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**THE DEVELOPMENT OF DECORATIVE ARTS IN AUSTRALIA:
MORRIS & CO. AND IMPORTED TASTE,
1862-1939**

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of The Australian National University,
June 2004

I, Lesley Anne Baker, am
entirely responsible for this thesis

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ABSTRACT

This work inquires into decorative choices in the Australian states of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, between the years of 1862 to 1939, with a view to highlighting the activities and uniqueness of Morris & Co. within the general commercial world in which the English firm operated.

Morris & Co. (1861-1940) produced items for interior decoration and stained glass windows. Its ethos and activities were firmly rooted in the principles expounded by its founder, William Morris. The essence of those principles was upheld by John Henry Dearle following Morris's death in 1896. The company's products were so distinctive that publications continue to discuss them separately from other styles promoted during its lifetime. Customers who favoured Morris & Co. could be as individual as the company itself. This particularly applied to Australian clients because not only did the firm operate within a restricted business code but also Australia presented commercial and social considerations which differed from the British situation.

Chapter 1 presents an overview to allow the reader to understand basic precepts governing Australian manufacturing and lifestyles and the workings of Morris & Co. Chapter 2 looks at particular circumstances and opinions in the mid-nineteenth century which affected Australian decorative manufacturing and Morris & Co. The

Australian firms of Ferguson & Urie, Lyon, Cottier & Co. and W.H. Rocke & Co. are introduced in this Chapter.

The purpose, assessments and outcomes of the first international exhibitions to be held in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide are considered in Chapter 3. The appearance of these exhibitions from 1879 allowed local manufacturers to present their wares to many more people than previously possible and in competition with the strong import industry. While Morris would later denigrate international exhibitions his company's first showing to the public occurred at such an event in London and the educational possibilities he supported could be served by these affairs. In Chapter 4 the various avenues of decorative arts education followed in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia are examined. Education and responsibility to the public were important issues for William Morris. He not only applied his beliefs in these areas to his own firm but also he devoted considerable time to their general dissemination. Australian manufacturers were encumbered by circumstances irrelevant to Morris & Co. Nonetheless Morris's opinions proved relevant when authorities came to tackle the problem of design education in Australia. The practices of Adelaide's Clarkson Ltd. in stained glass window manufacture are highlighted here.

Chapter 5 studies the beginnings of the stained glass window industry in Australia, its British associations, Morris & Co.'s productions, the company's first commission for Australia and a comparison of its style with Australian work. Chapter 6 focuses on Sydney's Lyon, Cottier & Co., on the nature of the company as

it converged with or diverged from the course of Morris & Co. Finally the concepts of style and fashion are pondered. In Chapter 7 fashionable decorative choices in Australia are considered. The Melbourne firm of W.H. Rocke & Co. is compared with Morris & Co. in terms of style and presentation of goods.

There was only one Australian family to decorate extensively with Morris & Co.: Adelaide's Barr Smiths. Chapter 8 investigates this family's background and initial decorative preferences, the reasons why they subsequently favoured Morris & Co. and the progression of their Morris & Co. decorations. The embroidery side of Morris & Co. is taken into account.

For stained glass windows to become a reality numerous concrete and emotional circumstances come into play. Chapter 9 discusses the practices and sentiments which affected Morris & Co.'s productions in Australian churches. Chapter 10 studies Morris & Co. items individually conveyed to Australia during the twentieth century, up until the company's effective demise in 1939, with likely reasons for introduction. Articles for interior decoration and stained glass windows are examined.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis argues that Australia after European settlement depended on its primary industries (wool, minerals, grain) and did not develop a manufacturing base until the late nineteenth century. In view of a relatively small population, overseas capital did not consider investment in Australian manufacturing would return profit margins to rival existing production and export capacities. This attitude applied particularly in the decorative arts sector. Thus the majority of manufactured goods were imported into Australia and a monopolistic warehouse system in the hands of profit-conscious middlemen prevailed. As a consequence initiatives necessary to encourage local manufacturing were often stifled unlike, for example, the situation in the United States of America where that country's fight for independence from British control saw local manufacturing burgeon. In artistic affairs Australians were confronted in many instances with expressing distinctiveness within limits determined by imported items and ideas.

By choice Australians remained basically conservative within the parameters provided by imports and generally avoided flaunting wealth by way of art and decoration. In the decorative arts national identity was limited to details rather than concepts. Australian decorative companies were most comfortable with fashionable imagery provided from overseas sources which negated Australian individuality and could carry political undertones irrelevant to this country.

The English decorative firm of Morris & Co. (1861-1940)¹ absorbed at the time of its founding its country's political connotations yet progressed to become a recognisably unique concern. It succeeded despite working within restrictive company policies of output and distribution. The relationship between Australia and William Morris often appears tenuous.² Nonetheless a consideration of Morris,

¹ The company began as Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. in 1861. In 1875 Morris assumed sole control and renamed the firm Morris & Co. After Morris's death in 1896 the firm continued as a partnership until 1905 when it became a private limited company, Morris & Co. Decorators Ltd., with a further name change in 1925 to Morris & Co. Art-Workers Ltd. For this work 'Morris & Co.' has been used definitively to encompass all these titles.

² Without a substantial manufacturing base in Australia, this country would absorb William Morris's standards for designing and business through two different avenues: indirectly by the products of importers influenced by the company's manufactures; and directly through the principles upon which Morris based the activities of his company. For some Australasian workers today this direct influence still holds true. Charles Radford Furnishings Pty Ltd in Richmond, Victoria, strives to retain a "wonder" which Morris championed in creative processes, joint owner and Director Kim Andrews even going so far as to classify herself among "the real Morrisians" (Letter of Kim Andrews to the author, 3 November 1996). Radfords have absorbed Morris's historical perspectives to fulfil his desire that modern manufacturing should, as "mediaeval man" did, place "production" and not "money" at the heart of activity (William Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1902, p.235; Kim Andrews, *William Morris and the Politics of Labour*, paper in manuscript given at the William Morris Symposium, Melbourne University, 14 September 1996). Rick Allan of Heritage Decorative Glass, Moss Vale, New South Wales, has consistently praised verbally Morris & Co.'s uniqueness and superiority in the manufacture of stained glass windows (Rick worked on the restoration of Morris & Co.'s *Dies Domini* in Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, NSW, following that city's 1989 earthquake). Rick's firm is only small and this has enabled him to run the business with "the co-operation of his fellows, who help him according to their capacities" (William Morris, *Signs of Change*, Reeves and Turner, London, 1888, p.192). In his own work Rick Allan maintains the standards of quality in materials and workmanship upon which Morris insisted. Graham Stewart of North Canterbury, New Zealand, carried out in 1998 the conservation of Morris & Co.'s West Windows in St.Barnabas' Chapel, Norfolk Island, to a strict programme which upholds Morris's tenets set down most clearly in his involvement with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. The Society's 1877 manifesto called upon a substitution of "Protection" for "Restoration" and it is thus that Graham Stewart approaches his work as a conservator, not a restorer (Chris Miele (Ed), *William Morris on Architecture*, Sheffield Academic Press, 1996, p.54; letter of Graham Stewart to the author, 19 February 1998). A recent "conservation treatment" by the National Gallery of Australia of a large sample of Morris's 1878 woven *Peacock and Dragon* textile was undertaken with the same care to original intent and reversibility of procedure (Charis Tyrrel, 'William Morris Peacock and

Morris & Co. and erstwhile Australian circumstances contributes to a fuller understanding of the English firm within its commercial milieu.

The business of Morris & Co. centred on the production of stained glass windows and items for interior decoration and provided a practical and advisory service for utilising the latter. For Morris & Co. these three areas of concern were not separate ventures but activities united and integrated by a common awareness and acceptance of Morris's design and manufacturing principles. Thus the reader will find in this thesis that, in order to highlight and preserve the supportive nature of Morris & Co. productivity, they have been treated in an associate manner for both Morris & Co. and Australian conditions.

The first four chapters inquire into the conditions which set for Australians the foundations upon which they would establish decorative perceptions. This examination is done comparatively, with an awareness of the workings of Morris & Co. The next three chapters investigate more thoroughly the activities of several Australian decorative firms, more finely defining Australian decorative directions within the general commercial world in which Morris & Co. also operated. These chapters introduce a closer study of Morris & Co. design principles and products which highlights the unusual nature of the English company.

The final three chapters look particularly at Morris & Co. products brought into Australia between 1862 and 1939 and at the individuals involved with these

Dragon', in *artonview*, No.30, Winter 2002, p.48).

importations. Despite the limits placed by Morris & Co.'s manufacturing axioms upon supply and merchandising of its products, a considerable amount of Morris & Co.'s manufactures entered Australia during the firm's lifetime.³ Those imports are legitimate components of the company's record and the history of decorative taste in this country: "legitimate" in terms of scope and significance to be worthy of consideration. Not only do they reinforce the principles upon which the company operated but they also establish some very personal contributions to taste in Australia during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The analyses in these concluding chapters present the cruxes of this thesis: that Morris & Co., despite restrictive practices, was ably successful in a highly competitive business sphere; and that the company's uniqueness, derived from the manner in which it manufactured and marketed its products, revolved around resolute codes not subject to fashion or the excesses of the profit market.

³ Christopher Menz has suggested that during the 1880s and 1890s Adelaide's Barr Smith family alone was "one of the firm's most significant international clients" (Christopher Menz, *Morris & Co.*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2002, p.137). Overall, goods acquired from Morris & Co. for Australia covered the full range of the company's manufacturing processes.

CHAPTER 1: THE IMPORT INDUSTRY AND AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATISM,
1862-1939

In Australia's first century of European occupation taste⁴ in the decorative arts was dictated by the commercial domination of primary production and lack of manufacturing power.⁵ In contrast to the United States of America which was forced by its War of Independence from Britain to encourage its own manufacturing industries, Australia was not so motivated and complacently allowed its economy to be manipulated by importers of manufactured goods. The United States also safeguarded its manufacturing industries with a hefty tariff system. At the time of the Philadelphia International Exhibition in 1876 duty was levied at 35% on furniture, between 35-50% on carpets and 40% on painted glass for windows. In comparison France's tariffs stood at 10% on furniture and coloured/enamelled glass.⁶ Morris himself was circumspect about trade with the United States. In 1882 he advised Catherine Holiday, one of the great professional embroiderers of the late nineteenth century, that Morris & Co. had never "sent any embroideries on sale

⁴ The term 'taste' has been taken to mean "manifested preferences" rather than the more refined definition of "the capacity to discern aesthetic values" (Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1984, pp.56, 474).

⁵ For New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria, the Australian states upon which this work concentrates, the staple exports were wool, tallow, coal and minerals, wheat and flour (T.A. Coghlan, *Statistics*, Sydney, 1903, pp.51, 59, 73; see also Norman Kelvin (Ed), *The Collected Letters of William Morris*, Princeton University Press, Vol.II, 1987, pp.226-227). William Morris was personally acquainted with two other Australian export products: namely smoked mutton hams and tinned kangaroo meat (Ibid., Vol.I, 1984, pp.168, 276).

⁶ Philadelphia International Exhibition, 1876. *Official Catalogue of the British Section*, by Authority of the Lord President of the Council, London, 1876, pp.109, 155, 159, 411, 421.

because the enormous custom's duties would raise the price more than the risk of selling them would be worth".⁷ Participation by Australian manufacturers in the Philadelphia International Exhibition was generally indifferent because of the American tariffs which were seen to be "inimical to competition from without".⁸ Trade could not be expected from sending goods to countries so governed and this in turn narrowed the incentive to expand the already limited Australian manufacturing field.⁹ Some manufacturing stimulation was created in the colony of Victoria by the passing of a Tariff Act in 1866. This was intended to encourage in the manufacturing sphere employment for an abnormally crowded labour market created from the petering out of alluvial gold mining in the state.¹⁰ New South Wales favoured a free market and consequently lagged behind in manufacturing activity. This colony, however, did not consider its situation as disadvantageous but rather viewed Victoria's stance as objectionable with its restricting of international trade. The Sydney-based *The Australian Town and Country Journal* supported the open frustration of Canadians who had exhibited in Melbourne in the 1870s then were excluded from trade with the southern colony. The same publication proudly reported the claim of J.L. Montefiore that the "light import duties levied in New South Wales cause it to be regarded as a very desirable market".¹¹ South Australia stood midway between the protectionist course taken by

⁷ Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, p.134.

⁸ *The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XVI, No.396, 4 August 1877, p.174.

⁹ Outside local demand Britain could provide a sympathetic market for Australian decorative goods however factors affecting manufacturing costs in Australia, such as higher wages, the need to import components, etc., meant that often manufactured items could not provide sufficient profit margins to satisfy British importers' desires.

¹⁰ *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1901-1908*, G.H. Knibbs, Melbourne, 1909, p.597.

¹¹ *The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XVI, No.394, 21 July 1877, p.92.

Victoria and the free trade ideals of New South Wales. In 1885 the younger colony's tariff policy was to be revised but the government emphatically asserted that it would not be altered "in the direction of protection".¹² The upholding of the Victorian colony's protectionist principles, which saw the luggage of intercolonial travellers thoroughly searched at Melbourne's Spencer Street Station, was something of an embarrassment to many locals¹³ and highlighted just one of the many obstacles which allowed colonial rivalries to restrict chances of a unified front for Australian manufacturing. The different trading conditions of individual colonies meant that governments setting the regulations inadvertently influenced the education of buyers because protectionist or free trade policies could affect considerably the number and class of international and national companies willing to participate. While Victoria may have enjoyed better manufacturing circumstances than New South Wales and South Australia, presenting a larger percentage of home-made goods compared to the other states, all three colonies nonetheless continued to deal largely in imported items and, in fact, in imported taste. There are no sustainable indications that Australians contributed to the appearance of imported products. Rather, some industries, such as carpet manufacturers Woodward Grosvenor Pty Ltd of Kidderminster, impressed their British predilections on items expressly destined for the Australian market.¹⁴

By the 1880s Australian manufacturing in the decorative fields of carpets, textiles, furniture and wallpapers nationally offered some competition to imports,

¹²*The Australasian Sketcher*, Vol.XIII, No.188, 14 January 1885, p.3.

¹³*Ibid.*, 4 October 1887, p.150.

¹⁴Scott Carlin (Ed), *Floorcoverings in Australia 1800-1950*, Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Glebe, 1997, p.34.

although Britain still strongly dominated the market.¹⁵ In all but the furniture industry Australian production would always be minimal compared to available imports. Decorators and the public had little option but to consider available foreign items. Into the twentieth century only furniture among New South Wales' decorative imports decreased in volume. Carpet imports soared and the United Kingdom continued to dominate the decorative market.¹⁶ In many cases it may well be that imported goods continued to be supported through allegiance to a time-honoured tradition of accepting British as best. When Mary Steele recalled in 2000 her childhood in Ballarat, Victoria, during the 1930s, she specifically noted the colonial emphasis on exportation of raw materials and that British imports were "the best in the world".¹⁷

¹⁵In 1887 import percentages for NSW were: 1. carpets: GB 85%, Victoria 6%, France 6%, India 2%, South Australia 1%; 2. drapery: GB 82%, Victoria 13%, South Australia 2.5%, France 1.5%, Germany 1%; 3. furniture: GB 67%, Victoria 11%, USA 9.5%, Germany 8.5%, South Australia 4%; 4. wallpapers: GB 83%, Victoria 10%, South Australia 3%, USA 2%, Germany 2% (based on figures in *Journal of the Legislative Council of New South Wales*, Vol. XLIII, Part 4: Statistical Register of NSW for 1887, Part III: Trade & Commerce, pp.55-135. By 1907 there were only 5 woollen and tweed mills in NSW, 9 in Victoria and 2 in South Australia, and no cotton or linen weaving at all. In consequence from Britain alone in that year over 3.5 million pounds worth of apparel was imported into Australia and over 8.8 million pounds worth of textiles (*Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1901-1908*, op.cit., pp.573, 603). Also by this date NSW boasted 103 furniture factories, Victoria 127 and South Australia 19, yet over 78 thousand pounds worth of furniture was imported from Britain and a similar amount from the United States (*Ibid.*, pp.576, 603, 605).

¹⁶*New South Wales Statistical Register for 1913; for 1925-26; for 1938-39*, Government of NSW, Sydney 1915, pp.179, 188, 217; 1927, pp.378, 399, 405; 1941, pp.58, 87, 94.

¹⁷Mary Steele, *Beside the Lake*, Hyland House, Flemington, 2000, pp.80-81. The British Colonial Office was established in 1801 (jointly with the War Department) and became an independent body in 1854. Its express purpose was "for conducting the business between Great Britain and her colonies (Peter Cunningham, *Hand-Book of London, 1850*, www.victorianlondon.org/organisations/colonialoffice.htm). After its founding in 1836 the settlement of South Australia was by private initiative under the control of the British Colonial Office, indicating the extent of its power. With such an organisation in command it is little wonder that British-made was accepted so readily in the Australian marketplace. See also Patrick McCaughey, 'Morris & Co. in Adelaide', in *Apollo*, March 2003, p.51.

The lack of a strong manufacturing framework in Australia encouraged a class structure which differed somewhat from the British model. The early years of the nineteenth century in Britain saw a burgeoning of population in the environs of manufacturing centres such as Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham. New technologies which enhanced factory outputs allowed for fuller employment as wages and profits increased to offset similar trends in prices, rents and tariffs.¹⁸ Not only did this situation create and cater to enlarged working and middle class markets but also by mid-century it saw the generation who had amassed the nation's industrial wealth succeeded by heirs who formed a "generation of spenders".¹⁹ This latter group sought to dissociate themselves from the conventions of their forebears and to display their wealth by surrounding themselves with the latest fashions. Australia's population congregated in coastal cities and inland service centres which essentially handled the exporting of raw materials and the importing of processed goods. No wealthy industrialist class existed. In lieu thereof was a commercial fraternity whose often considerable wealth was based on pastoral, mining and shipping interests which did not particularly require living in those environments.²⁰ Indeed in the latter half of the nineteenth century Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide each supported some 30-40% of the population of their respective colonies, these figures reaching 40-45% at the turn of the century.²¹

Australia's wealthy investment class seemed to feel no need to display its wealth

¹⁸Asa Briggs, 'The Later Victorian Age', in Boris Ford (Ed), *Victorian Britain*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp.6, 18.

¹⁹John Summerson, 'Architecture', in Ford (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.47.

²⁰Financial investors in Australia's vast pastoral and mining industries placed managers in charge of properties.

²¹Coghlan, *op.cit.*, pp.7, 11.

flamboyantly and basically remained conservative in its outlook, essentially looking to the British upper class for directions in interior decoration.²² If indeed, as Pierre Bourdieu has asserted, “a group’s whole life-style can be read off from the style it adopts in furnishing or clothing”,²³ then this wealthy class in Australia sought to suggest that it had brought with it to the colonies “upbringing and education” indicative of refined breeding.²⁴ Its members had the means whereby they could travel to Britain and Europe to purchase quality products of their desire and thus did not rely on imported goods or Australian-made products. There were, of course, exceptions to these rules. Joseph Clarke, governor of Melbourne’s Colonial Bank of Australasia, in 1878 chose to have his Toorak mansion of Mandeville Hall decorated with the latest Aesthetic characteristics,²⁵ using London’s Gillow & Co. The same bank’s managing director William Greenlaw followed suit stylistically in 1884 for his Kew residence Villa Alba but used the local Paterson Brothers as decorators and extensively purchased furniture from Melbourne manufacturers W.H. Roche & Co.²⁶ These choices among banking circles may well imply that this grouping preferred to be seen as more progressive in its outlook and perhaps in some cases supportive of likely or already assured clients. In general, however, the wealthy sought to decorate their substantial dwellings with elegance rather than opulence. In contrast to the wealthy whose circumstances allowed them considerable freedom of

²²See, for example, Terence Lane & Jessie Serle, *Australians at Home*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1990, pp.130-135, 145-147, 198-203, 219, 222-224, 241, 290, 298-299.

²³Bourdieu, *op.cit.*, p.77.

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp.1-7.

²⁵Lane & Serle, *op.cit.*, pp.127-128, 354-355; Andrew Montana, *The Art Movement in Australia*, The Miegunyah Press/Melbourne University Press, 2000, pp.62-65.

²⁶Montana, *op.cit.*, pp.70-71. See also Jessie Serle, ‘Greenlaw’s Folly: Villa Alba’, in *The Australian Antique Collector*, 45th edn, January-June 1993, pp.40-44.

choice, for guidance in aesthetic matters Australia's middle and working classes remained at the mercy of importers. By the 1920s the pattern continued from the previous century whereby average Australians could furnish their homes by one-stop shopping at warehouse facilities stocked by importers. Such was belaboured by Sydney's *The Home*, published by *Art in Australia*, which very much set itself up as an arbiter of taste, the journal asserting that "We negotiate life by wholesale".²⁷

On a basis of above-noted situations Morris & Co. would not have been able to satisfy generally the strata of Australian society. The style of the company's products was assertive and the firm did not deal with importing warehouses. The type of customer Morris & Co. attracted was greatly affected by the company's approach to marketing. The hub of the firm's mercantile presentation, from 1877 until 1917, was its Oxford Street, London, shop [ILLUSTRATION 1] and thereafter even grander premises in George Street, Hanover Square [ILLUSTRATION 2]. In earlier years many clients were introduced to the firm's products by means of direct communication with company partners, through private friendships or social contact.²⁸ Personal service was to permeate the company's approach to trade. A warehouse set-up was never envisaged. During the 1880s when so much of Morris's time was being devoted to socialist endeavours he still found the time to oversee decorative schemes personally.²⁹ From 1890 this mantle of personal assistance fell

²⁷*The Home*, Vol.1, No.3, September 1920, p.66.

²⁸See Charles Harvey and Jon Press, *William Morris: Design and enterprise in Victorian Britain*, Manchester University Press, 1991, pp.58-59.

²⁹For example, Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.II, 1987, pp.75, 574, 622; also Vol.III, 1996, pp.275, 277, 372, 397, 433 and Vol.IV, 1996, p.208.

almost solely to Henry Dearle³⁰ who was responsible for the 1888-1896 decoration of Stanmore Hall in Middlesex for expatriate Australian mining magnate William Knox D'Arcy. Dearle likely supervised the Stanmore Hall work because of Morris's increasingly short fuse regarding the acquisitive drive of wealthy customers.³¹ A fine indication of the courtesy and attention accorded clients, while still having an eye to business, is shown in Dearle's dealings with South Australian George Brookman.³² Individual interest in solitary items of Morris & Co.'s manufacture was dealt with by the shop's general managers and provincial customers could avail themselves of the services of agents.³³ Morris stated in 1881 that ordering through agents accounted for two-thirds of the company's business.³⁴ This figure included the United States but not Australia. While Morris complained of the United States' tariffs he nonetheless recognised that wealthy Americans were prepared to pay for premium products.³⁵ The popularity of Morris's designs among prosperous Americans resulted in "unauthorised copies and various imitations" by local companies, necessitating Morris & Co. to publish the names of authorised agents and warning that "no others can supply the goods we make".³⁶ Morris & Co. were therefore never strictly an exporting firm but relied for sales on some direct approach from a prospective client.

³⁰Ibid., Vol.IV, 1996, pp.142-143.

³¹Ibid., Vol.II, 1987, p.843; Vol.III, 1996, p.164.

³²See Appendix III.

³³Nicholas Salmon and David Taylor, 'Morris & Co. in Manchester', in *The Journal of the William Morris Society*, Vol.XII, No.3, Autumn 1997, p.19.

³⁴Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, p.70.

³⁵At the 1883 Boston Foreign Fair the company apologised for "presenting such a homely article as cotton for a decorative material"(Charles Harvey and Jon Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, Frank Cass, London, 1996, p.130).

³⁶Ibid., p.148.

In dealing with Morris & Co. the closest similarity to Australia's position was that of Canada. In terms of world market prospects, Morris claimed that the "rich middle-class" of England was "howling for fresh markets ..., and trying to persuade themselves that Australia and Canada will consider themselves one country with each other and with England".³⁷ Like Australians, wealthy citizens of the more northern member of the British Empire retained social and political ties with the mother country and on visits to England were able to purchase from Morris & Co.'s London shop.³⁸ Many of those Canadians who availed themselves of this avenue of purchase had, like their Australian counterparts, gained their wealth through shipping and importing or were influenced in their choice by architects.³⁹ By way of acquiring Morris & Co. wares however Canadians had an advantage over Australians of proximity to the United States and therefore access to American art periodicals, Morris & Co.'s substantial showing at the Boston Trade Fair in 1883 and

³⁷Eugene LeMire (Ed), *the unpublished lectures of William Morris*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1969, p.128.

³⁸Katharine A. Lochnan, Douglas E. Schoenherr, Carole Silver (Eds), *The Earthly Paradise*, Art Gallery of Ontario, 1993, pp.20-21.

³⁹The earliest Canadian Morris & Co. adherent was shipping merchant David Watt, an expatriate Scot, who decorated his Montreal home with stained glass windows, wallpapers and fabrics in the late 1870s (Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), *op.cit.*, p.21). The first Morris & Co. church windows in Canada, of 1885 for St.Paul's, Montreal, were dedicated to the wife of Andrew Allen, likewise of a prominent shipping family (*Ibid.*, pp.21, 26, 116). English-born architect Alexander Steele, who served with Watt in the Art Society of Montreal, also decorated his house with Morris & Co. curtains, wallhangings and carpets as did Scottish-born architect Percy Nobbs to a lesser degree, while the architectural firm of Maxwell Brothers influenced their clients to use Morris & Co. products and advice (*Ibid.*, pp.22, 25-26, 24).

US agents who had been appointed since 1878.⁴⁰ A Morris & Co. agent was in place in Montreal by 1903.⁴¹

Wealthy Canadians appeared to accept a distinctive eclecticism which was far bolder than any to be found in the homes of wealthy Australians. This may reflect a greater desire among Canadians to display successes in their colonial undertakings. The dining room in Charles Hosmer's 1911 house in Montreal displayed mahogany panelling with upper walls hung in Morris's *Peacock and Dragon* woven fabric, strangely off-set by a massive white marble fireplace.⁴² Charles Davies deigned to feature a white marble fireplace in the dining room of his late 1880s Tasmanian residence Lyndhurst however the general decoration of the room was Classical with Aesthetic trimmings.⁴³ A fine example of the amalgamation of decorative styles most acceptable in Australian interiors appeared in the 1920 Sydney home of Septimus Levy where the ballroom displayed a Louis Quinze brass chandelier and an Adam-design mantelpiece with French mirror and clock above.⁴⁴ These features had appeared seventy years earlier in the drawing room of Tommy Chapman's Hobart residence Sunnyside.⁴⁵ Additions in the late nineteenth century of distinct

⁴⁰Harvey & Press, *William Morris: Design and enterprise in Victorian Britain*, op.cit., p.139.

⁴¹Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., p.24.

⁴²Ibid., pp.24-25, 164.

⁴³See Lane & Serle, op.cit., p.298.

⁴⁴*The Home*, Vol.1, No.4, December 1920, p.19. See also James Broadbent, 'Louis XIV in Australia', in *The Australian Antique Collector*, 38th edn, July-December 1989, pp.70-73. The blending of Classical and French flavours, while strongly supported across the social spectrum, was not accepted uncomplainingly in the twentieth century. In regard to "modern" furniture James Bruce claimed that with "comparatively few exceptions, its design is either painfully banal, or else irritating in its attempt at *rococo* novelty" (*The Home*, Vol.1, No.3, September 1920, p.66).

⁴⁵See Lane & Serle, op.cit., p.243.

yet regimented repeating pattern wallpaper and carpet did not alter the room's essentially conservative look. These Australian interiors give no true sense of a passing of time, no clear indication of changes in fashion. Rather they suggest an underlying circumspection against which designers forwarding a new outlook would necessarily make heavy progress.

In terms of market demands British manufacturers may not have recognised the distinctive qualities of the Empire's colonies yet the individuality of those colonies, however slight, was nonetheless a reality. Thus each must essentially be regarded as an entity not particularly aligned to the workings of the others. Morris's observation of England's "rich middle-class ... trying to persuade themselves that Australia and Canada will consider themselves one country with each other and with England" shows how insensitive the mother country's manufacturers could be when trade was involved, and perhaps how cynical Morris could be when capitalist systems were under scrutiny.

The Australian market for Morris & Co. was given none of the early considerations offered its English provincial and North American counterparts. Morris & Co. had no Australian outlet for its products, did not exhibit its wares in this country, advertised its stained glass only between 1914 and 1921 and finally gained an Adelaide agent for stained glass in 1925. The reason the company did not attempt to make inroads into the Australian market, particularly in the nineteenth century, was a consequence of prevailing economic, marketing and aesthetic conditions in Australia and within the company. The decorative style expounded

by Morris & Co. was, throughout its range of products, innovative and modern. The flat pattern designing of Morris for interior decoration and the stained glass windows based around the figures of Edward Burne-Jones were bold and by “treating the medium in terms of its own potential”⁴⁶ did not adhere to then popular British trends which were being transferred to Australia. Three-dimensional landscape designs for carpets ignored the two-dimensional intent of that medium while naturalism and architectural imitation did the same in wallpaper production. Stained glass window manufacturers retained past solutions for keeping figures in proportion.⁴⁷ It was Morris & Co.’s break from these practices which would have recommended them to the British *nouveaux riches* and their Canadian counterparts but which would have been unsettling for conservative wealthy Australians. Those Australians wished to be discreetly fashionable not obviously different.⁴⁸ Morris & Co.’s quality control also meant that pricewise many of its products fell outside the available resources of ordinary Australians who were then left to the discretion of importers.

Just how suspect a reliance on importers could prove is apparent with the machine-made wallpapers exhibited at the 1880-1881 Melbourne International Exhibition by English manufacturers Heywood, Higginbottom, Smith & Co. These papers were in clear conflict with Morris & Co. productions in terms of manufacturing and design precepts. The Melbourne exhibitors hedged their bets as

⁴⁶Ray Watkinson, *William Morris as Designer*, Studio Vista, London, 1979, p.41.

⁴⁷See Carlin (Ed), op.cit., p.34; Phyllis Murphy, *Historic Wallpapers in Australia 1850-1920*, Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum, 1996, pp.14, 17; Illustrations 66 and 67.

⁴⁸See visual examples of such in Lane & Serle, op.cit., pp.62, 69-70, 99-101, 104, 107-8, 115-6, 126, 140, 164-5, 169, 172-3, 200-3, 222-3, 242-3, 260-1, 285-8, 360-1, 365-7, 392-5, 407-8.

to satisfying the latest trends: one area of influence for them was the “Oriental” and “Japanese”; the other, designated “early English or Queen Anne”, presented not only a tripartite wall division not favoured by Morris but also the three-dimensional pictorialism which he abhorred:

The Decoration ... consists of Dado, representing a bank of wild ferns and plants of English growth, woodcock, pheasant, insects, &c. Scene in distance, Cascade and Water Mill; Filling composed of sweet pea, birds, and flies; Frieze Border, representing a dingle of hazel nut trees, with squirrels...⁴⁹

With such presentations Heywood, Higginbottom and Smith would satisfy that section of the Australian market which yearned for reminders of ‘home’. Many struggled with homesickness and often isolation in a country which environmentally was vastly different to Britain. Such emotionally particular considerations were not heeded by Morris. For him the more mechanical the manufacturing process for wallpapers, the “less direct should be the imitation of natural forms”,⁵⁰ an axiom clearly not upheld in the work of Heywood, Higginbottom and Smith. Morris did not suggest such an approach out of contrariness but with a fine understanding of the medium for which he was designing.

Wallpapers were extensively used in Australian interiors. The introduction of steam powered machines resulted in a massive expansion of production in Britain,

⁴⁹Melbourne International Exhibition. *Official Catalogue of Exhibits*, 1880, pp.271-272.

⁵⁰Christine Poulson (Ed), *William Morris on Art & Design*, Sheffield Academic Press, 1996, p.127.

Europe and the United States and by 1861 all British taxes on paper had been removed,⁵¹ making wallpapers a highly affordable decorative element.⁵² Wallpapers were generally handled in Australia by warehouse outlets such as J. Murphy & Sons, established in Sydney in 1844, and James Sandy & Co. who imported, among other commodities, plate and sheet glass, paints, oils, colours, varnishes and brushware.⁵³ Before the end of the nineteenth century James Sandy & Co. would join the bandwagon of many merchant enterprises and house and commercial painters to add “Artistic Decorators” to their listed responsibilities.⁵⁴ Their commercial decorative schemes show that they basically utilised their imported products without successfully accounting for aesthetic considerations or quality control. The somewhat more specialised businesses of painters and decorators might have been more acceptable to Morris & Co. as agents but their limited marketplace due to Australia’s small population meant that they tended in general to handle cheaper wallpapers. They also could carry a stigma of inferiority in terms of artistic sensibilities. Melbourne architect William Salway was almost polite when in 1887 he noted that in handing themselves “over to the painter and paperhanger” home owners could expect “a stereotyped arrangement of paper patterns”.⁵⁵ Less courteous was one media critic for the Melbourne Centennial

⁵¹Lesley Hoskins (Ed), *The papered wall*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1994, p.134.

⁵²Australian wallpaper manufacture began in the 1850s but was, and remained, restricted to hand blocking (see Murphy, op.cit., p.9).

⁵³*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.I, No.6, 12 February 1870, p.1; Vol.XIV, No.339, 1 July 1876, p.38.

⁵⁴*Australasian Builder & Contractors’ News*, 30 January 1892, p.99; *Building & Engineering Journal*, 12 January 1904, pp.2, 5, advertisements, and 19 January 1904, p.4. Megan Martin has noted that *Sands’ Sydney Directory* began the trade classification of “art decorators” in 1885 (Scott Carlin & Megan Martin, *Augusto Lorenzini: Italian Artist Decorator in Victorian Sydney*, Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, Sydney, 2001, p.9).

⁵⁵Quoted in Murphy, op.cit., p.19.

Exhibition of 1888 who suggested that all the decoration for that venue had been carried out in a “lamentable and crude “plumber, painter, and glazier” style”.⁵⁶ Although Charles Carter of Melbourne classified himself as a “Decorative Artist” he still proudly advertised “Cheap Paper-Hangings” [ILLUSTRATION 3]. Cole Bros. of Collingwood, Victoria, who dealt with Carter, present as a fine example of the decorators’ range and taste. They used Heywood, Higginbottom and Smith for cheap papers and dictated to buyers in England that while papers should be “light cheerful” they should not be particularly “showy” but rather the “neater and smaller the Pattern the better”.⁵⁷ By stipulating such conditions Cole Bros. obviously recognised the conservative nature of much of its market. In contrast Morris’s wallpaper designs with their often grand scales made the company’s products in this line not “showy” but certainly distinctly visible. Morris & Co. also sold “cheap” trade wallpapers for the “convenience” of customers wanting such for “inferior” rooms; however Morris did not do so with definite approval of the designs. The trade papers handled by the company would generally seem to have been of the “pretty and most quite harmless little patterns” which Cole Bros. saw as suitable for Australian consumption.⁵⁸ By allowing Morris & Co. to deal in such goods Morris not only acknowledged a popular style outside his own designing axioms but he also countenanced the exclusivity of his own work with regard to the financial and social standing of the company’s clients. In Canada Morris & Co.’s wallpapers were obtainable through outlets more reputable than those available in

⁵⁶Quoted in Carlin & Martin, *op.cit.*, p.17.

⁵⁷Quoted in Murphy, *op.cit.*, p.11.

⁵⁸Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.II, 1987, p.457.

Australia. In Toronto the city's foremost decorating firm Elliott & Son acted as agents and W. Scott & Son's Decorations House likewise in Montreal.⁵⁹

Despite the lack in Australia of immediate accessibility to Morris & Co. goods, Morris's impress was decidedly felt in this country. Notwithstanding cheap wallpaper imports and an Australian preference for small patterns, directly Morris's designing prowess, particularly in flat pattern making, was emulated by first-class manufacturers who did import into Australia. Indirectly, through published lectures and public pronouncements, Morris's ideas were absorbed by the next generation, particularly adherents of the Arts and Crafts Movement, to reinforce and continue the necessity of quality and understanding of medium in any manufactured goods.⁶⁰ Harry P. Gill, in charge of Adelaide's School of Design from 1882 to 1915, in 1892 echoed Morris's own words delivered fifteen years earlier in *The Lesser Arts*. Gill claimed that "useful and beautiful. No design is perfect unless it fulfils these requirements".⁶¹ Some forty years later Mildred C. Dunstan did the same as Gill. She maintained that "having spun, dyed and woven an article for wear or use ... brings out in the maker qualities for a better and fuller appreciation of life".⁶²

⁵⁹Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., pp.24, 70, 154.

⁶⁰Scottish political economist James Mavor encouraged this aspect of Morris's influence in Canada when he moved to Toronto, through his friendship with Canadian painter and teacher George Reid and the Arts & Crafts Society formed there in 1903 (Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., p.27).

⁶¹Quoted in Christopher Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, Art Gallery Board of South Australia, Adelaide 1994, p.28; William Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1917, pp.3-4, 31.

⁶²Quoted in Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., p.39; Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.5-6, 9.

In Australia Morris's opinions were favourably considered as individual colonies strove to improve the skills of their own workforces and into the twentieth century Morris's productions were being held up as examples to be followed for "modern" directions.⁶³ The most significant influence of Morris & Co., however, was that its success lifted the applied or decorative arts to a fine arts status when previously they had been considered strongly to be "the lesser arts". This aspect impacted on the Australian scene through decorative companies who sought to be accepted as other than a "plumber, painter and glazier" concern or utiliser of warehouse provisions. Morris & Co.'s pioneering combination in Britain of interior decoration and stained glass window production was copied in Australia: in the nineteenth century first by Ferguson & Urie in Melbourne, then by Lyon, Cottier & Co. in Sydney and E.F. Troy in Adelaide; in the twentieth century the tradition continued with R.S. Exton & Co. Ltd. in Brisbane.⁶⁴ Although preferred styles differed between the English and colonial firms, Morris & Co.'s example of attention to quality was followed by the Australian companies through their pride in their home productions. While none of the nineteenth century Australian businesses outlived their principals, their commercial successes were important indicators to the competitiveness achievable by Australian manufacturing within the dominant import infrastructure.

⁶³*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, 12 March 1919, p.28.

⁶⁴*The Home*, Vol.6, No.3, June 1925, p.2, and Vol.6, No.4, August 1925, p.46C.

CHAPTER 2: MANUFACTURING AND MARKETING OF DECORATIVE GOODS IN AUSTRALIA, 1862-1879: SOME PROBLEMS SHARED WITH MORRIS & CO.

While Australian manufacturing was constrained by several situations which did not affect Morris & Co., problems in common were considerable. Major considerations for both were the sophistication and value of machinery in Britain, suspect trading ethics and middlemen in the marketplace, the weighing of profit margins against production of quality, and the quest for the best means of introducing manufactures to the public. In coming to grips with these matters Morris often set standards which other manufacturers were not able or did not wish to follow. Morris & Co. was able to access the services of other manufacturers using the most advanced machinery and employing large trained workforces. The company insisted on the integrity of natural dyes over cheaper chemical dyes but was also in a better position than Australians to acquire these products. The predominance in Australia of imported items and components often meant that Australians were unable to set the requisite profit margins for survival realised by British firms.

Colonial authorities were not entirely unmindful of the dominance of imported manufactures into Australia and the need to redress such an imbalance by examining the local situation. First to seriously undertake such an investigation was the New South Wales Government which established in 1862 a Select Committee on the State of Manufactures and Agriculture in the Colony, evidence

being taken from 7 October to 2 December.⁶⁵ This inquiry was clearly prompted by concern about an alarming increase in youth vagrancy as local manufacturing not only stagnated but also in some areas decreased.⁶⁶ There is no indication at this date that aesthetics were a particular consideration or indeed that imports provided a less than desirable quality to Australian lifestyles. Rather the Select Committee addressed the social dilemma of gauging hope for the future employment of “the rising generation”.⁶⁷ Questions were put to some ten local manufacturers engaged in the woollen, leather and furniture industries. In respect of woven materials it was admitted that the finer cloths were not made in the Colony and James Byrnes of Parramatta stated that cloths that were made locally cost twenty-five per cent more to manufacture than comparable imports. When pressed for exact figures Byrnes agreed that goods worth £100 to manufacture locally would cost only £82 10s to import inclusive of all charges.⁶⁸ It was suggested to Sydney woollen manufacturer Malcolm M’Intyre Campbell that requisite machinery might be imported but he claimed the freight alone would be more than the worth of the machinery.⁶⁹ Much of the workforce that came to Australia did so for better pay conditions as employees, not to set up as employers, thus investment in capital goods was limited. The price of local products was inflated by wages and costs of imported raw materials such as dyes and fuels, all of which could be up to three times greater in Australia than Britain.⁷⁰ Weavers in Scotland and England were paid 3d-5d per yard

⁶⁵Fully recorded in *Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings*, Vol.5 (1862).

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p.1043.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, pp.1056, 1069.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p.1049.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p.1056.

⁷⁰Both these instances indicate how different the Australian situation was to that in America. Higher wages were essential to encouraging skilled labour to Australia while America’s

for cloth produced compared to 10d-15d per yard earned by weavers in Australia.⁷¹ To produce a full range of woven fabrics locally would have required a massive initial capital outlay which was never likely to appeal to overseas investors in the light of a domestic market based on a relatively small population.⁷² Linda Parry has observed that by the 1870s when Morris seriously contemplated designing for woven textiles there was in Britain a “vast field of available manufacturers ... for silk, wool, cotton, and gauze weaving”⁷³ and even though a comparatively humble firm Morris & Co. contracted to at least six of those manufacturers.⁷⁴ All of Morris & Co.’s contractors “used the most technologically advanced power-driven jacquard looms in their factories”. The only reason Morris did not follow suit when he set up his Merton Abbey Works in 1881 was that he did not have “enough capital” to do so.⁷⁵ Thus for the same reason - shortage of capital - Morris & Co. and the Australian textile industry were not able to effectively utilise modern technology. It is fallacious to suggest that Morris was different to other textile manufacturers and shunned machinery available in his day because of a romantic attachment to handicraft.⁷⁶

independent status ensured that that country sought out and successfully utilised its own raw materials with little recourse to imports.

⁷¹*Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings*, Vol.5 (1862), pp.1058, 1059.

⁷²Offsetting capital expenditure in Australia by exporting was not an option competitive with profits obtainable from already established British sources.

⁷³Linda Parry, *William Morris Textiles*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1983, p.58.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp.58-60.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p.60.

⁷⁶See E.P. Thompson, *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary*, Merlin Press, London, 1977, pp.649-654. William Peterson has suggested that Morris “dramatically” rejected new technology at the Kelmscott Press yet his further observation of Morris favouring a nineteenth century iron hand press over a fifteenth century based wooden model (William S. Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris's Typographical Adventure*, University of California Press, 1991, pp.10-11) highlights the care with which Morris considered all possible effects to the quality of products he manufactured.

In his evidence before the 1862 Select Committee James Byrnes suggested that fabrics that were woven locally were in fact of better quality than imports manufactured by the same means, such as tweed. However Byrnes contended that buyers could be duped by retailers who both pushed the poorer quality article at the lower price and also, where it was obvious a customer was not aware of the difference, presented the cheaper import under the guise of being the more expensive local product.⁷⁷ In so stating, Byrnes was inferring that there was indeed an interest in local products but the higher profit margins on imported goods influenced salesmanship. Boot and shoe maker John Fletcher believed local manufactures would be preferred if they could be bought “at a reasonable price”.⁷⁸ Dubious behaviour was not exclusive to Australian traders. In attempting to trace a particular cloth for Andreas Scheu in 1883, Morris suggested it might be found in “some Scotch warehouse” because “such goods have become strange to England; we are got too clever by half to give people the real article when shoddy will do as well”.⁷⁹ At the same time Morris also discussed with Scheu the weaving of blankets and in so doing hinted at the plus and minus sides of Australian wool production. Morris advised Scheu that “it is common to make the warps of cotton, and even to mix cotton with Australian wool for the weft” then added that “the best blankets made at Witney ... have good worsted warps and their weft is all of pure English wool, which is firmer, though not so soft as the Australian”.⁸⁰ Obviously Australian

⁷⁷*Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings*, Vol.5 (1862), p.1050.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p.1081.

⁷⁹Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.II, 1987, pp.225-226.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, pp.226-227.

wool lent itself to special uses which could well have detracted from its consideration for local processing. The softness of merino wool limited its application to fabrics which would not be subject to the wear and tear, for example, of upholstery or work clothing. Despite Morris's assertion, however, Australian blankets are still known for their long lasting properties as well as their comfort.

Essential to both the aesthetics and commercial aspects of fabric production was the art of dyeing. When questioned by the 1862 Select Committee on the matter of dyes James Byrnes stated that local dyes were better lasting than imports and that the only defect in colonial manufactured goods was really "want of finish".⁸¹ He claimed that English dyes were bright at first but soon "fly" when exposed to the heat of the Colony.⁸² Yet the Volunteer Artillery had wanted to acquire uniforms of blue colonial cloth and had abandoned the intention because of the dye being so bad.⁸³ Campbell when asked if there were difficulties in setting colour answered negatively - "if you choose to go to the expense it is quite an easy matter" he asserted.⁸⁴

The subject of dye properties was one which troubled the fabric industry in Australia and Britain at the same time. Morris's insistence on the integrity of colour was a trait which strongly differentiated Morris & Co. products from those of competitors.⁸⁵ This became paramount with the company's woven and printed

⁸¹*Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings*, Vol.5 (1862), p.1051.

⁸²*Ibid.*, p.1052.

⁸³*Ibid.*, p.1051.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p.1058.

⁸⁵Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.I, 1984, pp. 263, 267-268, 272, 308, 334-335, 548-549; Vol.II, 1987, pp.22-23. See also Virginia Davis, 'William Morris and Indigo Discharge Printing', in

textiles because of the perceived garishness and fleeting nature of chemical dyes in common use in Britain.⁸⁶ Morris believed the “art of dyeing” to be the very foundation of the “ornamental character of textile fabrics”.⁸⁷ He grouped the invention of chemical dyes with such other “preposterous follies” as “monster cannon” and berated modern science to invent instead “machines for performing such labour as is revolting and destructive of self-respect to the men who now have to do it by hand”.⁸⁸ Here was another instance of Morris encouraging technology, but clearly with the proviso that social responsibility must be taken into account.

Chemical dyes had gained acceptance commercially because of their cheapness to produce, obtainability in large quantities and quick-drying properties which suited mechanical production techniques. W.C. Eldridge who ran an aniline dye works in Sydney claimed in 1870 that every “passion and affection of the mind has

The Journal of the William Morris Society, Vol.XI, No.3, Autumn 1995, pp.8-18; and Howard Batho, ‘William Morris and Dyeing’, in *Journal of the Society of Dyers and Colourists*, no.112, December 1996, pp.342-346.

⁸⁶See Simon Garfield, *Mauve*, Faber and Faber, London, 2001, pp.102-104. Aniline dyes gained commercial recognition only after the accidental discovery of mauve by chemistry student William Perkin in 1856. Their rapid development and acceptance was obvious at their showings at London’s International Exhibition of 1862. At this event August Hofmann declared that England “may ere long send her coal-derived blues to indigo-growing India, her tar-distilled crimson to cochineal-producing Mexico, and her fossil substitutes for quercitron and safflower to China and Japan” (quoted in *Ibid.*, p.77). French historian Hippolyte Taine found the exhibits and visitors at the 1862 Exhibition to be “gaudy and unrefined” (*Ibid.*, pp.77-78). Raphael Meldola, chairman of the 1906 jubilee celebrations for the discovery of mauve, remembered that “even, in my younger days, the term aniline dye was a term of reproach. A coal-tar dye was looked upon as gaudy, fugitive, and having every objectionable quality” (*Ibid.*, p.132).

⁸⁷Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.157.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, p.101.

its appropriate TINT, and COLOURING” and that he was both conversant with and prepared to produce for his “generous patrons” and the colonies at large:

every colour and every shade, or tint, they may desire in silk or wool, as pure and as perfectly BEAUTIFUL as the GAY COLOURED RADIANCE which FLUSHES BRIGHT O’ER ALL CREATION; thus enabling them, in the expression of colour, to “Wear a Virtue,” and appropriately “Dress a Passion.”⁸⁹

With his advertising Eldridge sought to bedazzle. He played on the emotions and fashion-consciousness of his clients in order to sell his wares. He did not disclose difficulties which could beset aniline dyes regarding permanency and thus perpetuated the acceptance of strong changes of colour from original presentations. Such an education meant that purchasers lacked an ability to discern colour subtlety.

In Australia natural dyes were based solely on plant material and before the 1862 Select Committee Enoch William Rudder from northern NSW claimed that they were all permanent. For his actual preparations Rudder asserted that costs of

⁸⁹*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.I, No.5, 5 February 1870, p.1. In 1906 Raphael Meldola applauded the ultimate public acceptance of aniline dyes because without them “what a miserable colourless world this would be” (Quoted in Garfield, op.cit., p.132). The greater colour range which aniline dyes could satisfy has been clearly suggested by Simon Garfield: “...the supply of plant dyes was often limited to specific regions and hampered by a nation’s attempts to monopolise production. ...trends in colour were fashioned less by taste than by the vagaries of war and efficiencies of foreign ports. It stood to reason that a colour you could make on demand in a laboratory ... would surely be worth an awful lot of money” (Ibid, pp.42-43). It is interesting that Eldridge only mentions the colouring of silk and wool in his advertisement, omitting cotton. Certainly for William Perkin the fixing of mauve on cotton was for some time a real problem (see Ibid., p.52).

production were half those for English products yet Malcolm Campbell suggested that because of commercial timber harvesting expenses the natural dyes became more expensive than importing chemical dye materials from England.⁹⁰ The overriding factor for both local and overseas commercial dye production was the saving of costs, not quality, and thus the chemical aniline dyes ruled. The situation was not one which was acceptable to Morris. In discriminating between natural and chemical dyes he wrote circumspectly of the former:

As to the artistic value of these dye-stuffs, ... I must tell you that they all make in their simplest forms beautiful colours; they need no muddling into artistic usefulness, when you need your colours bright (as I hope you usually do), and they can be modified and toned without dirtying, as the foul blotches of the capitalist dyer cannot be. Like all dyes, they are not eternal; the sun in lighting them and beautifying them consumes them; yet gradually, and for the most part kindly ... These colours in fading still remain beautiful, and never, even after long wear, pass into nothingness, through that stage of livid ugliness which distinguishes the commercial dyes as nuisances, even more than their short and by no means merry life.⁹¹

Morris did not find it necessary to torture his colours into satisfying the human vagrancies of fashion. Natural dyes provided for him perceptible innate beauty together with predictable quality control.

⁹⁰*Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings*, Vol.5 (1862), pp.1075, 1058.

⁹¹Poulson (Ed), *op.cit.*, pp.71-72.

Morris began experimenting with traditional natural dyes in 1872, however initially work space restricted him to producing only some of the silks and wools used in the firm's embroideries. He was particularly troubled by repercussions on the company's reputation caused by defects in commercial dyeing. In June 1876 he reported "bad accounts" concerning the fading of silk curtains handled by the firm and imported from two different French centres.⁹² In order to dye yarns in commercially viable quantities for carpets and woven fabrics and to control his own textile printing Morris sought the aid of Thomas Wardle's dyeing and printing works in Leek, Staffordshire. Morris first visited the works in 1875 to set on course his required methods and expectations and thereafter stringently examined and tested every sample subsequently forwarded by Wardle, reporting in detail on each.⁹³ This procedure was time-consuming and required a keen perception of the finest colour variations, both of which would have been luxuries in the general competitive dye industry. Because of such attention to detail Morris was able to ensure the quality of Morris & Co.'s products manufactured by other commercial concerns. From April 1876 he supplied ready-dyed the wools used by the Heckmondwike Manufacturing Co. for Morris & Co. Kidderminster carpets and the silk and cotton yarns used by Nicholsons and McCreas to produce Morris & Co. woven fabrics. Wardle took over the production of block-printed chintzes. Morris's example however could not be supported by businesses which looked primarily to profit-taking.⁹⁴

⁹²Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.I, 1984, p.308.

⁹³*Ibid.*, pp.259-397. See also Ray Watkinson, 'Living Dyeing: Morris, Merton and the Wardles', in *The Journal of the William Morris Society*, Vol.XII, No.3, Autumn 1997, pp.20-25.

⁹⁴When *The Home* reported in the 1920s on the Australian bush dyes of Eady Hart of Ballarat which "resemble more the flowers in a garden than the crude commercial shades known in

Throughout Morris's dyeing experiments he was aware of the commercial advantages and liabilities of his undertaking. He haggled with Wardle but accepted the latter's offers over dyeing costs in order to sell at a profit "of some kind" and not "prohibit from our customers".⁹⁵ He begged Wardle to consider reducing his prices "considerably" otherwise sales would "likely ... be very limited" and cited Wardle's prices as more than double Clarkson's who originally printed for the company.⁹⁶ At the 1862 NSW Select Committee Malcolm Campbell had also rightly recognised that it was an expensive affair to produce quality dyes which were not fleeting. Yet it was not Wardle's costs but inadequate workmanship which ultimately drove Morris to seek premises which would allow him to control totally all the company's dyeing requirements.

I am sorry to say that the last goods African marigold & red marigold sent are worse instead of better: they are in fact quite unsaleable; I should consider myself disgraced by offering them for sale: I laboured hard on making good designs for these and on getting the colour good: they are now so printed & coloured that they are no better than caricatures of my careful work.⁹⁷

There is no doubt from the evidence of James Byrnes and Malcolm Campbell before the 1862 NSW Select Committee that manufacturers in the local textile industry had faith in the quality of their base products. They were perhaps

modern days" (*The Home*, Vol.7, No.1, January 1926, p.4), it was obvious that the pursuit of natural dyeing techniques had become the prerogative of amateurs and that chemical dyes strongly ruled in the business world.

⁹⁵Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.I, 1984, p.273.

⁹⁶Ibid., p.275.

⁹⁷Ibid., Vol.II, 1987, p.10.

thwarted, like Morris, in their abilities to promote items by inadequate workmanship in secondary phases such as dyeing and product finish. In Australia, in their efforts to advance local products, manufacturers also needed to overcome the promotional leanings of middlemen. Morris & Co. effectively restricted what Morris himself saw as “the wasteful system of middlemen” by dealing directly with the public whenever possible.⁹⁸ For Malcolm Campbell the bane of local manufacturers was warehousemen who seemed to have a recognisable “down” on colonial manufactured goods. They could receive a trade profit of only fifteen to twenty per cent on colonial wares compared to seventy-five per cent on imports.⁹⁹ There is no doubt that from its beginnings Australian commerce was firmly within the grasp of “competitive salesmanship, or, to use a less dignified word, the puffery of wares”.¹⁰⁰

Warehouses would remain the most common outlet for goods in nineteenth-century Australia [ILLUSTRATIONS 4-5] and thus they considerably affected the buying preferences of the general public. They were not simply repositories for goods which would be sold from shop outlets but the forerunners of today’s large department stores.¹⁰¹ An excellent and typical nineteenth-century

⁹⁸Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.102.

⁹⁹*Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings*, Vol.5 (1862), p.1058.

¹⁰⁰Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., p.148.

¹⁰¹Warehouses were a facility which survived well into the twentieth century, carefully dropping on the way the nomenclature “warehouse” which was possibly seen as something of a stigma as the new century approached. At the end of the nineteenth century Sydney’s Anthony Hordern & Sons proudly presented their major outlet as the “Palace Emporium” (see Illustration 186); in the twentieth century their Melbourne rival embraced similar terminology, to be known as The Myer Emporium (*The Home*, Vol.7, No.8, August 1926, p.63).

example of a warehouse was the Melbourne firm of Alston & Brown who could furnish both house and person from the one address [ILLUSTRATION 6].¹⁰² Not only did such establishments influence taste by the goods they offered, they also attempted in their advertising to convince prospective customers that they dealt only in the most fashionable. In the case of Alston & Brown their advertisement in the Official Catalogue of the 1866 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition assured the reader that “*Manufactures of France and Germany* have largely increased in public favour” and that as Mr Brown was actually resident in London, the firm was able to receive “an almost daily importation of all the Novelties”.¹⁰³ In this instance taste was not dictated directly by contact with Europe. The core of Alston & Brown’s advertisement was to present to their Australian audience the latest acceptable styles for Britons. The “public favour” to which the company referred was British. A taste for French and German styles was legitimised through British ratification. This then encouraged European countries to compete directly because of established acceptance. The significance of British imports in Australian society is well indicated by such expressions as “Manchester” for household linen, a generalisation reflecting an early acceptance of imported cotton goods from that

¹⁰²Craig’s of Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, might be seen as Alston & Brown’s successor, the later company advertising itself as “Drapers, Milliners, Costumiers, Tailors & Complete Outfitters Also Suppliers of Carpets, Furniture, Furnishings & Home Needs” (*The Home*, Vol.7, No.9, September 1926, p.65).

¹⁰³*Official Catalogue*, Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne, 1866, p.xi. In 1905 Lewis F. Day asserted that in the past “it used to be said by those who catered for the public taste, that a new phase of fashion had seven years to run. Nowadays it exhausts itself in a single season: last year’s novelty is already out of date” (*The Art Journal*, March 1905, p.84 in Rare Books, The Huntington Library). Craig’s guaranteed prospective clients, particularly “Interstate Visitors”, that the “many exclusive creations” on show at the company’s premises were recent acquisitions from “London, Paris and other authoritative style centres” (*The Home*, Vol.7, No.9, September 1926, p.65).

English manufacturing centre as tantamount to domestic cotton products as a whole.

The local furniture trade perhaps suffered even more than the textile industry initially, because of the ascendancy of importers. The introduction of cheap American articles was a classic case of successful opportunism: chairs made of plentiful pine and “convict labour” flooded the country through shippers who were willing to run the hazard of finding a ready market.¹⁰⁴ However the Australian media attempted to influence taste without considering price by pushing the view that American furniture was aesthetically inferior to British. In reviewing “art furniture” shown at the 1876 Philadelphia Exhibition, *The Illustrated Sydney News*, in its selective account taken from the *European Mail*, clearly indicated those imports which should bring most prestige to Australian homes:

... The American cabinet-makers have made a gorgeous display of their products; but bad taste, or the utter absence of any taste at all, characterises nearly all their work. From Belgium and Italy have arrived many beautiful specimens of carved furniture; but there is nothing in the Exhibition equal in richness, solidity, and beauty to the articles shown by the English makers...¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴*Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings*, Vol.5 (1862), op.cit., p.1112.

¹⁰⁵*The Illustrated Sydney News*, Vol.XIII, No.9, 19 August 1876, p.11. Such an outlook must have had some influence on import figures. The dominance in 1907 of British imports over the USA was considerable: value of imports into Australia, 1907, from UK £31,906,447, from USA £5,869,099 (*Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1901-1908*, op.cit., p.600).

Such reporting may not have been solely based on a desire to bring the best aesthetic judgements before the Australian public. American furniture would continue throughout the rest of the nineteenth century to make inroads into the Australian marketplace, by 1907 surpassing Britain's contribution.¹⁰⁶ The *Illustrated Sydney News* may well have been gearing its 1876 article towards helping to protect British furniture imports.

The 1862 NSW Select Committee asked retired cabinet-maker Edward Hunt, who had arrived in Australia in 1814, why furniture was still imported. Hunt put it down to the more educated taste of people generally and that they required only the best. Native cedar was not equal in hardness, colouring and grain to the mahogany, rosewood or walnut of British imports and although many articles made in the colonies could be more durable they were not as artistically pleasing.¹⁰⁷ These observations imply that many immigrants brought with them established predilections which did not rely on the persuasiveness of warehousemen, retailers or the media. Nonetheless, as with fabric manufactures, profit margins could impose as great an effect on furniture availability as aesthetic considerations. Labour costs again affected pricing. While mahogany was double the price of cedar, wages in the British furniture industry were only about half of those in Australia.¹⁰⁸ Charles Hunt, who had taken over Edward Hunt's business, admitted that his firm no longer made chairs or drawing room furniture because they could import these more cheaply.¹⁰⁹ While import costs were around thirty per cent, so that articles

¹⁰⁶*Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia 1901-1908*, op.cit., pp.603, 605.

¹⁰⁷*Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings*, Vol.5 (1862), p.1112.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p.1115.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, p.1116.

worth £100 in England might cost £130 here, accepted features of drawing room furniture such as marble and glass were not available locally and thus to manufacture similar furniture items in Australia would see a price of around £155.¹¹⁰ Other than a protectionist policy which was not favoured by any of the manufacturers, there was really no answer to the importation impasse.

The evidence of the Hunts and Malcolm Campbell was typical of the practical advice offered to the 1862 Commission. Its tenor really served to reinforce the dilemma faced by the young colony in weighing artistic merit against economic considerations. Clearly decision-makers were faced with “what a hideous nightmare that profit-market is”.¹¹¹ There seemed no suggestion that Australian workmanship was lacking; rather, the greatest obstacle to acceptance of colonial products rested with a predisposed taste which insisted on materials not readily available and some doubt as to the nature of Australian design. Morris’s assessment generally of “supply and demand” was so apposite to the Australian situation. He insisted it was “artificial ... under the sway of the gambling market; the demand is forced ... before it is supplied”.¹¹²

Efforts at this time to redress a lack of artistic ability applied to manufacturing in Australia were unremarkable. In 1869 the government of Victoria appointed a

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 1117.

¹¹¹Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., p. 11.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 16. Commodity demand was reinforced by media advertising and warehouse window displays and by the mid-1870s catalogues and brochures, popularised in Britain several decades earlier, began to be issued by Australian decorative firms to further direct preferences (see Montana, op.cit., pp. 83, 92, 93, 96; also Joanna Banham, Sally MacDonald, Julia Porter, *Victorian Interior Design*, Crescent Books, New York, 1991, p. 45).

Royal Commission to look into the merits of introducing technical education to the “working classes”.¹¹³ Other than setting up a Technological Museum strongly based on mining, initially the Commissioners really let the many Schools of Arts in existence perform the educative duties which they felt could be beneficial to workers:

... competent masters should give instruction in the different branches of drawing, ... improving at one and the same time the hand, the eye, and the taste of the young workman, and so enhancing both the elegance and the intrinsic value of all the finer mechanical products of the colony, including embroidery and other artistic work for females.¹¹⁴

Pre-dating the Schools of Design in Britain, the Schools of Arts/Mechanics’ Institutes sprang up in an atmosphere of philanthropy and educative zeal in Edinburgh, Glasgow and London in the early 1820s and thence throughout the British Empire. Sydney established a School of Arts in March 1833 and in 1879 it gained a large new library room in which to house an accumulated 20,000 volumes.¹¹⁵ Schools of Arts/Mechanics’ Institutes were usually the pride of nearly every township throughout the Australian colonies and often founded within a short time of settlement. Bathurst in New South Wales, for example, established a School of Arts only twenty-two years after the town’s layout was determined in 1833. The first permanent premises was built six years later and continued to expand. By

¹¹³*Royal Commission for Promoting Technological and Industrial Instruction, Colony of Victoria, Report No.67, 1886, p.3 (Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings).*

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, p.4.

¹¹⁵*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, 18 June 1919, p.30.

1900 it presented as a substantial and imposing edifice [ILLUSTRATIONS 7-8]. The character of each School of Arts/Mechanics' Institute varied according to localised conditions, however most basically upheld the strong moral injunctions of the times.¹¹⁶ The Bega School of Arts was an oddity in omitting "moral improvement" from its aim, focussing solely on the "mental improvement" of its members.¹¹⁷ At the opening in 1877 of the Toowoomba School of Arts in Queensland the Governor Sir Arthur Kennedy claimed:

... Institutions such as this will discourage and finally succeed in putting down evils which repressive laws have failed to do, and will, with God's blessing, wean men from those degrading pursuits which bring sickness, insanity, pauperism, and crime in their train. ...¹¹⁸

Kennedy assumed more of the Schools of Arts system than this leisure organisation could reasonably provide. Many workers did attend as much for social as educational reasons and such would have lessened hours spent following "those degrading pursuits" indicated by Kennedy. However attendance was purely voluntary and could be greatly restricted by a worker's trade and hours of employment.

It was not until the 1880s that Australian authorities looked further than the Schools of Arts/Mechanics' Institutes to provide a more solid technical and

¹¹⁶*Catalogue of Works in Library, Grafton Mechanics' Institute, 1901, p.3; Library Catalogue, Geelong Mechanics' Institute, 1893, p.1.*

¹¹⁷*Catalogue of the Bega School of Arts Library, "Gazette" office, Bega, 1890, p.5.*

¹¹⁸*The Australian Town and Country Journal, Vol.XVI, No.392, 7 July 1877, p.24.*

aesthetic education for workers. Notwithstanding, from around 1860 several Australian companies appeared in the decorative arena with a positive and optimistic belief in the quality of their local products. The first, founded in 1859, was the Melbourne firm of Ferguson & Urie, house decorators and Australia's first manufacturer of stained glass windows. In 1873 John Lyon, an early partner in Ferguson & Urie, opened Lyon, Cottier & Co. in Sydney. With this later company the colonial combination of interior decoration and stained glass window production would reach both highly acceptable and prestigious proportions. Melbourne furniture manufacturers W.H. Rocke & Co., formed in 1869, would combine quality local furniture making with the proffering of advice on interior decoration. All three companies reflected in directions followed and marketing an astute understanding of the taste and financial features of their respective markets. They are considered more fully in Chapters 5 to 7. Within the parameters of this chapter they stand as clear examples of Australian nineteenth century commercial concerns which could compete comfortably with British counterparts; they did so on their own terms with regard to style, quality control and product presentation.

The first really important opportunity for local manufacturers, including the three abovementioned, to present their wares for serious assessment occurred with the 1875 Victorian Intercolonial Exhibition, held in Melbourne from 2 September to 16 November.¹¹⁹ Both Ferguson & Urie and Lyon, Cottier & Co. exhibited stained glass windows. The former were so pleased with their awards at this event, of

¹¹⁹Previous intercolonial exhibitions, such as those in Melbourne in 1866-67 and in Sydney in 1869, were basically agricultural shows with small pavilions where manufactured articles and art works were presented for colonial consumption. The 1875 Victorian Intercolonial was intended to accumulate colonial products for international display.

Special Silver Medal and First Prize, that they continued to specifically stipulate such in their general advertising into the 1880s.¹²⁰ W.H. Roche & Co.'s 1875 presentations show thoughtful marshalling of manufacturing and marketing strategies. Allocation of the exhibits of these three Australian manufacturers suggests that the 1875 Exhibition organisers were not adept at classifying the decorative arts. This Exhibition also highlighted the Australian colonies' perception of themselves individually and their relationship to each other. The latter reveals a struggle for supremacy which has carried through to the present.

The 1875 Intercolonial Exhibition grew, in reality, from a desire to display on an international front a consciousness of Australian cohesion, despite the fact that the Australian colonies were still some twenty-six years from a federated status. In June 1874 a circular had been forwarded by the American Department of State in Washington inviting "Foreign Powers" to take part in an International Exhibition to be held in Philadelphia in 1876, celebrating one hundred years of American Independence. The government of the colony of Victoria considered Australia should

join in the friendly contest, and should bring resources and industrial progress of the latest continent colonised by the subjects of the British Crown before the citizens of a State springing from the same race, speaking the same language, and studying the same literature.¹²¹

¹²⁰*Sands & McDougall's Melbourne Directory*, 1880, p.69.

¹²¹*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record*, by Authority of the Commissioners, Melbourne, 1875, p.vii.

The 1875 exhibition in Melbourne was to be a preliminary to the Philadelphia one, to allow the colonies to reveal what they individually considered appropriate for overseas display. Only the accumulative best would be selected for dispatch to America, there to show "the whole world...the achievements and capabilities of British Australia".¹²² But from the outset there was no "much-desired unity of action" as originally hoped¹²³ and for the Philadelphia Exhibition the Commissioners for the Victorian colony realised that each Australian colony will indulge in a rivalry with its neighbours, which although friendly and amicable, may somewhat militate against the effect which might have been expected from the efforts of a combined Australia. ...¹²⁴

Competition between the Australian colonies, particularly Victoria and New South Wales, was unremitting and rarely amicable.¹²⁵ For all its apparent anxiety regarding a union of the colonies for Philadelphia, with the 1875 Intercolonial Exhibition Victoria in fact went some way to display a presumed superiority over the other exhibitors. It ensured that the event was held in Melbourne for reasons

¹²²*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XII, No.298, 18 September 1875, p.454. See also Marc Rothenburg and Peter Hoffenberg, 'Australia at the 1876 Exhibition in Philadelphia', in *Historical Records of Australian Science*, vol.8, no.2, 1990, pp.55-62.

¹²³*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record*, op.cit., p.ix.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, p.xi.

¹²⁵Lack of mercantile unity does not seem to have been obvious between the American states nor the countries comprising Great Britain. Perhaps its peculiarly destructive nature in Australia between Victoria and New South Wales resulted from the latter colony attempting to assert a legitimacy based on an unsavoury foundation. Victoria's establishment by free settlement may account for that colony's 'superior' attitude (see Andrew Garran (Ed), *Australia the First Hundred Years*, Summit Books, Sydney, 1978, pp.15-20, 160-166; also Henry Gyles Turner, *A History of the Colony of Victoria*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1904).

that were somewhat strained - "for convenience of concentration and of shipment"¹²⁶ - and in the medal tally achieved 167 compared to New South Wales' 11, South Australia's 18, Tasmania's 19 and the Northern Territory's 2.¹²⁷ Such judgements could not have been solely based on quality.¹²⁸ At the time *The Australian Town and Country Journal* highlighted the insularity of the Australian colonies. While it concurred with the desirability of a united national display "before the eyes of the world", it voiced strongly the opinion that New South Wales had been "almost lost sight of" by Americans, Europeans and even the British, and therefore it was necessary to "claim ... the recognition that is due" at the Philadelphia Exhibition. Such an expression was not meant to "imply any want of cordial good will towards the sister colonies and admiration for their progress".¹²⁹ When, in May 1875, New South Welshman Richard Teece visited the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, he was a little mortified to learn that Melbourne was the whole of Australia. A very little trouble would bring New South Wales into prominent notice, but whilst our Agent General's office remains as it appears to be a place of entertainment for the billetless English swells, such a consummation is scarcely to be expected.¹³⁰

This was not to say that other Australian colonies were afforded at the Philadelphia Exhibition a standing commensurate with an independent nation. Queensland and

¹²⁶*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record*, op.cit., p.viii.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, pp.xxiv, xxv.

¹²⁸Later exhibitions which involved international participation somewhat quashed this colonial bias in judging.

¹²⁹*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XII, No.304, 30 October 1875, p.694.

¹³⁰Quoted in Andrew Hassam, *Through Australian Eyes*, Melbourne University Press, 2000, pp.69-70.

Tasmania displayed their wares in the Colonial Section assigned by the British Commission¹³¹ and were obviously happy to be considered as offspring of British colonial power. An understanding of the Australian situation was well reflected in a letter to the *New York Independent* at the time which recognised the colonies as separate “countries, which have scarcely been settled more than twenty-five years, and which do not contain more than two million inhabitants”.¹³² A Philadelphia *Visitors’ Guide* went so far as to list New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia as separate exhibiting “countries” located on the continent of Australia, a reasonable view considering the behaviour of the colonies.¹³³ The relatively small population of the Australian colonies played to the advantage of importers over local manufacture when initial capital outlay was weighed against profits and the strong insular attitude of each narrowed even further the market base available to local manufacturers. The Federation of the colonies in 1901 encouraged a united spirit among Australians and a pride in Australian manufactures across state boundaries. This was not yet apparent at the time of the 1875 Victorian Intercolonial Exhibition. Rather the 1875 Intercolonial simply provided exhibitors with the opportunity to display their goods to a wider cross-section of prospective clients than had been hitherto possible.¹³⁴

¹³¹Philadelphia International Exhibition, 1876. *Official Catalogue of the British Section*, by Authority of the Lord President of the Council, London, 1876.

¹³²*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XV, No.369, 27 January 1877, p.141.

¹³³*Visitors’ Guide to the Centennial Exhibition and Philadelphia*, Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1875, p.24.

¹³⁴It was with such a persuasion that Morris & Co. entered London’s 1862 International Exhibition.

The significance of the 1875 Intercolonial Exhibition to the Australian decorative scene lay particularly in two areas: firstly, the ability of assessors to direct aesthetic taste; and secondly, in the allocation of decorative items, a seeming want by organisers to understand truly the decorative arts. That these areas were not of high import in Australia was suggested by the general tenor of the Exhibition. Exhibits were not assessed by judges but by unnamed "Experts" who one can only assume were selected by the host colony of Victoria.¹³⁵ The majority of items on offer belonged to categories of primary production, such as minerals, wool and cereals. This had been, and would continue to be, the face that the Australian colonies happily presented to the rest of the world: in 1882 the bureaucracy in London drew attention to the colonies being "well represented" at the 1862 London, 1873 Vienna, and 1867 and 1878 Paris International Exhibitions "by the display of their valuable natural productions".¹³⁶ At the 1862 London International New South Wales did exhibit woollen fabrics, suggesting a manufacture of international competitive standards; however minerals, ores and timber dominated the presentations from that colony, Victoria and South Australia. Victoria readily admitted that "the efforts of the people ... have hitherto naturally been exerted rather to the production of the raw materials than in manufacturing industry".¹³⁷

¹³⁵*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record*, op.cit., p.322.

¹³⁶*Report of the Royal Commission for the Australian International Exhibitions*, London, 1882, p.9. See also Jonathan Sweet, 'Empire, Emigration and the Decorative Arts: Australian Representation at the International Exhibitions 1862-1886', in H.C. Collinson (Ed), *Victorian: The Style of Empire*, The Decorative Arts Institute, Royal Ontario Museum, Canada, 1996, pp.103-120. There seems no concrete evidence to suggest that a repressive British policy existed whereby Australian natural resources were exploited so that manufactured goods could then be sold back to Australia, as, for example, may be suggested with Indian cotton.

¹³⁷*The Australian Colonies at the International Exhibition, London, 1862*, Government

At the 1875 Intercolonial Exhibition there were, nonetheless, several decorative exhibits which made a true showing intended for international eyes. Assessors for Department 22 had the onerous task of attending to a diverse range of exhibits encompassing, among other items, “Educational Apparatus and Methods; ... Instruments of Precision; ... Architectural Designs; decoration of Dwellings and Public Buildings”.¹³⁸ They felt compelled to comment on “interior decoration as it is known and practised amongst ourselves, and ... a few of the essential rules which should determine its application”.¹³⁹ To these “Experts” the basis of all interior decoration was the quality of plasterwork and only upon an excellent foundation could the necessary “harmonious colouring, ... contrast and ... surface ornament” be applied.¹⁴⁰ The accepted medium for the latter was paint, although the assessors did note that aesthetic standards for paint work should apply equally to wallpaper. The suggestion was that painting presented the most satisfactory agency for immediate artistic expression and it was upon such a premise that Lyon, Cottier & Co. would make its name in interior decoration. Morris also saw “painted decoration” as the most desirable treatment for walls, viewing paperhangings as “makeshift” to such.¹⁴¹ As all wallpapers were imported into Australia at the time only the act of paperhanging was included among the skills of the Australian interior decorator.

Printer, Melbourne, 1865, p.30.

¹³⁸*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record, op.cit., p.194.*

¹³⁹*Ibid., p.195.*

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁴¹*Morris, Hopes and Fears for Art, op.cit., p.136.*

The “legitimate use” of plaster was seen as “forming a vehicle for art”. It passed beyond this when it attempted to simulate “a construction in either stone or wood”.¹⁴² Notwithstanding these high ideals, the only decorative exhibits presented for Jury 22’s scrutiny were as follows:

Group 72.

Heathcote, Thos. S., 88 Drummond-street, Carlton.

2861. Specimens of Painted Imitations of Woods.

Roberts, Samuel H., 165 Swanston-street.

2862. Decoration of the Walls of Rotunda, in tempered border and cornices
in Grecian style. ¹⁴³

The painted imitations of woods were awarded a First Class Certificate, the plasterwork presumably in imitation of stone a Second Class Certificate, despite the fact that those judging admitted to the times being “characterised as an age of shams” and stating as a necessity the principle that “no one material should attempt to arrive at a result which can only be perfectly done by another”.¹⁴⁴ Morris held a like opinion. His dedication to appropriateness in material utilisation was based on practical rather than theoretical concerns yet he believed that if this natural “law” of selection was broken “we shall make a triviality, a toy, not a work of art”.¹⁴⁵ His interpretation of “sham” was perhaps too focussed by his personal socialist perspectives. He abhorred that workers should be forced at first to produce

¹⁴²*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record, op.cit., p.195.*

¹⁴³*Ibid., p.203.*

¹⁴⁴*Ibid., p.195.* It should be noted that both award-winning exhibits in Group 72 were Victorian.

¹⁴⁵*Morris, Architecture, Industry & Wealth, op.cit., p.43.*

and then to use “shams and mockeries of the luxury of the rich”.¹⁴⁶ One of the greatest skills of the house painter in the nineteenth century was the ability to imitate other materials with paint, particularly wood and marble. Despite the 1875 view of the Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition assessors, the popularity of this expertise was assured among the less wealthy who, where the genuine article was not affordable, sought not necessarily expensive but certainly quality appearances. Here the Melbourne organisers and assessors agreed in theory with Morris. These decorative exhibits were not presented as works of art and they were appraised on the grounds of what they were, not what they might purport to be.

To vindicate its emphasis on the role of plaster within the arena of the “House Decorator”, Jury 22 went to some lengths to commend paperhanging although no such skill had been displayed in its section. It suggested that this “style of internal decoration” had in “some instances been carried to extravagant extremes” as a reaction to classic form and in such cases the use of colour and ‘trompe l’oeil’ effects were seen as “a direct departure from good taste”¹⁴⁷ [ILLUSTRATIONS 9-10]. Indeed fifteen years later, as supporters of a classic style, Lyon, Cottier & Co. were insinuating that such questionable predilections were still aberrations to be avoided.¹⁴⁸ Discerning clients of the Sydney firm would naturally choose painting as being the accepted norm among “refined circles”. The “special” wallpapers

¹⁴⁶Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., p.150.

¹⁴⁷*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record*, op.cit., p.196. See also Michael Hall, ‘Simple People and Homely Minds’, in *Country Life*, 1 September 1994, pp.58-61.

¹⁴⁸See Illustration 108. As suggested in Chapter 1, with respect to the business of Cole Bros., Australians generally favoured wallpapers which displayed “good taste” rather than “extravagant extremes”.

imported by the company and available “at moderate cost”, while really only a commercial ploy to ensure prospective customers of more limited financial means were not dissuaded, were clearly advertised as “good in design and colour” in keeping with perceived Australian respectability. In an obvious move to direct public taste, Jury 22 at the 1875 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition viewed Owen Jones’s wallpaper designs, which had not been exhibited, as some of the most acceptable [ILLUSTRATION 11] because they displayed the “two essentials” of the medium, flat pattern making and harmonious colouring.¹⁴⁹ To achieve the former Jones based his designs on geometrical construction and his extensive study of historical styles. Morris supported a geometrical basis for recurring pattern design and also an acquired general knowledge of past decorative statements:

No pattern should be without some sort of meaning. True it is that that meaning may have come down to us traditionally, and not be our own invention, yet we must at heart understand it, or we can neither receive it, nor hand it down to our successors. ...

... Some of the finest and pleasantest of these show their geometrical structure clearly enough; and if the lines of them grow strongly and flow gracefully, I think they are decidedly helped by their structure not being elaborately concealed.¹⁵⁰

Yet Morris expected more in a pattern than Jones ever provided.

¹⁴⁹*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record*, op.cit., p.196. In favouring Owen Jones’s designs Jury 22 may merely have wanted to indicate their own sophistication. Yet their recommendations were also useful to the public in forwarding an understanding that design should be appropriate to purpose of the medium involved.

¹⁵⁰Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.157-158, 155.

... in all patterns which are meant to fill the eye and satisfy the mind, there should be a certain mystery. We should not be able to read the whole thing at once, nor desire to do so, ... ¹⁵¹

Two-dimensional visual intent and tonal colouring were acknowledged tenets of Morris & Co. wallpapers,¹⁵² however Owen Jones's work was more accessible to Australian educators through his illustrated *Grammar of Ornament* which was published in 1856. Since Morris & Co. products were not available in Australia, knowledge of their appearance initially relied on their having been seen in Britain. Morris's publications, without illustrations, did not begin to appear until 1882. Certainly support for Morris's designing was apparent in Australia by the 1890s.¹⁵³ In 1892 Andrew Wells claimed in Sydney that with his wallpapers Morris had insisted twenty years earlier on the essential "truth" of beauty in design and colour overcoming the vagrancies of fashion.¹⁵⁴ An indication of why Morris & Co. avoided direct contact with Australia appears with the quality and character of exhibits at the 1879-1880 Sydney International Exhibition. Manufacturers displaying wallpapers there consisted of four British firms, two French and two German.¹⁵⁵ Machine-made papers predominated, as opposed to Morris & Co.'s papers which were all hand-blocked to ensure surety of colour and registration.¹⁵⁶ Seven of the

¹⁵¹Ibid., p.155.

¹⁵²Ibid., pp.145-150.

¹⁵³The quality of Morris & Co. wallpapers was acknowledged by Melbourne architects Terry and Oakden in 1885 (Lane & Serle, op.cit., p.144).

¹⁵⁴*Australasian Builder & Contractors' News*, 7 May 1892, p.332.

¹⁵⁵*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, Thomas Richards, Government Printer, 1881, pp.296, 297, 299, 300, 305, 308.

¹⁵⁶Indistinct colouring and registration on machine-made papers could result from the need for quick-drying chemical dyes to cope with the speed of production.

eight International exhibits gained the award of First degree of Merit; one, machine-made papers by French manufacturer Jules Roger, was described as “a very nice collection of landscape papers, of novel and pleasing designs”,¹⁵⁷ suggesting that a “departure from good taste” was now receiving some official acceptance.¹⁵⁸

At the 1875 Intercolonial Exhibition Department 14 (Wood as Material) actually presented among its articles on show a more accurate indication of fashionable Australian interior decoration. In company with an assortment of individual exhibits of tables, chairs, billiard-tables and venetian blinds were two medal winning displays by W.H. Roche & Co. More often than not entries in official catalogues were terse and fairly uninformative. The exhibits of Morris & Co. in London’s 1862 International Exhibition were listed simply as “Exhibit No.5783: Decorated furniture, tapestries,&c” and “Exhibit No.6734: Stained glass windows”.¹⁵⁹ This was not the case with Roche & Co.’s entries in 1875:

2050. Black and Gold Drawing-Room Suite, upholstered in rich
canary-coloured satin, with blue satin borders and trimmings to match;

¹⁵⁷*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.297.

¹⁵⁸This acceptance may have been occasioned by Australian graciousness to international guests. However three-dimensional “departure from good taste” in wallpaper designs was later reflected in printed fabrics, Myer’s Emporium in Melbourne advertising in 1933 a “superb depiction of Windsor Castle as seen from the Thames; well drawn and beautifully coloured, printed on 31-inch linen” (*The Home*, Vol.14, No.2, February 1933, p.8). While one might argue that over fifty years on a shift in aesthetic taste may account for acceptance of this kind of design work, under Morris’s structural basics for flat pattern making appropriate to the construction and use of textiles and wallpapers no such deviation should be possible at any date.

¹⁵⁹Aymer Vallance, *William Morris: His Art His Writings and His Public Life*, Studio Editions, London, 1986, p.59.

consisting of Settee, Easy Chairs, Victoria Chair, 6 Chairs, and Centre Ottoman, stuffed in all hair, designed and made in colonial blackwood by exhibitors.

2051. Window Drapery, in canary and blue satin, trimmed with all silk bullion fringe, silk cord and tassels, silk rope, &c., to match, with black and gold Cornice, white Swiss Lace Curtains, and blue and gold Silk Curtain Holders. Designed and made by exhibitors. ¹⁶⁰

The interesting aspect of Rocke's 1875 exhibits was the attempt to coordinate a domestic interior rather than simply display unconnected items. Beyond its expertise as superior furniture makers [ILLUSTRATION 12], the company obviously prided itself on its ability to advise the general public of integrated fashionable decorative schemes. In addition to its two prizewinning exhibits Rocke's also displayed Brussels carpets and "a large variety of articles suitable for internal house decoration".¹⁶¹ It did not intend to miss the opportunity offered by the 1875 Intercolonial Exhibition to display the full range of its available services.¹⁶² The directions Rocke & Co. proposed were of a more opulent nature than previously indicated for Australian consumption suggesting that the firm sought to entice the public towards fashion rather than comfortable conservatism. In contrast, Ferguson & Urie and Lyon, Cottier & Co. only exhibited stained glass, giving no

¹⁶⁰*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record*, op.cit., p.135. Welsh-born William Henry Rocke arrived in Melbourne in 1852 and following a visit to England in 1857 opened a furniture warehouse in Lonsdale Street. Trading as Beauchamp and Rocke, Auctioneers, from 1863 to 1868, Rocke dissolved the partnership to form from 1869 W.H. Rocke & Co., setting up a furniture and carpet warehouse in Collins Street.

¹⁶¹*Ibid.*, p.135.

¹⁶²Nonetheless Victorian organisers did not send any of Rocke & Co.'s work to Philadelphia.

indication of the decorative activities they also undertook. This concentration on stained glass likely reflected satisfactory business in interior decoration through a repute which may not have been known to stained glass patrons.

Experts at the 1875 Intercolonial Exhibition believed that the local glass industry “could have become still more extended in its operations were it not for the difficulty of obtaining skilled workmen who all, until lately, had to be imported from Europe”. Yet it was not really an employment matter which restricted glass manufacture in Australia. In meeting glazing requirements there seemed to be first a lack of interest and incentive to develop those subsidiary industries needed to provide quality raw materials; and, secondly, a reluctance on the part of importers to overthrow the established trade which allowed healthy profit margins. Within Department 1 at the 1875 Intercolonial Exhibition, sandwiched between building bricks and bottles and basic table glass, appeared the two colonial stained glass manufacturers:

Lyon, Cottier & co., Sydney, New South Wales

119. Stained Glass Staircase Window.

Subject - “Captain Cook.”

Special award by Commissioners - Medal

Ferguson & Urie, 10 Collins-street East, Melbourne

120. Staircase on wall Window, “The Seasons.”

Staircase on wall Window, “Rob Roy.”

Portion of Staircase Window for Mr. Clarke’s mansion, Sunbury

Embossed Plate Glass for do. "Chillingworth Wild Cattle."

121. "The Maries at the Tomb," "The Charge to Peter," Samples of Margins.

Special award by Commissioners - Silver medal for collection. ¹⁶³

Although Ferguson & Urie had been operating in the field for nearly ten years and Lyon, Cottier & Co. for only two, the larger display by the senior company was not a reflection of its greater output but of the cautious approach of many manufacturers to participate in exhibitions outside their own state. This circumspection was based on sound business practice: resources were marshalled to impact on the most promising and profitable markets and these often remained within the home sphere because of colonial rivalries. At the time of the Intercolonial Exhibition Lyon, Cottier & Co. had just completed a substantial commission for All Saints' Anglican Cathedral in Bathurst [ILLUSTRATIONS 13-14] which included five-light east and west windows [ILLUSTRATION 15]. Its single secular choice for Melbourne may have been a statement on New South Wales' independent outlook compared to Ferguson & Urie's presentation of popular British subjects.¹⁶⁴

With the Australian stained glass industry at such a fledgling stage it was perhaps difficult for exhibition organisers to place the manufacture within a section appropriate to its nature. At the first Intercolonial Exhibition held in Melbourne in 1866 Ferguson, Urie & Lyon were the only stained glass manufacturers

¹⁶³*Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (Melbourne 1875) Official Record, op.cit., p.17.*

¹⁶⁴See Beverley Sherry, 'Australian themes in stained glass', in *Heritage Australia*, vol.2, no.2, Summer 1983, pp.8-15. Tariffs must not have been seen as restrictive for Lyon, Cottier & Co. in stained glass or they would not have bothered to exhibit at all in Melbourne.

[ILLUSTRATION 16]. They exhibited under the section for “Manufactures and the Useful Arts” [ILLUSTRATION 17], stained glass not being seen as one of the acceptable “Ornamental Arts” which embraced sculpture, painting, casts, photographs, lithographs, models, engravings and carvings.¹⁶⁵ Yet jurors awarded them a medal for “Establishing a Manufacture of Stained Glass” under “Ornamental Work in the Flat”.¹⁶⁶ The inclusion in 1875 of stained glass within the “mineral” determined Department 1 would have been justified if the basic pot metal (composed of sand, soda, potash and various metal oxides) were under judgement. This, however, was not the case. Stained glass is essentially the artistic modulation of the fundamental materials and it is upon this that estimation should have been sought.¹⁶⁷ At the Philadelphia Exhibition stained glass was rightly recognised as an “Art” and appeared not with “Manufactures” but within a section for decorative artistic work.¹⁶⁸ Such an enlightened appreciation drew support from twelve specialised British companies including John Hardman & Co. and Heaton, Butler & Bayne, with James Powell & Sons presenting the most exhibits.¹⁶⁹ Lyon, Cottier & Co.’s *Captain Cook* also appeared,¹⁷⁰ perhaps more to display to Americans some colonial “industrial progress” than to stimulate orders. Morris & Co. did not

¹⁶⁵*Official Catalogue*, Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne, 1866, p.31.

¹⁶⁶*Awards of the Jurors*, Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne, 1866, p.34.

¹⁶⁷Just as painting is assessed on the expressive use of paints and sculpture likewise with clays, constructive materials, etc.

¹⁶⁸Philadelphia International Exhibition, 1876. *Official Catalogue of the British Section*, op.cit., pp.91, 224-225.

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*, pp.224-225.

¹⁷⁰*Official Catalogue of the Natural and Industrial Products of New South Wales Forwarded to The International Exhibition of 1876, at Philadelphia*, printed for the Commissioners by Thomas Richards, Government Printer, Sydney, 1876, p.36.

exhibit. The company may not have seen enough promise in the American market to warrant the expense of exhibiting.¹⁷¹

As a business not centred on exporting, Morris & Co. understood the commercial advantages to be gained from exposure at selected exhibitions. When showing at Manchester in 1887 Morris supposed that the company would not sell “much on the spot” yet he believed that “to show our goods where many people congregate is a legitimate way of advertising, & perhaps the only one possible for us”.¹⁷² Ferguson & Urie, Lyon, Cottier & Co. and Rocke & Co. seemed likewise to accept that ideally such venues in Australia should aid in the promotion of local manufactures. However the uncertainty displayed in the early intercolonial exhibitions in Melbourne concerning the place of the decorative arts reflected an insecurity with such production which undermined encouragement for Australian manufacturing and colonial rivalries debilitated rather than stimulated any possible beneficial interaction.

Size of available market noticeably affected decorative manufacturing. In Australia it was the most enervating condition in the furthering of local production. Investor support relied solely on profit viability and with attempts to satisfy the varying financial parameters of a small population compromise of standards often resulted. Morris & Co. did not need to consider even the rudiments of exporting as Britain provided suitable patrons in reasonable numbers without compromise

¹⁷¹It would seem that Morris & Co. wallpapers were displayed at the Philadelphia Exhibition, not by the company itself but by agents (Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., pp.24, 33).

¹⁷²Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, p.625.

being necessary. To tap that home clientele was also for Morris & Co. a more easily managed concern because of the sophistication of exhibition organisation. With a greatly favoured British import industry in Australia Morris & Co. could have successfully competed here if it had so wished to pursue that form of selling. To do so however would have meant changes in attitude for the firm: quality would have to have been varied to cover market expectations; media advertising would have had to have been strongly pursued; and middlemen would have had to have been accepted. All these particulars suggest compromise of company principles. On this point the enterprise would not have been considered.

The international exhibitions which made their first appearance in Australia in 1879 would provide a far greater challenge for Australian companies than the intercolonial events. Australian products would be viewed by many more people than previously attended the intercolonial happenings and in terms of style and quality they would be up for comparison with international goods. Australian manufacturers would be competing in a highly visual and immediate manner with overseas firms which ran their businesses on grounds suitable to satisfying the Australian market in terms of production and marketing. Morris recognised these international exhibitions as the “advertising shows” that they were yet his 1896 addendum that they “cursed the world with their pretentious triviality”¹⁷³ was decidedly cynical. For Australians the exhibitions appeared to be serious yet enjoyable affairs. They were not exclusively based on ostentation but on a genuine

¹⁷³Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.IV, 1996, p.394.

concern to show the competitiveness of Australian directions among broadened choices.

CHAPTER 3: INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS IN AUSTRALIA,
1879-1888: MORAL CONCERN AND TRADE PROMOTION

In accordance with earlier trends in Britain, Europe and the United States, Australian authorities began in the 1880s to consider organisational lines for improving taste and skills. Essentially this evolved from reflections on the first three international exhibitions on Australian soil. The Sydney International Exhibition which ran from 17 September 1879 to 20 April 1880 was Australia's first such showing. Melbourne's International Exhibition began just over five months later, opening on 1 October 1880 and continuing until 31 March 1881. Adelaide's first International Exhibition, from 21 June 1887 to 7 January 1888, developed from the enthusiasm of parliamentarians who had visited the Melbourne Exhibition. These International Exhibitions were educational because of their enormous visual display, not because of judicial assessments which could be flawed.¹⁷⁴ Greater consistency in this latter area could have benefitted the population more, if indeed organisers seriously sought to enlighten with regard to quality in workmanship and discernment in form and adornment. However trade manoeuvrings, both colonial and international, often seemed to influence assessments. These then exposed the fluctuating condition of Australian decorative arts which varied from healthy

¹⁷⁴During the running of the Sydney International Exhibition "exhibition" conferences were organised by the Working Men's College and a series of papers was given at the School of Arts "dealing in an explanatory fashion with the exhibits and the probable outcome of an investigation into the merits of those exhibits" (see *Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, Mitchell Library, Sydney, ML.F981.1/30). The latter was instigated by John Plummer who expressed his regret "that no steps had been taken by the Commission of the Exhibition to popularise and explain the many interesting objects". Plummer claimed that "to a great extent" many of the exhibits were "unintelligible" to the majority of visitors (Ibid.: *Sydney Mail*, 15 January 1880).

manufacturing in furniture to misleading interpretations of stained glass and neglect in wallpaper and textile production.

The Executive Commissioner for Sydney's International Exhibition, P.A. Jennings, reported that

While thus maintaining our prestige and increasing our trade and population the Exhibition has done good educational service to the masses of the people by placing before them works of art of the highest character, and in this way propagating sound principles of taste and awakening a love for the beautiful. ...¹⁷⁵

Here Jennings was reiterating those foci established with previous English events: trade promotion, national pride and education. Jules Lubbock has suggested that the "real motif" of exhibitions organised by the state was "to reshape personal morality by implementing ... control over individual consumption".¹⁷⁶ To some degree this stand is evident in Jennings' words however realisation was somewhat mitigated in Australia because of the dominance of imported goods on display.

¹⁷⁵*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, Thomas Richards, Government Printer, Sydney, 1881, p.cviii. Previous exhibitions in Sydney had always been arranged by The Agricultural Society of NSW and this organisation likewise set into motion the 1879 affair with its secretary Jules Joubert suggesting the importation of a selection of goods from the 1878 Paris Exposition Universelle. The costing of an International Exhibition proved to be beyond the means of the Agricultural Society and the Colonial Secretary was reluctant to assist. However the Society's president, Governor Sir Hercules Robinson, brought his weight to bear in keeping the honour of the Colony intact and promised that the government would match subscriptions raised by the Society. Such fell short of the final estimates and the government agreed to see the Exhibition through to maturity. See also Peter Proudfoot, Roslyn Maguire, Robert Freestone (Eds), *Colonial City, Global City: Sydney's International Exhibition 1879*, Crossing Press, Darlinghurst, 2000.

¹⁷⁶Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1995, p.248.

Trade was surely the strongest undercurrent to exhibitions in this country. In 1877 when the possibility of an international exhibition for Sydney was being mooted *The Australian Town and Country Journal* declared that such “can hardly fail to promote the commercial interests of the country”.¹⁷⁷ Companies partook in international exhibitions for the commercial advantages they could gain not for the influence they could exert on social standards. Jennings’ observation of the public’s reaction at Sydney was basically cautious but it did highlight an important educational opportunity which Morris understood as essential to the people: “I want every one to think for himself about [the arts], and not to take things for granted from hearsay”.¹⁷⁸ The *Sydney Mail* went too far in suggesting that any “love for the beautiful” awakened by the Sydney Exhibition would focus on “beauty for its own sake” and that such should “elevate a community’s thoughts and aspirations, and keep it from fixing all its aims on mere money getting and utilitarianism”.¹⁷⁹ International exhibitions were still competitive forums in a commercial world.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XVI, No.394, 21 July 1877, p.92.

¹⁷⁸Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.77.

¹⁷⁹Quoted in Montana, op.cit., p.171: *Sydney Mail*, 8 May 1880, p.864.

¹⁸⁰Morris’s “eccentricities” (Peter Faulkner (Ed), *William Morris: The Critical Heritage*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1973, p.316) would lead him to a view opposite to that expressed by the *Sydney Mail*: “It is profit which draws men into enormous unmanageable aggregations called towns,...; profit which crowds them up when they are there into quarters without gardens or open spaces; profit which won’t take the most ordinary precautions against wrapping a whole district in a cloud of sulphurous smoke; which turns beautiful rivers into filthy sewers;...it is almost incredible that we should bear such crass stupidity as this” (Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., pp.29-30). An unsigned criticism in the *Saturday Review* claimed that here Morris “describes a state of things which does not exist”, that he “darkens his picture of the present in order to heighten the charms of the dream of the future” (Faulkner (Ed), op.cit., p.312). Morris’s above-quoted remarks are carelessly pointed. Humankind is not gregarious for reasons of profit. The accumulation of Australia’s population in coastal towns was most strongly driven by desire for security and companionship in a hostile and often lonely natural environment. Yet the character of the

Just over one million people visited the 1879-1880 Sydney International Exhibition, compared with a little more than six million for London's 1862 event and ten million in Philadelphia in 1876.¹⁸¹ Yet the attendance in Sydney was in fact comparatively impressive. Two years earlier the NSW Commissioners for the Philadelphia Exhibition had noted of a combined Australia and New Zealand "their 65 millions of sheep, and less than two millions and a half of people",¹⁸² and in 1879 Jennings argued that distance from Europe suppressed immigration to Australia unlike the United States where the population was exceeding fifty million.¹⁸³ Thus Sydney entertained at its International Exhibition the equivalent of close to half of its country's population in comparison to Philadelphia's one-fifth. While the attendance figures themselves suggest in international terms a small market in Sydney, by percentage they indicate an enthusiasm by the public for first hand experiences. On a mercenary note, this would have been important to importer and local manufacturer alike.

At the Sydney International Exhibition organisers revealed a sophistication in product divisions which had been lacking just four years earlier with the Melbourne Intercolonial. There was no hesitation in allocating stained glass to the Art Section, perhaps in emulation of the 1876 Philadelphia International Exhibition, while plain window glass found a logical place within the class comprising items

urban environment is decided by cost factors. Present day conditions testify to the essential truth in Morris's words.

¹⁸¹*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., pp.cxvii, cxviii.

¹⁸²*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XVI, No.396, 4 August 1877, p.174.

¹⁸³*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.cix.

manufactured by similar means: ceramics, pottery, porcelain and glassware.¹⁸⁴ International exhibits in the stained glass section at Sydney were both highly competitive and enthusiastically assessed by the judges who were particularly captivated by the French entries. Comments disclose the elements undoubtedly seen to be essential to sustain a reputable professional industry here,¹⁸⁵ those for the work of Leo Lefevre et Cie, Paris, which received a First degree of Merit, are indicative:

Several painted church windows of the highest artistic merit, the designs and composition being of great beauty, force, and brilliancy, the grouping and attitudes graceful and striking, the colours bright, harmonious and pleasing, the skill displayed in the combinations of the colours and shades praiseworthy and denoting great progress.¹⁸⁶

Similarly, in stained glass window design Morris looked for “clear, crisp, easily-read incident” and colour which was always “clear, bright, and emphatic”.¹⁸⁷ Yet, as with the 1876 Philadelphia Exhibition, Morris & Co. chose not to exhibit in Australian exhibitions. Again this may well have been purely a business decision based on marshalling resources for most likely markets, Australia not seen as an economically viable proposition. In comparison to the French exhibits in Sydney Camm Brothers of Birmingham, credited with equal distinction, received from the

¹⁸⁴Morris classified these manufactures as “arts”; some may have been “lesser arts with a vengeance” (Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.45) but they nonetheless could satisfy the necessary conditions of art: functionality with beauty of form. Stained glass maintained a profile higher than a “lesser art” by virtue of its impact on architecture.

¹⁸⁵*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., pp.490, 491.

¹⁸⁶*Ibid.*, p.490.

¹⁸⁷Poulson (Ed), op.cit., p.44.

judges the terse observation of “Very excellent designs and careful work”¹⁸⁸ while the Highly Commended work of Heaton, Butler & Bayne of London went without remark.¹⁸⁹ While the products of Camm Brothers are unrecognised in Australia, windows by Heaton, Butler & Bayne became apparent following the company’s foray into exhibiting here.¹⁹⁰ The London company’s Sydney display would have been responsible for the commission of the great East Window of 1885 for St.Saviour’s Anglican Cathedral, Goulburn, New South Wales [see ILLUSTRATION 119]. Thus this international exhibition clearly allowed some of the public to “think for himself” regarding artistic endeavour rather than accepting the “hearsay” of judges. Such a choice was rightly discerning when comments on other items are considered.

The Australian colonies were represented in Sydney by two stained glass window manufacturers from New South Wales and one from Victoria. The former secured awards equal to the best overseas entries (First degree of Merit) while the latter was Commended. Despite the varying commendations all three Australian exhibits received comments from the judges. Remarks were not equable even for equally assessed items. Ashwin & Falconer of Sydney attracted attention similar to the French entries:

Show several painted (stained) ornamental glass windows of excellent execution, of very good designs, the colours being bright and harmonious,

¹⁸⁸*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.495.

¹⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p.496.

¹⁹⁰See, for example, Peter & June Donovan, *150 Years of Stained & Painted Glass*, Wakefield Press, Netley, 1986, pp.59, 61-62, 73, 75-76.

the grouping easy, expressive, and correct, and the settings substantial and creditable.¹⁹¹

The most obvious omission in the more insipid response to the work of Lyon, Cottier & Co. - "Of fine execution, well designed, and creditable to the Colony"¹⁹² - is mention of bright colours. In 1890 Morris wrote that "Any artist who has no liking for *bright* colour had better hold his hand from stained-glass designing".¹⁹³ This was Morris's way of verbally presenting a major consideration in Gothic stained glass windows. With the Gothic Revival in the nineteenth century the luminosity which formed such an essential part of original windows was revitalised by the use of high quality coloured glass. True Gothic Revival protagonists, including Lyon, Cottier & Co., held strongly to this fundamental ingredient. While Lyon later moderated the tonality of his colours from the vividness of early work he never abandoned brightness in terms of luminous intensity.¹⁹⁴ The judges appeared loath to find fault with any of the stained glass works. In order to sustain this stand they omitted to comment at all on some entries while their reports on the Australian exhibits bear an almost condescending intonation, perhaps in the misguided belief that colonial stained glass needed to be verbally supported regardless of its true quality. The report for the window by John Bell of Sandhurst would have been better left unsaid.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.504.

¹⁹²*Ibid.*, p.506.

¹⁹³Poulson (Ed), op.cit., p.44.

¹⁹⁴See Chapter 6.

¹⁹⁵"The effect is good, design and workmanship very fair and artistic, and the industry is worthy of encouragement" (*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.515).

The panel responsible for stained glass (among engravings, photographs and design work) was composed of three Sydney judges including French expatriate Lucien Henry and one each from New Zealand, Paris and Philadelphia. Lucien Henry was a strong advocate of Australian decorative arts and produced designs for stained glass in the next decade.¹⁹⁶ The preferential comments for the French exhibits were very much a reflection of personal decorative taste¹⁹⁷ as French stained glass was never in high contention in the Australian import industry. The awards, displaying as in the case of other divisions an almost blanket acceptance of all exhibits, laid the ground for possible public duping when prizes could subsequently be announced by firms. John Bell's ability to declare that his work had been "Commended" in Sydney would not have been a true indication of the standing of his products.

The furniture division of the 1879 Exhibition was something of a tame affair, particularly in terms of entry numbers compared to the following Melbourne show. British furniture manufacturers pressed accepted style choices for particular rooms, early English and "other superior Styles" such as Queen Anne and Adam predominating.¹⁹⁸ This was probably done with the knowledge that Australians already appreciated such styles. William Walker & Sons deigned to include one Gothic piece in "Scotch Baronial" style which was simply a showcase for exhibits; its description suggests it was not a style really suitable for home consumption:

¹⁹⁶*The Technical Gazette of New South Wales*, Vol.2, Part 3, August 1912, p.35.

¹⁹⁷and perhaps the strength of Lucien Henry's position on the panel.

¹⁹⁸*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., pp.100-104.

... The Case is massive and well proportioned, and distinguished by that severity of detail which characterizes the Gothic of the period.¹⁹⁹

The Sydney furniture firm of J. Lawson held its own against British competition, to be awarded likewise a First degree of Merit Special and to receive the same notice for design, skilled workmanship and selection of materials.²⁰⁰ British judges were conspicuous by their absence, perhaps something of a political move to allay fears of favouritism and wisely so in view of Moore & Co.'s comments in their *Catalogue of the British Court*. This Sydney publication suggested that a "magnificent success" was assured for this first international exhibition held in the southern hemisphere, "the principal factor in this gratifying result" being the "display made by the British Exhibitors".²⁰¹ As suggested in Chapter 2, the Australian press strongly favoured British furniture and promoted its acquisition by locals. Yet from the judging comments passed on J. Lawson's exhibits, Australian products could compete on all levels with imported items but were not given the same encouragement by the media. The ten-man judging panel for furniture at the Sydney International Exhibition was made up of eight Sydney judges, one from the country town of Bathurst and one from Vermont in the United States. All works received awards of some degree. The organisers of the Sydney Exhibition seemed determined to offend no-one and to ensure that the public believed they were being treated to a viewing of the world's best products. In the majority of cases this was

¹⁹⁹Ibid., p.104.

²⁰⁰Ibid., pp.225, 217, 221.

²⁰¹Moore's *Catalogue of the British Court, Sydney International Exhibition of 1879*, Moore & Co., Sydney, n.d. [1879], p.1.

so; however, exhibits such as John Bell's stained glass and the commended exhibit of Paris furniture makers Adam et Cie - "Elaborate in design, but being cheap it is rather rough and inferior in workmanship"²⁰² - demonstrate that greater restraint should have been shown when granting lesser awards. This would have ensured that spectators could easily differentiate between the best and the rest.²⁰³ Yet, in presenting the first event in Australia to promote international participation, Sydney organisers clearly wished to appear as both courteous hosts to international guests and proud supporters of local content.

The countries appearing at the Sydney International Exhibition and the volume of works from each reflected already established import preferences. Prior to World War I Britain supplied some 63 percent of imports to Australia, Germany 11 per cent and the United States nearly 12 per cent.²⁰⁴ At the Sydney International Exhibition Great Britain provided the most exhibitors at 1250, the home colony 1123, Germany 720, France 375 and the USA 310. Award figures followed a similar pattern.²⁰⁵ So while it is likely that the public were seeing some already available decorative styles they would also have been exposed to an enormously greater array of approved goods from abroad which had not been taken in hand by importers.

It is difficult to assess accurately the practical impact of this first International Exhibition on Australian soil as official reports do not offer sales figures. One

²⁰²*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.214.

²⁰³It was perhaps such misdirected judging which drew from Morris the scornful appendage of "pretentious trivialities" for international exhibitions.

²⁰⁴*Australia Today 1924*. British Empire Exhibition Number, 10 November 1923, p.99.

²⁰⁵*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., pp.cxcv, cxciv.

instance of selling success however was the fact that Walker & Sons presented an entirely new furniture collection at the Melbourne International Exhibition because all their exhibits in Sydney had been sold during the run of the earlier show, the “handsomest” pieces going to a New South Welshman²⁰⁶ - that is, Bathurst’s James Horne Stewart. The influence of the 1879 Sydney International Exhibition on Stewart was both immediate and long-lasting. Not only did he buy items on show in Sydney, he again purchased some of the “handsomest” pieces from Walker & Sons’ new collection in Melbourne.²⁰⁷ He also subsequently favoured manufacturers who had exhibited in Sydney, probably because of remembered impressions of work he had seen at the time. More than ten years after the event he was purchasing articles from the Sydney furniture maker J. Newton²⁰⁸ whose “ottoman and chairs” had been highly recommended in 1879,²⁰⁹ and in 1887 he acquired floor coverings and curtains from British manufacturer Thomas Tapling & Co. [ILLUSTRATION 18] whose tapestry exhibit in 1879 received the following accolade from the judges:

This is a magnificent exhibit, richly and beautifully finished and coloured, and the design of the piece is so well executed as to render the exhibit a work of art.²¹⁰

²⁰⁶*Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903, op.cit.: Sydney Morning Herald, Wednesday 31 October 1880.*

²⁰⁷*Ibid.*

²⁰⁸See Illustration 187.

²⁰⁹*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879, op.cit., p.225.*

²¹⁰*Ibid., p.250.*

There is little doubt that in not exhibiting its wares in Australia, Morris & Co. lost prospective Australian clients who would have been discerning enough to appreciate the company's products and wealthy enough to purchase the same. James Stewart bought quality goods on the basis of observation rather than repute, just as Morris wished people should.²¹¹ Stewart would not have been the only New South Welshman to be impressed by the 1879 Sydney event. However, because of colonial insularity, it was always necessary for manufacturers to exhibit in all colonies if the entire Australian population was to be tapped. While the prevalent aura of each Exhibition in the Australian colonies was available to the public through newspaper reports²¹² full impact could only be experienced first-hand and this was a luxury not available to all because of the long distances between capital cities. Thus, in order to spread themselves across Australian colonial markets, exhibitors generally had to be sizeable exporters. Wallpaper manufacturers Jeffrey & Co. are a case in point. This fine London-based firm exhibited in all three initial international exhibitions in Australia whereas somewhat smaller concerns, such as Walker & Sons, concentrated on Sydney and Melbourne alone. Selective exhibiting would have been based on a keen understanding of market sizes and preferences and a company's ability to readily supply goods.²¹³

²¹¹Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.77.

²¹²The *Melbourne Argus* commented kindly on the Sydney Exhibition and likewise the *Sydney Morning Herald* on the Melbourne Exhibition (see *Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, op.cit.).

²¹³While Jeffrey & Co. also exhibited at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, Walker & Sons did not (Philadelphia International Exhibition, 1876. *Official Catalogue of the British Section*, op.cit.).

In P.A. Jennings' summary of the Sydney Exhibition, when he referred to "our prestige" and "our trade and population", he was not alluding to Australia generally. The preservation of prestige referred to New South Wales only as the individual colonies continued to fight between themselves for supremacy. That Melbourne would host an International Exhibition immediately following Sydney's was an indication of the consuming passion with which the battle was fought, a battle not simply for trade but for 'one-upmanship'. The consecutiveness of the Sydney/Melbourne affairs was unheard-of for countries on the International Exhibition calendar,²¹⁴ probably because participating nations other than Australia organised their exhibitions as united communities. There is no doubt that many overseas exhibitors were attracted by the prospect of showing at two major cities rather than shipping goods the considerable distance to Australia for just one appearance. Thus inadvertently the concept of the two exhibitions worked to bring better presentations to the Australian population. Enthusiastic competition between shipping lines meant that exhibits could be freighted from Sydney to Melbourne at low rates and without delay. Although Sydney's Executive Commissioner Jennings suggested that these "twin shows" were "not rivals, but friendly competitors" he nonetheless clearly pointed out that there was no "relationship" between the Sydney and Melbourne Exhibitions.²¹⁵ Such an attitude would seem to relate to the obstinate separateness cultivated by the individual colonies alluded to previously.

²¹⁴International Exhibitions 1851-1900: England 1851, France 1855, England 1862, France 1867, England 1871, Austria 1873, USA 1876, France 1878, Australia 1879-80, Australia 1880-81, Netherlands 1883, Australia 1887, France 1889, Australia 1891, USA 1893, France 1900.

²¹⁵*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.xxxix.

The commissioners for Melbourne's International Exhibition believed that they gained invaluable insight from the Sydney affair into "the wants of the Australasian market" and were able to utilise such in "the larger and more comprehensive display" at Melbourne.²¹⁶ Certainly numbers of exhibitors from all countries increased. The Victorian colony provided twice as many exhibitors at home as New South Wales had been able to muster for Sydney, and while British participation rose marginally, France tripled its numbers and Germany added a third more.²¹⁷ These increases were possible because Melbourne provided over 20 per cent more exhibition space than Sydney²¹⁸ - again an indication of 'one-upmanship'? As the most populous Australian colony Victoria may also have attracted added overseas interest on the presumption that the size of the market would offset the effects of the state's protectionist trade policy. Yet the Melbourne commissioners betrayed a restricted and outmoded attitude towards the constitution of artistic creativity which was not shared by Sydney or Europe. In the introduction to the "Art Galleries" the commissioners quoted "a great critic" who said that there "are only two fine arts possible to the human race, sculpture and painting".²¹⁹ Morris firmly believed that it was "only a matter of convenience" that painting and sculpture were ever separated from "applied art" for

²¹⁶*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record, 1882, p.xxxvii.*

²¹⁷*Ibid., p.li.*

²¹⁸*Ibid., p.xlviii; Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879, op.cit., p.cxxii.*

²¹⁹*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record, op.cit., p.lxxxv.*

in effect the synonym for applied art is architecture, and I should say that painting is of little use, and sculpture of less, except where their works form a part of architecture. ... ²²⁰

Notwithstanding the Melbourne commissioners' narrow position, the "Art Galleries" section included a delicate Austro-Hungarian tea service, French tapestries, German porcelain and Italian pottery.²²¹ Morris would have approved. All these "useful wares" were "not frivolity, but a part of the serious business of life".²²² In a retrogressive step, in Melbourne stained glass was relegated to the division for Civil Engineering and Public Works, among stone flagging and building stones, whereas plain window glass held a higher profile in the Glass and Pottery section. This seemed to affect the interest of stained glass manufacturers to exhibit since Sydney's Lyon, Cottier & Co. and Ashwin & Falconer competed with only three German companies, two undistinguished British firms and one French maker.²²³ The Civil Engineering jury, made up of eight Victorian Judges, two British and one each from France, the United States, Germany and the Netherlands,²²⁴ reported:

In stained glass windows one only is worthy of special notice - that of Lorin, of Chartres - for its purely artistic design and perfection of workmanship. ²²⁵

²²⁰William Morris, *Art and Its Producers, and The Arts & Crafts of Today*, Chiswick Press, London, 1901, p.26.

²²¹*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record*, op.cit., pp.lxxv-xcii.

²²²Morris, *Art and Its Producers, and The Arts & Crafts of Today*, op.cit., p.26.

²²³*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record*, op.cit., pp.213, 240-241, 315, 371, 581, 628.

²²⁴*Ibid.*, p.84.

²²⁵*Ibid.*, p.88.

Unlike Sydney commendations which encouraged all work, this Melbourne jury was not willing to even acknowledge other entries. This may have been the result of a more cosmopolitan outlook in the southern colony, with a greater contribution by international jurors and local partners securer than their Sydney counterparts in dealing with exhibitors. The result was a more honest assessment of items on show, organisers not striving to please all exhibitors regardless of quality of work. In this respect Melbourne indicated a step forward for Australian discernment of aesthetic character.

The United Kingdom Court at Melbourne included a considerable amount of items of interior decoration: Walker & Sons and A.J. Arrowsmith & Co. exhibited “Art Furniture” as opposed to the ordinary furniture of W.A. & S. Smee and Conrath & Sons;²²⁶ an array of Kidderminster, Axminster and Wilton carpets were provided by numerous manufacturers and wallpapers from, among others, J. Allan & Son and Carlisle & Clegg of London, William Cooke of Leeds and Brooks, Robinson & Co. of London and Melbourne.²²⁷ Jeffrey & Co. of London, who printed all of Morris & Co.’s wallpapers, received an award for its own flock papers.²²⁸ Contributions in wallpapers came also from Germany, France and Austria and judges commended all for their “excellence of manufacture, beauty and

²²⁶The distinction between “Art Furniture” and ordinary furniture here was one of media ‘hype’; of some companies choosing to label their products using the most up-to-date terminology and others not bothering. In reality products were of a similar nature.

²²⁷*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record*, op.cit., pp.cxxx-cxxxiii, 310.

²²⁸*Ibid.*, p.310.

appropriateness of design, and perfection of printing and finish". They concluded their report on paperhangings with the following:

It is worthy of note that the extravagant and inappropriate floral arrangements so much in vogue with the paperstaining trade a few years ago, were generally absent, and that when flowers were introduced in the papers exhibited, it was with correct taste and judgment. The great majority of the designs, however, were in conventional flowers and ornament in soft and gentle tints of harmonious colours. ²²⁹

Two typically fine British wallpapers which entered Victoria around this time were the dining room paper used at Rotha, East Hawthorn [ILLUSTRATION 19] and one obviously designed for drawing room use [ILLUSTRATION 20].²³⁰ Both these papers are unmarked as to manufacturers and it is therefore not known if they were actually shown at the Melbourne International Exhibition. They do, however, decidedly satisfy the judgements passed at that event. France and Britain strongly contested for the best in the furnishing lines of upholstery fabrics, hangings, wallpapers and carpets and it was these exhibits which drew the highest commendations from Exhibition judges. France received nine First Order of Merit Gold in this section and Britain six.²³¹ Morris & Co. might have comfortably competed here. That the company presented a substantial showing at the Boston Foreign Fair just two years later and were already planning for such in 1880²³²

²²⁹Ibid., p.81.

²³⁰Collection of Phyllis Murphy, Kyneton, Victoria.

²³¹*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record*, op.cit., pp.211, 310.

²³²Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.I, 1984, p.563.

clearly suggests that business repercussions of costs against likely market returns were at the heart of the company's decision to selectively exhibit.

The appearance of the Australian firm of Brooks, Robinson & Co. in the wallpaper section at Melbourne suggests that they were manufacturers of wallpapers when in fact they were only importers. In 1853 Henry Brooks had arrived in Melbourne acting as agent for his father's British export firm in glass and china. He joined with Edward Robinson in 1869 to form a highly successful and opportunist company which continued well into the twentieth century [ILLUSTRATION 21]. Some idea of the range of merchandise handled by Brooks Robinson is apparent in the advertisements it placed regularly with *The Australasian* [ILLUSTRATION 22]. Therein it was stated that they acted as agents for the wallpaper manufacturers C. & J.G. Potter and it was likely to be this firm's products that were exhibited at the 1880 Exhibition. Brooks, Robinson & Co. also displayed an "embossed mirror, ebonite and gold" among the Upholsterer's and Decorator's Work of the colonial Victorian Court,²³³ probably the work of Sherratt & Newth. Through its importing Brooks Robinson ultimately utilised its knowledge of glass, paints and stains to take up stained glass window manufacture in 1888.²³⁴ The company's windows bear a naivety of design combined with unusual and saturated colour tones²³⁵ which seem to reflect the tools of their merchant trade rather than a true understanding of the medium [ILLUSTRATION 23]. The firm outlasted many of its more legitimate competitors and in fact showed the way for other Australian

²³³*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record, op.cit., p.647.*

²³⁴*Sands & McDougall's Melbourne Directory, 1888, p.990.*

²³⁵Geoffrey Down, *Nineteenth-Century Stained Glass in Melbourne*, Master of Arts Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1975, p.90.

glass, oil and colour merchants, such as Brisbane's R.S. Exton & Co., to diversify into stained glass window production.²³⁶ Because such import companies did seize opportunities to expand from dealers to manufacturers and arrangers, the public gained access to a range of Australian products and ideas they would otherwise have missed.

Within the decorative sphere of the Melbourne International Exhibition was a representation from Australian furniture makers comparable to overseas interest. Sixteen Victorian manufacturers competed with ten firms from Austria, seventeen from Germany and fifteen from Italy.²³⁷ Awards of First Order of Merit Silver were presented to Sydney's J. Lawson who again entered drawing room furniture, and to J. M'Ewan and Wallach Bros. of Melbourne for dining and drawing room furniture.²³⁸ No British or European furniture exhibit gained a higher commendation.²³⁹ Although gaining equal distinction W.H. Roche & Co.'s 'Pavilion of Art' [ILLUSTRATION 24] was nonetheless the piece de resistance.

As at the 1875 Intercolonial Exhibition, Roche & Co. did not simply exhibit its furniture manufactures at the 1880 International but attempted to present a quintessential image of home interior decoration. The firm ensured public

²³⁶*Australia Today 1924*, op.cit., p.118. Although Exton & Co. started like Brooks Robinson by utilising its imported products it gained considerable respectability from 1921 through its fruitful association with William Bustard. Bustard came from James Powell & Sons and remained with the Brisbane firm until the 1950s.

²³⁷*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record*, op.cit., pp.183, 239-240, 265-266, 433-434.

²³⁸*Ibid.*, pp.370, 433.

²³⁹*Ibid.*, pp.183, 239-240, 265-266, 310.

awareness of its endeavours through advertising. The *Argus* published some fifteen supplements to the Melbourne International Exhibition, varying from four to eight pages, between 2 October 1880 and 20 May 1881. On the front page of each Rocke's 'Pavilion of Art' was described in considerable detail so that even those unable to attend the exhibition could savour the taste and grandeur of the exhibit.²⁴⁰ The bedroom setting was said to be in "the Combined Renaissance Adams Style",²⁴¹ with "The colours of the Dado, Frieze and Panelling consisting of Shades of Pale Pink, Turquoise Blue, and Silver, with Panelled Ceiling to match". The panelling consisted of sateen cloth; the furniture was of Australian blackwood and Huon pine, inlaid with ebony and holly; the bed and windows were adorned with curtains, hangings and valances in colours matching the walls and ceiling, with the addition of "real Lace" at the windows. A lounge and several easy chairs in matching material were "dispersed about the room". The dining room portion encompassed a wall diapered "in Sober Tints" with a dado below "artistically worked out in rich panelling" and above a painted frieze of panels depicting "various stages of sport". Against this was placed a massive oak sideboard "Early English in design", a grand mahogany sideboard "of Modern Style" and a mahogany dining room chair "covered in embossed Morocco". For the drawing room "The Painting of the

²⁴⁰ *'Argus' Supplement to the Melbourne Exhibition*, p.1. See also Terence Lane & Jessie Serle, 'A Souvenir of Marvellous Melbourne: W.H. Rocke's 1880-1881 Exhibition Cabinet', in *The Art Bulletin of Victoria*, no.33, 1993, pp.18-28. Through advertising, Rocke & Co. would always strongly encourage community consciousness of its products and services although visual presentation, at exhibitions or with shopfront displays, created the greatest impact for the firm. This vigorous approach to business completely contrasted with Morris & Co.'s which was downplayed and intimate and assumed public knowledge of the company's reputation.

²⁴¹ It was common practice in Australia to refer to the "Adams Style". "Adam" or "Adam's" style is the correct classification. This misspelling will recur in quotes.

Cornice, Frieze, Wall, and Dado is carried out in quiet taste, the prevailing colours being neutral tints suitable for the show of Art Furniture". The latter included an Early English cabinet, a black and gold jardiniere, and a light and "elegant" satinwood cabinet of "Early English style" which "has panels of pale blue, whereon are painted Figures of Classic Grace, the back is bracketed, and has panels of Venetian Glass, and the Cove above is pale blue, with Birds, Butterflies, and Foliage". The windows were surmounted with black and gold incised cornices, the draperies of satin and plush. The flooring was polished Huon pine and blackwood parquetry covered in the centre by a Real Axminster carpet. At the end of this full column advertisement Rocke & Co. proudly declared that the "costly exhibits" were all "COLONIAL MADE ... by the artists and workmen" employed by the firm. This statement was something of an exaggeration: the carpet, fabrics used for draperies and upholstery and Dresden china which adorned some of the furniture were not home made but imported. Nonetheless, the company was responsible for the bulk of the items and the complete integrated decorative arrangements presented in the exhibit and it was rewarded by having the only display illustrated in the Official Record. The reason that Rocke's "integrated" arrangements were somewhat remarkable in Australia lay in the company's organisation and the image it sought to project. Although established on furniture making this company, like Brooks Robinson, understood the business advantages of expanding a narrow base by utilising imported components to enhance the possibilities of their local products.

On the last page of the first *Argus* supplement Rocke & Co. also placed another advertisement, for their "Elegant Furnishing Warehouse". They insinuated that

little furniture was now imported by “the gentry” who could find satisfactory articles made in Melbourne by top-class workmen.²⁴² This of course was a liberal bending of the facts to benefit the company’s reputation as the wealthy did still favour overseas manufacturers.²⁴³ In case they should deter customers of more moderate means, Rocke & Co. added that they sought to give “satisfaction to all” and that “Every class of Furnishing is undertaken, from the palatial residence to the artisan’s rustic cottage”. With their Melbourne Exhibition presentation Rocke’s covered nearly all the decorative styles fashionable in the second half of the nineteenth century, from the Classical through to the new Aesthetic Movement with its utilisation of subtle tones and light, graceful furniture. The firm’s advertising most carefully paraded this array, but emphasised acceptable elegance for all. As another indication of the strength of colonial rivalry between New South Wales and Victoria, the *Sydney Morning Herald* elected not to report on Rocke & Co.’s ‘Pavilion of Art’ but instead on the new Melbourne exhibits of London’s William Walker & Sons. The British firm, like its Australian rival, concentrated on Early English and Queen Anne styles and reinforced this strong British flavour with a dining room fireplace “in the Gothic style”.²⁴⁴ Facing such a reception from the Sydney press (that is, no reception at all), it is little wonder that Rocke & Co. concentrated on showing in Melbourne.

On page one of the same first *Argus* supplement dominated by Rocke’s ‘Pavilion of Art’, Alston & Brown also advertised. Essentially drapers and tailors, they

²⁴² *Argus’ Supplement to the Melbourne Exhibition*, 2 October 1880, p.8.

²⁴³ See Lane & Serle, *Australians at Home*, op.cit., p.32.

²⁴⁴ *Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, op.cit.: *SMH* Wednesday 31 October 1880.

likewise classified themselves as “Carpet, Furniture & Bedding Warehousemen” and listed their stock to include suites for the drawing room, dining room, library, hall and bedroom, as well as curtain materials and Axminster, Velvet, Brussels, Tapestry and other carpets “in elegant designs” from “all the leading English Manufacturers”. They indicated that such were being shown by them in the British Court at the Exhibition “as agents for the various manufacturers”.²⁴⁵ Thus, like Brooks, Robinson & Co., Alston & Brown were another colonial importing business exhibiting the manufactures of others.²⁴⁶ In Sydney the department stores of David Jones & Co. and Farmers & Co. received awards at Metropolitan Exhibitions for household furnishings such as carpets, tapestries, wallpapers and curtaining which they exhibited as distributors not manufacturers.²⁴⁷ Australian import firms obviously believed that exhibitions provided a worthwhile venue for advertising wares; however, the same does not seem to have applied generally to Australian manufacturers in the decorative field. After competing favourably in the Melbourne Exhibition of 1867 and the Intercolonial of 1875, Ferguson & Urie did not enter any other exhibitions although they continued to advertise their early exhibiting successes well into the 1880s. Likewise W.H. Rocke & Co. confined itself to showing only at exhibitions held in Victoria. One reason for this cautious attitude may be simply that manufacturers readily perceived the extent of their markets and found other means of advertising more profitable. Morris & Co. were equally as circumspect as Ferguson & Urie and Rocke & Co. The shops of the British

²⁴⁵ *Argus' Supplement*, op.cit., 2 October 1880, p.1.

²⁴⁶ In international exhibition circles this procedure by Australian importers was not unusual, as indicated by American agents exhibiting Morris & Co. wallpapers at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition (Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., pp.24, 33).

²⁴⁷ *The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XI, No.275, 10 April 1875, p.577; Vol.XI, No.276, 17 April 1875, p.619; Vol.XV, No.383, 5 May 1877, p.701.

company provided the main focus for its advertising while exhibiting at other venues was infrequent and selective.²⁴⁸ Another reason in Australia for exhibiting reserve was the physical and financial risks believed to attend the transporting of some exhibits interstate. On this point Sydney's Lyon, Cottier & Co. were applauded by *The Australian Town and Country Journal* for their "national spirit" in exhibiting in Brisbane a window made specifically for a Mudgee client.²⁴⁹ This "spirit" did not encompass a concept of Australia but strictly colonial pride, what the *Journal* referred to as the trade advantages of exhibiting "our wares abroad". In other words, Lyon, Cottier & Co., in exhibiting outside their home colony, were seen by the Sydney publication to be somewhat daring and worthy of encouragement and, in fact, their showing in Brisbane did gain them a commission there.²⁵⁰ Generally, however, Australian manufacturers concentrated marketing to their home colonies. This both encouraged and inspired taste differences between the states.

Judges at the 1879 Sydney International Exhibition issued all exhibitors with commendations of some kind, from the excellence of First Degree of Merit Special to Honourable Mention. The latter would seem to have been really a simple recognition of participation. The honourably mentioned tweeds by George French of Parramatta, considered to have "Fair patterns, but inferior finish",²⁵¹ should not have received any commendation. Melbourne's organisers were far wiser in

²⁴⁸See Harvey & Press, *William Morris: Design and enterprise in Victorian Britain*, op.cit., pp.138-142.

²⁴⁹*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XIV, No.362, 9 December 1876, p.948.

²⁵⁰Ibid.

²⁵¹*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.253.

providing certificates to cover participation where work was unworthy of recommendation.²⁵² At the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition however controversy erupted concerning a suggested rigging of awards to British manufacturers. The Melbourne *Argus* alluded to a “manipulation” of the official British catalogue which drew from some exhibitors the claim that gold and silver medals had been awarded to those firms “who have allowed puffing notices of their displays to appear in the pages of the work in question”. It was suggested that such conduct would be viewed unfavourably by “the better class of manufacturers, especially those who are unwilling to rely on other than the merits of their commodities for honorary recognition”.²⁵³ This attack would seem generally to be unsubstantiated when companies like William Walker & Sons are considered. In their Australian exhibiting Walker & Sons ensured that they had full-page coverage in the official British catalogues and in both Sydney and Melbourne received a silver medal. Such credit was not based on the company’s prowess to impress verbally but genuinely on their ability to display in their products “Excellent taste - very best materials - first-class workmanship”.²⁵⁴ In the light of the *Argus* debate one might conjecture that W.H. Rocke & Co.’s nomination at the 1880 Melbourne Exhibition for the Emperor of Germany’s prize²⁵⁵ was influenced by the firm’s gratuitous “elaborate and tasteful decoration” of the dais for the opening ceremony which drew a public vote of thanks from the commissioners,²⁵⁶ and that the

²⁵²For example, *Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record*, op.cit., pp.265-266, 315.

²⁵³*Album of Newspapers Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, op.cit.: *Argus*, 20 May 1880.

²⁵⁴*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.222.

²⁵⁵*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record*, op.cit., p.78.

²⁵⁶*Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, op.cit.: newspaper

company's award of First Order of Merit Silver resulted from their exhibit being illustrated in the Official Record. Roche & Co. endeavoured, as did Walker & Sons, to present quality products of the best workmanship and materials available. Morris & Co. did no less with their exhibiting. Illustrations and descriptions in catalogues would not have been enough to endorse or detract from actual articles on display. They were simply provided to reinforce visual impressions on viewers.

By comparison with the International Exhibitions of the eastern capital cities Adelaide presented in 1887 a decidedly subdued affair. There were several reasons for this. Although fourteen foreign countries took part only Belgium had its Government's support, thus other European exhibitors were restricted.²⁵⁷ Also, between planning and occurrence of the Exhibition, South Australia changed its tariff laws "in a highly protective direction".²⁵⁸ Britain assured its domination of the Exhibition by organising fixed rates of freight for its exhibitors who occupied "fully one half ... of actual exhibiting space available". That area was only a little more than half that in Sydney.²⁵⁹ In order to attract judges from Sydney and Melbourne free rail passes were issued.²⁶⁰ Population numbers also would have affected participatory interest: in 1885 when New South Wales's population stood at around 900,000 and Victoria's at 1,000,000, South Australia supported only 320,000

not identified; report dated 7 August 1880 under heading THE EXHIBITION.

²⁵⁷*Report of the Royal Commission for the Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition, 1887*, Great Britain Parliament, London, 1888, p.20; also *Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition 1887, Reports of Juries and Official List of awards*, Government Printer, Adelaide, 1889, pp.66, 73.

²⁵⁸*Report of the Royal Commission for the Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition, 1887*, op.cit., p.25.

²⁵⁹*Ibid.*, pp.18, 26.

²⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p.23.

people.²⁶¹ Not all South Australians viewed their Exhibition with the same colonial pride and educative enthusiasm felt by the commissioners of Sydney and Melbourne. Robert Barr Smith wrote to the manager of his London office that “Our Jubilee Exhibition which is to put all things straight, opens on the 20th June. I find it a great bore to be troubled with such childish ongoings”.²⁶² Such an outlook however did not deter Barr Smith from accepting a position as a judge.

Our Exhibition is in full swing, and is pronounced a success. They have made me a judge of sculpture! I am afraid I have little aptitude for the work. I am puzzling myself still to find out what good is to come to us from the Exhibition. Meanwhile the place is full of strangers, and the natives are wasting precious time in idleness sightseeing & festivities.²⁶³

Inadvertently Robert Barr Smith’s comments indicate the value of exhibitions not only to satisfy local curiosity enjoyably but also to open up for an insular public some wonders they would not otherwise see. Most did not have the resources which enabled Robert Barr Smith to travel freely to Britain and Europe. Barr Smith’s remarks also highlight the fact that in Australia judges could be appointed because of their perceived social standing rather than for any ability in the field they were to assess, thus undermining much of the ‘clout’ their opinions should have had.

At the Adelaide Exhibition Australian stained glass was offered by two Victorian firms, Smyrk & Rogers and Brooks Robinson. Respectively these received

²⁶¹*The South Australian Advertiser*, 14 January 1885, p.6.

²⁶²*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide, PRG354/56: Vol.7, p.439: letter of 5 May 1887, Adelaide, to Edward Stavenhagen.

²⁶³*Ibid.*, p.527: letter of 29 August 1887 to Frank Adams.

commendations of Second Order of Merit and Third Order of Merit.²⁶⁴ London's Clayton & Bell and Vienna's Geyling were somewhat reluctantly awarded first class diplomas. The jury for the stained glass section boldly passed judgement on these international entries: "excessive darkness" was noted of some parts of Clayton & Bell's window while "inferior work of the canopy surmounting the figures" was recorded against the Austrian work.²⁶⁵ Excessive darkening was a problem which commonly plagued Clayton & Bell windows because of the firm's painterly style and insistence on heavy stippling to create shading [ILLUSTRATIONS 25-26]. Clayton & Bell had just received approval to provide some sixty-eight double stained glass windows for Melbourne's St.Paul's Cathedral as well as the great East and West Windows. It would be the firm's second largest single commission. They surely felt confident in exhibiting in Adelaide with the intention to expand their Australian prospects, however the exercise was in vain. Clayton & Bell are represented in South Australia by only one recognised window in North Adelaide.²⁶⁶ The reason may be found in prevailing tastes. While Clayton & Bell worked in both the Decorated [ILLUSTRATION 27] and Perpendicular [ILLUSTRATION 28] Styles of the Gothic Revival, they were probably best known for the latter in Australia, the style also followed by the Viennese Geyling. While this traditional style was highly favoured in Melbourne, Adelaide was far more eclectic.²⁶⁷ In fact, the South

²⁶⁴*Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition 1887, Reports of Juries and Official List of Awards*, op.cit., p.220.

²⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p.46.

²⁶⁶Donovan, *150 Years of Stained & Painted Glass*, op.cit., p.72.

²⁶⁷The general freethinking spirit of Adelaide's population was perhaps a reflection of the colony's establishment. British occupation from 1837 was based on a colonising land sale ideal which precluded military authority and religious discrimination (see A Grenfell Price, *The Foundation and Settlement of South Australia 1829-1845*, F W Preece, Adelaide, 1924, p.109). In such an atmosphere it was not necessary to assert social position by adherence to

Australian stained glass window market was dominated by more contemporary design work epitomised in the mass of windows appearing in the colony by James Powell & Sons. A comparison of treatments of saints by Clayton & Bell [ILLUSTRATION 26] and James Powell & Sons [ILLUSTRATION 29] ideally presents the different impact created by both firms. Despite some political selection of judges in certain fields at the Adelaide Exhibition, judging of stained glass at least had progressed from the seeming condescension in Sydney to perceptive criticism which no longer intimidated awe of international participants.

The Adelaide Exhibition continued to uphold the division of home decoration however such division showed a more sympathetic and sensible understanding than had been apparent in the earlier exhibitions. Section D of Department II (Manufactures) entailed furniture and objects of general use in constructions and dwellings: Class 217 for heavy furniture, Class 218 for table furniture (that is, glassware, china, tea sets, etc.) and Class 219 for mirrors, stained glass, etc.²⁶⁸ Designs for the decoration of interiors of buildings, together with other design and decorative work, were part of the Art Department.²⁶⁹ Jury V (Household Furniture, &c.) made special mention of the local firm of S. Mayfield & Sons for their bedroom

predetermined fashions. For Fabian Society stalwart Beatrice Webb there was a clear differentiation of character between Australia's three southern capital cities: "We found Adelaide perhaps the pleasantest of all the Australian colonies. The luxuriously laid out city surrounded by beautiful hills, the pleasant homely people, the air of general comfort, refinement and ease give to Adelaide far more amenity than is possible to restlessly pretentious Melbourne, crude chaotic Sydney, ..." (A G Austin (Ed), *The Webbs' Australian Diary 1898*, Pitman, Melbourne, 1965, p.96).

²⁶⁸*Official Classifications and Regulations, Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition, 1887*, by authority of E. Spiller, Government Printer, Adelaide, 1886, p.20.

²⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p.31.

and dining room furniture and also remarked on the artistic wallpaper of Jeffrey & Co. of London.²⁷⁰ Neither Walker nor Smee exhibited for Britain. Jury VII (Textile Fabrics) particularly noted the lack of exhibits in this area but did especially commend the Linoleum Manufacturing Company of Queen Street, London, for “the taste displayed in the patterns shown, and also for the way in which they were presented to the public gaze”.²⁷¹ The absence of competitive presentations for textiles was a sad reflection on local manufacturing and a disappointment with regard to educating the populace towards discernment in this field. The judges comments here highlight the two powerful motivations behind international exhibitions of educating the public in acceptable aesthetic taste and displaying goods to their best advantage for trade promotion.

Most interesting among the decorative exhibits at Adelaide’s International Exhibition were E.F. Troy’s specimens of graining and marbling for house decorations.²⁷² Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1858, Troy trained as a decorator in his native country before setting up his own firm in Adelaide in 1884. Troy’s business encompassed domestic, church and public building interior decoration and, like Morris & Co., included the provision of stained glass as a necessary component of such a service. Initially Troy covered orders for stained glass windows with work imported from neighbouring Victoria. Within ten years he was putting together his own windows; until then South Australia had effectively lacked a local stained glass trade. Undoubtedly Troy believed Adelaide’s International

²⁷⁰*Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition 1887, Reports of Juries and Official List of Awards*, op.cit., p.34.

²⁷¹*Ibid.*, p.36.

²⁷²*Ibid.*, pp.130, 131,

Exhibition provided an excellent venue in which to display his painting skills and advertise his relatively new business.

Notwithstanding the manufacturing and design inadequacies apparent in the Clayton & Bell and Geyling exhibits at the Adelaide International Exhibition, there would seem to be no doubt that their chances of best assessment were lessened by the inferior presentation of their work regarding the back lighting. An understanding of the details affecting successful exhibiting became a serious business during the nineteenth century and professional agents appeared in order to submit manufacturers' wares to their best advantage. One such Australian establishment was Albert S. Manders & Co., founded in Melbourne in 1878 with offices in Adelaide and Sydney by 1880. Manders set up expressly to offer his services as an "Expert Exhibition Representative".²⁷³ The company predicted that clients would save, both mentally and monetarily, by engaging such "persons thoroughly and practically acquainted with the *minutiae* and the peculiarities of Exhibition work" and boasted that exhibits handled by Manders himself in the past had "gained more awards than those of any other representative" because "he was at touch with his work, and knew how and where to place his goods to show them to advantage, and to explain their merits to the judges".²⁷⁴ With such a positive approach to exhibiting it was clearly apparent that promotion of goods through exhibitions was designed to gain an official recognition which would subsequently impress the general buying public. There was an inference that exceptional quality

²⁷³ *Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition 1887, Centennial Exhibition Sydney (N.S.W.) 1888, Circular of Albert S. Manders & Co., 30 Collins Street, Melbourne, 1886, cover.*

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.2, 3.

need not be the main criterion for approval and that visual and verbal presentational skills could be used as powerful promotional tools. Even though at the 1883 Boston Foreign Fair Morris & Co. pressed the quality of their products as paramount, Wardle's arrangements highlighted the company's awareness of the advantages of positive advertising and placement. This also applied to Melbourne's W.H. Roche & Co. who went to great lengths to enhance their own manufactures with examples of their decorative prowess. In so doing they were able to advertise the full range of services available through their business. William Walker & Sons was another case in point. Walker himself represented his company in Australia and the success of his presentations was apparent. Walker & Sons supported their appearance in Sydney with a full-page layout in the *Official Catalogue of the British Section* published in London before the Exhibition.²⁷⁵ The company was undoubtedly among the "English exhibitors" to be praised by Melbourne's *Argus* for the "pains taken" in displaying their wares "picturesquely" in Sydney.²⁷⁶ Some manufacturers did avail themselves of agents, for example furniture-makers Alexander McIntosh and Arthur J. Arrowsmith & Co. used the International Exhibition Agency of J.M. Johnson & Sons and Plummer & Nixon respectively, Crossley & Sons's carpets were handled by W.A. & S.Smee and the stained glass window firm of Heaton, Butler & Bayne used Hogg, Selby & Co.²⁷⁷ Nonetheless many preferred to handle their own exhibits. This was obviously true for Australian exhibitors and in so doing their chances of success were certainly not jeopardised.

²⁷⁵Sydney International Exhibition, 1879, *Official Catalogue of the British Section*, op.cit., p.104.

²⁷⁶*Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, op.cit.: *Argus*, 13 September 1879.

²⁷⁷Sydney International Exhibition, 1879, *Official Catalogue of the British Section*, op.cit., p.99; *Moore's Catalogue of the British Court*, op.cit., pp.12, 15, 18.

Rather, in avoiding professional exhibition agencies, manufacturers may well have presented their goods more sincerely.

When exhibiting Morris & Co. also elected to control their own presentations rather than use professional mediation. Thus the selective exhibiting favoured by the firm was a formed business decision. While the Sydney and Melbourne Internationals may have offered unknown market serviceability, non-appearance in Adelaide was a lost sales opportunity for the company. From 1884 Adelaide's Barr Smith family began their long association with Morris & Co. which was considerably profitable for the firm.²⁷⁸ To exhibit in Adelaide in 1887 would have reinforced the validity of the Barr Smiths' choice of decorator, allowing the company to tap further the wealthy and sympathetic market in this city. Yet Morris & Co. elected at this time to exhibit in Manchester.²⁷⁹ The company's earlier showing in Manchester in 1882 had been so successful that the firm opened a shop there.²⁸⁰ This success undoubtedly was due to the power of visual display. If such an arrangement had been allowed for Adelaide a similar response would have been likely, although on a smaller scale due to population size. Shop facilities or agents in Adelaide would not have been a necessity for further transactions as most wealthy South Australians at some time would travel to England and could arrange there purchases and shipment with Morris & Co. However the foremost consideration initially to attract custom was the need for visual demonstration.

²⁷⁸See Chapter 8.

²⁷⁹Organisationally this would have been an easier and less costly option in terms of staff and product movement.

²⁸⁰Harvey & Press, *William Morris: Design and enterprise in Victorian Britain*, op.cit., p.139.

There were numerous factors arising from the first three International Exhibitions to take place in Australia which drew attention to important issues affecting the progress of local decorative arts. Highly apparent was the lack of national unity among the country's participants. In his "First Impressions" lecture given in the Bathurst School of Arts in June 1880 newly arrived Englishman John Plummer, although lampooned for his "egotistical bombast" by the local press, rightly recognised that "a general distrust" was the great failing of Australians.²⁸¹ While colonials were commendably self-reliant they were not mutually reliant and this led to the lack of associated enterprise throughout the country. It was a situation which seemed unconditionally accepted by manufacturers and fuelled by the press of the individual colonies. Also, the underlying impetus to take part in exhibitions, while understandably commercial in nature, was often blatantly so in the extreme: importers could display and promote availability of commodities, regardless of origin, thus forwarding confusion of source and in many cases encouraging importing to the detriment of colonial manufacturing. For Morris such commercial focus interested itself in "the creation of a market-demand" and "the production of profits", not in art which would satisfy truly "the genuine spontaneous needs of the public, and the earning of individual livelihood by the producers".²⁸² Clearly by the time of the International Exhibitions in Australia imports still undermined the ability of colonies to provide variety of employment opportunities for "the rising generation".

²⁸¹*Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, op.cit.: lecture delivered on 21 June 1880.

²⁸²Morris, *Art and Its Producers, and The Arts & Crafts of Today*, op.cit., p.38.

On the positive side there was a growing confidence apparent in judgements following the first Sydney International Exhibition which indicated the progressive ability of Australians to sensitively and knowledgeably assess aesthetic concerns without kowtowing to outside influences. In addition these exhibitions did introduce people generally to an aesthetic array they could not have otherwise experienced. In so doing there was always the possibility that decorative resolutions could be guided by those who felt “compelled to foist” their products on the public “by stirring up a strange feverish desire for petty excitement, the outward token of which is ... fashion”.²⁸³ Morris clearly warned all consumers not to “be led by the nose by fashion into having things you don’t want”.²⁸⁴ To combat such an eventuality he advocated that everyone should “be educated according to their capacity” and imbued with a “sense of ... responsibility to the public”.²⁸⁵ After the Australian International Exhibitions Australian authorities realised more clearly the significance of these matters which for Morris formed the foundations of Morris & Co.’s manufacturing and marketing. How each dealt with these ideals is considered in the following chapter.

²⁸³Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.110; Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.16.

²⁸⁴Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.163.

²⁸⁵Ibid., pp.100, 104. See also Charles Harvey and Jon Press, ‘William Morris -Art and Idealism’, in *History Today*, no.46, May 1996, pp.15-21.

CHAPTER 4: EDUCATION IN THE DECORATIVE ARTS, 1880-1925, AND COLONIAL INSECURITIES

Morris applied his dictums regarding education and responsibility to the running of Morris & Co. Up until the death of John Henry Dearle in 1932 the firm maintained a strong commitment to the workshop training of its employees. Dearle himself was a case in point. Taken on as a 19 year old shop assistant in 1878 he was then trained by the company in glass painting before Morris selected him to help with early tapestry weaving experiments. By 1887 Dearle had produced his first tapestry design and by 1898 had become chief designer for the firm, working on woven and printed textiles, carpets, tapestries, embroideries, wallpapers and stained glass. Even during Morris's time apprentices were usually selected by senior workers and were often family members.²⁸⁶ One such family institution were the Chadwicks - "there was old Chadwick and he had four sons, ... may have been five, two of them were in the dyeing department and the rest were in the weaving shed".²⁸⁷ After World War I the company paid for assistants to attend evening classes at Wimbledon Technical College "to encourage and develop drawing and designing"²⁸⁸ and at Merton Abbey it would seem that apprentices had the opportunity not only to closely study the company's recognised designs for fabrics and wallpapers but also to hone their drawing skills.²⁸⁹ Thus a company association

²⁸⁶Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.II, 1987, p.178; Parry, *op.cit.*, p.69.

²⁸⁷From an interview on 17 December 1975 with Douglas Griffiths who was employed by the firm 1934-1939, p.9 of typescript transcription among miscellaneous articles by Morris & Co. workers in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

²⁸⁸Typescript information given by Douglas Griffiths on 23 April 1968, in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

²⁸⁹In The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library, is a series of "Separation Drawings",

was formed among employees which ensured the continuation of not only the decorative arts espoused by the firm but also the company's style and distinction.

In contrast to Morris & Co.'s assured workings, the size of many Australian companies and their ability to sustain apprenticeships were restricted by the power of the import and the strength of political manoeuvrings by overseas countries.²⁹⁰ As observed in Chapter 3 only furniture at the Australian International Exhibitions had been able to compete favourably with overseas goods in terms of volume and quality because that industry did not rely solely on mechanisation and had attained a size effective enough to support in-house training. Colonial insularity would always hinder comprehensive training schemes for workers²⁹¹ who were often held back by employees ill-equipped or unwilling to offer proper guidance. The basic reason for such lack of foresight lay in immediate profit margins. Self-education was often the only form of outside instruction available to workers. The best chance for young Australians to obtain trade skills beyond physical labouring was thus seen by authorities to rest with training institutions.²⁹²

From 1882 to 1915, under the influence of Harry P. Gill, Adelaide's School of Design changed somewhat from a theoretical bias based on the study of the history

accurate pencil, ink and wash drawings of identifiable individual flowers, to scale, thought to have been produced by employees as skill exercises.

²⁹⁰See evidence presented before the 1862 NSW Select Committee in *Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings*, Vol.5 (1862), op.cit.; also *Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record*, op.cit., pp.lxvii, 17, 18.

²⁹¹Education is still handled on a State Government level in Australia and varies considerably between states.

²⁹²*Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-1881, Official Record*, op.cit., p.80.

and rules of ornament and design towards a more practical bent. Drawing still formed the basis of instruction under Gill but for translating designs emanating therefrom Gill involved local commercial firms such as furniture manufacturers S. Mayfield & Sons and the Hindmarsh Pottery. In so doing Gill ensured that students related their work to actual manufacturing and thus were prepared for useful employment. Even with embroidery popularly seen more as a fashionable recreational pursuit than a livelihood, the School promoted the commercial potential of the medium, selling 1700 designs in the twelve years 1888-1900.²⁹³ Gill's worth and the obliging support he received from the South Australian Government was lauded by the Sydney press which recognised that such was indicative of the "foremost place" the younger colony enjoyed in "the encouragement of Art".²⁹⁴ The School was originally under the control of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery but in 1909, complete with a name change to the School of Arts and Crafts, its administration was handed to the Education Department. These moves suggest not only an acceptance of the "lesser arts" as legitimate creativity but also their general rather than peculiar educational value.

In contrast to the South Australian example, for design instruction Victoria relied strongly on the services provided by the ubiquitous Schools of Arts/Mechanics' Institutes within its borders.²⁹⁵ It was not until 1886, four years after Victorian politicians recognised with the Melbourne International Exhibition that colonial manufacturing standards were poor, that a Royal Commission looking

²⁹³Judith Thompson, *Crafts of South Australia: The First Hundred Years*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 1986, p.6.

²⁹⁴*Australasian Builder & Contractors' News*, 7 January 1893, p.333.

²⁹⁵See Chapter 2.

to the promotion of technical instruction recommended more than monetary contribution to the colony's Schools of Arts. Falling attendance at these institutions was attributed chiefly to a lack of trained teachers, and the Royal Commissioners intended to redress the problem by introducing the system of art education directed from South Kensington, this being "the most perfect in Europe" and seen as the basis of improvement in Britain's manufactures.²⁹⁶ This course of action was probably supported by the London Commissioners' donation from the Melbourne International Exhibition of a collection of art examples prepared by British students under South Kensington principles. These were accompanied by a complete set of "rules and regulations, drawings, models, &c., showing the mode of teaching".²⁹⁷ Rules and regulations would seem to have been the outstanding features of the system. Strictly controlled drawing exercises were aimed at turning out teachers of art for those attending national schools.²⁹⁸ Ideally such a focus failed to advance a worker's lot as a designer or artisan.²⁹⁹ With their gift the London Commissioners were strongly guiding directions in Victoria towards narrowly based training procedures.³⁰⁰ In 1887 the more galling fact was revealed by the Royal

²⁹⁶*Royal Commission for Promoting Technological and Industrial Instruction, Colony of Victoria, Report No.67, 1886, op.cit., pp.5, 6.*

²⁹⁷*Report of the Royal Commission for the Australian International Exhibitions, op.cit., pp.15, 12-13.*

²⁹⁸Paula Gillett, *The Victoria Painter's World*, Alan Sutton, Gloucester, 1990, p.103.

²⁹⁹Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, Trefoil Publications, London, 1990, p.20.

³⁰⁰New South Wales' authorities at least considered countries other than Britain (following in text) however these in the main comprised standard tourist destinations of the time rather than design education centres. While Austria was also inspired by London's South Kensington experiment (see Elizabeth Cumming & Wendy Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1991, p.160), from 1845 Sweden had vigorously encouraged its own practical programmes for local businesses and manufacturing (see *Encyclopedia of Arts and Crafts: The International Movement 1850-1920*, Headline, London, 1989, p.57; Naylor, op.cit., p.192). Examination of the latter may well have been beneficial to Australian endeavours.

Commissioners that Victoria was even “most lamentably behindhand” in terms of technical education than “the sister Colony of New South Wales”.³⁰¹ This finally prompted action in terms of better funding and the introduction of systematic teaching and assessment in the Schools of Arts, one might surmise more for political than artistic reasons.

Officially New South Wales appeared to treat the problem of design education more seriously than the other colonies with Edward Combes’ Royal Commission on Technical Education which brought down its report on 28 September 1887. Ostensibly one of the major concerns of the enquiry was how to best manage theoretical and practical training, many considering that the former set up illusive circumstances which created “amateur artizans” who were “unfitted to commence life as skilled workmen” because of lack of association with practical operatives.³⁰² In Britain, Morris based his lecturing on his own “experience” as a “craftsman”, decidedly recognising the merits of proving accepted “rules of a craft ... in practice”.³⁰³ Ultimately, he believed, “the workshop would once more be a school of art”³⁰⁴ and he did attempt at Morris & Co. to somewhat fulfil this conviction. Harry Gill in Adelaide also went some way to satisfying workshop practicalities with his School of Design.³⁰⁵ For Combes, as for Gill, the basis of all training was accepted as

³⁰¹*Royal Commission for Promoting Technological and Industrial Instruction, Colony of Victoria, Report No.21, 1887, p.6 (Legislative Assembly Votes & Proceedings).*

³⁰²*Journal of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, Vol.XLIII, op.cit., part 2 (1887-88), p.268.* Morris & Co. avoided this predicament by ensuring practical skills and professionalism were basic to the in-house training of employees.

³⁰³Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.114-115.

³⁰⁴Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., p.29.

³⁰⁵Gill was obviously well aware of Morris’s dictums concerning design and manufacture. Gill’s utterance in 1892 regarding works being “useful and beautiful” (quoted in Menz,

skill in drawing however Combes could not refrain from encumbering this stand with a strong moral bias:

... It is the foundation of all the constructive arts.... It is an essential aid to every class of artisan, while it instructs and improves both mind and body in its imitation of nature. ...

... The virtues especially developed by the study of drawing are persevering industry, love of unobtrusive right action, order, purity, and decency. ...³⁰⁶

Morris was more finely focussed. Ten years earlier he had suggested that

... all people should be taught drawing who are not physically incapable of learning it: but the art of drawing so taught would not be the art of designing, but only a means toward *this end, general capability in dealing with the arts.*³⁰⁷

Yet in his lecturing Morris also was not entirely free from placing moral strictures on art:

... in my mind, it is not possible to dissociate art from morality, politics, and religion. ...³⁰⁸

Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia, op.cit., p.28) echoes Morris's own words published ten years earlier (Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.108, 109).

³⁰⁶*Journal of the Legislative Council of New South Wales*, Vol.XLIII, op.cit., part 2 (1887-88), pp.269, 275.

³⁰⁷Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.26.

³⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p.66; see also Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., p.vii.

However he approached the dilemma from a broad life vision which reversed Combes' perceptions:

... the general education that makes men think, will one day make them think rightly upon art. ... ³⁰⁹

To his credit, Combes ensured that he was conversant with the teaching of drawing throughout the industrialised world. He admired the American tradition of teaching drawing in public schools “not as a speciality but in the regular course of study” and accepted a perceived French superiority in “taste” because for generations French children had been “taught drawing as part of their education”.³¹⁰ In preparing his Report he visited art schools in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany and Schools of Design in Britain’s manufacturing districts. The last-mentioned he believed were beginning to succeed in improving British artistic taste.³¹¹ Despite such first-hand observations however much of the evidence in Combes’ Report was drawn directly from the 1881-1884 British Royal Commission on Technical Instruction³¹² thus in essence reflecting in New South Wales the same Anglicism which determined colonial Victoria’s decision-making.

William Morris appeared in March 1882 before the British Royal Commission and Combes quoted at length albeit selectively from Morris’s evidence. Combes seemed to find such reporting necessary because he had concluded that there was no “hard

³⁰⁹Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.65.

³¹⁰*Journal of the Legislative Council of New South Wales*, Vol.XLIII, op.cit., part 2 (1887-88), pp.272, 331.

³¹¹*Ibid.*, pp.283-4.

³¹²*Ibid.*, pp.291-325.

and fast or even comprehensive system” of public art instruction in either British or European schools,³¹³ and thus he sought elsewhere for what he considered to be knowledgeable opinions. He had it would seem a desired result in mind to his enquiry and possibly selected evidence to support that outcome. The points raised by Morris which Combes grasped to substantiate his own stand were the necessity of learning to draw and the indispensability of museums where examples of the best manufactures could be studied. While advocating life drawing because it gives “a standard of correctness that nothing else can do”, Morris was aware that his own shortcomings in this area were not individual and suggested that life drawing was not “absolutely essential” and that “There are some people who have no great turn for drawing the human figure, who would nevertheless make clever draughtsmen in drawing plant form”.³¹⁴ The more than one hundred figure drawings by Morris now in The Morris Collection of The Huntington Library belong to the very early years of the firm. They show a preoccupation with drapery and pattern and an apparent awkwardness to the conjunction of figure parts. Morris would not seem to have begun with the nude as Burne-Jones always did and Morris’s example was clearly followed by Dearle with similar results. Because the human form provided the most subtle of lines for drawing, technical errors would be most noticeable and could be corrected. With such teaching “the habit of discriminating between right and wrong” had for Morris no moral thrust, but simply forwarded the education of all those “as had the germs of invention in them”.³¹⁵ However such training obviously

³¹³Ibid., p.280.

³¹⁴Ibid., p.306.

³¹⁵Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.27.

stood outside workshop circumstances and needed to be provided by other organisations.

Study of the “art of past ages” was also a necessity to furthering the “Decorative Arts”.³¹⁶ On this point Morris’s view on museums was unconditionally embraced by Combes:

... I do not think that a public museum need set itself to what is called collecting, or need try the sort of things that a private man with a long purse may do. Here the things are only wanted for educational purposes, and not as curiosities. You want types of good work, not a mere multiplication of articles. This typical museum in the metropolis should contain complete collections in all styles; ...³¹⁷

Throughout his working life Morris drew heavily for inspiration on the textile collections in London’s South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert), founded in 1852 after the Great Exhibition as the first Museum of Manufactures.³¹⁸ He was conscious of the limited access the public often had to some specimens and in 1880 discreetly suggested that such should “as the Museum gains space, be more easy to see”.³¹⁹ An appreciation of the Museum’s collection in fact worked two ways: Morris’s expertise in the textile field was often sought by the Museum when

³¹⁶Ibid.

³¹⁷*Journal of the Legislative Council of New South Wales*, Vol.XLIII, op.cit., part 2 (1887-88), p.306. Combes’ own comments p.287. The Royal Commission stated that the chief object of a Technological Museum would be “to provide models of machinery, apparatus, fabrics, products, &c.” for educative purposes only (Ibid., p.482).

³¹⁸Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.55-56.

³¹⁹Ibid., p.147.

purchases were contemplated.³²⁰ Major manufacturing cities followed the example set in London by the South Kensington Museum³²¹ with like establishments subsequently appearing, for example the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery opened to the public in 1867. Combes noticed in his travels these institutions which were “open on Sundays free to the people”³²² yet ultimately he restricted his recommendation to a Technological Museum to be connected to Sydney’s Technical College, for the use of “students and their teachers”.³²³ In fact the Sydney Technological Museum had been set up in 1880 but received a boost with Combes’ findings, acquiring in 1893 a permanent building when it was placed under the administration of the Department of Education.³²⁴ The main purpose of the Museum was seen to be threefold, in order of importance: to investigate the economics of the natural products of Australia; to illustrate through its collections the “industrial advance of civilisation”; and lastly, to promote craftsmanship and artistic taste with examples of applied arts from “all nations and all times”.³²⁵ This sequence of

³²⁰For example, Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, p.604. See also Stephen Astley, ‘Influence and Inspiration’, in *Art Quarterly*, no.26, Summer 1996, pp.38-43.

³²¹Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.82.

³²²*Journal of the Legislative Council of New South Wales*, Vol.XLIII, op.cit., part 2 (1887-88), p.286.

³²³*Ibid.*, p.482.

³²⁴*The Sydney Technological Museum*, pamphlet prepared by the Curator, 11th Edition, 2 March 1931, Sydney, p.4.

³²⁵*Ibid.*, pp.4, 5, 10. From the time of his first public lecture in 1877 Morris constantly took to task the “industrial advance of civilisation”. He believed that museums and art schools would simply be “amusements of the rich” unless “modern commerce” addressed and reversed wholesale felling of trees, pollution of waterways and fouling of the atmosphere (Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.197, 32-33; Morris, *Art, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.171; LeMire (Ed), op.cit., p.51). His association of ecology and art education was not even remotely considered by authorities in his own time yet today it remains so strongly pertinent.

preferences displayed in microcosm the accepted attitude which influenced Australian trade and manufacturing.

In keeping with the tenor of the 1882 British Royal Commission Morris's evidence was heavily biased towards an amalgamation of theory and practice in the manual arts³²⁶ and it was towards this end that Combes' Royal Commission sought a solution. In his capacity from 1876 as an examiner at the South Kensington School of Art Morris informed the British Royal Commission that

... Not enough attention is given to the turning out of the actual goods themselves. We cannot give prizes for the things turned out, we can only give prizes for the designs. I think it would be a very good thing to give prizes for the goods themselves. ...³²⁷

This fault in the British system, of theory divorced from practice, was not among Morris's evidence which Combes selected for his Royal Commission. For Australia

³²⁶See Charles Harvey and Jon Press, 'William Morris and the Royal Commission on Technical Education, 1881-1884', in *The Journal of the William Morris Society*, Vol.XI, No.1, Autumn 1994, pp.31-44. Contrasting with Morris's evidence regarding education of the designer was that of Mr Mott of H. Scott, Richmond & Co. who manufactured all manner of fabrics, tapestries and wallpaper. Mott contended that designers were "accidents" created from those who had an aptitude for drawing and an inquisitive disposition. Self-education was a matter of "good sense", something Mott believed many designers lacked: "... so long as they can produce patterns and sell them they are content" (*Journal of the Legislative Council of New South Wales*, Vol.XLIII, op.cit., part 2 (1887-88), p.307). However Mott accurately estimated that the popularity of French designs lay in their being "lighter, more frivolous, and gay" rather than "steady going" and "over studied" as were English presentations by designers "of the better class" (Ibid.).

³²⁷J.W. Mackail, *The Life of William Morris*, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1899, Vol.II, p.51.

to place faith entirely in the British system without admitting its defects would not see the problem effectively addressed.

On the face of it Combes' 1887 Royal Commission produced little of instructive value to improve the competitiveness of local manufacturing. Primarily its findings depended on a moral rather than a practical intent:

The object of technical school instruction should be not to make workmen, but to prepare men to become workmen, and thus understood, it will at once elevate the mind, and improve the wage-earning capacity of the artisan. ³²⁸

Combes' suggestion that such instruction should be more intellectual than manual was really a downside to any system not centred on workshop practices. Industry required trained operatives with practical skills.³²⁹ Morris & Co.'s in-house training was designed to educate employees to be "good workmen". For Morris this would then allow of a sympathetic understanding of art and a cooperative perception of life.³³⁰

With Combes' Royal Commission there seemed little advancement on the outlook displayed at the founding from the early 1830s onward of the numerous Schools of Arts and Mechanics' Institutes throughout the Australian continent. Combes' emphasis on a worker's moral fibre suggests that his Royal Commission was

³²⁸ *Journal of the Legislative Council of New South Wales*, Vol. XLIII, op.cit., part 2 (1887-88), p.516: Appendix K by Henry H. Cunynghame.

³²⁹ Today's technical college education centres on the joint acquisition of practical and theoretical expertise.

³³⁰ Morris, *Art and Its Producers, and The Arts & Crafts of Today*, op.cit., pp.46-47; Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.104.

probably held “to create an impression of government activity” rather than seriously “to decide what action should be taken”.³³¹ Nonetheless the Commission did ensure financial support from government coffers for both Technical Colleges and the Museum and educators themselves did not generally push the moral bent of their calling. That art professionals felt some frustrations concerning practical directions immediately following the 1887 Royal Commission findings was apparent with the establishment in Sydney in 1891 of an “Australian Academy of Arts” which promised to give instruction at a nominal cost to all those interested in the “peaceful Arts of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and the Applied Arts of Decoration and Design”.³³² The Australian undertaking was most likely influenced by the founding in England in 1883 of the Art Workers’ Guild. This cooperative organisation promoted “more intimate relations” between those “Arts” encompassed by the Australian concern.³³³ While Morris supported such groups he always saw them as well intentioned rather than effective in the quest for true artistic quality. The ultimate solution to what he saw as a social, not aesthetic, problem had to be political.³³⁴ On the whole Morris’s contemporaries, and many of those influenced by his designing precepts, did not accept his political analyses. Designers Lewis F. Day and Walter Crane, guiding figures of “The Fifteen”, a

³³¹G N Hawker has suggested that Royal Commissions were held because “They could remove a contentious issue from parliamentary scrutiny, create an impression of government activity, take the blame for unpopular actions from a government, help to decide what action should be taken on a question and prepare the way for action already decided upon” (G N Hawker, *The Parliament of New South Wales, 1856-1965*, Government Printer of New South Wales, Sydney, 1971, p.89).

³³²*Australasian Builder & Contractors’ News*, 14 November 1891, p.403.

³³³Peter Stansky, *Redesigning the World*, The Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship, Palo Alto, 1996, p.138.

³³⁴Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., p.122.

forerunner of the Art Workers' Guild founded in 1881, are a case in point. Crane fervently shared Morris's socialist views, Day decidedly did not.³³⁵ Yet they could successfully work together because both perceived a human implication to art. Their approaches just happened to differ. One cannot factually claim that either was invalid.

Signatories for a deputation to the NSW Minister for Public Instruction advising of the founding of the "Australian Academy of Arts" included nine artists, three architects, a sculptor and, representing decorators and designers, W.A. Kerr, Andrew Wells and John Lamb Lyon. This joining of forces of operatives in the fine and applied arts fields displayed an enlightened outlook by New South Welshmen which aligned them closely to South Australians. However when the first syllabus was released for the Academy no specific instruction in decorative art was apparent.³³⁶ In its encouragement of H.P. Gill's call for a National School of Art and the Sydney Architectural Association's formation of an Arts and Crafts Society, both in 1892, New South Wales again indicated support for South Australia's definition of Art "in its widest sense"³³⁷ although no union of the three colonies as hoped by Gill ever eventuated.

The patronage of the Schools of Arts/Mechanics' Institutes, however erratic, suggests that many artisans had the "good sense" to pursue some form of

³³⁵See Naylor, *op.cit.*, p.124, and Lewis F. Day, *The Art of William Morris*, Easter Art Annual, Art Journal Extra Number, London, 1899, p.7.

³³⁶*Australasian Builder & Contractors' News*, 26 March 1892, p.237.

³³⁷*Ibid.*, 5 March 1892, p.189; 12 March 1892, p.202; 30 April 1892, p.312.

self-education. The libraries of the institutions were large and comprehensive³³⁸ and combined with lectures provided for some public consciousness of aesthetic taste. It was to suchlike institutions in Britain that Morris often lectured because he believed that “people need some preliminary instruction” if they were to gain the best from museum visits.³³⁹ In Australia freelance speakers such as John Plummer regularly offered practical advice to Schools of Arts’/Mechanics’ Institutes’ members. In one such lecture delivered in 1884 and entitled ‘Ornament as applied to Furniture’ Plummer advised his Sydney audience:

... It is not necessary that an object be covered with ornament, or be extravagant in form, to obtain the element of beauty. ... In England there are many drawing-rooms furnished with tables, chairs, and couches in white and gold, and covered with costly satin, which visitors are afraid to use, lest they should injure them. Utility must never become sacrificed to ornament. ...³⁴⁰

Within the official system, the disposition of teachers was mostly practical. For example, Parnell Johnson was associated with the Sydney Technical College for twenty-seven years from 1884, beginning as Teacher of House Painting and Decoration at night while during the day working for “one of the then leading firms of high-class decorators”. As Lecturer-in-Charge of Industrial Art he encouraged

³³⁸A typical example was the library of the Bega School of Arts, in the small NSW south coast town, which contained in 1890 some 3000 volumes covering Science, History, Biography, Travel, Poetry and Fiction (*Catalogue of the Bega School of Arts Library*, op.cit.); see also the Grafton Mechanics’ Institute *Catalogue of Works in Library*, op.cit.

³³⁹Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.21.

³⁴⁰*Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, op.cit.: newspaper not identified.

original designing from his students.³⁴¹ Work produced at the State's Technical Colleges reached such an acceptable standard that, from early in the twentieth century, the Sydney emporium of Anthony Hordern & Sons was willing to hold annual exhibitions in its Art Gallery of items by staff of the Museum and students of the affiliated Colleges, displaying examples as diverse as plastering, bricklaying, masonry, designs for stained glass, hand-painted china and pottery and stencil designs for curtains, cushions and tablecloths.³⁴² There would seem to have been no apparent gain for the company beyond altruism. Such support might seem to vindicate Morris's belief that the twentieth century "may be called the Century of Education", as opposed to his perception of the nineteenth as "the Century of Commerce".³⁴³ At Anthony Hordern & Sons it may be noted that for stained glass and household items other than pottery, designs only were exhibited. Morris's wish to see students produce "the actual goods themselves" was a long way from reality in his own country let alone in the colonies. By following British educational programmes Australian authorities failed to provide "the rising generation" with a complete understanding of the tie between design and manufacturing. In-house training by companies themselves was restricted by the size of a firm and its ability to compete profitably with imports.

The reliance of the Australian decorative arts markets on imported goods contributed considerably to a lack of assurance in original design work by Australians and led in some cases to an acceptance of plagiarism. The

³⁴¹*The Technical Gazette of New South Wales*, vol.1, part 1, June 1911, p.17. Johnson worked for Lyon, Cottier & Co. (Carlin & Martin, op.cit., p.12).

³⁴²*Catalogue*, Anthony Hordern & Sons Ltd., Sydney, 1914.

³⁴³Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.89.

predominance of imported taste was partly a consequence of the small amount of local manufacturing. In addition insufficient educational opportunities offered through courses and museum specimens left tradespeople and purchasers without defined directions or thought-provoking examples. Locally produced items were most often based upon popular imported pattern books or on introduced wares themselves [ILLUSTRATION 30]. Intervention by authorities could also guide taste. In 1914, at the request of the Superintendent of Technical Education, Anthony Hordern & Sons displayed “an unique Collection of Old English period Furniture, including fine examples of Chippendale, Adams, Hepplewhite, &c.”³⁴⁴ With such illustrations being officially supported, when an Australian characteristic was introduced it often entailed simply an application of Australian floral or faunal emblems onto otherwise accepted forms [ILLUSTRATIONS 31-33].

A major example of Australian design inadequacy which remained unapparent to clients occurred with the stained glass productions of the Adelaide firm of Clarkson Ltd. Clarksons became agents for Morris & Co. stained glass in 1925³⁴⁵ and this would account for three unacknowledged sketch designs by the English firm among the South Australian company’s archives³⁴⁶ [ILLUSTRATION 34]. Watercolour

³⁴⁴*Catalogue*, op.cit., p.2.

³⁴⁵Donovan, *150 Years of Stained & Painted Glass*, op.cit., p.25.

³⁴⁶Clarkson Ltd, Watercolour designs for stained glass windows, Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide, BRG172/1. A sketch design of the 1930 St.James window for St.John’s, Salisbury, South Australia, in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library, was obviously ordered by Clarksons as Morris & Co. agents as it bears the Australian company’s identification label. This window together with Unley Park Baptist Church’s ‘The Light of the World’ and four single lights for Malvern Methodist Church never built because of “financial stress”, are listed in Morris & Co.’s *1930 Glass Estimate Book* also in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library. The “Correspondent” in all cases is stated to be “Messrs Clarkson Ltd, 124 Rundle Street, Adelaide. South Australia”. As agents Clarksons

sketches of windows were produced for submission to religious authorities for approval prior to manufacture and the style of working these sketches in Australia followed English precedents [ILLUSTRATIONS 35-36]. Clarksons adhered to this accepted practice however the process by which they achieved their end results was, ethically and technically, the antithesis of that practised by legitimate stained glass producers. Of British manufacturers trading in Australia certainly Morris & Co., James Powell & Sons, Heaton, Butler & Bayne and John Hardman & Co. all created original images recognisable as individual to each firm.³⁴⁷ The Australian companies of Ferguson & Urie, Lyon, Cottier & Co., E.F. Troy, William Montgomery and R.S. Exton & Co. worked likewise. Essentially at home with leadlighting [ILLUSTRATION 37] and general glazing, Clarkson Ltd at no time designed forms other than small emblematic elements [see the two side lights in ILLUSTRATION 38]. The central presentation of Illustration 38 reveals the company's methodology. The firm amassed an enormous collection of resource material from which it constructed its window designs.³⁴⁸ Items ranged from photographs of German religious paintings, a Bellini Madonna and British and American stained glass windows [ILLUSTRATION 39], to trade catalogues of Italian religious statuary, simple gospel picture books and prayer cards. The *Good Shepherd* in Illustration 38 was cut from one of the gospel picture books, pasted down on the design sheet and extended on the edges to fit the window's dimensions. It was then watercolour

were paid ten per cent of gross window costing.

³⁴⁷See, for example, William Morris Gallery exhibition catalogue *Henry Holiday 1839-1927*, London Borough of Waltham Forest Libraries & Art Department, London, 1989, p.7, Item 13; Wendy Evans, Catherine Ross and Alex Werner, *Whitefriars Glass*, Museum of London, 1995, p.36; Chris Brooks, *The Gothic Revival*, Phaidon, London, 1999, p.338.

³⁴⁸These have been assembled into 8 volumes in the Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide, BRG172/11: listed as *Printed material used for "inspiration"*.

tinted and the outlines inked. The extended area outside the plagiarised section is clearly discernible by the variation in absorption of the watercolours by the different papers. If it was not possible to actually use a cut-out image, a tracing was taken. The firm did sometimes make minor alterations, particularly where tracings were used; one such adaptation from Illustration 39 appears in *The Good Shepherd* window of 1915 in St. Margaret's, Woodville [ILLUSTRATION 40]. Plagiaristic habits were not confined to Clarksons. As a post-World War II apprentice Kevin Little clearly recalls the same practices followed by Perce Barnard at Sydney's Standard Glass Studios in Strathfield.³⁴⁹

The Australian International Exhibitions had brought home to authorities that generally lower standards tarnished local decorative products. It was realised that some official intervention was needed to raise awareness and skill levels. Yet the exercise was often hampered by accepted circumstances and preconceptions: the strength of the import industry was supported by delicate political manoeuvring; individual colonies continued to fan the flame of competitive narrow-mindedness; and bureaucratic endeavours often revolved around moral perceptions of little use to ordinary workers seeking actual guidance. Even Morris's practical advice drawn upon by Edward Combes was used to support outcomes not entirely consistent with Morris's intentions. While teachers at Technical Colleges and Schools of Arts/Mechanics' Institutes offered serviceable experiences a real want of direction by authorities regarding educational measures and manufacturing motivation might be blamed for inadequacies of the scale apparent with Clarkson Ltd. Kevin

³⁴⁹Conversation with Kevin Little, Arncliffe, 25 November 2000.

Little's post-World War II art education at East Sydney Technical College still revolved around drawing habits constant to the South Kensington system while his apprenticeship in stained glass at the Standard Glass Studios offered manufacturing skills with no design guidance.³⁵⁰ Although Clarksons survived into the 1960s before being absorbed, its inability in stained glass window manufacture to present honest design work of consistent timbre must be seen now as an embarrassment to Australia's attempts to compete respectably with imported products.

The Australian stained glass window industry differed from home decoration in that clients had direct access to manufacturers and thus the influence of importers was not brought into play. However, just as customers were required to accept the honesty of importers when buying decorative home wares, so they likewise had to rely on the integrity of manufacturers producing stained glass windows. Without some knowledge of these fields it was not easy for the public to be aware of ruses. This was not a problem to confront patrons of Morris & Co. because sound management and workshop procedures sustained manufacturing sincerity. The practices of Clarkson Ltd. and the Standard Glass Studios were likely not to have been unique to these two Australian firms. Nonetheless the Australian stained glass industry supported other manufacturers who displayed the same understanding, pride and integrity in the medium as did Morris & Co. Their training was invariably acquired in their countries of birth, prior to coming to Australia, and the greatest influence in the field came from British practices.

³⁵⁰Ibid.

CHAPTER 5: STAINED GLASS WINDOW PRODUCTION 1863-1926: DIRECTIONS
AVAILABLE TO THE AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY

The first Morris & Co. stained glass window considered in this Chapter is dated 1863, the last 1926. Between these dates Morris & Co.'s presentations progressed beyond accepted British trends. Because of the manual nature of stained glass window production which did not require investor support for machinery and because manufacturers did not need to use the dominant warehouse system of distribution, contemporary Australian craftsmen were only restricted by the design precepts and quality control which they personally brought to their work. To satisfy these two attributes British fashion and materials strongly held sway, resulting in British iconography dominating the entire market. Australian manufacturers would remain basically constant to valid available sources while Morris & Co.'s development locates the uniqueness of the firm's work among the mainstream.

Early glass manufacture in Australia involved only the most basic products of bottles, jars and some table ware. This limited range was supported by a healthy import trade in superior glassware and all glazing requirements. In 1887 a deputation of the glass trade in Victoria sought import duties on stained glass windows, to help the small local industry compete pricewise with the highly popular import business, however no duty was sought on sheet glass for building purposes which was still to enter free of charges.³⁵¹ The latter condition was

³⁵¹*Australasian Builder & Contractors' News*, 17 September 1887, p.300.

undoubtedly sought because, with no local manufacturing, sheet glass was necessary to a large industry which affected the pockets of ordinary citizens. Stained glass windows entered Australia as works of art and thus were initially not subject to import duty. Hence the Victorian trade's deputation. In the light of this official recognition as a legitimate art form it is perhaps surprising that exhibition organisers in Victoria should have been in such a quandary as to the manufacture's rightful classification. The power of the import over the colonial in this field in the years 1863-1926 is indicated by the figures for stained glass windows of known date in the city of Adelaide and its immediate suburbs: of some 250 windows installed English imports accounted for 62.4 per cent of the market; 3.2 per cent was the work of German manufacturer F.X. Zettler and 0.8 per cent that of American Louis Comfort Tiffany; local manufacturers captured the remaining 33.6 per cent.³⁵² Among their penchant for imported wares South Australia and New South Wales were widely accepting of diverse styles in stained glass windows while the colony of Victoria remained somewhat conservative. In common with Canada's Toronto, Victoria did not commission any Morris & Co. windows, favouring instead more strictly Gothic Revival products typified by the work of Clayton & Bell.³⁵³ One can only assume that influential architects in Victoria, such as William Wardell and Joseph Reed, remained committed, like their British counterparts, to manufacturers producing traditional Gothic Revival imagery and recommended such to clients.³⁵⁴

³⁵²Percentages deduced from manufacturers listed in Peter & June Donovan, *A Guide to Stained Glass Windows in and about Adelaide*, Donovan and Associates, Blackwood, 1983, pp.26-71.

³⁵³Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., p.116.

³⁵⁴See Montana, op.cit., p.155; *St.Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, Australia*, Scancoolour, Moorabbin, 1988, p.3.

Prior to Ferguson & Urie embarking on stained glass window manufacture in 1866, local decorative glazing was available in the form of leadlighting - that is, coloured glass free from additional paint joined by lead calmes [ILLUSTRATION 41]. It was a decorative element which survived well into the twentieth century [ILLUSTRATION 42]. Components were readily available through building supplies manufacturers, such as Sydney's Goodlet and Smith, founded in 1855, who not only prepared and provided timber, bricks and pottery items including drainage pipes and chimney pots, but also invested in warehouses to accommodate imported glazing products generally sought:

... a complete stock of sheet, plate, and ornamental glass of every description, and a variety of church and domestic lead lights. ... embossing on plate and coloured glass ... executed to a considerable extent and in every conceivable style. ...³⁵⁵

In addition, flourishing stores, such as Sydney's famous ironmongery F. Lassetter & Co. Ltd and Melbourne's Brooks, Robinson & Co. Ltd, imported in abundance superior glass products, including popular gas, kerosene and later electrical lamps and fittings.

The conformation of Australian glazing was dictated by early methods of glass manufacture in Britain which seemed also to set a fashion. Small panes could be either cast, in which case they could be rather thick and opaque, or more

³⁵⁵*Australasian Builder & Contractors' News*, 28 May 1887, p.38.

commonly, were “crown” glass - small squares, rectangles or diamond shapes cut from large flat discs of hand-blown glass. These also could differ in thickness and texture. The small panes were set in varying patterns by lead or wooden bars [ILLUSTRATIONS 43-45]. Cylinder glass, which could provide larger window panes, was produced in Britain from 1832 and rolled sheet glass initiated from Belgium in 1904. Small-paned windows remained popular in Australia into the twentieth century not specifically as a fashion statement but because it was cheaper to replace any broken components [ILLUSTRATION 46]. Not until 1932, with the formation of Australian Window Glass Ptd. Ltd in Sydney, did Australia produce its own commercially ‘drawn’ glass. Until then all window glass was imported.

The basis of Australian stained glass windows was therefore imported glass. This, however, should not detract from their admissibility in terms of artistic appearance and quality or from the achievements of the early colonial industry to compete with the fully imported product. “Imported” glass also underlay the contemporary productions of many reputable British stained glass window firms: throughout its existence Morris & Co. used white and coloured pot metal from the stock of established glass making firms such as James Powell & Sons of Whitefriars³⁵⁶ and Chance Brothers & Co. of Birmingham and the prolific Birmingham firm of John Hardman & Co. also used Chance Brothers glass.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁶The first use of Powell & Sons “coloured glass” is registered in the *Minute book* of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., meeting of 4 February 1863 (The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library).

³⁵⁷Throughout the Middle Ages and into the 17th century England had been almost entirely dependent on imported coloured glass from France and Germany (see Michael Archer, *Stained Glass*, Pitkin Pictorials, Andover, 1994, pp.4, 24). In addition, European mediaeval stained glass craftsmen did not produce their own glass but purchased from middlemen

The blossoming of stained glass window production in Britain during the nineteenth century was a direct result of the Gothic Revival in architecture. In ecclesiastical circles the movement encouraged the extravagant embellishment of church interiors at a time when church building itself was on the increase. The effects of the Gothic Revival in Australia carried into the first decades of the twentieth century as churches moved away from their perceived mission status. Temporary structures were replaced by Gothic Revival edifices to satisfy a wish to display social graces and religious ascendancy. The Gothic Revival provided the primary elements for British and Australian stained glass windows.

When in 1884 Morris came to talk specifically of the Gothic Revival he clearly defined the Gothic ethos which he brought to bear upon Morris & Co.'s stained glass window production. Foremost was the "life" which "collective or popular art" should project. It resulted from the planning of a "master mind", guided by "tradition" and aided by men "who share his thoughts, his memories":

... men of divers aptitudes, one doing this work, one that, but all harmoniously and intelligently: in which work each knows that his success or failure will exalt or mar the whole; so that each man feels responsible for the whole; of which there is no part unimportant, nor any office degrading: every pair of hands is moved by a mind which is in concert with other minds, but freely, and in such a way that no individual intelligence is crushed or wasted: and in

merchants dealing with glass manufacturers (Sarah Brown, *Stained Glass: An Illustrated History*, Bracken Books, London, 1994, p.15).

such work, while the work grows the workers' minds grow also: they work not like ants or live machines, or slaves to a machine - but like men.³⁵⁸

From 1879 the company's stained glass artists were acknowledged in the firm's Catalogue of Designs.³⁵⁹ Their "divers aptitudes" were apparent in the listing of window features on which they worked, the success of their concerted efforts apparent in the windows themselves.

Morris & Co. stained glass windows were both a reflection of the industry generally and a divergence. In the former case they adhered to the mosaic system of design which gained renewed recognition with the studies of Charles Winston. In his 1847 treatise on the history of stained glass production,³⁶⁰ Winston had pinpointed the original Gothic essentials of the medium. These had been progressively eroded until, by the eighteenth century, windows had become three-dimensional paintings on a transparent ground rather than on a canvas [ILLUSTRATIONS 47-48]. This debasement of the art, which was still acceptable to some at the 1851 Great Exhibition [ILLUSTRATION 49], lost favour as stained glass firms returned, with the growth of the Gothic Revival movement, to original principles of production. The painterly style in coloured window production necessitated the addition of enamels onto the surface of thin glass and with each

³⁵⁸LeMire (Ed), *op.cit.*, pp.90-92.

³⁵⁹Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs used for Windows Executed*, Vol.1 from June 1876 to June 30, 1916; Vol.2 from July 1st, 1916 (The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library).

³⁶⁰[Charles Winston], *An Enquiry into the Difference of style Observable in Ancient Glass Paintings*, John Henry Parker, Oxford (1857 edition held in the Library of the Council for the Care of Churches, London).

successive layer the transparency of a window would become clouded.³⁶¹ In reviewing the work of Heaton, Butler & Bayne at the 1862 International Exhibition William Burges noted the company's use of shading rather than differing tints of the same colour to produce variety, the result of which was a lack of "jewel-like effect" to their windows.³⁶² In an 1891 article in the *Australasian Builder & Contractors' News* James Green claimed the same defect for Munich stained glass which favoured minimal leading and painting with enamel on white glass. Therein, according to Green, the true mosaic character of stained glass "was sacrificed for the sake of misplaced and incongruous pictorial effect".³⁶³ Charles Winston believed that the best artists in glass were "unquestionably the Munich glass-painters" although he did recognise that they represented "rather a school of art in the abstract rather than of art as applied to painted glass".³⁶⁴ Morris admitted to knowing only two features of Munich glass - "it is the worst that can be bought for money and, I believe the dearest".³⁶⁵ One may only assume this dismissive attitude was based on an awareness of the school's treatment of the medium outside Gothic terms of reference. The acceptance in Australia of Munich glass such as that by F.X. Zettler in fact relied on the dramatic impress created by the firm's highly skilled painters [ILLUSTRATION 50], this consideration outweighing any diminution of transparency or brilliancy in the windows. There is no doubt that Morris strove to

³⁶¹A wide range of enamel colours (metallic oxide pigments with crushed glass flux) were in use by the end of the 16th century. Windows created using enamels no longer used leading as an artistic ingredient but purely for utility.

³⁶²*Gentlemans Magazine*, July 1862, article by William Burges, transcribed in Notebook of J.R. Holliday (Archives Department, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery).

³⁶³*Australasian Builder & Contractors' News*, 28 November 1891, p.429.

³⁶⁴[Charles Winston], *Memoirs Illustrative of the Art of Glass-Painting by the late Charles Winston*, John Murray, London, 1865, p.36.

³⁶⁵Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.I, 1984, p.148.

present “glittering jewel-like colour” in his windows which he believed contrasted with the “daubs” of other manufacturers.³⁶⁶ The mosaic system employed coloured pot-metal, glass coloured at its original creation, and in order to retain translucency, purity of colour and two-dimensionality, lead framing was used as a design feature to separate each coloured portion [ILLUSTRATIONS 51-52]. Morris boasted that the colour of his company’s windows almost entirely relied upon the “actual colour of the glass” and that the more mosaic-like the designing the better.³⁶⁷ As most early Australian manufacturers were British trained they also followed the mosaic system for window design [see ILLUSTRATIONS 63, 92 and 136]. Windows so constructed promoted “jewel-like” qualities and enhanced their position as architectural members.

In order to reclaim the “jewel-like” characteristics of Gothic windows, in 1849 Winston had the chemistry of old glass analysed to determine properties of colour, thickness and density. He first offered the results of these researches to Birmingham’s Chance Brothers & Co. who declined to attempt making glass based on the findings.³⁶⁸ James Powell & Sons accepted the challenge, producing coloured glass of fine purity and brilliance.³⁶⁹ Independently Chance Brothers were to manufacture glass equal to Powell’s. It was upon a basis of quality in British coloured glass imported into Australia that this country’s first stained glass firm could secure the worth of its products.³⁷⁰ To have begun manufacturing using poor

³⁶⁶Ibid., Vol.II, 1987, p.578.

³⁶⁷Ibid., p.186.

³⁶⁸[Winston], *Memoirs...by the late Charles Winston*, op.cit., p.10.

³⁶⁹Ibid., p.182.

³⁷⁰The tradition would continue into the twentieth century: Sydney’s F. Ashwin & Co.

quality base materials would have negated any advantages to be gained by employing a competent designer. Australia's first stained glass company, listed in Melbourne in 1866, was Ferguson, Urie & Lyon³⁷¹ and this firm maintained the high standard of its windows by using quality glass and skilful designing.³⁷²

From 1859 Ferguson & Urie had been classified as "Painters, Plumbers, Glaziers and Paperhangers".³⁷³ Nothing is known about James Ferguson. James Urie was born in Kilmarnock, Scotland, in 1828 and migrated to Victoria in 1853. With firms established in Australia, it was not uncommon for partners to be friends or acquaintances originally from the same region and with similar basic training.³⁷⁴ Thus both Ferguson and Urie are likely to have come from western Scotland imbued with like preferences, tastes and skills in domestic decoration. By 1861 they had introduced leadlighting to their glazing service. This was not unusual among decorating businesses being basically pattern manipulation not requiring drawing skills. Supporting the firm's new 1866 designation as glass stainers, when they were joined in partnership by likewise west Scot John Lamb Lyon, was an illustrated advertisement in Melbourne's trade directory promoting the full range of window types and church decoration which could be provided from their "Stained Glass

advertised that the "Best British Antique Glass" was used in their windows, Melbourne's William Montgomery used the "Finest English Art Glass" (*The Church Standard*, 2 June 1916, pp.1, 9).

³⁷¹*Official Catalogue*, Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne, 1866, p.23. Officially listed to the trade in *Sands & McDougall's Melbourne Directory*, 1867, p.487.

³⁷²A comparison of windows by Ferguson & Urie, Lyon, Cottier & Co. and Hardman & Co. suggests that the two Australian companies also used glass made by Chance Bros. of Birmingham.

³⁷³*Sands & Kenny Melbourne Directory*, 1859, p.280.

³⁷⁴John Lyon's teaming with Daniel Cottier in 1873 was certainly based on friendship and work experience originating in days of youth in Glasgow.

Works” in North Melbourne.³⁷⁵ The expansion of the firm obviously coincided with Lyon’s admission to the partnership and the stained glass windows were strongly his domain.³⁷⁶ Lyon’s work for Ferguson & Urie and many of the decorative aspects carried over to his later windows for Lyon, Cottier & Co. show readily perceived allegiance to continuing Glaswegian traditions of motif and colour. Those traditions were based on an acceptance of the earlier of two Gothic styles which were championed by Gothic Revival window manufacturers. Charles Winston clearly defined these. The earlier style, which he labelled “The Decorated Style”, dated from 1280 to 1380.³⁷⁷ Winston divided the Decorated Style into two classes - human interest “*Picture-windows*”, the influence of which can be seen in the 1864 work of Ballantyne for The Old West Kirk, Greenock, Scotland [ILLUSTRATIONS 53-54], and “*Pattern-windows*”, reflected in the decorative window of c.1875 in St.MacKessog’s, Luss, Loch Lomond [ILLUSTRATION 55].³⁷⁸ The style was also widely popular in England [ILLUSTRATIONS 56-57] and the two classes were often fused into one presentation by Gothic Revival protagonists [ILLUSTRATION 58]. Brightly coloured pot-metals were a feature of the Decorated Style with a certain simplicity to the use of leading for figures. The *Argus* analysis of windows exhibited by Ferguson, Urie & Lyon at Melbourne’s 1869 Exhibition of Fine and Ornamental Art, suggesting “lack of Medieval simplicity, the use of too many colours and the glass’s pictorial naturalism”,³⁷⁹ indicates that the newspaper’s critic was not conversant with the traditions of “The Decorated Style”. The later Gothic style

³⁷⁵*Sands & McDougall’s Melbourne Directory*, 1867, p.65.

³⁷⁶In setting up Lyon, Cottier & Co. in Sydney in 1873 Lyon took with him many of his Ferguson & Urie window designs.

³⁷⁷[Winston], *An Enquiry into...Ancient Glass Paintings*, op.cit., p.62.

³⁷⁸[Winston], *Memoirs...by the late Charles Winston*, op.cit., p.238.

³⁷⁹As paraphrased by Montana, op.cit., p.2.

identified by Winston was that which he called “The Perpendicular Style”, dating from 1380 to 1530.³⁸⁰ The favourite design features of this style were the “Figure and Canopy”, light and finely finished shading and a preponderance of white glass in the composition. The *Argus* reporter commenting on Ferguson, Urie & Lyon’s work most likely accepted the Perpendicular Style as the style of the Gothic Revival. According to Winston windows in the Perpendicular Style “want the force of the earlier windows, but they are more delicate and refined”.³⁸¹ The Jesus Chapel Window of c.1903 in St.Bartholomew’s, Wilmslow, Cheshire [ILLUSTRATION 59], by Heaton, Butler & Bayne, is an excellent example of the mode and the survival of the style into the twentieth century indicates the strength of its acceptance.

Ferguson & Urie produced fine “Decorated Style” Gothic Revival windows which successfully combined figures and pattern-making. The firm was at its height by 1875 even though Lyon had left two years earlier. It had added a prestigious Collins Street site to its addresses and was confidently advertising fortnightly in *The Australasian* newspaper³⁸² [ILLUSTRATION 60]. Of three hundred and twenty-five entries under “Painters, Glaziers and Paperhangers” in Sands and McDougall’s Melbourne Trade Directory for 1876³⁸³ Ferguson & Urie were the only listed company to place an advertisement.³⁸⁴ This, however, was not for their general decorative abilities but their standard advertisement highlighting their stained glass work [ILLUSTRATION 61]. They now proudly informed prospective clients

³⁸⁰[Winston], *An Enquiry into...Ancient Glass Paintings*, op.cit., p.102.

³⁸¹[Winston], *Memoirs..by the late Charles Winston*, op.cit., pp.245-246.

³⁸²For example, *The Australasian*, 6 March 1875, p.291; 20 March 1875, p.379; 15 May 1875, p.610; 29 May 1875, p.699.

³⁸³*Sands & McDougall’s Melbourne Directory*, pp.780-782.

³⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p.49.

that they had won medals at the Melbourne Exhibition of 1867 and the Victorian Intercolonial Exhibition of 1875. This indicated that they not only considered this early exhibiting to have been a profitable means of placing wares before the public but also that they believed favourable judgements passed at these events were noted by prospective clientele. Their concentration on stained glass, when only one other worker in the field was mentioned in Sands and McDougall,³⁸⁵ suggests the importance they placed on bringing knowledge of a local industry before the public. Their success in doing so is shown by their 1872 Adelaide commission of the triple-light east window for St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Walkerville [ILLUSTRATION 62], this being the first stained glass in the church and dedicated to the memory of the wife of the colony's Governor. Their Melbourne church and secular work was both widespread and prestigious and is manifest in the large four-light west window commission for The Scots' Church, Collins Street, Melbourne [ILLUSTRATION 63], presented in 1876 by the then President of the Legislative Assembly, Sir Samuel Wilson.³⁸⁶ The size, forcefulness, complexity and colour coordination of this window certainly indicates the achievement of a "master mind" plan by a "collective" workforce. The firm had secured its expertise in stained glass by employing from the start a trained painter like John Lyon.³⁸⁷ The fact that the partnership continued to produce and advertise its stained glass work after Lyon left in 1873 suggests that Lyon's skills had been successfully passed on to workshop employees who would appear to have been then guided by James Urie.

³⁸⁵Ibid., p.743.

³⁸⁶Leaflet *The Windows in The Scots' Church Melbourne and Down*, op.cit., pp.74-75.

³⁸⁷It is likely that Lyon worked with Ferguson & Urie prior to his taking up a partnership in 1866, the firm's earliest known stained glass window dating from 1864 (see Down, op.cit., p.68).

To accomplish a product of the calibre of The Scots' Church west window points to this firm carrying on in-house training as thoroughly as Morris & Co. Ferguson & Urie's later work [ILLUSTRATION 64] remained faithful to the tenets of Glaswegian Decorated Gothic Revival Style but its loss of dynamism suggests a depleted workforce. The small and static nature of the firm and Urie's death in 1890 obviously took their toll on the business which closed in 1899.

Like Ferguson & Urie, Morris & Co. also ensured in its stained glass windows quality of workmanship by employing from the start trained glass painters. George Campfield, the firm's foreman and chief glass painter from 1861 to 1898, originally worked for Heaton, Butler & Bayne while Charles Holloway came from James Powell & Sons.³⁸⁸ In its formative years during the 1860s the firm adhered in some degree to an accepted Perpendicular Style character for its windows yet these could also display Decorated Style features. In the Boaz and Ruth window of 1863 in St.Martin's-on-the-Hill, Scarborough [ILLUSTRATION 65] the figures designed by Morris follow tenets of the later style while the tracery and patternwork by architect Philip Webb suggest the Decorated Style. An important facet of Gothic Revival supporters was the fact that they attempted to integrate figures and their surrounding space with a suitable framework which would enable figures to remain in proportion. For those manufacturers working in the Perpendicular Style, elaborate canopies and pedestals were favoured [ILLUSTRATION 66]; those partial to the Decorated Style often set their figures in a highly decorative but basically unrelated surround [ILLUSTRATION 67]. Morris & Co. soon abandoned canopies

³⁸⁸Martin Harrison, *Victorian Stained Glass*, Barrie & Jenkins, London, 1980, p.40.

altogether, employing a variety of techniques to solve the problem of due proportion within a design. In all cases however figures were designed to dominate the windows and this approach was subsequently followed by progressive manufacturers like James Powell & Sons [ILLUSTRATION 68]. In the Boaz and Ruth window aforementioned the subdued tones and use of large areas of white glass delicately patterned show an early strong allegiance to Perpendicular Style which contrasted sharply with contemporary work in the Decorated Style, dominated as it was by intense colours [ILLUSTRATION 69]. It was the manner of composition and relationships of colour which would characterise the distinctiveness of Morris & Co. windows.

The earliest Morris & Co. windows in Australia show, within thirteen years of the Scarborough Boaz and Ruth, how dramatically in composition the company's productions moved from the accepted Gothic Revival imagery which Australian manufacturers found so safe. They also indicate the variety of customer Morris & Co. could satisfy, the role of stained glass windows and something of the workings of Morris & Co.'s stained glass division.

The first Australian stained glass commission for Morris & Co. was for St. Barnabas' Memorial Chapel on Norfolk Island [ILLUSTRATIONS 70-71]: a group of five single lights dated 1876 for the east Chancel [ILLUSTRATIONS 72-73], to be followed in 1879 by a rose window and five single lights for the west end of the chapel [ILLUSTRATIONS 74-76]. The Chancel windows were the gift of Dowager Vicountess Downe, the west windows given by members of the Melanesian Mission

in memory of those of their colleagues killed in the area.³⁸⁹ The entire chapel was built in memory of John Coleridge Patteson, the first Bishop of Melanesia, who was killed by natives on 20 September 1871 at Nukapu, one of the Santa Cruz Islands.³⁹⁰ The importance of both sets of windows lies in the fact that they are the only windows in Australia installed during Morris's lifetime. Since Morris supervised the appearance of windows issuing from Morris & Co. until the 1890s the St. Barnabas' commission offers fine examples of his particular likings, comparable with later windows controlled by Henry Dearle. The St. Barnabas' windows are also unusual in an Australian context as they were designed to be erected with the building. Australian churches usually started out as simple buildings with plain glass, because initially they were seen to be of missionary status. One would have expected the same considerations to dictate the appearance of a chapel for the Melanesian Mission³⁹¹ on Norfolk Island but this was not so. The deviation at Norfolk Island resulted from the wealth and social standing of Patteson.³⁹²

³⁸⁹Rev. H.N. Drummond, *Bishop Patteson, Pioneer and Martyr*, Ralph & Brown, Parkstone, 1930, p.28.

³⁹⁰*Report for the Year 1871*, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, London, 1872, p.134 (Rhodes House Library, Oxford).

³⁹¹The Mission was the creation of George Augustus Selwyn, the first and only Bishop of New Zealand, who would have been spurred on by the existence in the region of other denominations such as the Wesleyans, Presbyterians and French Marists. Selwyn intended that native Melanesians would be trained to serve their own people and to this end he brought islanders to St. John's College in Auckland. To serve Melanesia was not an easy task as tribal groups were relatively small with individual languages. They were also highly suspicious of newcomers because of previous aggressions by Europeans and fear had often lead to killings. It was believed that the clubbing to death of John Patteson and the accompanying attack with poisoned arrows which saw the deaths of Mission workers Joseph Atkin and Stephen Taroaniara resulted from some recent outrage perpetrated on the natives by one of the numerous "labour" vessels which carried on a virtual slave trade in Melanesians for Queensland and Fiji plantations (*Report for the Year 1871*, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, op.cit., pp.136-139). The massacre stung concerned British clergy into action which saw the subsequent passing of the Pacific Islanders Protection Bill

Shortly after his appointment as Bishop of Melanesia in 1861, John Patteson wrote to his cousin Charlotte Yonge:

Sometimes I have a vision ... of a small but exceedingly beautiful Gothic chapel, rich inside with marble and stained glass and carved stalls and encaustic tiles and brass screen work ... It may come some day, and most probably long after I am dead and gone ... And yet a really noble church is a wonderful instrument of education, if we think only of the lower way of regarding it. ³⁹³

In his undergraduate Oxford years (1853-1855) Morris and his friends had been captivated by Charlotte Yonge's *The Heir of Redcliffe*, surcharged as it was with High Church sentiment.³⁹⁴ Because of the intimacy shown between Yonge and

(*Journal No.51 (1870-1873)*, Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Friday 19 January 1872, pp.184-187). The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had no illusions about the difficulty of enforcing in the Pacific such laws passed in England. It petitioned Prime Minister Gladstone to station a gunboat in the area (*Standing Committee Minutes, Vol.35, Jan 1872-Oct 1873*, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, p.102: Thursday 11 April 1872).

³⁹²Born on 1 April 1827 Patteson was the eldest son of Sir John Patteson, a judge of the Queen's Bench, had been educated at Eton and Oxford and ordained at Exeter Cathedral, and his family's considerable wealth was invaluable to the Melanesian Mission. In its first year Patteson gave £1000 from his personal finances towards the move of buildings from New Zealand to Norfolk Island (Raymond Nobbs, *St. Barnabas and the Melanesian Mission Norfolk Island*, Macquarie University, 1990, unpagged) and in 1869 advised the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel that he wished to forego the Society's annual gift of £300 (*Report of the Year 1881*, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, London, 1882, p.97). At the time of his death Patteson had been some seventeen years in the Mission.

³⁹³Nobbs, op.cit.

³⁹⁴One of the group, Richard Watson Dixon, related nearly fifty years later that he believed Yonge's novel was the first to greatly influence Morris and that it was "unquestionably one of the finest books in the world" (Mackail, op.cit., Vol.I, p.41).

Patteson with the above-quoted letter Yonge undoubtedly would have contributed to the cost of the chapel in Patteson's memory. Before Patteson's death had even been confirmed in England, but as "no contradiction to the rumour" had been received, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel decided to set on foot an endowment fund as a memorial to the Bishop.³⁹⁵ Just under seven thousand pounds were raised, to be used to acquire two "urgently needed ... objects" for the Melanesian Mission, a new ship and a church, and for the general support of the Mission on Norfolk Island.³⁹⁶

Gothic Revivalist architect George Gilbert Scott first prepared plans for St. Barnabas' Chapel,³⁹⁷ however church authorities found them impracticable because the chapel was conceived by Scott as wholly of stone.³⁹⁸ Thomas Graham Jackson, who had been a pupil of Scott, was then approached and provided a satisfactory scheme for a building mostly of wood, because of the roof-line, on stone supports. Nevertheless he simply adapted Scott's floor plan to present a somewhat shortened edifice.³⁹⁹ There seems no doubt that St. Barnabas' Chapel was from the

³⁹⁵ *Journal No. 51 (1870-1873)*, op.cit., Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Friday 15 December 1871, pp.165-166.

³⁹⁶ *Report of the Year 1881*, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, op.cit., p.97; *Journal No. 51 (1870-1873)*, op.cit., Friday 19 January 1872, p.188; *Journal No. 52 (1873-1876)*, Friday 19 March 1875, pp.255-256; *Journal No. 53 (1876-1881)*, Friday 21 May 1880, p.355.

³⁹⁷ *Standing Committee Minutes, Vol. 35, Jan 1872-Oct 1873*, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, op.cit., p.317: Thursday 27 March 1873.

³⁹⁸ Morris himself was never enamoured of Scott's derivative work and became scathing of his restoration work. On 5 March 1877 Morris wrote to the editor of *The Athenaeum* out of concern for the Minster of Tewkesbury that "is to be destroyed by Sir Gilbert Scott" (Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.I, 1984, p.351) and twelve years later related to Georgiana Burne-Jones on the parish church of Holy Trinity, Bradford-on-Avon: "The church a very big and fine one, but scraped to death by G. Scott, the (happily) dead dog" (Ibid., Vol.III, 1996, pp.57-58).

³⁹⁹ Jackson's solution for St. Barnabas' would seem to echo A.W.N. Pugin at his best: "...It is

start conceived to satisfy the vision Patteson outlined to his cousin. Gothic would have been considered the only appropriate style. Scott's replacement by Jackson also ensured that in scale and external appearance the building was environmentally compatible with its site. Several influences would work to see the interior flower as envisaged. Structurally, Jackson's designing presented a fine Gothic effect, and although made mainly from local materials, Jackson later recalled:

The Pattesons, like their relatives the Coleridges, were patriotic Devonians, so nothing would do but that the font and the pavement should be of Devonshire marble; and these, together with many of the fittings, and the painted glass by Burne-Jones and Morris, had to be sent out from England and landed with difficulty on a rock when the great Pacific swell lifted the boat for a moment to the right level. ... ⁴⁰⁰

From this a complete yet singularly appropriate English Gothic Revival edifice rose in a South Pacific island environment. Its conception, appearance and existence were entirely dependent upon the personalities and social circumstances of people divorced from the realities of its setting.

in the smaller...churches..., where he was forced to think his way out of difficulties...that his own voice began to be heard" (Rosemary Hill, 'Who was Pugin? The Architect and the Age', in Brian Andrews, *Creating a Gothic Paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes*, Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery, Hobart, 2002, p.8). Jackson was very much an architect in the Gothic Revival mould. For his 'extended' skills see Paul Thompson, *The Work of William Morris*, Oxford University Press, 1993, p.148; Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., p.113; Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., p.110; Kelvin (Ed), op.cit. Vol.II, 1987, p.74 and Vol.IV, 1996, pp.43, 46, 54, 56; *Arts and Crafts Essays*, Thoemmes Press, Bristol, 1996, pp.330-344; Stansky, op.cit., pp.164-166.

⁴⁰⁰Quoted in Nobbs, op.cit.

The Chancel windows for St. Barnabas' comprise four evangelists originally designed between 1872 and 1874 for Jesus College, Cambridge [ILLUSTRATIONS 77-78], and a *Salvator Mundi* of 1873 for St. Mary Magdalen's, Monkton, Devon [ILLUSTRATION 79]. The massive presence of these figures, straining at the restraints of their framework, show Burne-Jones' delight in his study of Michaelangelo's art when visiting Italy in 1871. Morris's unswerving belief in the superior draughtsmanship of his friend is exposed with these works. It is interesting that John Ruskin, early mentor for both Morris and Burne-Jones, should have claimed that "it is one of the chief misfortunes affecting Michael Angelo's reputation that his ostentatious display of strength and science has a natural attraction for comparatively weak and pedantic persons".⁴⁰¹ Morris in fact did not favour Renaissance art, but not because of any perceived digressions from true religious principles. For him, the Renaissance ignored the previous thousand years of historical evolution in art and severed art "from the daily lives of men". Art was no longer representative but "an end in itself".⁴⁰² Such an assessment might seem somewhat drastic, particularly in light of Burne-Jones' life's work. Morris had no qualms about using Burne-Jones' Renaissance-influenced figures as central to many of the firm's stained glass windows, indicating that he was not always as rigid in practice as he was in word.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰¹Martin Harrison & Bill Waters, *Burne-Jones*, Barrie & Jenkins, London, 1973, p.104.

⁴⁰²William Morris, *Art and the Beauty of the Earth*, Chiswick Press, London, 1898, pp.10-11; Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.79-80.

⁴⁰³Morris's "ingenious solution" for covering an admiration for Durer was to assert that "though his method was infected by the Renaissance, his matchless imagination and intellect made him thoroughly Gothic in spirit" (Peterson, op.cit., pp.47-48).

All five figures utilised at St.Barnabas' appeared together just four months later in St.Martin's in the Bull Ring, Birmingham [ILLUSTRATION 80] and the similarity of treatment for both projects was not coincidental. Heading the sub-committee responsible for Australasian and Pacific affairs for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was the Bishop of Lichfield.⁴⁰⁴ He would have been responsible for the choice of Morris & Co. for Norfolk Island, in consultation with Patteson's family. The latter should have known the Devon *Salvator Mundi* as well as the same Apostles as they appeared in Tavistock, Devon, some short time prior to their Norfolk Island counterparts.⁴⁰⁵ The selection of the Apostles with Christ as *Salvator Mundi* would have been seen as most appropriate to the Chapel's mission status. Because of diocese connections the Bishop of Lichfield would also have had an input into the arrangements for St.Martin's. The two sets of windows impress the same because of Morris's favouring of Perpendicular Style colour standards. They were not, however, exact copies, subtle variations appearing in the colouring of garments and in the pattern-work [ILLUSTRATIONS 81-84]. Thus while Morris & Co. may have followed traditional division of labour in its workshop practices for stained glass it nonetheless allowed its glass painters scope to display their skills.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁴Membership of sub-committee listed in *Standing Committee Minutes* books.

⁴⁰⁵Dated 1876 the Tavistock Apostles do not appear in Morris & Co.'s *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit. (The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library). The *Catalogue's* first entry is for Youlgreave, Derbyshire, covering another commission for the four Apostles, and is dated June 1876. Thus the Tavistock figures must have been manufactured prior to this date. Unlike the Youlgreave commission which appears similar in colouring to the Norfolk Island windows, those at Tavistock generally display more colour.

⁴⁰⁶See Paul Thompson, op.cit., p.139. No record exists of specific painters for the main figures at St.Martin's and St.Barnabas' however these were likely to have been the same for both locations, particularly as Pozzi is listed as responsible for the treework behind the principal figures for both commissions (Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit. p.5,

Producing a totally different effect to that at St.Martin's and St.Barnabas' the five same figures of Christ and the Apostles were repeated as a group in 1902 in the East Window of the Parish Church of St.Edward the Confessor, Leek, Staffordshire [ILLUSTRATION 85]. Such diversity of treatment was more marked in Morris & Co. productions orchestrated by Henry Dearle who often replaced Morris's predominance of white glass with broad areas of pure colour, thus removing the company's windows even further from Perpendicular Style tenets. All three Christ and Apostles windows are however typical of Morris & Co.'s work throughout its existence in the dynamic relationships of figures and colours and the pre-eminent craftsmanship of painting and assembly. It was never a consideration by the company that its accepted standards of production should be lowered for colonial consumption.

The west grouping at St.Barnabas', designed specifically for the site, consists of a large rose window filled with foliage, below which ranges the five trefoil-headed lights, three wide ones showing *St.John*, *St.Philip Baptising the Eunuch* and *St.Stephen* alternating with two narrow windows which are purely decorative. The figures of the Saints were designed by Burne-Jones. The rose window and two lights alternating with the Saints were probably designed and painted by W.E. Pozzi.⁴⁰⁷ George Wardle, Morris & Co.'s manager, particularly noted that Morris was able to hand over this type of work to Pozzi "who became very skilful in the design of

March 1877; p.3, November 1876) and his work also displays individual expression.

⁴⁰⁷See Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, p.577.

foliage”.⁴⁰⁸ Again the figure subjects chosen for the west windows were entirely appropriate to their dedication. *St.Philip Baptising the Eunuch* obviously refers to the main thrust of missionary work. *St.Stephen* would have been selected in memory of native convert Stephen Taroaniara and *St.John* may reflect the wounding of John Ngongono. Although purely decorative, the St.Barnabas’ rose window and accompanying small panels bear no resemblance to Decorated Style Gothic Revival work of the time. The rose window of 1875 by Clayton & Bell for Christ Church, Oxford [ILLUSTRATION 86] is typical of the genre for such an opening and was closely followed by Sydney’s Lyon, Cottier & Co. in a design of the 1890s, Christ in Majesty filling the central roundel but saints replacing the radiating angels of Clayton & Bell.⁴⁰⁹ The nave windows of c.1884 by Lyon, Cottier & Co. for Christ Church, Bong Bong, New South Wales [ILLUSTRATION 87] are representative of decorative panel-type work with their realistic depiction of growing flowers. The reason for the use at St.Barnabas’ of pattern work rather than figures may well have been simply to offer a window within the means of the donors. For the three small figure panels alone in the west window Morris & Co. paid a designing fee to Burne-Jones of some £30.⁴¹⁰ For whatever reasons of choice, the rose window at St.Barnabas’ is a unique work for the company in stained glass, echoing Morris’s own concentration on flat pattern designing in other fields of production. There is no suggestion with it of contributing to the chapel as “a wonderful instrument of education”. This focuses attention on Patteson’s

⁴⁰⁸Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, op.cit., p.96.

⁴⁰⁹ML. PXD609 f.6: Lyon, Cottier & Co.: Designs for stained glass windows and painted ceilings and walls (Mitchell Library, Sydney).

⁴¹⁰See entry for 1878 in Burne-Jones’ account book, Vol.1, original in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, copy in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

addendum “if we think only of the lower way of regarding it”. Patteson’s description of his visionary chapel does not imply education as his first priority but rather physical beauty which one assumes translates into the ethereal. In terms of Church history and tradition, rose windows of the Clayton & Bell/Lyon, Cottier & Co. mould were decidedly educative. The St.Barnabas’ rose window is the extreme outcome of Morris’s view of mosaic stained glass windows as “pieces of ornamental glazing” where “*suggestion*, not *imitation*, of form is the thing to be aimed at”.⁴¹¹ Assuredly the Morris & Co. windows in St.Barnabas’ were produced with a “unity of purpose”, and that was to complement the “genuineness and spontaneity of the architecture” they were decorating.⁴¹² From Morris’s own perspective they all would have been educative:

... ‘tis we ourselves, each one of us, who must keep watch and ward over the fairness of the earth, and each with his own soul and hand do his due share therein, lest we deliver to our sons a lesser treasure than our fathers left to us.⁴¹³

Contrasting with the British control of selections for St.Barnabas’ was the fine example of support for colonial stained glass in St.Margaret’s Anglican Church in the Adelaide suburb of Woodville. This was fuelled by the work of E.F. Troy. Troy is best remembered today for his windows, his decorative schemes, like those of Ferguson & Urie, having disappeared with time. The two Australian firms, with principals of strong Scottish background and training, presented with their

⁴¹¹Poulson (Ed), *op.cit.*, pp.48, 44.

⁴¹²*Ibid.*, pp.50, 49.

⁴¹³Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, *op.cit.*, p.170.

windows all the force of the Decorated Style Gothic Revival idiom while asserting individuality of presentation. Window acquisition for St.Margaret's from Troy's contribution onwards highlights in its succession several important considerations in stained glass window manufacture and selection.

In 1886 the Rev. Thomas Blackburn began a twenty-seven year incumbency at St.Margaret's which brought a stability to the church's community although Blackburn himself suffered some monetary hardship.⁴¹⁴ It was during Blackburn's term that St.Margaret's began to acquire its stained glass windows [ILLUSTRATION 88]. Initially the church was glazed with plain, small-paned tinted windows [ILLUSTRATION 89]. In 1897 an *Ascension* was donated by the parishioners in memory of John Bristow Hughes who had built the church and in the same year a *Risen Christ* was donated by the family of William and Maria Harrison. Both were by E.F. Troy. Troy fulfilled many important commissions in Adelaide for both decoration and windows including the Adelaide Town Hall and Council Chamber in 1897, Government House in 1901 and the South Australian Institute of Technology in 1903 [ILLUSTRATION 90]. On a smaller scale the firm produced numerous door surrounds for private homes [ILLUSTRATION 91]. The workshop was not large, in 1898 employing only two men and two boys, however it maintained an integrity by retaining a simplicity to its designs. Although an ardent Catholic, Troy made windows for most Protestant denominations; all present ingenuous principal images within a highly decorative framework. Around 1910 a *Crucifixion* was added to

⁴¹⁴In 1901 his annual stipend plummeted to only £115 - a respectable figure was £200 (see Financial Records (1868-1948) for Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, Christ Church Cathedral Archives, Auchmuty Library, University of Newcastle, A5362).

St.Margaret's by the Girls' Friendly Society in memory of Blackburn's wife Margaret. This was also by a local firm, Thompson & Harvey, who had purchased the equipment of Troy following the latter's death in 1910. It would appear that Troy's designs were also acquired as the decorative surrounds for the *Risen Christ* [ILLUSTRATION 92] and the *Crucifixion* [ILLUSTRATION 67] are the same.

Following Blackburn's death in 1912 it was decided to extend St.Margaret's as a memorial to him. The eastern wall (containing the three early windows) was removed and chancel, sanctuary, transept, organ loft and two vestries added.⁴¹⁵ These were completed in 1915 [ILLUSTRATION 93]. The *Ascension* window was moved to the south side of the sanctuary [see ILLUSTRATION 89], the *Risen Christ* and *Crucifixion* to the north side of the nave either side of the newly dedicated *Good Shepherd* by Clarkson Ltd [ILLUSTRATION 94]. Standardisation of design was not an aesthetic consideration in this church, the highly decorative fillings of E.F. Troy and Thompson & Harvey contrasting sharply with the elaborate pedestal/canopy work in the Clarkson window. Unlike E.F. Troy which was established on a decorative basis, Clarkson Ltd had grown from an ironmongery/glazing background. J.F. Williams, who began the "Leaded Light and Stained Glass Department" when he joined the company in 1899,⁴¹⁶ had trained with Troy. The adept construction of Clarksons' windows was undoubtedly the result of this training and one can only assume that the firm's management dictated the plagiaristic design methods which would have stifled any originality Williams could

⁴¹⁵Remembered as such by parishioner Betty Howe, born 1920: letter of Betty Howe to the author, 11 March 1998.

⁴¹⁶*Clarkson Limited 75th Birthday Commemoration Booklet*, Mortlock Library of South Australian, Adelaide, BRG 172/9/2.

have brought to the company's works. However the outcome was an ability by Clarksons to match superficially any rival's presentations.

St.Margaret's earliest Australian productions show that Gothic Revival concepts were unquestioningly followed. Troy's work faithfully adhered to the Decorated Style of twelfth century origins with their ornamental frames, bright colours and simplicity of figure design. Thompson & Harvey, while still retaining Troy's pattern work, displayed a leaning towards fifteenth century Perpendicular Style with a more elaborate figure in paler tones. Clarkson's *Good Shepherd*, in the ostentation of its canopy and pedestal, evoked fifteenth century Perpendicular Style but the figure suggested the heavier shading of a waning sixteenth century art. A comparison of these styles with Morris & Co.'s work shows how innovative that firm was in terms of filling window space.

In 1926 Morris & Co.'s *St.George* in memory of Charles Hubert Bath was added to St.Margaret's array of stained glass windows. Significantly it was not placed on the north side of the nave where a plain window existed next to Thompson & Harvey's *Crucifixion*. It was situated by itself on the south side of the nave, to be joined twenty-two years later by English designer C.E. Welstead's *St.Margaret* [see ILLUSTRATION 44]. Thus the local and imported works were effectively separated either side of the nave. Designed originally in 1871 by Burne-Jones for Peterhouse, Cambridge [ILLUSTRATION 95], the Adelaide *St.George* is an excellent example of how Morris & Co. coped with filling a difficult window shape without resorting to traditional design features. Unlike its local predecessors, the figure in the St.George

window dominates, proportion being maintained by the use of the naturalistic panel below and the positioning of the banner above. This solution was often employed successfully by the company for tall lancet windows [ILLUSTRATION 96]. Just why the tradition of support for the local industry was broken for the Woodville *St. George*, and Morris & Co. approached, is not known. By 1926 the local choice would have been the unimaginative Clarkson Ltd or Thompson & Harvey, both essentially general glaziers with stained glass as a sideline. The major donors of the window, representing banking, exclusive club and masonic connections, obviously sought a more prestigious manufacturer and with Clarksons now as agents for Morris & Co., ordering would have been a much easier process than previously.

The now relative darkness of the *St. George* compared to the other windows in St. Margaret's occurs because of a large tree which grows immediately outside. While such a state may affect to some degree the window's luminosity it does not detract from the original design work which sets it in advance of its Australian companions developed more than twenty years later. When compared with the very traditionally conceived Australian productions, the *St. George* clearly highlights why architects initially favouring Morris & Co. returned to equally traditional British manufacturers, as contemporary outlooks wavered under partiality for more historically correct interpretations. For St. Margaret's, however, pure and simple individual aesthetic taste affected selection of windows, resulting in a complete lack of cohesive arrangement. Such a situation Morris did not support:

One drawback to the effectiveness of painted windows comes from the too common absence of any general plan for the glazing of the building. The

donors of windows are allowed to insert whatever may please their individual tastes without regard to the rest of the glazing or the architectural requirements of the building; so that even where the window is good in itself, it fails in effect of decoration, and injures, or is injured, by its neighbours. The custodians of buildings before they allow any window to be put up should have some good plan of glazing schemed out embracing a system of subjects, an architectural arrangement, and a scheme of proportion of colour, and this plan should be carefully adhered to. Thus, one window would help the other, and even inferiority of design in one or two of the windows would be less noticed when the whole effect was pleasing. ... ⁴¹⁷

The selection of quarries for the background to Welstead's 1948 *St. Margaret* was probably dictated by the limited funds of the donor. The resulting excess of light entering illustrates the difficulty often ensuing from English manufacturers not taking into account Australian conditions. In 1887, for a Dedworth, Berkshire, commission, Morris & Co. set the figure of St. George used at Woodville completely in quarries. This arrangement was entirely suitable for its English location. Church "custodians" in Australia would have been aware of this country's problem with intense light. In such cases however windows were often accepted from donors simply because the church had no funds of its own with which to purchase stained

⁴¹⁷Poulson (Ed), op.cit., p.49. Lack of consistent glazing schemes was not a problem to be faced only by nineteenth and twentieth century churches. Sarah Brown relates that with Chartres Cathedral's glazing (c.1200-1235) some "attempt was made to impose a coherent iconographic plan on the whole: ... This rationale was soon to be swept aside by the tastes and preferences of the donors who gave the individual windows, and it was the Cathedral's success in attracting secular patronage that ensured the completion of the scheme in record time" (Brown, op.cit., p.62).

glass and therefore welcomed any contributions. After architect William Wardell saw the first windows prepared by John Hardman & Co. of Birmingham for Sydney's St. Mary's Cathedral, he requested the company deepen the colours of subsequent windows to counteract strong glare,⁴¹⁸ thus ensuring with controlled supervision adherence to such a "plan" as outlined by Morris. It may well be that the correctly estimated poor window quality of excessive darkness recognised in Clayton & Bell's output by the Adelaide International Exhibition judges may in fact have worked inadvertently in the company's favour with their Melbourne St. Paul's commission.

In the later nineteenth century design styles for British and Australian made stained glass windows evolved from a single source - Gothic. Australian manufacturers were not inclined to move far from strictly proper presentations of the Gothic Revival and this allowed them to present adept productions with confidence. Morris & Co. was more adventurous, following Gothic principles but expanding visually on set precedents.⁴¹⁹ During the same period decorative schemes for houses drew upon a profusion of sources and Australian companies were confronted with wider decisions regarding aesthetic choices. As with its stained glass window production Morris & Co. would diverge from its source material with

⁴¹⁸*St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, Australia*, Catholic Communications, 1993, p.17.

⁴¹⁹Some of Morris & Co.'s early architect clients became uncomfortable with the firm's divergencies from purist Gothic Revival imagery and returned to more traditional manufacturers: Street to Clayton & Bell, Bodley to C.E. Kempe & Co. In the twentieth century Australian manufacturers began to experiment somewhat iconographically, accepting, for example, to follow the imagery of James Powell & Sons and be influenced by the Art Nouveau/Art Deco Movements. Construction techniques remained basically constant to nineteenth century beginnings.

its interior decorations. However, the company did not develop and sustain itself within a vacuum. Morris & Co. competed, successfully, in a decorative sphere which was as diverse in its range of style selections as it was in its understanding and satisfaction of public requirements. In nineteenth century Britain that sphere to a great extent had been politically manipulated. The Australian decorative scene would absorb the effects of British manoeuvrings while disregarding the causes. In Australia two firms in particular covered ably the market arena in which Morris & Co. was involved. Sydney's Lyon, Cottier & Co. supplied a client base similar to that which Morris & Co. serviced in reality. While it did so with the same aplomb as Morris & Co. regarding its actual workings, stylistically it was very different. Melbourne's W.H. Rocke & Co. catered to patrons for whom Morris & Co. in theory sought to provide. Like Lyon, Cottier & Co. it would do so from an aesthetic perspective different to Morris & Co.'s. The stylistic directions taken by the Australian companies, while diverging from Morris & Co.'s, were equally as acceptable and were, in fact, more in accord with popular British trends. Lyon, Cottier & Co. and W.H. Rocke & Co. are considered in the next two chapters, comparatively with Morris & Co.

CHAPTER 6: LYON, COTTIER & CO., 1873-1923, AND MORRIS & CO.:
DISTINCTIONS AND SIMILARITIES IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

The design precepts upon which Morris & Co. was founded were Gothic Revival. These were well established by the 1830s and manifest in the work of A.W.N. Pugin.⁴²⁰ From 1836 until his death in 1852 Pugin produced for respected commercial concerns designs in Gothic style for stained glass, metalwork, furniture, textiles, wallpapers, tiles and jewellery⁴²¹ [ILLUSTRATIONS 97-98]. Pugin's example was upheld by his admirer Henry Cole who established Summerly's Art Manufactures in 1847⁴²² [ILLUSTRATIONS 99-100]. Yet the prevailing decorative styles at London's Great Exhibition of 1851 were elaborate Renaissance and Louis XIV-XV [ILLUSTRATIONS 101-102], the extreme opulence of which captivated the public. Except for the porcelain and earthenware exhibits of Wedgwood, the Classical was all but ignored. Members of Henry Cole's organising circle for this exhibition, including Pugin, were appalled at the corruption of products by ornamentation which either belied or defied an item's construction and intent.

⁴²⁰Pugin's support of Gothic was religiously based. He saw Gothic as a true Christian style, associating the Classical with paganism. Supporters and followers looked more to the political/aesthetic distinctions of Gothic.

⁴²¹See Andrews, *op.cit.*, pp.32, 35, 36; Brooks, *op.cit.*, p.244.

⁴²²The business lasted only a year. While Cole himself was interested in manufacturing practices (see Andrews, *op.cit.*, p.18), the artists involved in his enterprise, although maintaining appropriate ornamentation for function, were not known to be conversant with production methods and conditions. Thus Cole's experiment failed to satisfy the melding of industry and art that was being so elusively sought. In contrast, Morris ensured that he personally mastered either the practicalities or the essence of all production methods before wares were manufactured by Morris & Co. (see, for example, Parry, *op.cit.*, pp.11, 39, 49-50, 58, 101). Henry Cole continued his design reform crusading with the Society of Arts by organising exhibitions which it was believed would upgrade the taste of consumers. The president of the Society was Prince Albert and it was through this connection that Cole became the chief promoter of London's Great Exhibition of 1851.

Their ire applied not only to British entries but also to European exhibits. British Schools of Design⁴²³ also appeared to have failed to prevent the obsession for decoration which disregarded form and purpose [ILLUSTRATION 103]. Cole was instrumental in setting the tone of the new South Kensington Museum which drew its initial collection from the Great Exhibition. For educative purposes items were chosen to indicate good and bad design: officially approved products were of reformed Gothic style [ILLUSTRATION 104], the exuberant Louis relegated to the poor taste category.⁴²⁴ In Britain the quest was for a distinctive national style to counteract the classically based French Louis and that style was seen to be English Gothic.⁴²⁵ Charles Dickens was to satirise his friend Cole's educative zeal and abhorrence of Louis trappings in *Hard Times* published in 1854:

You are to be in all things regulated and governed ... by fact. ... You must discard the word Fancy altogether. You have nothing to do with it. You are not to have, in any object of use or ornament, what would be a contradiction in fact. You don't walk upon flowers in fact; you cannot be allowed to walk upon flowers in carpets. You don't find that foreign birds and butterflies come and perch upon your crockery; you cannot be permitted to paint foreign birds

⁴²³Following the findings of an 1835 Select Committee into "the best means of extending a knowledge of the arts and of the principles of design among the people (especially the manufacturing population) of the country" (quoted in Naylor, *op.cit.*, p.16), Britain founded a series of Design Schools in its major manufacturing districts. The future want of such institutions in Australia underlines this country's lack of any significant manufacturing centres.

⁴²⁴The extent of Cole's ascendancy over public policy may be gauged by the fact that Prince Albert's personal taste ran to the Italian Renaissance. The royal patronage of this style may account for its prominence in many nineteenth century Australian decorative schemes for the wealthy (see, for example, Lane & Serle, *op.cit.*, pp.155-156, 170-171, 182-183, 190-191, 212, 260-261, 284-285).

⁴²⁵Chris Brooks, *op.cit.*, p.241. See also Hill in Andrews, *op.cit.*, p.8. Under Ruskin's influence the movement would later embrace "a new international gothic" to indicate "European unity" (Brooks, *op.cit.*, pp.300-301).

and butterflies upon your crockery. You never meet with quadrupeds going up and down walls; you must not have quadrupeds represented upon walls. You must use ... for all these purposes, combinations and modifications (in primary colours) of mathematical figures which are susceptible of proof and demonstration. This is the new discovery. This is fact. This is taste. ⁴²⁶

[ILLUSTRATIONS 105-106]

As a designer of the next generation Morris strongly supported the rightness of English Gothic over the dubiousness of French Louis. Yet the battle for predominance of Gothic over Renaissance/Louis and Classical styling for interior decoration was not one which affected either the Australian scene or the wider commercial field in Britain. While the officially sanctioned British idiom may have been Gothic based, British interpretations of French opulence, Classical refinement and Middle Eastern and Oriental exoticism were shipped to the colonies and supported by all levels of society. It was upon such liberties that the firm of Lyon, Cottier & Co. would found a reputation which basically remained faithful to the classically based styles of Lyon's Glaswegian youth. Commercially this was a sound procedure. Lyon was both confident and proficient in the practices of his apprenticeship and he also believed in the social rationales behind their public acceptance. With these strengths he could present a positive, assured and adept front to prospective clients. This ability he shared with Morris. However, unlike

⁴²⁶Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*, Wordsworth Classics, Ware, 1995, p.7. Dickens was widely read in Australia during the nineteenth century. As an example, the *Catalogue of the Bega School of Arts Library* (op.cit.) lists nineteen Dickens novels; his popularity was only rivalled by Walter Scott (with 25).

Lyon, Morris would consistently belabour the role of art and did not brook compromise in his own stylistic direction. Because Australians were concerned with an aesthetic side to style without political connotations, Morris & Co.'s products could be bypassed here in favour of presentations which were widely fashionable rather than distinct.

After leaving Melbourne's Ferguson & Urie in 1873, John Lyon had moved to Sydney to form with Daniel Cottier the firm of Lyon, Cottier & Co., not just house decorators and glass stainers as Ferguson & Urie had been, but "Artistic Interior Decorators" and "Artists in Stained Glass"⁴²⁷ [ILLUSTRATION 107]. By the 1870s the grouping of these two services, the staple of Morris & Co.'s business, was recognised because of the success of the English firm. Certainly each was equally important to Morris & Co. and could individually support the company through market irregularities. John Lyon and Daniel Cottier would have been aware of this business rationale.

The clearest expression of Lyon's intention for his decorative firm appeared in a three-page advertising layout [ILLUSTRATIONS 108-110]. This probably dates from around 1877-1878 in view of references to work for the Hon. S.D. Gordon's Sydney residence Glenyarrah (1876) and the Philadelphia International Exhibition (1876), but with no mention of the important commission to decorate Government House, Sydney (1879). Superficially the declaration at the beginning of the brochure

⁴²⁷See Donald Ellsmore, 'The Decorators Lyon and Cottier', in *Historic Houses Journal*, no.1, March 1982, pp.2-7. John Lyon was the controlling partner in Sydney; Cottier remained in Britain and did not ever visit the Australian enterprise.

suggests little connection with the workings of Morris & Co. There are, nonetheless, important associations between the two companies to which Lyon's statement draws attention. Specifically involved are valid treatments for walls, the architectural/historical bases of interior design and their social ramifications, the cost of quality workmanship, and stylistic interpretations for client gratification. Business for both firms was also affected by conditions of work, product variety and acceptance (or not) of fashion.

The first consideration in Lyon's preamble is his insistence on the superiority of painting over wallpapers. There is a definite suggestion that wallpapers were an option only for those not able to afford the painting of their homes' internal surfaces. Morris certainly viewed paperhangings as "a cheap art", "quite modern and very humble".⁴²⁸ Yet they were a major manufacture for Morris & Co. which replaced its 1860s reliance on "Mural Decoration, either in Pictures or in Pattern Work".⁴²⁹ By the date of Lyon's brochure Morris & Co. alone had some twenty-four wallpaper designs in production.⁴³⁰ Because all wallpapers were being imported into Australia Lyon's stand on painted ornamentation allowed him to present decorative schemes which did not have to revolve around imported components. Thus he was able to prepare original work which could assert the competitiveness of Australian artistic ability and judgement. Morris's designing for his own firm presented an

⁴²⁸Clive Wilmer (Ed), *William Morris: News from Nowhere and Other Writings*, Penguin Books, London, 1993, p.270; Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.68.

⁴²⁹Appendix I.

⁴³⁰Fiona Clark, *William Morris Wallpapers and Chintzes*, Academy Editions, London, 1973, pp.11-14.

originality conceived to compete against perceived inadequacies of taste and quality in British and European manufacturing.

Lyon and Morris both approached their designing with some deference to its architectural framework. In so doing their historical perspectives differed. Lyon's would seem to have involved aesthetic considerations only; for Morris social matters dominated. Lyon expressly mentions "the beauty of the ancient Roman and Greek decorations" as the basis for "ornamentation used". Such restricted conditions could not possibly result in always "elucidating the ideas of the architect" as claimed, but they did allow in Lyon's work for the underlining of the structural essence of wall and ceiling. According to Chris Miele nothing in Morris's later writings on architecture "betrays a scholar's understanding".⁴³¹ In extending this concept Miele compares the travelling incentives of Morris and architect G.E. Street. The latter, Miele suggests, "saw travel first and last as a professional opportunity",⁴³² just as Lyon seemed to do on an 1886 overseas trip discussed later; in contrast, "Morris went to the continent for pleasure pure and simple".⁴³³ What then formed the foundation for Morris's designs? His inspiration was basically two-fold. Morris succinctly alluded to this in his 1881 lecture *The Prospects of Architecture in Civilisation*. Therein he defined "the arts" as being "surely the expression of reverence for nature, and the crown of nature, the life of man upon the earth".⁴³⁴ These two concepts which ruled Morris's designing - nature and human endeavour - provided both strength and weakness to his accomplishments. In the

⁴³¹Miele (Ed), op.cit., p.10.

⁴³²Ibid., p.13.

⁴³³Ibid.

⁴³⁴Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.178.

former case he remained focussed and firm in the directions he followed, not allowing popular fancies to undermine his position. In the latter case he often appeared restricted in his understanding of people's needs. Lewis F. Day perceptively recognised Morris's limitations:

We need not mourn the narrowness of Morris. There is strength in concentration: and the intensity of his conviction was at the root of his success. He himself believed in narrowness, and had some scorn for anyone whose love of art was more diffuse than his. He used to say, he had rather a man did not appreciate many and various forms of art, suspecting him probably, if he did, of not loving any one of them truly. Catholicity was obnoxious to his temperament. He was not by nature critically inclined, if we assume criticism to imply weighing and soberly judging. What he did not like he disliked; that was all, and there was an end of it. ... ⁴³⁵

The classical principles upon which Lyon based his designing were repugnant to Morris. They originally entailed production by workers enslaved⁴³⁶ and disallowed "invention or individuality", resulting in "a kind of bareness and blankness, a rejection in short of all romance".⁴³⁷ Style based on Greek/Roman precedents was stagnant, with "no sense of the possibility of growth".⁴³⁸ Morris recognised its

⁴³⁵ Lewis F. Day, *op.cit.*, p.17; also quoted in Esther Meynell, *Portrait of William Morris*, Chapman & Hall, London, 1947, pp.157-158. In remembering a discussion with Morris in 1889 on landscape paintings of Richmond Hill, Bruce Glasier noted that Morris expressed "himself emphatically, as was his wont, for or against..." (J.Bruce Glasier, *William Morris and The Early Days of the Socialist Movement*, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1921, p.60).

⁴³⁶ Morris, *Art and Its Producers*, *op.cit.*, p.6; Salmon (Ed), *op.cit.*, pp.56, 112-114; Wilmer (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.269; Miele (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.104.

⁴³⁷ Miele (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.146.

⁴³⁸ Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, *op.cit.*, p.21; Miele (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.146.

Greek/Roman revival styles involved the use of a range of recognisable motifs which limited

“extreme refinement”,⁴³⁹ but this was no saving grace because of its evocation from “exclusiveness and aristocratic arrogance”.⁴⁴⁰ So it was that Morris turned to the Middle Ages for stimulation because they “allowed the workman freedom of individual expression”.⁴⁴¹ The inventiveness of the mediaeval workman could even humanise the pedantry of classical work:

... The great rolling curves of the Roman acanthus have not been forgotten, but they have had life, growth, variety, and refinement infused into them; the clean-cut accuracy and justness of line of one side of Greek ornament has not been forgotten either, nor the straying wreath-like naturalism of the other side of it; but the first has gained a crisp sparkling richness, and a freedom and suggestion of nature which it had lacked before; and the second, which was apt to be feeble and languid, has gained a knitting-up of its lines into strength, and an interest in every curve, which make it like the choice parts of the very growths of nature. ...⁴⁴²

The Gothic age “was to breathe new life into dead classical forms”⁴⁴³ and in so doing materialise that spirit “which makes us what we are at the best: the wild imagination, the love of nature, the scorn of pedantry, and stilted pompousness”.⁴⁴⁴ In maintaining his severe criticism of past conditions for ancient workers and his overzealous support for Gothic times Morris missed the general attraction of

the amount of play possible to individual proponents.

⁴³⁹Miele (Ed), op.cit., p.145.

⁴⁴⁰Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.17; Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.91; Miele (Ed), op.cit., p.146.

⁴⁴¹Miele (Ed), op.cit., pp.131-132; Salmon (Ed), op.cit., pp.102-103, 120-122.

⁴⁴²Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.31.

⁴⁴³LeMire (Ed), op.cit., p.101.

⁴⁴⁴Ibid., p.147.

classical styling for his own generation. Earlier London decorators H.W. and A. Arrowsmith recognised that the “great mass of the British public” wished for “a cheerful and pleasing but not a gorgeous style of decoration”.⁴⁴⁵ By adopting a Gothic influence Morris comfortably embodied in his pattern designing his acute observations of nature as well as adding support to his increasing involvement in the political situation of his time. He appeared unintentionally to manipulate historical references to justify highly personal attitudes.⁴⁴⁶ John Lyon sought out classical design principles for reasons which were, in decorative terms, as legitimate as Morris’s and clearly understood by Morris, despite the latter’s repeated attacks on socialist grounds. Morris suggested that the rules of Greek art “must have been unconsciously so well understood among the population, that what

⁴⁴⁵Quoted in Banham, MacDonald, Porter, *op.cit.*, p.53. See also Australian tastes in wallpapers discussed in Chapter 1. With reference to the Kelmscott Press William Peterson’s observations on nineteenth century type designs echo decorative preferences. Peterson notes the “boasting in the trade journals” that “the growing delicacy of type was a sign of increased ‘refinement’: ... By contrast, older typefaces were condemned as heavy, clumsy, and crude. It is in the context of this widespread preference for delicacy and lightness that Morris’s almost oppressively dark types must be seen: discarding what seemed to him the attenuation and weakness of nineteenth-century typography, Morris reacted (over-reacted, some would say) by designing faces that were solid, black, and aggressively self-assertive” (Peterson, *op.cit.*, p.19).

⁴⁴⁶Morris’s sometimes irrational outbursts may perhaps be explained by frustration. He admitted that the “frightful ignorance and want of impressibility of the average English workman floors me at times” (Florence Boos (Ed), *William Morris’s Socialist Diary*, The Journeyman Press, London, 1985, p.23) and thus some of his statements may have been for impact. Commenting in January 1887 on some newly acquired third to sixth century Egyptian textiles at the South Kensington Museum he claimed: “... some pieces being nothing but debased Classical style, others purely Byzantine, yet I think not much different in date: the contrast between the bald ugliness of the Classical pieces and the great beauty of the Byzantine was a pleasing thing to me, who loathe so all Classical art and literature. ...” (Ibid.). Eight days later Morris refers to his working on his own translation of Homer’s *Odyssey* (Ibid., p.25). Another interpretation of Morris and the sweeping statement comes from William Peterson: “a characteristic piece of Morrisian exaggeration” (Peterson, *op.cit.*, p.91).

is called nowadays bad taste did not exist among them at all".⁴⁴⁷ Lyon surely realised the aesthetic impact of his chosen ornamental precedents and in suggesting that it "never fails to give pleasant satisfaction" he acknowledged the transference to Australia of that decorative ambience admitted earlier by the Arrowsmiths to be the preference of the British public.

Despite the generally acceptable predilections of Lyon, his brochure declaration was clearly aimed at an exclusive wealthy market. While such social selection was never the intention with Morris & Co., production methods for its goods nevertheless resulted in basically the same market being satisfied. Lyon's provision of "special" wallpapers "at moderate cost" was a token gesture to lower/middle class aspirations. Not so with Morris & Co. In his first public lecture in 1877 Morris declared "I do not want art for a few, any more than education for a few, or freedom for a few".⁴⁴⁸ His belief in a "decorative, noble, *popular* art" underlay all his work in "the Decorative Arts";⁴⁴⁹ however in maintaining his standards within the established capitalist system of manufacture and distribution he created for himself a quandary between personal ideals and the desire to see Morris & Co. continue to succeed. George Wardle astutely understood why Morris did not form "a little communistic society" at Merton Abbey - because "*you cannot have socialism in a corner*".⁴⁵⁰ Both Morris & Co. and Lyon, Cottier & Co. confidently stated that decoration carried out with artistic "taste" as its aim would not prove to be much

⁴⁴⁷LeMire (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.144.

⁴⁴⁸Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, *op.cit.*, p.34.

⁴⁴⁹*Ibid.*, pp.36, 37.

⁴⁵⁰Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, *op.cit.*, p.108.

more expensive than available trade work. In the commercial world this outlook was always more of a hope than a reality.

It is uncertain how large the firm of Lyon, Cottier & Co. ever actually was. Megan Martin believes the company employed “between 30 and 40 tradesmen and artists”.⁴⁵¹ Margaret Lyon’s diary notes would suggest that its stable workforce was probably on a par with Morris & Co.’s prior to the latter acquiring its Merton Abbey Works. Margaret became her father’s clerk in 1881 at the age of nineteen on a salary of five shillings per week⁴⁵² and two years later recorded that she did “all Papa’s Money business, pay bills, & make up all the men’s wages”,⁴⁵³ tasks which obviously could be handled by one fairly inexperienced person. In addition to its initial Pitt Street location, the firm also built its own factory at Rushcutter’s Bay [ILLUSTRATION 111], an indication of its success.

The Rushcutter’s Bay factory is perhaps poorly represented in Illustration 111 when it was obviously photographed soon after completion. Architecturally severe, this purpose-built establishment nonetheless displays a simplicity and refinement concomitant with Lyon’s work and suggests spacious, well-lit and thus comfortable working conditions. Morris was adamant that a worker’s environment profoundly affected his output. However it was not with this in mind that Morris settled on the Merton Abbey site for his factory setup. Rather he needed to expand his workshop

⁴⁵¹Carlin & Martin, *op.cit.*, p.9.

⁴⁵²Margaret Stowe, nee Lyon, *Diary: December 1880-April 1882*, 12 February 1881 and 18 December 1881. ML.MSS.1381/1, Item 2 (Mitchell Library, Sydney).

⁴⁵³*Ibid.*, *Diary: December 1882-October 1883*, 16 June 1883. ML.MSS.1381/1, Item 5 (Mitchell Library, Sydney).

area so that he could extricate himself from commercial manufacturers handling the company's cloth printing and dyeing and textile weaving and also be able to add tapestry weaving to Morris & Co.'s range. One location would mean a sensible rationalisation for the company's other productions.⁴⁵⁴ The site at Merton Abbey satisfied all these needs [ILLUSTRATIONS 112-117]. Its setting and amenities added to the enjoyment of Morris & Co.'s workers, including Morris himself. Although the buildings were around a century old, the alterations carried out by Morris ensured workspaces which were as spacious and well-lit as suggested by Lyon's Rushcutter's Bay building. In a reminiscence of 1981 Morris & Co. employee Edward Payne, who briefly joined the firm in 1929, suggested that several of the buildings were "badly lit" yet the surviving photographs of the work areas belie such. Indeed Payne himself, after claiming that the "stained glass room was also badly lit", went on to describe the number and location of its numerous windows.⁴⁵⁵ Douglas Griffiths, who joined the firm five years after Payne, recalled "that all these buildings had an excessive amount of windows, ... they were all very well, very well ... lit".⁴⁵⁶ The Work's manager George Wardle maintained that there was "an abundance of pure water, light & air" and the synthesis of man-made and natural elements which produced the complete workplace at Merton Abbey resulted in employment that

⁴⁵⁴Within three years of opening the Merton Abbey Works in December 1881, Morris & Co. employed over one hundred workers. On the face of it, this workforce might suggest a sizeable manufacturer. However, in dividing that workforce among some half-dozen enterprises always meant a somewhat restricted output for each of the company's manufactures, particularly in view of Morris's scrupulous insistence on maintaining the highest possible quality in his products.

⁴⁵⁵Edward Payne, 'Memories of Morris & Co.', in *The Journal of the William Morris Society*, Vol.IV No.3, Summer 1981, p.2.

⁴⁵⁶Transcript of interview, 17 December 1975, op.cit., p.7, in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

was “altogether delightful”.⁴⁵⁷ In an account of a visit to the Works in 1886 Emma Lazarus recalled that there “was plenty of air and light even in the busiest room”,⁴⁵⁸ although Morris recognised the “deafening clatter” amidst which weavers were “imprisoned ... for a lifetime”.⁴⁵⁹ A bonus for workers at Merton Abbey was the natural beauty of the seven acre site⁴⁶⁰ however a recent assertion that the Works “proved that industry could thrive in a garden setting”⁴⁶¹ would seem to be assuming more than fact can substantiate. The key, perhaps, to worker satisfaction reflected in the productions of Morris & Co. and Lyon, Cottier & Co. might well have been understanding and mutual respect between involved employer and employee. Morris himself, then Henry Dearle after him, and John Lyon were all practical men in keen rapport with those working under them. The strength these men brought to the two firms is reflected in the demise of the companies. Lyon, Cottier & Co. survived only seven years following Lyon’s death in 1916; Morris & Co. went into liquidation six years after Dearle’s death in 1932. Morris & Co.’s fate must be blamed somewhat on lack of active participation and disinterest by company directors between 1932 and 1940.⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁷Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, op.cit., p.104.

⁴⁵⁸Parry, op.cit., p.70.

⁴⁵⁹Fiona MacCarthy, *William Morris: A Life for Our Time*, Faber and Faber, London, 1994, p.432.

⁴⁶⁰Mackail, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.58-59.

⁴⁶¹Jill Duchess of Hamilton, Penny Hart & John Simmons, *The Gardens of William Morris*, Hodder Headline, Rydalmere, 1998, p.75.

⁴⁶²“Duncan Dearle...was the only one of the directors who actually worked at Merton, though he was not particularly interested in the work and spent more time playing his clarinet” (Typescript information given by Douglas Griffiths on 23 April 1968, op.cit.).

Lyon, Cottier & Co. in its decorative schemes aimed to satisfy in Australia the equivalent market to that serviced by Morris & Co. in Britain. Like Morris & Co., Lyon, Cottier & Co. also gained many of its commissions by reputation, through architectural connections,⁴⁶³ rather than exploiting popular advertising avenues. Private commissions included the residences of Sir Frank Darley, Sir James Martin and the Hon. S.D. Gordon and miscellaneous work in the fashionable Sydney suburbs of Vaucluse, Drummoyne, Woollahra, Darling Point and Elizabeth Bay. These were invariably of a delicate Renaissance flavour suggestive of Lyon's control. Decorative work for institutions and businesses included the Joint Stock Bank, the National Mutual Life Association, St. Andrew's College, Sydney and St. Vincent's Hospitals, the A.I.S. Bank, Her Majesty's Theatre, Tooth's Brewery and Wunderlich's Showground pavilion. These commissions often reflected the Aesthetic persuasions of Andrew Wells with tripartite wall division displaying unrelated heavy frieze and dado with lighter filling or the use of Japanese leather wallpaper. The difference in treatment of these commissions highlights the company's ability to satisfy projections of established refinement and modern progressiveness, although in so doing it qualified its stated code for artistic interior presentation. Morris & Co. did not differentiate between its commissions which were handled without modification to its stylistic principles.

With their stained glass window productions both companies remained true to current dominant Gothic Revival tenets. As with his interior designs Lyon did not experiment with stained glass imagery, producing comfortably acceptable

⁴⁶³Montana, *op.cit.*, pp.132, 134, 136, 140, 147, 149, 151.

presentations. Morris and Dearle extended the boundaries of visual forms with their windows while strongly reinforcing constructive axioms from Gothic times.

Despite the more prominent designation of “Artistic Interior Decorators”, Lyon, Cottier & Co.’s 1877-1878 brochure placed greater emphasis on the firm’s stained glass work and in fact the company stamp marking these and other original designs impresses “Artists in Stained Glass and Wall Painting”. This arrangement was perhaps purely a business decision. Local stained glass artists were rare, interior decorators, particularly in the form of the “plumber, painter and glazier”, were common. Advertising of the company’s stained glass abilities would have been critical in capturing some of that market dominated by imports. Church windows arising from Lyon’s designing are more conspicuous than domestic glass which was often a transference of Cottier’s ideas. An indication of Lyon’s determination to assert the acceptability of Australian-based work is seen with the replacement of the company’s logo, clearly emanating from Cottier’s London premises

[ILLUSTRATION 107], with Lyon’s Chancel Window design of 1875 for All Saints’ Cathedral, Bathurst [ILLUSTRATION 110] - although written acknowledgement of Cottier’s alleged Ruskinian connections are retained. The central light of the Bathurst Chancel Window, depicting the Ascension [ILLUSTRATION 118], was adapted by Lyon from his 1872 Ferguson & Urie window for St Andrew’s, Walkerville [ILLUSTRATION 62]. From its earliest years Morris & Co. likewise modified designs for re-use⁴⁶⁴ thus Lyon was following an accepted practice.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶⁴See, as a small sample only, references to Abraham, Adam, St.Alban, St.Andrew, Angels, Annunciation, Boaz, St.Catherine, Christ on the Cross, Christ in Majesty and St.Elizabeth in Sewter, *op.cit.*, Vol.II, 1975, pp.274, 275, 276, 277-278, 281, 283, 284, 286, 287, 291.

⁴⁶⁵See also *Henry Holiday*, *op.cit.*, p.8, Item 16, in reference to similar practice by James

Lyon's example in this case also suggests that he was both proud of and confident in the rightness of his continuous championing of the Decorated Style. Stained glass windows were popular with both institutions and private clients and church work for Anglican, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic churches ranged from suburban Sydney to large country towns in New South Wales and Victoria.⁴⁶⁶ In this latter field the firm definitely showed that local manufacture could favourably compete with imports. For the newly-erected St.Saviour's Anglican Cathedral, Goulburn, in 1884-1885 Lyon, Cottier & Co. provided seven two- or three-light windows. The great seven-light East Chancel window, donated by the family of pastoralist William Bradley, was by Heaton, Butler & Bayne [ILLUSTRATION 119]. The powerful six-light North transept window came from Hardman & Co. [ILLUSTRATION 120]. It was presented by the family of Thomas Sutcliffe Mort. In the 1860s Mort had included in his Sydney residence of Greenoakes stained glass windows by Hardmans portraying kings and queens of the Tudor period.⁴⁶⁷ The commission for St.Saviour's impressive six-light South Transept window, in memory of pastoralist and benefactor Andrew Gibson and his two sons, did not go to a British firm but to Lyon, Cottier & Co.

Powell & Sons. Re-use of designs dates back to mediaeval times. For example, at Tewkesbury Abbey in Gloucestershire figures of the prophets are derived from three/four basic models slightly adapted and/or reversed.

⁴⁶⁶See Lyon, Cottier & Co.'s designs for stained glass windows and painted ceilings and walls, Mitchell Library, Sydney, PXD609 and CYPOS691 (DG D30). See also Daphne Penalver, 'Stained Glass City', in *Highlife*, vol.7, no.2, December 2002-January 2003, pp.120-127.

⁴⁶⁷See Lane & Serle, *op.cit.*, pp.130-135.

Lyon, Cottier & Co. could have projected a far more 'modern' image if Cottier's preferences had been more widely utilised by Lyon.⁴⁶⁸ Cottier had direct knowledge of early Morris & Co. work, his first important Glasgow commission being the painted decoration for a new church in Townhead for which Morris & Co. provided the east window in 1866 [ILLUSTRATION 121]. Here Morris & Co. still adhered to Webb designed canopies in keeping with Perpendicular Style layout, but had replaced pedestals with small subject panels. Cottier's immediate absorption of Morris & Co.'s stained glass work resulted firstly in his 1867 variation for Dowanhill Church, Glasgow, of Burne-Jones' figure of David for Townhead. Then at St.Nicholas's Church, Cramlington, Northumberland, having provided in 1868 two windows still in the vivid Decorated Gothic Revival Style he at first shared with Lyon, Cottier manufactured windows representing Christ in Glory and Psalms 103 and 116 [ILLUSTRATION 122] which reflected after only four years the modelling, patterning and colouring of Morris & Co.'s vastly modified Perpendicular Style productions. Cottier would also have been au fait with Morris & Co.'s 1865-8 work in the Old West Kirk in the Glasgow suburb of Greenock [ILLUSTRATIONS 123-126]. Twenty years after the Morris & Co. installations, to accompany that firm's Faith [ILLUSTRATION 127] and Charity, Cottier added Hope in memory of his grandfather [ILLUSTRATION 128]. The influence of Morris & Co. is obvious in the layout, patterning and background of Cottier's piece however the minimal leading

⁴⁶⁸Glasgow-born Cottier served his apprenticeship with local glass painter David Kier, Master Glazier at Glasgow Cathedral from 1859 until his death in 1864. It is likely that Lyon was also employed in Kier's workshop before he sailed for Australia in 1860 to join Ferguson & Urie. Cottier moved temporarily to Edinburgh in 1862 as chief designer for Field & Allan before returning to Glasgow two years later to set up his own business with Andrew Wells in painted decoration and stained glass (Harrison, *op.cit.*, pp.47, 48; Lyon Family Papers, ML.MSS.1381, Mitchell Library, Sydney).

of the figure is indicative of Cottier's past training in the decorative tradition of Scottish work, as in Ballantyne's windows for the same church [ILLUSTRATIONS 129-130].

Cottier moved to London in 1870 and for a short time was in partnership with architects J.M. Brydon and William Wallace and art furniture designer Bruce Talbert. When he established in 1873 the Sydney business with Lyon in control he also opened on Fifth Avenue in New York a branch managed by James Smith Inglis. The North American store differed from the Sydney enterprise in that it specialised in items for interior decoration [ILLUSTRATION 131] rather than in decorative schemes.

By the early 1870s Cottier displayed an enthusiasm for the striking effects and decorative motifs of the Aesthetic Movement which had blossomed out of the spirit of reform presented by the Gothic Revival but which continued on to cultivate a concept of beauty divorced from moral principles. One large dining room decorated by Cottier in London boasted

crimson-flock wallpaper with black fleurs-de-lis stencilled over, a dark blue ceiling with scattered stars in silver and gold, and a silver crescent moon; and specially designed brass-ball wall-brackets and chandeliers for gas. ⁴⁶⁹

William Morris was to occupy this house for some eighteen years from 1878 and when he initially visited it with William De Morgan the latter was impressed by the

⁴⁶⁹Greville MacDonald, *George MacDonald and his Wife*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1924, p.386.

extreme bad taste of the interior decoration and the “considerably tarnished” ceiling.⁴⁷⁰ Cottier here was simply following one of a myriad of styles which during the late nineteenth century appeared as off-shoots of or reactions against the Gothic Revival Movement. Martin Harrison has suggested that stylistically in his stained glass work Cottier appeared to be “the originator in Scotland of the reaction from Gothic styles”.⁴⁷¹ Yet the greatest influence on Cottier’s windows - Morris & Co. - remained committed to Gothic, although images progressed beyond the capabilities of those times. De Morgan supported Morris’s own tangential direction from that same source which ultimately led Morris & Co. to be categorised independently of other nineteenth-century stylistic statements.⁴⁷² Notwithstanding, Morris & Co. retained the spirit of Gothic and DeMorgan’s assessment of Cottier’s work must therefore be accepted within a context of sensibilities biased towards upholding basic Gothic principles.

Cottier’s choice of Lyon as controlling partner for the Sydney enterprise was shrewd. Although Lyon was a close friend and entirely aware of Cottier’s partialities, he nonetheless displayed an understanding of and liking for the decorative tastes of a wealthy Australian clientele who betrayed a reluctance to embrace the avant-garde in favour of the earlier and acceptable classical

⁴⁷⁰MacCarthy, op.cit., p.392. Before Morris moved in he renovated and redecorated, spending almost £1000 above the furnishings and fabrics he supplied himself (Ibid., p.395).

⁴⁷¹Harrison, op.cit., p.56.

⁴⁷²See, for example, Jeremy Cooper, *Victorian and Edwardian Furniture and Interiors*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1987; Banham, MacDonald, Porter, op.cit.; Steven Adams, *The Arts & Crafts Movement*, The Apple Press, London, 1989; Elan & Susan Zingman-Leith, *Creating Authentic Victorian Rooms*, Elliott & Clark, Washington, 1995.

predilections of “refined circles in the old country”⁴⁷³ [ILLUSTRATION 132]. This outlook of Lyon’s basically ran contrary to Cottier’s, yet obviously Cottier was willing to allow Lyon a free hand in Australia⁴⁷⁴ and this surely led to the firm’s winning in 1879 of the contract to redecorate Government House in Sydney. As an expatriate Glaswegian Lyon would have been well grounded in the fineries of classical styling. As Britain’s second largest city, Glasgow was during the nineteenth century almost unrivalled in its concentration of architectural classicism,⁴⁷⁵ borne out by the nicknaming of its famed architect Alexander “Greek” Thomson. However Lyon’s championing of classical interior decoration and Decorated Style Gothic Revival stained glass windows was not simply to court the favour of already determined tastes in Australia. Rather he honed in Australia the tastes, teachings and skills that he brought with him from his homeland and by astute business acumen ensured the stability of a market he both set and satisfied.

It was some twenty-five years after John Lyon’s arrival in Australia, and fifteen years since he had visited Britain, before he embarked on another excursion, to take

⁴⁷³See Illustration 108.

⁴⁷⁴With his American dealings Cottier was as discerning as he had been with his choice of Australian partner. He specialised in furniture, hangings, gaseliers and pictures, having become a committed contemporary art dealer. Lyon found the art works “curious chosen more for their manner and painting rather than subject”, however Cottier obviously knew his market and was instrumental in introducing to both Scotland and New York Dutch artists Anton Mauve, Josef Israels and the Maris brothers and Corot and Daubigny of the French Barbizon school. Among the back page advertisements in the March 1905 edition of *The Art Journal* (Rare Books, The Huntington Library), under *Miscellaneous* and in company with James Powell & Sons, Cottier & Co. nominated its London and New York addresses, thus clearly defining a distinction between these operations and the Sydney enterprise. This is reinforced by its list of services which excluded interior decoration: “Pictures, Etchings, and Objects of Art; Painted Glass for...Windows...”.

⁴⁷⁵Andor Gomme, ‘The City of Glasgow’, in Ford (Ed), op.cit., pp.209, 213.

in Britain, Europe and Daniel Cottier's American enterprise. Thus within this settled time in Australia his awareness of contemporary overseas fashions would have been mainly experienced second-hand through correspondence, journals and imported wares. The remoteness of his situation yet his continued strong tie to Britain may be evidenced by his daughter Margaret noting in her 1885 diary that "Papa has been thinking of taking a trip home before Xmas".⁴⁷⁶ Lyon's journey in 1886 of five months duration, when he travelled to San Francisco via Honolulu, then on to Chicago, New York, Glasgow, London, Amsterdam, Gouda, Antwerp, Brussels, Paris and Naples, would be important for providing immediate stimuli by which he could assess both current trends and his own aesthetic directions.⁴⁷⁷

Lyon's general impression of American decorating, which included Cottier's New York store, was one of sumptuousness:

... they make hangings on the Mosaic system cutting out all the pattern say on red satin and letting in the pattern in gold satin and outlining with gold cord it has a very rich effect must be very expensive saw some being done for the Vanderbilts it requires a millionaire purse for such luxuries saw a window by Le Farge of the ascension done altogether in a new kind of opal glass except the Flesh which is done in antique the effect of the Window is peculiar and outside the whiteness of the china looking glass is bad still some good effects may be got in this glass for domestic work. ...

⁴⁷⁶Stowe, *op.cit.*, *Diary: February 1885-June 1886*, Wednesday 14 October 1885. ML.MSS.1381/1, Item 8 (Mitchell Library, Sydney).

⁴⁷⁷See Appendix II: John Lamb Lyon, *Diary "Short Tour in Europe"*, 1886. ML.MSS.1381/1, Item 1: pages not numbered (Mitchell Library, Sydney).

His comments reflect a recognition of the restrictions placed upon the decorative market by the financial situations of prospective clients and an understanding of the limits to which various media could be manipulated. His assessment of the glass of John La Farge, one-time friend and ultimately rival of Louis Tiffany,⁴⁷⁸ suggests his general conservatism yet he was certainly not alone in his opinions. Ten years later “modernist” Henry Holiday⁴⁷⁹ felt compelled in an appendix to his *Stained Glass as an Art* to describe to his readers La Farge’s “new departure in stained glass”.⁴⁸⁰ After carefully examining La Farge’s work “with an open mind” Holiday still concluded, as Lyon had done, that “it may suffice for small ornamental work” but was “wholly inadequate for monumental decorative art”.⁴⁸¹ In the light of later remarks Lyon also undoubtedly viewed the American scene with an eye to the fickleness of fashion, a circumstance to which he obviously felt he was not susceptible, unlike his partner Cottier:

Cottier has banished all the Japanese stuff He used to [be] so fond off He now dislikes it so fashions change.

That the market base with which Lyon had to work was conservative may be surmised from the comments of Thomas Mort, prominent in the Australian dairy, wool and shipping industries, who had stated in 1861 that “*fashion* does not affect us in N.S.Wales”.⁴⁸² A newer generation of wealthy pastoralists and investors would

⁴⁷⁸John La Farge and Louis Comfort Tiffany are perhaps the two most renowned American designers in stained glass, establishing their reputations in the 1870s.

⁴⁷⁹See *Henry Holiday*, op.cit., pp.1-2.

⁴⁸⁰Henry Holiday, *Stained Glass as an Art*, Macmillan & Co., London, 1896, p.159.

⁴⁸¹Ibid., p.160.

⁴⁸²Quoted in Lane & Serle, op.cit., p.29.

uphold Mort's outlook, not following fashion for the sake of so doing but often decorating in a fashionable way because of availability of products.⁴⁸³

Lyon seemed to regard his 1886 trip as work related rather than recreational. Decorative schemes, particularly commercial, and stained glass attracted his attention throughout the entire journey. His observations were twofold: not only did he absorb ideas he could suitably utilise back in Australia but also he confirmed that the directions he was already following in his business were true. In Amsterdam he made no comment on his reaction to Rembrandt's *Night Watch*, despite the fact that he was himself an accomplished practising artist particularly of portraits, yet he described in some detail and with sketches the divisions and painting of the walls and treatment of the ceilings of the Rijksmuseum [ILLUSTRATIONS 133-134]. At Gouda he visited the church of St James [ILLUSTRATION 135], the windows of which would almost immediately offer him inspiration in his own stained glass work. Lyon's cycle of seven windows in 1884 for St.Saviour's Cathedral, Goulburn [ILLUSTRATIONS 136-138] and his East Window of the same year for Christ Church, Bong Bong [ILLUSTRATION 139] display a greater surety of composition and figure design but little modification of the intensity of colour and abundance of decorative elements apparent in works executed a decade earlier [see ILLUSTRATIONS 14 and 62]. However his nave windows for All Saints', Hunters Hill, executed three years after his overseas trip,

⁴⁸³An indication of the continuing conservatism of Australians comes with the 1926 suggestion of Mrs Arthur Staughton, one of a "select company" representing connoisseurship, that "modern" living room walls should be "papered with an "all-over" pattern of small, unobtrusive design" (*The Home*, Vol.7, No.5, May 1926, p.21). In 1930 Sydney's Anthony Horderns' claimed that wallpapers of "distinction" were those "that do not call attention to themselves alone" (*The Home*, Vol.11, No.4, April 1930, p.98).

present those salient features which so impressed him at Gouda: more massive modelling; clearly defined backgrounds architecturally rather than decoratively based; and colour emphasis on umber and red and yellow tonings [ILLUSTRATION 140]. There was never any indication in Lyon's windows of a Morris & Co. influence through Cottier.

While Lyon was obviously alive and sensitive to current trends in America, Britain and Europe he was highly selective in his utilisation of any seen stimuli. Gouda's St.James windows allowed him to experiment in scale, composition and colouring without entirely abandoning the Decorated Gothic Revival Style in which he had been grounded, with which he felt comfortable and which he knew to be popularly acceptable. Lyon was never to follow the full-blown Aestheticism of Cottier which had developed from the latter's earlier and direct exposure to Morris & Co.'s work, although the Sydney firm did sell Cottier's "Art Furniture" and produce its own hand-painted tiles,⁴⁸⁴ and where client fancies so dictated, utilised Cottier's Aesthetic designing skills.⁴⁸⁵

The architectural backgrounds to many of John Lyon's stained glass windows left little doubt as to his stylistic preferences [ILLUSTRATION 141] however, as evident in the variety of decorative imports into Australia, eclecticism was a feature of late nineteenth century decoration. Morris clearly accepted this fact, believing that the art of his own day was "not bound by the chain of tradition to anything that has

⁴⁸⁴*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XI, No.275, 10 April 1875, p.576 and Vol.XV, No.383, 5 May 1877, p.701.

⁴⁸⁵See Montana, *op.cit.*, pp.128-129, 133-134.

gone before”.⁴⁸⁶ Morris & Co. and Lyon, Cottier & Co. were engaged in a highly competitive business arena with the intention to succeed. Such necessitated some flexibility to ensure customer satisfaction; this was far more pronounced with the Australian firm and will be discussed hereafter.

Lyon, Cottier & Co. in theory strongly approved of Roman/Grecian decorative schemes although many of their designs appear more Renaissance and they were willing to import accompanying paraphernalia of Italian, Indian and “Aesthetic” persuasions. Likewise while Morris & Co. favoured Gothic principles, Morris was happy to handle Florentine and Venetian glazed pots and wickered flasks and Indian flower pots.⁴⁸⁷ Before he began manufacturing his own carpets, Morris at first recommended “fine India carpets” for those who could afford them and “the quietest kind of Brussels or Kidderminster” for those who could not.⁴⁸⁸ The firm then retailed “very expensive” Persian rugs from its London shop, expanding the range after Morris’s time to items from Persia, Turkey and China.⁴⁸⁹ Lyon himself, in his Sydney home overlooking Hyde Park, shared Morris’s taste for Eastern rugs.⁴⁹⁰ In late 1883 Margaret Lyon related that

⁴⁸⁶Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.2.

⁴⁸⁷Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.I, 1984, pp.185, 204, 214, 255.

⁴⁸⁸Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, op.cit., p.89.

⁴⁸⁹Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.I, 1984, p.385; *A View of the New Morris Showroom*, catalogue of Morris & Co. Art Workers Ltd., p.6 (William Morris Gallery, General File No.11a; The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library).

⁴⁹⁰In the later nineteenth century Near and Middle Eastern rugs were popular generally among the more wealthy who could afford to buy them (see Chapter 8). Together with Far Eastern rugs, their popularity increased in the twentieth century with the middle classes because of greater supply through trade pressures between nations (see *Floorcoverings in Australia 1800-1950*, op.cit., pp.61-63). In April 1927 Craig’s of Melbourne advertised the “Supreme Beauty and Craftsmanship” of its hand-woven Turkish and Persian rugs (*The Home*, Vol.8, No.4, p.49) and Sydney’s Grace Bros. followed suit in January 1928 for its

We have had the drawing room carpet up, also the staircase carpet & sent to the Beating Grounds at Rushcutters Bay, the men came and put it down again yesterday, and after he had put the carpet down he told Papa he had a beautiful Turkey rug 16×15 ft which he could let him have for £15, it is a very thick pile, and he says would match our own Turkey rugs, Papa has gone out this morning to have a look at it, I hope he will buy it, I do not think the man knows the value of it, a carpet that size would not cost under £50 - ... ⁴⁹¹

The fine seventeenth-century Persian rug which graced the Morrises' dining room at Kelmscott House [ILLUSTRATION 142] cost Morris £80.⁴⁹²

While Morris did not entirely approve of Far Eastern influences, Lyon's stand appeared to be somewhat ambivalent. However "clumsy-handed" some past European or Aryan workers may have been, Morris believed the "seriousness and meaning" in their goods created pieces of "art" which Chinese or Japanese "deftness" could not achieve.⁴⁹³ It was perfection in the manufacture of Far Eastern art to which Morris objected. His suggestion that "the clumsier expression of the historic workman" was the only true indication of human involvement and worth⁴⁹⁴ was projecting a fairly narrow view. Lyon's somewhat humorous slight of Cottier's

Indian, Persian and Chinese examples (*The Home*, Vol.9, No.1, pp.56-57).

⁴⁹¹Stowe, op.cit., *Diary: October 1883-December 1883*, Wednesday 12 December 1883. ML.MSS.1381/1, Item 6 (Mitchell Library, Sydney).

⁴⁹²Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, p.160. The carpet was bought by the South Kensington Museum in 1897 for £200 (Linda Parry (Ed), *William Morris*, Philip Wilson Publishers, London, 1996, p.151; see also Barbara Morris, *William Morris and the South Kensington Museum*, The William Morris Society, London, 1987, p.22).

⁴⁹³Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.44.

⁴⁹⁴LeMire (Ed), op.cit., p.144.

past favourings of Japanese “stuff” as simply “fashion” was, for the time, a far more honest assessment but one which still supports Morris’s inference that fashion follows no “historical evolution”.

The reason for Lyon’s focus on the interior decoration of public buildings on his 1886 trip became clear the following year with the firm’s winning of the contract to decorate the English, Scottish and Australian Chartered Bank in Collins Street, Melbourne.⁴⁹⁵ This building was seen as both “striking and novel”, the architect William Wardell having diverged from the accepted classical style for colonial public edifices to produce a structure “of purely mediaeval or Gothic character”.⁴⁹⁶ It might well be wondered how Lyon would cope with decorating a Gothic building, however as so often was the case at this time, treatment of the interior did not have to rigorously follow external style. Ginahgulla, the Sydney residence built for John Fairfax in 1858, was a large two-storeyed brick and stone Gothic Revival edifice⁴⁹⁷ yet when son James inherited following his father’s death in 1877 he did not hesitate to use Lyon, Cottier & Co. to redecorate owing to the firm’s reputation for quality albeit classical work. Similarly with the ES & A Chartered Bank it was not necessary for Lyon to compromise his advocacy of classical styling to present an archaeologically correct Gothic interior. Despite its Gothic inclinations Morris & Co. had no problems in working with the architectural classicism within St. James’s Palace.⁴⁹⁸ The difference between the two companies in fulfilling such large

⁴⁹⁵*Contract for Decorating The New Building for the ES & AC Bank, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Archive, Melbourne, E/301/3, p.2.*

⁴⁹⁶*Australasian Builder & Contractors’ News*, 18 June 1887, p.90.

⁴⁹⁷Gavin Souter, *Heralds and Angels: The House of Fairfax 1841-1990*, Melbourne University Press, 1991, p.33.

⁴⁹⁸See Parry (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.203.

commissions lay in their overall approach. Lyon, Cottier & Co. were willing to adapt their interior decorative skills to accommodate client preferences concerning public and private quarters. Morris & Co. remained committed to its recognisable design rules regardless of architectural setting or client status.⁴⁹⁹

When Lyon returned to Sydney from his overseas trip the firm was joined for several years by Andrew Wells, initially trained in interior decoration by Cottier when they first joined forces in 1864. Like many workers in the field Wells apparently suffered long term side effects from contact with noxious pigments and his visit to Australia was seen as a convalescence. Wells was able to bring to Lyon, Cottier & Co. an immediate touch for current British popular aesthetic taste.⁵⁰⁰ It may well be that Cottier suggested Wells' sojourn in Australia to enable the company to better satisfy clients seeking other than Lyon's controlled views. Even though Wells claimed that on joining the firm he managed the interior decoration side of the business and Lyon the stained glass,⁵⁰¹ it is unlikely that Lyon fully relinquished his guidance of the former area. Thus although Wells prepared the decorative schemes for the Melbourne ES & A Chartered Bank, and his imprint with all the flamboyance of Cottier's tastes is apparent in the decoration of the General Manager's residence above the banking offices, his restraint in the treatment of the latter suggests that he was aware of the presentations upon which the firm had founded its reputation. The different ways in which the banking and residential areas of this building were decorated highlight public and private aspirations of

⁴⁹⁹See *Ibid.*, pp.152-153, 203.

⁵⁰⁰See Montana, *op.cit.*, pp.144, 148-150.

⁵⁰¹*Ibid.*, p.146.

period and place. The banking business's need to present some image of security to ordinary investors resulted in a more conservative front than that favoured personally by a forward thinking general manager. Here Lyon, Cottier & Co. was not only willing to compromise stated stylistic directions but also, because of the small competitive marketplace in which it operated, was probably forced to do so for commercial survival.

The Melbourne banking offices consisted of the main public banking room, five business rooms and a mezzanine floor. Elaborate panelled ceilings in which the firm specialised were prevalent and the fashionable division of walls with frieze and dado. The use of diapering noted in Lyon's 1886 diary was also echoed in the Melbourne decorations.⁵⁰² The company confirmed in these public areas Lyon's belief in the artistic superiority of painted work over wallpapers, because such work was individually designed for specific locations. By the 1880s however the stigma of artistic inferiority and cheapness which initially adhered to wallpapers was no longer supported in wealthy circles. An example is the typically classical 1875-1876 building for the Bank of Victoria in Kyneton [ILLUSTRATION 143] where the manager's office boasted an extremely fine dado and border [ILLUSTRATION 144] of Reform/Aesthetic persuasion.⁵⁰³ Andrew Wells ran with this more popular fancy in his overseeing of the decoration of the private areas of the ES & A Chartered Bank, strongly encouraged by the bank's General Manager, Sir George Verdon, an

⁵⁰²For example, with the ceiling for the Public Banking Room: "Each panel having a border of Emblematical flowers painted upon a gold ground and finished in outline. The panels fitted with a diaper in quiet tones relieved with gilding" (*Contract...for the ES & AC Bank*, op.cit., p.4).

⁵⁰³Collection of Phyllis Murphy, Kyneton.

enthusiastic Gothic supporter. In the Melbourne bank the dados of the hall, principal staircase, corridors and library were to be of Scott Morton & Co. Tynecastle Tapestry, the walls of the drawing room, boudoir and billiard room hung with highly embossed Japanese leather paper and leading lines of all the ceilings picked out in gold except for the billiard room where the Japanese paper or Tynecastle Tapestry was to be used. The five bedrooms were to boast dados of the Japanese paper and ceiling friezes of Tynecastle Tapestry.⁵⁰⁴ Morris & Co. were eventually to acknowledge the fashion for Japanese embossed leather papers with one only to their design being manufactured in Japan. Unlike the normal pricing of wallpaper by the roll, Morris & Co. costed its Japanese paper by the yard for a 36in. width,⁵⁰⁵ suggesting that it considered the paper's use would be limited to feature work. Wells' overwhelming use of the highly embossed wallpapers favoured by Verdon for his private rooms at the ES & A Chartered Bank⁵⁰⁶ meant that much of the individuality of Lyon, Cottier & Co.'s decorative work in this instance became overshadowed by the acceptance of imported taste and product.

The personal articles with which George Verdon adorned his private rooms at the ES & A Chartered Bank provide an insight into the accepted norms and eclecticism of decorative collecting at the time by that stratum of the wealthy class which sought to project an understanding and acceptance of modern attitudes.⁵⁰⁷ As

⁵⁰⁴*Contract...for the ES & AC Bank*, op.cit., pp.7-11.

⁵⁰⁵*Interior Decoration, Furniture, Panelling, Etc.*, 1907 catalogue of Morris & Co. Decorators Ltd., p.32 (The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library); *Wallpapers*, Morris & Co. catalogue, c.1911, last page (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, General File No.11, and The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library).

⁵⁰⁶See Lane & Serle, op.cit., p.297.

⁵⁰⁷See, for example, Montana, op.cit., pp.120, 129, 152-153.

previously noted Joseph Clarke and William Greenlaw from the higher ranks of Victoria's banking circles also formed part of this group. Verdon's drawing room in particular presented a synthesis of solid "Old English" and light Aesthetic styles, British and European furniture of Gothic persuasion being interspersed with Japanese, Chinese and Arabian pieces. The ambience of all the private rooms was typically reflected in the distribution of art works: for the drawing room mainly watercolours, oil paintings prevailing in the dining room and old engravings for the writing room.⁵⁰⁸ In an 1884 list of furniture for James Marsh's home of Morton in the Sydney suburb of Woollahra, works of art followed exactly the same arrangement by media as Verdon's.⁵⁰⁹ Among Verdon's numerous furniture items purchased from unspecified manufacturers was the work of three named London companies, suggesting that these were firms of some note. Various pieces in mahogany for the drawing room were by Smee & Co. while black walnut chairs for the corridors and writing room came from Walker & Sons.⁵¹⁰ Three chairs for the drawing room from Morris & Co. were the only items described in any detail at the auction of Verdon's effects in 1891, undoubtedly placing the firm's repute above that of Smee and Walker:

15. Very beautiful black walnut circular occasional chair, upholstered in rich art-silk brocade, purchased from Morris & Co., London.

⁵⁰⁸Gemmell, Tucket & Co., *Catalogue of the Most Beautiful and Costly Art Furniture, Marble Statuary, Real Bronzes, Art Treasures, Oil Paintings, Water Colour Drawings, Fine Old Engravings, &c. collected by Sir George Verdon, K.C.M.G., C.B.*, Melbourne, 1891, pp.22-25, 26, 14, (Fine Arts pamphlets, v.52, No.7, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne).

⁵⁰⁹*James Milbourne Marsh Papers, 1848-1884*, ML.MS.1177, Item 1, 27 September 1884 (Mitchell Library, Sydney).

⁵¹⁰Gemmell, Tucket & Co., op.cit., pp.4-5, 8-9, 14.

16. Costly inlaid black walnut occasional chair, "Sherraton" design, upholstered in rich art-silk brocade, purchased from Morris & Co., London.
17. Very elegant carved black walnut occasional chair, upholstered in a most tasteful manner with art-silk brocade, purchased from Morris & Co., London.⁵¹¹

Such chairs sold for around £5 a piece with slight variations depending on the particular upholstery fabric used.⁵¹² Morris & Co. invariably produced inlaid mahogany cabinets for drawing room use. At around £90 per item these were probably more expensive than the Smee & Co. drawing room pieces owned by Verdon.⁵¹³

The insistence on naming the three companies at Verdon's auction reinforces the exclusivity of their work in Australia, rather than their being the popularly accepted or affordable. Walker & Sons did have a branch in Sydney and their advertising indicated that they offered sound and elite pieces for a cultured clientele [ILLUSTRATION 145]. It was the same customer base which sought out Morris & Co. in Britain. The partiality for Morris & Co.'s seven-shilling single *Sussex* chair [ILLUSTRATION 146] by the socially elite was even to gain the attention of the satirical *Punch* [ILLUSTRATION 147]. Unlike Morris & Co., by displaying large

⁵¹¹*Ibid.*, p.4.

⁵¹²See *Silk and Wool Tapestry Brocades*, Morris & Co. catalogue, c.1911: "Specimens of Morris & Co.'s Upholstered Furniture", and *Specimens of Upholstered Furniture*, op.cit., (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, General File No.11).

⁵¹³*Specimens of Furniture and Interior Decoration*, Morris & Co. catalogue, c.1911, p.15 (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, General File No.11).

furniture collections in the 1879-1881 Sydney and Melbourne International Exhibitions Smee and Walker could attract wide colonial interest. This difference in marketing strategies helps towards understanding why, during the firm's lifetime, Morris & Co. products were somewhat exceptional in Australia.

One might argue that Morris & Co. presented a particular style of its own, that Lyon, Smee and Walker followed certain stylistic principles which were clearly identified in their advertising, while Daniel Cottier's designing fluctuated according to fashion. The distinction between style and fashion in the later nineteenth century is perhaps fine. Morris attempted to explain the difference but in so doing the discussion became even more complex. Unlike style, fashion might be seen as lacking any association with "historical evolution", thus "when passed, will leave nothing enduring behind it".⁵¹⁴ Morris advocated avoiding "the production of beauty for beauty's sake" as maintained by the Aesthetic Movement.⁵¹⁵ Great art had always aimed at "the instruction of men alive and to live hereafter ... rather than beauty".⁵¹⁶ Yet previous to these statements Morris had claimed that what he meant by art was "not the prevalence of this or that style, not the laying on the public taste whether it will or not a law that such or such a thing must be done in art, ... but rather a general love of beauty".⁵¹⁷ Nonetheless Morris never intended in any of his own designing that "beauty" should ever be separated from "interest of incident": together these two properties formed the "Aim of Art".⁵¹⁸ It annoyed him

⁵¹⁴Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., pp.200, 198.

⁵¹⁵Ibid., pp.221-222.

⁵¹⁶Ibid., p.222.

⁵¹⁷LeMire (Ed), op.cit., p.51.

⁵¹⁸Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., p.122.

to be told that for his art to “succeed and flourish, you must make it the fashion”. This meant for him one day over artistic work to two days insincere salesmanship.⁵¹⁹ However all salesmanship was not insincere. That put forward by Lyon, Cottier & Co. and William Walker in Illustrations 108-110 and 145 was genuine. Likewise George Wardle’s Boston Foreign Fair catalogue of 1883 for Morris & Co. was sincere but nonetheless a form of salesmanship.⁵²⁰ Where Morris & Co. differed to the other firms was in not announcing a “preferred style”. Gothic was a basis, an inspiration, not an end. Thus was born Morris & Co.’s style, evolved from but not copying historical style features. In contrast Lyon, Cottier & Co. and Walker & Sons clearly specified their chosen historical precedents, suggesting an adherence to past iconographies without “evolution”. In so doing they both set and satisfied fashion by providing and supporting irrational style acceptance.

Although Morris insisted that “fashion” followed no “historical evolution”, there is, in fact, a history to “fashion” itself. It was a thriving concept certainly by the mid-eighteenth century and has continued to this day to embrace commercialism and popularity.⁵²¹ In order to satisfy the fashionable market the best approach

⁵¹⁹Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.16.

⁵²⁰Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, op.cit., pp.121-149. Wardle visited the United States in 1880 complete with letters of introduction from Morris to those whom it was believed could further Wardle’s mission. On 30 March 1880 Morris wrote to Charles Eliot Norton: “I am ashamed to write to you after this long silence, & all the more as I am writing now asking you to do something for me: Mr. G.Y. Wardle my manager, is travelling in America with the purpose of trying to disentangle people’s ideas as to our business, & to show them what kind of things we are really making, and what our aims are: he would be very glad therefore to be introduced to anyone who is interested in these matters, and I thought you might be able to help him herein, & I was sure that you would do so in that case” (Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.I, 1984, p.563).

⁵²¹Lubbock, op.cit., pp.21, xii, xiii.

would seem to have been that followed by Cottier: a willingness to encompass the variables of the time. With its stained glass productions Adelaide's Clarkson Ltd. was expert at this, presenting Decorated and Perpendicular Gothic Revival Styles as well as windows in the Aesthetic idiom. It is little wonder that the company was generally popular. To be likewise popular in interior decoration the gamut of going styles needed to be addressed by any provider who wished to survive commercially in the limited Australian marketplace. The confidence of W.H. Roche & Co. would see this Melbourne firm ably fill the bill.

CHAPTER 7: CATERING TO FASHION, 1869-1920: W.H. ROCKE & CO. OF
MELBOURNE

In Australia, on the edge of that clientele served by such as Lyon, Cottier & Co., stood a somewhat larger class who sought to project a studied understanding of fashionable decorative presentations. The basic principles upon which it drew were chiefly imported from Britain. In its British marketing Morris & Co. intended to encompass this same group however Morris was often at odds with its prevailing concerns.

The furnishing and decorating of rooms in a nineteenth century middle class house adhered to well-established rules of function and social etiquette. One influential treatise on the subject was J.C. Loudon's London publication of 1833 the availability of which was advertised in Sydney four years after its initial issue.⁵²²

Therein Loudon stated that

The colouring of rooms should be an echo of their uses. The colour of a library ought to be comparatively severe; that of a dining room grave; and that of a drawing room gay. Light colours are most suitable for bedrooms.⁵²³

Such colouring was complemented by choice of furniture which reinforced the atmosphere sought. In an 1874 brochure W.H. Rocke & Co. suggested a dining room's

⁵²²John Claudius Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture and Furniture* (London) was advertised on page 3 of the *Sydney Herald*, 16 February 1837.

⁵²³Quoted in Banham, MacDonald, Porter, op.cit., p.33.

... chief characteristics ought to be of a more sober and massive kind than becomes a chamber devoted to lighter and more feminine purposes. ... ⁵²⁴

Eighteen years later the somewhat avant-garde Andrew Wells was still similarly insisting to a Sydney audience that dining rooms should be “sombre in tone” and drawing rooms “bright and cheerful”.⁵²⁵ Morris approached interior settings differently. Above all else, he believed that rooms “are to live in”, regardless of designations.⁵²⁶ Thus

A dining-room ought not to look as if one went into it as one does into a dentist's parlour - for an operation, and came out of it when the operation was over - the tooth out, or the dinner in. A drawing-room ought to look as if some kind of work could be done in it less toilsome than being bored. A library certainly ought to have books in it, not boots only, as in Thackeray's country snob's house, but so ought each and every room in the house more or less; ... ⁵²⁷

Morris & Co.'s work for the Barr Smith family in Adelaide (discussed in detail in the next Chapter) upheld these principles of Morris. On such a basis the company extended the parameters of accepted taste. The stained woodwork of the library at Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton [ILLUSTRATION 148] set the tone for Morris & Co.'s decoration of the room, in accordance with Morris's directive in his 1880

⁵²⁴*Remarks on Furniture and the Interior Decoration of Houses*, W.H. Rothe & Co., Melbourne (16 October 1874), p.29 (Rare Books, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne).

⁵²⁵*Australasian Builder & Contractors' News*, 7 May 1892, p.333.

⁵²⁶Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.130.

⁵²⁷*Ibid.*, p.161.

lecture *Making the Best of It*.⁵²⁸ The dining room and drawing room at Standen, East Grinstead [ILLUSTRATIONS 149-150] in overall effect differ little, their simplicity of treatment being in keeping with the house's intent of a country retreat.

Increasingly during the nineteenth century, with work centring on the utility areas of office, shop and factory, the home acquired greater importance for socialisation and leisure. To accommodate these pursuits effectively at least two formally recognisable reception rooms were provided, usually in a conformation of drawing room and dining room either side of a hallway [ILLUSTRATION 151]. Morris's own 1860 Red House in Kent [ILLUSTRATION 152], the collaboration with architect Philip Webb which was seen as an indicator to modern domestic architecture, still held to some extent to this traditional planning [ILLUSTRATION 153]. However the reception room across the hall from the dining room was now only a token gesture to tradition, the main drawing room for entertaining being on the first floor.

While a dining room was used by both sexes, in fashionable circles after formal meals the women left the room to the men who continued their drinking with smoking and 'male' conversation. Therefore this room was usually decorated in a manner considered suited to masculine expectations. In contrast the drawing room was a female domain, the room to which ladies traditionally withdrew after dining. It was also seen as the centre of the home for entertaining both family and guests. The dining room at Torrens Park House in Adelaide, South Australia, still features

⁵²⁸Ibid., p.138.

its original 1854 fireplace of plain rich red-brown marble [ILLUSTRATION 154] whereas the drawing rooms were fitted with fireplaces of white carved marble [ILLUSTRATION 155]. Likewise at Abercrombie House in Bathurst, New South Wales, built in the years 1870-1878, the dining room fireplace is of solid timber and tile [ILLUSTRATION 156] in contrast to the drawing room's two magnificent white Carrara marble fireplaces [ILLUSTRATION 157]. Differentiation of room ambience through this pivotal decorative piece was not abandoned in the twentieth century. One such example appeared at Woodfield, the South Australian home of Capt. and Mrs Colin Duncan in Fullarton, where the dining and drawing rooms boasted mantelpieces of black and white Italian marble respectively.⁵²⁹ In its 1907 catalogue on *Interior Decoration* Morris & Co. centred nearly all its designs for interiors around the fireplace.⁵³⁰

Melbourne's W.H. Roche & Co. approached its interior decoration with a different focus in mind. Essentially furniture manufacturers Roche & Co. followed the lead of respected established English firms such as Gillow & Co., James Shoolbred & Co., Jackson & Graham and Holland & Sons. The nucleus of decorative schemes by all these firms, including Roche & Co., was their own furniture lines. The English companies specialised in Louis styling without neglecting the Classical, Aesthetic or Gothic. W.H. Roche & Co. strongly based its wares on a Free Renaissance style which could embrace all gradations of Classical, French and Middle Eastern influences and thus it was able to satisfy a large cross-section of public preferences.

⁵²⁹*The Home*, Vol.6, No.3, June 1925, p.32.

⁵³⁰*Interior Decoration, Furniture, Panelling, Etc.*, op.cit., pp.xv, xvi, 1-7, 10, 18-20 (The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library).

For decorators such as Rocke & Co. pure style was not the vital ingredient for a sale but rather appearances of comfort and cheerfulness. The opulence of the company's work was apparent and although cost was never stated the firm professed to accommodate "every class of household".⁵³¹ In its more open acceptance of the eclecticism of the times and in its approach to promoting its wares Rocke's in fact laid a wider and perhaps firmer base for its business than was the case with Sydney's Lyon, Cottier & Co.

Rocke's was representative of the most common means by which Australians could fit out their homes [ILLUSTRATION 158]. Furnishing warehouses afforded almost one-stop shopping and newspaper advertising placed the range and quality of products firmly before the public [ILLUSTRATION 159]. The firm was shrewd in its methods of presentation. The straight-forward no-nonsense approach of its advertisements in *The Australasian*, highlighting the warehouse aspect of the business, was replaced in a publication for the esteemed Orient Shipping Line by an elegant illustration of the company's furniture and decorative abilities. Terminology in the Orient Line advertisement truly transformed Rocke's warehouse into "show" rooms [ILLUSTRATION 160]. A warehouse in Sydney comparable with Rocke's was that of Hardy Brothers. The advertising slant of this company however differed in that it appealed to the financial situation rather than the social standing of future clients [ILLUSTRATION 161]. Nevertheless all Australian decorative firms were mindful of the limited marketplace in which they manoeuvred and therefore most attempted in their advertising to provide for

⁵³¹See W.H. Rocke and Co. weekly advertisements in *The Australasian* (for example, that reproduced in Illustration 159).

customers of varying financial resources. While Lyon, Cottier & Co. could substitute “special PAPERHANGINGS” for original painted ornamentation where “economy is wanted”, Hardy Brothers could furnish homes “for £12 10s ... UP TO £5000”.⁵³²

When Morris & Co. finally considered it opportune to produce brochures in the first decade of the twentieth century it in fact was following the line which had been favoured by Australian decorative firms nearly thirty years earlier. Such an approach to marketing always had been for Australian manufacturers indispensable for capturing the interest of a limited clientele. With Morris & Co. such a situation became more perceptible following the ‘post-Morris’ restructuring of the firm as a private company. For Morris & Co. furniture, two classes were particularly noted in brochures: cabinet work of the highest standard; and “joiner-made” furniture which Morris & Co. also described as “Cottage Furniture”.⁵³³ What Morris himself had always meant by these two classes was “state-furniture”, that is substantial pieces such as sideboards and cabinets, and everyday “necessary” items such as chairs and tables. He did not believe that construction codes should differ but that all should be “good citizen’s furniture”.⁵³⁴ By the 1920s, as Morris & Co. struggled to compete in the post-war marketplace, it was pressing that while its manufactures were not “mass-produced” it could still

⁵³²See Illustrations 108 & 161.

⁵³³*Specimens of Furniture and Interior Decoration*, op.cit., p.1.

⁵³⁴Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.70.

offer “Decoration with Economy”. It went so far as to lay down figures to support its claims.⁵³⁵

<u>Morris & Co.</u>		<u>Firm without Workshops</u>	
Cost of upholstery	£100	Cost of upholstery	£100
Sub-Contractor's Profit		Sub-Contractor's Profit	25
Firm's Gross Profit	£ 25	Firm's 25p.c. Profit on both items	£ 31 5 0
	£125		£156 5 0

Rocke & Co.'s 1874 brochure *Remarks on Furniture and the Interior Decoration of Houses* was a telling document on the methods, styles and directions followed by the firm. Rocke's obviously set a fine example for other furniture businesses. During 1886 Wallach Bros., also of Melbourne, notified prospective clients through their advertising that not only their furniture price list was available “on application” but also their pamphlet “How to Furnish with Taste”.⁵³⁶ On an 1873 overseas trip Rocke not only organised “Furniture, Upholstery, Trimmings, and every description of Household Drapery, FROM CARPETS AND CURTAINS FOR DRAWING-ROOMS DOWN TO SHEETS AND TOWELS FOR BEDROOMS” he also imported “the best procurable workmen”⁵³⁷ to ensure that decorative schemes

⁵³⁵See two catalogues, both produced by Morris & Co. Art Workers Ltd., one showing “The varied phases of the work of the Morris Artists at Merton Abbey”, the other “A View of the New Morris Showrooms”, op.cit., p.2 (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, General File No.11a).

⁵³⁶See, for example, *The Australasian Sketcher*, 1 June 1886, p.96. The clientele and marketing approach of Australian firms remained dependably constant over time.

⁵³⁷*Remarks on Furniture and the Interior Decoration of Houses*, op.cit., p.3.

issuing from the firm were “in strict accordance with the highest rules of taste and fashion”.⁵³⁸ Roche’s use of both terms - taste (obviously aesthetic) and fashion - implies that they were not interchangeable but it is not clear here whether the firm viewed them independently. The company recognised and applauded in its 1874 brochure that generally most people preferred the arrangement of their homes to reflect individual traits however it was suggested that the advice of a professional could be “of great value”.⁵³⁹ What Roche’s really sought to instil in the public was the fact that quality products “most in vogue” could be procured in Australia without having to travel overseas personally.⁵⁴⁰ The firm backed its position with the praise of a Victorian gentleman “of cultivated tastes and enormous wealth” who believed he had wasted several months in London and Paris searching for articles of furniture which he could have bought at Roche’s.⁵⁴¹ The company was thus gearing its advertising towards middle class pockets while playing on aspirations for prosperous and cultured show. While Roche & Co. was particularly proud of its home products, as shown by its 1875 exhibits, it was obviously cautious not to exclude prospective buyers who believed in the superiority of imported goods. In fact the firm’s 1874 brochure concentrated not so much on its own products but on its imports - “THE BEST THAT EUROPE CAN PRODUCE”.⁵⁴² It would seem that in many cases Roche imported unfinished items and employed his “corps of skilled workmen” in the fitting and ornamenting thereof.⁵⁴³ Thus with Roche & Co.’s actual

⁵³⁸Ibid., p.6.

⁵³⁹Ibid., pp.6-7.

⁵⁴⁰Ibid., pp.13-14.

⁵⁴¹Ibid., p.10.

⁵⁴²Ibid., p.3.

⁵⁴³Ibid., pp.6, 14.

manufactures there is a blurring of boundaries between imported and local production but not so with its decorative taste which was fully imported.

Rocke & Co. stood by the French aphorism that “There are a hundred thousand ways of being pretty, but only a hundred ways of being handsome” and translated this to mean that the greatest heights of “magnificence” should be sought⁵⁴⁴ - not with actual French products but definitely with a French flavour. The “mania” for French furniture styles was noted somewhat disdainfully in 1875 by *The Australian Town and Country Journal* with the suggestion that the fashion should be short-lived:

... The novelty at the present time consists in the total absence of uniform furniture: in their stead we have a variety of fancy chairs of every conceivable shape, and the silks and satins with which they are upholstered are those usually manipulated by a dress-maker rather than a cabinet-maker. ...⁵⁴⁵

Morris was more scathing. He insisted that “Louis” styling was a “bundle of degraded whims falsely called a style, that so fitly expresses the corruption of the days of Louis XV”.⁵⁴⁶ However it was not an aversion of past French politics which determined the appearance of Morris & Co.’s furniture but rather form and materials appropriate to use. Customers bought the firm’s chairs for their simple lines and quality upholstery. Clearly Rocke and Morris had different

⁵⁴⁴Ibid., p.18.

⁵⁴⁵*The Australian Town and Country Journal*, Vol.XI, No.284, 19 June 1875, p.985 (“Ladies’ Column”).

⁵⁴⁶Wilmer (Ed), op.cit., p.279; Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.24; Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.70.

interpretations for “handsome”. With their decorating both sought to impress and both carried this out with a certain amount of panache, however Morris (and Dearle after him) did so with great care to colour subtleties. Morris & Co.’s interpretation of “handsome” appears clearly in their decorating of the Barr Smiths’ homes in South Australia.⁵⁴⁷

In Rocke’s 1874 brochure the summer drawing room began with painted French grey walls, later denigrated by Lyon, Cottier & Co. as “tame” with an inference of being common,⁵⁴⁸ however the tone was greatly intensified in Rocke’s room by accompanying carpet, coverings and curtains, the latter two of “purely French” design, and all boasting “arabesques” and somewhere Rocke’s favoured colours of black and gold.⁵⁴⁹ Among carved sofas based on French prototypes and ebony inlaid cabinets and gilded furniture “the brilliant sumptuousness of which seems to illuminate the whole room” appeared American folding easy chairs “now known by their quaint appellation of “kangaroo” chairs”.⁵⁵⁰ The fireplace was of course “of the purest white marble”.⁵⁵¹ Such a vision may well suggest that fashion can be satisfied with no obligation to aesthetic taste.

To show its versatility the firm also described how it would decorate a winter drawing room, although its heart seemed not in it and, by comparison with the summer room, words were few. The winter drawing room seemed basically to be an

⁵⁴⁷See following Chapter 8.

⁵⁴⁸See Illustration 108.

⁵⁴⁹*Remarks on Furniture and the Interior Decoration of Houses*, op.cit., pp.19, 20.

⁵⁵⁰*Ibid.*, pp.22, 21, 23.

⁵⁵¹*Ibid.*, p.18.

adaptation of the dining room, with simply a substitution of rich crimson satin for morocco coverings and sober florals for emblematic carpet patterning.⁵⁵² Gothic designs were considered by the firm to be best reserved for the masculine domains of dining room and library rather than for the feminine realm of the drawing room. Use in the latter case was seen as an aberration “so highly popular in certain somewhat limited circles”.⁵⁵³ It was those “somewhat limited circles” which provided Morris & Co. with its staple clientele.

While Roche & Co. may have continued the Australian commercial tradition of importing products it combined the practice with colonial manufacture in such a way as to create for itself a comprehensive customer base. If it is accepted that Roche & Co. set a standard in supplying the most fashionable fancies of the Australian market, it is then understandable that Morris & Co. did not consider competing in Australia. Roche’s furniture as indicated by Illustration 12, with its fine workmanship and painted panels, was equal to the best work of the Aesthetic Movement. However, with its decorative schemes, the firm seemed bent on producing an over-abundance of richness in materials and colour in order to create a luxurious impression.⁵⁵⁴ Such an approach was anathema to Morris. Simplicity was his catchword. He believed it to be “the very foundation of refinement”.⁵⁵⁵ It could be “as costly as you please” but would not run to luxury if “done for beauty’s sake, and not for show”.⁵⁵⁶ The value of an item was therefore not dictated by its

⁵⁵²Ibid., pp.26, 30-32.

⁵⁵³Ibid., pp.28, 27.

⁵⁵⁴See the description in Chapter 3 of Roche & Co.’s ‘Pavilion of Art’ at the 1880-1881 Melbourne International Exhibition.

⁵⁵⁵Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., p.214.

⁵⁵⁶Ibid., pp.109-110.

display but by its integrity. Simplicity was, in fact, the basis of “all art”⁵⁵⁷ and Morris attempted to uphold this outlook not only in his designing but also with his mercantile showings.

The straightforward arrangements favoured by Morris & Co. for presentation of its goods were apparent with the company’s shopfront displays [see ILLUSTRATIONS 1 & 2] and perhaps most clearly expressed when the firm attempted to expand its British consumer base with a thrust into the American market. In 1883 Morris & Co. took a large stand (45 feet by 30 feet) at the Boston Foreign Fair and it was for this occasion that general manager George Wardle prepared his comprehensive catalogue. The interesting feature of the Morris & Co. display was its complete contrast of presentation to those of W.H. Roche & Co. in Melbourne. While the Morris exhibit was divided into compartments, there was no attempt to present “the ordinary decoration of a house” but simply to allow goods to be displayed in logical groupings and where possible in situations concomitant with their actual use (for example, heavy curtain material hung to reveal the effects of its folds on the pattern). Wardle was at pains to point out that “Morris and Company are exhibiting here as manufacturers only”⁵⁵⁸ and the catalogue was a reinforcement of Morris & Co.’s manufacturing axioms. The two outstanding features continually highlighted by Wardle were good design - “designs having form and character proper to the material” - and permanence of colour.⁵⁵⁹ Interestingly, the company was willing to expose faults applying to its products. In the case of printed cottons, a

⁵⁵⁷Ibid., p.110.

⁵⁵⁸Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, op.cit., p.121.

⁵⁵⁹Ibid., p.122.

warning was offered that “some of the colours may not safely be sent to the ordinary wash”.⁵⁶⁰ While the firm may have been exhibiting only as manufacturers this did not deter Wardle in his catalogue from passing on the type of decorative advice for which the company was noted. Referring to the *Honeysuckle* printed linen on show Wardle explained:

... A room dressed with it should have the wood-work of very richly toned walnut or mahogany; or, if meaner wood is used, it should be painted a rich, deep green, and varnished. ...⁵⁶¹

Here the company was definitely suggesting that it did not accept the skills of house painters to imitate the graining of superior timber classes.

The large section on wallpapers in Wardle’s catalogue, accounting for nearly 30 per cent of the whole, was a lesson on how to approach wall (and ceiling) decoration generally. Morris & Co. stood by the low opinion also held by Sydney’s Lyon, Cottier & Co. concerning the colour grey:

... The use of positive colour is very difficult, and house-painters are peculiarly ignorant of it. Their incapacity may have led to the use of the dull, gray, or even dirty shades, which have become so general since house-decoration has begun to interest educated people.⁵⁶²

⁵⁶⁰Ibid., p.129.

⁵⁶¹Ibid., p.130.

⁵⁶²Ibid., p.138.

The “educated people” referred to may well have influenced house painters’ selections if they required subdued wall shadings to show off ornate furnishings. A change in emphasis away from positive wall adornment would have aided furniture manufacturers in their ascendancy among commercial concerns specialising in home decoration. In contrast, as businesses not being centred around furniture making, Lyon, Cottier & Co. and Morris & Co. favoured distinctive wall treatment without showiness.

In the area of wall division, whenever Lyon, Cottier & Co. used dado and frieze with their own designing they did so with an eye to compatibility with the filling. This however was not the general case in interiors at the time. The Morris & Co. Boston catalogue was quite adamant about what treatment should be afforded to dados and friezes:

... If the dado be not panelled, do not make sham panelling; paint it of one colour, which must be that of the architraves of windows and doors. Never stoop to the ignominy of a paper dado; ...

... The decoration of a frieze, if it leave any pretension at all, should be done by hand; it requires more careful design than the wall itself, because nothing but absolute fitness will justify the separation of this part of the wall for special treatment.

It will be understood from this that Morris & Company do not print distinctive frieze patterns. ... ⁵⁶³

⁵⁶³Ibid., pp.133, 134. Following Morris’s death, as Morris & Co.’s new management sought to compete viably in the decorative marketplace, the firm produced two coloured friezes, “Tulip” and “The Tree”, the former at 2/9 per yard for a 21 inch depth, the latter 1/10 for a 15 inch depth (*Wallpapers*, catalogue of Morris & Co.Ltd. in The Morris Collection, The

At the Boston Foreign Fair it might thus be claimed that Morris & Co. were in fact exhibiting as decorators, not simply as manufacturers, just as Rocke & Co. had done in Melbourne. However, their approaches were different. Morris & Co. allowed the goods themselves to betray the company's principles of design and quality and relied on verbal assistance to explain preferred decorative arrangements for those products. Rocke & Co. confidently depended on visual display to present the scope of its abilities. In taking such courses Morris could reinforce his vision of decorative simplicity while Rocke & Co. bedazzled prospective clients in a way which would have been inadequately served by words.

A general non-acceptance of Morris & Co. products in Australia was undoubtedly affected by a preconceived mythology which surrounded the company and which was not to be refuted, because of lack of advertising.⁵⁶⁴ The firm's originality, uniqueness and adherence to Gothic undercurrents flew in the face of fashions advanced in Australia. Individuality of style would always be problematic. For example, in the company's publication of 1911 to commemorate its fiftieth anniversary, for its furniture it was recognised that the "best of the designs have a restraint and dignity which sets them quite apart from most modern furniture".⁵⁶⁵ Thirteen years earlier, on Morris's general designing, Aymer Vallance wrote:

Huntington Library).

⁵⁶⁴The only Morris & Co. advertising I have found in Australian journals has been for its stained glass in Sydney's *The Church Standard*, between 1914 and 1921.

⁵⁶⁵Morris & Company Decorators Ltd, *A Brief Sketch of the Morris Movement*, London, 1911, p.54.

... in the genealogy of art, none has so indisputable a title as he to be the lineal descendant of the Gothic artists. There is not the slightest taint of the Renaissance or of Japanese influence in his work - in which respect, indeed, his position is remarkable and almost unique among the designers of modern times. ... above all else the strong individuality of William Morris himself always prevailed, making all his decoration of one perfectly sustained and consistent style; and such that no one having the most superficial acquaintance with ornamental design could mistake Morris's for anybody else's work. ... ⁵⁶⁶

Thus the firm's work was always conspicuous. For this reason alone it would have been worrying to that conservative element in Australian society which preferred to be fashionable, not different. That Morris & Co. also produced costly items for an elite market was a fact inadvertently promoted by the firm itself. In its 1911 "Brief Sketch" the company admitted that its Hammersmith hand-knotted carpets "although costly in the first instance to make, are calculated to justify themselves as heirlooms".⁵⁶⁷ Such a desire mattered little to a general public who were purchasing within specific means for immediate gratification and use.

Morris & Co.'s reliance on word of mouth promotion of its goods certainly lost it Australian clients while companies like Rocke & Co. carefully tailored their media exposure to inveigle the largest possible cross-section of prospective customers. Prominent British manufacturers such as the wallpaper firm of Lighbown,

⁵⁶⁶Vallance, *op.cit.*, p.137.

⁵⁶⁷Morris & Company Decorators Ltd, *A Brief Sketch of the Morris Movement*, *op.cit.*, p.37.

Aspinall & Co. skilfully marketed perfectly registered machine-made papers which were clearly influenced by Morris's designing [ILLUSTRATIONS 162-163]. Their willingness to exhibit their wares before the Australian public⁵⁶⁸ and their ability to provide articles of apparent artistic merit at reasonable cost captured the interest of decorator and customer alike. Ready availability could for many be a deciding factor in selection of goods. It was here that Morris & Co. unsuccessfully competed with manufacturers imitating the firm's productions. For Morris & Co. products to reach this country required particular clients willing to step outside the accepted norms of the Australian decorative scene.

⁵⁶⁸Melbourne International Exhibition. *Official Catalogue of Exhibits*, op.cit., Vol.II, p.272; Sydney International Exhibition, 1879. *Official Catalogue of the British Section*, op.cit, p.99; *Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.303.

CHAPTER 8: ACCUMULATIVE RETAIL THERAPY: ADELAIDE'S BARR SMITH
FAMILY, 1856-1910, AND MORRIS & CO.

The Barr Smiths of Adelaide were the only Australian family to use Morris & Co. furnishings in comprehensive integrated schemes. This they did neither to flaunt their acquired riches nor to stand out as different to their peers. In many instances they were typical of fellow Australians possessed of considerable wealth. As part of the latter caste they invariably bought household goods while abroad, thus their dealings with Morris & Co. from 1884 onwards comfortably fitted in with their usual habits and the approach the company expected of clients. For nearly thirty years following their settlement here the senior members of the family basically favoured the conservative outlook of their fellows in decorative matters. Their willingness to break from that mould to embrace more adventurous presentations was not done with an eye to parading their wealth, as was the case with William Knox D'Arcy and his commissioning of Morris & Co. to decorate his home of Stanmore Hall in Middlesex. Rather the Barr Smiths' decorating adventures centre on retail therapy, never clearly expressed yet nonetheless well documented.

The following Chapter covers the Barr Smiths' decorative choices over some fifty-five years. The Barr Smiths can and should be treated at length. So rarely is pertinent archival material available as allows for such detailed examination to be followed of an Australian family's taste over a long period. The telling of the Barr Smiths' story provides not only an insight into the everyday living arrangements of Australia's wealthy echelon but also allows for a practical observation of the

workings of Morris & Co., through advice proffered and materials supplied to see the company's decorative expertise realised in the Barr Smiths' numerous homes.

Robert Barr Smith [ILLUSTRATION 164] was born into rural manse life in the village of Lochwinnoch, south-west of Glasgow.⁵⁶⁹ His wife Joanna's youth was spent in circumstances dictated by wealth and authority [ILLUSTRATION 165]. Her father George Elder had prospered as a merchant and shipowner in the town of Kirkcaldy, situated across the Firth of Forth from Edinburgh. His four sons all joined in their father's trade, the two eldest setting up business in Adelaide in 1839 with a miscellaneous initial cargo which included rum, whisky, brandy, tar, fish, biscuits, tinware, gunpowder, agricultural machinery and seed.⁵⁷⁰ Robert also followed a mercantile career and on 4 April 1854 sailed for Australia in the company of Thomas Elder, Robert bound for Melbourne, Thomas to join his brothers in

⁵⁶⁹The dedication of Robert's father to his pastoral situation was tested in 1843 when he joined 473 fellow ministers and withdrew from the established church, forming the Free Church of Scotland. The main point of contention had been the ability of the state to appoint ministers by patronage rather than popularity and this secular interference meant for the dissentients a loss of both parish and salary. However while the Smith family were forced to leave their home of over twenty years, they were able to remain in Lochwinnoch. Loyal parishioners ensured that within nine months of expulsion a Free Church had been built, almost adjacent to the state church, and accommodation provided. Such was the resolute allegiance of the Reverend Smith's followers. Some indication of the esteem in which the Rev. Smith was held by his parishioners may be gleaned from Joanna's response to her father-in-law. In 1861 she wrote from London to Robert in Scotland: "... You will be hearing that dear, good, heavenly man, your father preach today. I envy you. ..." (Fayette Gosse (Ed), *Joanna and Robert: The Barr Smiths' Life in Letters 1853-1919*, The Barr Smith Press, Adelaide, 1996, p.15: letter of 31 March 1861). In contrast was her relationship to her own father. Some three months before the above-quoted letter she wrote during a visit to her own family: "... Last night I got out of patience with Papa - only for a moment. Then I remembered how my Blessed Example was "subject to his parents" and I choked the demon in its birth. ..." (Ibid., p.7: letter of 14 December 1860).

⁵⁷⁰*Elder, Smith & Co., Limited: The First Hundred Years*, The Advertiser, Adelaide, c.1939, p.10.

Adelaide. In October 1855 Robert visited Tom Elder in Adelaide and was asked to join the firm of Elder & Co. The following year Joanna came out from Scotland and she and Robert were married on 15 April in a Presbyterian service in Melbourne before sailing for Adelaide ten days later.

During the first sixteen years of their married life Robert and Joanna Barr Smith rented homes. They seemed to have no trouble finding suitable accommodation when needed. Substantial properties would have been available for renting as wealthy owners made extensive trips to Britain and Europe on holiday or for business and left their estates in the hands of agents for the time of their absences abroad. The leasing of homes by England's wealthy was also a common practice.⁵⁷¹ Morris's father upgraded in 1840 from Elm House, Walthamstow, to the imposing Italianate mansion of Woodford Hall. The lease on the latter was £600 a year.⁵⁷² After moving from his purpose-built Red House in 1865 Morris himself rented homes for the rest of his life, including his country haven Kelmscott Manor. The Manor was finally bought by Jane Morris in 1913, seventeen years after Morris's death. For the leasing in 1878 of his London residence Kelmscott House Morris suggested an offer of £85 per year.⁵⁷³ Houses closer to the heart of the city Morris believed would have cost around £180 to £200 a year.⁵⁷⁴ Morris would seem to have settled on leasing with an eye to cost-effectiveness. The Barr Smiths did so because they were unsure in their early South Australian years whether they would stay or duly move back to

⁵⁷¹According to Banham, MacDonald, Porter (op.cit., p.11) "in England before 1900 nine out of ten houses were privately rented".

⁵⁷²David Rodgers, *William Morris at Home*, Ebury Press, London, 1996, p.20.

⁵⁷³Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.I, 1984, p.463.

⁵⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p.469.

Britain to live. The domestic circumstances of the Barr Smiths need to be understood in some detail if the reasons for their eventual favouring of Morris & Co. are to be realised and the extent of Morris & Co.'s involvement visualised.

Within six months of their marriage Robert and Joanna Barr Smith were occupying their second home, Ridge Park, situated some 5km south-east of Adelaide and owned by Joanna's eldest brother William who had returned to Scotland. At Ridge Park the first two of their thirteen children were born. When a third son arrived in April 1860 the family had moved to Oaklands, a two-storey residence set in five hundred acres in the suburb of Marion, 10km south-west of Adelaide. This last child died on 6 May 1860 and only three months later Robert, Joanna and the two surviving sons left for a year-long visit to Scotland and England. Thus was set some pattern to the Barr Smiths' personal lives. A family of means within only four years of settling in Adelaide, their chosen residences were impressive and they followed the popular trend for the wealthy of extended overseas travel.⁵⁷⁵ Joanna's highly-strung personality would be tested by births, deaths, moving house and long sea voyages to Britain.

⁵⁷⁵The touring in Britain and Europe of Sydney's James and Lucy Fairfax with their seven children favourably compares with that of the Barr Smiths: Schedule of Trips by Robert & Joanna Barr Smith to Britain/Europe =1860-1861(1 year),1873-1875(2 years),1879-1880 (1 ½ years),1883-1885 (1 ¼ years),1888-1891(2 ¼ years),1899(< 1 year);Schedule of Trips by James & Lucy Fairfax to Britain/Europe =1872(1 year),1881-1883(2 ½ years),1889-1891 (2 ½ years),1899-1902(3 years). A conservative costing of a twelve month trip to Britain in 1851 was £700 (Hassam, op.cit., p.23), indicating the socially exclusive nature of such a venture. It was the Great War which would present many working class Australians with their first taste of overseas travel.

Before returning to Australia from their 1860-1861 trip the Barr Smiths had to decide on new accommodation. The criterion of choice for Joanna was made clear when she advised Robert of a discussion she had had on the matter with her brother Tom:

... I spoke of Parkside but he negatived that at once saying we shd lose caste there, that nobody lived there & it was very important for peoples respectability to live in a fashionable locality. ... ⁵⁷⁶

Fayette Gosse has suggested that Joanna was here somewhat mocking her older brother⁵⁷⁷ but they had had the same upbringing in a community which sought to define its prosperity through social position, in contrast to Robert's more humble affinities and situation. On their return to Adelaide the Barr Smiths took up residence in the then fashionable north-western suburb of Woodville, renting John Bristow Hughes' large St.Clair property. The two-storey house was of thirty rooms including a large ballroom [ILLUSTRATION 166].

In 1864 Tom Elder purchased Birksgate [ILLUSTRATION 167] an estate south-east of Adelaide at Glen Osmond which he enlarged, updated and beautified. When he left for an extended stay in Britain in 1869 he offered the use of his home to his sister and her family and the Barr Smiths left St.Clair to take up residence at Birksgate for two years. Birksgate represented the first truly permanent residence in Adelaide for the extended Barr Smith-Elder family. The only indication of its domestic adornment is in a letter from Robert to the absent Tom Elder concerning the

⁵⁷⁶Gosse (Ed), op.cit., p.7: letter of 14 December 1860.

⁵⁷⁷Ibid.

acquisition of a dog. Therein Robert relates in a somewhat cavalier manner that the dog “ is rather given in the drawing room to lifting up one of his hind legs against your gilt console”.⁵⁷⁸ Robert’s unconcern for the treatment suffered by Tom’s furniture may well suggest an indifference born of wealth. The gilt console was most likely to have been of French styling but British manufacture.

When Tom Elder returned to Adelaide in 1871 the Barr Smiths moved from Birkgate again into rented premises, this time George Charles Hawker’s town house The Briars [ILLUSTRATION 168], built in 1856 in the north-eastern suburb of Medindie. On 27 November 1872 another son was born. Only two months later the family departed for what would be nearly two years away in Britain. Robert and Joanna travelled by steamship with only two of their eight children. The five youngest children, including the two-month-old baby, and the eldest child sailed separately in the care of German governess Clara Fickert and a nursemaid. The separation most likely resulted from Joanna’s need to marshal her mental and emotional resources which were not only disarrayed by birth and death but always stretched by the long voyage to England. Additionally their fourteen-year-old son George had been diagnosed as epileptic and his seizures would have been an added trial to the already fragile nervous state of his mother.⁵⁷⁹

The 1873-1875 journey to Britain and Europe was something of a turning point in the Barr Smiths’ lives. It would appear that the original intention was to stay in

⁵⁷⁸*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.3, p.252: letter dated 19 May 1870.

⁵⁷⁹*Ibid.*, Vol.4, p.14: letter to Tom Elder dated 10 June 1873, and pp.686-688: letter to John Gardner dated 2 January 1877. This was a situation the Barr Smiths shared with the Morris: Morris’s elder daughter Jenny was likewise diagnosed at the age of fifteen.

Britain but ultimately the trip was seen as a “mistake” and all (except George) found the weather and the “conventionalism” of English life distasteful.⁵⁸⁰ Robert’s thoughts thus turned again to accommodation in South Australia but this time with a difference. He wrote to Tom Elder:

... We have spent so much of our lives without a fixed home that I must put my foot down now - somewhere. I shall have a fixed home - the lack of it to a large family is intolerable. ...

... Twenty years is a long part of one’s life, friendships are formed and interests created which do not die out at once. To tumble yourself into the midst of strangers who do not care a brass farthing for you - to subject yourself to live in a disagreeable climate where it is always raining is doubtful wisdom. I do not return, however until I know where I am to go for really with my family and at my time of life a fixed home is a necessity. ⁵⁸¹

Robert’s stand reflects a dilemma faced by many Australians at this time - cultural identity. Andrew Hassam’s studies show that the Barr Smith family was not alone with its feelings of “snobbery displayed towards colonials”, nor with its inability to cope with Britain’s weather.⁵⁸² In fact Hassam suggests that for “those of Scottish ... descent, Scotland ... increased their awareness of being Australian”, that when returning to Australia from a visit they brought with them “a new sense of their Australian identity, an identity based on their experiences of having been an

⁵⁸⁰*Ibid.*, p.38: letter to Walter Hughes dated 11 July 1873; also Gosse (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.31: letter of Joanna to Mary MacKillop, 10 July 1873.

⁵⁸¹*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, *op.cit.*, Vol.4, pp.12, 14: letter dated 10 June 1873.

⁵⁸²Hassam, *op.cit.*, pp.27-28, 156.

Australian abroad”.⁵⁸³ There seems no doubt from Robert’s words that by 1875 he comfortably accepted Australia as home, more strongly on the grounds of personal relationships and diversions than environmental conditions. It might thus be asserted that from this time the family faced decorative decisions from a colonial perspective rather than as British travellers staying in Australia for a limited period.

Prior to their 1873-1875 trip Joanna had been interested in buying Birksgate from her brother. However Tom Elder decided to remain settled in South Australia and in lieu Robert purchased The Briars, the last home they had rented, because, according to Joanna, it was “a place for which we have a strong affection”.⁵⁸⁴ Robert immediately began planning additions, sending plans of such in January 1874 to Tom Elder back in Adelaide.⁵⁸⁵ Yet the “affection” for The Briars was not strong enough to prevent Robert also purchasing some four months later the estate of Torrens Park for £20,000.⁵⁸⁶ After sixteen years of renting houses in Adelaide suddenly the Barr Smiths owned two substantial properties. There was no procrastinating by Robert as to which they would occupy. He immediately sent a telegram to Tom Elder:

Bought Torrens Park with everything send lists and plan of rooms. Sell Briers
don't let. ...⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸³Ibid., p.141.

⁵⁸⁴Gosse (Ed), op.cit., p.32: letter to Mary MacKillop dated 30 November 1873.

⁵⁸⁵*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.4, p.138: letter dated 21 January 1874.

⁵⁸⁶*Correspondence re Torrens Park*, Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide, PRG354/62: document entitled Torrens Park Titles dated 3 November 1910 (purchase finalised 30 December 1874).

⁵⁸⁷*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.4, p.142: transcription by Robert in letter

Torrens Park was originally built in 1853 for Robert Richard Torrens.⁵⁸⁸ In 1866 the house and some 245 acres were bought by Walter Watson Hughes, connected through business in South Australian mining ventures with Robert Barr Smith. Negotiations between Torrens and Hughes were undertaken in Britain and Hughes and his wife did not return to take possession of the house until 1870. They again left for England in 1873, this time to remain permanently. The Hugheses were part of a floating wealthy population centred on political, mining, pastoral and shipping concerns which sought the comforts of substantial town houses during their stays in the colonies. Such had been the case with Joanna Barr Smith's brothers Alexander, William and George who all returned to Britain after a 'term of duty' in Adelaide. In the short time that they occupied Torrens Park, the Hugheses made notable extensions using the original architect Edward J. Woods [ILLUSTRATIONS 169-172]. During 1874 Robert met up with Hughes in London. In notifying Tom Elder that he had bought Torrens Park "with everything" Robert was not exaggerating:

You see I got all as Hughes left it "furniture and effects" and hence I want your lists to see what I have got. Hughes statement to me is that "we just need to go in and light the fires" "nothing having been removed except plate silver" not even an ornament from a mantle piece there is he says "a clock in every room"

... I am to get all Hughes had when he left, ...⁵⁸⁹

dated 30 March 1874.

⁵⁸⁸See Illustration 151.

⁵⁸⁹*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.4, p.142: letter dated 30 March 1874.

In the matter of obtaining the lists of all items included with the house Robert asked Tom to approach the agents “with a delicate glove”:

... it is just possible that some [?] nice things may have been borrowed ...
may God forgive me if I am charging anybody - but if I found the house
without a clock at all ... ⁵⁹⁰

Robert’s suspicions may have been justified as the agents proved to be reticent and no lists were forthcoming.⁵⁹¹ It would seem that the Barr Smiths were not conversant with the house at Torrens Park. Certainly in the short time that the Hugheses actually occupied their home, work connected with alterations and additions would have restricted their ability to entertain and while being aware of its locality and outlook the Barr Smiths seemed not to have ever entered the house itself. Thus Robert wrote to Tom Elder:

... if you will cast a rigorous colonial eye over the whole “entourage” you will be able to say which of the carpets, papers, any other things you think from their extreme ugliness or unsuitability it will be absolutely necessary for us to replace. Your advice solicited. ⁵⁹²

Robert’s request highlights several important points. Firstly that Tom Elder possessed the same “colonial” aesthetic inclinations as the Barr Smiths (thus they would have been comfortably accommodated during their sojourn at Birksgate).

⁵⁹⁰Ibid., p.141.

⁵⁹¹Ibid., pp.262, 277: letters to Young & Hughes dated 12 & 16 July 1874.

⁵⁹²Ibid., p.141.

Secondly that Hughes and his wife may have had questionable tastes regarding the major elements of interior decoration. Thirdly that decorative choices in the home were not necessarily the prerogative of women.⁵⁹³ Unfortunately there appears to be no interior views of Tom Elder's Birksgate or Torrens Park in the time of the Hugheses to clarify their decorative propensities. There is, nonetheless, the inference in Robert's remarks that Tom Elder would find at Torrens Park some decorative items inappropriate to permanent everyday existence in the house; that for the Hugheses Torrens Park represented an ostentatious accessory to their financial success in South Australia not an expression of refined and sensible living.

It was intended by the Barr Smiths from the outset that some wallpapers and curtains should be sent back to Adelaide from England for Torrens Park, without waiting for Tom Elder's assessment, and to that end Robert asked Tom to provide him with plans of the rooms to include heights to ceilings and heights of mantelpieces and window sills.⁵⁹⁴ Thus Robert and Joanna clearly meant to stamp their personalities upon the house without remaining tied to the Hugheses' projections. In all some twenty-one cases of goods and chattels were sent home during 1874 through shipping agents Ogilby Moore & Co.,⁵⁹⁵ these to furnish a fully furnished house of which the interior had apparently never been seen. The distribution of suppliers suggests that during their two-year sojourn away from Adelaide the Barr Smiths travelled extensively in Europe although their exact itinerary is not known. The packing cases included furniture and figurines from

⁵⁹³For a discussion of Australian "women" and "the domestic interior", 1875-1900, see Montana, *op.cit.*, pp.17-60.

⁵⁹⁴*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, *op.cit.*, Vol.4, pp.141, 140.

⁵⁹⁵*Ibid.*, p.369: letter to Adolph von Treuer of 14 September 1874.

Munich, Dresden china costing £30, 20 dozen pints of hock wine, mosaics from Florence, books, linen from Wilson & Sons in Ireland, toys, lamps and even a £30 gravestone. A brougham carriage was shipped out on the 'Marlborough'.⁵⁹⁶ Pictures were purchased from Florence, Munich and Rome, the two former to the value of £50 and £20 respectively, the latter worth £250.⁵⁹⁷ Robert ordered parquet from the Swiss firm of Colomb & Cie of Aigle, apologising in October 1874 "because I have not yet been able to fix the exact size of my room".⁵⁹⁸ Goods from three different upholsterers were dispatched, one being an Edinburgh business and the other two the London firms of Jackson & Graham and Howard.⁵⁹⁹

The patronage by the Barr Smiths of decorative suppliers scattered abroad was entirely in keeping with the buying strategy of their class.⁶⁰⁰ Among their social peers, Sydney's James Fairfax favoured London's well-established Gillow & Co., the Bagot and Symons families of Adelaide preferred James Shoolbred & Co., while Elder Smith associate Peter Waite chose John Taylor & Son of Edinburgh. All these stores 'hedged their bets' as to satisfying the tastes of clients and handled a range of Elizabethan, Queen Anne, Louis and Aesthetic styles. At the Philadelphia International Exhibition of 1876 James Shoolbred & Co. exhibited as upholsterers and cabinet manufacturers four dining and drawing room suites in the Jacobean

⁵⁹⁶Ibid., pp.201, 211, 215, 282, 367, 369, 392, 397: letter to Longstaff, Ehrenberg & Pollak of 14 June 1874; letter to von Treuer of 14 September 1874; and letters to Ogilby Moore & Co. dated 16 June 1874, 18 June 1874, 26 July 1874, 13 September 1874, 25 September 1874.

⁵⁹⁷Ibid., p.232: letter to Ogilby Moore & Co. of 6 July 1874 and p.369: letter to von Treuer of 14 September 1874.

⁵⁹⁸Ibid., pp.456-457: letter to Messrs. Colomb & Cie, Aigle, Suisse, of 4 October 1874.

⁵⁹⁹Ibid., pp.282, 367: letters to Ogilby Moore & Co. of 26 July 1874 and 13 September 1874.

⁶⁰⁰See Lane & Serle, *op.cit.*, p.32.

and Queen Anne styles and a bedroom suite in the Anglo-Indian style.⁶⁰¹ At the same time, for the decoration of his new home of Mandeville Hall, Toorak, Victoria, Joseph Clarke commissioned Gillow & Co. who sent artists and workmen from London to fashion the Australian interior “in early English mediaeval and Oriental styles”.⁶⁰² By contrast, for the Paris Exhibition of 1878 and in Manchester four years later Gillows presented Adam interiors.⁶⁰³ The basic difference of influence between these stores for Australians was probably not stylistic but presentational. Maples and Shoolbreds would have appealed to the more progressive mind with their “magnificent displays in their large well-arranged windows”; for more conservative personalities Gillows and Jackson & Graham occasionally offered for show individual items “distinguished for some rare excellence or colouring” but rather relied for sales on “their superior reputation alone”.⁶⁰⁴ The Barr Smiths would continue throughout their lives to support firms of the latter kind.

The house at Torrens Park as purchased by Robert was seen by him as too small for his family but this seemed a minor drawback which could easily be remedied. The property displayed the overriding advantages of established gardens and

⁶⁰¹Philadelphia Internation Exhibition, 1876. *Official Catalogue of the British Section*, op.cit., pp.156-157.

⁶⁰²Suzanne Forge, *Victorian Splendour*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1981, p.88.

⁶⁰³Banham, MacDonald, Porter, op.cit., p.211.

⁶⁰⁴*Ibid.*, p.21. Differences occurred even between stores utilising similar presentational expertise. Illustrator Ernest Shepard, in recalling his London childhood in the 1880s, remembered a “rivalry” between Shoolbred’s and Maples’; he “could not get it clear why the Aunts would not go to Maples’. Aunt Emily, whose explanations never gave satisfaction, said it was something to do with a four-in-hand, and that it was ‘raffish’”(Ernest H. Shepard, *Drawn from Memory*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1975, p.38).

grounds, splendid views and immediate accessibility.⁶⁰⁵ From the moment of purchase however he began planning alterations:

... I think I must call in the aid of an architect - for though I know what I want inside I don't know how to arrange the little extras which will make the outside tolerable.⁶⁰⁶

Personal events would delay alterations to Torrens Park. During the first four years of residence the two youngest daughters died. The death of the youngest had a profound and prolonged effect upon Joanna.⁶⁰⁷ Robert fervently believed that “nothing but a change from Torrens Park will do her any good”,⁶⁰⁸ trusting in diverting Joanna’s attention to happier matters through decorative differences. In April 1878 he had bought for £3000 the old single-storey Oakfield Hotel at Mt.Barker in the Adelaide Hills with some forty-four adjoining acres.⁶⁰⁹ Renamed Auchendarroch (the Scottish for Oakfield), Robert commissioned architect John Grainger to oversee the building’s conversion into a summer retreat of like magnitude to Torrens Park. The acquisition of a summer residence was again in

⁶⁰⁵*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.4, p.153: letter to Tom Elder of 14 April 1874.

⁶⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p.152: letter to Tom Elder of 14 April 1874.

⁶⁰⁷A measure of its depth was presented in Robert’s correspondence to family members in Britain: “This mail takes the sad news to us of our little daughter Ursula’s death. ... dear Joe is not able to write or to do anything - The child was her great favourite, nay no child has ever been so much indulged and petted as this one was; and she was a very lovable bright little creature. The calamity has left the mother low fitful & nervous. Time of course is the great restorer, such consolations as are offered of the “God Knows best” and “these trials are blessings in disguise from his gracious hand” class go but against the grain with your sister & make her rebellious and indignant” (*Ibid.*, Vol.5, p.53: letter to George Elder of 30 November 1878; pp.12, 20, 23, 24, 49-50: letters to others dated 19 and 29 November 1878).

⁶⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p.257: letter to Tom Elder of ? April 1879.

⁶⁰⁹*Correspondence re “Auchendarroch”*, Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide, PRG354/63: Sale Note from Lachlan McFarlan dated 30 April 1878.

keeping with a popular inclination of wealthy Australians. In 1884 James and Lucy Fairfax built at Moss Vale in the southern highlands of New South Wales Woodside, a red brick villa almost as large as their Sydney home Ginahgulla. There they would spend some four months each year between Christmas and Easter.⁶¹⁰ The work at the Barr Smiths' Auchendarroch [ILLUSTRATIONS 173-176] continued to drag through 1879⁶¹¹ and Robert became more and more disgruntled, virtually blaming the "infernal contractor" for Joanna's continuing despondency as the family could not occupy its summer retreat.⁶¹² The family arrived in Britain in August of 1879 for an eighteen-month sojourn with their summer residence of Auchendarroch still not finished - and Joanna six months pregnant.

Before embarking on the 1879-1880 trip Robert organised for alterations and extensions to Torrens Park to be finally carried out while the family were away, to avoid the discomfort which always accompanied such work. While Grainger was ostensibly in control at both Torrens Park and Auchendarroch alterations were always based upon Robert's visions with advice sought from London architect William Neville Ashbee.⁶¹³ Although Robert wrote in 1881 a letter of recommendation for Grainger when the latter moved to Melbourne⁶¹⁴ he was never satisfied with Grainger's organisational abilities. When planning for Torrens Park

⁶¹⁰Souter, *op.cit.*, p.36.

⁶¹¹"... after contracting to get the keys on the 15th of January, the 15th of March won't see it ready and as we start in Oct or Nov next who knows when, if ever, I shall inspect the House that Bob built. Fools build houses wise men live in them" (*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith op.cit.*, Vol.5, p.188: letter to George Elder of 22 February 1879).

⁶¹²*Ibid.*, pp.186, 257, 282: letters to Tom Elder of 10 February, ? April and 25 April 1879.

⁶¹³*Ibid.*, p.314.

⁶¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp.429-430: letter to firm of Sir James McCulloch dated 3 August 1881.

the building of an imposing theatre (according to Robert “a small private theatre”) in 1882 Robert wrote to Ashbee that “This is a kind of thing in which Graingers taste would have been helpful but I cannot have anything more to do with him”.⁶¹⁵ The Barr Smiths were not alone among Adelaide’s wealthy set in seeking the advice of London architects. In 1878 Edmund Bowman had London architect Ebenezer Gregg design his Mintaro home, the erection of which was supervised by Edward Woods, the local architect associated with Torrens Park. Furniture and fittings for Mintaro were supplied by some of the best overseas companies including Sadgrove & Co. of London.⁶¹⁶

The last of the Barr Smith children was born in Edinburgh in November 1879 and the family returned to Adelaide late in 1880 to a completed summer retreat and a considerably enlarged town house. At Torrens Park an east wing had been added [ILLUSTRATION 177] which extended the dining area and incorporated a new billiard room [ILLUSTRATION 178]. The old billiard room was converted into an ante-drawing room with bay window, connected to the main drawing room by two archways. Ashbee had advised Robert not to completely remove the wall between the two rooms because it would alter the dimensions of the main drawing room which he considered “a well proportioned and magnificent one”. Ashbee strongly favoured a central opening over two side ones as “looking far superior”, but, as with many details for the house, Robert asserted his own ideas. On this point Rocke & Co. had been correct in its recognition that homeowners often desired to reflect individual traits but for such could be beneficially directed by professional advice.

⁶¹⁵Ibid., p.773: letter dated 12 October 1882.

⁶¹⁶Lane & Serle, op.cit., pp.168-169.

Ashbee also designed the “irregular shaped” bay window for the ante-drawing room at the location suggested by Robert, adding that it

would be most valuable, in breaking the monotony of this very long wall face, should you decide to throw the two rooms into one. I do not know what would be the outlook from this window into the courtyard, but in case it is from any cause objectionable, this might be remedied by filling the windows with stained glass, which would have a very pleasant effect.⁶¹⁷

Robert accepted Ashbee’s recommendation and the windows were filled with stained glass [ILLUSTRATION 179]. As there was no local industry at this date, two options were open to Robert: to import or order from Melbourne. For such domestic purposes the latter was more likely the avenue. The company chosen would have been Ferguson & Urie. From 1871 Joanna and her daughters were constant attendants at St. Andrew’s Anglican Church, Walkerville. In 1872 the east window by Ferguson & Urie [see ILLUSTRATION 62] was installed in the church and remained its only stained glass until 1883. There is no doubt that it would have impressed Joanna. The treatment for the bay window chosen by the Barr Smiths was a fashionable decorative statement, as shown by the 1888 scheme by C.E. Kempe in an alcove of the Hall at Wightwick Manor, West Midlands [ILLUSTRATION 180].

Robert initially authorized the lowering of the windows of the bedrooms and drawing rooms on the western side of Torrens Park house, agreeing to give Grainger the go-ahead for the east wing provided “all the alterations and

⁶¹⁷Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide, PRG354/68: letter of W. Neville Ashbee to R. Barr Smith dated 11 September 1879.

improvements at both ends can be done for the estimate £3013⁶¹⁸ He did not intend to brook a cost above this. Robert always kept a careful eye on expenses involved with architectural rearrangements and redecorating. His discussion with Ashbee regarding Torrens Park's existing drawing room/billiard room mantelpieces shows that he did not willing spend money simply to court fashion:

... it seems to me a sinful waste of money to remove these very beautiful marble mantelpieces for a mere whim that oak and tiles are better when probably 6 people out of every dozen think the opposite way.⁶¹⁹

Robert's comments demonstrate a perceptive eye for decorative details and an awareness of current decorative trends. A careful weighing of these sensibilities helped towards accounting for both the early and later impressions created for his homes.

Like Robert Barr Smith Morris did not dismiss marble fireplaces outright in preference to oak and tiles. Morris was himself content to live with marble fireplaces which already existed in the houses he occupied [ILLUSTRATION 181]. The fireplace was for him a "piece of architecture" and as such he looked to the honesty of its construction and good sense as to its use. He attacked those modern fireplaces which were either "mean, miserable, uncomfortable" or "showy, plastered about with wretched sham ornament". What he accepted was a structure

⁶¹⁸*Correspondence re "Auchendarroch"*, op.cit.: copy of letter sent from Edinburgh to John Grainger dated 28 August 1879.

⁶¹⁹*Ibid.* Ashbee would seem to have concurred with Robert: "... At all events the present fireplace in Billiard room would of course be moved to the opposite side, where lavatory now stands" (Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide, PRG354/68, op.cit.).

delightful to the sight and practical to clean.⁶²⁰ For the buying public however style choices could be curtailed by cost. In its 1872 illustrated catalogue the Melbourne ironmongery firm of James M'Ewan & Co., dealing mainly in kitchen equipment and utensils, iron fire grates and garden furniture, featured a section on fireplaces which were exclusively marble, of French or Italian origin - "Handsome Chimney Pieces with Columns, &c., from £90 to £150, according to quality of Marble and Workmanship".⁶²¹ While the company prided itself on providing for "the Cottage or the Mansion"⁶²² the cost of marble fireplaces obviously placed them more within the means of those occupying the latter dwelling. By comparison a simple oak "chimney-piece" manufactured by Morris & Co. was listed around 1911 at £22 10s.⁶²³ As Morris & Co. moved progressively towards "Queen Anne" interior decoration in the twentieth century it in fact also sold marble mantelpieces, one "genuine carved Adams" piece being priced at only £30.⁶²⁴

1882 views at Torrens Park of the ante-drawing room which became known as the Yellow Drawing Room [ILLUSTRATION 179] and the enlarged dining room [ILLUSTRATION 182] are the only indications of the Barr Smiths' pre-Morris & Co. preferences in decoration. They bear comparison with the Stewart family's fitting out at the same time of their new home in Bathurst, New South Wales [ILLUSTRATIONS 183-184]. Both families might be seen as indicators of wealthy

⁶²⁰Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.159-160.

⁶²¹James M'Ewan & Co.'s *Illustrated catalogue of Furnishing and General Ironmongery*, Melbourne, 1872, p.77 (Rare Books Collection, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne).

⁶²²Ibid., introductory note.

⁶²³*Specimens of Furniture and Interior Decoration*, op.cit., last page.

⁶²⁴Morris & Co. Ltd. catalogue showing "New Colourings" in printed cottons (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, General File No.11a).

taste, the Barr Smiths preferring to purchase items overseas, the Stewarts generally buying through outlets at home.

The Stewarts' "Scotch Baronial" Abercrombie House [ILLUSTRATION 185] was completed in 1878⁶²⁵ with work on the interior continuing after this date. Stewart presents as typical of wealthy pastoralists and identities connected to large country towns. While he did occasionally travel overseas he would not seem to have been a seasoned traveller as was usually the case with wealthy Australians, like the Barr Smiths and the Fairfaxes, who lived in the capital cities. Where the latter would buy quantities of household furniture and items while in Britain and Europe, the likes of Stewart purchased extensively from local city stores [ILLUSTRATIONS 186-187] and only occasionally overseas [ILLUSTRATION 188].

Since the Barr Smiths bought Torrens Park "with everything" but with no lists existing, it is impossible to ascertain what items may have been retained by the family from the Hughes estate or what they would have added through their own extensive purchasing in 1874. Nonetheless, in the light of Robert's request to Tom Elder for advice regarding the unsuitability of any articles in the "entourage", it is certain that by the time of the Torrens Park alterations in 1880 what remained in the house would have been definitely to the Barr Smiths' taste.

Major components of the Barr Smith and Stewart dining rooms were similarly treated. Both utilised wallpapers of popular design and finish: for the Stewarts a

⁶²⁵Rex and Christopher Morgan, *Halcyon Images of Abercrombie House*, The Runciman Press, Manly, 1985, p.61.

loud floral with contrasting frieze; for the Barr Smiths a more sober flock without frieze; both with dado paper which appears to be the same. The Stewarts' fill paper was most likely bought in Sydney⁶²⁶ and indicates the influence Morris had on other manufacturers to produce natural flat patterns for walls. The use of dado paper blatantly contradicted Morris & Co.'s advice on dados offered in its Boston Foreign Fair catalogue. Eastern-style rugs, not carpets, were used for the floors in both Australian dining rooms, allowing the parquetry to remain on show. In choice of furniture, however, the Stewarts were far more modern as a result of their purchasing the latest in "art furniture". At Abercrombie House the fireplaces in the hall [ILLUSTRATION 189] and dining room [ILLUSTRATION 156] and much of the dining room furniture [ILLUSTRATION 184] reflect the work of Walker & Sons exhibited in Sydney in 1879.⁶²⁷ One of the large sideboards in the dining room [ILLUSTRATION 190] is stamped W.A. & S. Smee [ILLUSTRATION 191] who were also exhibitors in Sydney and Melbourne. Their style and workmanship were much like that of Walker & Sons and their work "supplied to the higher class Residences in England, but at moderate prices".⁶²⁸ The decorative effect created by Stewart in his dining room, with its Walker and Smee furniture, somewhat aligns him with George Verdon. Superficially this may suggest that Stewart should then have belonged to that wealthy sub-group which sought to present itself as progressive in outlook. Yet Abercrombie House was not a town dwelling but the residential centre of a working country property. Stewart's acquaintances would have differed somewhat to Verdon's. The class analogy does not fit perfectly. It is likely that

⁶²⁶and possibly seen at the 1879 Sydney International Exhibition.

⁶²⁷*Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, op.cit.: *Sydney Morning Herald*, Wednesday 31 October 1880.

⁶²⁸*Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, op.cit., p.103.

Stewart would have wished to project a cultured image. In so doing he simply may have chosen the latest decorative creations locally on offer because he liked them and could afford them.⁶²⁹ There would be no particular reason for him to assert progressiveness. At Torrens Park the balloon-back dining chairs were of a type popular from about 1830 and the lattice-fronted classical cabinet probably of the same vintage. Here there is certainly no intention on the part of the Barr Smiths to project a progressive outlook. Rather, they are expressing a recognition of established refinement.

For the walls of the drawing rooms in both houses popular wallpaper styles were again chosen. The Stewarts favoured a more delicate pattern to complement the classical styling of their room, however even the Barr Smiths' choice presents that conservative Australian preference for neat and small patterns identified by Melbourne's Cole Bros.⁶³⁰ A contrasting frieze was used in both cases. While the Stewarts once more incorporated a substantial dado, none is apparent in the Barr Smiths' scheme. The Stewarts with their wall decoration displayed a preference for the tripartite wallpaper treatment favoured by followers of the Aesthetic Movement, where wide dados and friezes were designed to make loud statements in their own right [ILLUSTRATIONS 192-193]. The division by the Barr Smiths of the walls in their dining and drawing rooms into only two compartments may indicate that, through their adviser Neville Ashbee, they were already absorbing Morris's ideas

⁶²⁹Born in Scotland in 1825, Stewart settled in Bathurst with his parents in 1832. He did not travel until about 1850 and then only to Scotland. He made only three or four further trips (to Scotland) in his long lifetime of 95 years (see C.W. Sloman, *The History of Bathurst 1815-1915*, The Runciman Press, Manly, 1994, pp.337-338). Stewart's decorative tastes most likely would have been influenced by associations with Sydney.

⁶³⁰See Chapter 1.

before actually acquiring Morris & Co. products. In Morris's 1879 lecture *Making the Best of It* his advice for dividing a wall was as follows:

... I think dividing it once, making it into two spaces, is enough. Now there are practically two ways of doing that: you may either have a narrow frieze below the cornice, and hang the wall thence to the floor, or you may have a moderate dado, say 4 feet 6 inches high, and hang the wall from the cornice to the top of the dado. Either way is good, according to circumstances; ... ⁶³¹

Another suggestion by the Barr Smiths of support for Morris's principles was the treatment of their drawing room floor compared with that accepted by the Stewarts. The latter selected wall-to-wall carpeting while the Barr Smiths again chose rugs. Morris considered both forms of floor covering in *Making the Best of It*. He clearly supported rugs over carpeting not entirely for aesthetic reasons:

As to the floor: a little time ago it was the universal custom for those who could afford it to cover it all up into its dustiest and crookedest corners with a carpet, good bad or indifferent. Now I daresay you have heard from others, whose subject is the health of houses rather than art ... what a nasty and unwholesome custom this is, so I will only say that it looks nasty and unwholesome. Happily, however, it is now a custom so much broken into that we may consider it doomed; for in all houses that pretend to any taste of arrangement, the carpet is now a rug, large it may be, but at any rate not looking immovable, and not being a trap for dust in the corners. ... ⁶³²

⁶³¹Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.135-136.

⁶³²Ibid., pp.131-132.

Morris's view of wall-to-wall carpeting as a "doomed" custom proved to be erroneous. Technology ultimately was to ensure successful cleaning techniques for all those "dustiest and crookedest corners". In Morris's time, however, health problems were very real. Thus even the layout of Morris & Co.'s own machine woven carpets followed the principles of rug production: each consisted of a central field design with complementary border. In 1881 Morris gave *Some Hints on Pattern-Designing* for carpets. Before discussing the merits of broad or narrow borders he clearly stated that "carpets are always bordered cloths" and thus he did not consider any other arrangement.⁶³³

In the Stewart and Barr Smith drawing rooms there was a significant difference in furniture selection also, although both displayed a fashionable eclecticism in the assortment of items present and included a shared choice of popular cane. The Barr Smiths were far less flamboyant than the Stewarts, the photograph of their ante-drawing room set to feature a classical Hepplewhite Revival chair of the shield-back style which originally appeared in the late 1780s. The Stewarts' drawing room displayed several Sheraton style chairs, however the bulk of the furniture was likely to have come from their patronage of Sydney stores like Anthony Hordern & Sons [ILLUSTRATION 194]. Articles from the Furniture Department illustrated in that store's 1884 Catalogue⁶³⁴ [ILLUSTRATIONS 195-196], such as the oval pedestal and tripod tables and the couch, show that the Stewarts appreciated the selection of styles put forward by such firms as the latest fashion. In Melbourne, Cullis Hill &

⁶³³Wilmer (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.275.

⁶³⁴*Household Catalogue*, Anthony Hordern & Sons, Sydney, 1884, pp.18-19.

Co. provided similar direction to Anthony Hordern & Sons. At the 1884 opening of its premises the Melbourne firm suggested that

even the benighted individuals who do not “run across to Europe” every three years, are enabled to select or, at any rate, see what is the leading style in house furnishing at home.

It was Hill’s intention to import in vogue British and European furniture and while Queen Anne was acceptable for overmantels and cabinets

when comfort is involved desert her and strike for the luxurious chairs, of downy softness, of plush and velvet exteriors, low in the seats, broad and roomy, with comfortable cosy-looking draperies, of the Louis XIV. period. ⁶³⁵

This the Stewarts did. As recalled by Mary Steele, Bishopcourt in Ballarat, Victoria, in 1936 echoed Abercrombie House of fifty years earlier:

The drawing-room was a double room divided by a wide arch, and with very high ceilings. It swallowed up with ease innumerable couches and armchairs, occasional tables and the walnut piano. There were two elegant fireplaces with white marble mantels. ... The dining-room also contained a lot of oak furniture and a huge Turkey carpet. ⁶³⁶

⁶³⁵*The Australasian*, 21 June 1884, p.823: feature on “Artistic Furniture” in “The Lady’s Column”.

⁶³⁶Steele, *op.cit.*, p.28.

One might imagine that by 1936, with Australian Federation and the Great War already a part of history, a change should have occurred in selection of items for interior decoration. Although James Stewart's rural status and the ecclesiastical position of Mary Steele's father, Bishop William Johnson, may have dictated the need to instil confidence in their social standings, Bishop Johnson's preferences indicate that Australians remained comfortable with fashions acceptable in past times and did not particularly court fashion simply for the sake of doing so.⁶³⁷

South of Sydney, Goulburn held a similar position to Bathurst in terms of economic and social significance. Both were distribution and service centres for surrounding pastoral concerns and significantly both became Anglican diocese centres in the 1860s. While English Cathedral cities were chosen at the heart of great masses of population, their Australian counterparts outside the capital cities represented strategic jumping off places from which the Church could make its advance upon scattered settlements.⁶³⁸ The centres themselves, however, maintained a hierarchy, the upper echelons of which were determined to present tasteful aesthetic judgements. Francis Rossi's Goulburn mansion of Rossiville, built in the late 1830s, was inherited by his son in 1851. Photographs of Rossiville's drawing and dining rooms taken in the late 1880s⁶³⁹ suggest that the junior Rossi remained faithful to the simpler, refined taste initially favoured by the Barr Smiths,

⁶³⁷The Johnson family transported all their own furniture to Ballarat when they moved from Newcastle, New South Wales, in 1936 (Ibid., p.11).

⁶³⁸The largest proportion of the Goulburn diocese, between the Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers, accounted for five per cent of the area of New South Wales, yet in 1843 supported a population of only 1709 (Ransome T Wyatt, *History of the Diocese of Goulburn*, Anglican Parish of Binda, 1998, pp.24-25).

⁶³⁹Lane & Serle, op.cit., pp.200-201.

rather than following the more modern approach of the Stewarts. It is never really possible to pigeon-hole decorative selections of individuals into set formulae of class and image projection.

In 1882 the Barr Smiths' interiors reflected the preference among wealthy Australians, such as many of Lyon, Cottier & Co.'s clients, for subdued rather than flamboyant surroundings. In Adelaide similar adherence to accepted principles of room ambience and refined taste in decorative details and furniture certainly appeared in Athelney, the St.Peters home of Herbert Bristow Hughes.⁶⁴⁰ However with the treatment of their floors and walls the Barr Smiths did indicate that by this time some contemporary influences were coming into play, assuredly through the advice being proffered by Ashbee.

In March 1881 the Barr Smiths' youngest child died. Having never really recovered from the two previous losses, Joanna was again overcome with grief. In an attempt to relieve his wife's depression Robert again placed his faith in varying Joanna's domestic environment. He dispatched servants to prepare Auchendarroch, believing that the "change" of residence would help to alleviate Joanna's "settled gloom".⁶⁴¹ They were back at Torrens Park after a month.⁶⁴² The break at Auchendarroch had not been enough to lift Joanna's spirits and so Robert looked to another "change". He forwarded a letter to Neville Ashbee and so that he should not "miss the mail" he proposed to "trouble" Ashbee with only "a small

⁶⁴⁰Ibid., pp.260-261.

⁶⁴¹*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.5, p.410: letter to Tom Elder of 14 July 1881.

⁶⁴²Ibid., p.445: letter to Tom Elder of 11 August 1881.

order". What followed were several pages of detailed instructions for purchasing three substantial items with which to redecorate Joanna's bedroom.⁶⁴³ The paper and dado as existed were to remain and Robert enclosed pieces of these for Ashbee. He first required a Persian carpet 16 feet by 26 feet 6 inches "to match the colour of the paper", explaining that he meant by this "to go well" with the paper. Certainly for Morris colour was the most exquisite quality of Eastern rugs. He suggested that in Western manufacturing, "as to the mere colour we are not likely to beat, and may be well pleased if we equal, an ordinary genuine Eastern specimen".⁶⁴⁴ The sizing of the carpet for Joanna's bedroom needed to be exact so as not to cover fully the fashionable parquet floor of the room. Such an arrangement would have satisfied Morris's belief that the use of rugs necessarily compelled "better floors (and less drafty)". Morris found it a "great comfort to see the actual floor" and lauded "wood mosaic" as one of the fine ornamental variations for this feature.⁶⁴⁵ In their treatment of floors the Barr Smiths would continue to be unswerving in their earliest leanings which seemed independently to accord with Morris's principles.

For Joanna's bedroom Robert also requested that Ashbee organise two sets of curtains which were needed to "go well with" both the carpet and paper. These were "not to be extravagantly dear say £25-£30 for the lot". Robert's concept of what was not "extravagantly dear" was relative: his allocation for the two sets of curtains almost represented the annual income for domestic staff and around a quarter of the average annual working wage.⁶⁴⁶ Thirdly, despite his stand on mantelpieces, Robert

⁶⁴³Ibid., pp.446-449: letter dated 11 August 1881.

⁶⁴⁴Poulson (Ed), op.cit., p.75.

⁶⁴⁵Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, op.cit., pp.132-133.

⁶⁴⁶*The Australasian Sketcher*, Vol.X, No.160, 18 November 1882, pp.315, 330. Domestic

requested a “nice” new one of wood; Ashbee was to choose a colour which he considered would best complement the yellow pine and bamboo furniture which adorned the room. Robert included a sketch with dimensions. While he suggested to Ashbee that Howard, one of the London upholsterers from which he had bought on the 1873-1875 trip, would undoubtedly invoice him and await payment by cheque he had no specific desire that the company be used as “some of his things were badly packed” in addition to being “rather costly”. Ultimately the decision was to be left to Ashbee, but after so many cautionary remarks Robert obviously recalled the basic reason for his letter - therapy for his wife’s melancholy - and advised Ashbee to “Go where you think you will get the things best & prettiest”.

Again Robert’s remarks are enlightening with regard to decorative choices for the home. The tone and selection of words throughout Robert’s letter suggest that Joanna was unaware of the proposals to affect her bedroom. Once more men, not women, were making the decorative decisions. Robert’s terminology - “match”, “go well with”, “nice” - reinforces the conservative nature of past decorating which obviously did not rely solely on Joanna’s tastes but was likely to have been a cooperative affair between husband and wife.

There is no record of which company or companies Ashbee used for this project. At the time Morris & Co. were just beginning to manufacture large hand-knotted Hammersmith carpets at Merton Abbey. Prior to this Hammersmith carpets created at Kelmscott House extended only to twelve foot widths,⁶⁴⁷ Robert requiring staff earned £30-£40 per annum; an average wage was c.£2-£3 per week.

⁶⁴⁷Parry, op.cit., p.87.

an exact sixteen foot width for his “Persian carpet”. Thus Morris & Co. would really not have been an option for this early piecemeal decorative scheme. Ashbee could have approached Jackson & Graham whom the Barr Smiths had also patronised on their 1873-1875 trip however Robert does not suggest this firm in his correspondence. A more likely candidate would be Hampton & Sons, one of the leading London West End department stores. The Barr Smiths purchased widely from this business on their next overseas sojourn and thus may have done so following earlier successful transactions by Ashbee.

In 1883 Alexander Elder, who had acted as London agent for Elder, Smith & Co., resigned the post after a disagreement and Robert was obliged to travel to England to set up an independent office. A year before leaving Robert had organised for construction to start on a private theatre and ballroom at Torrens Park, to satisfy his wife’s and eldest daughters’ passion for fashionable charades and tableaux. Building was to continue while the family were away and the house itself repainted and redecorated. This wholesale decorative push basically revolved around Robert’s desire to relieve Joanna’s extreme depressions and tensions. His therapy through visual change and stimulation was geared to comfort and encourage his wife after thirteen births and six deaths in twenty-four years. Fundamentally Robert would seem to have agreed with Morris’s proposition that one of the “essential aims of art” was the “restraining of restlessness”. With his art Morris sought to mitigate mental states such as suffered by Joanna Barr Smith, by both pleasing and making happier any recipients.⁶⁴⁸ This was not to be accomplished

⁶⁴⁸Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., pp.120, 119.

simply by designs themselves but by the professional manner in which Morris & Co. products combined to form a whole domestic environment.

From London and Nairn in Scotland, between June and December 1884, Robert Barr Smith endeavoured to orchestrate the alterations being carried out at Torrens Park. He achieved this mainly through correspondence with Tom Elder and Adolph von Treuer, private secretary to both himself and Tom. The exercise was not an easy one. Confusion often plagued local builder Burnett's attempts to interpret London-based Ashbee's plans.⁶⁴⁹ At one stage Robert exclaimed to von Treuer "What midsummer madness is this?"⁶⁵⁰

Von Treuer was responsible for relaying Robert's wishes to Adelaide architects Henderson & Marryat who in turn organised the subcontractors. Henderson & Marryat made no artistic contribution to the alterations and decorations at Torrens Park but were simply expected to ensure that instructions from overseas were carried out efficiently.

The impetus for the Barr Smiths to now choose Morris & Co. to provide for the redecoration of their homes is unknown. Molly Legoe, granddaughter of Robert and Joanna, has stated:

⁶⁴⁹*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.6, pp.3, 87: letters to von Treuer of June 1884 and 21 July 1884.

⁶⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p.85: letter dated 21 July 1884.

It was believed by my family that this penchant towards Morris arose because my father's sister Mabel went to school in England with Maie Morris, sister of William Morris. ... ⁶⁵¹

In addition to the anomalies in this recollection Christopher Menz has ascertained that the Barr Smith and Morris daughters did not attend school together ⁶⁵² and Linda Parry states that May Morris's brief formal education, at Notting Hill High School, ran from October 1874 to June 1877⁶⁵³ which is outside dates the Barr Smiths were in England. There is no doubt that the Barr Smiths were aware of Morris's activities by the time they decided to redecorate in 1883. In October of 1874 Robert listed eleven British journals which the family arranged to have sent regularly to Australia.⁶⁵⁴ Of these, five reviewed Morris's literary works. The Barr Smiths would have been well armed after reading Edith Simcox's lengthy and enthusiastic review of *Hopes and Fears for Art* in the June 1882 issue of the *Fortnightly Review*.⁶⁵⁵ However the most likely source of influence in approaching Morris & Co. would have been Neville Ashbee. He was active at a time when Morris & Co. was most noted and influential⁶⁵⁶ and his claims of domestic work would have made him aware of the company's productions. As early as 1879 he advised Robert that he

⁶⁵¹M.I. Legoe, *A Family Affair*, Author, 1982, p.19.

⁶⁵²Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., pp.46, 62 (Note 17).

⁶⁵³Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., p.156.

⁶⁵⁴*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.4, p.472.

⁶⁵⁵Faulkner (Ed), op.cit., pp.270-279. That the family were interested in Morris's writings is indicated by Joanna Barr Smith later owning a copy of the 1890 special edition of *The Roots of the Mountains* bound in *Honeysuckle* printed cotton (Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., p.117).

⁶⁵⁶See Ashbee's RIBA Nomination Papers for Associateship, 23 March 1881 (Royal Institute of British Architects, No.77); also RIBA Nomination Papers for Fellowship, 23 October 1890 (Royal Institute of British Architects, No.69).

would be “very pleased to give you what help I can in selecting tiles for your house, when you come to London again”.⁶⁵⁷ Joanna’s dressing room was part of the Torrens Park additions at this earlier date. The tiles selected for the fireplace in this room [ILLUSTRATION 197] were almost certainly by Minton Hollins, the leading tile manufacturer of the day and the same firm which Joanna had favoured some three years earlier when donating sanctuary flooring to St. Andrew’s Church in Walkerville. If Ashbee’s offer was taken up with the initial decoration of the extensions to Torrens Park he was probably working within the limits laid down by the Barr Smiths.

The redecorations at Torrens Park in 1884 were a different matter. To begin with the Small and Large Drawing Rooms were to be entirely renovated. It is uncertain whether their success led to the subsequent renovation of other major entertaining areas or whether the Barr Smiths always intended to proceed thus over the next decade or so. Nonetheless, the initial exercise allowed for the employment of a firm which could offer a complete decorative service, providing not only all the individual decorative products of wallpapers, fabrics, tiles and carpets but also expert advice regarding paint and timber components. As the Barr Smiths were already somewhat attuned to Morris’s outlook on interior design they would have been receptive to a suggestion if offered by Ashbee to actually use Morris & Co.

In the Small Drawing Room at Torrens Park there appeared Morris-designed *Sunflower* tiles made by William De Morgan and sold by Morris & Co.

⁶⁵⁷Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide, PRG354/68, op.cit.

[ILLUSTRATION 198]. In boldness of design and brilliance of lustre the Morris/De Morgan tiles contrast strikingly with typical Minton Hollins tiles of the same vintage as seen in Joanna's dressing room [ILLUSTRATION 197] and the Stewarts' dining room and hall in Bathurst [ILLUSTRATIONS 184 & 189]. The *Sunflower* tiles graced a new fireplace of wooden surround and overmantel, the original white marble fireplace [ILLUSTRATION 155] being removed to a new room for son George on the first floor. Robert had not changed his mind that "oak and tiles" were "a mere whim": the choice was Joanna's.⁶⁵⁸ The arrangement for the fireplace in the Small Drawing Room strongly adhered to Morris's directive that

... if you have wooden work about the fireplace, which is often good to have, don't mix up the wood and the tiles together; let the wood-work look like part of the wall-covering, and the tiles like part of the chimney.⁶⁵⁹

Linda Parry of the Victoria and Albert Museum believes that "it is unlikely that Morris & Co. personally supervised the decoration" at Torrens Park or later at Auchendarroch.⁶⁶⁰ Robert's correspondence, however, indicates that, during the family's 1883-1885 stay in Britain, the decorative work carried out to the house at Torrens Park was certainly based on detailed advice presented by the company. In September 1884 Robert wrote to Tom Elder:

I now enclose a coloured sketch of how Joanna wants the Torrens Park hall painted ...

⁶⁵⁸*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith, op.cit., Vol.6, p.275: letter to Bruister of 25 September 1884.*

⁶⁵⁹*Morris, Hopes and Fears for Art, op.cit., p.160.*

⁶⁶⁰*Parry, op.cit., p.145.*

The only correction I wish to make of this sketch is that whereas Mr Ashbee has shown the ornamentals of the arches white, I do not want any white. By Morris & Co.'s advice, the parts shown white should be the same colour as the wall.⁶⁶¹

Robert's instructions to Tom, which had to be relayed to Henderson & Marryat and after that on to subcontractors, already in themselves show complicated arrangements. Joanna appeared to offer her preferences to Neville Ashbee who probably suggested variations in consultation with Robert. Ashbee then prepared architectural presentations which were still subject to review. Robert's acceptance of Morris & Co.'s word as final points to his faith in the superior professionalism of the company over his wife and the London and Adelaide architects involved. While Robert claims the enclosed sketch is how Joanna wants the hall painted he nonetheless forcefully states that he is the one wishing to pursue Morris & Co.'s advice. Again decorative decisions are male dominated (although Joanna Barr Smith may not have been aware of this).

The hall at Torrens Park [ILLUSTRATION 199] contained no major Morris & Co. components.⁶⁶² Robert obviously sought the company's recommendations for this area to ensure a general decorative continuity to the rooms through which visitors were naturally directed. Morris & Co. would not have had any difficulty in

⁶⁶¹*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.6, p.179: letter dated 2 September 1884.

⁶⁶²Lane & Serle, op.cit., p.158, claim that the three rugs in the hall are Hammersmith rugs. All display the same pattern and are clearly not Morris & Co. Hammersmith carpets but probably examples of the company's Axminsters used as slip matting for the polished timber flooring (see Parry, op.cit., p.84).

envisaging the Torrens Park rooms they were required to handle. Robert not only requested measurements to allow for the ordering of wallpapers, drapery and mantelpieces but he also appeared to have organised photographs of the rooms to be forwarded to England, clearly to assist both Ashbee and Morris & Co. in their arrangements.⁶⁶³ However the contact between Robert in particular and Morris & Co. seemed not to have been highly personal. When sending payment, while still in London, to the company for wallpapers, Robert enquired as to whom the proffered “hints and instructions” were to be sent and suggested they be forwarded to himself and that he would then post them on to Adelaide.⁶⁶⁴ With Robert’s time greatly taken up with establishing the Elder Smith London office, it makes sense that Joanna should be the one to personally attend Morris & Co.’s shop.

The treatment of Torrens Park’s Small and Large Drawing Rooms reveals a clarity of arrangement which characterised Morris & Co.’s best work, pointing to the Barr Smiths favourably heeding Morris & Co.’s proposals regarding coordination of colours, patterns and textures. The new wooden fireplace in the Small Drawing Room was integrated into a panelling scheme for the room which included cupboards and shelving [ILLUSTRATION 200]. All these components were designed by Morris & Co. and plans for such sent by Robert to Henderson & Marryat in December 1884 with the intention that they should be made locally.⁶⁶⁵ While local tradesmen would also have been engaged for painting work, actual paint samples were devised by Morris & Co. for ceilings and woodwork and were shipped to

⁶⁶³*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.6, p.4: letter to von Treuer of June 1884.

⁶⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p.427: letter to Messrs Morris & Co. of 11 December 1884.

⁶⁶⁵“... the thing to aim at is that we should have a thoroughly good cabinet maker to do the work well. ...” (*Ibid.*, p.471: letter to Messrs Henderson & Marryat of 31 December 1884).

Adelaide from London with the wallpapers.⁶⁶⁶ Robert informed Henderson & Marryat that

The instructions forwarded are to assist you to carry out exactly what Morris & Co. have planned. I do not see how I can add to them.

They contain advice as to the cupboards, mantelpiece & woodwork in the Small Drawing Room - and the painting & other work in the large Drawing Room as well as the means to be taken to bring the mirror frames into harmony with the rest of the colouring.⁶⁶⁷

[ILLUSTRATION 201]

The decorative schemes about to be undertaken were thus in no way simply a combination of Morris & Co. products but a careful consideration by the company of every detail which could impact on the overall effect being sought.

The Small Drawing Room was papered with *Fruit* [ILLUSTRATION 202], fragments of which were discovered in 1985 behind the original electricity meter box installed in 1917.⁶⁶⁸ This paper was the third designed by Morris and printed by Jeffrey & Co., initially around 1866. The twelve blocks necessary for the printing were cut by Barrett's who were specialists in the field.⁶⁶⁹ Although giving the impression of a strong diagonal bent, the design was actually based upon four

⁶⁶⁶Ibid., pp.470-471: letter to Messrs Henderson & Marryat of 31 December 1884, and p.452: letter to von Treuer of 25 December 1884.

⁶⁶⁷Ibid., p.472: letter to Messrs Henderson & Marryat of 31 December 1884.

⁶⁶⁸These fragments are now in the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (see Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., p.109, Catalogue no.201).

⁶⁶⁹Parry (Ed), op.cit., p.198.

independent rectangular components of four separate fruits bound into a whole by leaves from each insinuated into neighbouring spaces [ILLUSTRATION 203]. *Fruit* is a fine example of Morris's priorities in his designing and clearly shows where he diverged from Owen Jones. Both men advocated a logical discipline compatible with mechanical processes and the study of nature as basic to pattern production. However, where Jones pursued extreme stylisation of natural forms, Morris drew on his observations of growth and colours in plants actually on hand to him. He cautioned against "twisting of natural forms into lines that may pass for ornamental". Such, he believed, would result in "a mere platitude".⁶⁷⁰ *Fruit* succeeded in presenting the "satisfying mystery" considered by Morris to be essential in pattern work. This was achieved by masking the construction "enough to prevent people from counting the repeats".⁶⁷¹ There was certainly never any "mystery" to Jones' stringent repeats.

The colouring of the timberwork in the Barr Smiths' Small Drawing Room was devised to tone with its *Fruit* wallpaper [ILLUSTRATION 204]. It also reflected, to the letter, the recommendations offered in Morris & Co.'s Boston Foreign Fair catalogue with reference to the use of *Honeysuckle* printed linen as a wall covering. If walnut or mahogany were not available, the wood "should be painted a rich, deep green, and varnished".⁶⁷² Of the three colourways available for *Fruit* that used by the Barr Smiths was variation No.72, on a green/grey ground.⁶⁷³ *Fruit* was priced at

⁶⁷⁰Poulson (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.127.

⁶⁷¹*Ibid.*, p.128; see also Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, *op.cit.*, pp.144-145.

⁶⁷²Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, *op.cit.*, p.130.

⁶⁷³Rare Books, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, SEF 745.5 M83: "Designs for Wall Papers - William Morris", Vol.I.

11s 2d per roll in 1902, increasing to 13s 6d around 1911 and to 18s 6d by the 1930s.⁶⁷⁴ These amounts definitely equated with the upper end of the wallpaper market but for hand prints were not above the going rate.⁶⁷⁵ They were, however, outside the price range which the ordinary worker could afford. Good machine printed wallpapers marketed from 3s to 7s 6d per roll and some (perhaps not so good) sold for as little as 1d per roll.⁶⁷⁶ Even a company as highly respected as Jeffrey & Co. produced machine printed papers at 6d per roll,⁶⁷⁷ suggesting that an artistic standard could be expected even at this price. Morris & Co. claimed that their hand blocked wallpapers at 7s 6d per roll so greatly outlasted machine printed specimens costing 5s per roll that in papering an average room the “extra expense” of around 20s was only “slight”.⁶⁷⁸ Such calculations were basically of a class relative to Robert’s assessment of £25-£30 curtaining being not “extravagantly dear”.

The intimacy created in Torrens Park’s Small Drawing Room contrasted with the grandeur produced in the adjoining Large Drawing Room [ILLUSTRATION 205]. Nonetheless these effects, offered with regard to the dimensions and purpose of each room, evolved from the same consideration: an adroit use of pattern, texture and colour. The Large Drawing Room, 48 feet long by 24 feet wide and nearly 18 feet

⁶⁷⁴Ibid.; *Wallpapers*, op.cit.; *A few suggestions for Furnishings*, Morris & Co. Art Workers Ltd. catalogue, pages not numbered (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, General File No.11a).

⁶⁷⁵Hoskins (Ed), op.cit. p.166; Parry (Ed), op.cit., p.203.

⁶⁷⁶Hoskins (Ed), op.cit., pp.166, 170. The machine printed wallpapers marketed by Morris & Co. ranged in price from 2/6 to 2/9 (*Wallpapers*, op.cit., in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library).

⁶⁷⁷Hoskins (Ed), op.cit., p.152.

⁶⁷⁸*A View of the New Morris Showrooms*, op.cit., p.3.

high, was papered with *St. James's*⁶⁷⁹ [ILLUSTRATION 206], designed by Morris in late 1880 specifically for the entrances and banqueting room of St. James's Palace. *St. James's* in size was the grandest of all Morris & Co. papers, although the dominant floral motifs and acanthus leaves were tempered in the design by the underlying small flowers. The usual width of Morris & Co. papers, including *Fruit*, was 22 inches; *St. James's* required two widths (44 inches) to complete the pattern horizontally and the vertical repeat dimension of 47 inches required two blocks to cover each colour. In all the design required sixty-eight blocks to complete the printing. It may well be imagined why physical strength was virtually a prerequisite for a block printer and why years of such occupation could result in poor eyesight.⁶⁸⁰ Needless to say, *St. James's* was the most expensive Morris & Co. paper produced, at 27s 8d per roll in 1902, increasing to 32s 6d per roll c.1911.⁶⁸¹ Around the same time Sydney's F. Lassetter & Co. were advertising a wallpaper stock, "the finest in Australasia", with prices from 3½d to 3s per roll.⁶⁸² Lassetters clearly provided an acceptable range for general Australian consumption, indicating how exclusive Morris & Co. wallpapers could be in terms of availability and price. For the two wallpapers to cover the Small and Large Drawing Rooms Robert paid, while still in London, £81.7.6.⁶⁸³

⁶⁷⁹Fragment recovered in 1980s from behind the large fireplace mirror now in the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (see Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., p.110, Catalogue no.205). See also Christopher Menz, *Morris & Co.*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2002, p.105.

⁶⁸⁰Hoskins (Ed), op.cit., p.138.

⁶⁸¹Rare Books, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, SEF 745.5 M83, op.cit., Vol.1; *Wallpapers*, op.cit.

⁶⁸²Murphy, op.cit., p.21.

⁶⁸³*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.6, p.427: letter to Messrs Morris & Co. dated 11 December 1884; also Mortlock Library of South Australia, Adelaide, PRG354/61 (cheque stubs & bank passbooks of R. Barr Smith): chq stub M^C/_B149517, 11 December 1884

When the Barr Smith family returned to Adelaide in March 1885 they stayed at Auchendarroch for several months as “painters and other trades folk had possession of Torrens Park”.⁶⁸⁴ In April Robert forwarded a cheque to Morris & Co. for £900.⁶⁸⁵ What items this amount covered is uncertain. Assuredly it would have included curtains for the Small and Large Drawing Rooms and some upholstery fabrics, and very likely the three hand-knotted Hammersmith carpets to be seen in the Large Drawing Room.⁶⁸⁶ While it is not known what drapes adorned the Small Drawing Room, in the Large Drawing Room the Barr Smiths used *St. James’s* damask silk [ILLUSTRATION 207]. Designed by Morris in 1881, this fabric was also used to upholster a couch in the Large Drawing Room. *Utrecht Velvet* was another fabric used to upholster at least three armchairs. This mohair plush embossed with a floral pattern was named after original seventeenth-century Dutch fabrics but was neither designed nor made by Morris & Co. Probably produced by the Manchester firm of Heaton & Co., *Utrecht Velvet* was adopted by Morris & Co. in 1871, before Morris took on the task of designing and manufacturing his own printed and woven fabrics, and it continued to be a very popular product available through the

to Morris & Co.

⁶⁸⁴*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.7, p.22: letter to Maurice of 6 May 1885.

⁶⁸⁵*Ibid.*, p.15 (list of cheques granted).

⁶⁸⁶The carpet in the centre of the Large Drawing Room, now in private ownership, is illustrated in Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., p.66. In commenting on this item Christopher Menz clearly highlights the overall decorative prowess of Morris & Co.: “The striking pinks, greens and blues of the carpet harmonised in colour, pattern and texture with the vibrant pink damask silk *St James* curtains and the majestic - predominantly blue - floral *St James* wallpaper”. See also Christopher Menz, ‘From St.James’s Palace to Torrens Park - Morris & Company Interiors in Adelaide’, in *Australian Antique Collector*, 47th edn, January-June 1994, pp.37-41; and Patrick McCaughey, ‘Morris & Co. in Adelaide’, in *Apollo*, March 2003, p.51.

company's London shop. Around 1911 it was listed at 9s per yard.⁶⁸⁷ It was not however exclusive to Morris & Co., Heaton & Co. themselves choosing the fabric in 1914 as part of their decorative scheme for the White Star Line's 'Titanic' [ILLUSTRATION 208]. At the 1880-1881 Melbourne International Exhibition William Walker & Sons exhibited *inter alia* a drawing room suite with couches upholstered in *Utrecht Velvet*, claimed by the press to be "worth £5 per yard".⁶⁸⁸ In Morris & Co.'s exhibition catalogue for the 1883 Boston Foreign Fair George Wardle stipulated that *Utrecht Velvets* were "of too much importance in furnishing to be omitted", particularly where "rich, quiet colour, with but faint pattern" were required.⁶⁸⁹ Morris & Co.'s continued use of *Utrecht Velvet* is indicative of a firm trading not to tout the sale of its own products only but to educate customers by offering complementary materials of even quality.

The other prominent upholstery fabric in the Barr Smiths' Large Drawing Room is the silk and linen textile *Golden Bough* [ILLUSTRATION 209], produced in 1888. The dating of this fabric shows that the redecorating of Torrens Park was not an en masse affair but was pursued over a number of years. *Golden Bough* was priced in 1907 at 25s and claimed by the firm to have been "designed by the late Mr. William Morris".⁶⁹⁰ Such an assertion however was not necessarily accurate and *Golden Bough* may well have been designed by Henry Dearle. Following Morris's death

⁶⁸⁷*Silk and Wool Tapestry Brocades*, op.cit.

⁶⁸⁸*Album of Newspaper Cuttings collected by John Plummer, 1879-1903*, op.cit.: *Sydney Morning Herald*, Wednesday 31 October 1880: "Melbourne International Exhibition".

⁶⁸⁹Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, op.cit., p.128.

⁶⁹⁰*Interior Decoration, Furniture, Panelling, Etc.*, op.cit., p.iv. The cost of *Golden Bough* rose around 1910 to 27s 6d (*Church decoration...Embroideries, etc.*, op.cit., p.50; *Silk and Wool Tapestry Brocades*, op.cit.).

Morris & Co. management carefully omitted to acknowledge Dearle's contributions to the company's range of designs, hoping to gain economic mileage by trading on the name of the firm's founder. It would seem that Dearle's reticence added support to this stance.⁶⁹¹ For Linda Parry designer attribution for *Golden Bough* presents a problem because "It is as difficult to believe that Morris would have produced [this] weak [design] as it is to believe Dearle was capable of such sophisticated repeating structures so early in his design career".⁶⁹² What Parry's consideration of *Golden Bough* does is show the extent to which Dearle was schooled in the ethos of Morris & Co. George Wardle noted in 1897 that in employing Dearle in 1878 Morris was "influenced by the evident intelligence & brightness of the boy".⁶⁹³ These characteristics were obviously put to good use after Dearle moved from shop assistant to the glass painting room where, according to Lewis F. Day in his 1905 article 'A disciple of William Morris', Dearle "presently earned in the morning half of the day ... enough to leave him free for the rest of it to study drawing, painting and design".⁶⁹⁴ That Dearle was brought up on an understanding and love of the natural world is indicated by his retaining throughout his life an edition of Oliver Goldsmith's *Pictorial History of the Earth and Animated Nature* which had clearly belonged to his father.⁶⁹⁵ The 'company style', upon which Morris & Co. prospered,

⁶⁹¹It was not until 1926, at the age of 66 and after 48 years with the firm, that Dearle finally confronted Managing Director Henry Currie Marillier and gained some recognition for his tapestry designing when Marillier published his *History of the Merton Abbey Tapestry Works* in 1927 (see Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., p.92).

⁶⁹²Parry, op.cit., p.68.

⁶⁹³Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, op.cit., p.101.

⁶⁹⁴*The Art Journal*, March 1905, op.cit., p.89.

⁶⁹⁵Now in Rare Books, The Huntington Library, and signed inside by Dearle Snr with the date of 11 May 1850.

was set on a firm footing by Morris in his own time, with promising continuation under Dearle.

In their initial flurry of decorative zeal in 1884 the Barr Smiths did not restrict their patronage to Morris & Co. As with their 1873-1875 overseas trip they bought from numerous sources a variety of household items including porcelain, linen, books, paintings and some eighty-four cases of champagne.⁶⁹⁶ From Hampton & Sons they purchased a variety of wallpapers for various unspecified bedrooms at Torrens Park. These would certainly have included the eight rooms of the servants' upper quarters, probably the nursery and possibly some of the six bedrooms reserved for younger family members and guests. Robert undoubtedly believed that his purse need not stretch to Morris & Co. manufactures for these rooms. Yet Joanna could have availed herself of those "cheap" trade papers offered by Morris & Co. specifically for such circumstances and the "convenience" of customers. That she did not does not necessarily mean that she disapproved of Morris & Co.'s selections but simply that she enjoyed her shopping freedom. The trade papers from Hampton & Sons were chosen by Joanna who carefully instructed the family steward Bruister as to which patterns were intended for what rooms.⁶⁹⁷ For the more private (and socially insignificant) parts of the house it would seem that

⁶⁹⁶*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.6, pp.223, 336, 468: copy dated 14 September 1884 of invoice for goods sent by *Kingdom of Sweden*, notice to von Treuer of 25 September 1884 and letter to von Treuer of 31 December 1884; also Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide, PRG354/61, op.cit., chq stub 149522 of 13 December 1884.

⁶⁹⁷Robert also advised his private secretary of the same, with a warning regarding Bruister: "... as he is stupid, it may be well that you remind him and tell him he has a letter of instructions some time ago" (*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.6, p.428: letter to von Treuer of 12 December 1884).

Joanna made the aesthetic choices although Robert was still fully informed. Thus there was a distinction in presentation between formal and informal rooms, the former being professionally undertaken, the latter satisfied by amateur leanings. Just three weeks after dispatching the Hampton & Sons wallpapers aboard the P & O Mail Steamer *Indus*, Robert forwarded on the *Barunga* ten cases of cane chairs valued at £119.17.6, one case of drapery at £176.9.7 and a case of brass goods at £33.13.0.⁶⁹⁸ The chairs were definitely purchased from Hampton & Sons, suggesting that the other items also came from this store. Robert undoubtedly encouraged Joanna in her retail activities in an attempt to occupy her time and thus lessen her inevitable interruptions to his working hours. The faith he placed in his way of dealing with his wife's generally agitated state is indicated by the fact that on this one buying spree in 1884 Joanna comfortably disposed of the equivalent to an ordinary worker's wages for around ten years. The advantages to Robert were that the solution was not limited to a buying programme but would carry on for many years in the experience of living amidst a vitalised environment.

The cane chairs bought from Hampton & Sons were undoubtedly those which graced the Barr Smiths' theatre [ILLUSTRATION 210] although in the past they have been incorrectly attributed to Morris & Co.⁶⁹⁹ If Robert had purchased

⁶⁹⁸Ibid., p.468: letter to vonTreuer of 31 December 1884.

⁶⁹⁹Ken Preiss & Pamela Oborn, *The Torrens Park Estate*, The Authors, Stonyfell, 1991, pp.100, 272; Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., p.107. At the exhibition "Morris & Co.", Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 21 November 2002-26 March 2003, it was noted on the labelling for Morris & Co. Sussex chairs on show that the "theatre at Torrens Park, Adelaide was originally furnished with a different version of the Sussex chair...". However no such reference was made in the publication accompanying the exhibition (that is, Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit.).

equivalent armchairs in Morris & Co.'s *Sussex* range (priced at 9s 9d each), he would have more than halved his costs if, as has been suggested, the theatre was set with 120 chairs.⁷⁰⁰ One might assume in this case that Morris & Co. were not able to instantly fill such a large order because of manufacturing limitations. This presents a clear example of two particulars concerning the workings of Morris & Co.: the restricted nature of many of its manufactures and its pricing policy based not on excessive profits but on honest acknowledgement of quality in materials and labour. The condition of the Hampton & Sons chairs when unpacked gives some indication of the problems which could attend the transporting of furniture such long distances. The rush work in some cases was almost rotten and in all cases was mildewed "in an extraordinary degree" while the colouring of the woodwork was "entirely lost".⁷⁰¹ Having previously imported rush furniture in good condition from Howards, Robert concluded that Hampton & Sons had shipped faulty goods unfit for the voyage, the rush work and staining being too "green" to withstand the heat of a ship's hold. In their eagerness to fulfil the Barr Smiths' needs, it is probable that Hampton & Sons had not allowed the correct seasoning time for their chair materials. Morris & Co.'s quality control would not have tolerated such a situation and the company certainly would not have lowered its standards in order to fulfil customer requirements. If the Barr Smiths had wished particularly to have Morris & Co. chairs they would have had to wait for the quantity required to be manufactured under the company's usual rules. Robert's acceptance of the higher

⁷⁰⁰Preiss & Oborn, *op.cit.*, p.272.

⁷⁰¹*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, *op.cit.*, Vol.7, pp.12-13: letter of 17 April 1885 to Edward Stavenhagen.

prices for the Hampton & Sons chairs suggests some buying urgency on the part of his wife.

The second round of Morris & Co. decoration for the Barr Smiths, involving the beginning of extensive redecoration at Auchendarroch and the Dining and Yellow Drawing Rooms at Torrens Park, would seem to have coincided with the family's next overseas trip between 1888 and 1891. While the Torrens Park Dining Room [ILLUSTRATION 211] displayed a simplicity of treatment which bound it to the previous work carried out in the Small and Large Drawing Rooms, all other work exhibited a considerable profusion of superimposed patterns. Such may have resulted from a greater input into selections by Joanna but most likely it evolved from advice being proffered by Henry Dearle who was supervising at the same time the interior decoration of William Knox D'Arcy's Stanmore Hall, Middlesex, the most extensive decorative scheme undertaken by Morris & Co. If this were the case, Morris himself was very likely responsible for recommendations regarding the 1884-1885 decorations at Torrens Park.

The Torrens Park Dining Room was repapered with *Acanthus* [ILLUSTRATION 212], designed by Morris in 1875, its bold swirling pattern in this instance used without any competition or supplementation with upholstery fabrics. Because of its size thirty blocks were needed to print *Acanthus*, resulting in an expensive paper at 16s per roll.⁷⁰² *Acanthus* was also used by Dearle for the Dining Room at Stanmore Hall before the completion of the specially designed *Holy Grail* tapestries for the

⁷⁰²Parry, *op.cit.*, p.213.

room.⁷⁰³ This reinforces the notion that Dearle was now responsible for advising the Barr Smiths. To set off the new wallpaper in the Torrens Park Dining Room the Barr Smiths added new solid leather upholstered “art furniture” manufactured locally by S. Mayfield & Sons and three Morris & Co. hand-knotted Hammersmith carpets. The support for Mayfield’s indicates the acceptable position Australian furniture manufacture now held against imported items, compared to other decorative wares. The large rectangular carpet under the table [ILLUSTRATION 213], its dominant indigo ground appropriate to a sober colour scheme for a dining room, is typical of Dearle’s designing after 1890 for many of the company’s hand-knotted carpets, differing little from his treatment for those destined to be machine-made. The personal expenses borne by Robert with the Morris & Co. redecorations at Torrens Park would seem to have elicited from him somewhat more respect for home furnishings than had been the case when the family occupied Birksgate in 1869. In May 1894 Joanna notified Robert, who was travelling in Queensland, that she had taught her dog Schatz

to eat his meals behind the pantry door as I knew it wd just break your heart or produce a rupture between us if I ever were to be caught feeding him on the dining room Morris carpet! You see how considerate I am of your feelings! ...⁷⁰⁴

In keeping with Robert’s previous attempts to console Joanna he may well have proposed that Joanna more strongly impress her personal predilections on the new

⁷⁰³Ibid., p.294.

⁷⁰⁴Gosse (Ed), op.cit., p.177.

arrangements for Torrens Park's Yellow Drawing Room [ILLUSTRATION 214] as this room was that in which the women of the family spent much of their time. The wallpaper used was *Lily and Pomegranate*, designed by Morris in 1886 [ILLUSTRATION 215] and priced at 12s 6d a roll around 1911.⁷⁰⁵ Again, because of its rhythmic interplay of features, *Lily and Pomegranate* does not allow the viewer to immediately trace its repeat. Drapes separating the bay window from the rest of the room were of the 1879-designed *Dove and Rose* woven silk and wool double cloth [ILLUSTRATION 216], with muslin curtains covering the stained glass windows of the bay itself. By the time of the Barr Smiths' purchase *Dove and Rose* was being produced at Morris & Co.'s own Merton Abbey Works for 15s 9d per yard for a 36" width.⁷⁰⁶ In design *Dove and Rose* held all the "special qualities" which Morris insisted figured woven stuffs needed: "breadth and boldness, ingenuity and closeness of invention, clear definite detail joined to intricacy of parts, and, finally, a distinct appeal to imagination by skilful suggestion of delightful pieces of nature".⁷⁰⁷ In the Yellow Drawing Room *Utrecht Velvet* was again used for upholstery. In keeping with Morris's edict that a room should have only one wallpaper pattern,⁷⁰⁸ in all the Morris & Co. decorated rooms at Torrens Park the paper was hung from cornice to skirting-board without dado or frieze and the Barr Smiths would continue this tradition at Auchendarroch.

From October 1889 Robert began corresponding from England with Charles Marryat, of the Adelaide architectural firm of Henderson & Marryat, concerning

⁷⁰⁵*Wallpapers*, op.cit.

⁷⁰⁶*Church decoration and furniture...Embroideries, etc.*, op.cit., p.46.

⁷⁰⁷Wilmer (Ed), op.cit., p.273.

⁷⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p.270.

alterations and additions to Auchendarroch. No mention is made of an input from Neville Ashbee. In October 1883 Ashbee moved from being in charge of the Architects' Department of E. Wilson & Co. to being Head of the Architects' Department for the Great Eastern Railway Co. This more high-powered job may have meant he had no spare time to advise Robert or was not allowed by the firm to undertake outside work. There is no indication that Robert was not completely satisfied with Ashbee's advice during the extensions and redecoration at Torrens Park in 1883-1885, rather he may have now realised that previous transference of instructions from Britain to Adelaide had been cumbersome and also that Henderson & Marryat were highly competent, unlike their predecessor John Grainger. To Marryat Robert wrote:

... All these are crude suggestions - I shd look to you alone for the architectural effect. I drew a plan for Mr Grainger who just accepted my arrangements with disastrous results as to the architecture, as you know. ⁷⁰⁹

At this stage the alterations to Auchendarroch involved a new dining room and pantry on the ground floor with a large bedroom suite above, a new billiard room and a modification to the tower which Robert found "ugly"⁷¹⁰ [ILLUSTRATION 217]. Presumably only the modified rooms were to be redecorated at this time. Robert asked Marryat to select papers and paint yet warned him not to undertake any painting or papering if children were about because of the "injurious" nature of paint "smells".⁷¹¹ Initially it would seem that the Barr Smiths intended to use

⁷⁰⁹*Letterbooks of Robert Barr Smith*, op.cit., Vol.9, p.501: letter of 1 October 1889.

⁷¹⁰*Ibid.*, p.500, and Vol.11, p.232: letter of 12 March 1890.

⁷¹¹*Ibid.*, Vol.10, p.499: letter of 21 January 1890. The Barr Smiths' daughter Joe Hawker and

Morris & Co. only for the redecorations at Torrens Park and not at all for Auchendarroch. The most likely reason was caution on Robert's part regarding costs. Certainly Morris's now heavy involvement in the Socialist cause would not have concerned him. In 1891 Robert related to his London manager of his attending a meeting of "Socialists" in Adelaide and of being approached to join. As a fine example of a capitalist businessman one might expect Robert to have dismissed the thought outright. Not so. Throughout his life Robert displayed tact, understanding and compassion in his dealings with others. He simply admitted that he "was not yet convinced and so not yet prepared to join".⁷¹²

Only a week after notifying Marryat to choose Auchendarroch's wallpapers in Adelaide Robert wrote from St.Leonards-on-Sea that "It will not be necessary to select paper for the house. We will select here".⁷¹³ Robert's change of heart undoubtedly resulted from consultation with Joanna. If it were her wish to have Morris & Co. manufactures for Auchendarroch Robert would have complied, regardless of the economic climate of the time. It was another seven weeks before Marryat received the firm directive that "The papers we shall select and send out in May so that you may have your scheme of colour before you begin to paint".⁷¹⁴ It is

her two children had gone to stay at Auchendarroch following the sudden death of Joe's husband George in February 1889 (Ibid., Vol.9, p.60: letter to Tom Elder dated 19 February 1889).

⁷¹²Ibid., Vol.8, p.288: letter to Stavenhagen dated 15 September 1891. When the Eastern Question reared its head in 1878 Robert and Morris supported the same position: "The "Register" has been very good...on the Eastern Question, ... Do not willingly assume that Russian designs must be treacherous. England has shown infinitely more trickery & bad faith than Russia. ..." (Ibid., Vol.5, p.70: letter to W. Finlayson of 5 December 1878).

⁷¹³Ibid., Vol.11, p.23: letter of 28 January 1890.

⁷¹⁴Ibid., p.363: letter of 6 April 1890.

thus obvious that Morris & Co.'s advice on painting was not being sought for Auchendarroch and also that Robert had complete faith in the ability of Marryat to provide complementary decorative arrangements for Morris & Co.'s products. There is no doubt that Joanna had more of a say in the Auchendarroch alterations than she would appear to have had at Torrens Park. One of Robert's letters to Marryat begins "My wife has changed her mind" and goes on to explain which plan by Marryat Joanna preferred.⁷¹⁵ Auchendarroch differed from Torrens Park in that it was assuredly a summer retreat for the family, one which Robert constantly saw as a panacea for Joanna's doldrums [ILLUSTRATION 218]. It was not required for the formal entertaining which was carried out at Torrens Park and thus Robert may well have given Joanna freer rein to decorate as she so desired. It might also be possible that Joanna was now dealing with Dearle at Morris & Co.⁷¹⁶ and found him a less daunting character than Morris.

Several of the wallpapers and curtains used at Auchendarroch post-date by design the May 1890 dispatch of wallpapers indicated by Robert. Those papers likely to have been among the May 1890 consignment were the unknown design selected for the Dining Room, Dearle's *Double Bough* designed in 1890 and used in Joanna's bedroom, and May Morris's *Horn Poppy* of 1885 which graced the Billiard Room [ILLUSTRATION 219]. This last paper, in nine colourways and costing between 5-6s a roll, appears in a Morris & Co. wallpaper swatch book which belonged to Robert.⁷¹⁷

⁷¹⁵Ibid., p.21: letter of 28 January 1890.

⁷¹⁶See Parry, op.cit., p.134.

⁷¹⁷Morris & Co. Wallpaper Swatch Book, numbered B33 (Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide). See Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., pp.100-101, 144.

Signed by Robert inside the cover, this book may give a direction to how further Morris & Co. furnishings arrived at Auchendarroch.

Auchendarroch's Drawing and Sitting Rooms were probably redecorated at the same time. The Drawing Room was papered with Morris's *Spring Thicket* [ILLUSTRATION 220] designed in 1894. The Barr Smiths' two unmarried daughters, Mabel and Erlistoun, changed that status in April 1896 and January 1898 respectively. It would seem unlikely that the major redecoration to the 'female' rooms at Auchendarroch would have taken place after the marriages, and most probably would have occurred prior to Mabel's. Thus considering the dating of the *Spring Thicket* wallpaper, the Drawing and Sitting Rooms were probably redecorated in 1895. As the Barr Smiths made no overseas trip around 1895, these rooms became the first to be redecorated while the family were actually in Adelaide. This undoubtedly would have been undertaken during the winter months when the family were in residence at Torrens Park. The work on these rooms also marks the first time that the Barr Smiths were not in a position to select items overseas. The surviving wallpaper swatch book is unlikely to have been the only one forwarded by Morris & Co. Others would undoubtedly have been advanced for perusal and either returned to Morris & Co. or simply lost. This does not necessarily mean, however, that redecoration of the Drawing and Sitting Rooms at Auchendarroch relied solely on Joanna's selections from sample books. In fact, Morris & Co. did not produce pattern books for their silk and woollen fabrics but were willing to send full-sized samples of interest to clients.⁷¹⁸ In view of a continuing proficiency in the

⁷¹⁸See inside cover of *Silk and Wool Tapestry Brocades*, op.cit.

coordination of colours, patterns and textures it is most likely that Dearle again recommended schemes of decoration and then forwarded to the Barr Smiths wallpaper swatch books and fabric samples to ensure that they were completely familiar with suggested items.

The Sitting Room [ILLUSTRATION 221] was papered with Morris's *Wild Tulip* designed in 1884, however curtains were of the firm's much more recent *Rose and Lily* woven silk and wool fabric [ILLUSTRATION 222], designed in 1893 by Dearle who simplified and adapted an Italian 17th century brocaded silk.⁷¹⁹ To these was added upholstery in the 1884-designed *Cray* [ILLUSTRATION 223], the most complex and consequently most expensive of Morris's printed fabrics. The considerable difference in the costs of woven and printed fabrics is highlighted by these two selections. *Rose and Lily* was priced at 18s per yard for a 27" width, *Cray* at 5s 3d for a 36" width.⁷²⁰ For Morris monetary costs corresponded to the "time, trouble, and thought" which art necessitated.⁷²¹ Morris & Co. prices reflected this, on the reasonable side of commercial practices. When Morris stated that "You can no more have art without paying for it than you can have anything else" he was not referring to pricing policies based on profit but on the sacrifices needed for art to exist, namely forgoing the power and pollution which attended manufacturing.⁷²²

⁷¹⁹Parry, *op.cit.*, p.71.

⁷²⁰*Church decoration and furniture...Embroideries, etc.*, *op.cit.*, p.42; *Printed Linens and Cottons*, Morris & Co. catalogue, c.1911, pages not numbered (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, General File No.11).

⁷²¹Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, *op.cit.*, p.106.

⁷²²Morris, *Art and the Beauty of the Earth*, *op.cit.*, p.27.

In Auchendarroch's Sitting Room Hammersmith carpets again were used. That in the foreground of Illustration 221 [ILLUSTRATION 224] adheres to the firm's early horizontal *millefleurs* patterns which were designed to be read from one side. The adjoining carpet [ILLUSTRATION 225] displays the symmetrical patterning around a central medallion developed by Morris in the early 1880s to be understood from all sides. In colour coordination, texture and pattern harmonies within Auchendarroch's Sitting Room there is delicacy yet brilliance, producing a bright and vital atmosphere in keeping with the room's projected use.

The Drawing Room at Auchendarroch [ILLUSTRATIONS 226-227] has miraculously survived with its original *Spring Thicket* wallpaper intact⁷²³ [ILLUSTRATIONS 228-229], thus providing a rare Australian instance where the impact of Morris & Co.'s wall treatment can be truly gauged.⁷²⁴ Morris saw walls as providing for "the widest use of pattern-designing",⁷²⁵ yet he restricted such to ornament "that reminds us of the outward face of the earth, of the innocent love of animals, or of man passing his days between work and rest as he does".⁷²⁶ It was

⁷²³Auctioned after Joanna's death in 1919, Auchendarroch was used as a convalescent hospital/rest home until World War II when it became a Rest and Recreation Centre for Air Force officers. After the war the property reverted back to the Methodist Memorial Hospital as a convalescent home. In need of major maintenance and repairs, in 1975 the house was bought and run privately as a co-operative. Although divided into self-contained flats, the two major reception rooms - the Drawing and Dining Rooms - were used communally. The heritage-listed original building is now the subject of on-going restoration as the function centre for the new Wallis Tavern adjoining. The *Spring Thicket* wallpaper has been sensitively restored.

⁷²⁴Many of the rooms in Wairoa at Aldgate in the Adelaide Hills still retain their original Morris & Co. wallpapers or fragments thereof however the present condition of these is not good.

⁷²⁵Wilmer (Ed), op.cit., p.257.

⁷²⁶Ibid., p.259.

very much this insistence on being “reminded”⁷²⁷ which separated Morris’s patterns from mechanical repetitions and three-dimensional realism. Since the company did not produce or support the use of wallpaper dados and friezes, at Auchendarroch *Spring Thicket* was hung from the skirting board to the plaster frieze which related to the ceiling. As with the *St. James’s* wallpaper the dominant feature of *Spring Thicket* was bold in scale but tempered by ancillary motifs and the colourway selected for the Barr Smiths was delicate yet bright as befitted its use in a drawing room. After more than one hundred years the colours have retained their brilliancy to highlight the exact registration of the design and truly indicate the quality of production. The curtains originally chosen to complement the paper were of *Oak* woven silk damask, designed by Morris in 1881 [ILLUSTRATION 230]. *Oak* was priced at 40s per yard but did come in 63” widths. The furniture was upholstered in *Persian Brocatel*, a woven silk fabric designed by Dearle c.1890 [ILLUSTRATION 231]. This fabric was not very practical for upholstery. The armchair on which Joanna is seated in Illustration 226 had a loose cover in Dearle’s sturdier *Trent* printed linen which allowed for everyday use without substantial damage being done to the delicate but more favoured silk.⁷²⁸ *Persian Brocatel* retailed at 52s per yard for a 54” width.⁷²⁹

Hammersmith carpets also graced the Drawing Room floor. The almost square piece in the bay window area [ILLUSTRATION 233] as well as the large rectangular

⁷²⁷Ibid., p.260.

⁷²⁸This *Trent* slip-cover belongs to the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, and was shown in its 2002-2003 “Morris & Co.” exhibition but is not mentioned in Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit.

⁷²⁹*Church decoration and furniture...Embroideries, etc.*, op.cit., p.41.

examples used in the main expanse of the room [ILLUSTRATION 232] graphically display all Morris's tenets for carpet designing. In order to ensure "no more at least than the merest hint of one plane behind another", Morris believed it was necessary "to surround all or most of your figure by a line of another tint".⁷³⁰ The light surface patterning on a dark ground followed Morris's observations of "the...method...of the West", favoured by "those who are chiefly thinking of form"; the outlining was "the...method...of...the Gothic East" and indicative of "minds...most set on colour".⁷³¹ Thus in Morris & Co.'s carpet manufactures both form and colour were cleverly considered and amalgamated to fashion the essence of Eastern and Western historical precedents without resorting to slavish mimicry. Hammersmith carpets were produced using the Turkish knot which Morris accepted as being more forgiving of varying weaver capabilities than Persian knotting would have been. He therefore designed accordingly.⁷³² Under the Turkish system Dearle's delicate pattern making often suffered in translation. As no records were kept by Morris & Co. for their Hammersmith carpet production, only a few designs and their quantity of manufacture are known, usually because they were named after the houses for which they were made or after the original clients.⁷³³ It has been suggested that most of the Barr Smiths' Hammersmith purchases were "designed especially" for them⁷³⁴ because of no other known examples to the same designs.

⁷³⁰Wilmer (Ed), op.cit., pp.274-275.

⁷³¹Ibid., pp.267-268.

⁷³²Parry, op.cit., p.89.

⁷³³The Barr Smiths' last residence at 40 Angas Street, Adelaide, displayed a *Holland Park* carpet in the hall (Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., pp.64, 166). This carpet was originally designed by Morris in 1883 for Alexander Ionides' home at 1 Holland Park, London. The *McCulloch* carpet was designed by Dearle c.1900-1902 for the London residence of expatriate Australian George McCulloch.

⁷³⁴Sotheby's, *Fine Furniture and Decorative Arts*, auction catalogue, Melbourne, 24 May

While Joanna and Robert Barr Smith continued intermittently to stay at Torrens Park until around 1906, they had in 1903 moved into a smaller single-storey town house built for them in Adelaide on land purchased in 1898 [ILLUSTRATION 234]. Summer months were spent at Auchendarroch from which the pair would pack up “to go down to the little town box for the winter”.⁷³⁵ This sixteen room “cottage”⁷³⁶ in Angas Street was also decorated with Morris & Co. products. Many items such as carpets and furniture would have been transferred to the new house from Torrens Park which was occupied only by a caretaker staff, however designs not used in Torrens Park or Auchendarroch did appear. The Angas Street Dining Room was papered with *Acanthus*⁷³⁷ as had been the same room at Torrens Park, but the Drawing Room in the new house was papered with *Myrtle* [ILLUSTRATION 235]. This wallpaper, based on a design by Morris of c.1875 for needlework, was issued by Morris & Co. in 1899 and may have been seen by Joanna on her last trip to England. Morris himself never favoured transference of designs between media. He believed each medium imposed its own limitations and that all designers must have “full sympathy” with and “love” of the craft for which they were designing or they could “never do honour to the special material”.⁷³⁸ After Morris’s death the company only occasionally transgressed. In the case of *Myrtle* it might be argued that both media were to be viewed flat so designing parameters would have been somewhat compatible. As with their other homes the Barr Smiths again did not deal

1993, pp.32-39.

⁷³⁵Preiss & Oborn, *op.cit.*, p.163: from a letter of Joanna to Lady Tennyson dated 7 April 1911.

⁷³⁶Gosse (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.236: letter of Joanna to Lady Tennyson dated 4 October 1904.

⁷³⁷See Menz, *Morris & Co.*, *op.cit.*, p.103.

⁷³⁸Wilmer (Ed), *op.cit.*, pp.262, 277-278.

exclusively with Morris & Co. In the Angas Street Writing Room [ILLUSTRATION 236] the upholstery was the 1884 Morris-designed printed cotton *Lodden* [ILLUSTRATION 237], on the floor a Hammersmith carpet. The wallpaper was not by Morris & Co. but nonetheless Morris influenced with its bold, clear flat pattern taking it beyond neat and small conservatism. The carpet in this room appears definitely to be the “Small Barr” [ILLUSTRATION 238] and its identification reinforces the assertion that the company “designed especially” for the Adelaide family. The “Small Barr” did not remain exclusive to the Barr Smiths. It appeared at least once more, in the ‘Honeysuckle Bedroom’ at Wightwick Manor.⁷³⁹ Sketch designs such as that existing for the “Small Barr” enabled clients to clearly visualise their purchases prior to manufacture, at the same time allowing for any minor changes felt to be necessary in design or colour. Some surviving designs do carry comments such as “softer” or “lighter”.⁷⁴⁰ One such sketch design by Dearle in the Huntington Library’s Morris Collection carries notes to indicate that colours should follow those used in the *McCulloch* Hammersmith carpet designed specially for George McCulloch around 1900. The sketches would seem to have been used by the company as visual aids for ordering, much like wallpaper swatch books. Because of the traditional nature of Morris & Co. carpets, always presenting field and border, the sketches allowed customers to select elements from different designs. It would seem that this was the avenue most often followed by the Barr Smiths.⁷⁴¹ It is in this context that many of their carpets may be seen as being “designed especially”, although the actual patterns for field and border may already have been utilised

⁷³⁹See Susan Day, et al, *Great Carpets of the world*, The Vendome Press, New York, 1996, p.300.

⁷⁴⁰Iain Zaczek, *William Morris*, Parragon, Bath, 2001, p.108.

⁷⁴¹Parry, op.cit., p.97.

individually elsewhere.⁷⁴² With the commission of the “Small Barr”, however, the family were somewhat more daring than most clients. The simplicity of the “Small Barr” suggests that it was by Morris and it was certainly acknowledged as such by Aymer Vallance in 1897.⁷⁴³ It thus was most probably part of the 1884 redecorations at Torrens Park. Between 1900 and 1910 the senior Barr Smiths spent some £885 with Morris & Co. This figure would have included the 1909 tapestry *Tree* portiere designed by Dearle.⁷⁴⁴ Support of James Powell & Sons in these years amounted to some £1576.⁷⁴⁵ This latter figure would have covered much of the company’s table glass which Joanna favoured but also undoubtedly included some of the Powell & Sons’ stained glass windows donated by the senior Barr Smiths to St.Andrew’s, Walkerville, St.Peter’s Cathedral, Adelaide, and St.Michael’s, Mitcham.⁷⁴⁶

The tradition set by Robert and Joanna Barr Smith of using Morris & Co. for home furnishings and James Powell & Sons for glassware continued with their children, particularly with son Tom and his wife Mary Isobel (Molly), but it was not taken on with the same verve by other families in Australia. Those who did partake in some degree are considered in Chapter 10. Between 1900 and 1910 Tom and Molly purchased £123 worth of Morris & Co. products and some £60 worth of glassware from James Powell & Sons.⁷⁴⁷ Tom and Molly rented houses until 1897 when Tom

⁷⁴²The border for the central carpet in the Large Drawing Room at Torrens Park was that designed for the *Holland Park* (Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., p.66).

⁷⁴³Vallance, op.cit., between pp.96-97.

⁷⁴⁴H.C. Marillier, *History of the Merton Abbey Tapestry Works*, Constable, London, 1927, p.35. See also Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., pp.156, 157.

⁷⁴⁵*Elder Smith & Co. London Office. General Ledgers, 1888-1916.* The Noel Butlin Archives Centre, Australian National University, Canberra, Nos.89/2/1-9.

⁷⁴⁶These windows are discussed in Chapter 9.

⁷⁴⁷*Elder Smith & Co. London Office. General Ledgers, 1888-1916*, op.cit.

inherited Birksgate on the death of his uncle Tom Elder. They had also acquired in 1896 the summer residence of Waiora in the Adelaide Hills through the generosity of Robert. The approach taken by the younger generation in decorating with Morris & Co. products is certainly less clear than that applying to Robert and Joanna. The only example by which this might be gauged is a c.1910 view of the Drawing Room at Birksgate [ILLUSTRATION 239] showing walls papered with Dearle's *Double Bough* of 1890, furniture with loose covers of *Tulip* printed cotton designed by Morris in 1875 [ILLUSTRATION 240], a Hammersmith carpet on the floor and numerous embroidered items in the form of screens and cushions. The arrangement does not seem to indicate Dearle's hand and the Barr Smith children probably personally selected Morris & Co. products either seen in their parents' homes or in the company sample books. By the time of Robert's death in 1915 the furnishings from Torrens Park had already been dispersed among the family in Adelaide. Those from Angas Street and Auchendarroch were similarly distributed following Joanna's death in 1919. Many of these furnishings found their way either to Birksgate or Waiora.⁷⁴⁸

The appearance at Birksgate of numerous items embroidered to Morris & Co. designs hints only at the magnitude of this activity for Morris & Co. and the Barr Smith family.⁷⁴⁹ Despite its generally perceived craft image for feminine diversion, Morris & Co. embroidery in many ways presents a practical microcosmic example

⁷⁴⁸See Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., pp.93, 103, 105. For some of the designs used at Birksgate and Waiora see Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., pp.44, 45, 53, 54, 56-57, 58, 62, 65, 108-109, 111, 112, 114.

⁷⁴⁹Some Morris & Co. embroideries were worked by other Adelaide women (see Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., pp.51, 93, 96).

upon which to explain Morris's concept of art. This involved several ideals which were nonetheless mutually inclusive. In something of an understatement Morris admitted that "by art I mean something wider than is usually meant by the word".⁷⁵⁰ The essence of all art he believed was "the human pleasure of life".⁷⁵¹ For such to exist art needed to be "popular", "of the people"; if it were not it would be "an idle and worthless toy".⁷⁵² Embroidery was surely one of the most popular pastimes of the later nineteenth century. It defied exclusiveness by its acceptability across all class divisions and its beauty was enriched by its being created for use rather than profit.⁷⁵³ For Morris and the company it was also a cooperative endeavour which could successfully accommodate the varying capabilities of all those involved. It was clearly "art".

Morris worked his own first embroidery in 1857 before going on to design hangings for the Red House which were embroidered by his wife, sister-in-law and friends. He had a decidedly strong practical knowledge of embroidery techniques.⁷⁵⁴ From the start of the firm in 1861 Morris also began the natural dyeing of embroidery yarns because of the unsatisfactory nature of commercially available aniline-dyed products and these provided the distinctive basis of the company's embroideries. From 1885 when Morris's younger daughter May assumed management of the embroidery section of Morris & Co. all new designs came from May herself or Dearle. Panels for firescreens or cushions, such as appear in the

⁷⁵⁰LeMire (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.94.

⁷⁵¹Ibid., pp.95, 113; Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, *op.cit.*, p.64.

⁷⁵²LeMire (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.93.

⁷⁵³Ibid., pp.101, 106.

⁷⁵⁴Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.I, 1984, pp.407-408, 470.

Birksgate Drawing Room, and other small items such as tablecloths were the chief money-spinners for this section of the business because of their affordability to a wide cross-section of prospective customers. Designs were offered in three different stages to suit both expertise and pocket. Proficient embroiderers could buy background fabrics either with designs marked out only or with a small area embroidered by company workers to indicate the laying of stitches and colouring. Pieces were also available fully embroidered. A finished cushion cover could cost 17s compared to as little as 4s for an unworked design with thread provided. Larger pieces such as portieres varied in price from £9 for a kit to £95 for an item completed by the firm. The Barr Smith family's favouring generally of embroidery kits over finished products was not decided on a cost factor. Molly Barr Smith and Robert and Joanna's daughter Erlistoun Mitchell were very fine embroiderers who worked not only small Morris & Co. items but also the larger portieres [ILLUSTRATIONS 241-242]. Molly Barr Smith's working for a three-fold screen of Dearle's *Pomegranate, Vine and Apple tree*⁷⁵⁵ is perhaps the most accomplished example in this line in Australia, her fine skills doing justice to Dearle's designing and the glorious colours produced in Morris & Co. silks. With their combined purchases the family were one of the most prolific customers for both Morris & Co.'s embroidery kits and finished items. Recognition of this fact may well account for two designs particularly named for these clients - the *Adelaide* panel [ILLUSTRATION 243] and the *Australia* table cover [see ILLUSTRATION 231]. The former was undoubtedly considered likely for general success since it appeared in Morris & Co.'s catalogue for *Embroidery Work*.⁷⁵⁶ Neither of these works displays any specific Australian

⁷⁵⁵See Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., pp.71, 151.

⁷⁵⁶Copy in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library. Around 1900 Erlistoun Mitchell

characteristics as would certainly have been expected of Art Needlework pieces designed particularly for this country.⁷⁵⁷ Then Morris never did support “the trumpet of patriotism” which he believed fuelled commercial competition and the careless productions on which the world market fed.⁷⁵⁸

Skill in embroidery techniques was not confined solely to those of such means as allowed free time for the pursuit as recreation, as with the Barr Smith women. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century embroidery skills provided legitimate employment prospects for many women not only in Britain but also in Australia.⁷⁵⁹ Acceptance of embroidery as an art form was celebrated in the formation of numerous societies, the forerunner of which was the Royal School of Art Needlework, founded at South Kensington in 1872. The School realised the value of international exhibitions to boost the commercial side of the enterprise and in 1876 mounted a highly influential stand at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition. Morris and Burne-Jones supplied a number of designs for the School in the 1870s including three large figurative panels which were worked either in outline with monochrome wools or all over in multicoloured silks. A version of their *Poesis* in the latter form [ILLUSTRATION 244] was forwarded to the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880-1881 by Alexandra the Princess of Wales, to be sold for charity. It

embroidered for a screen this same design using two different colour schemes (see Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., pp.76, 140, 141). It is uncertain whether Erlistoun ventured her own selection of colours for either, although one working does display greater clarity of the design more suggestive of Morris & Co. directions.

⁷⁵⁷*The Home*, Vol.1, No.4, December 1920, p.72.

⁷⁵⁸LeMire (Ed), op.cit., p.128; Morris, *Signs of Change*, op.cit., p.8.

⁷⁵⁹See Parry, op.cit., p.31; Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., p.32; also Ann Toy (Ed), *Hearth & Home: Women's Decorative Arts & Crafts 1800-1930*, The Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Sydney, 1988.

was bought by Mrs Ross Soden for her Melbourne home and is now owned by the National Gallery of Victoria. The gesture by Princess Alexandra may well have been an appeasement to Melbourne organisers for the Prince of Wales having to decline their invitation to open the Exhibition.⁷⁶⁰

The patronage of the Barr Smiths for Morris & Co. began as a continuation of Robert's personal search to alleviate his wife's profound and prolonged depressions. There is no indication that the family sought to change its social image which was one of understated rather than flaunted wealth. The senior Barr Smiths were not leaders of taste and their wholesale favouring of Morris & Co. really was emulated only by their children and grandchildren. The reason for this insularity of influence may well rest on the very private nature of Robert Barr Smith's quest. That quest was a family matter not an exercise to impress publicly. The family delighted in its decorative choices rather than advocating them as fashions to be followed.

Although the earliest decorative schemes for the Barr Smiths emanating from Morris & Co. were probably overseen by Morris himself with later arrangements supervised or encouraged by Dearle, there was nonetheless a continuity of effect throughout. Style was not subject to changes of fashion but held to Morris's quest to present beauty, restfulness and "something which reminds us of life beyond itself, and which has the impress of human imagination strong on it".⁷⁶¹ The Barr Smiths' enduring support for Morris & Co. is an expression of the success of the exercise to

⁷⁶⁰*Melbourne International Exhibition, 1880. Parliamentary Paper, Victoria, No.88, 1879.*

⁷⁶¹Wilmer (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.260.

find comfort for Joanna. Yet Joanna continued to order from other decorative outlets while using Morris & Co. Perhaps best favoured was James Powell & Sons for the glassware in which she delighted.⁷⁶² The most impressive purchases from Powell & Sons, however, were the stained glass windows donated by the family. Why not Morris & Co. stained glass windows? This question will be considered in Chapter 9 which looks at stained glass windows by Morris & Co. which grace Australian churches and at the myriad of influences which could affect choices concerning design and maker.

⁷⁶²See Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., pp.113-114.

CHAPTER 9: STAINED GLASS WINDOWS IN AUSTRALIAN CHURCHES, 1873-1939:
PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS AND IDEOLOGY OF MORRIS & CO. AND ITS
COMPETITORS

As works of art stained glass windows have always differed from other decorative items. Within the time span being considered here, design concepts for wallpapers, fabrics, furniture, carpets and even tapestries remained solely the domain of their artistic creators. To become a reality, a stained glass window relied on a number of variables. Included were the wishes of the donor/client which could encompass personal selections relevant to any dedicatees, the wealth or social standing of a donor, church affiliations (both of donors and dedicatees), partialities of church authorities, architectural setting, and ultimately whether a sensitive rapport existed between manufacturer and customer. Clients could vary from cathedral authorities acting on architects' advice to individual church rectors or parishioners. While all brought to bear personal taste in their choice of maker, commissions placed by authorities more often aimed at integrated arrangements of somewhat traditional presentation. Single choices could result in aesthetic unevenness within a church's ambience but often created greater visual stimulation. In the case of imported windows to Australia, consultation was most often by mail although sometimes clients did organise such while overseas. Customers were expected to provide accurate measurements of the lights and usually an indication of the subject to be represented.⁷⁶³

⁷⁶³See Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.I, 1984, p.258, and Vol.II, 1987, p.829.

For church glass, manufacturers needed to be conversant with religious subjects and symbolism so that suitable suggestions could be made where necessary. Morris himself handled arrangements for Morris & Co. stained glass until the mid-1880s⁷⁶⁴ after which Dearle assumed much of the responsibility. Following Dearle's death W.H. Knight appears to have accepted control for the remaining eight years of the company's existence. From 1875 when Morris & Co. was reconstituted under Morris's sole ownership, Burne-Jones undertook the role of principal figure designer for the firm's glass until his death in 1898. He and Morris were well equipped to present ecclesiastically acknowledged images, both having studied at Oxford with intentions to enter the Anglican Church. Dearle's knowledge in the field would have been gained through a number of sources. Not only did he have Burne-Jones' cartoons upon which to draw but as one of Morris & Co.'s main glass painters for near thirteen years until 1892⁷⁶⁵ he also would have closely observed the intricacies of the firm's productions. The company's library at Merton Abbey contained a complete sixteen volume set of the 1914 edition of S. Baring-Gould's *Lives of the Saints*.⁷⁶⁶ Discussion of individual churches in this Chapter will reveal the extent to which Dearle influenced selection of subjects which were appropriate to dedications.

While Morris & Co. strongly affected subject choice for its windows, determination by donors would seem to have been more typical for Birmingham's John Hardman & Co. A fine Australian example is St.Mary's Cathedral in Sydney,

⁷⁶⁴Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, pp.182, 271-272, 591, 592, 594, 595, 596.

⁷⁶⁵Gleaned from Morris & Co.'s *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit.

⁷⁶⁶Now in Rare Books, The Huntington Library.

filled from 1882 onwards with imagery largely dictated to the Birmingham firm by Cathedral authorities. Of a decidedly educative nature,⁷⁶⁷ the nave windows depicting “appropriate scenes from the Scriptures”⁷⁶⁸ sport lower panels with historical scenes from the Cathedral’s early days.

One instance of ordering by correspondence was the 1919 commission from John Lane Mullins and his wife Jane for a window to be located in the Irish Saints Chapel of Sydney’s St.Mary’s Cathedral. This was to be in memory of their only son Brendan who was killed at Arras, France, in 1917. In this case Hardmans dealt particularly with the donors and not with Cathedral authorities as had been the usual practice.⁷⁶⁹ Mullins’ choice of manufacturer, however, was obviously dictated by prior Cathedral procedures. The subject chosen for the Mullins window was undoubtedly suggested by the donors - St.Brendan presenting members of the family to St.Patrick [ILLUSTRATION 245]. Brendan Mullins and his brother-in-law Bertram Norris were to be depicted in their khaki officers’ uniforms. To help Hardmans accomplish such a personal presentation John Mullins sent to the firm four photographs and a newspaper cutting together with the window sizes.⁷⁷⁰ For the images of St.Brendan and St.Patrick Hardmans would have relied on an awareness of the traditional attributes of individual saints.

⁷⁶⁷See, for comparison, the discussion of Morris & Co.’s windows for St.Barnabas’ Chapel, Norfolk Island, in Chapter 5.

⁷⁶⁸*St.Mary’s Cathedral, Sydney, Australia*, op.cit., p.18.

⁷⁶⁹See *Hardman Collection Indexes, 1866-1899*, p.84 (Archives Department, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery).

⁷⁷⁰*Day Book 27, 6 July 1917 to 30 June 1920*, p.241 (The Archives of John Hardman & Co. in the Birmingham City Archives).

The wide knowledge on religious matters needed by window designers/manufacturers is clearly defined in the dealings of Walter E. Tower for C.E. Kempe & Co. when that firm was entrusted with the West Window for Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, New South Wales [ILLUSTRATION 246]. Tower encompassed in the single surround lights of the rose window sixteen figures of Saints as requested by the Cathedral architect but ventured to suggest that the centre quatrefoil should contain the Annunciation rather than the Deity because a better and more pleasing design might be accomplished. To suit the shape of the centre glass a half-length figure for the Deity would have been required and Tower believed “the difficulty of getting dignity of effect would certainly be considerable”.⁷⁷¹ When in 1862 Burne-Jones similarly designed for Morris & Co. Christ in Majesty as the pivotal tracery motif of the East Window of St. Michael and All Angels, Lyndhurst, Hampshire, the Rev. John Lawrell suggested to the vicar of Lyndhurst that the “attitude” of that figure was “wanting in dignity” and a symbol of the Trinity was ultimately substituted.⁷⁷² If rigid adherence to the original concept for Newcastle was to be insisted upon, Tower was willing to “do my best to accomplish it”. However, in his presentation for the case of using the Annunciation, Tower cleverly displayed his understanding of church doctrine by suggesting that “the Congregation of Saints are singing a “New Song” in praise of the Incarnation”.⁷⁷³ His change was happily accepted by the Dean of Newcastle.

⁷⁷¹Letter of Walter E. Tower to F.G. Castleden dated 18 August 1926 (Christ Church Cathedral Archives, Auchmuty Library, University of Newcastle, A5359).

⁷⁷²David Bond and Glynis Dear, *The Stained Glass Windows of William Morris and his Circle in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*, Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Papers 13, March 1998, pp.3-6.

⁷⁷³Christ Church Cathedral Archives, Auchmuty Library, University of Newcastle, A5359, op.cit.

Once the subject of a window was agreed upon, a sketch design was produced for client/church approval. The standard of these could vary greatly. Those by John Hardman & Co. ranged from refined delicate presentations such as that prepared for John Mullins to very rough ideas [ILLUSTRATION 247]. In contrast Morris & Co. always prepared finely finished watercolours [ILLUSTRATION 248], as did James Powell & Sons and Sydney's Lyon, Cottier & Co. As noted in Chapter 4 Adelaide's Clarkson Ltd. also adopted this policy, in so doing carefully camouflaging the plagiarism which had no place in the work of legitimate manufacturers. The care Morris & Co. took with its sketch designs is indicated by the time devoted to their preparation. Nineteen and a half hours were spent⁷⁷⁴ on the *St. James* for St. John's Church in Salisbury, South Australia [ILLUSTRATION 249], twenty four hours on *The Light of the World* for Unley Park Baptist Church in suburban Adelaide [ILLUSTRATION 250].⁷⁷⁵ This attention would suggest that the company realised a commission's approval by church authorities often relied on these presentations.

Documentation for diocesan approval to stained glass window installation (known as Faculties) has largely been lost in Australia. This is principally due to the absence of central information storage facilities, except for births, deaths and marriages. Individual churches, through either lack of space or lack of interest, in many cases have destroyed old administrative paraphernalia. In Britain churches have by law been obliged to forward their archival material to county records

⁷⁷⁴or at least charged for

⁷⁷⁵Figures from *1930 Glass Estimate Book* of Morris & Company Art-Workers Ltd., op.cit., in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

offices and thus Faculties largely survive there. However, the Anglican Diocese of Sydney has retained much of the paper work from the 1940s onwards, giving some indication of the facets of stained glass presentation which concerned the Church in Australia. Prior to this time, the seeking of Faculties would seem to have been often verbal or a formality, probably in most cases because of the association of the clergy involved and the social standing of those to whom memorials were intended. The first Morris & Co. window in All Saints', Hunters Hill, Sydney, in memory of Judge Charles Manning and his two sons, did not gain written approval until 29 August 1919 yet its manufacture was listed with Morris & Co. nearly eight months earlier.⁷⁷⁶ A subsequent window of 1926, also dedicated to a judge and his son, has no Faculty listing at all. The Church's main concern was with the appropriateness of inscriptions and dedications. Harmony of colour where other windows existed was another consideration, although this must of necessity have been a highly personal reaction depending on the nature of the cleric appointed to report.⁷⁷⁷ In All Saints', Hunters Hill, the two Morris & Co. windows installed bear little relationship in either colour or design to earlier windows by Lyon, Cottier & Co. [ILLUSTRATION 251].⁷⁷⁸

Following approval being given for the addition of a stained glass window in a church, the sketch design would be returned to the manufacturer and a full-size cartoon prepared. As Burne-Jones's time became more centred on his own artistic

⁷⁷⁶Faculty appears in the Indices of the *Acts & Proceedings of the Archbishop of Sydney* but no paper work is extant. Morris & Co. records: *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., p.322, 2 January 1919.

⁷⁷⁷See Appendix IV.

⁷⁷⁸All Saints' Morris & Co. windows are discussed in Chapter 10.

career, Morris & Co. resorted to photographic enlargements to produce these cartoons from original sketches.⁷⁷⁹ Morris set out from the start to control the colour of the firm's windows⁷⁸⁰ and, whereas in earlier work carried out for Powell & Sons Burne-Jones had provided coloured cartoons, his work for Morris & Co. was monochromatic [ILLUSTRATION 252], obviously with an understanding of Morris's intent. At Morris & Co.'s showing at the 1862 International Exhibition the firm displayed above its furniture earlier paintings produced by Burne-Jones for James Powell & Sons stained glass. William Burges proclaimed that

Mr. Jones is a colourist, and consequently declines to trust the choice of the tones of his colours to the glass-painter; he therefore makes a finished coloured painting in oil, and the result is that the best modern stained glass windows are due to his designs. ⁷⁸¹

Notwithstanding such praise, there seemed no disagreement at Morris & Co. as to Morris's role as colourist for the firm's stained glass windows. Morris would prescribe for the foreman of the glass painters the coloured glass to be used for each section and the colours to be adopted were often indicated on the cartoons [ILLUSTRATIONS 253-254]. From these directions and markings craftsmen would be able to determine the positioning of lead-lines, accepting Morris & Co.'s

⁷⁷⁹In connection with Morris & Co.'s 1875-76 commission for Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge, Burne-Jones charged the firm £2 for "touching up that *****d t.***** Hollyer's bad photograph of Temperantia" (1876 entry in Burne-Jones' account book, op.cit.); and in 1888 Hollyer was paid £16 each for enlargements of Burne-Jones' Nativity and Crucifixion designs for St.Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham (Ibid.; see also Sewter, op.cit., Vol.II, 1975, p.20).

⁷⁸⁰Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.I, 1984, pp.160, 202, 340.

⁷⁸¹*Gentlemans Magazine*, July 1862, article by William Burges, transcribed in Notebook of J.R. Holliday, op.cit. (Archives Department, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery).

adherence to mosaic glass. Contrary to the *Art-Journal*'s opinion of 1851 that "dark stiff lines of lead and metal ... disfigure",⁷⁸² Morris & Co. always favoured strong leading to highlight the design, differentiate the colours and accent the two-dimensional quality of windows as architectural members [ILLUSTRATIONS 255-256]. In indicating shading, features and patterning, the addition of enamels and staining was kept discreet so as to retain the purity of colours in the pot-metals used. Burne-Jones also most often provided only figures, settings being prepared by the company's adept painters who could source a ready supply of suitable drawings at their workplace.⁷⁸³ Following Morris's death in 1896 Dearle officially assumed the duties that Morris had performed for the company's stained glass department and skilfully carried through those responsibilities for near forty years more.

In St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Walkerville, South Australia, a single Morris & Co. work contrasts with a large contingent of windows by James Powell & Sons. Although the products of both companies are here still distinctive, they lie compatibly not only because of the use of the same base materials but also because of an agreement in leading use and form, even though the early Powell windows retain some Perpendicular Style Gothic Revival idioms.

The first stained glass for St. Andrew's,⁷⁸⁴ the east window by Ferguson, Urie & Lyon installed in 1873 [ILLUSTRATION 62], might be seen as an indication of the

⁷⁸²See Illustration 50.

⁷⁸³See *Church decoration...Embroideries, etc.*, op.cit., p.6; *A Note on the Morris Stained Glass Work*, Morris & Company, London, 1913, p.18; *List of Drawings in Glass Painters Room* in Ephemera File, The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

⁷⁸⁴Residents of Walkerville embarked on building an Anglican church in 1847 when land was donated by local brewer William Williams. After the foundations were dug work ceased

church outgrowing its mission image. Early church history suggests the window was the gift of Mr and Mrs Kent Hughes⁷⁸⁵ although at Vestry it was simply reported that a sum of money had been collected “for a Stained Glass Window with stone mullions for the Chancel” and that efforts were continuing to collect further contributions.⁷⁸⁶ At the same meeting a committee was formed consisting of the Rector George Dove, the Wardens and the members of Vestry to select the window and oversee its erection. The original suggestion was to dedicate one light each to Bishop Patteson and Lady Edith Christian Fergusson, wife of South Australian Governor Sir James Fergusson and “a very devoted Churchwoman”⁷⁸⁷ who had died in 1871. Patteson was scratched immediately, the whole window becoming a memorial to Lady Fergusson, probably because of her local connection.⁷⁸⁸ Some twenty years later Dove was still praising her as a “Benefactress of the Church” and her involvement in restoring “the music and ritual of the Church”.⁷⁸⁹ Her attributes

because of lack of funds. George Wright Hawkes then came to the rescue, promising to raise the money needed to see the church completed if original instigator J.W. McDonald revived the building committee. The church, free of debt, was consecrated on 23 August 1848. Of limestone with brick quoins, it was of fifty feet by twenty-five feet with a ten-foot square tower (*A Proposal for Commemorating the Centenary*, St.Andrew’s Church, Walkerville, 1947, p.5). The sanctuary window was leadlight incorporating an amber-coloured cross, made by Adelaide glazier John Chamberlain (L. Clift, *St.Andrew’s - Walkerville*, 1970, p.22: typed manuscript in Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide). Transepts were added to a new chancel in 1857. At this time, despite its fairly imposing appearance, St.Andrew’s was basically still in its mission stage and hence the simplicity of its chancel window. Nearly all Australian churches passed through this phase before grander premises were acquired.

⁷⁸⁵*S.Andrew’s Parish Magazine*, Vol.I, No.8, August 1890, p.2.

⁷⁸⁶*S.Andrew’s Church, Walkerville, Minute Book*, Easter 1865 to Easter 1913: Easter Tuesday, 2 April 1872, Item 7.

⁷⁸⁷[F. Halcomb], *A Short History of St.Andrew’s Church, Walkerville*, Adelaide, 1914, p.22.

⁷⁸⁸*S.Andrew’s Church, Walkerville, Minute Book*, op.cit., 2 April 1872, Item 7; *S.Andrew’s Parish Magazine*, Vol.IX, No.9, September 1898.

⁷⁸⁹*S.Andrew’s Parish Magazine*, Vol.V, No.11, November 1894 and Vol.III, No.12, December 1892.

clearly lifted the church well beyond its mission status to fully fledged grandeur. The Bishop's written consent was given to the proposed alterations to the Chancel to accommodate the new window and these were designed by E.T. Woods, then architect for St.Peter's Cathedral in Adelaide.⁷⁹⁰ The subjects chosen were traditionally sound and the choice of Ferguson, Urie & Lyon in keeping with the support already shown for local connections.

In 1879 St.Andrew's was enlarged for a second time [ILLUSTRATION 257], the work carried out by G.A. Selway under the direction of architect John Grainger who was at the same time supervising alterations and additions for the Barr Smith homes. Half the cost was covered by Kent Hughes, George Hawker, Robert Barr Smith and Charles Burney Young.⁷⁹¹ Grainger did not accept the structural soundness of the transept walls to support the arch of the new nave and, with much opposition, was finally allowed to build two pillars [ILLUSTRATION 258] which have subsequently been removed.⁷⁹² Four years after the extensions were completed St.Andrew's gained the first of its James Powell & Sons stained glass windows. This company was to provide seventeen of the church's nineteen stained glass windows between 1883 and 1961. The first twelve appeared during the incumbency of George Dove [ILLUSTRATION 259] whose personality strongly impressed upon the choices of his parishioners. For Dove stained glass windows were imbued with potent religious imagery:

⁷⁹⁰S.Andrew's Church, Walkerville, *Minute Book*, op.cit., Special Meeting, 11 June 1872.

⁷⁹¹*A Proposal for Commemorating the Centenary*, op.cit., pp.7, 9.

⁷⁹²Ibid.

... how much more fitting is a window than a tablet in memory of those we love; the tablet centres the thoughts on the persons as known and regarded by their immediate friends and acquaintances - the window is expressive of the bright hope of re-union, of peace, and joy, and immortality. The tablet reflects the opinion and praise of men - the window takes the thoughts from the individual and lifts them in adoration of the Love and Glory of God. ⁷⁹³

In voicing such an opinion, Dove clearly presented the persuasive power available to clergy in shaping both the physical demeanour of devotional environments and the spiritual guidance of flocks. This could greatly affect the impression of a church as a complete architectural entity in artistic terms, rather than its simply being seen in a narrow sense of structure used for religious worship.

The first Powell window in St. Andrew's was given in 1883 by Fred Halcomb in memory of his wife and brother, to be followed in 1891 by a *Good Shepherd* in memory of a son and daughter of the Doves.⁷⁹⁴ Then, despite their position as major clients of Morris & Co., the Barr Smith family donated the two main transept windows [ILLUSTRATIONS 260-261], the west window [ILLUSTRATION 262] and several smaller nave windows [ILLUSTRATION 263]. At the time of the installation of the great transept windows in June 1895, St. Andrew's contained only three stained glass windows - the Halcomb and Dove memorials and the Ferguson & Urie east window. Superficially it might have been simply to preserve a foreseen continuity of design that the Barr Smiths agreed to use Powells. However such an

⁷⁹³*S. Andrew's Parish Magazine*, Vol. IX, No. 8, August 1898.

⁷⁹⁴*Ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 6, June 1891.

explanation does not account for the fact that Robert and Joanna donated in 1900 three major three-light windows for the Lady Chapel of St.Peter's Cathedral, Adelaide [ILLUSTRATIONS 264-265], and in 1901 the three-light east window of St.Michael's, Mitcham [ILLUSTRATION 266], all by Powell & Sons. It is likely that the Barr Smiths did approach Morris & Co. initially when they first considered donating stained glass windows to St.Andrew's. The company prepared two sketch designs for "Walkerville Ch. S.Australia" which were suitable for the paired lancet windows of the nave of the church [ILLUSTRATIONS 267-268]. The fact that the subject matter for these was covered by the Powell transept windows is too coincidental not to be attributable to Barr Smith patronage. Dove obviously accepted that Powell & Sons provided some of the best available stained glass of the times and in his position as Rector orchestrated the windows for his church. Fred Halcomb also seems to have had a strong hand in the matter. Besides providing the first Powell window, he organised in 1898 the ordering of a window to celebrate St.Andrew's Jubilee the following year and arranged for a Mr. Jackson, considered to be a "competent judge", to assess in England the translation of the subjects chosen by the St.Andrew's Jubilee Committee.⁷⁹⁵ Both Dove and Halcomb were highly respected by Joanna Barr Smith. Dove officiated at her children's marriages and at the baptising of grandchildren, even though by 1893 Joanna was most often attending the local parish church of St.Michael's at Mitcham. The esteem in which she held Fred Halcomb was indicated by her giving daughter Ursula the second name of Halcomb. As with their home decorations, the Barr Smiths did not attempt

⁷⁹⁵Ibid., Vol.IX, No.10, October 1898 and Vol.X, No.4, April 1899. The Mr. Jackson consulted may well have been Thomas Graham Jackson (see Kelvin (Ed), *op.cit.*, Vol.IV, 1996, p.156).

to be trendsetters with their window donations. If they had pursued their approaches to Morris & Co. for window designs they would have been providing the first Morris & Co. windows for Australia after the Norfolk Island commissions. Instead they elected to follow the advice of others for choosing a provider.

In view of the memorials to the St. Andrew's transept windows, one for Joanna's parents and the other for the six deceased Barr Smith children, it is most likely that Joanna wished for the windows to be erected and Robert was not one to deny his wife's desires. Late in 1900 Robert also agreed to cover the costs of completing St. Peter's Cathedral which still lacked its twin towers and spires at the western end [ILLUSTRATION 269]. He advised Bishop Harmer:

I am a Presbyterian by birth and tradition, but I fully appreciate the good work the Anglican Church is doing in South Australia.

If I do this thing, as I hope I shall, I give willingly,

To the Glory of God,

For the permanent beautifying of the City of Adelaide,

For the love I bear my wife. ⁷⁹⁶

Following on the completion of the building was the donation of the Lady Chapel windows. That Robert gave "willingly" and was heartfelt in his religious character and desire to add to the beautification of Adelaide is apparent by his contribution not being acknowledged in the windows. The east window at Mitcham was in memory of Joanna's brother George and his wife. Robert's donations are concrete

⁷⁹⁶Quoted in Preiss & Oborn, op.cit., p.184.

examples of the freethinking atmosphere in which the South Australian colony developed. When Joanna came to honour Robert following his death in 1915, for the Parish Church in his birthplace Lochwinnoch she chose an image of the *Good Shepherd* - and Morris & Co.⁷⁹⁷

In 1900 Charles Burney Young and his wife donated two Powell windows to St. Andrew's, one in memory of two sons and the other in memory of Mrs Burney Young's mother and sister, and in 1925 the family donated another Powell window in memory of Mrs Young herself [ILLUSTRATION 68]. It therefore seems unaccountable that in 1908 Mrs Burney Young should have broken with the 'Powell tradition' and chosen Morris & Co. to produce the memorial window to her late husband [ILLUSTRATION 270]. When installed it was the only stained glass window on the north side of the nave. At the time Dove was still the incumbent but would retire three years later. Either he no longer insisted on Powells being exclusively used or Mrs Burney Young was a far stronger personality than Joanna Barr Smith, insisting on her choice being accepted.

Mrs Young may have been influenced in her selection of Morris & Co. by the installation in 1902 of the company's *Federation* window in the Adelaide Stock Exchange and the display in the same year of the firm's *Adoration* tapestry in the Adelaide suburb of Unley. She may also have seen the earlier sketch designs the company prepared for the Barr Smiths. Armed with these images, Mrs Young may have been travelling in Britain at the time of the ordering of the *Sts. Gabriel* and

⁷⁹⁷Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., 8 June 1917, p.310 in the Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

Michael lancets. The designs appeared in the books held at Morris & Co.'s London shop for clients to peruse and the company must have been satisfied with the Australian interpretation as a photograph of the St. Andrew's window was added to the Window Book.⁷⁹⁸ This photograph may well have influenced a subsequent appearance of Sts. Gabriel and Michael in the same sequence, in the west windows of 1910 for St. Stephen's, Tonbridge, Kent [ILLUSTRATION 271].

Charles Burney Young was a long-time worshipper at St. Andrew's, serving as Warden between 1861 and 1871 and synodman from 1857 to 1878. He continued as a member of Vestry until his death in 1904, taking a particularly keen interest in the school attached to the church and also serving on the Diocesan School Board.⁷⁹⁹ As with the choice of Morris & Co., there seems no apparent reason for the selection of Sts Gabriel and Michael to honour Young, save for the convenience of adapting to a very similar window shape Burne-Jones' original design of 1893 for St. Margaret's, Rottingdean, Sussex [ILLUSTRATION 272]. However, as St. Michael filled a larger central light at Rottingdean with Sts. Gabriel and Raphael in smaller left and right lights, it was not simply a matter of transferring the figures for the Walkerville site from the original cartoons, but of manipulating the proportions to bring them into line. The subject matter for Walkerville is somewhat aberrant when compared with those of already existing Powell windows. The latter generally depict biblical characters or stories. The Morris & Co. sketches prepared earlier for the Barr Smiths were in keeping with this trend, as was the Lochwinnoch *Good Shepherd*. In

⁷⁹⁸*Window Book of Morris & Co.*, pp.26, 58 (Archives Department, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery).

⁷⁹⁹*S. Andrew's Parish Magazine*, Vol.X, No.1, January 1899.

view of the nature of Young's strong involvement in church matters one would have expected a similar theme to have been followed yet the archangels and their associations with the "Power of God" may well have been more in keeping with the man's personality and beliefs. A close study of *Gabriel* and *Michael* also reveals the forceful simplicity of their presentation, compared to the more delicate work of Powell & Sons. Possibly Mrs Young preferred such in memory of her husband. Did her choice influence Joanna for Lochwinnoch?

Memorial windows were the rule in Australia. As churches rarely had the resources to fund the inclusion of stained glass windows, the generosity of parishioners was heavily leant upon to add such adornment. Usually this was done in memory of family members with donor acknowledgement although there were occasions where contributions were anonymous or dedications to other than family members. Among Morris & Co.'s Australian stained glass windows the only exceptions to the memorial custom are the *Federation* window of 1901 in the Adelaide Stock Exchange⁸⁰⁰ [ILLUSTRATION 273] and the *Dies Domini* window of 1906 in Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle [ILLUSTRATION 274]. Both were unencumbered gifts.

Dedicated on 21 November 1902 the first stage of Christ Church Cathedral was fitted with "cheap glass" (that is, plain glass), however its impressive collection of seventy-two stained glass windows began to appear soon after.⁸⁰¹ These in the main

⁸⁰⁰This large secular Morris & Co. production is considered in Chapter 10.

⁸⁰¹*Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 22 November 1902 in Parochial Council *Minute Book*, pp.79-80 (Christ Church Cathedral Archives, Auchmuty Library, University of Newcastle, AB7840). The Baptistry windows were dedicated on 29 May 1904

were provided over several decades by the London firm of C.E. Kempe & Co. [ILLUSTRATION 275]. Founded in 1869 by Charles Eamer Kempe, the firm continued after Kempe's death under the control of his nephew Walter E. Tower until 1934. In Australia Kempe & Co. usually provided large collections. In South Australia they were entirely responsible in 1920 for the stained glass windows (numbering thirteen) in Cabra Convent Chapel in the Adelaide suburb of Cumberland Park and for St.Peter's Cathedral, Adelaide, they supplied nineteen windows from 1903 to 1926. It was not uncommon for large churches and cathedrals to favour integrated glass schemes. Clayton & Bell's commission between 1887 and 1891 for St.Paul's in Melbourne accounted for all but one of the Cathedral's stained glass windows, at an estimated cost of £12,740 less discount for the size of the commission.⁸⁰² Of the work of John Hardman & Co. in Sydney's St.Mary's Cathedral, the Great North Window of 1885 alone cost £1234.⁸⁰³ Christ Church Cathedral did not rely on individual patronage for its stained glass windows which were chosen and ordered by the Cathedral authorities who then either approached parishioners to pay the costs or where necessary used monies raised by various affiliations such as the Sunday School or the Girls' Friendly Society.⁸⁰⁴ Thus Christ Church Cathedral's "custodians" did attempt to orchestrate a "good plan of glazing" such as suggested by Morris for ideal effectiveness of subject matter, architectural arrangement and colour coordination.⁸⁰⁵ George Dove did the same for St.Andrew's,

(Parochial Council *Minute Book*, op.cit., p.130).

⁸⁰²Jenny Zimmer, *Stained Glass in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1984, p.67.

⁸⁰³*St.Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, Australia*, op.cit., p.17.

⁸⁰⁴*Report and Financial Statements, Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, 1903-4*, p.6 (on p.121 of *Parochial Council Minute Book*, op.cit.).

⁸⁰⁵Poulson (Ed), op.cit., p.49.

Walkerville, allowing a slight variation with the acceptance of Morris & Co.'s Sts. Gabriel and Michael. The exception to the rule at Christ Church Cathedral was a deviation of far greater proportions, involving the presentation by John and Essie Wood of the Morris & Co. *Dies Domini* window.⁸⁰⁶

The very traditional Gothic Revival style of Kempe & Co. is in complete contrast to that of Morris & Co. [ILLUSTRATION 276]. Kempe's windows employed the architecturally elaborate components of canopy and pedestal to retain the recognisable insularity of the figures while Morris & Co.'s *Dies Domini* displays Burne-Jones's ability to incorporate figures in a purely decorative manipulation of space. In terms of colour and use of leading the companies' works were also at variance. Kempe's restricted leading meant that his areas of colour became darkened in the process of shading. The *Dies Domini*'s extreme segmentation by lead-lines allowed for subtle gradation of colours with far greater luminosity and transparency. If the *Dies Domini* had been placed side by side with the Kempe windows it would have set up an irreconcilable discord within the building's precincts; however although part of the north transept, it is in fact accommodated within its own space of alcove to a side entry.

The *Dies Domini* window was unveiled on 1 September 1907 by John Wood's uncle Joseph Wood, the donors being overseas at the time.⁸⁰⁷ Essie Wood was apparently an ardent admirer of Burne-Jones' work as presented by Morris & Co. and the

⁸⁰⁶*Souvenir of the Dedication of the Chancel, Ambulatories, and the Chapel of St. Nicholas, on March 9, 1910* (Christ Church Cathedral Archives, Auchmuty Library, University of Newcastle, A5366(ii)).

⁸⁰⁷Joan Murray, *The Vision Splendid*, Magazine Associates, Hamilton, 1991, p.62.

couple travelled to England purposefully to acquire a window for the Cathedral to the artist's design.⁸⁰⁸ Choice would have been limited by the shape of the opening to be filled however the design selected was one ideal to satisfy Mrs Wood's pleasure in Burne-Jones' work. *Dies Domini* first appeared as the central motif of the rose window component of the 1876 *Last Judgement* window in St. Michael and St. Mary Magdalene, Easthampstead [ILLUSTRATION 277]. The upper background of stars and dark sky in the rose segment was ultimately eliminated as Burne-Jones continued to work on the design and he exhibited *Dies Domini* in watercolour version at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1880.⁸⁰⁹ As originally envisaged *Dies Domini* appeared in one of Morris & Co.'s Cartoon Books kept at the London shop [ILLUSTRATION 278]. This book is composed exclusively of Burne-Jones cartoons and it was undoubtedly from this source that Essie Wood made her choice. Nonetheless, it was Burne-Jones' finished preliminary drawing to the watercolour, with the background filled with wings [ILLUSTRATION 279], which was faithfully transferred to glass for the Christ Church window.⁸¹⁰ Here was simply one instance where Burne-Jones' work for the firm and his legitimate art were indistinguishable.

The setting of the window is elaborate and was undoubtedly expensive. F.G. Castleden, Cathedral architect between 1909 and 1944, suggested that Dean Cyril Golding-Bird was "responsible for raising the funds".⁸¹¹ Having already

⁸⁰⁸Ibid., p. 148.

⁸⁰⁹This was bought by Rosalind Howard in 1881 for £459 (Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, p.75).

⁸¹⁰Morris & Co.'s *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., p.217, 20 December 1906, stipulates that the circular window for Newcastle of "Christ in Majesty" was based on the "photo...from Sir Edward Burne-Jones' completed design".

⁸¹¹Typescript by F.G. Castleden dated 3 September 1936: *The Newcastle and Hunter District*

acknowledged the window as being a gift, Castleden was undoubtedly referring to the setting. The donors of the window had no intention of remaining anonymous, their names being clearly inscribed in the surrounding stonework [ILLUSTRATION 280]. The costliness of such a setting may be imagined from figures extant for the Cathedral's 1926 west "wheel window" by Kempe [ILLUSTRATION 246]. The window itself was priced at £585, 20% duty adding £117 and freight and insurance £84, the total coming to £786. The masonry work, inscription and carving for the setting was costed at £1151.⁸¹² These pricings give some indication of how undervalued stained glass windows could be as art objects. Kempe & Co.'s artistry drew 74 per cent of window costs while the setting was worth some 46 per cent more than the window itself.

The combined fame of Burne-Jones and Morris & Co. in producing the *Dies Domini* did not seem to impress other than the Woods for some six decades. The window was not mentioned in the Cathedral's Official Handbook until 1938 where it was stated as being "designed by the celebrated artist Burne Jones" and "executed by Watts of London".⁸¹³ Watts & Co., founded in 1874 by architects G.F. Bodley, G.G. Scott Jnr and T. Garner, was one of numerous decorative furnishers formed in emulation of Morris & Co. following the latter's success.⁸¹⁴ The misconception concerning manufacturer continued until 1971 when finally the window's

Historical Society Journal and Proceedings - Volume 1 - 1936, p.9 (Christ Church Cathedral Archives, Auchmuty Library, University of Newcastle, A6137(ii)).

⁸¹²Letter of 18 October 1926 from F.G. Castleden to Dean of Newcastle (Christ Church Cathedral Archives, Auchmuty Library, University of Newcastle, A5359(ii)).

⁸¹³*Newcastle Cathedral Official Handbook*, 1938 edition, p.6 (Christ Church Cathedral Archives, Auchmuty Library, University of Newcastle, A6139(vi) and A5366(iv)(a)).

⁸¹⁴See Andrews, *op.cit.*, p.215.

production was ascribed correctly to “William Morris and Co. of London”.⁸¹⁵ The mistaken attribution in this case seems almost unaccountable. In 1913 the firm itself singled out Christ Church’s *Dies Domini* as being the only Australian window to date to be an “Important” example of “Morris Stained Glass”.⁸¹⁶ The Woods’ personal involvement with Morris & Co. seems to have left the Cathedral authorities with no knowledge of the manufacturers. The Faculty sketch prepared by the company⁸¹⁷ would not have enlightened them as it carries no identification markings. Here is a case where Morris & Co.’s particular rapport with clients and lack of advertising definitely disadvantaged the company’s promotion of wares.

No such confusion concerning the manufacturer of its stained glass windows occurred with All Souls’ Anglican Church in the Adelaide suburb of St.Peters. Morris’s planning dictum would be followed strongly in this church, the windows clearly accepted as integral architectural features of an aesthetic whole.

By 1908 the original old weatherboard church of All Souls’ had become very fragile - “its seams have a way of opening to let in the weather”⁸¹⁸ - however it was not simply material comfort which prompted the drive for a new building. Rector Wilfred George Martin Murphy, who was to serve for just over twenty years from February 1907 [ILLUSTRATION 281], related to his parishioners that

⁸¹⁵*Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, N.S.W.*, 1971 edition (Christ Church Cathedral Archives, Auchmuty Library, University of Newcastle, A5366(iv)(c)).

⁸¹⁶*A Note on the Morris Stained Glass Work*, op.cit., p.33.

⁸¹⁷In The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

⁸¹⁸*All Souls’ Parish Magazine*, Vol.VII, No.9 & 10, January & February 1908.

The Bishop of Ballarat once made the scathing remark that many Australian Churches “were mean, paltry, and hideous worship sheds.” ...⁸¹⁹

Murphy was referring to the Right Reverend Arthur Vincent Green who had become the second Bishop of Ballarat in December 1900.⁸²⁰ Green inherited a diocese of seven churches, four of which were “permanent buildings” and three “wooden structures”. Even though that city’s Cathedral was included in the former category, by 1901 it was being held together by “tie-rods”, the work on a new building started in 1884 being discontinued due to funds being exhausted.⁸²¹

Murphy vowed that a new All Souls’ would stand beyond Green’s scorn and envisaged “a new and noble Church ... with lofty roof, fine chancel, wide aisles, ...”⁸²² [ILLUSTRATION 282]. An added impetus was provided by interdenominational rivalry:

... Our present Church is now quite unworthy of our parish, for we have passed out of the Mission stage. We know that the Presbyterians are about to build a Church in our neighbourhood, and the Methodists possess a fine Chapel, and have lately shown much zeal in providing the funds for a new pipe organ. The Church of England must not be behind the others in showing devotion to her Lord and Master. ...⁸²³

⁸¹⁹Ibid., Vol.VII, No.6, October 1907.

⁸²⁰*Session of Synod of the Diocese of Ballarat (Programme of Arrangements)*, November 1908, p.2.

⁸²¹*Ballarat and District in 1901*, Periodical Publishing Co., Melbourne, 1901, p.52.

⁸²²*All Souls’ Parish Magazine*, Vol.VII, No.6, October 1907 and Vol.VII, No.9 & 10, January & February 1908.

⁸²³Ibid., Vol.VIII, No.6, October 1908.

Alfred Wells, a former choirmaster of the church, was appointed honorary architect and his proffered Byzantine design accepted.⁸²⁴ This was subsequently modified before construction began in 1915 [ILLUSTRATION 283], the dedication occurring some eight months later on 31 May 1916.⁸²⁵ Delays were not occasioned by the intervention of the Great War but as usual by the battle to acquire sufficient funds.

Murphy's vision for All Souls' was based firmly upon personal preferences and responses, and upon his standing within the Anglican hierarchy. He appeared to be on excellent terms with the then Bishop of Adelaide, Arthur Nutter Thomas, to the extent of persuading the Bishop, contrary to his stand on transepts, to approve the design for All Souls' by suggesting the practical use of these as baptistry and week-day chapel.⁸²⁶ During the Adelaide winter of 1910 Murphy and his family made an extended trip to England. He reported back to his flock of the "evening light streaming through the fine stained glass windows" at Seal and of the beauty of Kippington Church near Sevenoaks which affected him so much as to bring "him perilously near to breaking the Tenth Commandment" in his anxiety to see "something done" at All Souls'.⁸²⁷ These English churches contained fine Gothic Revival windows. Kippington Church was adorned by the work of C.E. Kempe & Co.

⁸²⁴Ibid.

⁸²⁵Ibid., Vol.XI, No.11, March 1912; Vol.XII, No.1, May 1912; Vol.XIV, No.12, July 1915; Vol.XV, No.5, December 1915; Vol.XV, No.10, May 1916.

⁸²⁶Ibid., Vol.XII, No.3, July 1912.

⁸²⁷Ibid., Vol.X, No.6, October 1910 and Vol.X, No.7, November 1910 (Exodus 20:17 - "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house ... nor any thing that is thy neighbour's").

and Heaton, Butler & Bayne, both companies being represented in South Australian Anglican churches at the time of Murphy's trip.

Murphy took to heart the Bishop of Ballarat's mockery of Australian churches and set out deliberately to make the new All Souls' "as unlike as possible to an ordinary hall".⁸²⁸ The architectural style chosen for the building was a start, striking internally with its polychrome banding and rounded aisle archways [ILLUSTRATIONS 284-285]. Initially the new church had no stained glass windows, but acquired its first two simultaneously. Sometime in 1917 these were ordered jointly and privately from Morris & Co. by two parishioners - Mrs Bagot and Mrs Suckling.⁸²⁹

In Morris & Co.'s *Catalogue of Designs* when listed orders were destined for churches only the names of the churches were recorded, not those responsible for placing the commissions. The firm's surviving *1930 Glass Estimate Book* sets down "Correspondent" by name and address. Undoubtedly other estimate books originally existed with these details. Without the survival of these books however one can only assume personal ordering where church records themselves do not indicate otherwise. Once client/manufacture satisfaction had been reached regarding subject matter, churches involved then had the final say on a window's imagery via the Faculty sketch provided. From this point correspondence then seemed to shift from individual to church authority. Morris & Co. notified All Souls' itself by June 1918 that the Bagot/Suckling windows were ready for

⁸²⁸*All Souls' Parish Magazine*, Vol.XIII, No.1, June 1913.

⁸²⁹*Ibid.*, Vol.XVI, No.11, July 1917.

shipment. Construction time suggests that, like many firms, Morris & Co.'s workforce was considerably affected by the Great War. For overseas orders shipping restrictions also came into play. Although All Souls' windows were completed by June 1918, the firm revealed to the church that dispatch was being delayed "for want of permission from the Government"⁸³⁰ and it was another year before they sat in a packing case in the church awaiting installation.⁸³¹ Murphy knew exactly who was responsible for the windows and following the unveiling on 6 July 1919 he informed all that

The church has been enriched with two very beautiful memorial windows, from the studio of Morris & Co., Merton Abbey, Surrey. ...⁸³²

The *St. Paul*, in memory of Martin Suckling, was the gift of his widow and children. Mrs Suckling and an unmarried daughter had moved to Sydney to live in August 1916 yet obviously continued to have ties with All Souls' close enough to wish for retained memories and be willing to bear the costs of the donated window.⁸³³ In their absence the window was unveiled by a married daughter still living in the area, Mrs Victor Wilson. The figure of the aged St. Paul was keenly in keeping with the memorial and was most likely suggested by Dearle. Such applies also to the *Jonathan* window, a gift of mother, sister and brother in memory of Charles Ernest Bagot of the 3rd Light Horse who died of wounds on 9 November

⁸³⁰Ibid., Vol.XVII, No.10, June 1918.

⁸³¹Ibid., Vol.XVIII, No.9, June 1919.

⁸³²Ibid., Vol.XVIII, No.10, July 1919.

⁸³³Murphy noted their departure with regret, adding: "They were whole-hearted and liberal supporters of the Church, and kindly folk withal"(Ibid., Vol.XVI, No.1, August 1916).

1915.⁸³⁴ This window was unveiled by a comrade, Lieut. Kenneth Hamilton, whom the Rector declared was to the deceased “as David was to Jonathan”.⁸³⁵ The emotional importance to families of such visual tributes for war casualties may be guessed at with the *Jonathan* window. Having been seriously wounded at Gallipoli, Bagot died on the hospital ship “Neuralia” and was buried at sea.⁸³⁶ His family therefore did not even have access to the photograph of a war grave which proved such a comfort to many other families. This image of Jonathan thus not only presents an obvious religious representation but also carries strong personal references to youthful warriors and their possible fate in the Great War. It manages to amalgamate in one art work the diverse reflections George Dove believed a tablet and a window individually evoked: private grief and remembrance of family and friends with a positive and uplifting assertion of religious faith. The latter is largely reliant on Morris & Co.’s purity of colours and clarity of design.

St. Paul was originally designed by Burne-Jones in 1875 for Coats Parish Church, Coatbridge, Lanarkshire, with a traditional Gothic Revival architectural framework and canopy by Philip Webb. The All Souls’ interpretation follows more closely *St. Paul* as he appears in the 1894-1895 great east window of Holy Trinity, Chelsea [ILLUSTRATION 286], save for changes to the colour of his robes and a more open background patterning. Jonathan was used for the first time in 1877 at Forest School Chapel, Walthamstow, Essex (this window was destroyed during the Second World War). The design was not utilised again until 1907, in High Pavement

⁸³⁴Ibid., Vol.XV, No.5, December 1915.

⁸³⁵Ibid., Vol.XVIII, No.10, July 1919.

⁸³⁶World War I Personnel Records of Charles Ernest Bagot (National Archives of Australia, Canberra).

Unitarian Chapel, Nottingham [ILLUSTRATION 287]. There Jonathan was placed within an historical setting and without the cloak worn in the All Souls' version. Both the All Souls' windows display how Morris & Co. designs were adapted, not simply repeated, with their new architectural settings in mind. *St.Paul* and *Jonathan* in style were executed as a pair for All Souls', to face each other on opposite sides of the nave [ILLUSTRATION 288].

Imported windows dominated the Australian stained glass window market particularly in the boom years of memorials to World War I casualties and just why local stained glass was often overlooked is apparent from the Rev. Murphy's attitude. In costing a £30 imported window, Murphy assessed additional expenses at £20 for freight, insurance and customs dues but asserted that local manufacturers were charging around £50 for a similar item so that it was "worth while going to London straight away". He held a low opinion of the quality of the local product and believed there was "no greater horror in church adornment than cheap and inferior glass". Murphy's assessment of local Adelaide production, which at the time would have emanated from Thompson & Harvey or Clarkson Ltd., in hindsight seems discerning and certainly would have been coloured by the apparent expertise of Kempe & Co. and Heaton, Butler & Bayne he had experienced in England. Murphy's ultimate goal was "that the glass in All Souls' Church will be all supplied by the same firm, so uniformity in design and quality will be assured".⁸³⁷ It is to be assumed that he had seen the Faculty sketches for the Morris & Co. *St.Paul* and *Jonathan*. Therefore he could not have been unaware of the company's unique

⁸³⁷*All Souls' Parish Magazine*, Vol.XVII, No.7, March 1918.

presentations compared with the more traditional workshops. One might claim that here Morris & Co.'s work was accepted on two grounds: the company's repute and Murphy's reception of the windows as satisfying components of his vision for All Souls'.

The prospect alone of the Suckling and Bagot windows inspired Murphy and this was turned to account with the death of Fred Farmer Bassett, choirman, Sunday school teacher and server at All Souls'. Bassett seemed by all accounts to be a quiet youth much loved by the church community as a whole and thought to be an unlikely soldier.⁸³⁸ Fred Bassett's demise was by no means glorious: he died of meningitis in London, presumably contracted on board the troop ship between Australia and England.⁸³⁹ The Rector suggested that the gentle parishioner be remembered with a small stained glass window in the chancel [ILLUSTRATION 289], to be sponsored by the Sunday school. The fund was started with 6s 7d.⁸⁴⁰ The history of this memorial window was protracted and painful and exposed the necessary reliance generally of churches on private donors to provide interior

⁸³⁸Ibid., Vol.XVI, No.8, April 1917. A hastily arranged social was organised for his departure overseas (Ibid., Vol.XVI, No.5, December 1916) and soon after a letter was received from him on shipboard: "Naturally our thoughts went back to one's parish church and I pictured myself back there again. I shall be making my Christmas Communion at sea this year, the first communion away from All Souls'....Time passes very quickly. We have plenty of literature, games, etc., to make the voyage bright" (Ibid., Vol.XVI, No.6, January-February 1917). Within three months an indication was given that something was amiss and in April 1917 his death announced (Ibid., Vol.XVI, No.7, March 1917 and Vol.XVI, No.8, April 1917).

⁸³⁹World War I Personnel Records of Fred Farmer Bassett (National Archives of Australia, Canberra).

⁸⁴⁰*All Souls' Parish Magazine*, Vol.XVII, No.6, February 1918.

decoration. Once the Suckling and Bagot windows were installed Murphy began to despair for the Bassett memorial:

... The Sunday school has not yet contributed more than a tenth of its cost,
but perhaps some of us can give the project a lift up. ... ⁸⁴¹

By April 1920, over two years after the appeal had been opened, funds for the Bassett memorial stood at £21. Morris & Co. were asking £45 for an appropriate window, Murphy assessing added costs at £7 to £8.⁸⁴² At this time, however, events were overshadowed by the appearance of the Wendt Memorial Window *War* [ILLUSTRATION 290].

Following the death of younger son Kenneth at Bullecourt, France, on 6 May 1917,⁸⁴³ the love and esteem felt by the Wendt family for both Kenneth and All Souls' reached its greatest expression with the *War* window.⁸⁴⁴ As with the earlier

⁸⁴¹Ibid., Vol.XVIII, No.10, July 1919.

⁸⁴²Ibid., Vol.XIX, No.6, April 1920.

⁸⁴³Rev.Murphy's sermon at the dedication service for All Souls' *War* window dwelt graphically with the second battle of Bullecourt where Kenneth Koeppen Wendt was killed. British troops having failed to meet up with their allies, the Australians were "left in the air", in fact fighting above an immense underground system of tunnels occupied by the enemy. This battle resulted in seven thousand casualties, the responsibility for such a heavy loss not resting solely with the British high command but also seen as a consequence of "serious weaknesses in Australian staff work"(Joan Beaumont (Ed), *Australia's War, 1914-1918*, Allen & Unwin, St.Leonards, 1995, p.21). According to Murphy Kenneth died "as a young but gallant officer of the gallant Tenth Brigade" (*All Souls' Parish Magazine*, Vol.XIX, No.9, July 1920).

⁸⁴⁴The Wendt family were faithful and generous participants at All Souls'. Hermann Koeppen Wendt was serving as both Choirmaster and Warden in 1901 when he resigned the former position after three years. His popularity was evident by the choir's gift to him of a copy of the Cathedral Prayer Book containing both words and musical settings (Ibid., Vol.1, No.2, June 1901). He served again as Warden in 1907-8 and 1915-16 and was licensed as a Lay-Reader in 1904 (Ibid., July 1904). For over thirty years, with his wife Jane, he opened his home "Slieve Bawn" at 12 Winchester Street for church fund-raising socials, one such

Suckling and Bagot windows, this window was privately organised with Morris & Co. Having enlisted in Adelaide in August 1915, Kenneth joined Australian reinforcements in France via the Suez in July 1916. From November 1916 to March 1917 he was in Oxford, apparently on leave for study at Balliol College.⁸⁴⁵ His parents would seem to have moved to London in 1916, probably to see their son, and did not return to Adelaide until April 1919.⁸⁴⁶ During this time abroad, obviously with Murphy's knowledge and philosophical contribution, the *War* window would have been ordered, to allow for its installation by July 1920.⁸⁴⁷ The Wendts undoubtedly attended Morris & Co.'s shop personally. Dearle probably suggested *War* as being most appropriate for their dedication and the original presentation appears in one of the company's show room books, together with the Forest School Chapel *Jonathan*.⁸⁴⁸

War was designed by Dearle for St.Bartholomew's, Wilmslow, Cheshire

[ILLUSTRATION 291]. A sketch design was accepted by the English church on 3

evening in 1904 proving to be "the most enjoyable and pleasant gathering of our Church people that we have had for some time (Ibid., January 1904; Vol.XXIV, No.4, August 1918; Vol.XXX, No.50, September 1934). Hermann and Jane both served on the Building Committee set up for the new church in 1915 and were among the guarantors required to secure a loan. In addition to numerous donations, the family's substantial gifts to the church included the high altar and reredos. The Wendts had three children Alan, Kenneth and Lois, and both sons enlisted during World War I. Alan, holding the rank of Lieutenant, was recorded on the sick list in August 1916 as a result of arduous operations in North Africa, but recovered to return to the parish three years later as a Major (Ibid., Vol.XVI, No.1, August 1916 and Vol.XVIII, No.11, August 1919).

⁸⁴⁵World War I Personnel Records of Kenneth Wendt (National Archives of Australia, Canberra).

⁸⁴⁶*All Souls' Parish Magazine*, Vol.XVI, No.9, May 1917 and Vol.XVIII, No.7, April 1919.

⁸⁴⁷Ibid., Vol.XIX, No.9, July 1920.

⁸⁴⁸Morris & Co. Show Room Book of Cartoons by Edward Burne-Jones and John Henry Dearle: 18951 Neg. War and Design No.548 David/Jonathan (Archives Department, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery).

April 1919 and the window installed in the same year as its counterpart in All Souls'.⁸⁴⁹ Thus the work came to All Souls' much as originally envisaged, however its slight differences are of great significance.

Charles Sewter has been highly critical of the original window (together with its companions *Peace* and *Victory* [ILLUSTRATION 292]):

... The style is obviously, even slightly ridiculously, retrospective: the soldiers are all conceived as knights in mediaeval armour. An unconvincing sentimentality precludes any attempt to come to grips with the horrifying realities of modern war. There is no genuine emotion or imagination here at all. ...⁸⁵⁰

Yet the design in some form was reproduced seven times within just two years.⁸⁵¹ Dearle's original concept was intended to encompass a universal Christian soldier and he drew on the only past training he had had in an effort to present that notion. On such a scale the intimacy which always accompanied a single light/single figure memorial (as in the Suckling and Bagot windows) may have been missing in the original *War* window. However the All Souls' version of *War* reclaimed "genuine emotion" by the personalisation in the centre light of the young soldier being received into Paradise. This minor alteration then softened the rigid symbolism of Valour and Generosity in the side lights. The window was never meant as a vehicle whereby a beholder could "come to grips with the horrifying realities of modern

⁸⁴⁹Sewter, op.cit., Vol.II, 1975, p.204; Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., p.335, 30 January 1920.

⁸⁵⁰Sewter, op.cit., Vol.I, 1974, p.81.

⁸⁵¹Ibid., Vol.II, 1975, p.320.

war". In his analysis of *War* Sewter was viewing the work some fifty-six years after its conception, with sensibilities honed by numerous world wars and media coverage unknown at the beginning of the twentieth century. Memorial windows for casualties of the Great War were never envisaged as historical statements of the madness perpetrated. Without ignoring realities, they were intended to replace brutality with gentle comfort, to offer succour where life generally had been ended abruptly by hostilities. This is apparent with the Bagot's *Jonathan* window. In his sermon dedicating the *War* window Murphy pinpointed the sentiment, applicable also to the *Jonathan*, which adhered to the very private yet very public memorial to Kenneth Koeppen Wendt.

... We remember him as a quiet, unassuming youth who was always ready to lend a helping hand when there was anything he could do for anybody. We remember him as one who was the soul of loyalty to his friends, one who did not like to hear an unkind word said about anyone. We remember him well, with his finely cut, open, yet somewhat serious face. He was regular in his religious duties and ever ready to make his communions with the dearly loved members of his family. It is the hope and desire of his family that every parent who has lost a son or brother or relative at the front will be comforted when he or she looks at this window with its sacred and beautiful suggestiveness of Divine love, of rest after victory, of peace after strife. ... ⁸⁵²

[ILLUSTRATION 293]

⁸⁵²*All Souls' Parish Magazine*, Vol.XIX, No.9, July 1920.

Clearly Murphy and his parishioners saw in *War* a “genuine emotion” and “imagination” which Sewter could not comprehend. The All Souls’ version was rescued also from “unconvincing sentimentality” by marks of singularity. The change to the central soldier was at the instigation and insistence of Murphy:

... There is really no reason why we should not hand down to history a correct picture of the military habit of these days, even as the mediaeval artists put in their pictures the costumes of the Kings, Bishops, and Knights of their days. ... ⁸⁵³

Dearle wrote to Murphy explaining the imagery throughout the three lights, but beginning his letter with “You will see that the sketch now embodies a ‘khaki’ figure”.⁸⁵⁴ This clearly indicates that although the three All Souls’ Morris & Co. windows to date had been ordered privately by the donors, Murphy had the final say as to acceptability, through the Faculty sketches. Murphy obviously understood and accepted as appropriate Dearle’s symbolism in the *War* window. The Faculty sketch for the All Souls’ version⁸⁵⁵ differed from the actual window only in its lack of the slouched hat at the feet of the soldier being received into Paradise. This addition to the finished product was surely Murphy’s decision, in view of his historical insight. To have had all the soldiers clad in khaki, and thereby remove the “retrospective” conception noted by Sewter, would have detracted from the spiritual feeling of the work which is perhaps even more sharply felt in the All Souls’ version because of costume contrast. The tracery also contained touches

⁸⁵³Ibid., Vol.XVI, No.11, July 1917.

⁸⁵⁴Ibid., Vol.XIX, No.9, July 1920.

⁸⁵⁵In The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

personal to Kenneth Wendt: to the centre right was the insignia of the Tenth Battalion, reflected in the colours on the soldier and the badge on the slouched hat; to the centre left was the badge of Kenneth's school, St.Peter's College, a reminder that the lad was only eighteen years old at the time of his death [ILLUSTRATION 294].

With the St.Bartholomew's and All Souls' versions of *War* both being installed in 1920 one might expect them to be virtual images of each other, save for the alteration of dress for the central soldier and some slight horizontal extensions to accommodate All Souls' wider window spaces. This however was not the case and a comparison of these two works provides an excellent example of how originally Morris & Co. treated each of its productions until the loss of Dearle in 1932. Colour changes were considerable, particularly in the centre lights where the white dress of the angels at St.Bartholomew's was changed to blue and green at All Souls' and the wings from blues to reds [ILLUSTRATIONS 295-296]. Details were also individually crafted and not slavishly copied, as can be seen with the patterning on Christ's white under-robe [ILLUSTRATIONS 297 and 293].

With the installation of the Wendt window, Murphy gained renewed spirit for the Bassett memorial and in fact envisaged something greater than had originally been planned. It was decided to also honour the memory of John Vivian Gordon, a 24-year-old clerk with Elder Smith & Co. who had been killed at Messines on 24 June 1917.⁸⁵⁶ Jack Gordon had been a member of the Sunday school and choir and when

⁸⁵⁶World War I Personnel Records of John Vivian Gordon (National Archives of Australia, Canberra).

the family moved to Croydon, a suburb on the other side of Adelaide to St.Peters, he still “remained faithful to his old church”, regularly making the trip across town to attend Evensong at All Souls’.⁸⁵⁷ Henceforward the fund was to cover the Bassett-Gordon Memorial Window and the location was moved to a larger space above the south door of the nave, thus connecting the three windows honouring youths lost in the Great War [ILLUSTRATIONS 284 & 288].

By November 1920 the Bassett-Gordon fund stood at £35 6s 3d. Murphy was reluctant to place an order at this time:

... Costs in England have gone up enormously. I received a letter from Messrs. Morris and Company this week. The cost in London is £75 f.o.b. [free on board]. Add customs, freight, insurance, cost of erection, wire screen, and there will be little left out of £100. We must consider this matter carefully.⁸⁵⁸

Costs did indeed escalate after World War I. In the 1890s Lyon, Cottier & Co. were charging 3s 10d per foot for glass⁸⁵⁹ and just prior to the War Birmingham’s John Hardman & Co. listed glass at 4s per foot.⁸⁶⁰ After the War Hardman’s glass prices doubled to 8s per foot.⁸⁶¹ Yet Murphy never once wavered from his original plan to honour Fred Bassett and Jack Gordon, never suggested another form of

⁸⁵⁷*All Souls’ Parish Magazine*, Vol.XIX, No.9, July 1920.

⁸⁵⁸*Ibid.*, Vol.XX, No.1, November 1920.

⁸⁵⁹See Mitchell Library, Sydney, PXD609, op.cit., f.7 reverse.

⁸⁶⁰*Stained Glass Cost Sheets 1912* (The Archives of John Hardman & Co. in Birmingham City Archives).

⁸⁶¹*Day Book 27, 6 July 1917 to 30 June 1920* (The Archives of John Hardman & Co. in Birmingham City Archives).

memorial or the use of a firm other than Morris & Co. He persisted in listing monthly the total amount held in the fund and what he considered was needed before the window could be ordered. In July 1921, £58 11s had been collected with “About £23 more needed”; by November £61 1s 4d was in hand and “Another £15 or £20 needed”; the fund stood at £70 14s 8d in August 1922 with only “About ten pounds more needed”; and by September 1922 Murphy felt confident enough to place the order, optimistically hoping for its arrival in Adelaide “in eight months’ time”.⁸⁶² He explained to the parishioners that the window would be recorded as the gift of the “Sunday School and other Friends” and its subject was to be the Archangel Michael weighing in the balance the souls of men - the heraldic sign of All Souls’.⁸⁶³ The window was finally in the hands of the Adelaide agents in February 1924, having arrived on board the R.M.S. Moulton, and it was dedicated on 2 March. As Murphy stated, it was indeed “a long delayed tribute of esteem and affection” however he had no doubt that “the window is a worthy expression of our feelings”.⁸⁶⁴ Initially Murphy may have contemplated an image other than St. Michael to honour Fred Bassett and Jack Gordon. Morris & Co. prepared a sketch design of *Christ in the Carpenter’s Shop* [ILLUSTRATION 298], the background of which clearly echoes that of the earlier *St. Paul* and *Jonathan*. This design may have been that costed at £45 for the smaller chancel opening selected when the fund started in 1918. Such a subject would have satisfied the Sunday School affiliations of the dedicatees but would not have tied it to the warrior figures

⁸⁶²*All Souls’ Parish Magazine*, Vol. XX, No. 8, July 1921; Vol. XX, No. 12, November 1921; Vol. XXI, No. 8, August 1922; Vol. XXI, No. 9, September 1922.

⁸⁶³*Ibid.*, Vol. XXI, No. 10, October 1922.

⁸⁶⁴*Ibid.*, Vol. XXII, No. 11, February 1924 and Vol. XXII, No. 2, March 1924.

of the two previous war memorials. Thus, with the move of the Bassett-Gordon memorial to the larger nave window space, Dearle may have suggested St. Michael as an alternative, because of the Archangel's warrior status and his relationship to the church's dedication.

The poignancy of the St. Michael figure reflects the diverse fortunes of the dedicatees' families while at the same time highlighting the shared fate of the honoured. The Bassett family would seem to have been dogged by sadness. Soon after the window in memory of Fred had been ordered, his mother died. In announcing the loss Murphy related that Mrs Bassett's father had been shot by a trooper at Government House, her husband had been killed by a fall from a horse and the tragic Fred had been her youngest son.⁸⁶⁵ At the dedication of the memorial window there were no relatives of Fred Bassett present. In contrast the Gordon family were represented by both parents and four siblings. Hermann Koeppen Wendt performed the unveiling.⁸⁶⁶

Following the dedication Murphy laid out the exact costings:

... Paid Morris & Co. £50; Shipping Agents, £22 4/3; London Agents, £3 2/1;
Road carriage and sundries, £10; Cash in hand, £27 4/1; still owing Morris
and Company, £29 4/- and the cost of erection in All Souls' Church. To all
intents and purposes this means that the window is paid for, £2 more is

⁸⁶⁵Ibid., Vol. XXI, No. 11, November 1922.

⁸⁶⁶Ibid., Vol. XXII, No. 2, March 1924.

needed for local expenses. We have yet to meet the cost of erection and of a wire guard.⁸⁶⁷

At this time Clarkson Ltd. was the best known firm for installing glass and would likely have handled the *St. Michael*.⁸⁶⁸ Morris & Co. charged around 8s for a wire guard.⁸⁶⁹ Murphy's calculations again give some clue to the relative value of stained glass windows: the *St. Michael* itself accounted for only 69 per cent of costs, shipping and handling making up the remaining 31 per cent.

Around the same time that the All Souls' *St. Michael* window was being produced, John Hardman & Co. provided a two-light memorial window for St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, thus providing an opportunity to compare costs. Morris & Co. were always seen as an 'art' house, Hardman & Co. as a 'trade' house, and as such it might be assumed that the former would attract higher prices for its manufactures, however this was not the case. Both companies charged the same for a single light window of similar dimensions but Morris & Co.'s London shipping agents asked some 2s more than Langstaff who was used by Hardmans. Hardmans did however usually include a wire guard in their quotations.⁸⁷⁰

⁸⁶⁷Ibid.

⁸⁶⁸*Clarkson Ltd., Glass Price List 1929*, Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Adelaide BRG172/9/4. A basic leaded (not stained) light of similar size to the *St. Michael* would have cost around £10.

⁸⁶⁹See *1930 Glass Estimate Book*, op.cit., entry for St. Mary's Church, Southery, 24 April 1931.

⁸⁷⁰*Day Book 27*, op.cit., p.241 and *Letterbook G60 1912 May 7th to Oct 11th*, p.750 (The Archives of John Hardman & Co. in Birmingham City Archives).

After the dedication service for the *St. Michael* window Murphy explained for the edification of his flock the symbolism of the window, ensuring that parishioners knew the attributes of the evil soul and the good soul. He reiterated that the window had come from “the world-famous studio” of Morris & Co. but added “and is probably the work of Mr. Dearle (who designed the Wendt Window)”.⁸⁷¹

The figure of St. Michael was originally designed by Burne-Jones in 1874 for the multi-light west window of Calcutta Cathedral [ILLUSTRATION 299] and in 1893 appeared again with company in the multi-light Chancel east window of Albion Congregational Church, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire [ILLUSTRATION 300].⁸⁷² The Bassett-Gordon window in All Souls’ would appear to be the only other occurrence of this St. Michael and the only time it was presented as a single light [ILLUSTRATION 301]. A cartoon of the figure appeared in one of the company’s show room books devoted exclusively to work by Burne-Jones.⁸⁷³ Murphy obviously had not seen this but probably had simply been advised by Dearle that the company could provide a design of St. Michael appropriate to a church dedicated to All Souls. In his dealings with Morris & Co. Murphy corresponded with Dearle alone and while he was aware of the company’s fine reputation for quality Murphy would not seem to have been conversant with Burne-Jones’ and Morris’s prior involvement in setting the tenor of Morris & Co. windows. Some three months after the dedication of All Souls’ *St. Michael* Murphy received a letter from Dearle explaining that the

⁸⁷¹*All Souls’ Parish Magazine*, Vol. XXII, No. 2, March 1924.

⁸⁷²See Sewter, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, 1975, p. 306.

⁸⁷³Design No. 132: S. Michael Calcutta 1874 (Justice with Scales) in Morris & Co. Show Room Book of Cartoons by Edward Burne-Jones (Archives Department, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery).

figures representing the souls were symbols not to be viewed as realistic and revealing that the window “was much admired by many” who had seen it during production at Merton Abbey.⁸⁷⁴ From this Murphy would have naturally assumed Dearle’s authorship of the St.Michael design. There seems no indication that Murphy or his parishioners had any trouble interpreting the symbolic rendering of the souls in the *St.Michael* window and one wonders whether this had not been the case in England. Murphy believed the dark background [ILLUSTRATION 302] suggested “bad times - times of testing - such as war”⁸⁷⁵ but this in fact was reading more into the work than was intended. The background patterning was based on true Gothic precedents which Morris would have seen during his visits of 1854-55 to France [ILLUSTRATION 303]. However, known as Neverstick, this was a commercial ploy which could be priced in window estimates by the square foot.⁸⁷⁶ Such backgrounds had been used by Morris himself in the 1876 South Transept Window of St.Martin’s in the Bull Ring, Birmingham [ILLUSTRATION 304] and were utilised by Dearle in all three lights of a 1919 window by Morris & Co. in All Saints’, Hunters Hill [ILLUSTRATION 305].

Murphy insisted that stained glass windows adorned Anglican churches as a tradition uniting past and present and that only in churches would memorials be respected and maintained, those in secular buildings eventually being “resented”

⁸⁷⁴*All Souls’ Parish Magazine*, Vol.XXIII, No.4, June 1924.

⁸⁷⁵*Ibid.*, Vol.XXII, No.2, March 1924.

⁸⁷⁶See *1930 Glass Estimate Book*, op.cit., costings for Malvern Methodist Church, South Australia (not carried out due to “financial stress in Australia”), and the St.James window for St.John’s, Salisbury, South Australia.

and ultimately removed.⁸⁷⁷ Yet his stand was not solely based on the spiritual. With regard to the *War* window he admitted that

... I sometimes prayed that our church might have some work of art which would be peculiarly precious and would attract people here by its beauty, and that prayer was granted ...⁸⁷⁸

On his departure from All Souls' Murphy's final message to his flock was in no way pastoral. He saw his most important work in the parish, that to which he had given most of his "affection and energy", as the tangible rather than the spiritual creation of his church:

... Its internal decoration has caused me much thought and care and I now confidently leave it to my successors in the hope that nothing but the best of glass, marble, and wood will be used in the future as in the past.⁸⁷⁹

The body of All Souls' contains fifteen stained glass windows. When Murphy retired in 1927 only the four Morris & Co. windows were in place however this small number began a veritable tradition of stained glass windows in the church. It was nine years after Murphy's retirement before the next window appeared, the *St. John* of 1936,⁸⁸⁰ donated by Emma Egerton Jones in memory of her late husband and made by the Brisbane firm of R.S.Exton & Co. to the design of William Bustard

[ILLUSTRATION 285]. This was the first of seven windows supplied by this team up

⁸⁷⁷*All Souls' Parish Magazine*, Vol.XX, No.2, December 1920 and Vol.XVII, No.7, March 1918.

⁸⁷⁸*Ibid.*, Vol.XX, No.2, December 1920.

⁸⁷⁹*Ibid.*, Vol.XXV, No.11, April 1927; also Vol.XX, No.2, December 1920.

⁸⁸⁰*Ibid.*, Vol.XXXIII, No.66, March 1936.

to 1950. The second of the Exton/Bustard windows was that dedicated to the memory of Canon Murphy and his wife, the *St. George* of 1940 [ILLUSTRATION 306]. Why Emma Jones decided to use the Brisbane firm for her donation is not known. The selection of the window for Murphy however was placed in the hands of a committee which included the Rev. H.H. Coles, the church Wardens and Jane Wendt, and the figure of St. George was chosen “to harmonise with the other windows”. Designs from Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide were examined before the order was placed with Exton & Co.⁸⁸¹ Murphy’s view that Australian stained glass window manufacture was inferior to British was manifestly not upheld by the selection committee. It clearly considered its options carefully before coming to a decision based on aesthetic, not monetary, grounds. By June 1941, some ten months after the *St. George* window was installed and dedicated, the total cost of £125 was finally covered, nearly half being met by donations from the Murphys’ daughters and friends, the remainder raised by subscription among the parishioners.⁸⁸² The twenty years between Morris & Co.’s *St. Michael* and Exton & Co.’s *St. George* had seen an escalation near 60 per cent in cost for windows of exactly the same size.

Murphy’s call in 1918 for windows to display “uniformity in design and quality” was logical and rational. At All Souls’ it was not satisfied entirely by Morris & Co. as he had envisaged but strongly reinforced by the Exton/Bustard partnership. Yorkshire-born Bustard trained as a stained glass artist with James Powell & Sons before migrating to Australia in 1921. R.S. Exton & Co. also had a long tradition in the craft having been established since the 1880s. In its approach to its Australian

⁸⁸¹Ibid., Vol.XXXVII, No.50, June 1940; Vol.XXXVII, No.51, July 1940.

⁸⁸²Ibid., Vol.XXXVII, No.54, October 1940; Vol.XXXVII, No.60, June 1941.

market the firm was both highly competitive and unashamedly proud of its productions. In advertising in Sydney the company ensured that prospective clients were aware that Exton & Co. utilised the two most important ingredients in producing quality windows: “exclusive stocks of rare English glasses, and a Staff of Artist Designers and Craftsmen thoroughly grounded in the best principles and practice of their art”.⁸⁸³ In Bustard’s designing for Exton & Co. the early influence of James Powell & Sons is strongly evident: rather solid, static figures within three-dimensional settings, decorative work replacing Gothic Revival canopies if need be [ILLUSTRATIONS 307-308]. The modernity of Bustard’s work was apparent in the facial features while Exton’s colouring and leadline placements followed the same tradition as laid down by Powell & Sons and Morris & Co. All the Exton/Bustard windows in All Souls’ are compatible, despite the date range of 1936-1950. This was not the case with the Morris & Co. windows because the open background for the two earliest did not take into account the strong natural light in Australia and particularly the *St. Paul* on the north wall [ILLUSTRATION 306] suffers in consequence. Having been established in Brisbane for over fifty years before providing their first All Souls’ window, Exton & Co. obviously were keenly aware of Australian conditions and none of their windows are affected as Morris & Co.’s *St. Paul*. The Exton/Bustard windows complement the later Morris & Co. windows: it can be seen with *Valiant for Truth*, added in 1947 to the war memorials on the south side of the church, how comfortably the work fits with *St. Michael*, *Jonathan* appearing obtrusive [ILLUSTRATION 301].

⁸⁸³*The Home*, Vol.6, No.4, August 1925, p.46C.

The last Morris & Co. window to appear at All Souls' was *Peace* of 1939, installed in the transept chapel opposite that displaying *War* and in memory of Hermann Koeppen Wendt who died on 13 February 1938 [ILLUSTRATION 309]. Wendt's widow and daughter made one of their numerous trips to England some sixteen months after his death and Jane related that she hoped to see the *Peace* window which was then already "under construction".⁸⁸⁴ Concern was voiced regarding the whereabouts of the travellers in October when war had broken out and also for the window which was to be shipped in September, however Jane and Lois embarked safely for home in November 1939, the same month that the window arrived at All Souls'.⁸⁸⁵ The *Peace* window was unveiled on Christmas Eve by Wendt's grandson Peter and according to the Rev. Coles

helps still further to create an atmosphere of devotion in this church which Mr. H.K. Wendt loved so dearly and served so faithfully, and for which he did so much. ...⁸⁸⁶

The *Peace* window is virtually the same as the original 1920 Dearle design for St.Bartholomew's, Wilmslow [ILLUSTRATION 310], save for the alterations necessary to accommodate slightly different window shapes. Unlike the variety of treatment afforded the two *War* windows, the *Peace* window at All Souls' remained faithful to the colour scheme of its earlier St.Bartholomew prototype. *Peace* exhibits those features which Sewter listed as typical of Dearle's designing:

⁸⁸⁴ *All Souls' Parish Magazine*, Vol.XXXVII, No.40, July 1939.

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol.XXXVII, No.43, October 1939 and Vol.XXXVII, No.44, November 1939.

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol.XXXVII, No.46, February 1940.

... the attitude of the figure is uninteresting; ... the background of rather bare hilly landscape, and the foreground filled with a profusion of wild flowers.⁸⁸⁷

[ILLUSTRATIONS 311-312]

In view of Sewter's dismissive attitude towards *War, Victory and Peace*, one might assume that his observations above-quoted were intended to be disparaging. Yet they are, in fact, important indicators to positive aspects of Morris & Co.'s continuing existence. First was Dearle's own contribution of original designs to the firm. The management's decision in the twentieth century to trade strongly on the names of Morris and Burne-Jones left Dearle without recognition and with the inference that he simply regurgitated Burne-Jones' designs. However Dearle provided some 129 "principal" stained glass window designs.⁸⁸⁸ There is no doubt that there is often an awkwardness to his figure delineations. This inadequacy would have resulted from the fact that Dearle was allowed very little figure designing during his first twenty years with Morris & Co., this position being controlled by Burne-Jones. Thus with Burne-Jones' death in 1898 Dearle lacked experience in this area upon which to call. His early drawing abilities may also have been affected by his father's profession as a mechanical draughtsman.⁸⁸⁹ This want of skill was a downside to the company's in-house training programme. The "foreground filled with a profusion of wild flowers" was an upside resulting from Dearle's years of such designing for the company's tapestries. In his acute observations of nature Dearle never lost sight of the fact that he was designing for

⁸⁸⁷Sewter, op.cit., Vol.I, 1974, p.79.

⁸⁸⁸Ibid., Vol.II, 1975, pp.245-246.

⁸⁸⁹Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., p.96.

two-dimensional media. Together with the backgrounds “of rather bare hilly landscape”, the floral foregrounds in the windows contributed to a new iconography which Dearle alone had to invent as Morris & Co. faced a world changed by the Great War. The backgrounds reveal a neutrality of place, the foregrounds an intimacy of comfortable memories. The “attitude” of the figures no longer exhibits the dynamism or elegance of Burne-Jones’ decorative presentations, but stolid, quiet images intended to communicate a consoling serenity. Paul Thompson has claimed that in “the hands of Morris and Burne-Jones” defects in Morris & Co. windows “were usually concealed by the quality of the colour and the inventiveness of the design” but in “lesser hands ... technical lifelessness was manifest”.⁸⁹⁰ Ingenuity in terms of energy may not have been a strong point in Dearle’s work however the “quality of the colour” remained paramount. Dearle was a true master of colour harmonies and this attribute breathed life into his designs.

By the time of the installation of the *Peace* window at All Souls’ Dearle had been dead for seven years. His younger son Duncan had assumed control at the Merton Abbey Works, however Duncan lacked the verve and dedication which his father since a youth had brought to Morris & Co. Duncan was indicative of the company’s new workforce which progressively replaced retiring workers who had either known Morris or felt his influence through Henry Dearle. Percy Sheldrick, who worked for some nineteen years for the firm until 1939, later noted that standards deteriorated under Duncan Dearle and that “things were very different”.⁸⁹¹ Douglas Griffiths, who worked at Merton Abbey from 1934 to 1939, considered that “the

⁸⁹⁰Paul Thompson, *op.cit.*, p.146.

⁸⁹¹Typescript of information from Percy Sheldrick, September 1959, *op.cit.*

Company simply stagnated".⁸⁹² The coming of World War II was the final blow to the firm as it struggled financially and artistically to compete in the retail sector. The business was placed in the hands of an official receiver in March 1940 and wound up by May. Managing director H.C. Marillier accepted that "The war has killed Morris & Co.",⁸⁹³ however with the 1939 *Peace* window it is also obvious that by this time certain qualities always associated with Morris & Co. were no longer outstanding. While the fine skills of the company's glass painters remained,⁸⁹⁴ the most imaginative and inspirational quality upon which the firm's stained glass reputation had been founded and sustained - surety of colour - was no longer there. This is particularly evident when comparing the insipid dress hues in the left light [ILLUSTRATION 311] with original tonings [ILLUSTRATION 313]. It is a sad reflection that this should have been the farewell opus for the firm in Australia, in a church which had sought to promote Morris & Co. as the best in the field of stained glass window production.

When Morris & Co. closed in 1940 the stained glass department was bought by Duncan Dearle. Two of his windows of 1948 appear in the western porches of St. Augustine's Anglican Church, Unley, South Australia. In the south-west porch, the entrance to the bell tower, is a scene portraying the proclamation of South

⁸⁹²Typescript of information given by Douglas Griffiths on 23 April 1968, op.cit.

⁸⁹³Parry, op.cit., p.127.

⁸⁹⁴The glass painters mostly involved with Australian windows were Titcomb, Stokes, Seeley and Chadwick. Stokes was specialising in background and tracery work when Dearle was one of the company's main painters from 1879 to 1892, graduating to full figures after this time. Titcomb joined the stable in 1896 and remained until 1930. Seeley was prominent between 1926 and 1938. Chadwick fulfilled Stokes early role from around 1920, progressing to figure work in 1932. He was entirely responsible for painting All Souls' *Peace* window (Gleaned from Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit.).

Australia as a colony on 28 December 1836; in the north-west porch, the main entrance to the church, is the depiction of the meeting between St. Augustine and his monks and King Ethelbert in 597 [ILLUSTRATION 314]. In terms of composition, construction and colour the Duncan Dearle windows show none of the boldness or brilliance of Morris & Co. productions, despite the fact that Duncan assured the company's past patrons that it was "his steadfast intention to maintain the high traditions associated with MORRIS STAINED GLASS"⁸⁹⁵.

As with All Souls', St. Augustine's opened with plain glass windows [ILLUSTRATION 46]. Before its completion in 1924 the Rector, E.H. Fernie, had received an offer of stained glass for one of the three major compartments in the east window provided that the other two were also donated.⁸⁹⁶ It was three years more before he announced that he had received "a most beautiful design for the East Window of the church designed by a first-class English stained glass window firm" and that such could be viewed by parishioners in the Vestry. The costs of the left and centre portions had been covered, however no donor had been forthcoming with the £220 needed for the right section.⁸⁹⁷ The exhibition of the sketch design in the Vestry was obviously aimed at remedying this situation. One month later, in June 1927, Fernie could declare that the window was ordered and how its total cost had been covered.⁸⁹⁸

⁸⁹⁵Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., p.484.

⁸⁹⁶*The Church of S. Augustine, Unley, Parish Paper*, Vol.XVIII, No.2, February 1924.

⁸⁹⁷*Ibid.*, Vol.XXI, No.5, May 1927.

⁸⁹⁸*Ibid.*, Vol.XXI, No.6, June 1927.

Except for the small Duncan Dearle windows in the porches, St. Augustine's has only two stained glass windows - the major East and West Windows. Both are by Morris & Co. and they thus exist virtually without competition from other firms or other styles. The great East Window is without doubt the most successful Morris & Co. window design in Australia [ILLUSTRATION 315] and should rightly be acknowledged among the company's best productions. It is a highly accomplished amalgamation by Dearle of adaptations of designs dating from 1862 to 1920 by Morris, Madox Brown, Burne-Jones and Dearle himself, its striking unification revealing Dearle's fine understanding of Morris's legacy of colour sensibilities. This window is a tangible argument against sweeping statements which denigrate Dearle's work as mediocre, lifeless, mechanical and stagnant.⁸⁹⁹ Charles Sewter has suggested that the most meritorious Morris & Co. windows are those for which original designs were produced because these are "most suited to their situation, and best integrated into the total architectural effect".⁹⁰⁰ Certainly these requirements were not always satisfied by repeated designs, however St. Augustine's East Window succeeds in both cases.⁹⁰¹

⁸⁹⁹Paul Thompson, *op.cit.*, p.146; Poulson (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.39; Bond & Dear, *op.cit.*, pp.16-17.

⁹⁰⁰Sewter, *op.cit.*, Vol.I, 1974, p.84.

⁹⁰¹Many of the design principles used by Dearle for St. Augustine's East Window had been thoroughly worked through when he created two years earlier the considerably larger East Window for the Old Parish Church, Langholm, Dumfriesshire. Charles Sewter rightly recognised this Scottish commission as being "one of the firm's finest achievements in the 1920s" (*Ibid.*, Vol.II, 1975, p.110). While some compositional arrangements and colour selections are the same in both windows there are nonetheless clear and decisive differences in effect. For Langholm images fill three large lancets in a three tier arrangement; for the simpler Unley commission only three subjects were needed, each spanning a two light width. The overall impact of each window relies on a different unifying colour scheme, red predominating at Langholm, blue at Unley.

The left paired lights displaying the Adoration were those for which the first donation had been offered in February 1924, by the widow of James Barton. Barton had died on 9 May 1918 just after the induction of Fernie and the decision to build the new church. The scene was adapted from Burne-Jones' 1887 *Adoration* tapestry design. A version of this tapestry was displayed in Unley Town Hall in September 1902 and was thus well known to locals. Mrs Barton's condition on her gift, that the other two compartments of the East Window needed to be presented at the same time, drew no response. Fortuitously, on 16 November 1924 church stalwart Priscilla Bickford died. Mrs Bickford bequeathed to St. Augustine's the sum of £750. This was initially earmarked for the building fund but probably because there were no offers for the stained glass in the ensuing years it was decided to allocate a portion of the legacy for the centre section of the East Window.⁹⁰² St. Augustine's Ascension was based on Burne-Jones 1884 design for the Chancel East Window of St. Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham [ILLUSTRATION 316], the original cartoon for which was acquired in 1906 by the National Gallery of Victoria [ILLUSTRATION 317]. The upper part of the Unley work faithfully recreated the figure of Christ from the original and the general feeling of Burne-Jones' angels behind, however the necessity to divide the Ascension between two lights at St. Augustine's meant that Dearle was required to off-set the central focus. In so doing Dearle here successfully presented an asymmetrical design despite Sewter's assertion that it was a "principle which Dearle never fully mastered".⁹⁰³ For the lower half of the St. Augustine's Ascension Dearle reworked his own design of 1903 for Troon Old Parish Church,

⁹⁰²*The Church of S. Augustine, Unley, Parish Paper*, Vol. XVIII, No. 12, December 1924 and Vol. XXI, No. 5, May 1927.

⁹⁰³Sewter, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, 1974, p. 80.

Ayrshire [ILLUSTRATION 318]. Sewter considers the Ayrshire window one of Dearle's most successful and that the designer had "created in this instance not only a moving representation of his subject in a pictorial sense, but also a window admirably related to its architectural position".⁹⁰⁴ The latter consideration may well account for Dearle's decision not to rely simply on his own Ascension composition where, according to Sewter, "much of the dynamic upward movement ... is due to the structure of the window tracery".⁹⁰⁵ The more static upper portion of Burne-Jones' Ascension lent itself to the broader window space at St. Augustine's.

The third section of the East Window depicting the first Easter morning was donated by Mrs Kanaley in memory of her daughter Ada, immediately following the Rector's appeal once he had received the sketch design.⁹⁰⁶ The death of Ada Ethel Kanaley on 19 December 1923 was tragically sudden and even Fernie was shocked enough to admit in rather unpriestly terms that "it was hard to see why her life should end like that".⁹⁰⁷ She was a devoted attendant and worker for St. Augustine's and, according to Fernie, "She was of the salt of the earth - unselfish, reliable, most truly kind, and full of zeal for Christ's cause".⁹⁰⁸ Again Dearle amalgamated a design of his own with one by Burne-Jones, as he had for the Ascension. For the right-hand side he adapted the right and centre lights of his 1910 composition for St. Stephen's, Tonbridge, Kent [ILLUSTRATION 319]. The flaw with this English work for Charles Sewter was poor visual connection between the right-hand light and its companions,

⁹⁰⁴Ibid.

⁹⁰⁵Ibid.

⁹⁰⁶*The Church of S. Augustine, Unley, Parish Paper*, VolXXI, No.6, June 1927.

⁹⁰⁷Ibid., Vol.XVII, No.1, January 1924.

⁹⁰⁸Ibid.

the former “looking like an afterthought”. For comparison he put forward Burne-Jones’ *Mary Magdalene at the Sepulchre* of 1878 in the church of St. Michael and St. Mary Magdalene, Easthampstead, Berkshire [ILLUSTRATION 320], to “show up the weakness of Dearle’s conception, with its static, expressionless angel and its lack of any embracing rhythm”.⁹⁰⁹ It was from this Burne-Jones work that Dearle purloined a more dynamic angel for St. Augustine’s and together with the tightening of the composition on the right he not only remedied the shortcomings observed by Sewter, he also visually tied the two lights to the adjoining Ascension.

In the tracery of the East Window Dearle incorporated above the Adoration and the Marys at the Sepulchre four trumpeting angels, the two above the Adoration being adaptations from the left and right lights of his 1920 *Victory* window which complemented *War* and *Peace* in St. Bartholomew’s, Wilmslow [ILLUSTRATIONS 321-322]. Above the Ascension are the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. These had originally been designed in 1862 for one of the firm’s earliest commissions, G.F. Bodley’s St. Michael and All Angels in Brighton, Sussex [ILLUSTRATION 323], the Michael by Madox Brown and the Gabriel by Morris.

The East Window was dedicated in June 1928. Fernie had been excited “as little by little the whole window was fixed in its place” and his attention was turned to providing more stained glass for the church. The West Window was the first consideration, not immediately for aesthetic reasons:

⁹⁰⁹Sewter, op.cit., Vol.I, 1974, pp.80-81.

... I should particularly like to see the West Window designed by the same firm. Stained glass there is badly needed, as the glare at present on a hot summer afternoon at the time of baptisms is most unpleasant. ... ⁹¹⁰

But Fernie later admitted that turning from the East Window and looking down the church, he wished “to see the same beautiful glass there also”⁹¹¹ [ILLUSTRATION 324]. The cost of the West Window was estimated at between £440-£480 and a sketch design was sought as for the East Window⁹¹² [ILLUSTRATION 248]. The order was placed in May 1929.⁹¹³

The West Window is entirely based on Dearle designs and the four lights treated in pairs as the East Window had been. On the left is the *Road to Emmaus* closely following Dearle’s 1911 window in St.Stephen’s, Tonbridge, Kent [ILLUSTRATION 325], an adjustment in figure spacing required for the wider lights in St.Augustine’s. The right-hand section contains the *Calling of St.Peter*, taken from the centre and right lights of Dearle’s 1902 window for St.Peter’s, Swinton, Lancashire [ILLUSTRATION 326]. In this instance a change in the positioning of the figures resulted in a different treatment of the lower portion of the design. An ungainliness in figure delineation and lack of expression is apparent in the West Window yet it nonetheless succeeds, through the “simplicity of presentation” noted by Sewter in

⁹¹⁰*The Church of S.Augustine, Unley, Parish Paper*, Vol.XXII, No.6, June 1928.

⁹¹¹*Ibid.*, Vol.XXIII, No.5, May 1929.

⁹¹²*Ibid.*, Vol.XXII, No.7, July 1928.

⁹¹³*Ibid.*, Vol.XXIII, No.5, May 1929.

the original *Road to Emmaus*⁹¹⁴ and also through the surety of colour repeated from the East Window.

The *Road to Emmaus* was the gift of Walter D. Chambers of Wattle Street in memory of his wife Diana Elizabeth Chambers who died on Easter Day 1928. Mrs Chambers was a regular worshipper and generous helper at St. Augustine's and, according to Fernie, she "was essentially a "happy rejoicing Christian," always cheerful, full of real humour, exceedingly wise, and most wonderfully kind".⁹¹⁵ Walter Chambers died on 16 October 1929, a year before the West Window was dedicated, and it would have been the Chambers' daughter Mrs Dempster who added her father's name to the memorial accompanying the Emmaus lights.⁹¹⁶

The memorial of the *Calling of St. Peter* is to George Henry and Amelia Catchlove. Amelia died on 13 April 1929 at the age of 94. Her age was obviously no barrier to her involvement with the church and her personality would appear to strongly contrast with that of Diana Chambers. While Fernie tempered his description of her with visions of kindness and good-heartedness, her strongest points appeared as level-headedness and intense practicality. She obviously rubbed many people the wrong way.

... It were easy to criticise her type, as all others, but I doubt whether the present age will produce women who in their old age will be quite so lovable, quite so commanding of respect as she was. ...⁹¹⁷

⁹¹⁴Sewter, op.cit., Vol.I, 1974, p.81.

⁹¹⁵*The Church of S. Augustine, Unley, Parish Paper*, Vol.XXII, No.5, May 1928.

⁹¹⁶*Ibid.*, Vol.XXIII, No.11, November 1929.

⁹¹⁷*Ibid.*, Vol.XXIII, No.5, May 1929.

Fernie not only missed her ready sympathy but also he regretted “the loss of her keen and frankly spoken criticisms of the things she did not approve”.⁹¹⁸ Her attachment to her church was shown at her death in a bequest of £200. That she was so obviously a difficult woman was reflected in Fernie’s wish, not stated elsewhere, that “her soul find truest peace”.⁹¹⁹ So that the West Window could become a reality it was decided to use Amelia Catchlove’s legacy to supplement the donation from Walter Chambers. Relatives and friends of Mrs Catchlove promised to make up any shortfall in funds required and this would account for George Catchlove’s addition to the memorial.⁹²⁰

The variety of qualities inherent in the dedicatees of St. Augustine’s windows poses an interesting aspect in the creation, manner and support of this particular art form. Vastly contrasting personalities could be united to allow for the blossoming of major presentations rather than simply single images. Their individuality was outweighed by their religious communion. St. Augustine’s windows offer strong support for the Rev. George Dove’s insistence that stained glass windows lift the human spirit beyond the material to focus on the essence of the ethereal.

⁹¹⁸In 2000 Mary Steele recalled her Auntie Nettie who “spoke her mind as Adelaide matrons did” (Steele, op.cit., p.53).

⁹¹⁹*The Church of S. Augustine, Unley, Parish Paper*, Vol.XXIII, No.5, May 1929.

⁹²⁰Ibid.

Fernie was not to see St. Augustine's West Window dedicated. He moved to Melbourne in 1929, his last service at St. Augustine's being held on 15 September. He was replaced by H. Wallace Bird from Western Australia. It was noted that the West Window was on its way from England in July 1930 yet it was another three months before it was installed and dedicated. Bird was impressed:

... The artist has excelled himself both in the presentation of the two themes, and also in the execution of his work. Design, colour, perspective and interpretation are perfect. ...⁹²¹

The total combined cost of St. Augustine's East and West Windows was £1,408.⁹²²

It was Fernie's desire to see the church filled with stained glass. Following the dedication of the East Window, he not only promoted the West Window but made known his hope that all the clerestory windows should eventually be filled, at a probable cost of £100 each [ILLUSTRATION 327]. He intended to seek designs for these windows so that "some definite scheme" would be at hand but following his move to Melbourne there is no indication that the matter was ever carried further.⁹²³

St. Augustine's is probably the better for the Rev. Fernie's ultimate proposal not being fulfilled. Not only does it increase the opportunity for the glory of the East and West windows to be recognised it also allows the sobriety of the church's interior to be appreciated. With the great East Window John Henry Dearle

⁹²¹Ibid., Vol. XXIV, No. 7, July 1930 and Vol. XXIV, No. 10, October 1930.

⁹²²*St. Augustine's Unley 1870-1930 Diamond Jubilee Souvenir.*

⁹²³*The Church of S. Augustine, Unley, Parish Paper, Vol. XXII, No. 6, June 1928.*

performed at his most proficient in terms of understanding the tenets laid down by Morris himself for stained glass windows: suitability to site, excellent draughtsmanship, effective mosaic designing and superb colour coordination.

The Morris & Co. stained glass windows in St. Augustine's obviously had an influence on churchgoers in the Unley area and were surely responsible for the appearance of stained glass in the Baptist Church of neighbouring suburb Unley Park.

Baptist preaching began in Unley Park around 1903, presumably in a temporary dwelling, and the present church begun in 1917.⁹²⁴ The main assembly area is a large airy room with the windows set high in the walls. These were all of plain glass in a leadlight pattern until the appearance in 1931 of Morris & Co.'s *Light of the World* [ILLUSTRATION 328]. Clarkson Ltd's *Good Shepherd* was added in 1948 [ILLUSTRATION 45] on the opposite side of the room. Both subjects were extremely popular with Protestant churches in and around Adelaide.⁹²⁵ Morris & Co. provided a *Light of the World* at only one other location, the Wesleyan Chapel in Earl Shilton, Leicestershire [ILLUSTRATION 329].

Charles Sewter has dealt harshly with Morris & Co.'s *Light of the World*, citing it as a vivid example in later years of the firm's "betrayal" of early principles by

⁹²⁴Presence of a pastor recorded by the church in 1903; cornerstone of church dated 8 December 1917.

⁹²⁵The *Light of the World* appears in nine Protestant and five Anglican churches, the *Good Shepherd* in nine Protestant and fourteen Anglican churches (see Gazetteer in Donovan, *150 Years of Stained & Painted Glass*, op.cit., pp.70-77).

reverting “to the early nineteenth-century practice of copying paintings”.⁹²⁶ In 1913 Dearle designed a two-light window for All Saints, Freshwater, Isle of Wight, based on paintings by G.F. Watts⁹²⁷ and in 1931 Morris & Co. produced a “glass copy” of Frank Dicksee’s *Harmony* for the Vancouver Art Gallery.⁹²⁸ K. Corey Keeble has stated that “Morris & Co. eschewed academic copies” and, contrary to Sewter’s opinion, cited the interpretation of *Harmony* as “an exception to its usual practice”.⁹²⁹ Sewter assumed the two Morris & Co. *Light of the World* windows to be identical and classified them as simply a translation into glass of William Holman Hunt’s 1853 painting⁹³⁰ [ILLUSTRATION 330]. Yet a comparison of the Unley Park window with the Leicestershire rendering shows that the Australian window received an individual interpretation. It would seem that W.H. Knight, who joined Morris & Co.’s glass painters in 1899 and soon after began designing features such as borders, backgrounds and tracery figures, was responsible for the initial translation of Hunt’s painting and the Leicestershire window was undoubtedly constructed from his rendition. For the Unley Park window the *Catalogue of Designs* states that the figure of Christ was “revised...by Mr. Dearle”,⁹³¹ suggesting that Dearle was not content to send a work to South Australia without Morris & Co. distinctiveness. The Leicestershire window would have been constructed after Dearle’s death in 1932 and thus without his discernment. Comparison of Morris & Co.’s Unley Park

⁹²⁶Sewter, op.cit., Vol.I, 1974, p.82.

⁹²⁷Bond & Dear, op.cit., pp.20-21: the window’s subjects were *Sir Galahad with a horse* and *Compact* showing Galahad in armour with an angel.

⁹²⁸Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., p.451; *1930 Glass Estimate Book*, op.cit., 12 June 1931.

⁹²⁹Lochnan, Schoenherr, Silver (Eds), op.cit., p.117.

⁹³⁰Sewter, op.cit., Vol.I, 1974, p.82.

⁹³¹Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., p.448.

Light of the World with that of 1927 by Clarkson Ltd for Scots Church, Adelaide [ILLUSTRATION 331] is enough to show that under Henry Dearle Morris & Co. in no way supported slavish copying or the painterly technique of early nineteenth-century work. For Unley Park Dearle ensured a continuation of traditions set down by Burne-Jones in his handling of the drapery and his change in the attitude of Christ moved the focal point of the lamp to bring the whole figure into prominence. The strong use of lead-lines ultimately stamped the window with Morris & Co.'s trademarks of adherence to the mosaic system of window designing and resultant brilliance and purity of colour.

If not for Dearle's notable understanding of Morris's tenets for all Morris & Co. products, combined with his own considerable abilities as a designer⁹³² and colourist, there can be no doubt that Morris & Co. would not have survived as long as it did. While Dearle may not have been as "imaginative or ingenious" as Morris in his pattern work⁹³³ or as competent as Burne-Jones in his figure drawing, he did nonetheless "make up for this in many ways with his own skills".⁹³⁴ He fully understood the processes for which he designed.⁹³⁵ The windows provided by Morris & Co. for mainland Australian churches were all controlled by Dearle except for All Souls' *Peace*. These clearly showed appropriateness of image, consideration of architectural setting, quality workmanship and the company's identifiable traits of colour and mosaic arrangement. While Dearle may have been "very strict" in the

⁹³²See Parry, *op.cit.*, pp.30, 56, 71, 97.

⁹³³*Ibid.*, p.70.

⁹³⁴*Ibid.*

⁹³⁵See, for example, the manuscript "Article on Textiles for Catalogue of the Paris Exhibition 1914 by Dearle" in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

workplace he nonetheless held the respect of fellow Morris & Co. workers because he “was a fine craftsman and kept high standards”.⁹³⁶ His rapport with clients was both kind and courteous and because of this he successfully guided their choices not only in stained glass windows but also in decorative arrangements for their homes. Although Morris & Co. was “not founded to be a conventional company”, Dearle managed with his insight and acumen to bring to the firm a “more saleable” image which carried it through a further forty-odd years after Morris’s death “within the conventional commercial market”.⁹³⁷

⁹³⁶Typescript of information supplied by former weaver Percy Sheldrick, September 1959, among miscellaneous articles by Morris & Co. workers in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

⁹³⁷Parry, *op.cit.*, pp.70-71. There are perhaps two primary differences between the Morris & Co. windows for which Dearle was responsible and those controlled by Morris and Burne-Jones. Progressively from the firm’s founding the Morris-regulated windows leant towards purely decorative glazing. In contrast the wants of a public affected by the Great War were satisfied by Dearle’s kindling of a strong spiritual overtone to his windows. In addition Dearle appeared to follow expressionistic use of colour in religious terms.

CHAPTER 10: AUSTRALIANS ACQUIRING MORRIS & CO.
PRODUCTS, 1900-1939: PRIVATE NEEDS AND MORRIS & CO.

MARKETING

Between 1900 and 1939 Australians purchased Morris & Co. wallpapers, printed and woven fabrics, carpets, tapestries, stained glass, and even original cartoons for stained glass, for reasons which were as diverse as the items themselves. Imports not previously discussed in this work will be considered here. These purposely include some stained glass. Examination of Morris & Co. manufactures most often centres on two disconnected areas - interior decoration and stained glass. Yet all Morris & Co.'s products were entities integrated by the principles underlying their manufacture: recognisable image construction; and quality of materials and workmanship. The company's stained glass windows did not result from a separate business set-up but were produced at Merton Abbey along with the textiles and by a workforce united in surroundings and work ethics. Thus the company's range of manufactures should be accepted as the single output of Morris & Co.

Selection of Morris & Co. articles was for Australians greatly affected by the manner in which the company marketed its manufactures. Personal attendance at Morris & Co.'s London bases remained the main point of contact between customer and product. Knowledge of the company through other than media promotion was essential⁹³⁸ although this tack was modified when Morris & Co. placed

⁹³⁸Among questions asked of Morris on 25 March 1888 by members of the Socialist League in Glasgow was "Why does the firm of Morris & Co. object to advertise its manufactures?" (Glasier, op.cit., p.62). Unfortunately Morris's answer is not recorded.

advertisements for stained glass between May 1914 and June 1921 in the Sydney-based *The Church Standard*.

The coming of the Great War obviously affected the stained glass industry generally. As an example, the output of John Hardman & Co. almost halved during the War years from around 120 commissions per year in the 1880s.⁹³⁹ It was to be expected that an interest would be renewed in the medium with the seeking of memorial windows to fallen soldiers and this was particularly so in Australia where families sought consolation beyond a photograph of a war grave in a foreign land. Thus to advertise at this time would suggest a sound business decision. The earliest advertisements placed by Morris & Co. in *The Church Standard* were illustrated and remained unchanged for four years [ILLUSTRATION 332]. Prospective customers were directed to the firm's London shop and Merton Abbey works.⁹⁴⁰ In stained glass this was for Morris & Co. a standard practice for ordering. At the Boston Foreign Fair of 1883 clients were likewise advised to send instructions to the company's Oxford Street address. When the firm began in 1909 issuing catalogues on its various activities it stipulated enquiries for stained glass be referred to Merton Abbey, with sketches and photographs of cartoons available for perusal at the London shop.⁹⁴¹ The illustration in the Australian advertisements was of Justice from Neston Church, Cheshire, with figure designed by Burne-Jones in 1883 for

⁹³⁹*Hardman Collection Indexes, Windows 1866-1882 and Windows 1883-1937* (Archives Department, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery). Australian firms were equally affected by staff shortages and more so by shipping restrictions which could limit base supplies.

⁹⁴⁰Morris & Co.'s first illustrated advertisement for stained glass appeared in *The Church Standard* of 1 May 1914, p.7. The company advertised fortnightly thereafter.

⁹⁴¹*The Merton Abbey Arras Tapestries*, op.cit., p.25: "Morris Stained Glass" (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, General File No.11).

Boston, U.S.A., and painted for Neston in 1888 by Dearle.⁹⁴² It was taken from a 1913 Morris & Co. brochure on stained glass.⁹⁴³

The most outstanding feature of the entire run of Sydney advertisements over seven years was the bold presentation of the names Morris and Burne-Jones. The firm's management clearly believed that the popularity of Morris & Co.'s stained glass rested entirely upon the acknowledged reputations of the two who had formalised its style. Yet as shown in the previous Chapter, for some Australian clients this conviction was faulty and the company was misguided in not acknowledging Dearle's role. For many Australians the company's repute for quality and Dearle's helpfulness were paramount considerations when placing orders.

Initially it was felt necessary to expressly mention in *The Church Standard* advertisements that Morris & Co. had no relation to any other firm using the name of Morris, and this was done with some good reason for the Australian market. Following the dedication of the magnificent Morris & Co. East Window in St. Augustine's, Unley, in June 1928, the Rector E.H. Fernie had been so impressed that he reported to his parishioners that he "should particularly like to see the West Window designed by the same firm"⁹⁴⁴ yet when the West Window was ordered, Fernie announced "with very great joy" that such had been placed with the firm of

⁹⁴²Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., p.56.

⁹⁴³*A Note on the Morris Stained Glass Work*, op.cit., facing p.21 (William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, general File No.11a). For some unaccountable reason this brochure dates the Neston window at 1906.

⁹⁴⁴*The Church of S. Augustine, Unley, Parish Paper*, Vol.XXII, No.6, June 1928.

William Morris & Son.⁹⁴⁵ The Rector's misquoting of the company name indicates that he was completely unaware of the reputations of the designers which featured so prominently in *The Church Standard* advertisements. Morris & Son are represented in South Australia with two windows in Christ Church, Kadina [ILLUSTRATION 333], one of the towns developed to service a local mining industry. It is not possible to mistake the works for those of Morris & Co. despite the fact that a recent listing to this effect does occur.⁹⁴⁶ Not only do the Kadina windows present a highly popular Perpendicular Gothic Revival style of stalwart figure with elaborate pedestal and canopy but in the lower left corner of the St. Paul appears the name Morris & Son with the partial address 239 Kensington, London. Specifically the Morris & Co. warning against spurious firms referred to "William Morris & Company" which was set up in Ruskin House, Rochester Row, Westminster, London.⁹⁴⁷ This firm traded intentionally and conspicuously on the name of its managing director - "Mr. William Morris" - and its voluminous November 1912 catalogue was available in Australia.⁹⁴⁸

The Morris & Co. advertisements in *The Church Standard* were not without competition. Two other English firms vied for customers. Heaton, Butler & Bayne alternated fortnightly with Morris & Co. [ILLUSTRATION 334] and Jones & Willis advertised weekly up until June 1918 [ILLUSTRATION 335] and both, like Morris &

⁹⁴⁵Ibid., Vol. XXIII, No. 5, May 1929.

⁹⁴⁶Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., Appendix III, p. 141.

⁹⁴⁷Morris & Co.'s advertisements in *The Church Standard* also clearly stipulated its "only addresses" as 449 Oxford Street, London, and Merton Abbey, in an attempt to further clarify the true Morris & Co. for prospective customers.

⁹⁴⁸Collection of Kevin Little, Arncliffe, NSW.

Co., could only be contacted through their English addresses. The Sydney trade was represented by Smith & Worrall [ILLUSTRATION 336] and John Ashwin & Co. [ILLUSTRATION 337] who both appeared weekly until 1916 and 1918 respectively, and by F. Ashwin & Co. who outlasted Morris & Co. in their advertising and were the only stained glass manufacturer to appear on the front page of the journal. The illustration incorporated in F. Ashwin & Co.'s initial advertisements [ILLUSTRATION 338] placed them as advocates of a traditional Perpendicular Gothic Revival style in keeping with their Sydney rivals. However a change of illustration [ILLUSTRATION 339] was obviously directed towards adherents of Aesthetic preferences and was more to the flavour of Morris & Co. and Daniel Cottier. Interstate advertisers were the Melbourne firm of Brooks Robinson & Co. to mid-1915; from March to August 1915 Brisbane's C.E. Tute who traded on his prior connection with C.E. Kempe & Co.⁹⁴⁹ [ILLUSTRATION 340] and Melbourne's William Montgomery [ILLUSTRATION 341], who matched F. Ashwin & Co. in advertising staying power. Montgomery's advertisement showed his capacity to satisfy fully the Aesthetic disposition which was anticipated in his earlier work [ILLUSTRATION 342]. The Aesthetic presentations of F. Ashwin & Co. and William Montgomery from 1916 onwards, compared to the traditional Gothic Revival imagery of Jones & Willis, Smith & Worrall, John Ashwin & Co. and C.E. Tute, show how reluctant manufacturers could be to relinquish comfortable precedents for originality.

⁹⁴⁹Tute managed to gain the inclusion in *The Church Standard* of a photograph of his window for the Community Chapel of St. Margaret's, Albion, Brisbane, after he ceased to advertise (*The Church Standard*, Vol.IV, No.176, 8 October 1915, p.7).

When Morris & Co. moved its showrooms to 17 George Street, Hanover Square, in 1917, it altered its advertisements in *The Church Standard*. The illustration was eliminated but the bold presentation of MORRIS and BURNE-JONES retained. The warning against other traders at the bottom of the advertisement was simply replaced by “Founded by William Morris the Poet”. The change was apposite for an Australian audience since Morris was perhaps generally best known here for *The Earthly Paradise*.⁹⁵⁰ Nonetheless, in other publications the firm remained vigilant to the end in cautioning against “other firms of similar name”.⁹⁵¹ Single column display advertisements in *The Church Standard* cost 3s 6d per inch, rising to 4s 6d in 1921.⁹⁵² Morris & Co.’s illustrated advertisements would have cost 14s each or £18 4s per year. The smaller advertisements, at one penny per word, would have cost around 2s each and less than £3 per year. An initial lack of response to the advertisements may have led to the cost-cutting measures although the company obviously believed there were grounds for hope. For this manufacture it was loath to forgo completely placing the name of Morris in black and white before the Australian public.

There is no evidence in extant church records to suggest that advertising in *The Church Standard* definitely brought business to Morris & Co. However the advertisements probably acted as a reinforcement to the choice of the first Morris & Co. window for Sydney in 1919 and a presumed association with the first orders for

⁹⁵⁰See, for example, *Catalogue of the Bega School of Arts Library*, op.cit., p.28.

⁹⁵¹See *Stained Glass Windows*, catalogue of Morris & Co. Art Workers Ltd., after 1930, in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

⁹⁵²*The Church Standard*, Vol.VII, No.351, 28 February 1919, p.1 and Vol.IX, No.460, 15 April 1921, p.1.

All Souls', St.Peters, Adelaide. The triple-light of *St.Patrick, St.George and St.Andrew* [ILLUSTRATION 343], supplied by Morris & Co. to All Saints', Hunters Hill, was listed in the company's *Catalogue of Designs* on 2 January 1919 as were All Souls' *St.Paul* and *Jonathan*.⁹⁵³ The All Saints' window was dedicated to Judge Charles James Manning and his two eldest sons killed during the war, Captain Guy Owen Manning accidentally in Rabaul in 1915 and Major Charles Edye Manning in France in 1916.⁹⁵⁴ When Mrs Suckling moved from Adelaide to Sydney in 1916 she obviously upheld her friendship with Mrs Bagot, resulting in the shared ordering of the two All Souls' windows. She may also have been on friendly terms with Mrs Manning and the last death, of Charles Edye Manning, might well have aroused the three women to honour their dead. In contrast to the *St.Paul* and *Jonathan* which pertinently refer to their dedicatees, the Hunters Hill Saints relate to the dedication of the church they occupy. This different approach to subject selection probably resulted from the fact that the All Souls' windows were the first stained glass for this church whereas All Saints' was already well endowed. Thus for Adelaide the Morris & Co. windows set the tenor for subsequent commissions, at Hunters Hill this was already present and was sympathetically followed by the company.

All Saints' history parallels All Souls': it began as a small chapel in the 1850s, then a more substantial building was erected on a new site between 1884 and 1888. The architect was John Horbury Hunt and the church reflects the solid, strong style which typified his work. The new church was opened with plain glass windows.

⁹⁵³Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., p.322. See discussion of All Souls' *St.Paul* and *Jonathan* in previous Chapter.

⁹⁵⁴World War I Personnel Records of Guy Owen Manning and Charles Edye Manning (National Archives of Australia, Canberra).

Twelve months later, on 12 April 1889, the great east window, costing £300 and by Lyon, Cottier & Co., was dedicated [ILLUSTRATION 344] and during the same year this firm provided other chancel and two nave windows⁹⁵⁵ [ILLUSTRATION 140]. There were no other stained glass windows before the 1919 Morris & Co. addition. Lyon always presented sincere work [ILLUSTRATION 345] and after his fledgling years in the decorative style of Ferguson & Urie concentrated his efforts within the more refined Gothic Revival idioms of posture, dress, background and setting of traditional British manufacturers [ILLUSTRATION 346]. Lyon's St.Paul in Illustration 345 compared with Morris & Co.'s St.Paul at All Souls' [ILLUSTRATION 285] highlights the latter's simplicity of design and colour while retaining recognisable figure attributes. If advertising in *The Church Standard* had some bearing on the selection of manufacturer for the 1919 windows at All Saints' and All Souls', the choice of Morris & Co. is comprehensible. Although Heaton, Butler and Bayne and Jones and Willis were advertising at the same time, their traditional Gothic Revival style, while compatible with Lyon's and thus suitable for use in All Saints', would have been totally incongruous in the Byzantine All Souls' in St.Peters. The direction taken by Morris & Co. in window design allowed for an essential integration with any architectural style, a situation which often limited its competitors.

All Saints' *Sts.Patrick, George and Andrew* were based on earlier designs by Burne-Jones for different locations: St.Patrick for Bute Hall, The University, Glasgow, in 1893; St.George for St.Martin's, Brampton, Cumberland, in 1880; and

⁹⁵⁵Nigel Hubbard, *The Sure Foundation*, Parish Council: Anglican Parish of Hunters Hill, 1988, p.21.

St.Andrew for St.Mark's, New Ferry, Cheshire, in 1877. However all three appeared together in Bute Hall [ILLUSTRATION 347] and also in the great east window of London's Holy Trinity, Chelsea [ILLUSTRATION 348]. As a wealthy Sydney family the Mannings would have been widely travelled and could have seen these saints in either location.⁹⁵⁶ It is unlikely, however, that the Manning family itself chose specifically Sts Patrick, George and Andrew from the Glasgow or Chelsea locations, as treatment and arrangement in all cases are so different. The St.George at Bute Hall and the St.Andrew at Chelsea are both in fact reverse images to those appearing at All Saints'. Rather, the family was probably aware from the existing examples of how the company presented images of saints and left selection to Dearle who simply needed to add to the array already provided by Lyon, Cottier & Co. The oft-repeated figure of St. George as he appeared at All Saints' in 1919 [ILLUSTRATION 349] again provides an excellent example of the individual treatment offered to all Morris & Co. productions, when compared to just two other of his rivals, the one in Bute Hall, University of Glasgow [ILLUSTRATION 350], dated 1893, the other in St.Margaret's, Rottingdean [ILLUSTRATION 351], of 1919.

On 19 December 1926 a second three-light Morris & Co. window was dedicated at All Saints' [ILLUSTRATION 352], in memory of Archibald Simpson and his son

⁹⁵⁶Judge Manning was himself born in Sydney but educated in England at Winchester School and Oxford (*S.M. Mowle Scrapbooks*, Vol.7: *The Truth*, 4 October 1898. Mitchell Library, Sydney, Q049/38A7). The family ties to England were therefore strong. An educational bond between Winchester and The King's School at Parramatta meant the three Manning boys attended the latter, their father being Governor of the school from 1893 until his death in 1898 (*S.M. Johnstone, The History of The King's School Parramatta*, 1932, pp.268, 330, 350, 368, 375, 377, 379). The eldest son, Charles Edye, was at Oxford at the time of his father's death (*S.M. Mowle Scrapbooks*, Vol.7, op.cit.).

George who was killed at Gallipoli in 1915.⁹⁵⁷ Charles Manning and Archibald Simpson had been judges serving at the same time and undoubtedly the families were well-acquainted. It would therefore have been natural for the Simpsons to donate a Morris & Co. window to adjoin the Manning window.

Moses, Christ Transfigured and Elijah were originally designed by Burne-Jones in 1874 for St.Cuthbert's, Lytham, Lancashire [ILLUSTRATION 353]. It was, however, upon the adaptation of 1913 for All Saints, Leigh, Staffordshire that the Hunters Hill window was based. The inclusion among Clarkson Ltd archives in Adelaide of the sketch design for the Staffordshire window [ILLUSTRATION 354] suggests that this may have been used in seeking Diocesan approval in Sydney.

Moses and Elijah had been repeated just two years after their original presentation, in the South Transept Window of St.Martin's in the Bull Ring, Birmingham [ILLUSTRATION 355]. Differences in colour and background treatment between the Birmingham and Hunters Hill productions are striking and offer another fine example of Dearle's imaginative adaptations of the company's store of designs. Dearle's move away from the heavy use of white glass with patterning which Morris favoured, to large areas of colour, often appeared to simplify designs however this was not always the case, as shown by the Hunters Hill *Sts.Patrick, George and Andrew* [ILLUSTRATION 343]. Whatever direction taken in his window treatments, Dearle never sacrificed Morris & Co.'s established principles of craftsmanship and colour sensibility.

⁹⁵⁷ *All Saints' Messenger*, New series No.13, December 1926, p.3; World War I Personnel Records of George Barre Goldie Simpson (National Archives of Australia, Canberra).

The contrast between the Morris & Co. and Lyon, Cottier windows in All Saints' is considerable, yet it cannot be asserted that the work of either company is disharmonious with its architectural setting. Viewed individually each creates a particular atmosphere and emphasises a different aspect of the space it occupies. The Lyon, Cottier windows reinforce the broad rounded shapes of Hunt's window spaces, the size of the figures regulated by the decorative canopy work and the colours generally of a warm nature. The designing of the Morris & Co. windows heightens the elongated shape of the individual lights and their cool colouring intensifies the simplicity of the figures unhampered by decorative surround features. In this instance the windows of the two firms prove to be incompatible because they exist alongside each other. There is not the architectural isolation which saved Morris & Co.'s *Dies Domini* in Newcastle's Christ Church Cathedral from a similar fate in company with the windows of C.E. Kempe & Co. All Saints' in fact demonstrates the sense of Morris's call for church "custodians" to consider "some good plan of glazing", because here indeed the work of the two companies "injures, or is injured, by its neighbours".⁹⁵⁸

The advertisements for stained glass firms in *The Church Standard* suggests healthy colonial manufacturing at the beginning of the twentieth century, however many church authorities and window donors sought out for themselves overseas work by established repute rather than advertised existence. One impressive example of such was the volume of work which entered Australia from the

⁹⁵⁸Poulson (Ed), op.cit., p.49.

Birmingham firm of John Hardman & Co. The company was particularly favoured by the Catholic Church and did not need to advertise because of this assured market. Thus Morris & Co. was not the only firm to rely almost solely on reputation for custom. During the years 1914-1921 when Morris & Co. advertised in *The Church Standard*, John Hardman & Co. fulfilled some eighty-six stained glass window commissions in Australia, fifty-six of which were in New South Wales.⁹⁵⁹ The decision by Morris & Co. to advertise its stained glass may have resulted from a recognition that the company was not as well known in Australia as perhaps previously assumed. Advertising for local firms would have been a necessity if they were at all to combat acceptances of overseas manufactures on historical rather than actual grounds.

With no outlets or agents in Australia (except for Clarksons for stained glass after 1925), by far the greatest number of Morris & Co. purchases for Australia followed personal attendance at the company's London shops or Merton Abbey works. Why the company should have so restricted the availability of its goods may only be surmised. By retaining control over the presentation of its products and over customer service the firm was able to keep intact a reputation for individual and sound advice concerning its quality range. Certainly such proved a persuasive factor for the Barr Smith family.

That the senior Barr Smiths had little influence on the decorative tastes of those outside their immediate family circle suggests that Morris & Co.'s trust in word of

⁹⁵⁹Deduced from *Hardman Archive. Stained Glass Designs. Indices: Australasia* (Archives Department, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery).

mouth promotion was unreliable. Friendships of the younger generation however may well have led to some use of Morris & Co. furnishings among other Adelaide residents. For example, Leonard and Isabella Bakewell, who were neighbours of Erlistoun and her husband William Mitchell in Fitzroy Terrace, while in London in 1900 purchased from Morris & Co. the *Bird* woven wool fabric designed by Morris in 1878 and May Morris's *Honeysuckle* wallpaper designed in 1883 [ILLUSTRATION 356]. That ordinary Australians who could not afford to travel were not necessarily disadvantaged at home is evident with the availability of Lightbown, Aspinall & Co.'s very fine *Honeysuckle* wallpaper [ILLUSTRATION 357]. This design predated May Morris's by two years⁹⁶⁰ but still displays the influence of her father. With no immediate availability in Australia of Morris & Co. products, Australians indirectly absorbed something of Morris's legacy to flat pattern making through the imports of British manufacturers such as Lightbown, Aspinall & Co. and Jeffrey & Co. These companies understood and adeptly utilised Morris's design principles.

The redecoration at the beginning of the century of Springfield House, Mitcham, by Frank and Annie Rymill using Morris & Co. goods may have been influenced by proximity to the Barr Smiths' Torrens Park. However the effects achieved at Springfield House sharply contrast with those at Torrens Park, suggesting that rather than staff at Morris & Co. being responsible for a scheme of decoration for the Rymills, the latter chose items themselves. Originally built in 1860 for Charles Newenham, the Sheriff of Adelaide, Springfield House was bought by the Rymills in 1898 and occupied by the family until the late 1920s. Views of the house's Drawing

⁹⁶⁰Collection of Phyllis Murphy, Kyneton, Victoria.

Room around 1900 [ILLUSTRATIONS 358-359] show the owners' decorating process in transition. The furniture was upholstered in *Tulip* printed cotton which had also been used at Birksgate [see ILLUSTRATIONS 239-240] and the floor covered with the woven Wilton pile carpet *Bellflowers* designed by Morris 1875-1880 [ILLUSTRATION 360]. The walls however were still covered with a flamboyant Art Nouveau paper. This paper was indicative of directions followed by designers such as A.H. Mackmurdo who, like Morris, used nature as their source but did not follow Morris's insistence on "rational growth".⁹⁶¹ Rather they were to create structures "almost expressionist in their harshness, vigour and movement".⁹⁶² The Morris & Co. wallpaper chosen by the Rymills as a replacement after these photographs were taken was pink *Willow*⁹⁶³ [ILLUSTRATION 361], originally designed by Morris in 1874. The choice could not have afforded a greater contrast.

The use by the Rymills of the machine-woven *Bellflowers* carpet was a significant departure from the hand-knotted Hammersmith carpets profusely preferred by the Barr Smiths and the Rymills' decoration of the Hall at Springfield House was an indication of the direction in 20th century Australian interiors of decorative schemes incorporating Morris & Co. products [ILLUSTRATION 362]. In the Springfield House Hall furniture was upholstered with strongly contrasting printed and woven materials, the brightly coloured cotton *Strawberry Thief* [ILLUSTRATION 363], designed by Morris in 1883, displaying Morris's stylised natural pattern making, the heavy subdued woollen fabric *Ispahan*

⁹⁶¹Wilmer (Ed), op.cit., p.278.

⁹⁶²Naylor, op.cit., p.118.

⁹⁶³Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., p.90.

[ILLUSTRATION 364], designed by Morris c.1888, revealing the influence of Middle Eastern pattern and colour. Again these two selections represented strongly contrasting prices in keeping with degrees of production difficulty: *Strawberry Thief* for a 36" width cost 4s 9d per yard, *Ispahan* for a 54" width was 19s 9d per yard.⁹⁶⁴ The walls were left plainly painted in the burgeoning Arts and Crafts manner which Morris himself in fact favoured⁹⁶⁵:

... if we really care about art we shall not put up with something or other, but shall choose honest whitewash instead, on which sun and shadow play so pleasantly, ...⁹⁶⁶

Red House had featured pale distempered walls and when in the 1880s Morris & Co. decorated Clouds in Salisbury, Wiltshire, Philip Webb wrote to the owner Percy Wyndham:

... when you decide on doing any white-washing as advised by William Morris, let me know, there is a way of doing even this properly.⁹⁶⁷

The carpet in the Hall at Springfield House was again Wilton pile machine-woven, in this instance *Lily* [ILLUSTRATION 231], designed by Morris c.1875. Various reasons could account for the use of machine-woven carpets in preference to the hand-knotted Hammersmith carpets of the firm. One was undoubtedly price although this would not necessarily have been the overriding

⁹⁶⁴*Printed Linens and Cottons and Silk and Wool Tapestry Brocades*, Morris & Co. catalogues, op.cit.

⁹⁶⁵Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, p.457.

⁹⁶⁶Morris, *Architecture, Industry & Wealth*, op.cit., p.69.

⁹⁶⁷Parry, op.cit., p.141.

factor. The Barr Smiths' Hammersmith carpet purchases in the 1880s and 1890s would have incurred a cost of around 10s per square foot,⁹⁶⁸ placing the cost of one Hammersmith carpet [ILLUSTRATION 365] which probably graced Torrens Park or Auchendarroch before being moved to Wairoa, at c.£35. A similarly sized Wilton pile carpet would have cost around £4.⁹⁶⁹ Brussels, Wilton and Axminster carpets were all manufactured for Morris & Co. by the Wilton Royal Carpet Factory, established in 1701 in Wilton near Salisbury, Wiltshire. Brussels and Wilton carpets were both very durable with the latter having a softer texture and these basically were employed in the full carpeting of large rooms. Patent Axminsters were better suited for use in heavy traffic areas such as stairs and around billiard tables and, as was apparently the case at Torrens Park, as protective matting for parquet flooring.⁹⁷⁰ Although Real Axminsters were hand-woven, the knotting technique used by Wilton differed from that used by Morris & Co. for its Hammersmith carpets, resulting in an inferior product of less depth and density. For The Adelaide Club Tom Barr Smith purchased in 1926 three large Morris & Co. Real Axminster carpets of *Montreal* design for the smoking room and in 1929 another two of different design for the dining room, all of which were probably made by the Wilton Royal Carpet Factory.⁹⁷¹ In Morris & Co.'s brochure for the Boston Foreign Fair in 1883 it was stated that "Wiltons must be classed as the best kind of machine-woven carpets"⁹⁷² and the Rymills' choice of *Bellflowers* and *Lily* for Springfield House may

⁹⁶⁸Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., p.92.

⁹⁶⁹Based on a 36" width at 10s 6d per yard (see Parry, op.cit., p.79).

⁹⁷⁰Ibid., p.84.

⁹⁷¹Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., pp.43, 44; Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., pp.137, 168.

⁹⁷²Harvey & Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, op.cit., p.122.

have been based on the acceptance of artistic merit brought by Morris & Co. to top-quality machine manufactured wares. The Morris designs chosen by the Rymills, with their simple repetitive natural motifs, were also in keeping with Arts and Crafts taste. They may well have appealed more to the Rymills than Dearle's rather "formal, stylized and complex" designs influenced by traditional Persian work.⁹⁷³

Following closely on the Rymills' acquisition of Morris & Co. furnishings was mining magnate George Brookman's association with the company. Brookman's interest in Morris & Co. products was different from that previously shown by other Adelaide residents in that essentially he sought out works of art rather than works of utility. His introduction to Morris & Co. occurred with the company's showing at the Paris International Exhibition of 1900. Sir Isidore Spielmann, chairman of the organising commission for the British pavilion at the Paris Exhibition stated:

The Royal Pavilion on the Quai d'Orsay afforded us our only opportunity of making a distinctive national display. ... Our intention was to provide an example of the most characteristic style of English domestic architecture, fitted up and furnished in such a way as to give, as far as possible, an idea of a well appointed English house...⁹⁷⁴

The exterior of the pavilion was based on an early seventeenth century Jacobean Manor House; the interior furnishings were provided by Morris & Co. The firm obviously believed that the presentation of their goods at this exhibition would be a

⁹⁷³Parry, *op.cit.*, p.82.

⁹⁷⁴Quoted in Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral vistas*, Manchester University Press, 1988, p.122.

commercially rewarding exercise and undoubtedly particularly necessary following the respective deaths of Morris and Burne-Jones in 1896 and 1898. The company's championship by Spielmann also implies that they were still seen as a considerable force in the preparation of domestic design schemes. Among the decorations in Paris was a fine set of *Holy Grail* tapestries, woven in 1898-9 for the Queen's Gate, London home of Australian George McCulloch, after originals commissioned by McCulloch's mining partner William Knox D'Arcy for the dining room at Stanmore Hall. They greatly impressed George Brookman who subsequently arranged to see the firm's Merton Abbey works. While there, an *Adoration of the Magi* tapestry, which had been commissioned directly by the Hamburg Museum,⁹⁷⁵ was nearing completion and Brookman persuaded Dearle to reproduce another, ostensibly on condition that it was destined for Australia⁹⁷⁶ [ILLUSTRATION 366]. Because of delays in production,⁹⁷⁷ the tapestry arrived after the introduction of the Commonwealth Customs Tariff Act of 1902 and much to Brookman's chagrin he was obliged to pay £144 duty.⁹⁷⁸ Like Morris & Co.'s stained glass windows, the company's tapestries were a cooperative affair and Linda Parry believes this is the reason for their being "such successful works of art".⁹⁷⁹ For the *Adoration* Burne-Jones provided the figures and their arrangement while Dearle supplied the decorative details of floral foreground, patterning on clothing and border.⁹⁸⁰ Dearle

⁹⁷⁵See Morris & Co. catalogue *The Merton Abbey Arras Tapestries*, 1909, p.1.

⁹⁷⁶*The Adelaide Observer*, 27 September 1902, p.35.

⁹⁷⁷Letter of J.H. Dearle to George Brookman, 4 November 1901 (Correspondence Archives, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, GRG19/247,AG470); reproduced as Appendix III.

⁹⁷⁸Kenneth Goodwin, 'Morris & Co's Adelaide Patron', in *Art and Australia*, March 1971, p.342.

⁹⁷⁹Parry, *op.cit.*, pp.102-103.

⁹⁸⁰*Ibid.*, p.103.

was also generally responsible for the colouring, Burne-Jones only suggesting tints on original studies.⁹⁸¹ The weavers who worked on Brookman's *Adoration* were credited nominally by the company⁹⁸² and in 1894 Morris acknowledged the contribution they could make:

... a considerable latitude in the choice and arrangement of tints in shading etc is allowed to the executants themselves, who are in fact, both by nature and training, artists, not merely animated machines. ⁹⁸³

In 1903 the Merton Abbey works also produced for Brookman the slightly smaller unique tapestry of *David Instructing Solomon in the Building of the Temple* [ILLUSTRATION 367]; the piece was the reworking of Burne-Jones' 1883 design for stained glass in Trinity Church, Boston, U.S.A., and the uniqueness of the Arras Tapestry version was noted in Morris & Co.'s *Cartoon Book* which illustrated the Boston window.⁹⁸⁴ Brookman sold his *Adoration* tapestry to the Art Gallery of South Australia in 1917 and the *David Instructing Solomon* tapestry back to Morris & Co. in 1922.⁹⁸⁵ These sales suggest that Brookman had purchased the tapestries with a clear eye to obtaining investment works of art. His donation of the *Federation* window of 1901 for the new Adelaide Stock Exchange building was a less selfish

⁹⁸¹Helen Proctor, *The Holy Grail Tapestries*, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1997, pp.16-17.

⁹⁸²Marillier, op.cit., p.32.

⁹⁸³Proctor, op.cit., p.18.

⁹⁸⁴Morris & Co. Show Room Book of Cartoons By Edward Burne-Jones, Cartoon Nos.423, 424, 425 (Archives Department, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery).

⁹⁸⁵The *Adoration* tapestry is still owned by the Art Gallery of South Australia (see Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., p.57; regarding value see Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.II, 1987, pp.574, 592). The *David Instructing Solomon* tapestry was subsequently bought by Detroit newspaper magnate George Booth (Marillier, op.cit., pp.22, 34; Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., p.38).

contribution of Morris & Co. artistry to the public adornment of Adelaide. The *Federation* window was the first major Morris & Co. stained glass on mainland Australia.

Secular windows from Morris & Co. were understandably not common in Australia, as the local industry was fairly adept in catering for popular tastes in this area [ILLUSTRATIONS 368-369]. For small projects, such as door surrounds, it would not have been generally economical to import finished products. Morris & Co.'s *Catalogue of Designs* lists two orders for a Mr Lassetter of Sydney (most likely Frederick Lassetter of F. Lassetter & Co.): one of 1892 for a window of five lights of quarries and the other of 1897 for an oval window of quarries for a door.⁹⁸⁶ As a prolific importer for his ironmongery emporium in Sydney Lassetter could have ordered the Morris & Co. items while on a buying trip to Britain. His example in selecting such small articles was not followed by any fellow Australians. The Adelaide Stock Exchange's *Federation* window [ILLUSTRATION 273] was a far more substantial affair than Lassetter's purchases had been and its high profile has ensured its survival. The three small lights at the top of the window are adaptations of Burne-Jones' 1878 designs for the private house of Woodlands (location unknown). The three major lights however were designed by Dearle particularly for this window.

On his visit to Morris & Co.'s Merton Abbey Works following the 1900 Paris International Exhibition George Brookman would have been able to observe fine

⁹⁸⁶Morris & Co. *Catalogue of Designs*, op.cit., pp.74, 128..

Morris & Co. stained glass windows in production. At the Paris Exhibition Dearle had warned visitors that the windows on display there “are merely intended as protection from the weather ... & it is to be regretted that no good examples could be shewn”.⁹⁸⁷ Financially the company could not have been expected to produce its most notable creations ‘on spec’ when stained glass window creation strongly evolved from an intimate association between a customer and manufacturer. It may be speculated that in escorting Brookman around the Merton Abbey Works Dearle would have become aware of Brookman’s position as Chairman of the Adelaide Stock Exchange and may well have worked upon this client’s enthusiastic quest for art to suggest a Morris & Co. window for the new Exchange.

The *Federation* window was not completed until 30 August 1901 and thus was not in place when the building was officially opened a week later. Apparently it was designed for an internal ground floor location where both position and light would have been detrimental to its effects. It therefore seems fortunate that it should have arrived late and also that a far more suitable location of the same dimensions existed on the first floor landing of the Exchange [ILLUSTRATION 370]. *The Adelaide Observer* reported the occasion of the building’s opening, its information concerning the window purported to be from Brookman.⁹⁸⁸ Brookman intended that the window should celebrate Australian federation and he would have discussed a possible layout with Dearle. Agreement was obviously reached on several features, however adaptations and alterations by Dearle to others as perceived by Brookman

⁹⁸⁷Manuscript draft for Paris 1900 Exhibition by Dearle in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

⁹⁸⁸*The Adelaide Observer*, 14 September 1901, p.43.

shifted the intrinsic meaning of the work from a celebration of the federation of the Australian colonies to an exaltation of the British Empire ideal. *The Adelaide Observer* incorrectly attributed the design of the whole window to Burne-Jones, perhaps with a desire to add to the work more prestige, in keeping with Morris & Co. managerial policy. There could not have been any misunderstanding of sources by Brookman who was dealing personally with Dearle. The description supplied by *The Adelaide Observer* was as follows:

... In the centre will be a representation of Britannia, and on one side the figure used by the artist in the picture, "the Star of Bethlehem." This is the form of a negro, and will typify South Australia. Alongside will be an Australian bushman, and on the opposite side a representation of Canada, and of an inhabitant of the King's Indian dominions. ...

The use of "a negro" to represent South Australia refers to the colony's emblem which features Britannia greeting an Aborigine [ILLUSTRATION 368]. The figure in the window (transferred to Africa) really bears no resemblance to Burne-Jones' work other than skin colour. Dearle may well have felt that the symbolism of the window as described by *The Adelaide Observer* was somewhat desultory, not effectively demonstrating the federation of the Australian colonies but presenting a hotchpotch of one Australian settlement with two fellow imperial states, or indeed he may have simply misunderstood the significance of the federation theme as it newly applied to the Australian colonies. His design thus unified the window's components within his understanding of the federation of British Empire members. Nonetheless, Brookman obviously sanctioned the window as finally presented, its

federation status wavering ambiguously between its significant Australian dating and its imperial symbolism.

Exhibiting closer to Australia was not to prove financially successful for Morris & Co. By the time of the 1906-1907 New Zealand International Exhibition held in Christchurch, British wares were not offered for judicial assessment but simply displayed for trade promotion. Confidence was manifest in the quality of products on show and the financial climate of the host country.

The Exhibition was undoubtedly held at a most opportune moment. New Zealand has experienced a series of successful years, and is at the present time exceptionally prosperous, so that individual firms felt more disposed to incur the expense of fitting out exhibits, and the public in general could afford to travel some distance to reach the Exhibition and to spend money freely when there. ...⁹⁸⁹

Nearly two million visited the Exhibition between November 1906 and April 1907, considered “as a very satisfactory total in a country whose whole population is less than 1,000,000”.⁹⁹⁰ Supplementing the traditional Fine Arts section in the British Government Exhibit was an Arts and Crafts display strongly supported by members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. To this both Morris & Co. and May Morris sent work. Morris had been and May Morris remained a member of the Society and such membership was clearly stipulated in the official British

⁹⁸⁹*Report by the British Commissioner for the New Zealand International Exhibition, Christchurch, on the British Government Exhibit 1906-7*, London, 1907, p.16.

⁹⁹⁰*Ibid.*

handbook.⁹⁹¹ Quantitatively the company's presentation was minimal compared to the 1883 Boston Foreign Fair as the firm appeared in Christchurch simply as a proponent of the Arts and Crafts movement [ILLUSTRATIONS 371-372]. The presentation centred on a fine mahogany inlaid cabinet, "of highest Sheraton finish", designed by George Jack who had become Morris & Co.'s chief furniture designer in 1890. It was priced at £102 18s.⁹⁹² The direction in furniture style for Morris & Co. after Morris's death in 1896 was greatly influenced by the preferences of new chairman W.A.S. Benson, George Jack and Mervyn Macartney and followed the British revived demand for the light elegance of the previous century. This is reflected in the company's various catalogues of c.1911 which display specifically named Sheraton and Chippendale derivations.⁹⁹³ If the company's furniture output had been of export proportions it may well have found a niche in the Australian market place. During the 1920s and 1930s in particular the popular emporiums and the wealthy both strongly supported here the revival of "Period decorating".⁹⁹⁴ Anthony Horder's prices, however, reflect the mass-produced quality of its furniture ranges, one 1926 "clever" reproduction Chippendale Cabinet being costed

⁹⁹¹*The British Government Exhibit at the New Zealand International Exhibition, Christchurch, 1906-1907*, compiled by Sir Isidore Spielmann, issued by the British Government Committee, London, 1908, p.296.

⁹⁹²Morris & Co. 1907 catalogue *Interior Decoration, Furniture, Panelling, Etc.*, op.cit., p.26.

⁹⁹³See *Silk and Wool Tapestry Brocades*, op.cit.: "Specimens of Morris & Co. Upholstered Furniture".

⁹⁹⁴*The Home*, Vol.1, No.2, June 1920, p.33; Vol.5, No.4, November 1924, pp.60, 86; Vol.6, No.3, June 1925, pp.32, 48; Vol.7, No.6, June 1926, p.19; Vol.7, No.8, August 1926, p.63; Vol.8, No.9, September 1927, pp.55, 59; Vol.8, No.10, October 1927, p.51; Vol.8, No.11, November 1927, p.49; Vol.9, No.2, February 1928, p.53; Vol.9, No.8, August 1928, p.69; Vol.11, No.3, March 1930, p.20; Vol.14, No.3, March 1933, p.5; Vol.17, No.3, March 1936, p.67.

at £32 10s.⁹⁹⁵ Morris & Co.'s only sale at the New Zealand International Exhibition was a hammered copper bowl designed and made by John Pearson.⁹⁹⁶

Like Brookman's tapestries and the *Federation* window solitary Morris & Co. items were to arrive in Australia by personal selection or British contacts. In 1902 the State Library of Victoria received a donation from J.F. Patterson in London of a large selection of Morris & Co. wallpaper samples.⁹⁹⁷ A c.1906 photograph of the Drawing Room of the Steuart Blacks' Glenormiston home⁹⁹⁸ shows the only known use of Morris & Co. wallpaper in Victoria, Morris's *Wild Tulip* which was also used by Robert and Joanna Barr Smith at Auchendarroch and by Tom and Molly Barr Smith at Wairoa. The Art Gallery of Western Australia acquired in 1907 a proof leaf of four pages from the 1896 Kelmscott Press edition of *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* following curatorial assistance from the South Kensington Museum [ILLUSTRATION 373]. The Gallery was advised that the work was to be credited as a gift of Morris's widow Jane and a letter of thanks sent to her in Richmond, Surrey.⁹⁹⁹

⁹⁹⁵Ibid., Vol.7, No.7, July 1926, p.44.

⁹⁹⁶A copy of the Chiswick Press production of Morris's "Birmingham Address", printed in the Golden Type of the Kelmscott Press, was also sold (*The British Government Exhibit at the New Zealand International Exhibition, Christchurch, 1906-1907*, op.cit., pp.259, 296, 356, 358).

⁹⁹⁷Rare Books, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, SEF 745.5 M83, op.cit.

⁹⁹⁸Lane & Serle, op.cit., p.366.

⁹⁹⁹Letter of Kathryn Kiely, Assistant Registrar, Art Gallery of Western Australia, to the author, 24 April 1997.

The Kelmscott *Chaucer* was the last impressive collaborative work by Morris and Burne-Jones which bears some comparison with their Morris & Co. output.¹⁰⁰⁰ It shows the great trust and affection each held for the other, both personally and artistically. Yet such unquestioning faith did not always necessarily produce a successful work of art. Reflecting on Morris's settings for his *Chaucer* illustrations, Burne-Jones claimed that he

loved to be snugly cased in borders and buttressed up by the vast initials ... if you drag me out of my encasings, it will be like tearing a statue out of its niche and putting it in a museum.¹⁰⁰¹

In reciprocation, Morris believed that many people would want to possess the *Chaucer* simply as a collection of Burne-Jones' designs when they "would not care at all for my type or ornaments; or for Chaucer either".¹⁰⁰² Morris almost negates here the very cohesion which should automatically have adhered to a successful collaborative work.¹⁰⁰³ For Morris & Co.'s tapestries Morris favoured Burne-Jones' figures. In early productions Morris himself created the background designs, described by Linda Parry as "strongly drawn and flamboyant in style".¹⁰⁰⁴ This

¹⁰⁰⁰The Kelmscott Press was a private venture by Morris not tied to the business of Morris & Co. It is not intended here to pursue its workings or influence on twentieth century printing and the private press movement.

¹⁰⁰¹Zaczek, op.cit., p.34.

¹⁰⁰²Kelvin (Ed), op.cit., Vol.III, 1996, p.476.

¹⁰⁰³In an 1892 lecture Morris clearly stated the fundamentals he strove to encompass in the Kelmscott *Chaucer*: "An illustrated book, where the illustrations are more than mere illustrations of the printed text, should be a harmonious work of art. The type, the spacing of the type, the position of the pages of print on the paper, should be considered from the artistic point of view. The illustrations should not have a mere accidental connection with the other ornaments and the type, but an essential and artistic connection" (Quoted in Peterson, op.cit., p.53).

¹⁰⁰⁴Parry, op.cit., p.110.

description aptly applies to Morris's border designs for the *Chaucer*. With the tapestries Parry suggests that Morris's work stands happily alone but "when added to a figurative design they tend to create an imbalance between subject and ground".¹⁰⁰⁵ In contrast, Dearle's later more delicate and traditional *millefleurs* backgrounds for the same Burne-Jones figures, such as appeared in the *Flora* purchased by Joanna and Robert Barr Smith's daughter Jean around 1927,¹⁰⁰⁶ comfortably complemented and allowed the figures their due prominence. Yet Burne-Jones was fairly ungracious towards Dearle's contributions to the firm's figurative tapestries, claiming that such "cluttered up his designs".¹⁰⁰⁷ No criticism was ever forthcoming towards Morris's less favourable presentations and one might wonder whether Burne-Jones' assessments were not based more on his personal dislike of Dearle, whom he found "humourless" and "badgering",¹⁰⁰⁸ than on a true aesthetic judgement. Dearle's sketchbooks¹⁰⁰⁹ in fact show that he did indeed have a sense of humour. A collaborative effort indicative of the successful rapport between Morris and Dearle recently surfaced in a home some 500km from Perth, in the form of one of the fine Hammersmith carpets they designed together in 1889 specially for the Chislehurst, Kent, property of Bullerswood, owned by wool trader John Sanderson.¹⁰¹⁰ In September 1921 the contents of Bullerswood were auctioned. The

¹⁰⁰⁵Ibid., pp.110-111. William Peterson has suggested that "in the Kelmscott volumes, one feels that at times the ornamentation is so out of control that it threatens to crush the text" (Peterson, op.cit., p.62).

¹⁰⁰⁶Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia*, op.cit., pp.56, 108; Menz, *Morris & Co.*, op.cit., p.96.

¹⁰⁰⁷Proctor, op.cit., p.24; Zaczek, op.cit., p.93.

¹⁰⁰⁸Parry, op.cit., p.120.

¹⁰⁰⁹In The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

¹⁰¹⁰Phillips, *A Century of Change: British Design*, auction catalogue, London, 25 September 2001, pp.8-9.

magnificent drawing room carpet was acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum prior to auction.¹⁰¹¹ The simpler hall carpet purchased in 1921 for Australia shows by its present condition that it was acquired for use rather than as an “heirloom”.

In 1906 the National Gallery of Victoria purchased through its Felton Bequest two Ascension cartoons by Burne-Jones for Morris & Co. windows: one dated 1874 cost £47 5s , the other smaller of 1884 cost £35 14s [ILLUSTRATIONS 252 & 317]. According to Alfred Felton’s Will of 1900 works bought with this trust’s funds were “to have an artistic and educational value and to be calculated to raise or improve public taste”.¹⁰¹² Art advisors centred in London selected works and Sir George Clausen was responsible for the purchase of the Burne-Jones cartoons.¹⁰¹³ Clausen would have been naturally sympathetic towards Burne-Jones’ endeavours for Morris & Co. In league with William Holman Hunt and Walter Crane, in the late 1880s he fought for the Royal Academy to accept a more liberal view of art, to include architecture, sculpture, design and handicraft.¹⁰¹⁴ He did, however, support a compromising position and in fact became a member of the Academy in 1898.

Following Burne-Jones’ death Morris & Co. found the sale of the artist’s cartoons to be a lucrative practice. Prior to Clausen’s purchases, while visiting Merton Abbey in June 1901 George Brookman had bought for £25 the cartoon of Nathaniel,

¹⁰¹¹Parry, *op.cit.*, pp.91, 142-143.

¹⁰¹²Ursula Hoff, *The Felton Bequest*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1983, p.7.

¹⁰¹³List of purchases by Clausen in 1906, Department of Prints and Drawings, National Gallery of Victoria (Burne-Jones acquisitions dated 29 June 1906).

¹⁰¹⁴Stansky, *op.cit.*, pp.181, 186.

designed by Burne-Jones in 1879 for St.Mary's, Edge Hill, Liverpool.¹⁰¹⁵ Some five months later Dearle advised Brookman that the firm had "sold many of Burne-Jones figures for twice the sum you paid"; this information was passed to Brookman so that he should not "under-value" his acquisitions. Dearle suggested that the South Australian Art Gallery might be interested in like purchases, particularly in view of the fact that the South Kensington Museum had bought about £250 worth.¹⁰¹⁶

Brookman approached Harry Gill, the Honorary Curator of the Art Gallery, who convinced the Fine Arts Committee of the merits of the offer. Morris & Co. forwarded twenty cartoons on approval [ILLUSTRATION 374] however the Gallery did not subsequently buy any of the works. Morris & Co. stipulated on all invoices that the cartoons were sold "subject to our sole rights of reproduction for manufacturing purposes".¹⁰¹⁷ Tracings or photographs would have been held by the firm from which windows could be constructed.

While such as the National Gallery of Victoria and Adelaide's George Brookman purchased Morris & Co. items because of their "artistic ... value", this consideration was not the driving force behind the presentation in 1909 of a lone Morris & Co. stained glass window for the Adelaide church of St.John the Evangelist [ILLUSTRATION 375]. The appearance of this city church was fashioned by rectorial attitudes which contrasted strongly with those held in suburban ministeries and saw the inclusion of stained glass windows virtually for reasons other than decorative or spiritual.

¹⁰¹⁵*Cartoon Book*, p.8, in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

¹⁰¹⁶See Appendix III.

¹⁰¹⁷Preamble in *Cartoon Book*, op.cit., in The Morris Collection, The Huntington Library.

In announcing the construction of the original church in 1839 the *South Australian Register* noted that the edifice would “be furnished in a chaste and handsome manner”¹⁰¹⁸ and this image carried to a new building in 1887. Once again plain glass was initially installed and within only two years it was apparent that considerable discomfort was felt at services because of the excessive light and heat admitted. For the Rev. Canon F. Slaney Poole [ILLUSTRATION 376] to combat these problems with stained glass was not an option because of cost. He suggested either colouring the inside of the windows or covering them with blinds and “Whatever plan is adopted it will be necessary to appeal to the congregation for the funds necessary to its execution”.¹⁰¹⁹ By 1891 Poole was pressing for some stained glass for the church, specifically for the chancel windows. Initially he was disappointed by one prospective donor but a subsequent appeal saw immediate results in the

¹⁰¹⁸C.R.J. Glover, *Church of St. John the Evangelist, Centenary Souvenir*, 1939, p.5.

¹⁰¹⁹*St. John's, Adelaide, Monthly Parish Chronicle*, Vol.I, No.5, February 1889. Whether because of its city location, St. John's appeared not to engender that community spirit which flourished in the suburban churches and until the 1890s there was no attempt at all to reduce its debts through the usual parochial fetes and entertainments (Ibid., Vol.I, No.10, July 1889; Vol.IV, No.1, December 1891; also Glover, op.cit., p.15). Adornments to the church interior relied heavily on parishioner donations and were remarkably uninspiring. In April 1889 the first “coloured” window was inserted on the north side in an attempt to “deaden” some of the light. The style of the window was also obviously changed because it is noted that ventilation had been improved. The cost of filling the double window space was £7 and it was hoped to eventually treat all windows in the same manner. Poole recognised that St. John's lacked an aesthetic warmth felt in many other churches and believed this want would be supplied to some extent by the coloured glazing (*St. John's, Adelaide, Monthly Parish Chronicle*, Vol.I, No.7, April 1889). In November 1889 an anonymous lady donor provided for two of the chancel lancet windows and promised one of the northern windows, however the latter was not fulfilled “owing to the impossibility of getting what was desired”. The sum which would have been spent - now risen to £12 10s. - was nonetheless forthcoming and put towards a chancel screen. A desperate plea was also made at this time for a blind for the west window “so that some of the heat may be kept out of the church during the summer months” (Ibid., Vol.II, No.2, November 1889 and Vol.III, No.1, November 1890).

anonymous gift of the Percy Bacon Bros. windows, in Perpendicular Gothic Revival style, in memory of Mrs E.M. Hornabrook¹⁰²⁰ [ILLUSTRATION 377].

Poole's incumbency of some twenty-one years ended in August 1895 when he took over the care of St.Peter's in Ballarat, Victoria.¹⁰²¹ His replacement was the Rev. Canon William S. Hopcraft [ILLUSTRATION 378] who accepted that the small tokens offered by parishioners "tend to add still greater dignity to what, we have been told, is the most dignified church in the City of Adelaide".¹⁰²² Hopcraft died on 9 June 1908, his place taken by the Rev. R.P.A. Hewgill [ILLUSTRATION 379] who noted the Hornabrook memorial windows, the blinds which had been added to the north windows and the colouring of the western windows.¹⁰²³ To honour the late Rev. Hopcraft, in addition to finishing the church hall in his name it was decided unanimously to dedicate to his memory "blackwood altar rails with brass standards" within the church.¹⁰²⁴ A stained glass window was not considered.

The only Morris & Co. window in St.John's is that of the apostle *Paul* as preacher which fills one of the small western baptistry openings [ILLUSTRATION 380]. It was placed in memory of Hopcraft in September 1909 as an anonymous gift by a parishioner who was obviously moved by the Rector's sermonising.¹⁰²⁵ Because of the donor's anonymity it is impossible to know why Morris & Co. was chosen or how the ordering of the window took place. It is most likely that the client attended

¹⁰²⁰Ibid., Vol.III, No.3, January 1891 and Vol.III, No.4, February 1891.

¹⁰²¹Ibid., Vol.VII, No.6, July 1895.

¹⁰²²*St.John's Parish Chronicle*, Vol.IV, No.6, June 1906.

¹⁰²³Ibid., Vol.VI, No.7, July 1908.

¹⁰²⁴Ibid., Vol.VI, No.12, December 1908.

¹⁰²⁵Ibid., Vol.VII, No.9, September 1909.

personally Morris & Co.'s London shop. The image of Paul was a popular one, appearing several times in Morris & Co.'s Window Book¹⁰²⁶ and it would have been suggested as being ideally suited as a memorial to Hopcraft.¹⁰²⁷

The two northern windows in St.John's which had been coloured by the addition of "transfers" to the glass were within a short time seen as "a positive disfigurement" to the church and their removal organised.¹⁰²⁸ They were replaced, to Hewgill's satisfaction, by "leaded lights", one the gift of new confirmees, the other again anonymously donated by a parishioner:

There is nothing very distinguished about our new windows, yet we are rather proud of them, chiefly because we suggested them, and because we had not to trouble the Wardens for a penny of the cost. ...¹⁰²⁹

Thus it is likely that Morris & Co.'s *Paul* was not accepted into St.John's for its artistic merit but because it was donated, placing no monetary burden on the

¹⁰²⁶*Window Book of Morris & Co.*, pp.35, 47 (Archives Department, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery).

¹⁰²⁷Hopcraft's character was poignantly laid bare by a friend writing in the *Advertiser*, 13 June 1908: "...Though a public power, he sought no publicity. Rarely was his voice heard except in his own pulpit. ... Rarely did the eloquent message of the prophet fail to bring relief ... all the time he was communicating vigor to the hearers. You went away nerved to do better things. Few probably know what all this cost him. Like the patriarch of old who wrestled all night with the angel before he conquered him, he wrestled with truth. Every morning in the week from 10 to 12.30 he used to shut himself in his study, and would allow no interruption. There he wrote and rewrote his sermons, until he came forth without his manuscript, to deliver that which he had made his own. In this was the preacher's secret. ... Canon Hopcraft was not always understood. He stood self-contained and alone, ... Yet beneath the rugged exterior and the thundering strength there beat a heart true and gentle".

¹⁰²⁸*St.John's Parish Chronicle*, Vol.VIII, No.6, June 1910.

¹⁰²⁹*Ibid.*, Vol.VIII, No.9, September 1910 and Vol.VIII, No.10, October 1910.

church, and because it would have lessened the effects of the westerly sun in the baptistry.

The attitude of Adelaide's *St. John the Evangelist* clergy towards the place of artistic endeavour within their specific environment was not the common reception to be expected for Morris & Co. products. Nonetheless it does demonstrate the very personal nature of aesthetic discernment. Churches would continue to accept donations regardless of true artistic merit because of financial straits and in so doing often neglected the complete architectural picture. In the twentieth century Australian domestic interiors utilising Morris & Co. products progressed towards a simple harmony of whole. A fine example was 68 Strangways Terrace, North Adelaide, built for Dr and Mrs Poulton around 1924. Here the ultimate conclusion was reached to the Arts and Crafts direction offered earlier in the Rymills' Springfield House. The Poultons used a variety of Morris & Co. curtaining fabrics, the colour and patterning of which were enhanced by the simple decorative scheme of off-white painted walls and darkly polished quality timberwork. Those fabrics included Morris's 1876-designed woven wool and mohair *Crown Imperial* and the printed cottons *Wey* and *Evenlode* [ILLUSTRATION 381], designed by Morris in 1883. The Poultons' example upheld Morris's call to "strive against barbarous luxury" as he saw his own time embracing "luxury instead of art".¹⁰³⁰ At last, nearly thirty years after his death, the "simplicity of taste" towards which Morris sought to educate people was coming to fruition.¹⁰³¹ This was buoyed by the fashionable acceptance of the Arts and Crafts Movement which had drawn from Morris an

¹⁰³⁰Wilmer (Ed), *op.cit.*, p.283; Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, *op.cit.*, p.212.

¹⁰³¹Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, *op.cit.*, p.32.

understanding of the interrelationship between materials, form and purpose. In Australia the basically conservative undertone to wealthy decorating meant that such an acceptance could be made with ease.

In the same year that the Poultons were curtaining their Adelaide home with Morris & Co. materials, Sydney architect Sir John Sulman purchased six-foot lengths of nine printed and two woven fabrics from the company's Hanover Square shop. Of the former were *Honeysuckle, Tulip, Wandle, Kennet, Medway, Snakeshead, Lodden, Rose* and *Brer Rabbit* and of the latter *Bird* and *Tulip and Rose*,¹⁰³² encompassing a designing range by Morris of 1875 to 1885. These purchases were never intended for actual domestic use but bought by Sulman to form the nucleus of a "Collection of Applied Art".¹⁰³³ The architect added to these acquisitions at the Wemby Exhibition of 1925 with specimens which included china, glass, metal and basket work.¹⁰³⁴ Initially Sulman stored his collection at the Art Gallery of NSW where he was a trustee but in 1927 he transferred the collection in its entirety to Sydney's Technological Museum as a gift.¹⁰³⁵ In his act of donation and in his choice of Morris & Co. products among his "Art Specimens" illustrative of "modern design and craftsmanship" at its best,¹⁰³⁶ Sulman recognised the importance Morris had

¹⁰³²Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Registration Nos. A2716-1 to A2716-9 inclusive and H3396-H3397 (Powerhouse Museum, Sydney).

¹⁰³³Letter of 5 July 1927 from Acting Curator, Sydney Technological Museum, to the Director, National Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney (Powerhouse Archives, MRS4, Vol.10, Letterbook, p.596).

¹⁰³⁴Powerhouse Archives, MRS117, Annual Report 1927, p.4.

¹⁰³⁵Letters of 21 June and 5 and 6 July 1927 from the Acting Curator, Sydney Technological Museum, to the Director, National Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney (Powerhouse Archives, MRS4, Vol.10, Letterbook, pp.553, 596, 606).

¹⁰³⁶Powerhouse Archives, MRS117, Annual Report 1927, p.4.

placed on the educative role of museums and stamped Morris & Co. manufactures as timeless in content and retentive of the production quality upon which the firm had been founded.

In 1927, as Sulman expanded for ordinary Australians the available visual contact with Morris & Co. fabrics, an anonymous young partner from one of London's "most exclusive firms of decorators" summed up his impressions of Australian interiors thus:

Australian decoration is just right. I mean, of course, in the houses of those who are interested in such things. ... In the first house I went to in Melbourne there was some excellent mahogany. It was placed just right against a neutral tinted wall. There were some quite excellent Persian rugs on a polished floor and some discreet English chintzes. I thought, 'This is delightful.' ... Before I had left Melbourne I had thought 'This is delightful' for exactly the same reasons on the nine or ten separate occasions I went into separate houses. After I came to Sydney I thought it for the same reason some nine or ten times more. ... ¹⁰³⁷

This "daring young Englishman" considered what he had seen to be "extraordinarily conservative". Yet his description could well encompass twentieth century Morris & Co. interiors as espoused by such as the Rymills and the Poultons, although Morris & Co. chintzes were perhaps not quite "discreet". For *The Home's* English critic the blame for the apparent "colourless" nature of Australian homes lay with the wholesale buyers for the large emporiums who claimed that there was

¹⁰³⁷*The Home*, Vol.8, No.6, June 1927, p.15.

“no demand for novelties”.¹⁰³⁸ Such an attitude was seen to restrict the public’s chances of seeing anything other than the retail stores’ preferred choices.

Opportunities to absorb world-wide fads through advertising and popular journal articles if anything had increased in the twentieth century, suggesting that Australians were not unfashionable but simply discriminating. Just as Lyon, Cottier & Co. in the nineteenth century had both set and satisfied a well understood market so the leading stores of the twentieth century catered for clients who were often aware of choices outside those consistently on retail show but content to follow the refined taste nurtured for over a century as a buffer to a perceived crassness in modern decoration. Price-wise department stores were providing not for wealthy needs but for popular desires. When Sydney’s Anthony Horderns’ advertised its furniture range by quoting the “once said, ‘Simplicity is the soul of Art’”,¹⁰³⁹ it indicated that Morris’s ideals had percolated through to working/middle classes and that store management understood the implication.

¹⁰³⁸Ibid., p.74. *The Home* was a strong advocate of Modernism. This movement pushed to the extreme the principles underlying the Arts and Crafts Movement and in so doing encompassed industrial media. Its ultimate outcome in favour of modular constructions took many years to infiltrate most Australian homes while its replacement of personal values by intellectual preoccupations divorced it from the core of Morris’s teachings.

¹⁰³⁹*The Home*, Vol.5, No.4, 1 November 1924, p.60. The progress made by department stores from the 1920s in providing ‘home grown’ wares was apparent with Anthony Horderns’ which ran its own “foundry, furniture, bedding and clothing factories, a printery and the largest marble and slate works in the Commonwealth” (Teresa Willsted (Ed), *This Working Life*, State Library of NSW, Sydney, March 2004, p.23). The company also cared for its staff with a “Welfare Department [which] oversaw a wide range of staff activities and groups” (Ibid., p.25).

The market for Morris & Co. itself in Australia was not affected in the twentieth century by the aesthetic predilections of major outlets or journals but by the company's own policies regarding retailing and advertising. Personal attendance at Morris & Co. outlets remained the major avenue for Australians to purchase the company's goods. For this to happen prospective clients needed to be aware of Morris & Co.'s repute and indeed the firm largely relied on this fact to entice customers. Restricted advertising also meant that word of mouth or visual influences were in operation, not a reaction to general journalistic presentations such as stimulated department store sales.

CONCLUSION

In terms of taste Australian decorative firms invariably differed from Morris & Co. Conservative subtlety or flamboyant richness represented the wants of Australian consumers who followed British fashions through imported opinions and items. For the general Australian public Morris's ideas were most often absorbed inadvertently. In an economy strongly based on the import of manufactured goods Morris's influence may be seen in the quality and designing of numerous imported decorative items by other makers when articles of poor standard could reasonably have dominated the market.¹⁰⁴⁰ The consistently high quality of Morris & Co. products which entered Australia reflected the attitude of many firms, both local and foreign, who realised that Australia provided a genuine and discerning market and was not simply a colonial dumping ground for astute adventurers.

Directly Morris & Co.'s commercial success set for Australian companies an array of products and standards in production. While Morris & Co. worked within the commercial confines of its day, its prices were not set by projected profit margins but by quality in materials and workmanship. Australian firms such as Ferguson & Urie, Lyon, Cottier & Co., W.H. Rocke & Co., E.F. Troy and R.S. Exton & Co. presented an equally caring and proficient front. While the Australian companies are distinguishable stylistically from Morris & Co. all supported the

¹⁰⁴⁰Indeed this influence may well account for some blatantly incorrect attributions today to William Morris of nineteenth century wallpapers by other manufacturers in Australian homes: see Morgan, *op.cit.*, p.30; <http://main.penola.mtx.net.au/~tourist/trust/yallum.html>; *The Weekend Australian*, 12-13 February 2000, p.29.

principle that the goods themselves counted, the maker and user mattered. Today Kim Andrews, Rick Allan and Graham Stewart show that many Australasians still maintain these business principles.¹⁰⁴¹

Morris & Co.'s manufactures were distinctive within the decorative arts sphere of its lifetime and this was particularly apparent in Australia. The firm was essentially not an exporter, relying instead on a clientele willing to approach, personally, the business through its London bases or selective agents. These limited retail and aesthetic considerations meant that Australian purchasers were often both wealthy and not enamoured of tradition or fashion for their own sake. On the whole Australians who acquired the firm's products did so for the pleasure derived therefrom. Certainly all customers accounted the quality of Morris & Co. manufactures to be paramount.

Pierre Bourdieu has defined taste as "the choice of destiny, but a forced choice, produced by conditions of existence"¹⁰⁴² and the findings of this thesis do not disagree with this statement. Nor do they disagree with Jules Lubbock's more detailed listing of those "conditions" as "the complex intertwining of economic, political, aesthetic, theological, national and moral ideas".¹⁰⁴³ When looked at from a consumer's standpoint, the permutations of these "ideas", within and between themselves, beggar the imagination. Generalisations encompassing groups of individuals are often possible but it is certainly a mistake to assume that all

¹⁰⁴¹See footnote 2.

¹⁰⁴²Bourdieu, *op.cit.*, p.178.

¹⁰⁴³Lubbock, *op.cit.*, p.277.

individuals will comfortably fit into a set group mould. Australian clients of Morris & Co. prove that decorative selections may revolve around satisfying particularly private idiosyncrasies rather than relying on the following of fashion dictated by outside influences.

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Note: There are two main sources for identifying Morris & Co. products brought to Australia within the time frame 1862-1939. From June 1876 the company recorded stained glass windows it manufactured and its two volume register known as the "Catalogue of Designs" is now in The Huntington Library, San Marino, California, USA. However no such documentation exists for interior decoration. Basically for items of interior decoration it is necessary to be able to identify such from historical photographs in the voluminous collections of the main public libraries in Australia. Undoubtedly there are still some isolated occurrences which have not been recognised. Many Morris & Co. items purchased during the firm's lifetime are still either in situ or have found their way with provenance to State art galleries or auction houses.

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