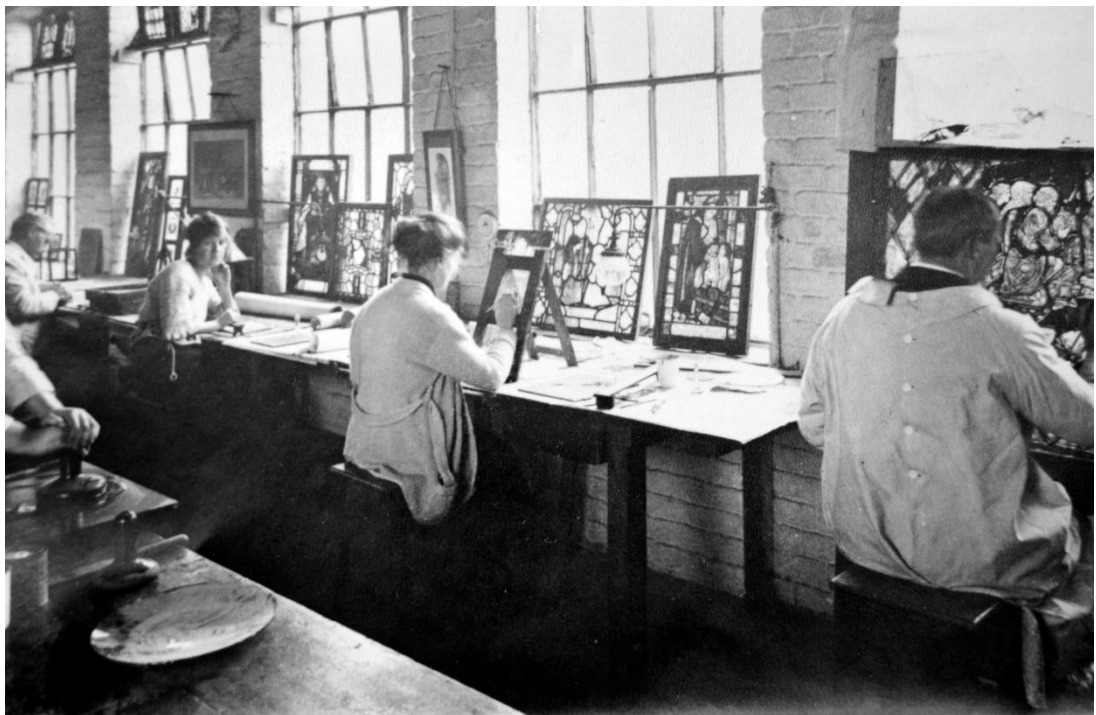


Figure 3.23 – *Employees at T.W. Camm cutting glass*, c. 1910-1930, black and white photograph, in John Burgin, 'Thomas William Camm and his Family Designers and Makers of Stained Glass at the Studio in Smethwick 1885-1963', MA Dissertation (City of Birmingham Polytechnic, 1984), Illustration XII



Figure 3.24 – *Employee at T.W. Camm selecting lead comes*, c. 1910-1930, black and white photograph, in Burgin (1984), Illustration X



Figure 3.25 – *T.W. Camm Showroom*, c. 1915, printed card, SA, BS-C/18/5 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.26 – *Lowndes & Drury employees drawing out the cutline and cutting glass pieces, c. 1910, black and white photograph, VAMA (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)*



Figure 3.27 – *Lowndes & Drury employee sticking up, c. 1910, black and white photograph, VAMA (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)*



Figure 3.30 – *View of the Assembly Hall at Earls High 4 November 2015* (Photograph: © Alan Williams)



Figure 3.31 – T.W. Camm, *Decorative glasswork for Halesowen Grammar School Assembly Hall, 1931*, view of the main entrance (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

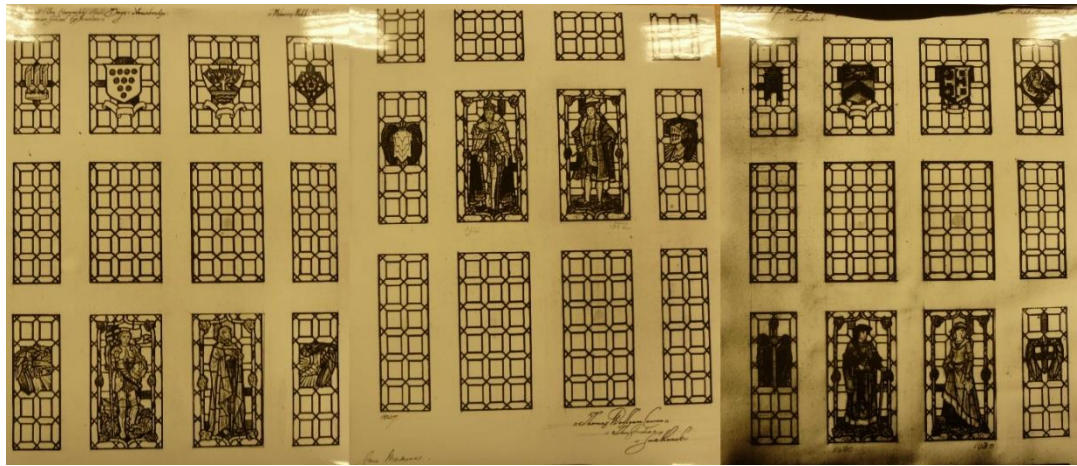


Figure 3.32 – Florence Camm, *Stourbridge Grammar School windows*, 1931, black and white photographs of assembled cartoons, SA, T34-448 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.33 – Florence Camm, *Cartoon of Edward VI for Stourbridge Grammar School windows*, 1931, colour drawing, BMT, with frame: 103.4 x 57.8 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

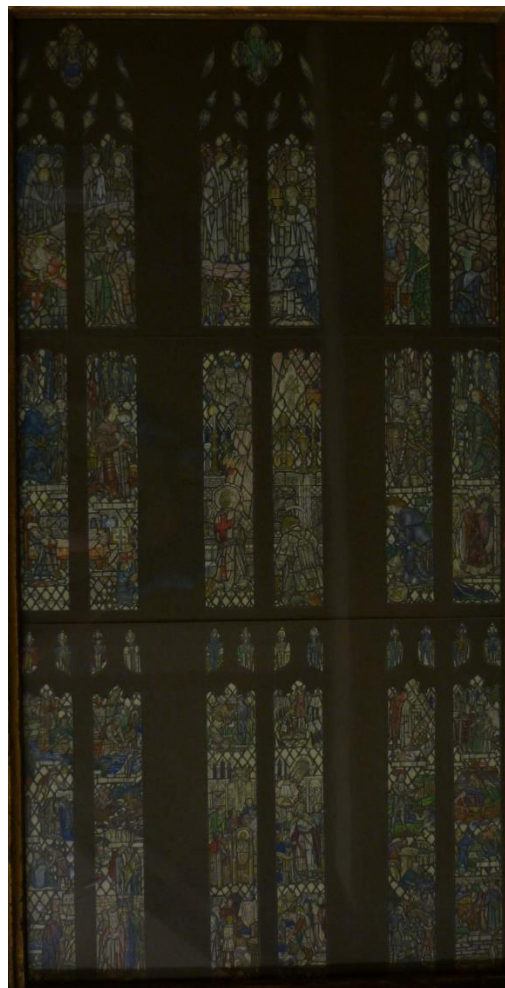
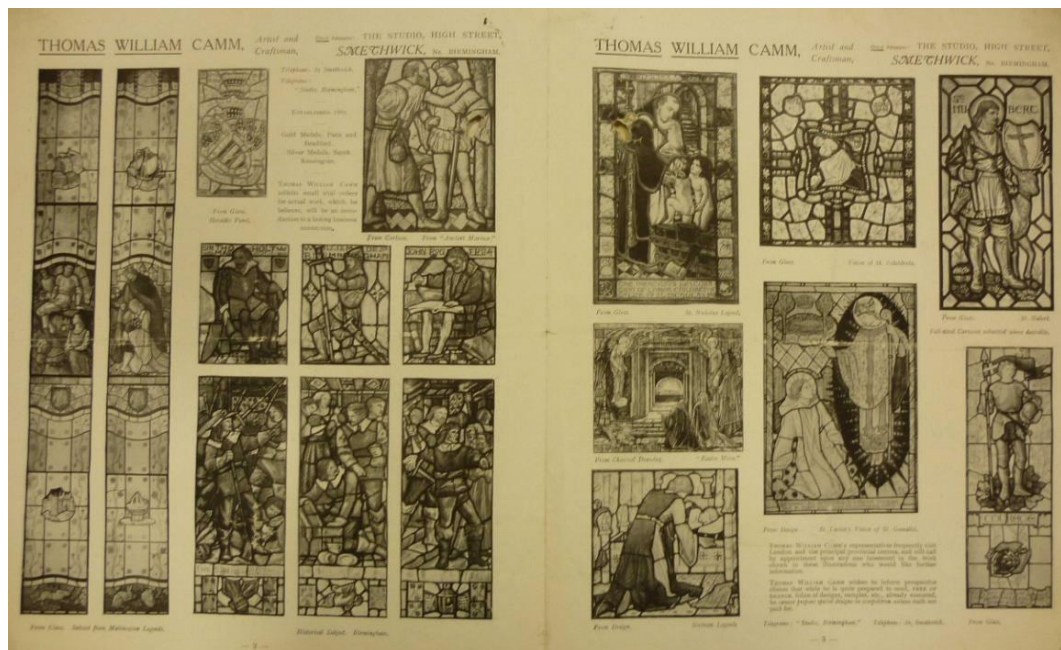




Figure 3.36 – Florence Camm, *Sir Galahad in Meditation*, 1917, stained glass, Cleveland Museum of Art, 94 x 40 cm, in H.G., ‘Two Panels of Modern English Glass’, *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 5:5 (1 May 1918), p. 59



Figure 3.37 – Margaret A. Rope, *English Martyrs Window*, 1909-10, stained glass, Shrewsbury Cathedral (Photograph: Aidan McRae Thomson, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/amthomson/7741577320/in/photostream/>)



Figure 3.38 – Ellen Mary Rope, *Detail from Relief*, 1905-6, St Mary's, Bolton-on-Swale
 (Photograph: Dave Webster,
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/davewebster14/3338008589/in/photostream/>)



Figure 3.39 – *Lowndes & Drury*, Lettice Street, c. 1906, black and white photograph, VAMA
 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.40 – *Sister Margaret of the Mother of God* (detail), c. 1928, digital photograph of a black and white photograph, Quidenham Carmel (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.41 – Margaret A. Rope, *Cartoon for Ralph Crockett panel for Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Birkenhead*, c. 1928, digital photograph of a photographic print, Shrewsbury Diocesan Archives (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

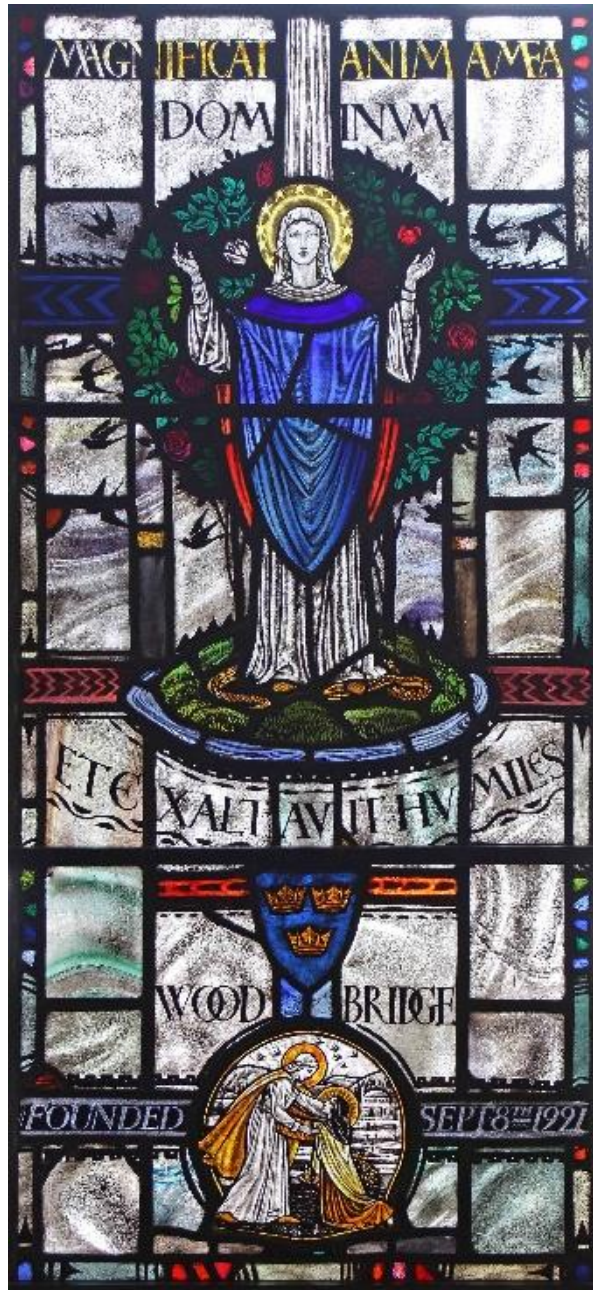


Figure 3.42 – Margaret A. Rope, *Magnificat*, c. 1925, stained glass, one of five panels originally at Woodbridge Carmel, now in enclosure at Quidenham Carmel (Photograph: © John Salmon)



Figure 3.43 – Margaret A. Rope, *Detail of Signature in East Window*, 1912-13, stained glass, St Peter's church, Blaxhall (Photograph: Simon Knott, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/norfolkodysey/2633524520/in/photostream/>)



Figure 3.44 – *Detail Fig. 3.37*



Figure 3.45 – *Detail Fig. 3.9* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.46 – Detail Fig. 3.9 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.47 – Margaret A. Rope, 'Visiting the Imprisoned' detail of window of the Corporal Works of Mercy, c. 1913, stained glass, Shrine of the Sacred Heart and the English Martyrs, Tyburn Convent, Hyde Park Place, in *A Celebration of the Martyrs in Stained Glass* (London: Tyburn Convent, s.d.), n.p.



Figure 3.48 – *Detail Fig. 3.9* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

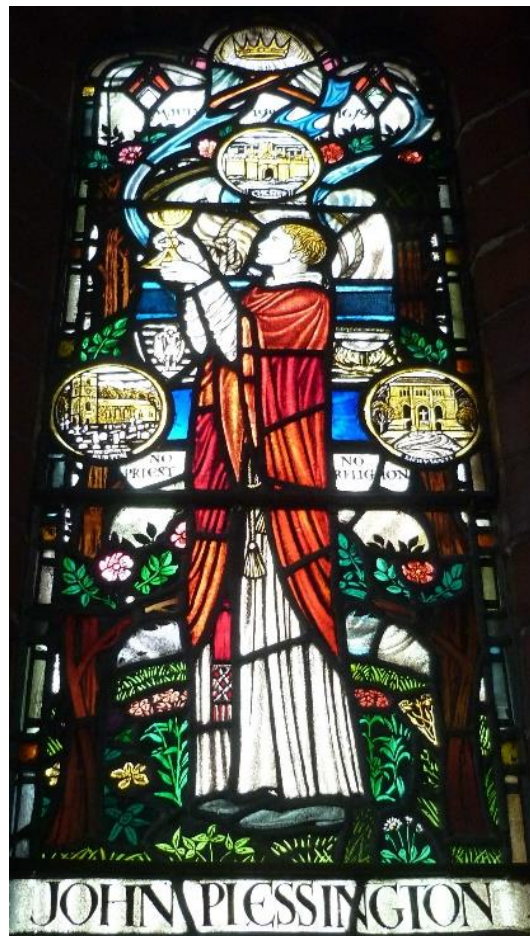


Figure 3.49 – *Detail Fig. 3.9* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.50 – Detail Fig. 3.9 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.51 – Detail Fig. 3.9 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.52 – Detail Fig. 3.9 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 3.53 – Margaret A. Rope (des.), Margaret Edith Aldrich Rope (exec.), *St Thérèse of Lisieux*, c. 1950, stained glass, Church of the CMQ (Photograph: © John Salmon)



Figure 3.54 – *Detail of Photograph of Thérèse of Lisieux taken 7th June 1897*, in Pierre Descouvemont, *Thérèse and Lisieux* (Toronto: Novalis, 1996), p. 291



Figure 3.55 – *Detail Fig. 3.8* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.1 – May Morris, Mary Newill, and others, *The Owl*, 1901-1903, coloured wools on linen ground, BMT, on permanent loan from the BIAD, 214 x 155 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.2 – Mary Newill, four curtains and two pelmets, c. 1906, embroidered wools on linen, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, each curtain: 211 x 119.5 cm (Photograph: V&A, <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O315941/set-of-curtains-mary-j-newill/>)



Figure 4.3 – BMSA, *Embroidery class*, c. 1898 (in Anthea Callen, *Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870-1914* (New York: Pantheon Books, c1979), p. 121)



Figure 4.4 – Mary Newill, *Embroidered cover for an illuminated address presented to John Thackray Bunce*, 1896, in Anonymous, ‘Studio-Talk’, *The Studio* 7:37 (April 1896), p. 178



Figure 4.5 – *Indo-Dutch embroidery*, 17th century, in Clarke, C. Stanley, ‘Indo-Dutch Embroidery of the Seventeenth Century’, *Needle and Thread* 2 (April 1914)

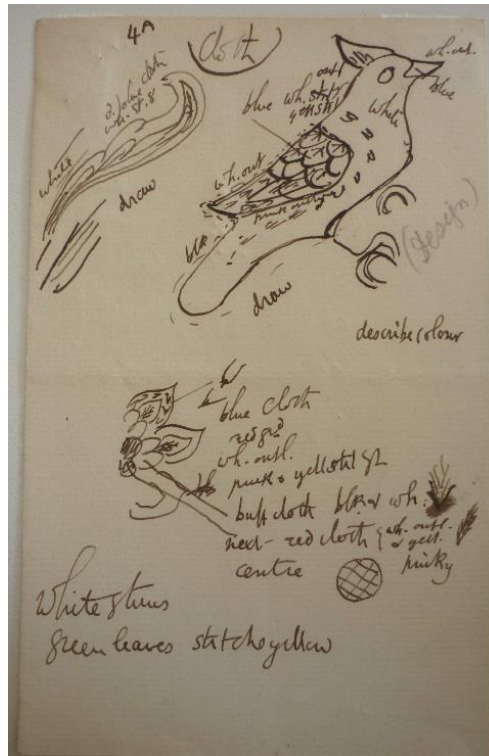


Figure 4.6 – May Morris, *Notes from Birmingham lectures*, c. 1899-1903, William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.7 – *Detail of Fig. 4.1*



Figure 4.8 – Mary Newill, *Detail of bedcover*, c. 1908, coloured wools on linen ground, BMT, 239 x 234 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.9 – Mary Newill, *Super-altar Frontal*, c.1916, embroidered wools on linen, each embroidered panel 67 x 27 cm, Uppingham School Chapel, full altar cloth: 189.7 x 121.8 cm (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.10 – Grace Christie, *Embroidery with Owl*, c. 1914, linen embroidered with coloured silks, V&A, London, 52.5 x 172 cm (Photograph: V&A, <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O17414/panel-christie-archibald-mrs/>)

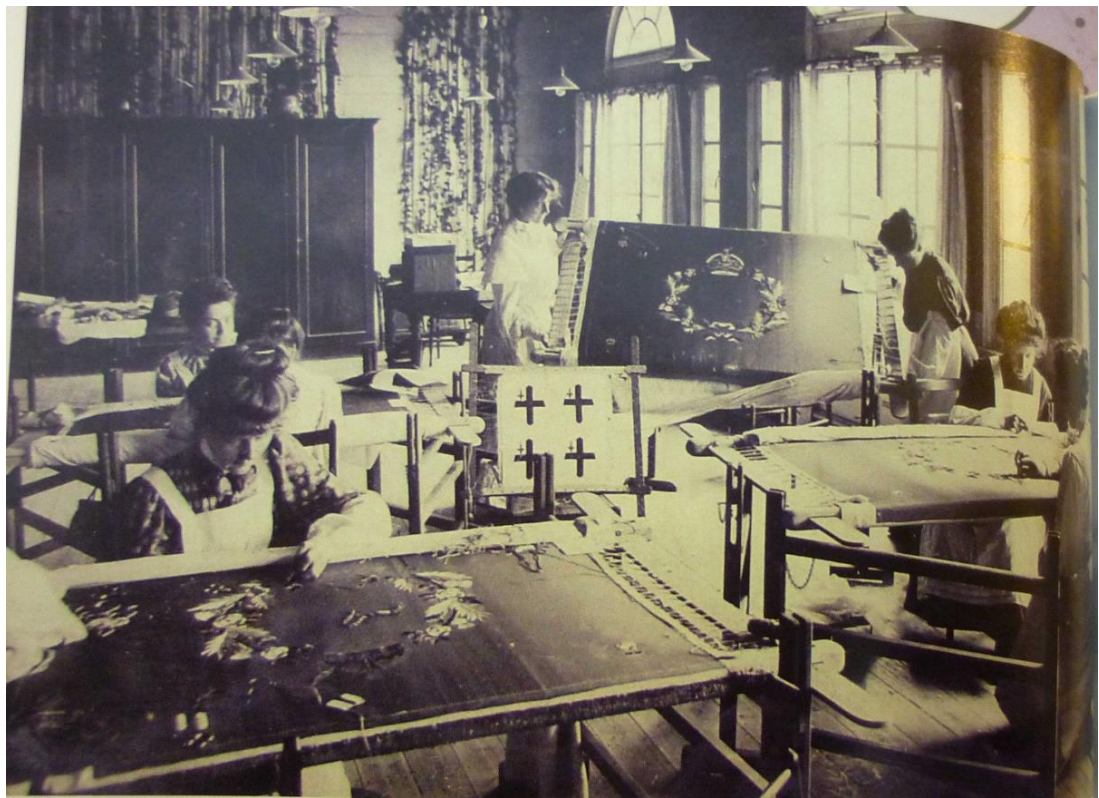


Figure 4.11 – Royal School of Art Needlework workroom, Exhibition Road, c. 1903, in Lynn Hulse, 'Introductory Essay' to *Royal School of Needlework Handbook of Embroidery* (1880) by Letitia Higgin ed. by Lady Marian Alford (Hampton Court Palace: Royal School of Art Needlework, 2010), p. 88



Figure 4.12 – May Morris, Mary Newill, and others, *Bed-hangings*, 1916, embroidered wool on linen, Cranbrook Art Museum, each panel: 195 x 68.6 cm (Photograph: Shoshana Resnikoff, ‘Cranbrook Sightings: Inside the Vault’, <http://www.cranbrookart.edu/museum/wordpress/2014/03/happy-birthday-may-morris/>)



Figure 4.13 – Mary Newill (des.), assisted by Violet and Edith Holden (exec.), Gareth and Lynet, 1893, embroidered wool and silk on fabric under glass, Victoria and Albert Museum, 57 x 206 cm, in Anonymous, ‘The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery: Third Notice’, *The Studio* 28:121 (April 1903), p. 181



Figure 4.14 – May Morris, Miss Yeats, Miss Wright and Miss Deacon, *Kelmscott Manor Bed-hangings*, 1891-2, Society of Antiquaries of London (Photograph: RobertTJW, ‘Pre-Raphaelite Reflections’, <https://dantisamor.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/picture-49.png>)



Figure 4.15 – May Morris (des.), Theodosia Middelmore (co-ex.), *Bed-hangings*, c.1900, hand-spun and hand-woven linen embroidered with natural dyed crewel wool, National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh, each panel: 191.5 x 146 cm (Photograph: National Museum Scotland, ‘May Morris Embroideries Fact File’, <http://www.nms.ac.uk/explore/collections-stories/art-and-design/may-morris-embroideries/>)



Figure 4.16 – Mary Newill, *Embroidered Landscape*, c. 1924, current location unknown, in E. Ruth Rayner, ‘The Embroiderers’ Guild Exhibition’, *The Studio* 87:370 (January 1924), p. 21

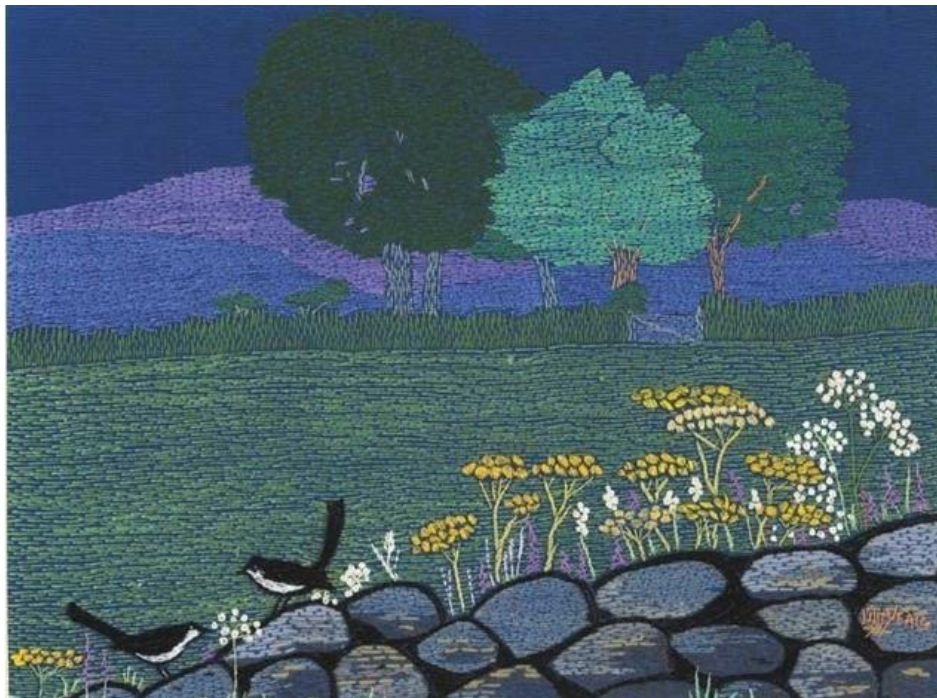


Figure 4.17 – Lily Yeats, *Two Magpies on a Stone Wall*, c. 1910, silk embroidery on blue paplin ground, 25 x 35 cm (Photograph: Art Net, ‘Two Magpies’, http://www.artnet.de/k%C3%BCnstler/lily-yeats/two-magpies-on-a-stone-wall-PdLwCj3rmseRQUfh2C_JpA2)



Figure 4.18 – Mary Newill, *Una and the Red Knight and the Wandering Wood*, c. 1898 in Top o' the Hill, Edmund Butler's house in Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, in the *Modern British Domestic Architecture* (1901), p. 801

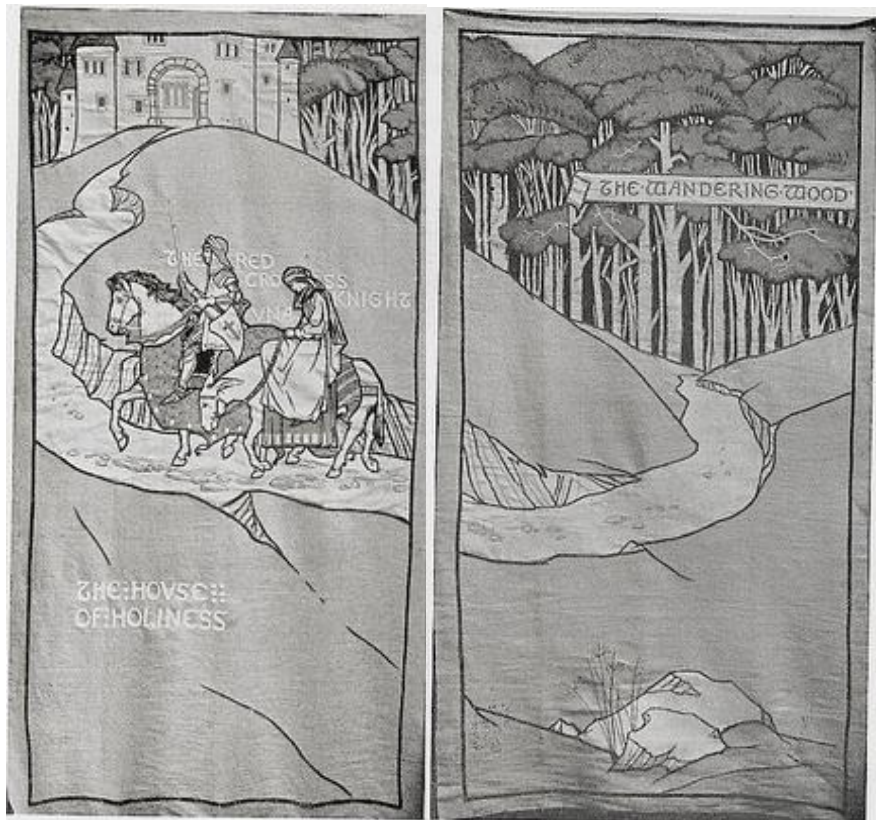


Figure 4.19 – Mary Newill, *Una and the Red Cross Knight and the Wandering Wood*, c.1898, as shown in the Paris Exhibition of 1900, in Aymer Vallance, 'Arts and Crafts, British Decorative Art in 1899 and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Part III', *The Studio* 18:81 (December 1899), p.



Figure 4.20 – Mary Newill, *Una and the Red Cross Knight and the Wandering Wood*, c.1898, wool and silk embroidery on silk and linen fabric with hessian and wool appliqué, in Worcestershire County Museum, Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire, 183 x 103 cm and 186 x 102 cm, in Yvonne O'Hara, 'Mary Jane Newill: Arts and Crafts Pioneer Rediscovered', MA dissertation (University of Warwick, 2008), Figs 18-19

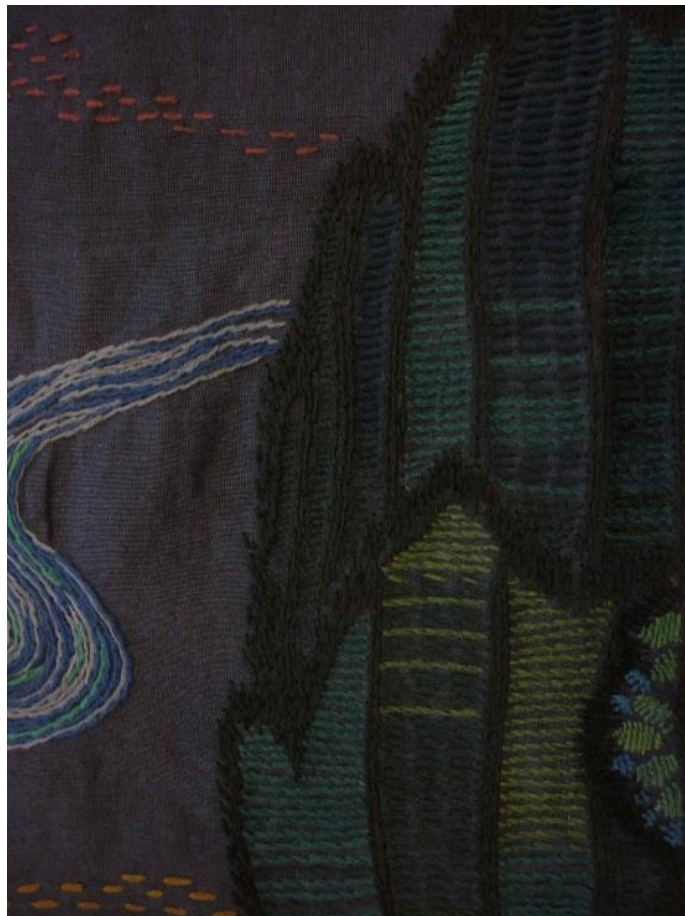


Figure 4.21 – Detail of Fig. 4.2 (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.22 – *Detail of Fig. 4.2* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.23 – *Detail of Fig. 4.2* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.24 – *Detail of Fig. 4.9* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.25 – *Detail of Fig. 4.2* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.26 – *Detail of Fig. 4.2* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.27 – *Detail of Fig. 4.13* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

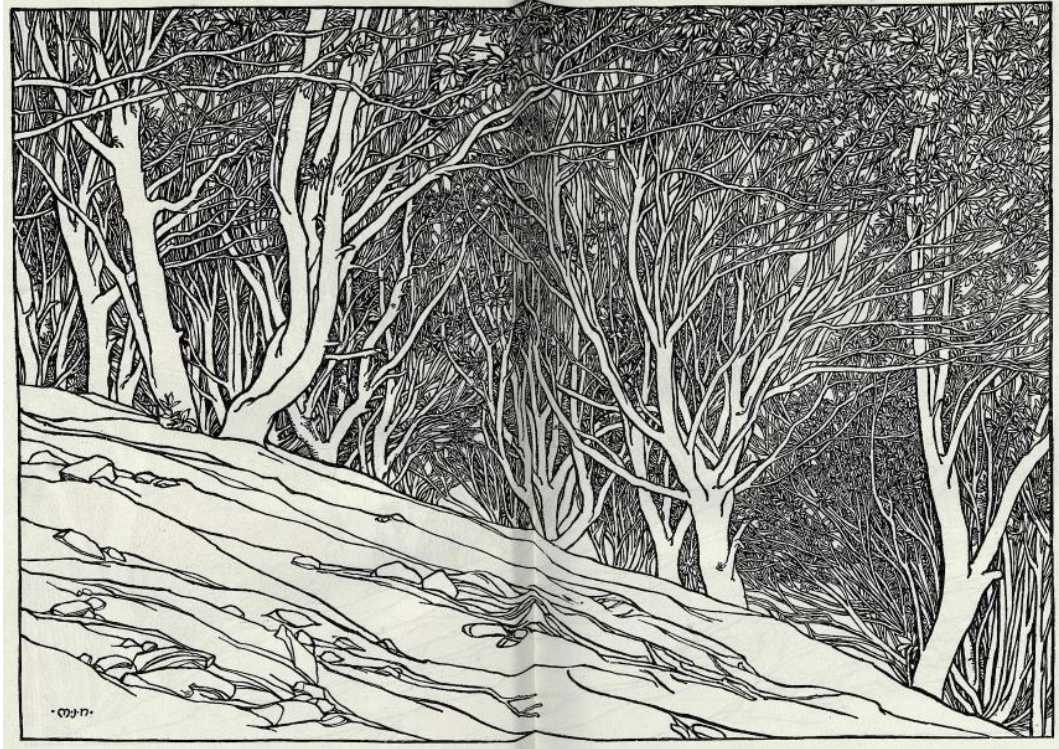


Figure 4.28 – Mary Newill, *Study of Ilex Trees*, c. 1895, in Supplement to *The Studio* (15 May 1895)



Figure 4.29 – Mary Newill, *Embroidered Bookcover*, 1896, in Anonymous, 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition, 1896, Part IV', *The Studio* 9:46 (January 1897), p. 278



Figure 4.30 – Mary Newill, *Detail of rabbits in 'Angel's memorial window to Good R.D. Newill, 1906, stained glass, St Peter's Church, Wrockwardine* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)



Figure 4.31 – *Detail of Fig. 4.2* (Photograph: Claire FitzGerald)

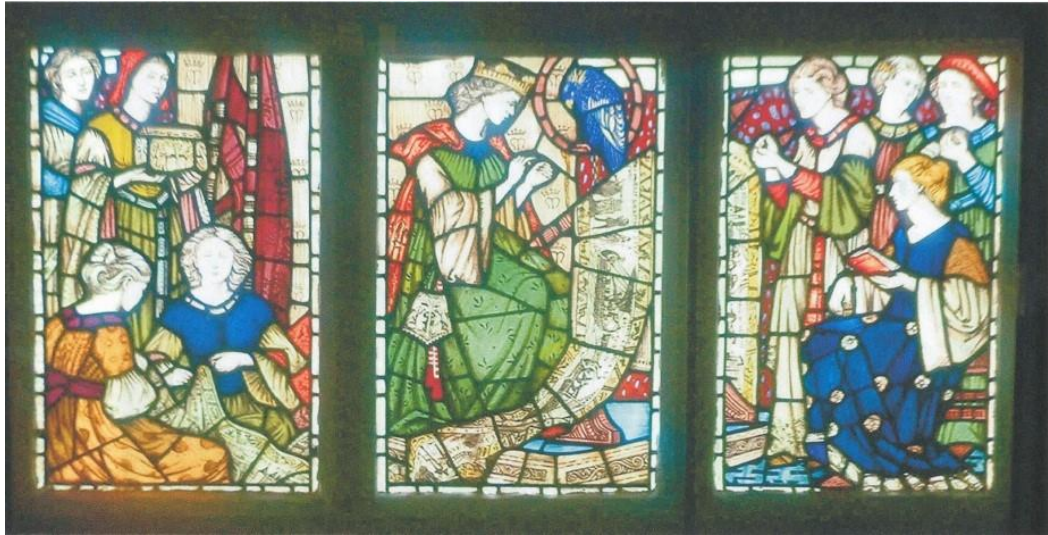


Figure 4.32 – Mary Newill, *Queen Matilda Sewing the Bayeux Tapestry*, 1898, three stained glass panels, The Anchorage, 137 Handsworth Wood Road, Birmingham, est. 70 x 40 cm, in O'Hara (2008), Fig. 48



Figure 4.33 – Sidney Meteyard, *'I am half-sick of shadows', said the Lady of Shalott*, 1913, oil on canvas, private collection, 76 x 14 cm (Photograph: Art Renewal Center, http://artrenewal.org/artwork/765/765/4702/i_am_half-sick_of_shadows,_said_the_lady_of_shalott-large.jpg)