South Australian Art Needleworkers 1876 - 1909

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Adelaide School of Design, *Portière*, 1901, silk on silk moire, 233.0x178.0cm,
Royal Collection Trust/© His Majesty King Charles III, 2023.
Designed by H.P. Gill. Worked by Elizabeth Meek, Maude Prosser, Lily Hope Goode and Lena Unbehaun.
Commissioned by Lady Way, Lady Baker, Mesdames Lendon, Harmer, Marryat, Bragg, Waite, Pope, Davies, Thomas, Fisher and Girdlestone, and Miss Howard.

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Abstract

Art Needlework was the first technical art at the Adelaide School of Design. It became a conduit to an alternative form of higher education which fostered independent careers for women at a time when that was still radical. The elevation of Art Needlework into the curriculum of the Adelaide School of Design occurred because of a conflation of four things. First, middle and upper-class women spent considerable time practising existing needlework skills for domestic necessity or pleasure. Second, female-operated ecclesiastical embroidery guilds were purposely furnishing a proliferation of new churches in the colony of South Australia and beyond its borders. Third, there was a growing aesthetic awareness of the Arts & Crafts trend for handmade objects of original design, and fourth, the influential Director of the Adelaide School of Design, H. P. Gill arrived in Adelaide to take up his position already supportive of women in a working environment. By harnessing the scene, Gill established a secular Art Needlework Society as a commercial arm of the school. The Society was successful because it prioritised original design and borrowed the same business practices as the ecclesiastical ateliers.

This thesis determines that in contrast to the few who pursued a University pathway, many more women were able to leverage their existing needlework skills into an alternative form of higher education at the Adelaide School of Design. It also demonstrates how the School's Art Needlework Society modelled the commercial practices that successfully underpinned the first Art Needlework studios operated by New Women seeking independent careers, even before they were enfranchised.

Thesis Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint award of this degree.

I give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library Search and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

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This thesis is dedicated to my Grandmother, Constance Arthur (née Neill 1923-2021)
who was forced to leave school at 14, against her wishes.

The Arrow and the Song

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found in the heart of a friend.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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Terminology

Art Needlework	A type of freestyle surface embroidery commercialised by William Morris in response to Berlin woolwork, made popular during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century within the Arts & Crafts Movement.
Atelier	A workshop or studio used by artists and or/designers.
Ayrshire work	A style of whitework embroidery on fine muslin originating from Ayr, Scotland. It features cutwork, satin stitch and needle lace.
Berlin woolwork	A form of embroidery where a single type of stitch in bold shades of colour is woven in and out of canvas fabric. This is a textile suitable for upholstery. In the Victorian era, patterns printed on paper and wool were imported from Berlin, hence the name.
Crewelwork	A form of embroidery using 2-ply wool yarn. In the late 17th and 18th centuries in England it was influenced by stylised fauna and flora patterns on Indian textiles imported through the East India Company.
Cross stitch	One of the oldest types of embroidery created by crossing one diagonal stitch over another. It is often executed on gridded, open weave fabric.
Cutwork	Any form of embroidery where sections of the fabric have been cut away and edged.
Drawnthread work	A counted thread form of embroidery where warp (vertical) or weft (horizontal) threads are cut and drawn out and the remaining threads stitched together to form a pattern.
Goldwork	A form of embroidery executed in gilt-metal or gold threads.
Ecclesiastical	Any form of embroidery intended to adorn a sacred space such as a church. The most common forms of ecclesiastical embroidery are the frontal (cloth covering the altar) and the vestments (clothing worn by priests).
Modelling	The working of mediums such as clay and wax to build up form. Modelling is an additive process in sculpture, as opposed to wood carving.

Mountmellick	A form of Irish whitework that does not feature any holes or open spaces but instead creates a three-dimensional effect.
New Woman	A term used in the late nineteenth century for the social phenomenon of women resisting traditional roles in preference for independent agency.
Opus Anglicum	Usually figurative embroidery made with coloured silk worked in split stitch and underside gold and silver thread in couch stitch. Luxurious and expensive Opus work was executed in the Middle Ages across Europe, but English Opus differs in technique to similar styles such as that of the French.
Repoussé	A metalworking technique where the design is hammered from the back to create a raised design on the front. Repoussé is an ancient technique that was part of the Arts & Crafts suite of technical arts.
School	In the interests of clarity, the Adelaide School of Design is often referred to as School, (upper case) throughout this thesis.
Society	Again, in the interests of clarity, the Art Needlework Society, which was the commercial adjunct of the Adelaide School of Design, is often referred to as Society, (upper case) throughout this thesis.
South Kensington examinations	A scaffolded series of examinations originally conceived at the South Kensington School of Science and Art. Their purpose was to develop drawing skills that would improve design for pattern making within the manufacturing industries.
South Kensington curricula	A numeracy-based drawing syllabus predicated by basic repetitive design skills examined in a scaffolded manner from Grade One through to Art Master.
Whitework	White embroidery on white material.
Wood Carving	A technique of carving using knives and chisels to remove areas of the surface of wood that is an ancient craft and part of the Arts & Crafts suite of technical arts.

This list acknowledges the embroidery terminology used by the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington.

Introduction

Art Needlework is a particular form of surface embroidery.[1] Women have often earned by the needle but in South Australia, the transition from domestic needlework towards Art Needlework carries with it an unexamined story of women moving from the private to the public sphere.

The delicate shading and freestyle designs of Art Needlework became prominent in the later part of the 19th century, diminishing the mid-Victorian trend for bright, counted-thread Berlin woolwork on canvas. The first to be responsible for sparking the popularity of Art Needlework was a committee of titled British women. Together, they mounted an exhibition of loaned English embroidered objects made prior to 1800, most of which were ecclesiastical. Gothic architects and designers began commissioning convent embroidery ateliers such as the Clewer Workroom, Glower Street and the Society of St. Margaret, East Grinstead to execute embroidered textiles. These Communities operated workrooms where women executed ecclesiastical embroidery. The endorsement of decorative Art Needlework by influential women, and its roots in the art of English ecclesiastical embroidery, combined to create an acceptable space for women to utilise their needlework skills towards a commercial model.

Concurrently, decorative needlework was part of the Arts & Crafts Movement of the time. The philosophical proponent of the Arts and Crafts Movement, John Ruskin (1819-1900), argued that workers were de-humanised by machine production and that dignity and pleasure were denied to the maker when objects were not made by hand.[2] Specialised artisanal skills were promoted in an effort to reconnect the maker with the process of design and execution.

[1] The term Art Needlework is articulated as a proper noun in most of the primary sources. Not only does this indicate its commercialisation but it also supports the differentiation between the terms art and needlework that are regularly used in this thesis.

[2] John Ruskin, *The Crown of Wild Olive: Four Lectures of Industry and War*, London: George Allen, 1898, 10-11.

The Arts & Crafts embroidery scene opened up opportunities for women beyond the convent needlework rooms. As well as the convent ateliers, secular needlework institutions such as the School of Art Needlework and the Sloane Work Society were established and these also executed work for leading designers of the day.

Although the Arts & Crafts Movement was sparked by Ruskin, the name of William Morris (1834-1896) became synonymous with it. 'Morris work' grew into a vernacular term for the Arts & Crafts embroidery style.[3] In fact, the firm Morris & Co's role in Art Needlework was the epitome of the symbiotic relationship between Art Needlework and ecclesiastical embroidery, for not only did Morris & Co produce secular embroidery, it also had a business arm that supplied vestments for churches.[4] This commercialisation of Art Needlework by firms and institutions such as Morris & Co, the School of Art Needlework, the Ladies' Work Society, the Leek Embroidery Society and others of the same ilk was disseminated in South Australia by the press.

During the scope of this thesis, the Arts & Crafts Movement was gaining ground in the colony of South Australia. Morris & Co products, including expensive domestic objects and embroidery kits designed by Mary (May) Morris (1862-1938), were imported directly into Adelaide by leading wealthy families such as the Barr Smiths and Rymills.[5] Across the world, and here in South Australia, followers of the Arts & Crafts Movement raised the status

[3] For example, "Our Ladies' Letter: Adelaide Gossip," *Evening Journal*, 8 September 1894, 7, and "School of Design: Student and Art Club's Exhibition," *The Advertiser*, 6 September 1894, 7.
[4] William Morris originally attended Oxford to train as an Anglo-Catholic clergyman, so it is perhaps unsurprising that his Morris & Co also had a business arm that supplied vestments for churches.
[5] Christopher Menz, *Australian Decorative Arts: 1820s-1990s: Art Gallery of South Australia*, Penelope Curtin (ed), Adelaide: Gallery Board, 1996, 64.

of hand-made objects and in this context, a suite of applied arts, including Art Needlework, were offered in the syllabus at the Adelaide School of Design.[6]

Although little known now, Art Needlework became a significant feature of South Australian women's art practice before and after the turn of the 20th century.

The Importance of the Thesis

When motivated individuals began to initiate what were effectively Art Needlework ateliers, South Australian women with existing skills were poised to embrace the work. This thesis recovers the neglected significance of Art Needlework as the first technical art at the Adelaide School of Design. It establishes that in contrast to the relatively few early female students enrolled at the University of Adelaide, many more women engaged with the Adelaide School of Design as an alternative form of higher education at a time when that was radical. Until now, this field of study has not been undertaken yet it occurred in the context of female emancipation, the period of history when the colony of South Australia was the first in the world to grant women the dual right to vote and stand for parliament.

There is existing literature on women's needlework abroad, the New Woman and needlework as an avenue for independence. There is some literature related to the Adelaide School of Design but only from a limited number of scholars. As the following review of the literature observes, much of the existing scholarship is inherently biased against needlework, relegating it as a womens chore, or overlooking its significance.

[6] Karen Livingstone, "Origins and Development," *International Arts and Crafts*, London: V&A Publication, 2006, 40-61.

General History of Women's Needlework Abroad

The art historian, Roszika Parker, claims that to 'know the history of embroidery is to know the history of women'.[7] In the Middle Ages, British embroidery, or 'Opus Anglicum', was regarded as a fine art and Parker argues that women took an equal part alongside men in the labour necessary for a successful embroidery home studio that serviced prominent clients eager to sport their status with embroidered surfaces and clothing.[8] Yet after the Middle Ages, Parker explains that embroidery came to be perceived as a woman's accomplishment rather than a livelihood. Parker and Anthea Callen determine that as the embroidery industry developed and males took on the design responsibility, women were left to execute the embroidery – work which Callen deemed as 'the lowest level in the hierarchy of the creative process.'[9] Both scholars find that embroidery was further diminished by the rising middle class amateur female embroiderer in the seventeenth and eighteenth century; at a time when a man's success was measured by a woman's leisure, women were confined to embroider within the domestic realm, effectively removing any associated professionalism from the practice of embroidery.[10] There is an inherent bias against needlework embedded within these key texts within the historiography. For example, Callen's assertion extends into the later part of the mid-nineteenth century arguing that embroidery was explicitly referred to as a craft, not art.[11] The word 'craft' of the Arts & Crafts Movement at this time, neatly supports this line of reasoning but in South Australia, Art Needleworkers were executing designs not only for sale, but also for exhibition as 'art'. Therefore, the term 'craft', in this context, merely

[7] Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*. Online: I.B. Tauris & Company Ltd, 2010, ix.
[8] Rosie Parker, "The Word for Embroidery Was Work," *Spare Rib 0*, no. 37, 1975, 41-45.
[9] Anthea Callen, "Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement," in Judy Attfield, Pat Kirkham, (ed), *A View From The Interior: Feminism, Women and Design*, London: The Women's Press, 1989, 158.
[10] Anthea Callen, *Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870-1914*, London: Astragal Books, 1979. See also Rosika Desnoyers, *Pictorial Embroidery in England: A History of Needlepainting and Berlin Work*, Bloomsbury, 2019, and Patricia Crawford, "The Only Ornament in a Women: Needlework in Early Modern England," in *All Her Labours: Embroidering the Framework*, Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1984, 7-21.
[11] Callen, "Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement," 151-164.

refers to practical execution of the work, rather than implying a diminution of its significance – a view certainly supported by contemporaneous press who championed the Art Needlework achievements.

Embroidery was an acceptable form of employment even if a woman was constrained by social mores. It did not diminish a financially struggling gentlewoman's social status because the work could be done discreetly within the home. V. Irene Cochrane argues that this isolated women for long hours.[12] Callen concurs in that the Arts & Crafts Movement continued to alienate women because they were forced to choose between operating in the public or private sphere.[13] This notion of Art Needlework effectively isolating workers in their homes is contrary to my findings in this study. In fact, the School's Art Needlework classes and student exhibitions proactively brought women into the public sphere, right into North Terrace in the heart of Adelaide.

Women studied Art Needlework in Arts & Crafts teaching institutions in Britain such as the Royal School of Art Needlework (1872-ongoing) and the Leek School of Embroidery (1879-c.1900). These institutions provided them with the skills to work towards establishing their very own financially viable studio, a space to engage fully in the Arts & Crafts Movement's ambition of designer/maker. This is true of South Australian women enrolling in Art Needlework classes at the Adelaide School of Design. However, Rosemary Mitchell argues that even if women did reach the status of independent Art Needleworker, they were still faced with the contradiction of feminine pastime and art,[14] and Pat Kirkham cautions against exaggerating the position of successful independent women practitioners because the

[12] V. Irene Cockroft, *New Dawn Women: Women in the Arts & Crafts and Suffrage Movements at the Dawn of the 20th Century*, Guildford: Watts Gallery, 2005, 15.
[13] Callen, "Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement," 151-164.
[14] Rosemary Mitchell, "A Stitch in Time?: Women, Needlework, and the Making of History in Victorian Britain," *Journal of Victorian Culture 1*, no. 2, 1996, 188.

evidence might not support it.[15] In contrast, this thesis determines that in South Australia, a number of women strategically developed their design and Art Needlework skills at the Adelaide School of Design before establishing their own successful Art Needlework studios. Their Art Needlework exhibitions were celebrated by the press as art and regularly enjoyed vice-regal attendance.

Several historians claim that women were not encouraged to create their own designs during this period. For example, Jan Morris cites the joint male writer of an Art & Crafts Art Needlework manual demeaning the co-female writer and female readers over their inability to design in his preface.[16] Callen and Parker also criticise the Arts & Crafts institutions for stifling original design.[17] In South Australia, it was the antithesis. The prioritisation of original design at the Adelaide School of Design underpinned the success of the South Australian Art Needleworkers.

Literature on Needlework in the Colonial South Australian Setting

Regardless of class or position, the financial status of early colonial South Australian women was largely dependent upon men.[18] As Margaret Allen, Mary Hutchinson and Alison Mackinnon emphasise, 'Life at home', was the destiny of South Australian women living in the colony whose very foundations were established on family life, but it was a life where

[15] Pat Kirkham, " 'If you have no sons': Furniture Making in Britain," in Judy Attfield and Pat Kirkham (ed), *A View From The Interior: Feminism, Women and Design*, London: The Women's Press, 1989, 109-130.
[16] Jan Morris, "May Morris: Ubiquitous, Invisible Arts & Crafts-Woman," in Bridget Elliott and Janice Helland, *Women Artists and the Decorative Arts, 1880-1935: The Gender of Ornament*, Burlington V.T: Ashgate, 2002, 37.
[17] This is difficult to reconcile because the female director, Lady Marion Alford wrote a scaffolded instructional chapter on design in her technical and historical manual. See M. M Alford, *Needlework As Art*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1886, 15-54.
[18] Until the *Married Women's Property Act* of 1884, under Common Law in the colony of South Australia a man held custodianship of his wife and ownership of her property. See Martin Shanahan, "Colonial Sisters and their Wealth: The Wealth Holdings of Women in South Australia, 1875–1915," in D.R. Green (ed) *Men, Women, and Money: Perspectives on Gender, Wealth, and Investment, 1850-1930*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

they bore the brunt of the domestic responsibilities of cooking, childrearing, caring, cleaning and essential needlework. These responsibilities were compounded by the demands of outside physical work.[19] A colonial woman's position was put succinctly in the 1849 Working Man's Handbook to South Australia advising men to marry an 'active woman' who would 'make and mend clothes' and 'be a great profit and help'.[20] Although scholars agree that colonial South Australia women were engaged in both domestic and physical outside labour, none seem to countenance that time-poor women may have actually enjoyed the necessity of needlework as a quiet and sedentary relief from other labour demands.[21] Unquestionably, surviving objects suggest the practice of needlework was a creative outlet.

Re-reading the scholarship in this light, needlework skills and the allocation of time spent on needlework, is overlooked. For example, Allen, Hutchison & Mackinnon offer an account of South Australian Dorothy Gilbert's (1885-1973) typical day in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[22] Despite the family employing a cook and a ladies companion, Dorothy still made everything the family wore and regularly sat down to sewing at 11am each day. Later in the evening during children's hour, she would sew again in the drawing room.[23] Instead of noting the prevalence of needlework, the scholarly discussion focuses on the presence and absence of the father. Another unexplored example reinforcing needlework as a

[19] Margaret Allen, Mary Hutchison, Alison Mackinnon, *Fresh Evidence, New Witnesses: Finding Women's History*, Netley, S.A: South Australian Government Printer, 1989. See also R.M. Gibbs, *Under the Burning Sun: A History of Colonial South Australia, 1836-1900*, Adelaide: Southern Heritage, 2013, 369.
[20] Eleanor Williams and Michael Williams, "Rural South Australia in the Nineteenth Century," in Eric Richards (ed) *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1986, 545.
[21] Joan Hancock and Eric Richards, "Wealth, Work and Well Being: Some Historical Indicators," in Eric Richards (ed) *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1986, 600. For example, large numbers of Irish female immigrants were recruited for both domestic service and farm labour, and German women had a reputation for their physical work. See also Margaret Allen, "Domestic Ideology and Maude Jeanne Franc," in *All Her Labours: Embroidering the Framework*, Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1984, 21-31.
[22] Allen, Hutchison and Mackinnon, *Fresh Evidence, New Witnesses: Finding Women's History*, 26-27.
[23] Dorothy Gilbert, "Country Life in the Later Nineteenth Century: Reminiscences by Dorothy Gilbert," *South Australiana 12*, no.2, 1973, 68-70 reprinted in Allen, Hutchison, Mackinnon, 26-27.

pleasurable activity is cited by Eleanor Williams and Michael Williams.[24] They observe that during the 1860s, after two decades of wealth accumulation, middle and upper-class women of pastoralist holdings embroidered by the fire on a winter evening. The family's financial position meant that domestic responsibilities were outsourced and the women had time to undertake embroidery as a practice beyond that which was purely necessary. These examples of daily sewing indicate that scholars have overlooked both the work and often pleasurable activity of the colonial woman's needlework, which has contributed to its role in transitioning women into the public sphere remaining unexamined.

The New Woman and Needlework as an Avenue for Independence

As a useful skill learnt at home or at school, needlework had the potential to transition women to the public sphere but the inherent bias against it in the scholarship has resulted in a failure to draw attention to the opportunities needlework provided for women to live independent lives. For example, R.M. Gibbs and Helen Jones separately observe that the government of colonial South Australia, through the *Education Act* of 1875, ensured that needlework was part of the primary school curriculum in the unlikely circumstances they were not engaged in sewing at home.[25] Both Gibbs and Jones draw attention to needlework being taught to girls whilst boys were given extra instruction in arithmetic, arguing that girls received a lesser education.[26] This discounts not only the embedded numeracy skills in needlework and sewing patterns, but also the value the government of the day saw in needlework skills to the economy.

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[24] Eleanor Williams and Michael Williams, "The Character of South Australian Society: Rural South Australia in the Nineteenth Century," in Eric Richards (ed), *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1986, 545.

[25] Gibbs, *Under the Burning Sun: A History of Colonial South Australia, 1836-1900*, 369, and Helen Jones, *In Her Own Name: a History of Women in South Australia from 1836,* Netley, South Australia: Wakefield Press, 1986, 46-77.

[26] Five levels of a scaffolded needlework curriculum was afforded to female students. See "Programme of Inspector's Examination, 1878," reprinted in Allen, Hutchison, Mackinnon, 83-86. See also Ian Davey, "Growing up in South Australia," in Eric Richards (ed), *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1986, 389.

After school, many working-class women leveraged their needlework skills to find employment in factories or home workshops.[27] By the year 1891, 5377 females in South Australia were recorded as earning their living in this way.[28] The scholarship acknowledges that for many women, this independence would have been preferable to domestic service but studies focus only on the negative aspect of this form of employment, the practice known as sweated labour.[29]

For the single middle-class or widowed woman, teaching in a school was an acceptable profession and a significant avenue of employment.[30] Again in 1891, Gibbs' statistics show there were 700 female teachers employed by the Education Department, 170 of which were needlework teachers. Neither Gibbs nor Jones investigate what that meant for the needleworkers entering the education workforce at a time when middle-class women were only just moving into the public sphere so this indicates the same bias demonstrated in the other scholarship.

The enlightened headmistress of the girls' school, Dryburgh House, Mrs Eliza Kelsey (1851-1926), wrote in 1893 '… women … are emerging from the traditional "sacred obscurity".'[31] She was referring to women seeking higher education, an independent income and a voice in public life. This is the New Woman who Clare Wright describes as 'independent, mobile,

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[27] Susan Magarey, *Passions of the First Wave Feminists*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd, 2001, 123-127.
[28] Gibbs, *Under the Burning Sun: A history of colonial South Australia, 1836-1900*, 375. See also Hancock & Richards, "Wealth, Work and Well Being: Some historical indicators," 601, and Ian Davey, "Growing Up in South Australia," in Eric Richards (ed), *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1986, 379.
[29] Sweated labour is so-called because of the long hours for minimal pay. In 1890, the Working Womens Trade Union was established in Adelaide with Auguste Zadow as the first female Inspector of Factories. See Allen, Hutchison and Mackinnon, *Fresh Evidence, New Witnesses: Finding Women's History*,197.
[30] See Brian E. Condon and South Australian Education Department, *Service Histories of S.A. State Teachers 1852-1960*, 2003, online database through University of South Australia, URL accessed 28 March 2021.
[31] Eliza.O. Kelsey, *The Education of Young Girls: a Paper Read by Mrs. Kelsey at the Adelaide Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science*, 28 September 1893, Adelaide: Burden & Bonython, 1893.

self-governing [and] putting personal dreams before social obligations'; women who sought companionable marriage, exercise in less restrictive clothing and education.[32] Despite needlework being women's most ubiquitous set of skills, the scholarship on the New Woman fails to explore how needlework and particularly, Art Needlework was used to pivot womens lives towards independence. For example, Carol Bacchi investigates the opposition to the New Woman in the South Australian press but she does not discuss any positive characteristics beyond the development of rational dress.[33]

New Women forged a radical path as early graduates of the University of Adelaide in the late colonial period although, as Alison Mackinnon's investigation notes, tertiary study at a university was expensive and for many, prohibitive.[34] In asking who were the New Women, she highlights a few names this research has observed in the Adelaide School of Design classes which means that these women engaged in art and design education prior to entering the University of Adelaide or other institutions. Women, such as Amy Louisa Tomkinson who used the Adelaide School of Design as a form of higher education before travelling and studying at the London School of Economics, are not observed in Mackinnon's study because it is dedicated to University of Adelaide graduates. The realisation of the Adelaide School of Design as an alternative pathway to higher education on North Terrace is overlooked by other scholars: Jones and Gibbs link the first government secondary school, the Advanced School for Girls, to the first female graduates at the University of Adelaide but they both fail to note the Adelaide School of Design; Allen, Hutchison and Mackinnon devote a chapter to South Australian women's education but the Adelaide School of Design is unnoticed. Simply

[32] Clare Wright, *You Daughters of Freedom: The Australians Who Won The Vote and Inspired Freedom*, Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2018, 24-87.
[33] Carol Bacchi, "The 'Woman Question' in South Australia," in Eric Richards (ed), *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1986, 412-413.
[34] Alison Mackinnon, *The New Woman: Adelaide's Early Graduates*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press in association with the University of Adelaide Foundation, 1986.

focusing on the early graduates of the University of Adelaide only tells a portion of the story so this thesis addresses a significant gap in the scholarship.

Literature related to the Art Needlework and the Adelaide School of Design

Apart from a few references in general works on colonial art and women's art, there has so far been no serious scholarship of the practice of Art Needlework in South Australia, as will be illustrated by the following review of the primarily descriptive literature pertinent to this thesis.

Ecclesiastical embroiderers from St. Dominic's Priory and the two Protestant guilds of St. Peter's and St. Paul's all contributed to the development of Art Needlework in South Australia. This is because they arrived with, or acquired embroidery skills locally by learning from others. Although Mary P. Harris notes the establishment of the two Protestant guilds, she does not expand on the strong connection between them and the School of Design's own Art Needlework Society so this is something that is developed in this thesis.[35] Judith Thompson does describe Art Needlework in her survey of the first hundred years of crafts in South Australia but the description in the small exhibition catalogue is understandably limited to three paragraphs, and again, no connection is made between the ecclesiastical ateliers and the Society.[36]

[35] Mary P. Harris, "Ecclesiastical Embroidery and Illuminated Manuscripts," in Louise Brown, B. Ch. de Crespigny, Harris, Mary P, Kathleen Kyffin Thomas and Phebe N. Watson, *A Book of South Australia: Women in the First Hundred Years*, Adelaide: Rigby, 1936, 182-185; Margaret Press offers more on the Guild of St. Paul but again, there is no analysis of the collaboration between the Guilds and the School. See Margaret. M. Press, *Three Women of Faith: Gertrude Abbott, Elizabeth Anstice Baker and Mary Tenison Woods*, Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2000.

[36] Judith Thompson, *Crafts of South Australia: The First Hundred Years*, Adelaide: Art Gallery Board of South Australia, 1986, 6.

Of significance to this thesis, an Art Needlework 'portière' was commissioned in 1901 to celebrate Federation and presented to the British royal family. A portière is a large, embroidered panel used for display or as a dividing curtain. It can also be used as a decorative bedspread. Although Marion Fletcher claims it is lost, it is still in the Royal Collection Trust.[37] (A more in-depth discussion of this book has been omitted because most of its findings are inconsistent with contemporary research.) The portière was executed by South Australian women. The only researcher to name one of the makers is Bridget Jolly.[38] The most consistent observer of the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia is Christopher Menz and given that one of his descriptive texts features the portière on the front cover, it is unfortunate that the needleworkers are not named.[39]

Literature Related to the Prioritisation of Original Design at the Adelaide School of Design

This thesis argues that original design was the key driver of success in the scope of Art Needlework in South Australia, not least because of H.P. Gill's promotion of it at the Adelaide School of Design. Other schools of design were being established across the world, many of which taught Arts & Crafts practices. As Karen Livingstone and Tim Barringer explain, this was because at the same time as the Arts & Crafts Movement was taking hold, there was a push for better education in drawing to improve the design of manufactured objects. However, neither of these scholars study the influential Adelaide School of Design, nor Gill's success in integrating the South Kensington system of education with the tuition of Arts & Crafts practices. [40] Caroline Jordan draws attention to H.P Gill's significant influence

[37] Marion Fletcher, *Needlework in Australia: A History of the Development of Embroidery*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1989, 153.
[38] Bridget Jolly, "Maude Fanny Prosser: An Adelaide Decorative Artist," Embroiderers' Guild of South Australia, 2012-2013, URL accessed 21 January 2021.
[39] Christopher Menz, *Morris & Co*, Adelaide: Art Gallery of South Australia, 2002, 74-76.
[40] Tim Barringer, "Representing the Imperial Archive: South Kensington and its Museums," *Journal of Victorian Culture 3*, no. 2, 1998, 357-373, and Karen Livingstone, "Origins and Development," *International Arts and Crafts*, London: V&A Publication, 2006, 40-61.

in embedding the South Kensington system of education in Adelaide and his proactive art teacher training but like other scholarly writings on tuition during the Arts & Crafts period, there is no discussion of Art Needlework and therefore no mention of Gill's 'Design for Art Needlework' classes in the decade before Federation.[41]

A few scholars have observed design and drawing education in South Australia but Gill's important role in advocating original design and the implications it had for women Art Needleworkers has remained unexamined. For example, Jenny Aland carefully explains the scaffolded drawing curriculum but her focus is on the influence of drawing in South Australian schools, rather than design for Art Needleworkers.[42] Michael Bogle's brief explanation of the link between the improved design education in South Australia does not concur with the analysis of the School of Design's archives for this thesis.[43] Bogle neither investigates the priority placed on design within the syllabus, nor recognises the majority attendance of women in the design classes. Although this gendered enrolment is acknowledged by Marisa Young, she argues that young South Australian women enrolled in arts education to support their 'social capital' by improving their artistic accomplishments. This argument sits alongside the contention of this thesis that the School's emphasis on design fostered women towards financial independence rather than just artistic accomplishment. [44] Like Aland, Young asserts that the drawing aspect of the curriculum

[41] Caroline Jordan, "The South Kensington Empire and the Idea of the Regional Art Gallery in Nineteenth Century Victoria," *Fabrications 20*, no. 2, 2012, 34-59.
[42] Jenny Aland, "The Influence of the South Kensington School on the Teaching of Drawing in South Australian Schools from the 1880s into the 20th Century," *Australian Art Education 15*, no. 1, 1991, 45–53. Jenny Aland's "Art and Design Education in South Australian Schools, From the Early 1880s to the 1920s: the Influence of South Kensington and Harry Pelling Gill," M.Ed. diss. Canberra: University of Canberra, 1992 also focuses on the influence that Gill and the South Kensington system of drawing and design had on schools.
[43] Michael Bogle, *Design in Australia*, North Ryde: Craftsman House, 1998, 40.
[44] Melissa Young, "Drawn to New Perspectives in the Public Sphere: Female Art, Design and Craft Students and their Cultural Connections in Nineteenth Century South Australia," *Outskirts: Feminisms Along the Edge,* no. 28, University of Western Australia, 2013, URL accessed 15 November 2021.

fortified their success whereas this thesis establishes the prioritisation of original design afforded women a platform from which to build on their existing drawing skills.

The final literature reviewed for this project pertains to the progressive business model articulated in the School of Design Art Needlework Society Rules. A commercial system of commission arrangements underpinned the Society and served as an exemplar for women seeking financial independence.[45] John Drury notes that Berthe Mouchette taught 'under conditions similar to those for needlework and china painting' at the Adelaide School of Design but does not explain that her employment was based on the Art Needlework Society's commercial model, a business arrangement that is explained in Chapter Four and expanded upon in Chapter Five.[46] Both Thompson and Andrew Montana point out that the Society sold designs of Art Needlework but they overlook the significance of original design underpinning the enterprise and the quality control measures that ensured its success.[47] Neville Weston's thesis records the 2900 Art Needlework designs created and sold by the Society and School between 1890 and 1905, but instead of exploring what this commercial enterprise meant to the women earning the commissions, he and Jolly explain more about the financial scrutiny of the Society's business when Gill was contentiously investigated (and exonerated).[48] Essentially, there is more emphasis on a sensationalised incident than the social history on the development of Art Needlework as a viable business opportunity to advance the independence of women.

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[45] "School of Design Art Needlework Society Rules", 1889, 31, in *School of Design. Art Club Magazines*: 1894-1908, Special Collection, University of South Australia.
[46] John Drury, *Two French Sisters in Australia: 1881-1922: Berthe Mouchette and Marie Lion: Artists and Teachers*, Victoria: Anchor Books Australia, 2021, 85.
[47] Andrew Montana, *The Art Movement in Australia: Design, Taste and Society 1875-1900*, Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2000, 39.
[48] Neville Weston, "The Professional Training of Artists in Australia, 1861-1963, with Special Reference to the South Australian Model," Ph.D. diss, Adelaide: University of Adelaide, 2006.

Taking all the existing literature into consideration, by and large, the scholarship I have undertaken for this thesis is entirely original.

Methodology

The methodology of this project hinges on the primary sources existing in State Records of South Australia and the Special Collection of the University of South Australia. State Records holds the *Art Masters Sessional Returns of Students and Fees, School of Design Cash Book*; *Records of Commissions executed by Art Needlework*; *Reports made by the Director of Technical Art*; the *Roll Book of Candidates for London Art and Science Examinations in Art Schools Drawing Examinations*; and the *Gill Enquiry*. The University of South Australia hosts the *School of Design Art Club Magazines*, multiple editions from the years 1894 to 1908.

Before any research was conducted, an analysis was made of the key sources of primary material. Initially, all the class cohorts of all students enrolled in the Adelaide School of Design from the extant *School of Design Cash Books* were recreated. This database brought to light forgotten Art Needlework practitioners and gave statistical information on their level of engagement in education. Second, articles written by past and present students and teachers in *School of Design Art Club Magazines* were analysed. Third, contextual information was gathered from contemporary media on Trove, the Australian online library database. Throughout this process, Art Needlework objects were located and visually analysed to inform the exploration into the Art Needlework in South Australia.

There were some noteworthy limitations inherent in this project. The recreated rolls only range from 1885-1909 because although the Adelaide School of Design operated outside of

this date range, the archives were lost by the Department of Education after the School was transferred under its governance. The database consists of over 100,000 entries and due to its magnitude was gifted to the Art Gallery of South Australia prior to submission so that it could be referenced in this thesis. Second, Art Needlework is ephemeral by nature and delicate textiles have not stood the test of time. Third, as the literature review established, there has been an underlying bias against needlework as unimportant womens therapy or tedious chore and so the existing scholarship is limited. Fourth, the Adelaide School of Design changed names three times during the date range of this thesis. This has been explained in Chapter Four but in the interests of clarity, throughout the thesis the institution has been referred to as the Adelaide School of Design (or School) to avoid unnecessary confusion. Fifth, the research brought forward a recognisable Adelaide School of Design style from key objects as well as a host of Adelaide School of Design exhibition images but unfortunately this line of enquiry did not serve the central argument of this particular thesis so the gallery of Art Needlework exhibition images remains in Appendix 6 and an extensive chapter was removed. Sixth, much genealogical research was conducted to bring forgotten women to light. Despite it no longer being a contemporary convention, the womens maiden names, birth and death years have been included in the chapters to indicate their age and stage in life at the time of the activities discussed. Finally, it is worth noting that this thesis was commenced almost immediately prior to the Covid 19 pandemic and was completed just after all restrictions were lifted in South Australia. A number of institutions were shut down temporarily for large parts of the research and intended research across state borders and overseas was not possible.

Thesis Outline

Chapter One establishes the needlework scene abroad and at home. A seminal exhibition of embroidery at the South Kensington Museum in London is examined alongside a diary written in the same period of time by a middle class, South Australian woman, Edith Caroline Tomkinson (1858-1953). The diary provides an assessment of the local level of existing needlework skill immediately prior to the popularisation of Art Needlework.

Chapter Two finds three neglected ecclesiastical ateliers operating in Adelaide during the latter part of the nineteenth century. It is determined that the ateliers implemented conventional business practices that laid the groundwork for the Adelaide School of Design's secular atelier, the Art Needlework Society.

Chapter Three examines the background of the Director of the Adelaide School of Design and recognises why Art Needlework became a prominent technical art. This chapter finds that the Director was familiar with working in a female dominated environment. It is shown how he brought different cohorts of women into the sphere of the School of Design, mainly through the popularisation of the South Kensington certificate. A gendered lens is taken to the statistics of women passing the examinations in comparison to matriculation and the university pathway. Chapter Three also examines the wider context and shows how the Director responded to the potential of a fledgling silk industry in South Australia by harnessing his wife's ecclesiastical embroidery contacts. This chapter explores the motivation behind the launch of Art Needlework as the first technical art at the School of Design.

Chapter Four uncovers the significance of the School's Art Needlework Society as a commercial arm that enabled students to learn and earn. It analyses the Society's commercial model and shows how it unlocked employment for women earlier than has been previously noted by other scholars.

Chapter Five establishes how Art Needlework afforded a transition to other popular Arts & Crafts applied arts, a factor which led to a critical mass of female enrolments at the School and further legitimised the institution as an avenue of higher education. This chapter explores the prioritisation of original design in the syllabus and work of the Art Needlework Society that ultimately led to individual agency.

Chapter Six recovers former students of the Adelaide School of Design who were able to pursue independent incomes because they were provided with both the skills and a model on which to develop a commercial enterprise. This final chapter includes a comparative analysis of their business models and marketing behaviours. The women recovered in the main section of this chapter were amongst the first to operate their own studio practices either solely dedicated to Art Needlework, or studio practises that transitioned to other applied arts and/or painting. The chapter concludes with a minor case study of Amy Louisa Tomkinson (1856-1943), sister of Edith whose diary is analysed at the beginning of the thesis. This case study has been included to show how the training at the Adelaide School of Design that began with Art Needlework, benefitted women in a general sense and developed their skills and outlook on the world.

Chapter One

Setting the Scene Abroad and at Home

This chapter establishes the needlework scene, both abroad and in South Australia, immediately prior to the popularity of Art Needlework. The first section explains an exhibition of embroidery held in the later part of the 18th century at the South Kensington Museum in London. The purpose of the exhibition was to recover and display the art of English embroidery from previous centuries. The exhibition was given the title of *Special Loan Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework Made Before 1800* because it consisted of loaned objects, many of which were ecclesiastical.[1] A committee of titled women not only collected objects but also collated them into categories called opus. The *Special Loan Exhibition* rekindled an interest in embroidery, particularly the type of ecclesiastical embroidery that became the precursor of Art Needlework.

The second section of this chapter is an analysis of a contemporaneous diary by a young middle class South Australian woman, Edith Caroline Tomkinson (1858-1953). The diary is re-read through the lens of needlework. This section serves to recognise the existing needlework skill level and the time afforded to needlework tasks by women of Edith Tomkinson's social strata.

The third section shows how Art Needlework filtered through to South Australia and how women with existing needlework skills, such as Edith Tomkinson, were poised to work collaboratively in the ecclesiastical needlework ateliers described in Chapter Two.

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[1] Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education, South Kensington Museum, *Catalogue of the Special Loan Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework Made Before 1800, Held in 1873*, London: Chiswick Press, 1874, Embroiderers' Guild of South Australia Reference Library.

Catalogue of the Special Loan Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework Made Before 1800

There is a letter signed by a Princess secreted inside the back cover of a book in the library of the Embroiderers' Guild of South Australia.[2] *Catalogue of the Special Loan Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework Made Before 1800* was produced for a seminal exhibition of Art Needlework loaned for public display at the South Kensington Museum in 1873.[3] The catalogue features the needlework objects lent by a range of different custodians for the exhibition. The letter hiding in the back of the catalogue was signed by Queen Victoria's fifth child and sent to a certain 'Mrs Howes' in recognition of her loan of 'a piece of needlework, embroidered with coloured silks.' This letter marks an important point in the formalisation of Art Needlework. It signals the beginnings of the promotion of Art Needlework as a technical skill.

The *Special Loan Exhibition* of embroidery was mounted by a large committee of women, four of whom led the project: Her Royal Highness the Princess Christian of Schleswig Holstein (1846-1923), together with Princess Mary Adelaide (1833-1897), Lady Victoria Welby (1837-1912) and Lady Marion Alford (1817-1888). In total, the committee comprised of four Princesses, three Countesses, four Marchionesses, ten Duchesses, thirteen Ladies, three Honorables and somewhat incongruously, three untitled married women. The objects themselves were loaned by men, women and unexpected organisations such as the Fishmongers' Company, however, despite the varied source of the loaned objects, the majority of the group organising its exhibition were titled. The combined social influence within the upper end of Victorian society effectively promoted Art Needlework as a superior

[2] Letter from Princess Helena Christian et al., President of the Committee of Special Loan Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework Made Before 1800 to Mrs. Howes, in *Catalogue of the Special Loan Exhibition*, 1874, Embroiderers' Guild of South Australia Reference Library.
[3] This exhibition will be referred to as the *Special Loan Exhibition* from this point.

technical art with an historical precedent, more worthy than the previous fashion of repetitive Berlin woolwork.

Embroidery was prioritised over and above other forms of needlework loaned for exhibition. No lace or woven tapestry was included. The loans were organised into sixteen classes of material or type, as shown in Figure 1. Furthermore, an attempt was made to classify objects by stitch within five ecclesiastical 'opus' categories outlined in Figure 2.[4] As a result, in 1873, a cluster of mostly titled women set the informal categorising boundaries of the secular and ecclesiastical Art Needlework movement – and the stitches pertaining to it – in response to objects made prior to 1800.

Figure 1.

Classes of material or type accepted for the *Catalogue of the Special Loan Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework Made Before 1800*, South Kensington, 1873.	
Ecclesiastical work	Silk on coarse linen
Works having historical interest	Work in Worsted, Crewels, &c.
Small objects of embroideries such as caps, gloves, vide poches, &c.	Work in braid and silks, on cotton and linen grounds
Workboxes, pictures, cushions, &c.	Appliqué work
Silk work on net, gauze, &c.	Work on velvet
Samplers	Work on silk
Hand-worked tapestry	Work on satin
Silk on muslin, fine linen, and other textures	Quilted work
White embroideries	Work on furniture and Pictures in fine embroidery.

[4] Opus is Latin for work so therefore the more commonly known Opus Anglicum means English Work. A nuanced discussion of Opus Anglicanum can be found in M. A. Michael, "Creating Cultural Identity: Opus Anglicanum and its Place in the History of English Medieval Art," *Journal of the British Archaeological Association, Volume 170*, no. 1, 2017, 30-60.

Figure 2.

Stitch descriptions assigned to 'Opus' ecclesiastical categories of the *Special Loan Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework Made Before 1800*, South Kensington, 1873.
Opus Anglicum was rendered in chain stitch and tambour
Opus Plumarium in feather and long stitch, crewel (long) stitch, satin and embroidery stitch
Opus Consutum in padded appliqué
Opus Pectineum (stitch not articulated)
Opus Pulvinarium in tent stitch, cross stitch and cushion stitch

During a time when it was radical for upper and middle-class British women to earn their own living, the *Special Loan Exhibition* had the effect of validating needlework of this type as a respectful source of income. This was due to the combination of both the composite of titled women in the committee and the foregrounding of ecclesiastical embroidery and stitches; two elevated ingredients. In the context of Victorian society, an income derived from decorative needlework was particularly acceptable, especially that connected to the social mores of the church. The attempt by the committee of the *Special Loan Exhibition* at South Kensington to categorise the embroidery stitches into five Opus sections, including the more well-known Opus Anglicum, legitimised needlework executed for income because it suggested a morally acceptable practice, a vital characteristic of a Victorian-era middle and upper-class gentlewoman.[5]

Ecclesiastical needlework and Art Needlework were fundamentally linked. Although the term Art Needlework could be a secular title, it used the same stitches and skills required for

[5] In fact, the second, larger exhibition of Art Needlework at the South Kensington Museum in 1884 was titled '*The Exhibition of Ancient Ecclesiastical Embroidery*' which further reinforced the morality attached to the practice.

ecclesiastical vestment production.[6] The symbiotic relationship between ecclesiastical embroidery and Art Needlework engendered needlework societies. These societies created opportunities for a range of women because they effectively blurred the secular and ecclesiastical needlework. Secular institutions with royal patronage such as the Royal School of Art Needlework and the Ladies' Work Society catered for the skill development of gentlewomen in danger of destitution, and morally acceptable employment was embraced by a range of ecclesiastical groups of women.

Nuns used their embroidery skills to produce ecclesiastic textiles prior to the advent of Art Needlework and, as a consequence of its popularity, the nun's skills were in demand. Convent ateliers executed designs from a number of leading designers and architects of the day, especially after the publication of *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament* by the Gothic revivalist Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852).[7] The School for Church Embroidery, more commonly known as the Clewer Workroom, was an ecclesiastical embroidery atelier overseen by the Sisters of Mercy in London. The Clewer Workroom aligned itself with the Kempe Studios (1866-1907) whose particular design style is explored in Chapter Two. Another convent atelier was established by the Anglican Sisterhood of East Grinstead known as the Society of St. Margaret. South Australian audiences were made aware of these institutions through the press and from those who travelled or had personal links in England.[8] For example, an article introducing South Australian women to the work of the Sisters of East Grinstead informed them of the fifteen young women being trained to

[6] For example, the committee of the *Special Loan Exhibition* in 1873 determined that Opus Plumarium employed feather and long stitch, crewel (long) stitch, satin and embroidery stitch. These are particularly useful stitches in Art Needlework which can be applied to any range of secular objects.
[7] A. Welby Pugin, *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume: Compiled and Illustrated from Ancient Authorities and Examples*, London: Henry. G. Bohn, 1884.
[8] For example, Frances Wright moved between London and Adelaide during this time and sent back information on ecclesiastical designs to her contacts. Mrs Harmer did the same. See "Notebook of St Peter's Cathedral Guild," SRG/94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.

design and execute a commission for a new altar-cloth for St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Furthermore, readers with leisure time were encouraged to use their needlework skills to make altar-cloths themselves.[9] A third institution on the South Australian needlewomen's radar was the School for Ecclesiastical Embroidery at 33 Queens Square, Bloomsbury which opened beside the Sister's hospital. It produced ecclesiastical commissions in the Art Needlework style designed by John Dando Sedding (1836-1891) under the supervision of his sister Isabella Ann Sedding (1840-1906).[10] Women could board at the school and earn a wage dependent on their skill level.[11] The common factor of these convent ateliers producing ecclesiastical embroidery was their agency for skill development of women in danger of destitution, however it was their high quality embroidery, rooted in historical design that the press brought to the attention of the South Australian public. Institutions such as St. Katherine's were described as 'one of the many signs of the Nineteenth Century renaissance' and these institutions were always noted in historical discussions of Opus Anglicum and other more ancient embroidery arts from around the world, thus further elevating the modern practice and reinforcing the design element.[12]

Edith Tomkinson's diary

The 1878 diary of an Adelaide woman attests that women in the colony of South Australia had needlework skills they often utilised on a daily basis. In fact, needlework in all its forms absorbed a significant proportion of a middle-class woman's daily life. In her twentieth year, the second daughter of the manager of the Bank of Australasia, Edith Caroline Tomkinson

[9] "Feminine Fashions and Fancies: from our Lady Correspondent, London, February 11, 1887," *South Australian Weekly Chronicle*, 26 March 1887, 16.
[10] Mary Schoeser, *The Watts Book of Embroidery: English Church Embroidery 1833-1953*, Great Britain: Watts & Co, 1998, 50. Schoeser asserts that the designers William Curtis Brangwyn (1839-1907) and the Seddings: Edmund and John Dando Sedding (1838-1891) are 'originators' of the Art Needlework style in ecclesiastical embroidery.
[11] Schoeser, *The Watts Book of Embroidery: English Church Embroidery 1833-1953*, 54.
[12] St Katherine's was referred to as the 'Ladies School of Embroidery' in the South Australian press. See for example "Ladies' Column," *Observer*, 17 December 1881, 34, and "Ecclesiastical Embroidery," *The Mount Barker Courier and Onkaparinga and Gumeracha Advertiser*, 2 May 1884, 3.

(1858-1953) recorded her daily events, many of which were of a domestic nature.[13] The diary brings to light the activities of Edith and her social circle in both the Adelaide Hills as well as in town because as her journal entries demonstrate, Edith's family and friends were highly mobile. Edith's diary is of particular interest to this thesis because she and her sister were involved in Art Needlework for several decades.

In detailing her daily pursuits, Edith revealed her station in life as a young Anglican woman. Her values were demonstrated through her actions. For example, throughout the year, she chronicled her presence at church services, caring for younger siblings, socialising with neighbours, family and friends, and attending to domestic chores. The opening page begins by marking the commemorative first service of the new St. Peter's Cathedral in Adelaide, which Edith optimistically recorded as a 'Glorious day.' Although the diary entries finish in December when the churches were draped in black to mourn the death of Princess Alice, Edith maintained her positivity in South Australia with 'Perfection of a day.'[14] Her journal entries exude her happy disposition which is why she communicated her anticipation in new technological developments. For example, she experienced the first telephone in the Adelaide Hills. However, it is her note of borrowing a domestic sewing machine that is relevant to this study because despite her delight, why did she continue to mostly sew by hand?

Edith recorded her excitement about the sewing machine with comments such as 'Fanny put a fresh needle in machine – beautiful.' Although the nemesis of hand-sewing, the introduction of the sewing machine into the domestic sphere would have created the same excitement in many other households as it did for Edith. The general public of South Australia were first

[13] Mary de Crespigny, *The Adelaide Establishment: The 1878 Diary of a Provincial Lady of Mount Lofty and Adelaide*, Adelaide: Gillingham Printers Pty Ltd, 1987, 107.
[14] Princess Alice Maud Mary (1843-1878) was the third child of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. The first entry of Edith's diary is coincidentally the day of the consecration of St. Peter's Cathedral in Adelaide. She would later take a very active part in its Guild.

made aware of a mechanical device for sewing in 1846.[15] In 1863, an agent from Stanford and Co in Melbourne held a demonstration of 'practical instructions' for the Singer Sewing machine in Hindley Street, Adelaide.[16] Later that year, Frederick Hasluck advertised the machine for 'family use' but they were still a considerable outlay and a valuable item of the household. By 1878, the year of Edith's diary, W & T Rhodes in Rundle Street, Adelaide, was importing on average 20 Singer sewing machines each month, each worth just under £10.[17] The sewing machine became a household investment but one that belonged within the female realm. Prior to the *Married Women's Property Act* of 1884, and during the time that Edith wrote her diary, the sewing machine was legally considered as a 'tool of trade' and was therefore exempt from seizure resulting from bankruptcy; everything else in the house was up for grabs, but not the sewing machine because sewing and needle skills were seen as valuable to the economy.

As useful and important the sewing machine was to colonial women, it was not suitable for all types of needlework and the subject of a 'rebellion of taste and of human will against the mechanicalness of the machine' according to the *Wallaroo Times*, a rural based South Australian newspaper.[18] The ability to make undergarments and dresses with a sewing machine was a boon to those who had access but machine work was also criticised for the 'depreciation of fine needlework.'[19] Hand-sewing was valued over mechanically executed fashion, even though textile celebrations such as a trousseau could only be 'accomplished at a considerable outlay of money' if the linens and clothes collected by a bride for her wedding could not be made by family or friends. The precedence given to hand-sewing explains why

[15] "Tailoring Machine," *Adelaide Observer*, 7 November 1846, 6.
[16] "Singer's Sewing Machines," *South Australian Register*, 25 February 1863, 1. See also, "Sewing Machines, Sewing Machines, Singer's Sewing Machines," *South Australian Register*, 24 June 1863, 1.
[17] *Evening Journal*, 22 March 1878, 1.
[18] "The Revival of Needlework," reprinted from *Queen* in *Wallaroo Times and Mining Journal*, 8 July 1876, 3.
[19] Ibid.

despite having access to a sewing machine, Edith only records using the machine 5 out of the 47 times she mentioned needlework. Above all, her diary demonstrates the sense of achievement and regular enjoyment she derives from executing needlework *by hand*.

Edith's diary exposes the hand-sewing proficiency of middle-class women who would soon engage in Art Needlework in South Australia. Of her 232 entries, 47 of them explicitly mention some form of needlework. This means that 20% of the diary is devoted to recording stitching. In other words, one fifth of what she felt necessary to record in written form in 1878 concerned her own needlework labour, despite the family employing a housemaid and laundress. The first mention of needlework is simply 'read to Grandmama and did some mending,' but other entries document longer projects such as a dressing gown she worked on all day and completed at 2am the following morning. It is likely that Edith did not mention all of the needlework she undertook in her diary so 20% is probably a conservative proportion of time devoted to needlework projects.

Unlike today, the needlework projects carried out on a domestic level were varied. Edith not only mended items of clothing that were torn or well-worn, she also made clothing from scratch. Over several entries, she gives an account of preparing a dress: cutting the pattern and sewing it. Edith made items for special outings and added extra flounces to existing dresses. She lined her father's Cashmir Choya and made curtains. She also did more robust needlework such as upholster furniture, sew papers, make canvas travelling bags (for a friend's horseback journey of 800 miles north), and sew holland covers onto a new pony trap. Considered as a whole, she recorded a wide-ranging set of needlework skills.

Although it is clear that Edith enjoyed needlework, she still referred to sewing as labour by repeatedly chronicling it as 'work'. At times, the needlework project is not articulated, she just wrote 'worked all afternoon' or 'worked – read' or even just 'worked.'[20] Her writing also indicated the time she spent on needlework such as 'in all morning working, put braids on Amy's dress.' Often projects were completed over several days with comments such as 'commenced lining Pater's Cashmere Choya' on a Tuesday, writing that she 'sat up rather late' that night working on it and then on the Thursday 'sat finishing Cashmir Choya.' She also described her time spent on needlework as 'busy' such as 'busy making muslin curtains' or 'busy preparing a dress' or even 'busy mending.' There is no indication that she did not enjoy her needlework, nor that she found it a chore. In fact, there is not a single reference to any negative feelings towards needlework. Rather, she treated it as her work, a work she chose to undertake.

Added to this, the movement towards Art Needlework in which Edith was to become involved was underscored by hand-sewing skills often done in a social setting. Edith notes her social interaction with simple lines such as 'Mother and I worked all afternoon' and 'Mother and I finished the Cretonne chair covers' or 'helped Amy with the curtains.' As Marion Diamond points out, 'sewing at a machine was a solitary occupation' whereas hand-sewing could be executed in a social situation, something which advantaged needlework executed for ecclesiastical purposes and the movement for Art Needlework.[21] Hand-sewing or embroidery could be undertaken either together at home, surrounded by others in a collective who sewed for a common good, or in a teaching situation.

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[20] de Crespigny, *The Adelaide Establishment: The 1878 Diary of a Provincial Lady of Mount Lofty and Adelaide*, 80-81.
[21] Marion Diamond, "A Stitch in Time," *Historians are past caring,* Pandora Archive, Australian National Library, URL accessed 7 December 2020.

By and large, the analysis of Edith Tomkinson's diary from this lens confirms the significance of needlework, particularly hand-sewing in a colonial woman's daily life at a time when Art Needlework began to blossom in England and be more present on the public's radar in South Australia.

How the Movement for Art Needlework Filtered Through to South Australia

A drip feed of publicity resulted in South Australian women such as Edith Tomkinson using their hand-sewing skills within the movement of Art Needlework, either secular or ecclesiastical. An examination of the press immediately around the years of Edith's diary demonstrates that both the Adelaide, and even the regional newspapers, made South Australians increasingly aware of the movement towards using their existing skills to create decorative Art Needlework. Women were encouraged to execute needlework either at home or in a purposeful social setting such as a needlework society or teaching institution. For example, just four years before she wrote her diary, the *South Australian Register* promoted embroidery and hand-sewing by informing their audience that the School of Art Needlework 'whose zealous promoter is Princess Christian' had leased at nominal rent the recently purchased Belgian annex of the South Kensington Museum.[22] This was the same Princess who had promoted the *Special Loan Exhibition* in 1873 explained earlier. The following year, Princess Christian's official opening of the School of Art Needlework was recorded and this reinforced to women like Edith the elegant tone brought to Art Needlework by the elevated social circles.[23] By 1876, regional South Australian newspapers such as the *Wallaroo Times and Mining Journal* brought the discussion of sewing versus machine work to the fore, and in particular, the term 'Art Needlework'.[24] Articles discussed the importance of useful hand stitching such as mending, knitting and making table linen as the scaffold for delicate

[22] "Close of International Exhibition," *South Australian Register*, 31 December 1874, 6.
[23]"Summary of News," *Adelaide Observer*, 21 August 1875, 5.
[24] "The Revival of Needlework," *Wallaroo Times and Mining Journal*, 8 July 1876, 3.

ornamental work taught to elementary aged girls so that they could produce clothing and decorative items 'not only useful but sightly.'[25] The year prior to Edith writing her diary, the Mount Gambier *Border Watch* informed readers that crewel-work, a type of embroidery using wool on a linen surface was popular and, in the very next line, that Dublin had its own School of Art Needlework just like the one in London.[26] All this served to push those with hand-sewing skills towards the opportunities available in the industry of increasingly fashionable decorative needlework, and especially secular and ecclesiastical embroidery.

Women such as Edith Tomkinson were not only kept informed about the School of Art Needlework in London but of the other institutions being established abroad that operated with similar philanthropic teaching purposes and executed notable embroidery fashions. In 1881, three years after her diary, a London correspondent for *The Express and Telegraph* in Adelaide sent in a long article on 'Feminine Fashions and Fancies.'[27] In it, they described visiting the Ladies' Work Society in Sloane St, which as they pointed out, enjoyed patronage of the Marchioness of Lorne in the same way that Princess Christian was patron of the School of Art Needlework.[28] The correspondent described viewing a 'magnificent piece of embroidery', a commission for a grand piano cover and she informed readers of the 'custom gaining ground' to mask what she described as an 'inartistic looking object in the drawing room.' The correspondent pointed out that although the price of £150 for the cost of twenty women's work in the Sloane Street depot was beyond most, a simpler lined covering ornamented with yellow sunflowers would suffice because 'yellow is the predominant colour … with embroiderers.'[29] Another article in the same year described the Ladies Work Society

[25] "The Revival of Needlework," *Wallaroo Times and Mining Journal*, 8 July 1876, 3.
[26] "Household: Fashion Notes," *Border Watch*, 8 December 1877, 2.
[27] By A Lady, "Feminine Fashions and Fancies," *Express and Telegraph*, 15 June 1881, 2.
[28] Princess Louise Caroline Alberta (1848-1939), Marchioness of Lorne and Duchess of Argyll, sixth child of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.
[29] During this time, yellow sunflowers was a key motif of the Aesthetic movement.

exhibition commenting on the contemporaneous taste for medieval fashion and offering a comparison between the Society's objects and the quality of the execution of 'ancient needlework from the South Kensington Museum shown beside them.'[30] Both articles promoted useful and fashionable objects. These examples illustrate that women like Edith Tomkinson were not only getting the message of the elevated tone of Art Needlework, and the elegant patronage behind it, but also the suggestion that they could achieve a similar look by doing it themselves.

Art Needlework was explicitly promoted in the press as an avenue for feminine employment. Just three years after Edith wrote her diary, South Australian colonial women were made aware of the financial opportunities if they were prepared to 'self-help'. Those willing to use their existing needlework skills to sew independently or collaboratively could do so within the movement towards Art Needlework. In 1882, the *Adelaide Observer* recorded that a branch of the School of Art Needlework had been officially opened in Aberdeen and that the London branch employed 'no fewer than 140 ladies, who might otherwise have become objects of charity, [and] are now able to earn their livelihood by working at embroidery.'[31] The article stressed 'self-help' as a necessary value and behaviour prior to state-funded assistance. This idea of self-help was reinforced in a serialised 'Australian Novelette' published in the same newspaper that year. One of the characters sailed to Australia to take up the position of governess on a station after losing her father and finding herself in a financially difficult position.[32] However, instead of working as a bush governess, she found independence in a small township by producing Art Needlework for sale and selling the materials for production. This notion of self-help translated to home needlework with

[30] "The History of the Fortnight," *The Express and Telegraph*, 21 September 1881, 2.
[31] "British & Foreign: News by the Mail," *Adelaide Observer*, 9 December 1882, 5.
[32] M.R. Stafford Lord, "Nil Desperadum I: an Australian Novelette: Chapter V," *Adelaide Observer*, 25 November 1882, 45.

advertisements appearing in Adelaide and regional South Australian newspapers for crewel work commenced in satin and the latest designs of Art Needlework.[33] Schools such as the Ladies College in Glenelg began to offer Art Needlework as a subject and individual student efforts, particularly 'those who work[ed] out their own design' were noted.[34] English firms producing Art Needlework materials such as J. Harris & Sons advertised directly in South Australian newspapers with headlines linking their product to the School of Art Needlework in South Kensington.[35] Embroidery termed 'Art Needlework' was worked for donation and advertised for sale in fund-raising bazaars.[36] Thus, around the time of Edith's diary, Art Needlework became an avenue for women to engage in small scale commercial activity.

Conclusion

At a time when it was considered unthinkable for a middle or upper-class English woman to earn their own money, the *Special Loan Exhibition* served to legitimise needlework in two ways. First, it exhibited and documented embroidery as a technical skill not least by categorising the loaned objects into a recognisable system of opuses. Second, the women who organised the exhibition were mostly titled and this legitimised needlework as an acceptable form of income earning for other middle and upper-class women, a legitimisation made all the more palatable by the embroidery work of nuns in ecclesiastical settings.

Closer to home, women such as Edith Tomkinson were made aware of this legitimisation by way of the press. Needlework, particularly that with ecclesiastical connections, was promoted as worthy work and a legitimate form of income. For those with existing needlework skills such as Edith, there was work to be done in South Australia to furnish new colonial churches.

[33] For example, *Border Watch*, 2 September 1882, 3, and "Special Announcement: Hay & Compy," *Evening Journal*, 20 December, 4.
[34] "Ladies' College, Glenelg," *South Australian Register*, 22 June 1883, 7.
[35] "Harris' Flax Embroidery Threads," *South Australian Register*, 3 June 1889, 2.
[36] *Burra Record*, 4 May 1883, 2.

In an environment of self-help, this is precisely how Edith and others came to leverage their needlework skills and work collaboratively in ecclesiastic ateliers, as the next chapter will show.

Chapter Two

The transition of women's existing hand-sewing skills through to ecclesiastical embroidery and a commercial model of Art Needlework practice in South Australia

During the last decades of the nineteenth century, the elevation of ecclesiastical embroidery created opportunities for women in Britain to use their existing needlework skills beyond their own domestic needs. Surprisingly quickly, the same elevation of ecclesiastical embroidery was realised in the colony of South Australia. In the context of an aspirational society in a colony all too familiar with the idea of self-help, it was inevitable that South Australian women began to mobilise themselves in making ecclesiastical or secular Art Needlework, either from necessity or for philanthropic purposes. In Adelaide, this occurred most prominently from necessity with one Catholic Community of Sisters, and with two Anglican embroidery Guilds. All three formed philanthropic teaching and production workrooms to adorn the growing list of new churches in Adelaide and beyond. Each organisation operated on a commercial basis.

As early as 1876, South Australian women harnessed their energies and existing needlework skills to adorn the growing number of churches in the relatively new colony. In what must have been a contrast to the dusty exterior of the country parishes in the driest colony of the (second) driest continent, they beautified the interiors of Catholic and Anglican churches with a luxurious Gothic style echoed from Britain. Although their labour was philanthropic, the women worked strategically through a commercial model based on the proper conventions of financial institutions. This chapter will show how their devotional needlework labour scaffolded the secular commercial Art Needlework scene explored in later chapters. In doing so, this chapter reinforces the level of existing needlework skills demonstrated by middle-

class women in the South Australia prior to Federation, skills that women brought to ecclesiastical embroidery. Three neglected ecclesiastical needlework organisations of Adelaide are investigated: the Catholic Community of the Sisters of St. Dominic and two Anglican guilds, the Guild of St. Paul and St. Peter's Cathedral Guild. These organisations of women worked within an atmosphere of self-help, effectively forming themselves into ecclesiastical ateliers – workrooms for embroidery and needlework labour. To afford the expensive silks and materials for their embroidery, needlework was practised on a system of paid commissions from individuals and parishes both in South Australia and beyond its borders. Although these ecclesiastic ateliers were described as philanthropic endeavours, this chapter reveals the commercial structures and conventions underpinning the women's work, necessary skills which sewed the seed for secular Arts & Crafts commercial endeavours later on. The focus on ecclesiastical embroidery is significant because the same women, and the following generation, would go on to develop their artistic skills and understanding of design in the Arts and Crafts educational setting explored in subsequent chapters.

The Atelier of the Sisters of St. Dominic, North Adelaide

St. Dominic's Priory in North Adelaide is host to one of the more pragmatic examples of colonial South Australian women leveraging their needlework skills to commercial enterprise. Just two months after arriving in the colony of South Australia in 1883, their Superior, Mother Rose Columba Adams (1832-1891), wrote 'Our future still looks most uncertain. Two priests have sent orders for vestments and wanted by Christmas if possible.'[1] The Community of Sisters found themselves having to fall back upon their needlework skills for remuneration in response to the context in which they found themselves, 15000 miles from their convent at Stone in the Diocese of Birmingham, England. Mother Rose Columba

[1] Letter to J.M.D.C, 28 November 1883, reprinted in Right. Rev. W.R. Brownlow, D, D. *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams, O.P: First Prioress St Dominic's Convent and Foundress of the Perpetual Adoration at North Adelaide,* London: Burns & Oates, Limited, 1895, 247.

Adams was not overstating the financial precariousness of the position of her Community.[2] Yet, in the very next sentence, she provided the solution: needlework.

The Community of the English Order of St. Dominic in North Adelaide were procured by the philanthropic efforts of two female members of the Baker family of Morialta who had recently converted to Catholicism. When the wealthy Baker women approached Bishop Christopher Augustine Reynolds (1834-1893) about establishing an English order of Dominicans, he was receptive because, as Margaret Press RSJ found, Catholic doctors had for some time been appealing to Reynolds about the discrimination against both Catholic patients and Catholic women wishing to train as nurses at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.[3]

In comparison with other denominations, the Catholic community in Adelaide into which the St. Dominic nuns arrived was a minority.[4] Arguably the most prominent within the small congregation was Elizabeth (Bessie) Anstice Baker (1849-1914). Her conversion to Catholicism was an anomaly for a wealthy Protestant in the colony of South Australia but she was fervent and active. By the time she wrote to Bishop Reynolds about a second Dominican establishment in Adelaide, Bessie had already attended two audiences with Pope Leo XIII and begun her solicitous visits to the Dominican Community at Stone. It would have been difficult for him not to take the well-travelled, intellectual and proactive young woman seriously. Reynolds welcomed the generous offer to fund the establishment of an English Dominican Community. Their purpose was to service a Catholic hospital in North Adelaide,

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[2] In the interests of clarity, upper case Community refers to the Community of religious Sisters whereas lowercase community to the general public.

[3] Press, *Three Women of Faith*, 68. This was an ongoing dispute. The Anglicans had previously been concerned at the rate of patient's conversion to Catholicism. See Cheryl Willis, *Miss Marryat's Circle: A Not So Distant Past*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2018, 59-60. (Religious Sisters of St. Joseph use the postnominal initials RSJ after their names.)

[4] Rev. Fr. R.A. Morrison, Diocesan Archivist, "The Priest Who Said the First Mass in Sth. Australia," *Southern Cross*, 6 October 1944, 3, and "Progress of the Colony - South Australian Almanac for 1841," *South Australian Register*, 2 January 1841, 3. See also Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams,* 204.

open to all, despite creed.[5] The Bakers also arranged their passage with the assurance of £400 annual funding (to which Bishop Reynolds promised a further £40 a year), plus paid passage home if desired.[6] Once the arrangements were made, two of the nuns visited the Irish Sisters of Charity in Dublin to study hospital work for the fortnight leading up to their departure for South Australia. In August 1883, the *Orient* arrived at Largs Bay conveying Mother Rose Columba Adams together with the five others: Sisters Francis Philomena Ullathorne (1850-1928), Mary Raymond Lundberry (1840 -1931), Anne Joseph McDonnell (1839-1910), Mary Magdalen de Pazzi Ward (1846-1894) and Mary Ermenilda Joyes (1833-1886), and two postulants: Mary Rose Mayo (1868-1931) and Dominic Teresa Winthrop (1851-1919).[7] The welcome committee included the Very Reverend Dean Kennedy (?-1897), several priests and Mrs and Miss Baker.[8]

The establishment of a Dominican hospital in North Adelaide was largely supported by the people of Adelaide and the Community of Sisters entered an environment where progress was contingent upon input, particularly amongst the women of the colony. For example, the Bakers took a mortgage of £2000 and used their own properties as security on the lease of a suitable site for the hospital. 'Younghusbands' was a substantial house on the corner of Hill Street and Strangways Terrace in North Adelaide.[9] The *South Australian Advertiser* announced that 'fifty or sixty influential ladies,' met at Younghusband*s* to organise a large fundraiser in the form of an International Fair to be held in the Town Hall. They planned a display of goods from other countries and the best lace and china ever seen in Australia. The details of the International Fair demonstrate the lengths to which the women were prepared to

[5] Press, *Three Women of Faith*, 69.
[6] Elizabeth Baker's controversial conversion to Catholicism and her role instigating a branch of the Community from Stone to establish themselves in North Adelaide is documented in Press, *Three Women of Faith*, 69. The exact amount of annual stipend varies from £300 to £800 according to the source.
[7] *The South Australian Advertiser*, 27 Aug 1883, 4.
[8] "Our Catholic Institutions: XIII. St Dominic's Priory, North Adelaide: A Cloistered Paradise," *Southern Cross*, 18 May 1900, 10.
[9] It is suggested that the Manager of the Bank of New South Wales, Aloysius MacDonald also contributed £1000 to the mortgage but this seems incongruous with his arrival in Adelaide in 1886.

go in order to improve facilities in the colony, and also how they supported enterprise. For example, Mrs Baker and an ecumenical mixture of other 'prominent ladies … [had] a herald, dressed in the most brilliant colours, riding about the City on a fine horse as a means of advertising.'[10] The week-long event in the Town Hall was costumed with themed stalls, continental cafes in the Banquet room, a huge, centred Christmas tree for children, numerous musical recitals and scenery of an international flavour. By and large, the experience was designed to significantly usurp the predictable fundraising bazaar model. Substantial entrance sales – 3000 entry fees sold on the first night – sales of wares, and repeated vice regal patronage throughout the duration all contributed to the International Fair's success. The event raised over £900 for the hospital.[11] The International Fair clearly emphasises the spirit of enterprise and self-help at the time, as well as the willingness of women to collaborate ecumenically for the advancement of the colony.

However, a singular issue arose that changed the course of the Community of St. Dominic in North Adelaide – one that forced them to commercialise their needlework and creative skills. Almost immediately after they arrived in Adelaide, it became apparent to the Bishop that the new hospital was for general patients and nursing male patients would not be considered suitable for women of their vocation.[12] Although a general hospital was taken for granted in the colony of South Australia, and indeed in Ireland where the nuns had sought professional experience, their request for guidance from the Bishop of Birmingham, Bishop Ullathorne, confirmed their misgivings. They were, in fact, unable to follow through on the agreed responsibilities which meant that they no longer had an annual stipend of £400. They needed to fall back upon their own enterprise, find alternative accommodation and generate an income. From this time forward, it is clear that the St Dominic's Community showed the

[10] "Adelaide News," *Northern Argus*, 16 October 1883, 2.
[11] *South Australian Advertiser*, 25 September 1883, 3.
[12] Press, *Three Women of Faith*, 75-77.

same spirit of endeavour as the prominent ladies of Adelaide who had organised the International Fair. After all, as Sister Jillian Havey OP, AM of St. Dominic's Priory pointed out, they were women who had come to Adelaide of their own free will, women who sought an alternative to the expected path of marriage and children.[13]

It is important to recognise that like Edith Tomkinson, Mother Rose Columba Adams had existing sewing skills, but unlike Edith, hers were specialised. Added to this, her prior administrative experience supported a commercial model. Mother Rose Columba Adams had long demonstrated an independent character prior to arriving in South Australia to lead a new venture. Similarly to Mrs Baker and her daughter Bessie, she was born into a wealthy Protestant family with the given name of Sophie. [14] Against her father's wishes, she was received into the Catholic Church and joined the Dominican Order. Her potential for administration was observed early when she entered the Convent of St Dominic's at Stone. Very quickly, in 1860 she became Sister Vicaress at the convent of Stoke-upon-Trent and this appointment was followed by another Sub-Prioress at Clifton. Three years later in 1866, she was Sister and then Mother Vicaress at St. Mary's Church, Plymouth. During this placement, she participated in the site management of a new chapel where 'every detail of the plans … and execution [of the new church] was discussed with her.'[15] She also took an active part in the erection of a new convent at Plymouth. She was not daunted by administering large projects and this experience must have bolstered her resolve in Adelaide.

In addition to her experience in administration, Mother Rose Columba Adams possessed considerable skills in embroidery, painting, terra-cotta decoration and illumination. It is likely that the potential for commercialisation of these skills would have been made clear during her

[13] Sister Jillian Havey OP AM, St. Dominic's Priory, interviewed 28 September 2020.
[14] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams*, 28.
[15] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams*, 60.

time as Vicaress of a small Dominican Community in Stoke-upon-Trent, Staffordshire. The populace she served was almost entirely made up of pottery workers from Minton, Copeland and the rest of the twelve potteries in operation.[16] The ecclesiastical Community worked closely with the pottery workers and some of the women continued their involvement with her when she conducted a drawing class for girls employed at the Watcombe Terra-Cotta Clay Company after she moved to Plymouth. In 1873, the Sisters of the Community at St. Mary's began to do freehand [drawing and painting] for the Watcombe Terra-Cotta works. Initially, the manager of the works suggested that the orphans under the care of the Dominican Sisters render the painting but it soon became clear to him that the Sisters own talents could be harnessed.[17] These skills proved advantageous in the first year in Adelaide when Mother Rose Columba Adams and the Sisters painted terra-cotta as one of a suite of capabilities they fell back upon to generate income.[18]

A second founding nun, Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne, also significantly contributed to the commercialisation of Art Needlework. She too was a skilled painter and embroider and had worked in close creative collaboration with Mother Rose Columba Adams prior to leaving England.[19] Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne had also painted terra-cotta at the works at Watcombe prior to coming out. In South Australia, her talents were recognised with a gold medal for her illumination of a Tennyson poem entered in the Women's Work Exhibition in Adelaide in 1907 and first prize in the same section of the national version, the First Exhibition of Women's Work in Melbourne.[20] Clearly, both Mother Rose Columba

[16] *The Staffordshire Pottery Directory*, London: W. Kent & Co, 1868, 93.
[17] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams*, 75.
[18] "Bazaar at the Institute Hall," *Evening Journal*, 30 December 1884, 3.
[19] For example, in 1880, Mother Rose Columba Adams designed and painted some of the miniatures of an Illuminated Address for the Bishop of Plymouth but the rest of the painting and illumination was completed by Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne. Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams,* 60.
[20] "Women's Work Exhibition," *The Advertiser*, 21 August 1907, 6, and "Women's Work Exhibition: Prizes awarded to South Australians," *Evening Journal*, 30 November 1907, 7.

Adams and Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne arrived in Adelaide with the creative skills to begin financially securing their Community in an unexpected moment of necessity.

In Adelaide, their artistic skills were in demand straight away, and because they no longer had a stipend of £400 to support them, they immediately sought out remunerative work. In a letter back to England, Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne wrote that the Community had been asked to form 'a class among the ladies of the place, for sewing, or rather embroidery and illuminating.'[21] It is significant that she differentiates domestic sewing from embroidery as a more artisan skill, one in keeping with the Arts & Crafts Movement of the time. By separating embroidery from sewing, she signalled a level of skill different from mending and other pragmatic sewing more likely to be executed on a domestic level. Mother Rose Columba Adams's biographer and confidant noted how quickly the Community realised their potential in the moment of necessity by commenting that 'the Sisters were highly accomplished ladies … Their artistic powers in illuminating, and their skill in embroidery, might also be turned to account in making Church Vestments. By degrees, orders came in and they collected around a little band of pupils.'[22]

Like any modern start-up business, the Community had to work hard. By October of 1883, they were importing and decorating terra-cotta for sale, as well as taking on commissions for embroidered ecclesiastical vestments.[23] In November, Mother Rose Columba Adams wrote that she had worked 'hard all day on the vestments' while another Sister painted 'Christmas Cards, for which there is a great demand, and as we get 3s [shillings] each for them, they are worth doing.'[24] After they moved out of the basement of the hospital, their labour was even more necessary if they were to create an income towards the unexpected rent of £200 per

[21] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams*, 243.
[22] Ibid.
[23] "The Anniversary Holiday: Commemoration Day at Glenelg," *Evening Journal*, 30 December 1884, 3.
[24] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams,* 248.

annum for alternative accommodation. Their efforts received the highest praise in the press such as the antimacassar pair of bannerette fire-screens they embroidered that were described as 'the most artistic samples of fancy work' at a Bazaar in the Town Hall opened by the Governor in 1884.[25] However, hard work alone does not always bring remuneration.

The noted success of their endeavours from this point were underpinned by Mother Rose Columba Adams's design skills. Brian Andrews thoroughly researched her role in the design of all the building plans for the Church and Convent at St. Dominic's Priory in North Adelaide which the 'architect put into a workable form.'[26] A closer examination of Mother Adams's designs for illumination reveals how her design style meshed with that of her designs for ecclesiastical Art Needlework to create an arresting style that combined with the Sisters' embroidery skill to afford success. In 1887, she designed an illuminated address to Queen Victoria for a deputation representing 'Women of South Australia.' She integrated views of Balmoral and Windsor with the Adelaide coat of arms, the Town Hall, a kangaroo and the Adelaide Jubilee Exhibition. A feature-medallion contained a symbol of Britannia interlocked with an Aboriginal person.[27] The address was shown at the Adelaide Exhibition for two weeks before being forwarded to Queen Victoria at Balmoral.[28] In another commission of that year, Wigg & Co also bound another illuminated address executed by the Dominican nuns of North Adelaide for Pope Leo XIII which depicted medieval designs and figures of St. Peter and St. Paul. Each initial letter featured an emblem of the office of Leo

[25] *Express and Telegraph*, 15 October 1884, 6.
[26] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams,* 326. See also "Letter from a Sister," 10 November 1890, reprinted in Stephanie Burley & Katherine Teague, *Chapel, Cloister and Classroom: Reflections on the Dominican Sisters at North Adelaide*, Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1993, 31.
[27] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams,* 287.
[28] "Address to the Queen from the Women of South Australia," *Evening Journal*, 21 June 1887, 4. Despite considerable effort to locate this object and a request for vice-regal support, this important South Australian object has not been located in the Royal Collection Trust, the National Archives, UK, Birmingham (colonial) Archives, nor any archival deposit closer to home. A second reply from the Royal Collection Trust on the 7 January 2020 stated that it had probably not survived the transport of archives over the years and been lost with the passage of time.

XIII.[29] Other miniature scenes of religious devotion adorned the address: the Rosary to St. Dominic, Jesus and Mary, St. Joachim, St. Thomas, Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis and the Last Supper. Like the address for the Queen, it too was displayed for the general public's appreciation and demonstrated the Community's artistic talents. These exhibitions of their illuminated addresses marketed their commercialised creative skills to a wider audience.

The analysis of Mother Rose Columba Adams's illuminated designs is important because it makes meaning of her embroidery designs. Both her illuminations and embroidery employ portraiture and a similar colour palette. A number of extant embroidered objects are held in the St. Dominic's Priory museum and by far the most spectacular is the *St. Dominic's Priory Cope*, shown in Figure 3.[30] The *St. Dominic's Priory Cope* was designed by Mother Rose Columba Adams and worked by Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne and others in 1889. At first glance, the object would appear to be a prime example of the Opus Anglicanum style in which the women received their training however, considered as part of her entire creative oeuvre, a closer analysis reveals the same design style of decoratively bordered miniature portraiture and landscapes seen in the illuminated address designs.[31] The coloured silk threads in gold, silver, red and blue also allude to illumination. The body of the ecclesiastical cope is a semi-circle of pale magnolia coloured silk-jacquard which when placed around the shoulders forms a cloak open at the front. It is fastened with a cameo morse nestling in a frame of Art Needlework embroidered flowers. The clasp provides a minor distraction to the intricate figurative embroidered length along the semi-circle dissection. The orphrey (which appears as a long decorative stole on the sides of the cope) is the most striking part of the

[29] "Address to the Pope," *South Australian Register*, 21 November 1887, 4.
[30] The St. Dominic's Priory Cope was made in 1889 but at a later stage, the Community presented it to Mother Mary Raymond Lundberry and it has been referred to as the Lundberry Cope in some scholarship.
[31] Opus Anglicanum style is characterised by richly coloured embroidered threads. It is often figurative and the forms are modelled, often with expression. The highpoint of Opus Anglicanum was between 1275 and 1350. See Lanto Synge and Royal School of Needlework, *The Art of Embroidery: History of Style and Technique*, Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 2001.

embellishment because it is entirely embroidered although the viewer would be forgiven for initially conceiving a painted surface, such is the skill of the execution.

St. Dominic's Priory Cope features eight portraits of Saints dear to the Third Order of Dominicans. Each 'Saint' panel has the name of the Saint embroidered below it in the foreground. Heraldic shields relating to each Saint sit below the name. The Formed Saints stand within a range of articulated backgrounds such as landscapes of wooded areas, floral arrangements or towns; two are placed in interior scenes of checked-tiled floors larger at the front and smaller towards the background to create perspective; these are a visual link with Mother Rose Columba Adams and Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne's former work with the people of Stoke-on-Trent. Each of the eight portraits of miniature delight are surrounded by an intricate border. The viewer is struck by the complexity of the design as a whole, and the delicacy of the execution, especially the tonal application of multiple colours to successfully form the figures in silk thread. A small panel joins the eight portraits and sits at the base of the neck and perhaps in a nod to Sophie's love of animals, a little embroidered dog sits faithfully below a crown supporting a banner with the Latin word for truth – 'veritas.' All of these portraits, texts and decorative borders could be easily transfered to the medium of illumination. The colonial South Australian viewer must have been equally impressed by the extraordinary cope as we are today.

Figure 3.



Mother Rose Columba Adams (designer) and Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne (embroiderer).
St. Dominic's Priory Cope, 1889, silk embroidery on silk jacquard,
St Dominic's Priory Museum, North Adelaide.







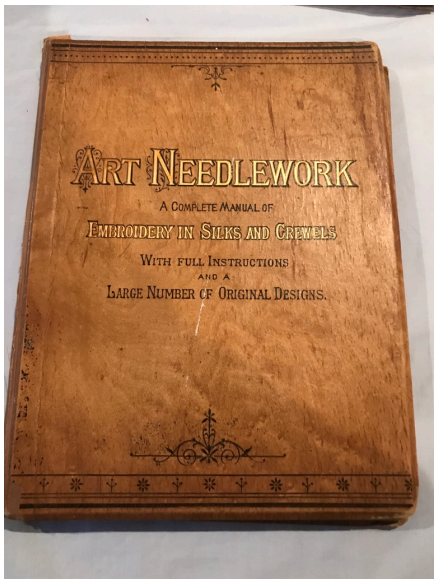


Details of Figure 3. *St Dominic's Priory Cope*

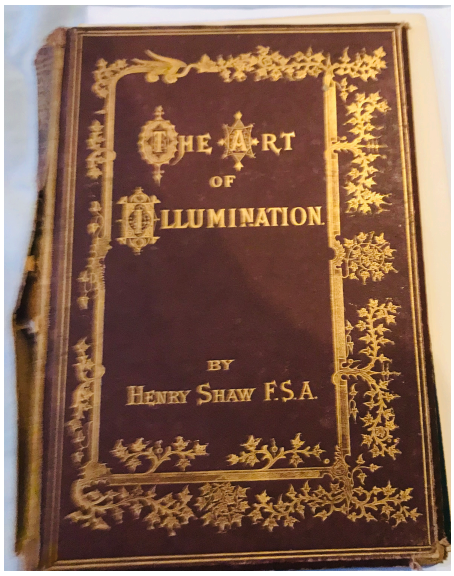
The success the Community achieved in these early years of finding remuneration was predicated on a number of factors. First, the Community came prepared to pursue their illumination and embroidery labour. They brought with them two large leather-bound texts seen in Figure 4. to support their skill development: *The Art of Illumination as practised from Earliest Times*, and *Art Needlework: A Complete Manual of Embroidery in Silks and Crewels*.[32] Although they probably did not originally intend to utilise these skills to a commercial end, they were prepared to contribute to either the adornment of their own establishment and/or that of others. Second, Mother Rose Columba Adams's unique design style was attractive and marketable, not least for its figurative narrative and bright colouring. Third, she had administrative experience of fledgling communities. Although the Community had the option of paid passage home, they chose to stay and be steered towards an unknown future of their own making. Finally, the Community led by Mother Rose Columba Adams had a willingness to labour. In effect, they harnessed the resources around, and within them, to create their independence. But creative endeavour alone does not often bring financial security and so they utilised, and in fact leveraged their needlework skills to launch another commercial opportunity.

[32] Henry Shaw, F.S.A, *The Art of Illumination As Practised During the Middle Ages,* London: Bell and Daldy, York Street, Covent Garden, 1870 and *Art Needlework: A Complete Manual of Embroidery in Silks and Crewels, with Full Instructions as to Stitches, Materials, and Implements Containing also a Large Number of Original Designs and a Handsome Coloured Design for Crewel Work*, London: Ward, Lock, and Co, 1882, St. Dominic's Priory Museum. A second text on illumination is also in the collection: W.R. Tymms, *Art of Illumination as Practised from The Earliest Times,* London: Day and Son, Lithographers to the Queen, 1866.

Figure 4.



Art Needlework: A Complete Manual of Embroidery in Silks and Crewels, with Full Instructions as to Stitches, Materials, and Implements Containing also a Large Number of Original Designs and a Handsome Coloured Design for Crewel Work, London: Ward, Lock, and Co, 1882, held by St. Dominic's Priory Museum, Adelaide.



Henry Shaw, *The Art of Illumination*, London: Bell and Daldy, 1870, held by St. Dominic's Priory Museum, Adelaide.

Mother Rose Columba Adams and the Sisters also brought teaching experience to the colony and this provided the Community with a more substantial and sustainable income. At Stone, the Prioress had taught in the Girls Poor School and then in the Middle Pension School. Both positions would have honed her organisational and leadership skills, qualities necessary to teaching. Later as the Mother Vicaress at St. Mary's, Plymouth, she initiated an orphanage and a young ladies school on the site. By the time she began a school for young ladies in North Adelaide, she'd already had experience in both teaching and administering in preliminary conditions where her own enterprise and administrative skills were required (as opposed to working in long established institutions). In what can only be described as an aggressive marketing campaign, for two months the Foundress repeatedly advertised in the

Adelaide newspapers for business offering instruction in needlework and painting, amongst other subjects.

> The Dominican Nuns (just arrived from England) have OPENED a SELECT DAY SCHOOL at PARK VIEW HOUSE STRANGEWAYS-TERRACE. Instruction is given in English, French, Italian, Latin, Greek, Painting, Needlework etc etc. For terms apply the Mother Prioress, Park View House, Strangways-terrace, North Adelaide.[33]

Not only would a Select School offering a curriculum of accomplishments afford a more secure income, it also enabled a wider audience beyond the Catholic community to benefit from the Community's needlework instruction.

On the 5 January 1884, Mother Rose Columba Adam's wrote: 'Tomorrow we begin our "Advanced School" to pay the rent and to benefit our neighbours.'[34] This comment speaks to her priorities at the time. On the other hand, the main priority of the neighbourhood mothers would have been instruction for their daughters in the essential Victorian accomplishment of needlework, not least because the Community had already been noted for the quality of their commissioned embroideries. The other subjects listed for instruction included five languages, music and painting, but needlework would have been the Communities 'brand' because from the very beginning, the Community's skills had been in demand.[35] During the first few years of their school, the needlework of their students received recognition in the press. For example, one of their 15-year-old pupils 'excited general admiration' for embroidered plush on a suite of drawing room furniture and a mantel drape.[36] In this light, it can be seen that needlework was the springboard from which the Community commercialised their existing

[33] *South Australian Register*, 15 December 1883, 1.
[34] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams*, 256.
[35] "Education," *Evening Journal*, 10 December 1883, 1.
[36] "The Gypsy Encampment," *Evening Journal,* 11 November 1885, 2.

skills towards securing a more sustainable and enduring financially rewarding independence that a school would bring them.

Even when their curriculum of accomplishments developed into an academic programme, the Dominican's special design style was still demonstrated by their pupils. Stephanie Burley and Katherine Teague analysed a student examination booklet in the same year as the Adelaide Jubilee Exhibition, 1887. They found evidence of subject instruction in Greek, Roman, Medieval and Ancient History, Literature Studies, Grammar, Latin, Chemistry, Botany and Astronomy.[37] As Burley and Teague noted, despite no formal training, the Sisters were providing an advanced education. Closer examination of the extant examination booklet of former student Lila Higgins demonstrates that the Sisters were also teaching the same integrated design skills that they employed for illumination and ecclesiastical Art Needlework. Well-executed, hand-drawn miniature illustrations adorn the student booklet. Gothic headings and a centralised heraldic shield embellish it. These are the same motifs and style used in the St. Dominic's cope and the illuminated address for Queen Victoria commissioned by 'Women of South Australia'. Although the curriculum broadened to include both a technical and university pathway, needlework remained embedded. For example, by 1905, St. Dominic's Priory Boarding and Day School advertised that they were also teaching book-keeping, shorthand and typewriting. The other academic subjects were not reiterated but 'plain and fancy needlework' received a special mention, as was their ability to prepare students for University Examinations.[38]

What began as a commercial venture underscored by their embroidery skills, blossomed into a large educational facility but it was still operated in conjunction with a needlework and

[37] 1887 Examination booklet of Lila Higgins in Stephanie Burley and Katherine Teague, *Chapel, Cloister & Classroom*, Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1993, 15-18.
[38] "St. Dominic's Priory North Adelaide: Boarding and Day School," *Southern Cross*, 21 June 1907, 15.

embroidery workroom business. The schools provided the Community with independent means that, ultimately, commissions for ecclesiastical needlework, sewing and illumination could not. However, they still took on extra commissions and developed their artistic business side-line. Mother Rose Columba Adams wrote about the strains of juggling competing responsibilities adding that 'a little extra work comes in, which we are glad to get, as it brings us a few pounds; but it has to be done under difficulties.'[39] Despite the difficulties in their workload, the Community continued to operate both the educational facility and the creative side-line as effective business enterprises to materially help their expanding building fund. In fact, the Community Art Needlework business was sustained for decades afterwards. In 1908, the Melbourne press commented on the attire worn by a fashionable bride 'made specially in St. Dominic's Priory, N. Adelaide, by the nuns, and the wedding veil was shown by the Women's Work Exhibition' so by that stage, the influence of the Community's ecclesiastical skills had spilled over into secular spheres.[40] The accounting ledger held in the St. Dominic's Priory archives records each purchase of 'materials for work' and each 'sale of goods.'[41] By the mid 1930s, they had effectively positioned their commercial venture to the point where they were receiving commissions of both a secular and ecclesiastical nature which were produced in workrooms before being sent around the state.[42]

This examination has focussed on the Community's transition of needlework to a commercial model however, it is also worth noting, in three particular points, there are also less obvious links to the development of Art Needlework in South Australia. First, this thesis will go on to show that Art Needlework was predominantly executed by Protestant women of Adelaide yet

[39] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams*, 261.
[40] "Mr H.L. Stevens to Miss.V. Levy," *Punch*, 23 April 1908, 27.
[41] For example, in the 2nd quarter of 1914, £12.4.7 was expended on 'materials for work' and the Community recorded £37.12.1 as income from 'Painting & Work.' In that year, the Community consisted of 46 Religious, 2 Novices, 2 Postulants, 22 Boarders and 1 Gardener – 73 in total. Accounting Ledger, St. Dominic's Priory Archives, North Adelaide, 45-46.
[42] "St. Dominic's Priory: Fruits of the Active and Contemplative Life," *Southern Cross*, 13 November 1936, 50.

it is worth noting that at a time when Art Needlework was making a mark within the Protestant community, the first students at the Catholic 'Select School' were *not* Catholic.[43] As previously mentioned, the Protestant parents who enrolled their daughters in the nuns 'Select School' during the first few years did so because were aware of the Community's superior needlework skills. The nuns were requested to teach and quickly advertised instruction available in embroidery (as well as illumination).[44] According to Burley and Teague's research into the St. Dominic's private archives, a few years into their arrival, the Sisters offered both day and evening classes to 'daughters from Catholic and Protestant families living in the vicinity of North Adelaide to learn some of the arts which were valued in middle-class English life, that this group was able to teach.'[45] In the early years of the 'Select School', needlework was one of the key subjects within a curriculum of accomplishment. However, this type of curriculum was offered by any number of schools operating in Adelaide and indeed North Adelaide at this time; advertisements in contemporaneous press demonstrate that parents had multiple choices of educational facilities.[46] Therefore, the decision of Protestant parents to send their daughters to a Catholic school with superior skilled needlework instructors, would have been a conscious choice.

Second, the Community's connection to the strata of Adelaide society engaging in Art Needlework is also suggested in the guest list for the opening of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, St. Dominic's Priory of which the 'beautiful embroidery on all the altars' executed by

[43] Stephanie Burley & Katherine Teague, *Chapel, Cloister and Classroom: Reflections on the Dominican Sisters at North Adelaide*, 15.
[44] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams,* 243.
[45] Burley & Teague, *Chapel, Cloister and Classroom: Reflections on the Dominican Sisters at North Adelaide*, 15.
[46] For a fuller examination of schools offering a curriculum of accomplishment for young ladies in Adelaide at this time see Helen. J. Reid, *Age of Transition: A Study of South Australian Private Girls' School 1875 – 1925*, Ph.D. diss., Adelaide, University of Adelaide, 1996.

the Sisters was especially noted by no less than seven news publications.[47] The *South Australian Chronicle* effused that the 'beautiful embroidery of the work of the high altar panels, the embellishments of the Lady altar, the shrine where the Blessed Virgin is seen holding the child Jesus, the altar of St. Dominic, who holds a lily in his hand, were executed by the nuns.'[48] Bishop Brownlow recorded a list of guests included:

> 'the chief Justice [Sir Samuel Way], Lady Downer, Colonel and Mrs. Gordon, Captain Milner, Hon. J.V. O'Loghlin M.L.C.., and Mr. T Worsnop (Town Clerk), Mr C.E. Owen Smyth (Superintendent of Public Buildings), Mr. and Mrs A. MacDonald, Mr. and Mrs. Leahy, Mr. and Miss Woods, Mrs. and Miss Barr Smith, Mrs. and Miss Baker, Mrs. and Miss O'Halloran, Mrs. and Miss Peacock, and several other ladies and gentlemen who took an interest in the Sisters and their work.'

For whatever reasons, Brownlow failed to mention the rest of the guests:

> 'Mrs. W Horn, Mrs. Frampton, Mrs. O'Halloran Giles, Mrs. Turner, Mrs. Gunson, Mrs. Ryan, Miss Du Cheane, Miss Rankine, Miss Stow, Mrs. Harris-Brown, the Misses Richardson, Mrs. Attenborough, Mrs. E.W. Way, Miss McMinn, Miss Ross, Mrs. George Hawker, the other Miss O'Halloran.'[49]

Put together, this is a veritable 'who's who' of Art Needleworkers in Adelaide and thirteen of these named were active members of the Anglican Guilds. Only some had a practical connection to the building so, as Protestants, they must have been linked to the

[47] For example, see "The Dominican Priory, North Adelaide: Dedication of the Chapel for the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament," *Southern Cross*, 28 July 1893, 4, and "The Dominican Nuns in North Adelaide: Opening of the a Perpetual Adoration Chapel," *Evening Journal*, 21 July 1893, 3.
[48] "A Handsome Edifice: Dominican Priory at North Adelaide," *South Australian Register*, 29 July 1893, 8.
[49] Ibid.

Community through another connection and the most likely is ecclesiastical embroidery and Art Needlework.

Third, the Catholic Community was indeed aware of the Protestant ecclesiastical embroidery Guilds operating at the same time, both of which will be explored in the remaining two sections of this chapter. Mother Rose Columba Adams wrote to another Sister in England that the 'Guilds have a good influence.'[50] Her Community worked for the same purpose as the Protestant Guilds in furnishing depleted or new South Australian ecclesiastical communities and new churches with vestments, altar cloths and frontals. She too took commissions from abroad, such as one in 1891 from Honolulu, and another from the Island of Molokai.[51] Like the Protestant ecclesiastical Guilds, the Sisters produced 'vestments, altar linen, art needlework, etc.' to order in the workshop which Brian Andrews described as an 'atelier'.[52] By 1936, this atelier had developed into dedicated 'workrooms for the making of orders for which [were] being sent from all parts of the State, and even from other States in Australia.'[53]

Although the Community of St. Dominic's is best known today for its St. Dominic's Priory school and notable Gothic architecture of its Chapel of the Holy Spirit, Mother Rose Columba Adams, Sister Francis Philomena Ullathorne and the other members of the Community played an important role in transitioning ecclesiastical embroidery to a commercial model of Art Needlework in South Australia. Even if there is no direct evidence that they collaborated with the Protestant ecclesiastical Guilds at the time, they certainly taught others to embroider including the daughters of Protestant North Adelaide families whose females engaged in the Anglican Guilds and the Adelaide School of Design, the topic

[50] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams,* 320.
[51] Brownlow, *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams,* 337.
[52] Brian Andrews, *Gothic in South Australia*, Adelaide: Flinders University, 38.
[53] "St. Dominic's Priory: Fruits of the Contemplative and Active Life," *The Southern Cross*, 13 November 1936, 50.

of the next chapter. The guest list of the opening of their Chapel indicates their social connection to others who were developing Art Needlework. Their quality products were lauded in the press and set a high standard for other needleworkers. Moreover, they provided women of the wider community with an exemplar of commercialising existing skills in what started as instruction in needlework, illumination, music, painting and languages yet manifested in an academic curriculum leading to university entrance.

The Guild of St. Paul

Just as Bessie Baker was indirectly responsible for bringing the talented Catholic Community of St. Dominic to South Australia, the Protestant side of ecclesiastical embroidery in Adelaide has been traced directly to her younger sister, Isabella Morison Baker (1847-1926). Isabella drew on her experience as a volunteer needleworker at the Clewer Workroom in Bloomsbury and formed the Guild of St. Paul in 1876. The Guild was alternatively known by a myriad of names: the St. Paul's Work Society, the Work Society of St. Paul, the Ecclesiastical Embroidery Society of St. Paul, Ladies of St. Paul's Guild and even the Society of St. Paul but regardless of its confusing nomenclature, its legacy is that it harnessed the existing needlework skills of South Australian women to decorate the growing number of churches.[54] In doing so, it furthered the embroidery skills of other women and provided them with a model that would in due course turn Art Needlework into an explicit commercial venture beyond ecclesiastical objects and into the hands of individual Art Needleworkers within their own studios.

In comparison with Bessie Baker, the information concerning her younger sister Isabella is scant but she unquestionably exhibited the same philanthropic behaviours. Like Bessie,

[54] This thesis will use the form Guild of St. Paul, as termed by Isabella Baker in Letter from I.W (sic).Baker (Miss Isabella), *Church Standard*, sent from London and printed after 4 August 1922, SRG 94/A1/55, State Library of South Australia.

Isabella was taught at home by governesses and had use of the family's library. At the age of twelve, the family travelled to England and during her four-year absence from Australia, Isabella attended school in Paris. After 1863, Isabella and Bessie lived a privileged life from back at the Baker's substantial home at Morialta; however, this was tempered by the family's deep sense of duty to others.[55] This sense of philanthropic duty was a constant, despite individual members of the family choosing contrasting branches of religion. For example, even though their father John Baker (1813-1872) was a member of the Unitarian church, he still donated the land and building costs of the Anglican church at Norton Summit, St. John's.[56] Demonstrating the same philanthropic behaviour, Isabella personally donated £875 (the same numbers of the year, 1875) towards the building of a new schoolhouse beside St. John's church. However, Isabella was not present in South Australia at its official cornerstone ceremony when Reverend Samuel Green (1841-1904) of St Paul's, Port Adelaide replied to an address on her behalf because, tellingly, she was in London pursuing dutiful religious works.

Sometime prior to this period, Isabella 'lived for some months at the Clewer Workroom.'[57] This was the School for Church Embroidery at 72 Gower Street, Bloomsbury operated by the Anglican Sisters of the Community of St. John Baptist, otherwise known as the Sisters of Mercy.[58] The Community was founded in response to social need, specifically to provide protection to fallen women at a time when upper and lower classes had minimal social

[55] John Baker owned over 2000 square miles of grazing land. His Adelaide Mining Company 'reaped easy profits' from the Montacute copper mine and the land he owned at Kapunda. The family seat of *Morialta* was the scene of many philanthropic social events, the home of the Adelaide Hunt Club and host to both royal and vice regal visitors. Press, *Three Women of Faith*, 33.

[56] Mrs Isabella Morrison Baker (née Allan 1819-1901) managed the project and the description of the consecration suggests she harnessed the support of business partners and family friends to furnish the church. "St. John's Church, Norton Summit," *South Australian Register*, 3 January 1873, 5.

[57] Letter from I.W (sic).Baker (Miss Isabella) sent from London after 4 August 1922 and printed in *Church Standard*, SRG 94/A1/55, State Library of South Australia.

[58] The Clewer workshop began at 72 Gower Street but later was moved to Clewer in an area of Windsor, Berkshire. Information supplied by Valerie Bonham and forwarded by Sister Pamela, Community of St. John Baptist, New Jersey, 26 November 2020.

contact. The Anglican nuns were mostly women from upper-class backgrounds. As Susan Munn points out, it was perceived that only upper-class women could 'wield the moral influence on fallen women' so the Sisters provided a useful social service to a problem largely created by the upper-class men who used the services of the 'fallen women', or had sexually assaulted those in domestic service.[59]

Like the St. Dominic's atelier, needlework at the Clewer Workroom was done in a communal setting and the anonymity of production was perceived to engender humility. For the Clewer Community, the art of embroidery generated two streams of income because they taught ecclesiastical needlework (from which Isabella Baker presumably benefited) and they undertook commissions, including those from leading designers. Much of the embroidery carried out by Anglican convent workrooms, including Clewer, was commissioned by architects of Anglican churches pursuing a medieval revival style, an aesthetic also known as Gothic or Tractarian.[60] The Clewer Workroom received commissions from the Tractarian artist, Charles Eamer Kempe (1837-1907). The Community also used his designs for other orders. Kempe was a designer influenced by his contemporaries, notably the leading ecclesiastical designer Charles Frederick Bodley (1827-1907) with whom he worked as a young assistant, and William Morris who first inspired him to make ecclesiastical decoration his career.[61] His design style was characterised by a mix of velvet and damask.[62] During her time at the Clewer Workroom, Isabella purchased 'a Kemp' design for a frontal which she brought back with her to South Australia.[63] She also purchased 'plant, frames and silks.'[64]

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[59] Susan Mumm, "Not worse than other girls: The Convent-Based Rehabilitation of Fallen Women in Victorian Britain," *Journal of Social History 29*, Spring, no. 3, 1996, 528.
[60] Kate Jordan, *Ordered Spaces, Separate Spheres: Women and the building of British Convents, 1829-1839*, University College of London, 2014, 267.
[61] Adrian Barlow, "Kempe Windows," *Queens College Record*, Cambridge: Queens College, 2007. URL accessed 30 December 2020.
[62] Schoeser, *The Watts Book of Embroidery: English Church Embroidery 1833-1953*, 81.
[63] Letter from I.W (sic).Baker (Miss Isabella), *Church Standard*, sent from London and printed after 4 August 1922, SRG 94/A1/55, State Library of South Australia.

Back in Adelaide, Isabella established her own philanthropic ecclesiastical needlework society. It is difficult to verify the date of establishment but in her own words very late in her life, Isabella wrote that she formed the 'Guild of S. Paul in Bishop Short's time.'[65] Isabella stated that she 'made the two first frontals for S. Peter's Cathedral, a red velvet, also a green one,' and noted that there were around twenty women who met in a room at Hindley Street which was probably the Anglican Church Offices in Leigh Street recorded in later archives. 'Mr. Green, of Port Adelaide, was the chaplain, and Mrs. Green the assistant.' When she left Adelaide for good in 1876, 'Mr [sic] Green took the lead and Miss Z. Dutton became second in command.'

Isabella also stated that she left them all her 'plant, frames, skills and designs, one of which was Kemp's [sic],' and this is significant to the development of design for Art Needlework in South Australia because it set an elevated tone in the same sense as that conveyed by the promotion of Art Needlework by upper-class women, and the embroidery of historical 'Opus' significance.[66] A Kempe design is one of a suite of what can be termed 'High Church' trappings within the Anglican church. High Church refers to certain expressions related to holy communion more akin to the religious expressions of Catholicism rather than Protestant non-conformist churches such as the Methodist and Congregationalists. Isabella's 'High Anglican' leanings, as Press observes, manifested in a personal attraction to the Tractarian Anglican domain.[67] Design was part of Isabella's responsibility as the Superior of the ecclesiastical atelier. Given that she purchased a Kempe Studio design to bring back to Adelaide with her, it is highly likely that Isabella became familiar with, or even worked on a Kempe design whilst at the Clewer Workshop. As already noted from Mary Schoesser's work

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[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Isabella's High Church leanings would eventually lead her to a lifetime of humble service at St. Alban's, Holbein in London.

on ecclesiastical embroidery, velvet and damask were characteristic of the Kempe Studio designs.[68] The frontal Isabella worked for the new St. Peter's Cathedral in Adelaide was in 'red velvet,' so it is likely that she absorbed a similar style to that of Kempe and introduced it to the ecclesiastical design aesthetic in South Australia.[69]

Both the St. Dominic and Guild of St. Paul's ateliers shared the same underlying motivation to adorn. Isabella's sympathies for the Tractarian style connected her with the Reverend Samuel Green and Ellen Elizabeth Green, (née Bayfield 1844-1920) at the parish of St Paul, Port Adelaide.[70] She and the Greens believed that a beautifully embroidered altar frontal, alms bag, vestment on a priest, or even a small but exquisitely embroidered bookmark contributed to an elevated spiritual tone throughout holy communion. By instigating the Guild of St. Paul, Isabella was articulating Reverend Green's similar Tractarian expressions. When Isabella departed for London, Ellen Green took up the mantle. Elements of Isabella's preferred style lingered long after she left the colony. Initially, this occurred because the glamourous Tractarian design style that Isabella brought to the colony's Protestant ecclesiastical needlework was faithfully continued by Ellen Green, but then the style was sustained because Ellen played a part in the skill development of other women developing the secular Art Needlework scene.

The Tractarian style of expressing holy communion, articulated by Kempe's ecclesiastical decorations and Isabella's iterations, was quickly sought after in other South Australian Anglican churches because Reverend Green at St Paul's, Port Adelaide actively encouraged it. It was a style that led to some controversy in a city largely populated by a more non-

[68] Schoeser, *The Watts Book of Embroidery: English Church Embroidery 1833-1953*, 81.
[69] The altar of St. Peter's Cathedral was donated by Reverend Green and Mrs. Green.
[70] This is why it was Reverend Green who replied on her behalf to the address afforded her at the cornerstone ceremony of the new Schoolhouse at Morialta late in 1875.

conformist flock.[71] However, despite this, the Guild of St. Paul's atelier was clearly successful not least because Reverend Green had an eye for business. For example, he successfully chaired the Easter vestry meeting of 1880 that moved motions for seat rents to be payable in advance, and 'offertory bags be dispensed with, and open plates substituted,' presumably to make individual donations more transparent.[72] Although the ecclesiastical embroiderers of the Guild of St. Paul were not required to pay a subscription, Reverend Green managed financial matters leaving his wife Ellen and assistant Zelie Adele Dutton (1846-1909) free to supervise the needlework. Essentially, Reverend Green's financial management would later underscore the development of a commercial model of Art Needlework explored in later chapters.

The strategic development of holy communion and the commercial underpinning of St. Paul's early on in Reverend Green's tenure are commemorated by the *Guild of Perseverance banner* executed by the Guild of St. Paul and seen in Figure 5.[73] Those supportive of the gothic revival ecclesiastical embellishments knew the impact of a processional banner on liturgical festivals. As a liturgical artform, they represent considerable effort as can be seen in the *Guild of Perseverance banner* currently cherished by St Peter's, Glenelg. The call to Holy Communion is overt in the central chalice and above it in a banner spelling out *ecce agnus dei*, Latin for 'behold the lamb of god'. In the foreground below the chalice, a panel of three stylised passionflower medallions signify the passion of Christ. The orphreys on the side also feature the passionflower medallion but the eye is quicky drawn to fledgling oak trees,

[71] Reverend Green was one of the first High Churchmen in the colony and observed high church style conventions such as the procession of the cross, altar candlesticks, weekly Eucharist and choral services. His Tractarian use of incense incensed the non-conformist laymen who complained about his ritualistic tendencies and throughout his early tenure at Port Adelaide, he was compelled to defend himself in the press. See "Ritualism, and the Rev. S. Green," *Port Adelaide News*, 9 August 1879, 7.
[72] "Easter Vestry Meeting: St Paul's, Port Adelaide," *The Express and Telegraph*, 12 April 1880, 3.
[73] By 1884, the Guild of Perseverance had 120 members which included the Guild of St. Paul needleworkers and it was sustainable enough to enjoy a yearly festival which was anything from dances, concerts, picnics and socials. See "Guild of Perseverance, Port Adelaide," *Evening Journal*, 30 September 1884, 4.

complete with catkins growing from jewelled pots. In Christianity, the oak motif symbolises virtue, force and strength and the jewelled pot suggests a domestic nurturing on a small scale rather than the majesty conveyed by a mature tree growing outside. Below the main banner, a drape has been added with a central panel of a crown above the 'IHS' monogram for Jesus Christ. Either side is an odd motif, highly stylised and at once suggestive of an Italianate crown, a lily, tapered maize cob with husk peeled back and a sword pushing upwards.[74] It sits in a breadbasket that connects it with the communion. A rope straddling the base forms three loops either side.

The design was manipulated from a flower motif on an 'Early English' frontal.[75] The iconography of the banner and its golden colour are perfectly in keeping with the advice of Marion Alford to 'originally possess [a pattern] to retain a meaning.' Marion was instrumental in organising the original *Special Loan Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework before 1800.* She wrote articles about Art Needlework in 1880s and published a seminal text titled *Needlework as Art* in which she repeatedly cautioned the amateur not yet educated in Art Needlework creation 'to be mindful to design a really thoughtful and beautiful work of art.' [76] No doubt, this is what the Guild of St. Paul aimed to achieve. They did this by manipulating design ideas in available texts.

[74] The sword is the symbol of St. Paul.
[75] This developed Fleur de Lis motif also appears in an instructional manual printed after the banner was made. Hinda. M. Hands, *Church Needlework: A manual of instruction*, London: G.J. Palmer & Sons, 1907, 40 and 45. Pugin described the heraldic Fleur de Lis as the 'most beautiful conventional form of the lily … the ornament royal in the crown of King Solomon representing love and pure charity.' See Pugin, *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume*, 154.
[76] Marion M. Alford, *Needlework as Art*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1886, 341.

Figure 5.



The Guild of St. Paul, *Guild of Perseverance banner*, before 1889, silk and metallic thread on silk and velvet held at St. Peter's, Glenelg.

Most of the motifs appear to have originated from another important contemporaneous instructional manual researched by Mrs Mary Barber and published posthumously in 1880.[77]

[77] Mrs Mary Barber, *Some Drawings of Ancient Embroidery: Thirty Specimens*, London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1880, plates 21, 24, 28.

The centre chalice feature is similar to a red velvet monogram on the end of a funeral pall belonging to the Saddlers' Company seen in Figure 6. The Fleur de Lis motif can be seen in Figure 7a[78] This idea of a banner held by angels can be seen in Figure 7b. However, none of these designs have been slavishly replicated by the designer of the Guild of St. Paul. Each one has been manipulated to the point of being, as Marion Alford termed it, 'possessed'. For example, the idea of the banner is the same but the angels are completely dissimilar and in fact more exquisitely formed.

Figure 6.

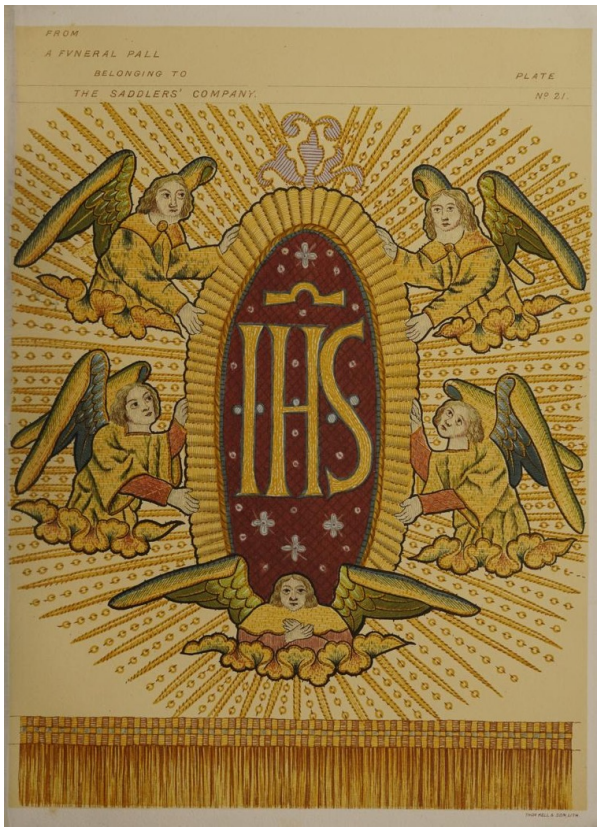


Plate 21. *Funeral Pall*, Saddlers Company. *Image reproduced from Mrs Mary Barber, *Some Drawings of Ancient Embroidery*, London: H. Sotheran and Co, 1880, 99.

[78] This motif was copied and published in Hinda. M. Hands, *Church Needlework: A manual of instruction*, London: G.J. Palmer & Sons, 1907.

Figures 7a and 7b.

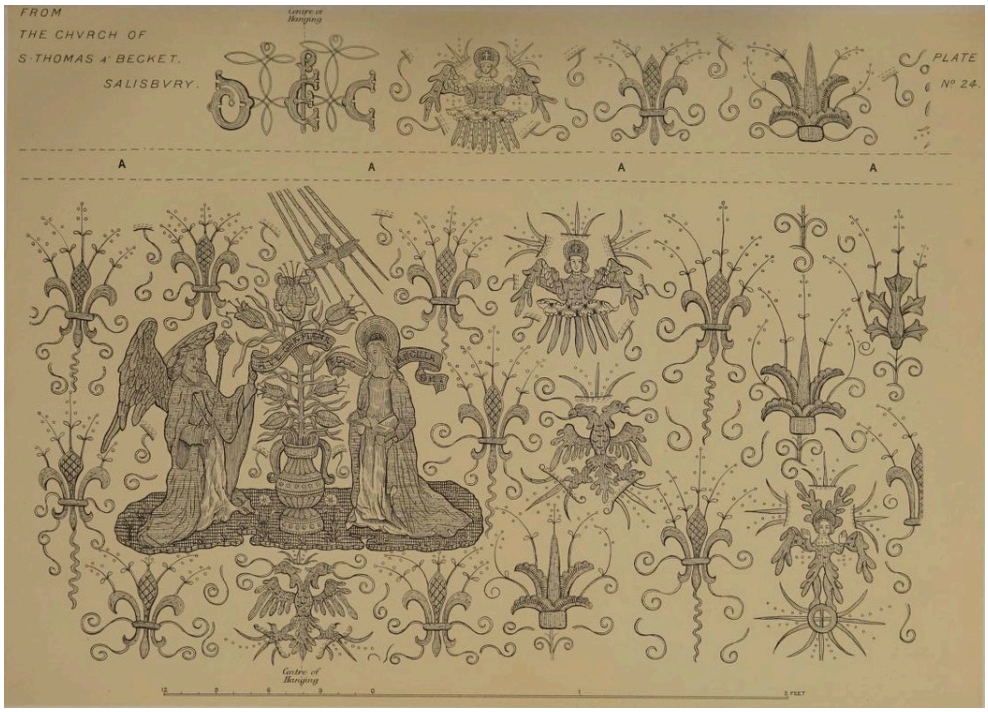


Plate 24. *From the Church of St Thomas á Becket, Salisbury* *Image reproduced from Mrs Mary Barber, *Some Drawings of Ancient Embroidery*, London: H. Sotheran and Co, 1880, 111.



Plate 25. *From the Church of St Thomas á Becket, Salisbury* *Image reproduced from Mrs Mary Barber, *Some Drawings of Ancient Embroidery*, London: H. Sotheran and Co, 1880, 114.

Just as the success of the St. Dominic's atelier rested on the design skills of one person, so too did the Guild of St. Paul. The principal designer and maker of the *Guild of Perseverance banner* was Reverend Green's wife, Ellen Green, who Isabella Baker named as her replacement superior. Canon Green's historiography has somewhat overshadowed that of his wife but she was known as 'an expert in church needlework' and 'ruined her eyesight over the fine work.'[79] Apart from Ellen Green, other members of the Guild at this time included Zelie Dutton who took on the role of second in charge, and Mary Stewart Leishman (née Douglas 1871-1922) was also an early member. Fanny M. Richardson, Alice M. Gall (née Mitford (1845-1937), Edith Tomkinson, Frances Caroline O'Halloran (1868-1955) and Mary Louisa Stewart Browne (1862-1947) were also early members. In 1894, the members of the Guild referred to themselves as the Society of St. Paul and signed their names on an illuminated address for the wife of the departing Bishop Kennion, Henrietta Duncan Kennion (née Fergusson 1839-1937).[80] They were:

Alice M. Gall	Ellen E. Green (Superior)
Ellen May Cave	Zelie Adele Dutton (Assistant Superior)
Fanny M. Richardson	Edith A. Doswell
Lilla Hope	Annie Hornabrook
Edith Tomkinson	Georgir Lamb
Frances O'Halloran	Emily Gill Mednall
Mary L. Stewart Browne	Florence E. Hammond
Charlotte Hussey	

[79] "Religious Notes," *Register*, 24 April 19. She also taught Sunday School at St Paul's Port Adelaide for twenty-one years.

[80] Henrietta Kennion, *Commemorative album containing illuminated addresses, photographs and a book of signatures presented by Churchwomen of the Adelaide Diocese, 1894*, PRG885/1, State Library of South Australia. Henrietta Kennion was the sister of a former Governor of South Australia from 1868-1873, Sir James Fergusson (1832-1907).

To become a member of the Guild of St. Paul, a needleworker did not have to be part of the congregation of St Paul's, Port Adelaide. This meant that skilled embroiderers from around Adelaide could be seconded and most resided in North Adelaide, Glenelg and Mount Lofty. They travelled to the Church Office, Leigh Street once a week where they were afforded a dedicated workroom.[81]

The St. Dominic's atelier and the Guild of St. Paul were more alike than not. The Guild workroom was entirely devoted to ecclesiastic embroidery and although this was not true of St. Dominic's, it too served a wider community. As Isabella Baker mentioned in her recollections of the early days of the Guild, orders were fulfilled outside of the colony of South Australia for churches in New South Wales, Victoria and beyond. Many of these commissions were mentioned in the press such as an altar cloth 'worked by the ladies of the Association of St. Paul in Adelaide,' for the new church of St. James in Jamestown, 1880.[82] Another altar cloth was worked for St Andrew's in Redhill, S.A. in 1882.[83] Just as the St. Dominic's atelier relied on commissions to raise funds, often the Guild benefitted from individuals wishing to present an embroidered work as a gift. This was the case in 1882 when Mrs Alexander Mackay Sr. commissioned a violet altar frontal for Lent and Easter for St Augustin's Church in Port Augusta, S.A. Similarly, Mrs. J. Lewis commissioned an altar cloth for St. Mary's, Burra in 1887. At other times, the Guild in one way or another perceived a need and gifted their work in the same manner as the Community of St. Dominic. This happened in 1884 when the 'Society of St. Paul' presented an altar cloth to All Saints' Church, Hindmarsh in 1884.[84]

[81] It would not have been difficult for Ellen Green to travel to Adelaide from Port Adelaide for weekly guild workshops because the government owned railway to Port Adelaide had been in operation since 1856.
[82] "Opening of the new Anglican Church at Jamestown," *South Australian Register*, 3 August 1880, 5.
[83] "Vestry Meetings," 26 April 1882, 2.
[84] "All Saints' Church, Hindmarsh," *South Australian Register*, 16 September 1884, 5.

Both the Guild and St. Dominic's ateliers offset the value of the materials and their labour with the sale of other work. They also volunteered their time and skill. For example, an un-commissioned set of ecclesiastical vestments was gifted to St. Pauls, Port Adelaide by the Guild in 1880. The design was described as a centre of 'beautifully-shaded palm branches springing from a golden crown' with orphreys on each side of 'lilies in jewelled cases.'[85] The embroidery was rendered on green silk and green velvet altar cloths, similar to the Kempe characteristic of velvet and damask backgrounds. It was noted in the press that the work took five months to complete and 'in England the cost of such a set…would not be less than £40', a considerable amount saved by the ladies of the Guild 'who supply churches with all kinds of altar-cloths, &c., for the simple cost of the material, the valuable work being given gratis.'[86] Therefore, by executing embroidery commissions for other churches, the Guild was able to afford the expensive materials to work spectacular vestments for their own congregation at home, just as the North Adelaide Catholic Community did in the case of the *St. Dominic's Cope.*

The other members of the Guild of St. Paul continued after Reverend Green was appointed and relocated to St Peter's, Glenelg. Before the couple departed after a 26 year tenure, the Greens were given a large farewell from St. Paul's and Ellen Green's work for the parish was recognised with a gift of the banner. This is how the *Guild of Perseverance banner* ended up at St Peter's, Glenelg.[87]

One of the final objects created by the Guild was reported in 1898. Reverend Canon Green thanked the 'Work Society of St. Paul' who had embroidered 'a handsome silk vestment' that

[85] "St. Paul's, Port Adelaide," *Port Adelaide News*, 2 October 1880, 5.
[86] Ibid.
[87] "Death of Canon Green, *The Register*, 25 July 1904, 6.

had been commissioned by Mr S. Morgan.[88] As can be seen in the detail images of Figure 8, *St. Peter's Glenelg Silk Vestment* is evidence that Ellen Green as the Superior was still exercising the Tractarian Kempe characteristics of embroidery on velvet after she relocated to Glenelg. She used the same motif of radiating sunflowers as she did in the design elements of the *Guild of Perseverance banner.* Another example of her design style can be seen in Figure 9, a stole from the same collection held at St. Peter's, Glenelg. Here again the stylised Fleur de Lis motif; it is also part of the pattern in the lower part of the stole seen on the right. The crown above the 'IHS' is also consistent with the *Guild of Perseverance banner*. This style will give future scholars clues to the identification of the work of the Guild of St. Paul.

Unfortunately, Ellen's husband's health rapidly deteriorated in Glenelg and Ellen's own eyesight began to fail meaning it was too difficult for her to practise needlework. Around the time of Federation, the Guild of St. Paul ceased operations but even after her husband's death in 1904, Ellen Green continued to be involved in embroidery and Art Needlework at Glenelg, offering advice and sharing equipment for the furtherance of her craft.[89] Her husband's legacy was the business model that was transferred to another ecclesiastical embroidery atelier in South Australia, the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild. Together the Greens are remembered by their donation of the St. Peter's Cathedral altar itself upon which altar frontals, embroidered by Ellen, came to adorn.[90]

[88] "Vestry Meetings," *Advertiser*, 21 April 1898, 6.
[89] Letter from Mary S. Leishman, *Church Standard*, after 1 December 1922, SLSA, SRG 94/A1/55.
[90] "St Peter's Cathedral: A historical sketch," *Adelaide Observer*, 27 July 1901, 44.

Figure 8.



Guild of St. Paul, *St Peter's Glenelg Silk Vestment*, 1898, silk and gold thread on silk and velvet, St. Peter's, Glenelg. Commissioned by Mr. S. Morgan.

Figure 9.



Attributed to the Guild of St. Paul, *St. Peter's Glenelg Stole*, prior to 1900, silk and gold thread on silk jacquard, St. Peter's, Glenelg.

St. Peter's Cathedral Guild and the Development of a Commercial Model

Almost a decade after its Church of England predecessor, the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild was established in 1885. The founding embroiderers included several who had been in the Guild of St. Paul. The wife of South Australia's Anglican bishop, Henrietta Duncan Kennion, was the earliest president. At first, the needlework meetings were held at St. Barnabas's College where as women, the needleworkers were an incongruous inclusion in an all-male theological training environment.[91] However, in 1906, they were squeezed out by the growing student body and moved to the Church Offices, Leigh St where it is likely that they took over the room and equipment vacated by the Guild of St. Paul.

[91] Letter from (Mrs) W.S. Milne to W. Pope, 114 Strangways Terrace, North Adelaide, 5 February 1906, , SRG 94/A1/14, State Library of South Australia.

The St. Peter's Cathedral Guild differed to the Guild of St. Paul in several ways. For a start, the foundational configuration was unlike that of the Guild of St. Paul which was entirely dedicated to embroidery and in this way, St. Peter's was more like the St. Dominic's atelier in that members undertook a variety of roles. As shown in Appendix 1, the earliest members listed in 1885 numbered forty-nine of which twenty volunteered in the first meeting to work on ecclesiastical needlework, whereas the others performed wider tasks of concern such as the brassware, choir needs and flowers. The St. Peter's Cathedral Guild also differed from the Guild of St. Paul in that it was structured on a more professional and sustainable basis. For example, from the second meeting, Frances Wright was 'elected to the Committee to work out a scheme for the meetings and take charge of the same.'[92] Yet the two Anglican Guilds shared a membership. Like the Guild of St. Paul's, skilled needleworkers were embraced into their membership and the roll call of St Peter's needleworkers grew very quickly. Of these, Fanny M. Richardson was in both the Guild of St. Paul and St Peter's Cathedral Guild. It is likely that Henrietta Kennion was in both too.[93] A number of needleworkers had family connections in the Guild of St. Paul such as Amy Richardson, Julia Doswell, Mona O'Halloran (née Wright 1848-1904), A. Isabel, sisters Bessie (Elizabeth Jamieson Scott 1855-1948) and Denny Scott (Janet Augusta Scott 1858-1943), mother and daughters: Frances Wright (née O'Halloran (1839-1923) and Helen Lucy Wright (1873-1950), and of significance to this thesis, foundation member and spouse of the Director of the Adelaide School of Design, Annie Waring Gill (née Wright 1865-1936). After the Guild of St. Paul dissolved upon the demise of Ellen Green's eyesight, a number of the more highly experienced needleworkers joined the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild such as Mary Louise Stewart Browne (1862-1943) Mary Leishman and Edith Tomkinson. These women took on

[92] "Notes on 1885," October 1885, SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[93] This is probably the case given that the Guild of St. Paul signed the illuminated address presented to Henrietta Kennion on her departure from the colony in 1894. Each organisation with which she was involved contributed a signed section to the bound address.

leadership roles. For example, Mary Stewart Browne was appointed Superintendent when Frances Richardson resigned after her sister Amy died. Amy Hornabrook (1873-1904) took on a role of training the beginners.[94] All the evidence demonstrates that the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild operation was conducted with serious intent.

The rules were strict to ensure the smooth operation of high-quality products. Members were given a specially printed copy of the Guild rules. A roll was taken of needleworkers at 11am on Friday mornings. Two non-attendances incurred a fine of 6 pence – three absences without an apology meant a cessation of membership.[95] New and less experienced members were put on probation for three months. Needleworkers had to work their way up to being accepted into the committee where they could take on positions of responsibility. For example, Isabella de Courcy Connor (1875-1923) joined on probation in 1897 but it took over two decades before she was in the committee.[96] There are numerous references to quality control measures such as when Miss Richardson was 'appointed to assist Mrs Dendy with supervision of member's work.'[97] In 1890 when Miss Richardson took over from the ailing Mrs Dendy, she took steps to maintain high standards of work. 'Grave criticism,' was made about the hemming of altar linen and steps were taken to ensure silk was not worked until a member could show due skill.[98] Lessons in linen work were given to each member. Furthermore, all work was sent to review before being passed for completion. When required, holidays were cancelled if the rate of commissions was high even though the Guild had a planned recess over summer.[99] Visitors to the workroom, presumably younger women wishing to learn

[94] Minutes book, 1908, SRG 94/A1/14, State Library of South Australia.
[95] "Notes on 1887," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[96] Secretary's Supplementary Report 1911, SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[97] Amy Richardson took over from Mrs Dendy in 1890 due to Mrs Dendy's continued ill health. See "Notes on 1887," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[98] "Notes on 1890," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[99] "Notes on 1887," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.

skills, were permitted to attend the Friday morning session but their presence was discussed by the Committee as was the case with a Miss Lewis and a Miss N. Beever in 1908.

Like any well managed business, the needleworkers' working conditions were considered. Women other than those executing the needlework were persuaded to read to the Guild on Friday mornings to provide a conducive working environment; their names were noted sometimes in the Guild reports with lines such as 'for reading to the workers on Friday mornings we are greatly indebted to Mrs Thomas.' In 1893 it was noted that 'Lady Downer and Mrs Wright read aloud during the work meetings' and again in 1907 when it was reported 'the readers were Mrs Thomas, Makin, Pope and Mrs Bodley.'[100]

Ecclesiastical embroidery took time and unlike the St. Dominic's atelier and Guild of St. Paul, some of the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild work was outsourced. This benefitted individual women in two ways.[101] First, work was done outside of the Friday meetings. Life members did not have to attend every meeting and did not pay a subscription but this did not mean they were not continuing their practice because life members could earn extra from executing objects in their own time. For example, the Guild paid for two superfrontals, two bookmarks, altar linen for Melanesia and numerous other items in 1905. As well as this, they also paid for a member to create a superfrontal for St. Paul's, Port Adelaide and another three superfrontals using new material but old designs. This transaction alone amounted to £16, 4 shillings and 6 pence paid to individual needlewomen. Therefore, sometimes the members privately paid others to expediate works and over the years, other women took on active individual work. In 1905, Miss Luxmore worked a commission from Miss Waite of Urrbrae for a pulpit hanging.

[100] "Notes on 1893," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia, and Minutes book, 1910, SRG94/A1/14, State Library of South Australia.
[101] Minutes book, 1907, SRG 94/A1/14, State Library of South Australia.

Two years later in 1907, both Miss Law and Miss Krieg were paid for the work they did on vestments for St John's, Laura. Miss Law earnt 4 shillings and 6 pence, and Miss E. Krieg 14 shillings for the larger share of the work. Workers such as Misses Law and Krieg were earning considerably less than commercial rates but at that point the tenets of the Guild were philanthropic. Similarly, Misses de Courcey Connor, Stewart Browne, Krieg and Johns were noted as 'workers' for a commission from Mrs Whittington of Hobart and were paid: 10 shillings, 6 shillings, 4 shillings and 6 pence, and 7 shillings respectively making the cost of work £2 and 6 shillings. The Guild then charged Mrs Whittington £7 for 'design, material and work inclusive.'[102] This small stream of income could add up to something more substantial for a needleworker. For example, in 1907, one commission earned Miss E. Krieg £5, 5 shillings and 5 pence. However, it was still less than the commercial rate. In contrast, the previous year the Guild was not able to complete a commission of a banner for Miss Butler of Hyde Park so outsourced the working to a Miss W. Brydon who was not in the Guild. This non-Guild worker charged the full commercial rate of £10 but this was for her work and materials only because the Guild supplied the design.[103] Outsourced work provided remunerated work for those women willing to undertake it but the designs remained under the control of the Guild.

Like the Guild of St. Paul and St. Dominic's atelier, design was embedded into the work of the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild from its very foundations. H.P. Gill (the husband of foundation member Annie and her mother Frances) was elected an associate member in its foundation year and in 1888 he was recorded on the notes of the Guild with the word 'designs' beside his name.[104] The Guild's needleworkers also provided designs and the

[102] "Order book on 1907," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[103] "Order book notes on 1906," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[104] "Notes on 1885, 1888," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.

acceptance of a design was critical to an object being executed.[105] Mostly, the designs were original creations of the members. Designers knew that their designs would be afforded serious consideration through a proper consultative process from the Committee. For example, in 1907 the minutes recorded a call for 'designs to be submitted to the Committee at an early date' for a white altar frontal.[106] Individual needleworkers developed a reputation for design such as Mary Leishman.[107] Even though she had left for England indefinitely, life-member, Frances Wright sent in designs. Reasonably often, patrons took up the option of ordering just a design which they worked themselves or had someone else render. For example, in 1905 the Saddleworth church in the Mid North of South Australia placed a design-only commission for a chalice veil and in the same year, Manoora church ordered a design-only for an altar frontal centre.[108] In this way, the element of design became an additional income to funds derived from the Guild's production of fully executed works.

Like the Guild of St. Paul, St. Peter's Cathedral Guild operated as a commercial enterprise, despite it being a philanthropic endeavour reliant on mostly unpaid labour. In the initial official meeting after it was instigated, the very first proposal was from Mrs Dendy that 'the Guild should work for churches out of the Colony' implying that they expand their market well beyond South Australia. This same meeting noted their first commission for St. George's, Gawler, and then set a scale of charges as set out in Figure 10. It was also proposed that members pay a six month subscription of 6 shilling towards materials and other expenses.' This amount was quickly adjusted to 5 shillings a year.[109] Members who attended their embroidery class were charged 2 shillings and 6 pence instead of the full amount and without doubt this contributed to a sustainable business model and a constant supply of

[105] Minutes book, 1908, SRG 94/A1/14, State Library of South Australia.
[106] Minutes book, 1907, SRG 94/A1/14, State Library of South Australia.
[107] "Devoted Church Workers," *News*, 10 January 1928, 6.
[108] Minutes book, 1905, SRG 94/A1/14, State Library of South Australia.
[109] "Notes on 1885," April 1885, SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.

needleworkers increasing their skills.[110] Every few years, the scale of charges were raised according to cost of materials.

Figure 10.

Scale of charges set out in 1885 by St. Peter's Cathedral Guild

Frontal £1.10.0	In Applique 15/-
Superfrontal £1.10.0	In Applique 15/-
Altar linen from £1.10.0	Design sketch 15/-
Bookmarkers 4/-	Alms bag 3/6
Stoles from 15/-	In Applique 5/-
Kneelers 3/6	Surplices 6/-
Cassocks 8/-	

In 1907, St Peter's Cathedral Guild spent £28, 6 shillings and 8 pence on materials and the proceeds of their work was £37, 5 shillings and 3 pence. In 1908, the minutes recorded £45, 19 shillings and 2 pence for the purchase of materials and the proceeds of their work almost doubled to £67 and 2 pence.[111] Many of the materials were purchased from England and it is clear they were making a healthy profit. Their expenditure on the wider decoration of the Cathedral was recorded and included the purchase of medals for the choir, postage, cleaning, cellar, vases, flowers and outside work. They also buffered their books with an annual subscription which was healthy given that, at times, they had over 70 women on their rolls. Added to all this, they earnt interest savings from their account and in a consistent show of

[110] "Notes on 1890," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[111] Minutes book, 1908, SRG 94/A1/14, State Library of South Australia.

the same serious intent underpinning their foundational structure, their own accounts were also audited by Mr J. M. Dunn each year.[112]

The Guild added another stream of income to their commercial model in 1900. One of the many responsibilities of the Superintendent was the purchasing of materials and this would have been reasonably complex given that many materials were required to be imported from England. In 1900, it was decided that members of the Guild could purchase materials directly from the Guild. Materials could only be bought 'if convenient' and the Superintendent was satisfied 'it would not interfere with the requirements of work ordered.'[113] This meant that St. Peter's Cathedral Guild was not only selling objects produced by the embroiderers and needleworkers but also importing materials knowing they would be on-selling to a customer base that sat at 69 the previous year. At the end of 1912, and with a customer base of 91 members on the roll, the value of their stock 'exclusive of designs, frames and cupboards etc was £123.6.4 ½.'[114]

The commercial model operated by the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild was supported by other conventional expressions of business operations. 'A die was cast and used for the Cathedral Guild notepaper.'[115] Meetings were held quarterly and minutes were taken. In the minutes, the most regular attendees to the weekly Friday workroom sessions were noted. These so-called 'mentioned in dispatches' no doubt acted an incentive as well as a recognition of work rendered philanthropically. To engender a sense of pride and belonging, members wore a uniform of specially designed woven badges featuring the St. Peter's cross keys when in the

[112] "Notes," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[113] "Notes on 1900," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[114] Report of Superintendent of Needlework, 1912, SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.
[115] "Notes on 1899," SRG 94/A1/51, State Library of South Australia.

Friday workroom or the Cathedral.[116] All in all, for a philanthropic endeavour, St. Peter's Cathedral Guild was a model of commercial enterprise but given the membership, it was probably unavoidable.

A survey of the financial connections of needleworkers supports the strength of the conventional commercial structures underpinning St. Peter's Cathedral Guild and for that matter the Guild of St. Paul when the cross-over of membership is taken into account. Key women were all directly connected to financial institutions in South Australia. The first Co-Superintendent of St. Peter's Cathedral Guild, Caroline Elizabeth Dendy (née Horne 1826-1894), was married to the Reverend Dr. Arthur (Alexander) Dendy (1824-1891), the Precentor of the Cathedral and Warden of St. Barnabas Theological College where the Guild held their weekly workshop. Reverend Dendy was the son of the banker.[117] Similarly, Edith Tomkinson's father, Samuel Tomkinson (1816-1900) was the son of a grocer who ended up the manager of the Bank of Australasia, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and on the directorship of numerous bodies such as the South Australia Gas Co., and the Burra Burra Mine amongst others.[118] Founding member, Alice Isabel Ebsworth (née Bath 1854-1903) was the wife of the accountant for the Savings Bank of South Australia, his father before him and her own father was the Minister for Education, Mr James Bath.[119] The father of two founding sisters, Lavinia Ann Back (1857-1949) and Frances Elizabeth Back (1943-1931) was the Chair of the Stock Exchange. Frederick Wright (1831-1900) – the husband of Frances Jane Wright (née O'Halloran 1839-1923) and the father of Annie Waring Gill – was the first

[116] SRG 94/A1/64/7-11, State Library of South Australia.
[117] Rev. Dr. Arthur Dendy was 'the youngest son of Charles Cook Dendy of the firm Messrs. Cook Dendy, Grugson and Co, bankers, Chichester,' *South Australian Register*, 10 August 1891, 6.
[118] Eric Richards in Bede Nairne (ed), *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 6,* Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1976, URL accessed 15 November 2020.
[119] "Death of Mr James Bath: An Old Public Servant," *Chronicle*, 25 May 1901, 38.

manager of the National Bank of Australia.[120] Other needleworkers had family members all too familiar with processes and protocols. Henrietta Kennion was the wife of the second Anglican Bishop of Adelaide and the sister of Governor Sir James Fergusson (1832-1907).[121] Mary Louise Stewart Browne (1862-1918) whose father John was the Stipendiary Magistrate of Port Lincoln.[122] Founding member Mary Letitia Longfield Wigley (née Creagh 1845-1919) was married to William Rodolf Wigley (1829-1890) who was another Stipendiary Magistrate.[123] These are just a smattering of the financial and magisterial connections of the members and it is clear that both Guilds operated under a climate of commercial, lawful enterprise.

The Guild's own archives show that the organisation functioned as an atelier for some decades. A witness to the operation in 1935 described the older embroidery frames still extant as being 12 feet long in length:

> For embroidery [sic] large altar cloths one needlewoman stands in front of the frame and one behind it, to push the needle through. The method of making the designs are also interesting. They are pricked through the traced paper, which is then brushed with Paris Green.[124]

They continued to undertake commissions of ecclesiastical and embroidered adornment for 'churches in the diocese of Adelaide and from parishes over Australia.'[125] These commissions funded the other operations of the church and supported the cost of the choir.

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[120] "The Late Mr. Frederick Wright," *Chronicle*, 21 April 1900, 23.
[121] See James Ferguson and Robert Menzies Fergusson, *Records of the clan name Ferguson, Fergusson and Fergus*, Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1895.
[122] *Adelaide Observer*, 11 September 1886, 24.
[123] "Death of Mr. W. R. Wigley, S.M," *South Australian Register*, 7 May 1890, 6.
[124] "Old Craft," *Advertiser*, 24 December 1935, 8.
[125] "Devoted Church Workers: Cathedral Guild Activities," *News*, 10 January 1928, 6.

When in attendance, they were accommodated with a special pew at the front of the church but membership of the Guild was open to all in the diocese not just those in the congregation.

Mary Leishman, a needlewoman who began in the Guild of St. Paul and ended up the Secretary of the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild, recorded some of the history and purpose of the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild in a letter to the editor of the *Church Standard,* 4 August 1922. In doing so, she set off a small cuffuffle that helped to clarify the earlier years of both Anglican Guilds.

She wrote:

> A work meeting was established, which has continued to the present day, where ecclesiastical needlework has been thoroughly taught by skilled superintendents … mainly through the efforts of these needle workers, in executing orders for the other churches at a moderate charge, money has been found to provide for all the vestments at the Cathedral, both for priests and choir, altar linen, frontals and other hangings, kneelers, banners, bookmarkers etc … By working for all churches in the diocese our first object has always been to enable country churches to obtain needlework necessary for the reverent congregation of the Holy Communion, at a minimum cost, and by careful designing and colouring to help in the teaching of the Church's year. Few of the older churches in South Australia have no some of the Guild's needlework … we have done much work for churches in other States.[126]

This letter must have raised the hackles of Isabella Baker because she wrote from her address in London to respond to Mary Leishman and this was duly printed by the *Church Standard* in

[126] Letter from Mary S. Leishman, *Church Standard*, 4 August 1922, SLSA, SRG 94/A1/55.

December the same year. Isabella no doubt thought she was setting the record straight and recorded her own instigation of the Guild of St. Paul in the decade prior to the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild which, she reminders readers, was 'only a continuation of the Guild of St. Paul.'[127] Although she was writing as an older woman, just four years before her death, she could remember twenty needleworkers in the Guild of St. Paul working ecclesiastical objects for churches in Adelaide, New South Wales and Victoria. She recorded leaving her equipment to the Guild when she left for England and that she also donated her design from Kempe. Mary Leishman took exception to Isabella Baker's assertion and wrote once more to the *Church Standard.* She told readers that the two Guilds were two separate entities and that she was 'honoured to have been a member for some years' of the 'St. Paul's Society' because whereas the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild members performed wider church duties, the Guild of St. Paul's was 'entirely an embroidery society' and that she doubted if any other similar institution could 'attain such perfection did St. Paul's Society.'[128]

One phrase in Mary Leishman's second letter stands out. In explaining the wider work of the St Peter's Cathedral Guild, she stated its purpose as 'necessary to the dignity and beauty' of the church.[129] This articulates the motivation of the women's needlework efforts; they sought to adorn, embellish and beautify their surroundings. This extended to actively working to adorn, embellish and beautify other churches in South Australia and beyond, places of which most of them would probably never even visit. This primary motivation is understandable for two reasons. First, in the context of a Tractarian sense of embellishment, the women were following a decorative fashion expressed by the Ecclesiastical and Art Needlework institutions in Britain. Second, this need to dignify and beautify is even more understandable

[127] Letter from I.W (sic).Baker in reply to a letter from Mary S. Leishman, *Church Standard*, 1 December 1922, SRG 94/A1/55, State Library of South Australia.
[128] Letter from Mary S. Leishman in reply to letter from I.W (sic).Baker (Miss Isabella), *Church Standard*, after 1 December 1922, SRG 94/A1/55, State Library of South Australia.
[129] Ibid.

if we take into context the often harsh conditions the South Australian women knew and either had or were actively working towards improving. Even though many of the Guild members lived in substantial housing by the time they were working in the Guilds, it is important to point out that they were still a generation who would have been personally acquainted with a dirt floor, or at least reminded of it by the generation above. Understood in this context, velvet and silk damask embroidered with richly coloured silk and gold thread is a defiant, aspirational expression. When the Guilds' objects are considered in this light, they become symbols of self-help. They communicate the same elegant tone first established by the committee responsible for the *Special Loans Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework Made Before 1800* held in 1873 at the South Kensington Museum.

Conclusion

The constant of ecclesiastical embroidery at this time was beautification; it was the desire for beautification that created market demand for a commercial product. Although the Community of St. Dominic's products were mainly executed from the necessity of earning an income, the Sisters were able to realise financial reward (and independence) from their teaching and creative endeavours because people actively sought beautification or the ability to beautify. Similarly, the Guild of St. Paul and St. Peter's Cathedral Guild sought to beautify their own diocese and afford the expensive materials. They too tapped into a market willing to pay for beautification. It is striking that in a colony founded largely by non-conformists and in direct contradiction to the anti-Tractarian movement, the women resisted austerity and instead collaborated and directed their energy, time and finances into embellishing their churches both in South Australia and beyond. On the whole, the South Australian ateliers were trading on the desire for aesthetic beauty to afford the expensive materials for their own churches. In doing so, they operated on a commercial model where they worked for payment

from others in a circular system of 'beauty for cash', then 'cash for beauty'. By engaging in this process, the needleworkers learnt the transferable skills of commercialisation and, naturally, this drive to embellish their churches slipped over to designing and embellishing their own domestic front.

The similarities in ecclesiastical design style and the interaction between the main South Australian ateliers is not the only evidence of a thread of skill and knowledge being passed first from the Opus style made explicit in the *Special Loans Exhibition* and apparent in the Opus Anglicanum design style of the Community of St. Dominic. A slightly less figurative Opus style of expertly rendered gold and coloured Gothic 'bling', individualised by Kempe Studios and used in the Clewer Workroom, was then transported to South Australia with Isabella Baker and passed on to Ellen Green at the Guild of St. Paul, and the next generation of Art Needleworkers based at St. Peter's, Glenelg and St. Peter's Cathedral Guild. Designs, equipment and materials were passed down. Just as Isabella Baker had passed on hers, Ellen Green continued to show an interest in the work of others 'and distributed her materials amongst such as would use them for the furtherance of objects.'[130]

Overall, it is clear that the two Protestant Guilds and the Catholic atelier operated on business models. The St. Dominic's Community began their atelier expressly to earn money when they found themselves on the other side of the world without an income. Their atelier continued to supplement the development of their wider concerns for decades. Like the St. Dominic's atelier, the Guild of St. Paul relied on the unpaid labour of skilled needleworkers such as Edith Tomkinson but the Guild still took a commission to cover the cost of expensive materials. They also implemented regular work routines and rosters which, when combined

[130] Letter from Mary S. Leishman in reply to letter from I.W (sic).Baker (Miss Isabella), *Church Standard*, after 1 December 1922, SRG 94/A1/55, State Library of South Australia.

with their financial management, ensured their operation was sustainable for a number of years. Although the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild collaborated philanthropically in the same manner as the St. Dominic's atelier and the Guild of St. Paul, undeniably their operation embraced a more recognisable commercial model. They offered individual women an income by outsourcing the workload and differentiating the cost of design from the cost of execution.

As subsequent chapters will show, the collaborative approach and differentiated business model developed by ecclesiastical ateliers was then used in the secular Adelaide 'School of Design Art Needlework Society'.

Chapter Three

How the Adelaide School of Design became an alternative form of higher education for women and why Art Needlework was positioned to play a part.

Under the leadership of its Director, H.P. Gill, the Adelaide School of Design became a significant avenue of higher education for women at a time when that notion was radical.

This chapter explores the background, education and experience of H.P. Gill that influenced his leadership decisions. In doing so, it discovers the artisan nature of his childhood neighbourhood, the syllabus he studied at the Brighton School of Science and Art, and how prior to moving to Adelaide, he was at no stage without the presence of women on an equal footing. The second section shows how Gill brought different cohorts of women into the sphere of the Adelaide School of Design through the popularisation of the South Kensington Certificate process. These cohorts included state educated schoolteachers, teachers in private schools, primary school pupils as well as adult students of design. The third section looks in-depth at the unexpected level of numeracy within the syllabus Gill implemented. It also takes a gendered lens to the statistics of women who passed their South Kensington examinations and offers a comparative analysis of women who chose to sit South Kensington examinations versus the limited numbers of women who matriculated and followed a university pathway. In the context of a fledgling silk industry in South Australia, the final two sections show how Gill collaborated with his personal contacts in the ecclesiastical Guilds to position Art Needlework as the first technical art subject at the School of Design, another key decision on his part that opened up opportunities for women with existing needlework skills.

The Influences of H.P. Gill

Harry Pelling Gill did not spring from folk who were already residing in the colony of South Australia. Across the other side of the world in Suffolk, England, the Gill's corner of Brighton was home to an artisan stratum of society. Their livelihood was dependent on commercial skills peddled on the high street.[1] As such, the Gills and their eight children lived above their three-story commercial premises on a busy street. Young Harry attended Brighton Grammar School, a private Protestant facility established to educate the sons of tradesmen.[2] The Civil Parish of Brighton census taken in 1871 recorded Harry as sixteen years of age and still in the family home.[3] His father was described as a dairyman/coal merchant employing thirteen staff and two live-in servants which means that he operated a reasonably successful private business, even if profit margins for this type of enterprise were small. Although his father was not an artisan or from an artisan class, the neighbours were, and this can be observed from further analysis of the 1871 census.[4]

H.P. Gill's early commercial artisan influences were the family's immediate neighbours along Georges Street, Brighton. These included a tailor, dressmaker, milliner, jeweller, greengrocer, whitesmith and saddler/journeyman. Harry would have therefore been acquainted at an early age with his neighbours' working mediums of textiles, metals and enamels, leather and the whitesmith's polished tin akin to repoussé – all mediums of the applied arts. This means that not only were Harry's peers at school the sons of tradesmen and merchants, but he also lived amongst small commercial businesses, the type of high street

[1] Henry Pelling Gill was the son of Alfred Gill (1820-1995) and Frances Elizabeth Pelling (1829-1902). His mother gave him her maiden name, just as his wife Annie bore her mother's maiden name. Both Annie and Harry's mothers were also called Frances.
[2] "Brighton, Hove and Sussex 6th Form College, Brighton, East Sussex," E/SC/214, The National Archives, UK.
[3] 1871 Census, Civil Parish of Brighton, United Kingdom.
[4] Ibid.

merchants reliant upon the quality of their materials and skills, and importantly, their ability to successfully trade their products in a commercial environment.

Like his artisan neighbours, H.P. Gill had to work hard to advance his prospects. For example, he took evening classes to realise his ambitions. Although the scant biographical information previously published elsewhere noted his studies at the Brighton School of Science and Art, Gill did not immediately progress from school to a teaching position in design education. The 1871 census records sixteen-year-old Harry working as a barrister's clerk whilst his younger brothers were still at school. Rather than enrolling in daytime art lessons, he worked for a clerk's wage during the day and took advantage of the evening classes offered at a reduced rate during the tenure of Art Master, Alexander Fisher (1837-1925). The enrolment numbers of the Brighton School of Science and Art swelled under Fisher's leadership. Students were actively encouraged to strive for high standards. Successful student examination winners were awarded with National medals if they progressed successfully through the verbosely titled 'Course of Instruction laid down by the Department of Science and Art,' a syllabus set by the National Art Training School in South Kensington.[5] It was a learning environment that supported Gill's ambitions and he progressed through the syllabus to the point where he was teaching at the same institution.

Early in his teaching career, Gill was witness to two events that emphasise the significance of design education at this time. By 1877, Gill had advanced to the position of Assistant Master. He found himself teaching in brand new purpose-built premises endorsed by the two most high-profile identities in Design and Art education. As Assistant Master, Gill would have

[5] Jonathon M. Woodham, 'Brighton School of Art: from Victorian Origins to the Twenty-fFrst Century' in Philippa Lyon & Jonathan M. Woodham (eds), *Art and Design at Brighton 1859-2009: From Arts and Manufactures to the Creative and Cultural Industries*, Brighton: University of Brighton, 2009, 29-174, URL accessed 25 March 2021.

been witness to the renowned Henry Cole (1808-1882) laying the foundation stone of the new building.[6] Cole was the prime force in design education for manufacturing at the time and his name was associated with both the establishment of the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the nucleus of the South Kensington Museum, the institution now known as the Victoria and Albert Museum.[7] Cole's presence reinforced the importance of the school's purpose. This reinforcement was compounded a year later when the building was officially opened by Princess Louise. Her presence was more than just a royal attendance, for not only had she just co-founded the Union for the Higher Education of Women, and additionally founded the Ladies Work Society mentioned in Chapter One, Princess Louise had also been a student at the National Art Training School (South Kensington) herself which was a radical departure from royal expectations of a Princess.[8] Young H.P. Gill would have seen her arrive at the new building accompanied by an attachment of Hussars and heard her husband, the Marquis of Lorne, extol the value of the School's curriculum to the advancement of industry.[9] Even if the fact that he witnessed a Princess is dismissed, the special event's heightened level of spectacle would have highlighted the importance of design education, and in particular the South Kensington system. In fact, the South Kensington curriculum was integral to the erection of the new Brighton School of Science and Art building that Princess Louise opened because it was subsidised by the Department of Science and Art in London. This subsidisation was contingent on the teaching staff being trained in the South Kensington system themselves and delivering the South Kensington syllabus.[10] For Gill, both the requirement for South Kensington Science and Art training, and the gravitas of the official

[6] G.L. Fischer, "That the Future Might Find Its Past: Some Notes on Harry Pelling Gill," Art Gallery of South Australia Research Library, 1982, 13.
[7] The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations in 1851 was the first of many international fairs around the world that showcased design for manufacture.
[8] 'Princess Louise,' in "Trail: The Captivating Life and Art of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's Daughter," Royal Collection Trust, URL accessed 26 March 2021.
[9] Jonathon M. Woodham, "Brighton School of Art: the Victorian age to the twentieth century," in Art and Design at Brighton 1859-2009: From Arts and Manufactures to the Creative and Cultural Industries, University of Brighton: 2009, 29-174.
[10] Ibid.

events, would have served to reinforce the value of design education and thereby his own role as a teacher.

These experiences at the start of Gill's early career, combined with his own background, go towards explaining his considerable resolve in working through the necessary certificates for his South Kensington 'Art Master' status, the highest qualification available in technical arts education. His own experience also clarifies why he championed the South Kensington system in South Australia, something that has been previously noted by other scholars but not fully explained. Gill's implementation of the South Kensington system at the Adelaide School of Design is important to this thesis because it gave rigour to what could otherwise have been a continued education in the Victorian female accomplishments of sewing and painting.

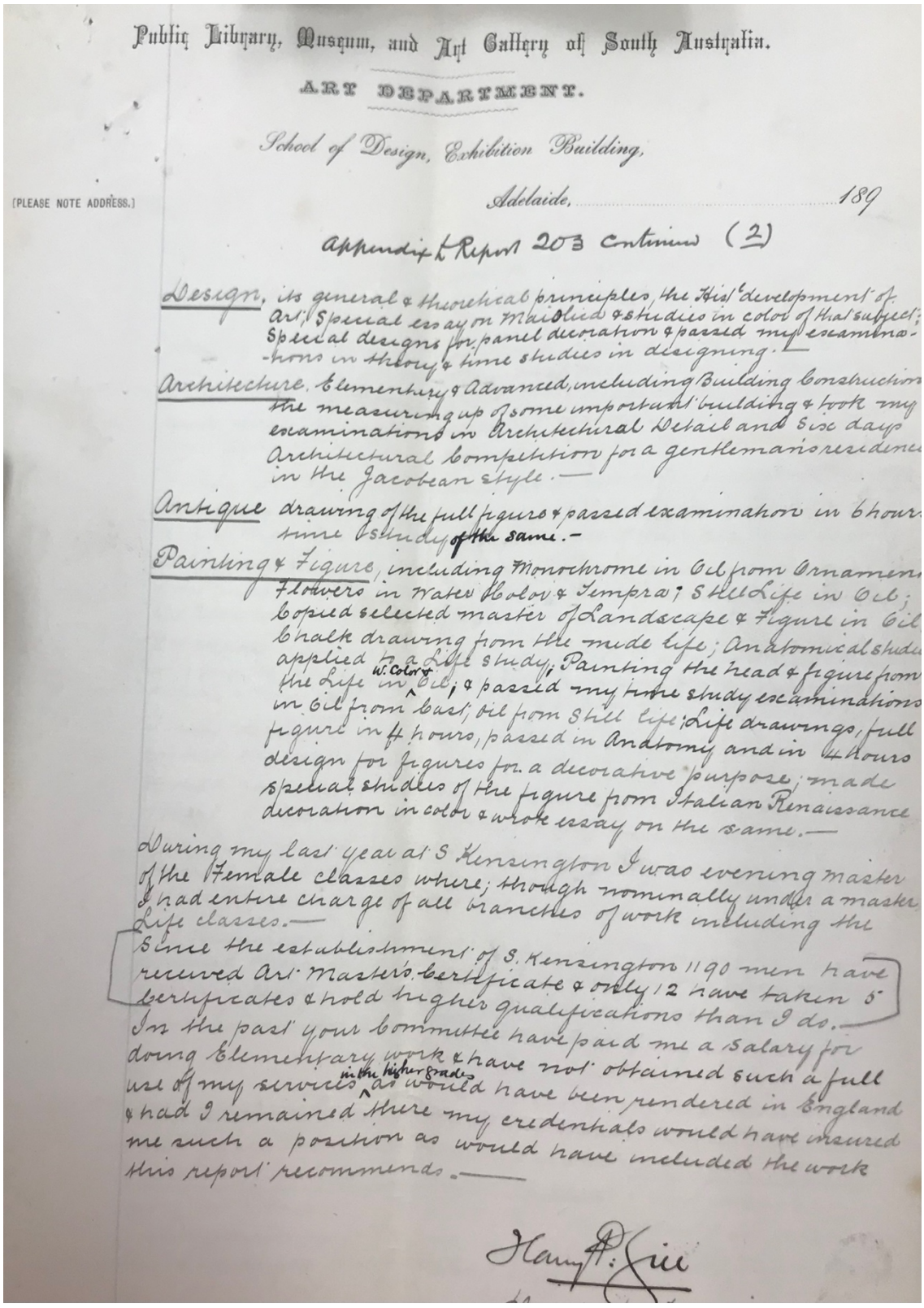
The rigour Gill instilled in the Adelaide School of Design syllabus also came from his own understanding of Science and Art education. An examination of Gill's curriculum experience in the new Brighton School of Science and Art building reveals how closely he replicated it in Adelaide. The ground floor at Brighton hosted a tiered lecture room and science classrooms. The science subjects included Chemistry, Physics, Electricity studies and a series of lectures on Mathematics given by Alexander Fisher. This would have therefore been Gill's understanding of the term 'Science' when he took up the position at the Adelaide School of Design. The first floor was home to the long tables in the 'Elementary' classroom, a label Gill also used at the Adelaide School of Design for classes devoted to elementary drawing and geometry for design. Just as Fisher brought Building Construction into the Brighton School Elementary room, so too did Gill in Adelaide. Similarly, the painting room was filled with

busts for advanced student work, a supply of which Gill repeatedly requested from his own Fine Arts Committee in Adelaide.[11]

Further understanding of the syllabus in Adelaide can be gained from the second part of Gill's own arts training. In 1877, he moved to London because he had secured a scholarship to the Art Training School at South Kensington itself. He took certificates in 'Design,' 'Architecture,' 'Building Construction,' 'Drawing from the Antique,' and numerous certificates in 'Painting,' and 'Figure,' including monochrome, chalk drawing, watercolour and oil painting, landscape and life drawing.[12] As seen in Figure 11, in 1892 Gill wrote that 'since the establishment of S. Kensington, 1190 men have received Art Masters Certificate and only 12 have taken 5 certificates and hold higher qualifications than I do.'[13] All of these subjects formed the basis of the curriculum he established at the Adelaide School of Design. Seen in this light, we can understand how the Adelaide syllabus came to not only mirror Gill's early years at Brighton School of Science and Art but also the second part of his training at South Kensington in London as well. Added to this, the subjects in the syllabus were much broader than that of mere 'female accomplishments.' Importantly, at no stage did Gill experience his own design training without the presence of women.

[11] For example, H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 9 March 1893, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 231.
[12] Gill's architectural studies enabled him to enter a competition to design a gentlemen's residence in Jacobean style)
[13] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 18 May 1892, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 203. See also "Mr. H.P. Gill, A.R.C.A.," *South Australian Register*, 4 January 1899, 5.

Figure 11.



Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery of South Australia.

ART DEPARTMENT.

School of Design, Exhibition Building,

[PLEASE NOTE ADDRESS.]

Adelaide, 189

Appendix to Report 203 continued (2)

Design, its general & theoretical principles, the Hist. development of art; Special essay on Mediæval & studies in color of that subject; Special designs for panel decoration & passed my examinations in theory & time studies in designing.—

Architecture, Elementary & Advanced, including Building Construction the measuring up of some important building & took my examinations in Architectural Detail and Six days Architectural competition for a gentlemans residence in the Jacobean style.—

Antique drawing of the full figure & passed examinations in 6 hours time & study of the same.—

Painting & Figure, including Monochrome in Oil from Ornament Flowers in Water Color & Tempra; Still Life in Oil; Copied selected master of Landscape & Figure in Oil Chalk drawing from the nude life; Anatomical studies applied to Life study; Painting the head & figure from the Life in Oil; & passed my time study examinations in Oil from cast; Oil from Still life; Life drawings, full figure in 4 hours, passed in Anatomy and in 4 hours design for figures for a decorative purpose; made special studies of the figure from Italian Renaissance decoration in color & wrote essay on the same.—

During my last year at S. Kensington I was evening master of the Female classes where; though nominally under a master I had entire charge of all branches of work including the Life classes.—

Since the establishment of S. Kensington 1190 men have received Art Masters Certificates & only 12 have taken 5. I hold higher qualifications than 9 do.—

In the past your Committee have paid me a Salary for doing Elementary work & have not obtained such a full use of my services in the higher grades as would have been rendered in England & had I remained there my credentials would have insured me such a position as would have included the work this report recommends.—

Harry P. Gill

H.P.Gill, Letter to Fine Arts Committee, 18 May 1892, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 203.

Gill's later recommendations for females to be employed at the Adelaide School of Design occurred at a time when that was unusual in such institutions. An examination of the role of women at the Brighton School of Science and Art provides an insight. Despite the fact that British women were not enfranchised until decades after South Australians, it nevertheless appears the South Kensington-affiliated institutions were progressive. In 1877, Miss H.E. Grace was an Assistant at the Brighton School of Science and Art sharing the same status as Gill. Both of them worked on equal footing under the Head Master and the Second Master of Brighton School of Science and Art.[14] This realisation of equality in the Brighton institution is evident in another snippet of evidence: in Gill's final year of teaching at Brighton, he was 'evening master of the female classes where [he] had entire charge of all branches of art, including life classes' demonstrating that his female equivalent was not limited to teaching only the female students as might be expected during this period.[15]

This show of equality was not an isolated episode in Gill's experience of the South Kensington system. During the term of his scholarship in London, his designs came under the 'direct suggestion, supervision, and discussion of Sir E.J. Poynter before the designs were to be passed on to be carved by Miss Eleanor Rowe (1853-1920), head of the South Kensington School of Wood Carving.'[16] Eleanor Rowe was not the only woman in a leadership role at South Kensington. By applying the same broader lens to Gill's surroundings at the South Kensington site as applied previously to his family's residence in Brighton, further scrutiny shows that next door to the Art Training School at South Kensington where Gill studied, the major ceramic company of Minton operated a state-funded art pottery studio specifically for

[14] Miss H.E. Grace continued to make an independent living and in 1899, her 'York Road Sketching Club' and 'Copying Club' at 54 York Road, Brighton were recommended to readers by the *Girls Own Paper*, *Volume 20* number 1029, 1899.
[15] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 18 May 1892, no. 203, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
[16] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Gill Enquiry*, *Volume 3*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 643.

training and providing women with employment opportunities.[17] As well as this, the School of Art Needlework was entirely led and occupied by women. In 1875, it moved from Sloane Street into the former Belgian and Australian annexes on Exhibition Road at the back of the South Kensington Museum in which the Art Training School had its premises.[18] As explained in Chapter One, its purpose was to provide gentlewomen with the skills to generate an income. Therefore, as a young man, Gill not only worked on the same footing as another woman at Brighton but in London, he was physically surrounded by female operated institutions and required to submit his designs to a woman.

By the time Gill took up the position of Art Lecturer and Teacher of Design in Adelaide in September 1882, he was used to a female populated working environment before it was commonplace for many other men. The learning, teaching and leadership roles for women associated with South Kensington indicate an equality not reached in Australian Art and Design schools until well after Gill moved to South Australia. Gill's own understanding of Science and Art education coupled with his experience in working around women resulted in his support of South Australian females entering a rigorous design education well beyond the superficial level of accomplishment.

H.P. Gill Creating Opportunities for Women at the Adelaide School of Design

As the new Director of the School of Design, H.P. Gill captured a broader market share beyond those just enrolled in design education and this had positive outcomes for different cohorts of women, including early female appointments. Gill achieved this by widening the curriculum opportunities. He facilitated design education beyond the walls of the School of

[17] Anthea Callen, *Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870-1914*, London: Astragal Books, 1979, 38.
[18] F.H.W. Shepherd, South Kensington Museums Area, *Survey of London*, *Volume 8*, London, British History online, 1975, URL accessed 27 March 2021.

Design by harnessing different cohorts of students such as the colony's pupil teachers. A further large body of students prepared for South Kensington Science and Art examinations, most of whom were young women. By engineering groups of the colony's females into the School of Design for necessary or desirable qualifications, Gill swelled the enrolment numbers. In doing so, Gill's own influence spread but before any of this occurred, he began by modernising the teaching space.

Upon his arrival, Gill immediately mobilised his energies to develop the School of Design into a contemporary learning institution like that at Brighton. At first, he operated the School of Design in the Morialta Chambers on King William Road opposite the General Post Office.[19] This was only a temporary measure whilst the furniture he personally designed was made for the back of the first floor of the Institute building on North Terrace. When the School of Design moved into the Institute on 4 December 1882, Gill had not only organised new furniture, he also oversaw improved ventilation, lighting, and gas. Within his first three months of operation, enrolments doubled to 95 students, many of them women.[20] In fact, enrolments quickly outgrew the space and by 1885 he was managing an average of 159 students within both the Institute and the south room of the Public Library next door. The expansion occurred because he had introduced new courses into the syllabus and it necessitated the sourcing and management of 'competent staff' to cope with the growing number of students, most of whom were women.[21] However, to attract new students and

[19] The University of Adelaide also began teaching in custom built rooms within Morialta Chambers so it is possible these were the same rooms vacated by the University in 1881. See Cheryl Hoskin, "Sir Samuel Way, E.A. Petherick and the Formation of the University of Adelaide Collection," Paper presented at the 2005 Adelaide Conference of the Bibliographical Society of ANZ.
[20] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Volume 3*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 707.
[21] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Volume 3, Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 708.

increase enrolments, he did not just rely on the South Kensington based syllabus of his own education, nor the modernised facilities.

In a clever move, Gill promoted the School of Design as the seat of the South Kensington examinations, and this established the School of Design as an institution essential to the aspirational middle-class society in Adelaide. The South Kensington standardised tests created a momentum, a weather of their own. Gill estimated that over the duration of testing in the colony he had set over 500 examination papers and 'corrected over twenty-five thousand worked papers.'[22] The first examinations were held in November of 1886. Thousands of examinations were held in South Australia because the syllabus underpinning the tests was comprised of seven subjects over two years – three in the first and four in the second. Over the next few years, another eight subjects were added. The newspapers regularly detailed young people's South Kensington test results in long and exhaustive lists – lists that added to the formal tone of the examinations whilst simultaneously advertising them as an obligatory part of a colonial young person's education. All the examination candidates interacted with the school and as the numerous lists in newspapers attest, most were female.

In another manoeuvre to develop the School of Design, Gill personally gave the explicit instruction twice a week to a second body of students, the majority of whom were female.[23] As a result of a three-year long enquiry into whether or not schools should offer Industrial or Technical education, drawing was included as a compulsory subject for school children.[24] All state educated teachers were instructed in drawing at the teacher Training School. This was a calculated effort to cultivate design for manufacturing to develop the colony's industry. In a

[22] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Gill Enquiry*, *Volume 3,* GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 710.
[23] Brian E. Condon and South Australian Education Department, *Service Histories of S.A. State Teachers 1852-1960*, 2003, online database through University of South Australia, URL accessed 28 March 2021.
[24] Jenny Aland, "The Influence of the South Kensington School on the Teaching of Drawing in South Australian Schools from the 1880s into the 20th Century," *Australian Art Education* 15, no. 1, 1991, 49.

line that can be drawn directly back to the impetus for setting up the South Kensington Art Museum and Art Training School, science subjects of the time such as Mechanical and Building Construction, Steam, Physics and Chemistry were integrally linked with art and design because to be competitive and profitable, manufacturing industry was reliant on better designed products. Gill's background in the South Kensington system of design-drawing from exemplars, standardised testing and a mix of suitable art and industrial science certificates meant that he had the skills to implement this policy. In fact, he later stated that as the head of the School of Design, he was the person responsible for 'all points artistic that pertained to any technical industry.'[25] Given his mounting responsibilities in 1886, why then did Gill go to the effort of delivering the explicit teaching himself at the separate campus of the teacher Training School? He did so because it was in his institution's long-term interest. If teachers improved drawing skills, then more students would then enrol at the Adelaide School of Design to develop these skills. This came to pass when, within a few years, all teachers were required to study a technical skill.

Enrolling as a pupil teacher was a form of higher education that could offer a living wage. Teacher training was a more affordable alternative to that of the University of Adelaide. Gill's affiliation with the teacher Training School had three consequences: he raised the drawing standards in South Australia which freed up space for advanced work at the School of Design; he taught drawing skills to potential teachers contributing to their eventual employment; and after a short period of time, instead of him teaching at the Training School in Grote St, the pupil teachers came into the School of Design for their instruction which broadened the responsibilities of the school.[26]

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[25] "The School of Design," *South Australian Register*, 10 August 1886, 7.
[26] H.P. Gill, School of Design Letters to Board Members, *Cruickshank Papers*, *Volume 1, Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 203.

Gill himself summarised the operations of the School of Design in 1886:

Shortly stated, the work of the school is as follows: -

> 1. To supply certificated teachers that drawing may be easily and systematically taught in elementary day school, and thereby raise the standard of drawing in all other school;
>
> (b) establish evening art classes in State schools wherever they are required;
>
> (c) free the School of Design from much elementary work, and enable it to proceed with more advanced work.
>
> 2. To extend the present system of examinations to technical industries.
>
> 3. To supply instruction to as many of the citizens as desire to the advantages of rudimentary technical education.
>
> 4. To instruct in the arts of ornamental design.
>
> 5. To apply the instruction technically and decoratively to the improvement of the arts and manufactures of the colony.
>
> 6. To examine and certificate competent handicraftsmen. [27]

Gill's influence not only extended to the School of Design's own students, the state trained teachers and consequently pupils of state schools, but also to teachers of private institutions. A number of past and present students of the Adelaide School of Design were tutoring in private schools, steering their students through the South Kensington system of examinations. The names of private teachers were listed as responsible for successful candidates in the papers. Teachers such as Rosa Catherine Fiveash (1854-1938) and the Kay sisters at their

[27] H.P. Gill, School of Design Letters to Board Members, *Cruickshank Papers*, *Volume 1, Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 203.

Miss Kay school and other tutors guided their pupils through the examination process.[28] Previously, the education of young women learning from a governess at home or at a small private school was restricted to the limit of the tutor's knowledge but a tutor who had trained, or was training, at the Adelaide School of Design was accredited with recognisable and standardised South Kensington certificates.

Therefore, Gill's proactive support of the South Kensington certificates resulted in far more than improved drawing skills for the colony's school children; it contributed to the state-based Teacher Training qualifications that became an avenue of employment for women. Gill's championing of the certificates also provided another body of women with necessary qualifications to earn money as private tutors or to teach drawing in private schools. The certificates negated any expectation the School of Design could only provide the most basic level of tuition and opened the way for more advanced studies in an alternative form of higher education, one that was scaffolded with increasing level of skill.

A Gendered Analysis of the South Kensington Examinations

Gill's implementation of the South Kensington certificate system resulted in women taking up the opportunity to study non-traditional content rather than the more typical Victorian dilettante accomplishments such as basic watercolour painting. This is because at least half of the South Kensington examination papers were testing levels of Geometry which necessitated a working knowledge of numeracy, the kind of numeracy required for skilled trade and apprenticeships the colonial authorities needed to encourage to develop a manufacturing base. In 1887, 150 papers were successfully passed in the South Kensington examinations that

[28] For example, "Art Examinations," *South Australian Register*, 5 December 1889, 3.

were set and marked by Gill in the first semester of the year.[29] Of that 150, 74 were female. This ratio was repeated each semester until the examinations ceased. Of note, these statistics challenge notions of Victorian females engaging in an education of 'accomplishments' at the Adelaide School of Design because the syllabus and numeracy content of the examinations clearly indicates that Gill was offering them more than something superficial to increase their chances as society doyennes.[30]

Women took up the opportunities offered by Gill's design syllabus much more extensively compared to other options available in South Australia. At a time when most students in the colony did not have the opportunity to go beyond primary school, a breakdown of matriculation statistics in the same year shows that out of 72 people who sat for matriculation, only 36 passed. Of the 36, 17 were women of whom nine passed. On the other hand, the examination results for the Adelaide School of Design show that 180 entries were female, all of whom passed examinations in various subject combinations of Model and Freehand Drawing, Geometry and Perspective. Added to this, of the 17 who matriculated at various schools in Adelaide, many of them went on to repeatedly enrol at the Adelaide School of Design, people such as Victoria Alice Mitton (1868-1948) who used design education as a pathway towards teaching and other paid positions.[31] There was a much starker contrast between the Adelaide School of Design and the University of Adelaide next door. For example, analysing the same year as Gill wrote of the purpose of the Adelaide School of Design (1886) only one female student was recorded as passing her University of

[29] For example, "Art Examinations," *South Australian Register*, 2 June 1887, and "Art Examinations," *Evening Journal*, 8 December 1887, 3.
[30] For more on the history of an education in arts accomplishment see for example Melissa Young, "Drawn to New Perspectives in the Public Sphere: Female Art, Design and Craft Students and their Cultural Connections in Nineteenth Century South Australia, *Outskirts Online Journal 28*, 2013, URL accessed 15 November 2020.
[31] Victoria Alice Mitten enrolled first enrolled in the Adelaide School of Design in 1889 and continued to enrol for another decade in subjects such as Advanced Artizan, Advanced Lectures, Solid and Plane Geometry, Shading and Perspective, Architecture, Antique and Life. See Jodie Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, Art Gallery of South Australia Research Library, 1889 through to 1897.

Adelaide exams: Ann Jacobs with a credit in First Year Bachelor of Science: French.[32] All other listed examination results were for males.

Considering the statistics and the nature of his work, Gill's influence is demeaned by notions of the School of Design only offering an education in accomplishments. A case in point is the second of the teaching terms of 1886. This winter session consistently had the lowest student enrolments due to the cold temperature in the rooms yet 118 students attended the School of Design of which 53 were day students and the remaining 65 were evening students. Gill wrote 'of the fifty-three day students, several are professionally studying and the whole are instructed on ornamental design as applied to different industries.' [33] Although he had not calculated the figures for 1886, the previous year, there had been 8503 total class attendances made by 1599 student entries. These statistics and the content of the South Kensington examinations reflect the serious nature of the syllabus studied by women at the Adelaide School of Design. Considered alongside the statistics of women matriculating and/or entering university education, they show that Gill exerted considerable influence in providing Adelaide women with an opportunity for higher education.

Therefore, during H.P. Gill's tenure, his decision-making influenced the opportunities for entire cohorts of women. His own experience at the Brighton School of Science and Art set the pattern of his teaching and curriculum leadership in South Australia. At the Adelaide School of Design, he replicated his understanding of the science and art curriculum gained from his own design education in England. He was familiar with working with women early in his career and this accounts for the conditions he created at the Adelaide School of Design, conditions that statistics show were conducive to women looking upon the institution as an

[32] "Educational: University of Adelaide," *South Australian Register*, 13 December 1886, 2.
[33] "The School of Design," *South Australian Register*, 10 August 1886, 7.

alternative form of higher education. Furthermore, by involving himself directly in teacher training and overseeing the administration of the South Kensington examinations, he ensured a rigour to design education in the colony – a rigour that provided a basis for women to engage in design education, and to teach. Gill established a pathway for women to involve themselves in commercial artisan roles just as he had been surrounded by in the high street of his childhood home in Brighton.

The Wider Context: a Fledgling Silk Industry

In South Australia, Art Needlework was a leading trend within the Arts & Crafts Movement, however, at the time, obtaining silks for Art Needlework was a lengthy and costly process. At the Adelaide School of Design, Gill was forced to order silks for Art Needlework from English firms Liberty and Morris & Co because Adelaide suppliers were not able to stock the comprehensive range of colours in small amounts that he needed.[34] During the time that Gill was facilitating higher learning opportunities for women at the Adelaide School of Design, other changes were coming into play in a wider environment. Moves were afoot to establish a South Australian silk industry. This next section explains the local advocacy for a silk industry and in doing so, it establishes an unexplored, wider context as to why the predominantly women's skill of Art Needlework was afforded enough serious attention to become the first technical art at the Adelaide School of Design.

At the time of the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition 1888-1889, obtaining the silk materials for needlework remained difficult outside of Britain.[35] The government of South Australia reprinted a handbook compiled for the Adelaide Jubilee Exhibition the previous year. It was

[34] For example, Report from H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 5 October 1888, *Extracts from Minute Books*, Principal, Librarian and Secretary Papers, *Volume 1*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 4.
[35] The 1851 Great Exhibition in London, associated with the South Kensington design educator Henry Cole, had manifested into a range of other exhibitions around the world, each showcasing design, manufacture, and industry. The Melbourne Centennial Exhibition was one such event.

provided for visitors at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition with the view to sharing a richer understanding of Adelaide and the regions. *South Australia in 1887-8: A Handbook for the Melbourne International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1888* included three sections pertinent to Art Needlework: a report by Thomas Wardle (1831-1909) on South Australia's silk production prospects; statistics on religious denominations; and the colony's oscillating import and export figures.[36] For example, it showed that in 1886, South Australia was importing more than it was exporting – that included silks for the burgeoning Art Needlework movement and allied ecclesiastical textile work. In that same year, it was recorded that there were 17 different religious denominations in the colony with 820 places of worship not including missions, school chapels or affiliated sacred or charitable institutions.[37] Not all denominations sought ecclesiastical textile adornment to enhance the sacred experience but from a statistical point of view, the market for silks for ecclesiastical purposes, combined with the developing desire for secular Art Needlework within the Arts & Crafts trend, contributed to the potential for a home-grown silk industry. The government of the colony turned to the man responsible for William Morris's hand-dyed silks.

At the time of the proposed development of a silk industry in South Australia, the Wardle name was considered the first name in silks for Art Needlework. Thomas Wardle (1831-1909) and his wife Elizabeth (1834-1902) founded the Leek School of Embroidery and its commercial arm, the Leek Embroidery Society. In fact, it was the Wardle family from whom William Morris first learnt about dying of silk.[38] Like St. Dominic's Priory, the Leek Embroidery Society acted as an atelier producing secular and ecclesiastical embroidery and

[36] H.J. Scott, South Australia in 1887-8: A Handbook for the Melbourne International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1888, Adelaide: H.F. Leader, Government Printer, 1888.
[37] Scott, South Australia in 1887-8: A Handbook for the Melbourne International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1888, 112-120B.
[38] Wardle and Co was founded in 1872 and based at the Hencroft Works, Staffordshire. They printed the first fourteen designs for William Morris and continued to print them after Morris's so-called apprenticeship with Wardle had run its course and Morris & Co were printing the bulk of his work.

Elizabeth developed a reputation for successfully interpreting the designs of architects. The Wardles supplied silks for both Morris & Co, and Liberty of London.[39] In Adelaide, Dr. William Leonard Cleland (1847-1918) led the South Australian efforts to cultivate cocoons.[40] Cleland was encouraged by his uncle-in-law, Sir Samuel Davenport (1818-1906) because he was President of the Chamber of Manufacturers in South Australia. A copy of Wardle's *Silks of India* was specially purchased for the Board of the Chamber of Manufacturers and they requested plants be secured to feed the 'tasar [*sic*] worm promoted by Wardle.'[41] In 1886, Davenport personally supplied Cleland's cocoons to Thomas Wardle via the Colonial and Indian Exhibition. Wardle had them spun and then exhibited them in the South Australian display himself.[42] His report found that South Australian cocoons were equal to Italian and Japanese winding silk valued at 20 shillings per pound that year indicating that a homegrown silk industry for the colony could be successful.[43]

Wardle addressed the South Australian concerns for long-term viability of a silk industry, mindful that the cost of labour in India was cheaper. Instead, South Australian country families were to be encouraged to plant the white mulberry trees (*Morus alba*) to provide enough feed for cocoons which would then be sent to India for processing.[44] Davenport and Cleland suggested that farming families be provided with white mulberry trees directly from the South Australian Forest Conservator, and that they be planted proportionally at the same

[39] In another connection to Adelaide, Thomas's wife Elizabeth Wardle learnt embroidery from Stone convent, the same institution discussed in connection with the Community of St Dominic's Priory in Chapter Two. She was particularly skilled at stitching flesh-coloured sections of figurative embroidery which was a feature of the ecclesiastical embroidery practised in North Adelaide too. Elizabeth Wardle was just two years older than Mother Rose Columba Adams.
[40] "Dr. W.L. Cleland," *The Journal*, 5 November 1918, 1.
[41] "Chamber of Manufactures," *The South Australian Advertiser*, 8 September 1882, 6.
[42] "Colonial and Indian Exhibition," *Adelaide Observer,* 2 October 1886. *See* also "Silk Culture," *The Age*, 13 June 1894, 5.
[43] Report reprinted Scott, *South Australia in 1887-8: A Handbook for the Melbourne International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1888*, 112-120B.
[44] This idea had been mooted by the South Australian Conservator of Forests in 1884 who encouraged the growth of white mulberry trees along with date palms and olive trees in the north of the colony to transform 'some of the arid places in the north into oases, thereby increasing the production of the colony generally.' See "South Australia," *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, 4 October 1884, 694.

rate of 50 to 100 acres of land. Similar stands could be established in near-by government lands such as Wirrabara Forest. Furthermore, Dr. Cleland could 'supply grain of pure and best quality.'[45] By 1889, Cleland was encouraging people in South Australia with a plot of land to plant the white mulberry tree because there was 'practically a certainty that the sale of the leaves [would] yield him an abundant return for his pains' and the South Australian product was of an 'admittedly high quality.'[46] Clearly, widespread investment was being advocated by Davenport and Cleland and the colony's fledgling silk industry was consequently thought to be of great potential to South Australia. Considering this, Gill's presentation of South Australian Art Needlework at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition is observed in the context of not only an escalating trend for Art Needlework in South Australia, but also a significant push to develop a silk industry that could supply the materials for Art Needlework manufacture.

Gill Responding to the Wider Context: The Launch of South Australian Art Needlework

In the same way that Gill seized on opportunities to develop the work of the School and boost enrolments, he also recognised that its theoretical design education could support more than just theory and examinations – it could also be applied to practical applications. With the possibility of a local silk industry to provide the necessary materials, Gill took measures to launch Art Needlework as the first technical art at the Adelaide School of Design. The Adelaide School of Design's display at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition was a defining moment in the development of the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia. In fact, Gill explained that it was the event that signalled *the entire suite of technical arts being implemented in the curriculum*. In a report to the Board, he listed twelve technical arts within the Arts & Crafts oeuvre and stated that 'ever since the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition …

[45] "Colonial and Indian Exhibition: Closing Meeting: on silk," *South Australian Register,* 24 May 1888, 6.
[46] "Education in South Australia," *South Australian Register*, 20 August 1889, 4. This system of domestic agriculture of the white mulberry harvested by women and children was still being promoted by Dr. Cleland in 1895. "Sericulture: Among the silkworms," *The Adelaide Observer*, 21 December 1895, 11.

the Board have encouraged the practice of these arts and crafts.'[47] Art Needlework was first in his list because of his own domestic environment. As this next section will show, it came to pass that Art Needlework was the first applied art at the Adelaide School of Design because H.P. Gill's new wife was connected to the Adelaide ecclesiastical embroidery scene.

The Art Needlework display at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition can be linked to when 'on the 29thApril, 1886, at Christ Church, North Adelaide by the Venerable Archdeacon Marryat, Harry Pelling Gill esq., Lefevre-terrace, North Adelaide [was married] to Annie Waring Wright.'[48] Annie was a 21 year old woman and H.P. Gill ten years her senior, the man in charge of the very institution where she studied.[49] In the alliance, who benefitted more? Arguably, he held an important position in Adelaide. Annie was marrying the man ultimately responsible for all the drawing education throughout the colony; the man who had marked the South Kensington test papers of her friends; the Director of the School of Design on North Terrace where many of her social circle and their mothers enrolled as arts students. Nonetheless, H.P. Gill also benefitted professionally by marrying Annie. In a strategic step to progress the School of Design, he gently made the most of Annie's ecclesiastical needlework contacts. By launching Art Needlework as a technical skill that could be learnt in his institution, Gill began a process of propelling the School of Design towards the next phase of Arts & Crafts syllabus development. As will be demonstrated, the success of that phase hinged not only on the popularity for Art Needlework but also the existing skills of Annie's needlework connections.

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[47] Witness H.P. Gill, Statement 3765, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Gill Enquiry*, *Volume 2,* GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 720.
[48] "Marriages," *South Australian Register*, 1 May 1886, 4.
[49] Annie Waring Wright was an early student of the School of Painting. See Art School Pupil Ledger 1881-1889, *Volumes 1 and 2*, GRG19/98, State Records of South Australia, and "Illustrated Supplement," *Adelaide Observer*, 7 January 1899, 56. She studied painting under Louis Tannert who was Head of Painting until H.P. Gill took over the leadership of the institution.

Relatively quickly after his marriage, Gill began pushing Art Needlework from the Adelaide School of Design into the public eye. In 1887, he entered work from his pupils at the Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition, an event attended by thousands of people.[50] He then hosted a preliminary exhibition of student needlework in the School's classrooms. Having showcased the School's industry to the public, the following year he promoted the School's strength – original design. To achieve this, he activated Annie's skilled needlework contacts and 'proposed to the St. Peter's Ladies Guild that if they [would] prepare Church needlework from designs made by these [School of Design] students it shall be sent to Melbourne and exhibited with the School exhibit.'[51] The Chairman of the Fine Arts Committee suggested he also 'communicate to that effect with the ladies meeting under the presidency of Mrs. Green, at the Church Office, Leigh Street,' (the Society of St. Paul discussed in Chapter Two).[52] By July of 1888, Gill proposed to the Fine Arts Committee 'to have at Melbourne an exhibition of Needlework designed by present students and executed by Past and Present students of the School.' He added that he had no doubt 'that the needlework exhibit [could] be made a very fine one provided that money is forthcoming to purchase the materials.'[53] This then describes the moment when the two Guilds began their interaction as fully formed ateliers in collaboration with the School of Design.

The collaboration with experienced needleworkers from the Guilds demonstrates a sense of strategy on Gill's behalf. His strategy was beyond a simple exhibition of the School's work for the display and was intended to show how the work of an outside industry was

[50] Thirteen obtained a First Order of Merit, fifty-six students took second Order of Merit. See Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Gill Enquiry*, *Volume 3,* GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 711.
[51] Report from H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 23 March 1888, *Extracts from Minute Books*, Principal, Librarian and Secretary Papers, *Volume 1*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 4.
[52] Report from H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 5 October 1888, *Extracts from Minute Books*, Principal, Librarian and Secretary Papers, *Volume 1*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 5.
[53] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 21 July 1888, *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.

'influenced by the work of the School.'[54] It was also an arrangement that ensured the South Australian needlework was produced by the most skilled needleworkers to achieve the best overall result. The strategy was made possible because, as Chapter Two has shown, Gill's wife Annie was a needleworker in the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild, along with a number of her relatives and friends. Her mother was part of the founding committee and some students at the School, such as Edith Tomkinson, were also members of a guild. Therefore, the collaboration between the School and the Guilds can be seen as another indication of Gill responding to the potential in his environment and making leadership decisions that would go on to create opportunities for women at the Adelaide School of Design.

Gill's approach to the demonstration of South Australia's needlework at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition was also calculated with a larger prize in mind.[55] He did not stop at utilising the skilled guild needleworkers to ensure quality control. First, he applied for £10 from the Fine Arts Committee for the exclusive purpose of 'getting together an Art Needlework Exhibit.'[56] He also asked for the holiday between the Winter and Autumn session 'be dropped … under exceptional circumstances' so that the School could maintain momentum on work to be exhibited. The fact that he cancelled the School holidays shows his seriousness, as well as the level of support he had from his students for the special project. Two cases of needlework were sent over to the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition: one larger

[54] H.P. Gill to the Fine Arts Committee, 21 July 1888, in *Reports made by the Director of Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909,* GRG 19/248, State Records of South Australia.
[55] His communication with the Fine Arts Committee Over the course of six months provides evidence of his proposal and its execution. Report from H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 23 March 1888, 20 April 1888, 25 July 1888, 5 October 1888, 8 January 1889, *Extracts from Minute Books*, Principal, Librarian and Secretary Papers, *Volume 1*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 4-5.
[56] H.P. Gill, "Reply to seven questions formulated by the Finance Committee respecting the Practical Art Needlework and Technical Department of the School of Design," Report 552 on the Art Needlework Department to the Fine Arts Committee, Public Library Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia, 18 June 1907, *Cruickshank Papers*, *Volume 1*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 285.

one of ecclesiastical work and another of 'secular every-day [Art] Needlework.'[57] Each branch was awarded an honour. The Society of St. Paul and the St. Peter's Guild (Figure 12) both received First awards, 'with special mention made' the 'highest commendation' of the Exhibition; and the secular Art Needlework from the School of Design 'had the honour of receiving first order of merit "with special mention".'[58] Gill's ultimate prize was beyond mere certificates. The display demonstrated a South Australian school of Art Needlework, which as Margaret (Rita) Ann Crawford (1860-1896) wrote in 1889, Gill 'doubtless desired to form a society on lines similar to those of the S.K. [South Kensington] School of Needlework.'[59]

The colony's display of Art Needlework at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition served as a marketing launch and was widely publicised as a most attractive exhibit. Almost as soon as it had been exhibited, Art Needlework was already being promoted in the newspapers as 'permanently added to the duties of the school [with] designs…executed there, and each being specially adapted to the subject to which it is to be devoted.'[60] Therefore, the press was advertising opportunities for interested individuals to benefit from the reputation of the School of Design.

[57] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 21 July 1888, *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
[58] "The Southern Line," *Adelaide Observer*, 4 May 1889, 37.
[59] R. Crawford, "School of Design Art Needlework Society," *Every Day Art Club Magazine,* 1889, Special Collection, University of South Australia, 31.
[60] "No IX," *Evening Journal*, 11 August 1888, 6.

Figure 12.



First Order of Merit, Certificate of Award, Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne 1888 to "Ladies of St Peter's Guild, Adelaide for Embroidery Ecclesiastical, Melbourne 31 January 1889."
Records of the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild, SRG 94/A1: A1/51, State Library of South Australia.

The praise in the newspapers raised the profile of specific women by crediting them for various elements of the display, including any collaboration. For example, a pall and corporal emblemizing 'the five wounds of Christ' was designed by the School of Design and worked by Miss [sic] F. Wright as a student but lent by the St. Peter's Guild. Miss Denny Scott of the St. Peter's Guild worked a stole designed by the School.[61] The naming of individuals working in collaboration also extended to the School of Design Art Needlework. The sister of Annie's friend Elizabeth, Miss M. E. Meek, worked a cushion designed by Henry (Harry) Evan Sibley (1867-1917) who referenced an old Flemish model. Miss Adelaide Elizabeth Stow (1859-1945) designed a cushion with a motif of a magnolia which was worked by her sister Ella Harriet Stow (1858-1944). Charlotte (Lottie) Adelaide Benda (1863-1937) worked a

[61] The published names and details have been recorded in Appendix Four, *South Australian ecclesiastical embroidery and Art Needlework exhibited at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition 1888*.

handkerchief designed in Indian style by H.P. Gill. He also designed a series of d'oyleys with an Italian motif of dolphins which were worked by his wife Annie. Some students of the School worked independently to design and execute their own objects. This was the case for the sister of Edith Tomkinson from the St Paul's and St Peter's Guild; Amy Louisa Tomkinson (1856-1943) designed a sachet in low pink and green colour for the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition. It was described as 'a perfectly sweet little thing' in which she 'ingeniously introduced a decoration of clover upon it.'[62]

Not only was the South Australian Art Needlework display well executed but both the style and process of design was foregrounded. To enrich the understanding of the process required, some work, such as that of Miss Mary Jane Korff (1857-1925) was deliberately left unfinished in an incomplete state to demonstrate the process of both the design and the techniques required for the needlework execution.[63] The exposure of method and process showed the level of expertise involved to work an original design, skills that could be gained in a learning institution. It was also noted that the designs befitted the fashionable Arts & Crafts principle of approaching nature rather than imitating it because according to one appreciative critic, the designs showed 'no attempt to imitate nature, but simply to suggest natural beauties, since no work can hope to rival them.'[64] Moreover, the referencing of nature reinforced the exhibit as being one within the fashionable Arts & Crafts Movement influenced by the aesthetics and nature writings of John Ruskin (1819-1890). In other words, the products were as we might describe them today as being 'on trend' and responding to the contemporary market.

[62] "Specially for the South Australian Ladies," *South Australian Register*, 11 August 1888, 5.
[63] Mary Jane Korff married George Alfred Reynolds in 1888, teacher at the Adelaide School of Design.
[64] "Specially for the South Australian Ladies," *South Australian Register*, 11 August 1888, 6.

Conclusion

Key elements not only contributed to the design curriculum at the Adelaide School of Design under H.P. Gill's leadership but set the scene for Art Needlework as a technical art. The Director's background, his own experience of design-education, and his familiarity of working with females primed him to create conditions conducive for women to enter an arts education at the Adelaide School of Design. Gill realised the potential of a home-grown sericulture and for the benefit of the School, tapped into his wife's Art Needlework connections. By combining the wider manufacturing context with his own domestic associations, he worked strategically towards a collaborative display at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition to publicly launch an Art Needlework arm into the School of Design. The fashionable display of South Australian Art Needlework was exhibited in such a manner that the element of design was foregrounded. The display presented Art Needlework as a technical skill in an artisan manufacturing industry; it was presented at a time when sericulture, as evidenced by Thomas Wardle's report in the South Australian exhibit's handbook, was a cog in the commercial ideation circling around the Art Needleworkers. In this way, Gill's harnessing of the Art Needlework in South Australia was a strategy that responded to the commercial context. From this perspective, it can be appreciated that the South Australian Art Needlework display at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition was the end result of Gill's leadership decisions, which as the next chapter will establish, readied the School to be in the position to become an alternative avenue of higher education for women.

Chapter Four

How the Art Needlework Society at the Adelaide School of Design unlocked opportunities for women within arts education

The Melbourne Centennial Exhibition presented Art Needlework as artisan manufacture, a product that could be generated by the Adelaide School of Design in collaboration with the South Australian ecclesiastical needlework ateliers. Buoyed by the success of the exhibition, H.P. Gill and a committee of Art Needleworkers established a School of Design Art Needlework Society. The Society operated on the same commercial model as the Guilds. Its purpose was to create and sell designs, transfers and executed work. Clients could select unique designs from a folio to render themselves or purchase a transfer service in which their chosen, one-off design was transferred to fabric ready for them to execute at home. Customers could also purchase fully rendered designs or request special commissions.

This chapter establishes three ways in which Art Needlework Society unlocked opportunities for women. First, the Society was formed strategically on effective commercial practices. These practices included successful marketing and sales strategies that brought repute to the work of the School making it an approachable pathway for women. Second, the work of the Society came to necessitate new administrative and teaching positions at the Adelaide School of Design, the first to be occupied by women. Third, it launched a process where students could earn to learn, or vice versa. An analysis of the School of Design rolls shows that in this way, the Society paved the way for female students to directly engage with other arts subjects within the syllabus even though they may have commenced with Art Needlework.

The School of Design Art Needlework Society

From its inception in January 1889, the School of Design Art Needlework Society was established with the intent 'to afford opportunities to young women to secure training necessary for enabling them to earn a livelihood.'[1] The business of designing and rendering Art Needlework for commercial purposes aligned splendidly with the technical education offered at the School of Design. The Art Needlework Society was set up for success with experienced needleworkers in an organising committee and a commercial model similar to the ecclesiastical ateliers. In addition to this, it had strict rules of engagement, quality control measures and a subscription fund to pay for materials. The Society's serious intent, coupled with the way in which it garnered membership from the School's enrolments resulted in Art Needlework becoming a new avenue of opportunity for women to study an arts education. This was stated by H.P. Gill himself in 1889 when he wrote 'I anticipate that this Society will be instrumental in making a market for work the result of this School's teaching.'[2]

Gill began pushing the commercial aspect of Art Needlework even before the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition had concluded. In a letter to his Fine Arts Committee, he estimated the cost of the work that had been exhibited in Melbourne to be 'perhaps £150' a considerable amount at that time and an indication of the superior quality.[3] He fed the press on Art Needlework's commercial viability and reports of the success of the School's Art Needlework exhibit in Melbourne mentioned the 'trade idea of designs being produced by the yard and cut to the length required … [but] no repetition or the same design will be carried out.'[4] When Gill wrote to the Fine Arts Committee to introduce the concept of an Art

[1] "Music and Art," *South Australian Register*, 26 June 1889, 4.
[2] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 7 January 1889, *Reports made by the Director of Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 1.
[3] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 21 July 1888, *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
[4] "Wonder Working Needles," *South Australian Register*, 11 August 1888, 6.

Needlework Society allied to the School, he stated that it would 'incur no expense' because it would operate on the same atelier business model as the workrooms at St. Dominic's, the Society of St. Paul and the St. Peter's Guild.[5] He subsequently wrote to introduce a set of formalised rules for the Society.

The Adelaide School of Design Art Needlework Society was more structured than the ecclesiastical ateliers and made the most of Annie Gill's Art Needlework connections. To explain, the founding membership was made up of H.P. Gill as President, a small Committee of experienced needlewomen, and members who paid a subscription that was used to purchase materials and exemplars for the School of Design. The Committee all had prior needlework experience and were familiar with the ecclesiastical atelier business model because they were associated with the St. Peter's Guild. Furthermore, they had been students of the Adelaide School of Design. The entire Committee was connected to Annie Gill: Annie Gill's mother, Frances Jane Wright; Frances' sister-in-law, Mona O'Halloran, Mona's unmarried sister Marion Wright (1840-?), Mary Jane Reynolds who had just married George Reynolds on staff at the School of Design, and student Miss Catherine Campbell Crawford (1862-1936). Annie Gill's friend and former student Elizabeth Hannah Meek (1848-1916) acted as Treasurer and Annie herself as Secretary. Working underneath the Committee were many other women who applied to become members of the Society on a remunerative basis. For a subscription of two shillings and six pence per year, the Society offered them payment for three different trade skills: design, transfer and needlework, all of which was supervised by the Committee.

Quality control was guaranteed by the requirements of membership admission and a set of fourteen rules. The rules were presented by H.P. Gill to the Fine Arts Committee and both the

[5] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 7 January 1889, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 1.

rules and new venture were simultaneously announced to the wider community by founding Committee member and former student, Margaret (Rita) Ann Crawford (1860-1896). She submitted a copy of the rules with an accompanying article through the School's own magazine.[6] Rita's short article was intended to inform and motivate readers to support the Art Needlework Society venture.[7] She urged readers to bring the 'first Fine Arts needlework society in Australasia' to the attention of their friends and wrote that it was hoped the Society would provide 'remunerative employment to those who had been properly trained.'

As shown below in Figure 13, the Society's committee, designers, transferers and needleworkers were required to adhere to formalised practices. Orders and sales had to pass through the Committee and all Art Needlework needed to be to the Committee's satisfaction. To ensure a consistently high standard of product, each needleworker, transferer and designer was required to have successfully passed their 'Full 1st Grade Certificate' and they were only permitted to join if they were past or present students of the School of Design.[8] Furthermore, it was necessary for each candidate to submit a sample of their work for approval by the Committee before admission into the Society. The Guilds' proven structure and the quality control measures were both implemented to establish a sustainable commercial model that would support female workers to earn an income.

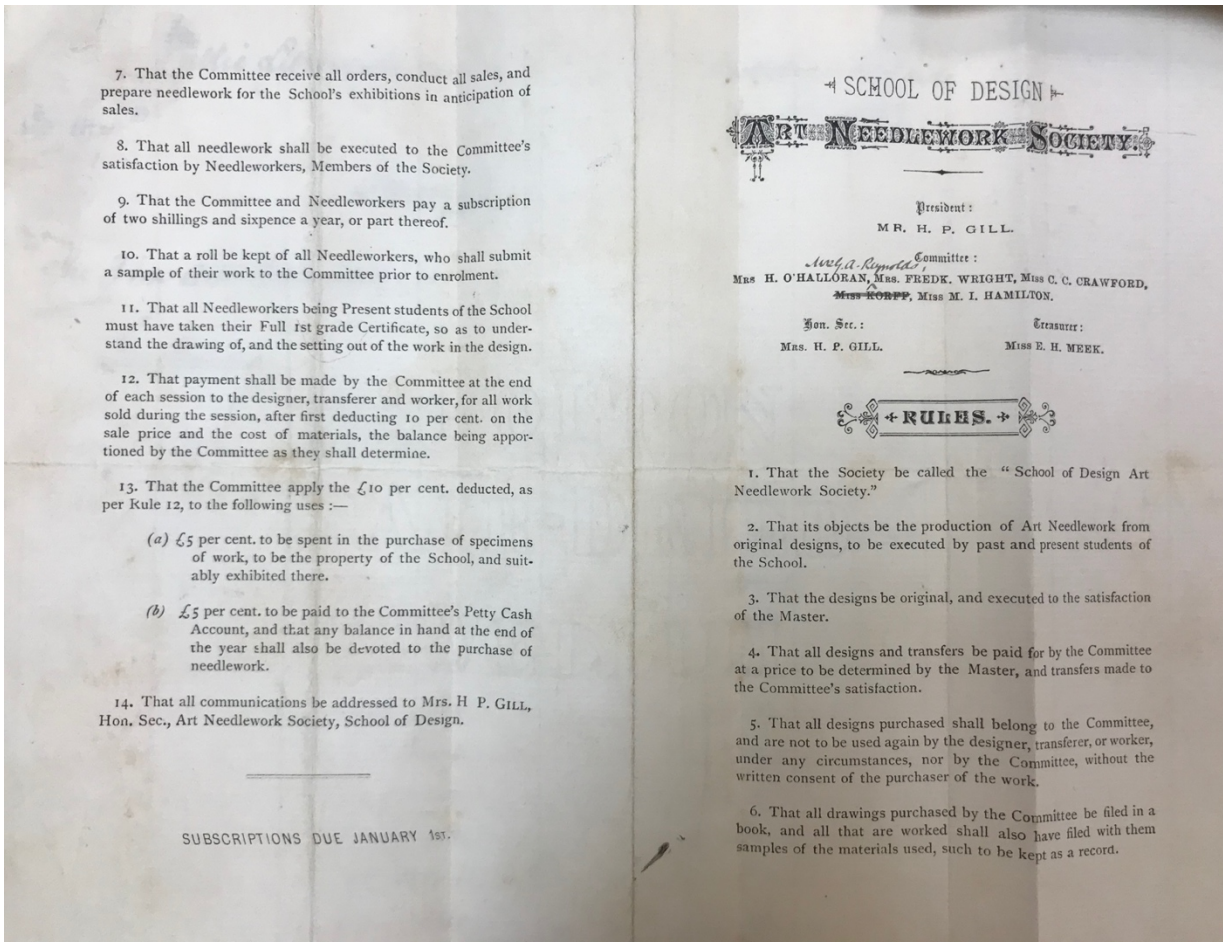
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[6] Rita was one of four sisters. They lived at 55 Strangways Terrace. Their father was manager of the Union Bank and like Elizabeth Meek, was from Northern Ireland. The family worshipped at Christ Church, North Adelaide where the Gills were married. Rita and two of her other three sisters first enrolled in the Design class at the School in 1885, in the same cohort as Mary Hamilton and Mary Overbury, amongst others. She continued her enrolment through the School of Design up until her marriage in October of the year of the first edition of the magazine. Her sister Catherine Campbell Crawford was on the founding committee of the Society. Rita Crawford married Herbert White Hughes (1855-1916) and died at Booyoolie Station, near Gladstone in 1896 when her second child was two years of age. See "Death of Mr. W. J. Crawford," *Express and Telegraph*, 21 January 1896.

[7] R. Crawford, "School of Design Art Needlework Society," Every Day Art Club Magazine, 1889, *School of Design. Art Club Magazines: 1894-1909, 8 Volume 1*, Special Collection, University of South Australia, 31.

[8] School of Design Art Needlework Society Rules, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909,* 7 January 1889, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.

Figure 13.



7. That the Committee receive all orders, conduct all sales, and prepare needlework for the School's exhibitions in anticipation of sales.

8. That all needlework shall be executed to the Committee's satisfaction by Needleworkers, Members of the Society.

9. That the Committee and Needleworkers pay a subscription of two shillings and sixpence a year, or part thereof.

10. That a roll be kept of all Needleworkers, who shall submit a sample of their work to the Committee prior to enrolment.

11. That all Needleworkers being Present students of the School must have taken their Full 1st grade Certificate, so as to understand the drawing of, and the setting out of the work in the design.

12. That payment shall be made by the Committee at the end of each session to the designer, transferer and worker, for all work sold during the session, after first deducting 10 per cent. on the sale price and the cost of materials, the balance being apportioned by the Committee as they shall determine.

13. That the Committee apply the £10 per cent. deducted, as per Rule 12, to the following uses :—

(a) £5 per cent. to be spent in the purchase of specimens of work, to be the property of the School, and suitably exhibited there.

(b) £5 per cent. to be paid to the Committee's Petty Cash Account, and that any balance in hand at the end of the year shall also be devoted to the purchase of needlework.

14. That all communications be addressed to Mrs. H P. GILL, Hon. Sec., Art Needlework Society, School of Design.

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE JANUARY 1ST.

SCHOOL OF DESIGN

ART NEEDLEWORK SOCIETY.

President :
MR. H. P. GILL.

Committee :
Mrs H. O'HALLORAN, Mrs. FREDK. WRIGHT, Miss C. C. CRAWFORD, ~~Miss KORPP~~, Miss M. I. HAMILTON.

Hon. Sec. : Mrs. H. P. GILL.

Treasurer : Miss E. H. MEEK.

RULES.

1. That the Society be called the "School of Design Art Needlework Society."

2. That its objects be the production of Art Needlework from original designs, to be executed by past and present students of the School.

3. That the designs be original, and executed to the satisfaction of the Master.

4. That all designs and transfers be paid for by the Committee at a price to be determined by the Master, and transfers made to the Committee's satisfaction.

5. That all designs purchased shall belong to the Committee, and are not to be used again by the designer, transferer, or worker, under any circumstances, nor by the Committee, without the written consent of the purchaser of the work.

6. That all drawings purchased by the Committee be filed in a book, and all that are worked shall also have filed with them samples of the materials used, such to be kept as a record.

School of Design Art Needlework Society Rules
H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 7 January 1889, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.

Women benefitted financially by meeting the admission prerequisites. The Committee paid designers, transferers and workers at the end of each session which meant Art Needleworkers received an income three times a year in line with the School of Design's three session/term calendar. Payment was what was left after three deductions: the cost of materials; less 5% to be spent on the purchase of work suitable for specimens for exhibition and to remain the property of the school; and another 5% to be paid to the Committee's petty cash fund which

also purchased needlework for the School of Design if there was a balance at the end of the year.[9]

As well as the Guild's structure and the quality control measures, the role of original design was central to the structure of the business model that ensured the Art Needlework Society's viability. Six of the fourteen rules focussed on the importance of design. All objects were to be the product of original design and once purchased by the Committee, were not to be used again by the designer, transferer, or worker unless permitted by the purchaser. The designs for specific objects were kept in a file. Each student's design was assigned a number. Prospective clients could choose a design from the file and purchase the design to work at home themselves, and that is how the designer would end up being paid as a separate entity at the end of the session. If the client did not choose a design from the file, they could make a specific request that was put into an order book. These requests were addressed in the classroom where the 'design instructor always put those designs upon the blackboards … and made some suggestions for designs.'[10] Students could then select any request they wished to address and their design was submitted back through to the client. Any remaining designs were also considered for submission to the file and the catalogue was also audited and refreshed from time to time. A full record of all designs that were worked with matching material samples was maintained on file. Clearly, this was a business model focused on bespoke design.

Original design underpinned the Society's commercial operations in a variety of ways. For example, clients could request that designs be transferred ready for rendering themselves at

[9] "School of Design Art Needlework Society Rules," H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 7 January 1889, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
[10] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Volume 2*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 646.

home and so a 'kit' would be sold to them and both designer and transferer were paid at the end of the session. If the client chose to purchase a fully worked design, this resulted in the designer, transferer and needleworker being paid separately. As well as this, original design as an element in itself was important to the business and part of the allure of the product. Gill stated that 'out of the 4 or 5 thousand designs [he did] not think there were four repeats.'[11] A policy of unrepeated design meant that clients received a bespoke object they would not see elsewhere in the homes of others.

The commercialisation of design was forefronted as the Society's chief inducement in the press's critiques of its work. For example, at the end of the first six months of its establishment, a dedicated Art Needlework exhibition of the Society's work was held in the School's classrooms and was well attended. Although the exhibition piggy-backed on the success of the exhibit in Melbourne by showing the altar cloth and side cloths, all other work was new. The *South Australian Register* reported that materials were purchased from Adelaide retailers and 'original designs of students [were] carried out by past and present students in such a manner as to be said to equal the best obtainable from England.'[12] The article took pains to point out the priority of original design within the business model and they praised the 'harmonious blending' and 'ingenuity and quality of workmanship' predicting that 'a South Australian work will have a character of its own even in this branch of art.' Another critic observed that every object was of original design, 'the value of having something unique' adding 'additional charm to anything purchased.'[13]

[11] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Gill Enquiry*, *Volume 2*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 646.
[12] "The Art Needlework Society," *South Australian Register*, 26 June 1889, 6.
[13] "This Week," *South Australian Chronicle*, 29 June 1889, 12.

The press not only picked up the uniqueness of design, they also noted the opportunities for remunerative work for women. The School of Design Art Needlework Society's promotion of a skilled trade was praised with comments such as 'ladies who seek to work for their living are deserving of very high praise' and 'great benefit is likely to accrue to the community from the existence of this Society, one of the aims of which is to afford opportunities to young women to secure the training necessary to earn a livelihood.'[14] The Society's second exhibition in December of the same year was promoted by the *Advertiser* as being of interest to those with a 'desire to aid the students in their endeavours to produce articles of a useful description for home decoration' and purchase 'artistic and valuable pieces of needlework.'[15] In contrast to this article, a long editorial followed on a meeting in the Town Hall to address the problem of female sweated labour in Adelaide. In a marked difference to the decidedly middle and upper-class Art Needlework Society, sweated labour at the other end of the socio-economic scale was brought about by 'shiploads of girls … imported free by the State' to relieve the shortage of domestic servants that unintentionally created an over-supply of labour in a tightly competitive textile market. According to the editorial, female dressmakers and shirtmakers were 'desperately in need of the establishment of female trades unions to protect the women in these trades.' In this context, the work of the School of Design Art Needlework Society was promoted as a wholesome alternative to the 'monstrous oppression of female labor.'[16]

Design was the driver of the Art Needlework Society but like the rag trade, labour was still the engine and costs had to be covered. Gill pitched the concept of the Society as being 'self-supporting' which meant that the women had to work for their renumeration and generate a

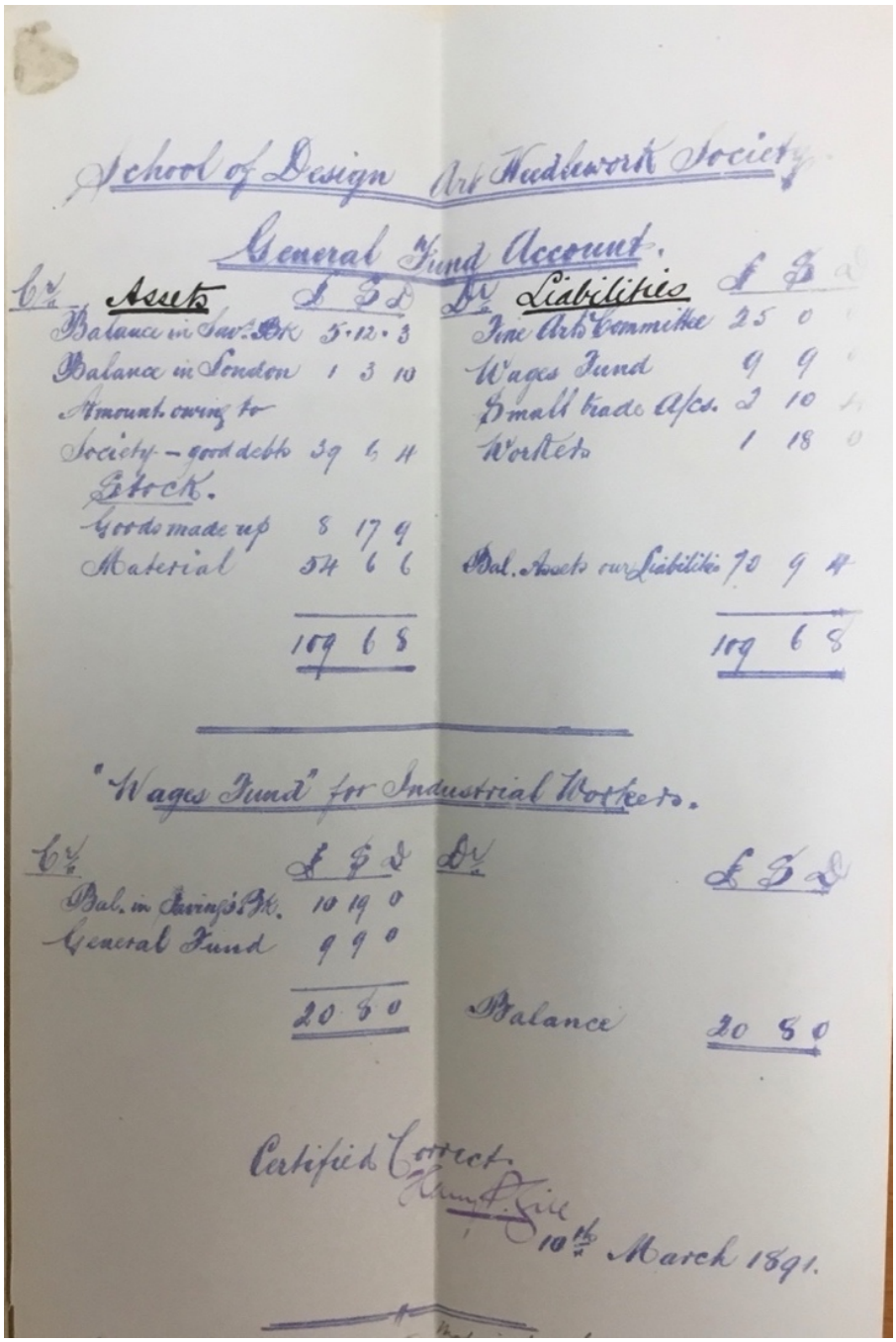
[14] *South Australian Register*, 26 June 1889, 6
[15] *The Advertiser*, 12 December 1889, 4.
[16] *The Advertiser*, 12 December 1889, 4. *Spelling of labor consistent with the original source.

profit to continue to purchase expensive materials.[17] In the first six months, the Society succeeded in paying a sum of £34 to the School for designs made by students. The language of the monthly accounts used in Figure 14 illustrates the Society's intention to provide women with the ability to earn a livelihood.[18] Payment was referred to as 'wages' and the students or former students receiving the payment were termed 'Industrial Workers.'[19] In October 1889, Gill requested £25 from the Fine Arts Committee to cover the cost of purchasing silks from Morris & Co and Leek Embroidery Society in England because the gestational silk industry had not come to fruition and materials were not available in Adelaide. If Adelaide firms did happen to stock the specific colours needed by the Society, they did not carry the quantity required.[20] The Committee declined to give the loan to the women but consented to afford it to H.P. Gill and within a short period of time – six months – the amount was repaid and a similar amount requested.[21] In calling for a second loan, Gill reminded the Fine Arts Committee that the Society was 'doing good work for both the School and for Art Culture, and [was] in a financially sound condition.'[22] As can be seen in the account statement of March 1891 in Figure 14, every six months, a similar amount was approved for the purposes of obtaining materials and each time, it was repaid. This ability to repay, what was for all intense purposes a business loan, meant the commercial model of the Society was working successfully in this initial stage.

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[17] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 10 July 1889, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
[18] "School of Design Art Needlework Society General Fund Account," H.P. Gill, 10 March 1891, in *Reports made to Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
[19] Ibid.
[20] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 11 September 1889, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia. For purchase of Morris & Co see for example Robert Kay, Letter to Elizabeth Meek, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, B172, 197.
[21] Principal Witness, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence Book 3, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 3244, 704, and Fine Arts Committee to Board, 13 June 1990, *Cruickshank Papers*, Sheet 5, B6, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 8.
[22] Ibid.

Figure 14.



School of Design Art Needlework Society General Fund Account,
H.P. Gill, 10 March 1891, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.

In the absence of a shop front, the Society and Gill used exhibitions as a marketing tool. Appendix 6 contains a gallery of original Adelaide School of Design Art Needlework exhibition photographs. Gill supplied these images to both local and interstate newspapers.

The press also promoted the Society's interactions with a Governor and/or Governor's wife. In this way, in addition to showcasing the Art Needlework production, the exhibitions allowed the Art Needlework Society to position itself in elite society. This in turn, bolstered the Society's status and increased orders.[23] A case in point was an early exhibition of the School's work at the University of Adelaide in 1889. The event was noted in the press because it was given for the benefit of the Earl and Countess of Kintore and his Excellency Rear Admiral Fairfax. Of all the work at the School of Design, Gill chose to display 'needlework done from original designs by the students.'[24] His choice not only signals the importance he placed upon the School's Art Needlework, it also indicates how he leveraged it for the benefit of free publicity.

In another example of positioning, the Victorian Governor's wife Lady Elizabeth Loch (née Villiers 1841-1938) visited the Society at the School of Design. She had recently caused some dissent in Melbourne for 'bringing out from England a scientific instructress for needlework for the Victorian public schools,' something which the Victorians had interpreted as condescending. During her visit, she stated that she hoped the Art Needlework Society would introduce their work to Melbourne because the 'class of designs shown her was quite unknown save when imported from England' and her comments were celebrated in the South Australian press.[25] On another occasion, H.P. Gill informed the press that the residing South Australian Governor's wife, the Countess of Kintore, Lady Sydney Charlotte (née Montagu 1851-1932) had brought the Countess of Jersey, Margaret Elizabeth Child (née Villiers 1849-1945) from Sydney to visit the Society because she wished to start a similar school in

[23] Initially, the Art Needlework Society did have an exhibition in 1889 at Gault & Co's rooms in Rundle Street. They advertised their made-up objects as well as took orders for family crest, initials and monograms designed and worked on cushions, tablecloths etc as wedding and birthday presents. After this, exhibitions were held in public buildings and mostly the School of Design rooms. See *Express and Telegraph*, 18 July 1889. 2.
[24] "Conversazione at the University," *South Australian Chronicle*, 1 June 1889, 6.
[25] "General News," *Express and Telegraph*, 20 November 1889, 4.

Sydney. At a special exhibition held by the Society later that year, the Countess of Kintore visited the opening and 'expressed her pleasure at seeing such a fine collection of needlework.'[26] Lady Ada Mary Scott (née Ryan 1855-1943) accompanied her to the exhibition and it was reported that she ordered 'a tablecloth border of oranges, with leaves and blossoms' made in rope silk and wool on a green background.[27] A portière 'with a treatment of magnolia on blue serge' was designed and made for Lady Janet Marion Clark (née Snodgrass 1851-1909) in Melbourne.[28] H.P. Gill's deliberate marketing through the press boosted the reputation of both the Society and therefore the School. It also resulted in sales through the extensive vice-regal network with orders sent to 'London, India, America, Fiji' and to other colonies outside of Australia.[29]

An analysis of an exhibition hosted at South Australia's Government House in Adelaide during the Society's second year underscores this point and offers an insight into how the Society and Gill successfully managed these relatively high-profile events. The process of production was demonstrated so that the commercial edge was tempered with an educational tone. Design drawings, incomplete transfers or 'patterns on paper' and work at various stages of completion were exhibited so there was no doubt as to how the finished work came to fruition.[30] The objects and designs varied in scale and therefore price. 'Surprisingly low figures' were marked on individual items on display. In addition to the price being made transparent, the individual who ordered any presold work was also made known, unlike the discretional conventions of normal retail interactions. Any collaborations between the School

[26] She saved two press articles on the exhibition and pasted it into her private album. Second uncited newspaper article authored by Victorine Selby cut and pasted into Album in *Papers of Algernon Keith-Falconer, 9th Earl of Kintore, 1889-1914*, Series 1, *Volume 1*, National Library of Australia.
[27] "School of Design Art Needlework Society," *Evening Journal*, 5 November 1891, 2.
[28] Ibid.
[29] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 10 May 1892, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
[30] "Art Needlework Exhibition," *Express and Telegraph*, 26 September 1890, 4.

and Society were deliberately revealed, such as the drawing room screen created by students of a different course in the school with Art Needlework worked by the Society. The Art Needlework display was also enriched with other work completed at the school. For instance, cane chairs designed by the students and executed at the Blind School were on sale, as were watercolours by both pupils and H.P. Gill, d'oyleys painted by Rosa Fiveash and work done in conjunction with the woodworking class. By including other objects made at the School, the Society did not hide their association with technical education even though they were positioning themselves in an elite market. Added to this, the range of price points honestly reflected the range of buying power in the market. In general, there was a transparency of the process of design, production and point of sale because the designers and makers were made known, as were the customers and how much they paid. So despite positioning itself amongst the elite, the Society's sales strategy was to be deliberately transparent about its products being the work of students.

Art Needlework opened up opportunities for women to study at the Adelaide School of Design because the Adelaide School of Design Art Needlework Society only took members who were connected to the School. It provided financial reward for women willing to develop their design, drawing and needlework skills in order to work as part of its professionally operated atelier. The Society's strict 14 rules of engagement embedded quality control measures on its commercial undertakings. Its successful market positioning aligned it with a stratum of society that afforded press coverage, repute and sales beyond the borders of the colony. Furthermore, the Society's sales strategy of transparency increased the reputation of the School by linking its design syllabus to artisan manufacture, the cornerstone of the fashionable Arts & Crafts Movement of the time. As the business grew, it opened up other opportunities for women to earn from associated administrative and teaching positions.

Positions of Paid Employment Created by the Art Needlework Society Through H.P. Gill's Self-Funding Model and Persuasive method

The Art Needlework Society's operations created the need for several paid teaching roles as well as an administrative position, all of which were enabled by a self-funding model proposed by H.P. Gill. Elizabeth Meek holds the distinction of being the earliest female sponsored into employment by Art Needlework in South Australia. On the 28 August 1889, Gill wrote to the Fine Arts Committee of the Public Library Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia to recommend 'Miss E.H. Meek, student of this School, as instructress.'[31] Miss Meek was to conduct 'a class at the School.'[32] Although it was initially called Decorative Needlework, the class changed its name to Art Needlework very quickly. This class operated in exactly the same manner as all other lessons at the Adelaide School of Design; Gill simply came up with a clever way to fund an additional subject in the syllabus. Students were charged one pound, two shillings and six pence for the session of classes. Just like all the others, Art Needlework students enrolled at the Library and a roll was kept of those attending each lesson. At the end of the session, the instructress was paid 'a salary an amount equivalent to the amount of fees received.'[33] The Board of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery approved and adopted the proposal with one amendment – that 5% be deducted from the total fees and retained towards 'expenses of advertising.'[34] This model of payment would go on to provide an avenue for employment for others.

As the first appointed female to a technical school in Australia, Elizabeth Meek's appointment in 1889 is contrary to that claim previously made of Elizabeth Caroline

[31] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 28 August 1889, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Art Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Board to Fine Arts Committee, 20 September 1889, *Cruickshank Papers*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 4,7,35.
[34] Ibid.

Armstrong's (1960-1930) appointment as painting instructor to the Adelaide School of Design in 1893.[35] Why has Elizabeth Meek's prior appointment not been recognised before? After all, H.P. Gill requested Elizabeth Meek's appointment through the Fine Arts Committee and their report was adopted by the Board. The process of appointment was in the same manner as all other appointments, including Elizabeth Armstrong. Furthermore, the Decorative Needlework students enrolled through the same process as all other students, and they took various other classes within the School syllabus so it is not as if they were a separated cohort. It can only be assumed that the significance of Elizabeth Meek's appointment has been unobserved because of an inherent bias against needlework leading to such an oversight. However, this bias was not apparent at the time of the development of Art Needlework in South Australia. Contemporaneously, Art Needlework was riding a wave of popularity, one that Gill was using to the School's advantage – a popularity that allowed him to broaden opportunities for other women. The year following Elizabeth Meek's appointment, the work of the Art Needlework Society necessitated a vacancy for an administrative position.

In 1890, Lucy May Harwood (1869-1948) was the second woman employed by the work of the Art Needlework Society. As a student at the Adelaide School of Design, she was engaged as a clerk to the Art Needlework Society at a rate of £6 per annum to be paid by the profits of the Society, not the Board. However, Gill also recommended to the Fine Arts Committee that she be employed by the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery Board. Lucy began as a Clerk to the School of Design in January 1891 with a commencing salary of £20 per annum

[35] For example, see Cathy Speck, "Significant Women Artists of the South Australian School of Art," A Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design lecture, initiated by the University of South Australia Art Museum, commemorating the opening of City West campus, University of South Australia, presented 27 February 1997.

as a wage in addition to the £6 from the Art Needlework Society.[36] Gill wrote twice to the Fine Arts Committee to recommend a pay rise and each time, not only he, but also the Fine Arts Committee and the Board effusively praised her work with comments such as 'careful, persevering,' and 'particularly trustworthy.'[37] At that time, she was responsible for the whole of the School's fees and accounts. Although her position began simply as the clerk to the Society, it expanded because her potential was recognised despite being a woman in a role traditionally held by a man. This was how Lucy Harwood not only became the second woman eased into paid employment by the work of the Art Needlework Society but also the first person enabled into a permanent, full-time position.

Rosa Fiveash was the third woman who benefitted from the same self-funding model and her appointment led to a particular type of persuasive method that Gill would repeatedly use to facilitate other women into positions of employment. In 1892, Gill recommended that she be permitted to teach china painting at the School of Design and suggested to the Committee that she be paid the sum received from the enrolment fees from her class, less 5% as was 'the practise in respect of the Art Needlework Society.'[38] In this particular request, Gill tabled nine objects of china painting executed by Rosa Fiveash, seven of which were burnt in Melbourne.[39] The remaining two were burnt by Gill as a test. Gill's tabling of the objects was to educate. He showed the Committee the success of the burning and explained how the process required a gas kiln which he hoped to install in the basement of the School of Design.

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[36] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 11 December 1890, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1992-1899*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 104.
[37]For example, see H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 12 May 1892, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1992-1899*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 202. Robert Kay made a note that the renumeration she was receiving in comparison to the 'careful and efficient work' was 'very small.' See also, H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 6 June 1894, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1992-1899*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 273.
[38] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 10 August 1892, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1992-1899*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 216.
[39] The term 'burnt' refers to firing pottery in a kiln at high temperature.

Just as he exhibited the process of Art Needlework in each of the exhibitions with unfinished work, he educated the process of china painting to the Committee in order to persuade. Whereas his educative demonstration of Art Needlework was intended to induce purchases, in Rosa Fiveash's case, the educative demonstration was to persuade the Committee to sanction a dedicated class for the applied art of China Painting and the expensive infrastructure to support it. Therefore, not only did the Art Needlework Society result in a prototype that generated a wage to afford individual women independent means, it also gave rise to Gill's persuasive method of achieving his means of broadening the applied arts curriculum.

The same self-funding process and method of persuasion paved the way for a fourth woman to be engaged at the School of Design. In September 1892, Bertha Julie Lucie Mouchette (née Lion 1846-1928) wrote to Gill to offer her services in the tuition of 'painting upon Tapestry, Ivory, Silk and Satin.'[40] She sent in examples of her work and in the same educative manner as Rosa Fiveash's appointment, Gill tabled Bertha Mouchette's objects for the Fine Arts Committee to inspect. He recommended that she be employed under 'conditions similar to those governing the Needlework and China Painting classes.' Gill correctly predicted that Bertha's classes would have limited numbers because of the predominance of Art Needlework but the opportunity allowed both she and her sister to establish themselves in Adelaide whereby Bertha was able to make an initial income conducting classes in tapestry painting (needlework), miniature painting on ivory, and oil or watercolour painting on silk and satin at the School.

[40] Bertha Mouchette to H.P. Gill, 8 September 1892, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1992-1899*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 202.

Gill's self-funding model had a ripple effect for other women to engage in applied art. With the exception of two male students, Berthe's classes were patronised by females. Her first Tapestry Painting class attracted fourteen pupils, including the two daughters of Lady Kintore. Other students included Jean Lilias Craigie (Jean. L.) Wilson (1854-1937) and Alice Marion Hambidge (1869-1947). These students had already taken evening classes and daytime Life painting classes at the Adelaide School of Design but this was their first course in applied art and both women went on to establish their own independent art careers, as will be explored in Chapter Five. Alice Hambidge became known for the miniatures within her portrait and landscape oeuvre and Jean L. Wilson took portrait commissions and taught painting and needlework instruction from her own studio. Without the self-funding model, it is unlikely Bertha Mouchette would have influenced her students in this way. After leaving the School, Bertha and her sister occupied various home studios in Adelaide for a number of years.[41] As founder of the Alliance Française, Mouchette's considerable career is beyond the scope of this project but without a doubt, Gill's self-funding model kick-started her independently funded activities after she first arrived in the colony of South Australia.

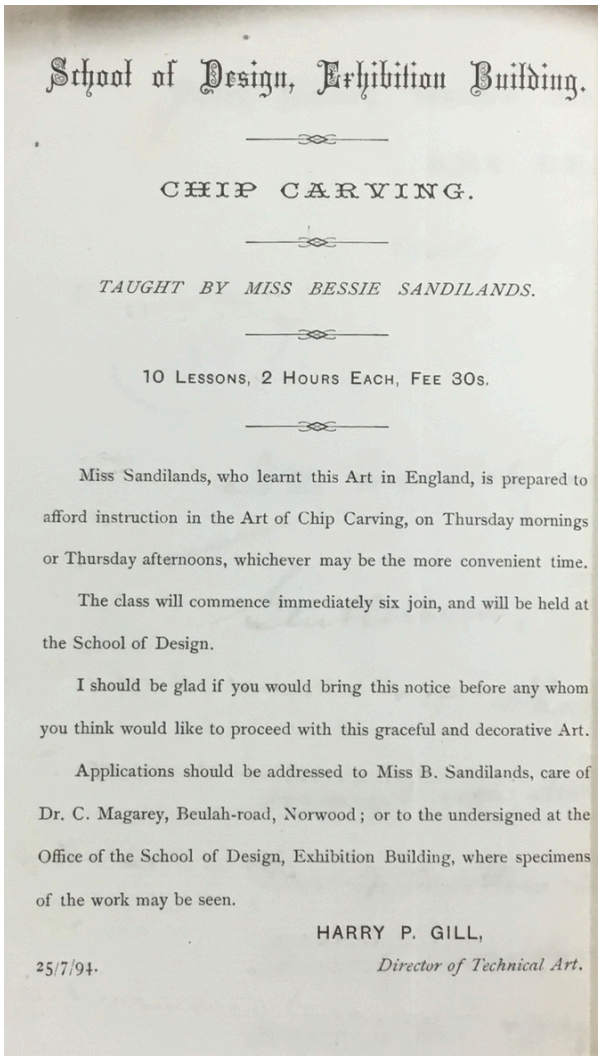
Gill recommended the self-funding model again to the Fine Arts Committee to introduce a class of Chip Carving. By this time, he was referring to it as 'the usual model' – such was the familiarity. As seen in Figure 15, Bertha (Bessie) Sandilands (1858-1839) was employed in 1894 on the same basis to teach Chip-Carving as a precursor to the development of the more demanding wood carving classes.[42] Hers was yet another position enabled by the model.

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[41] For a history of Madame Mouchette, see John Drury, *Two French Sisters in Australia 1881-1922 Berthe Mouchette and Marie Lion Artists and Teachers,* Victoria: Archer Books Australia, 2021, 75-93.

[42] Jodie Vandepeer, "South Australian Women Wood Carvers 1894-1923," Master of Arts (Studies in Art History, Diss., University of Adelaide, 2018. Bertha Sandilands was the daughter of Rev. P.R.R. Sandilands, Newton Abbot, Devonshire and sister-in-law of Dr. Cromwell Magarey, Adelaide. Prior to teaching Chip Carving at the Adelaide School of Design, she had been Assistant Teacher at the Morialta School House, a private school house established by Isabella Baker whose activities were explored in Chapter Two. See "School of Design, Exhibition Building, chip carving taught by Miss Bessie Sandilands, 25 August 1894, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 282, and "A Picturesque Rural Church," *The Register*, 18 January 1929, 13.

Figure 15.



School of Design, Exhibition Building.

CHIP CARVING.

TAUGHT BY MISS BESSIE SANDILANDS.

10 Lessons, 2 Hours Each, Fee 30s.

Miss Sandilands, who learnt this Art in England, is prepared to afford instruction in the Art of Chip Carving, on Thursday mornings or Thursday afternoons, whichever may be the more convenient time.

The class will commence immediately six join, and will be held at the School of Design.

I should be glad if you would bring this notice before any whom you think would like to proceed with this graceful and decorative Art.

Applications should be addressed to Miss B. Sandilands, care of Dr. C. Magarey, Beulah-road, Norwood; or to the undersigned at the Office of the School of Design, Exhibition Building, where specimens of the work may be seen.

HARRY P. GILL,

25/7/94. *Director of Technical Art.*

Printed flyer advertising Chip Carving classes with Miss Bertha (Bessie) Sandilands at the Adelaide School of Design.
H.P. Gill, 12 September 1894, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee, Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery of South Australia*, GRG19/248,
State Records of South Australia, 282.

Another occurred in 1899 when Gill used the payment model to employ 'Miss Warren of Church Hill, Gawler' to teach a class at the Adelaide site on handmade Torchon lace just as she had been conducting at the Gawler branch of the School of Design.[43]

[43] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 8 September 1899, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1992-1899*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, No. 220-419d, 410., and *Telegraph and Express*, 12 September 1899, 3. Elizabeth Warren's mother was Lucy Cave, sister of Ellen May Cave who was in the Society of St. Paul. The Caves were related to the O'Halloran and Wright family.

The final and eighth extant record of Gill deploying the model was for Maude Fanny Prosser (1876-1950) to take over from Elizabeth Meek in 1901 'where she be reimbursed, as was Miss Meek, by the amount of fees earned in the Art Needlework class less 10%.'[44] Therefore, Elizabeth Meek, Lucy Harwood, Rosa Fiveash, Elizabeth Armstrong, Madame Mouchette, Bertha Sandilands, Elizabeth Warren and Maude Prosser all benefitted from a model payment first used to support the Art Needlework. The funding model afforded these women an income of varying degrees and provided Gill with means to broaden the curriculum.

How the Art Needlework Society Brought Students into the Realm of the School of Design

The Art Needlework Society not only generated income for the aforementioned women, it also sparked the first class dedicated to the applied art of Art Needlework at the School. The instigation of the 'Decorative Needlework' class was closely followed by a supporting 'Design as Applied To Art Needlework' class. A cross referencing of enrolments of individuals in these two classes provides insight into a new entry point for women to begin studying at the Adelaide School of Design.[45] A range of women who began with Art Needlework then proceeded to enrol in other courses in the design-based syllabus. For those already at the School, the new classes were an opportunity to interact with Art Needlework using their transferable design skills.

The Decorative Needlework class was an entry point for those students wanting to learn the skills required to be a member of the Society but it also served to smooth the way to enrolment in other subjects. Although a number of students at the School had already

[44] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 31 January 1901, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 451.
[45] *Art Masters Sessional Returns of Students and Fees, School of Design Cash Book: 1885-1909*, GRG19:95, State Records of South Australia. Raw data from this source has been transcribed and reconstructed into Jodie Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, donated to the Art Gallery of South Australia Research Library.

engaged in needlework in a general design class, Decorative Needlework differed in that it was a dedicated course teaching specific applied needlework skills. Using the Spring session of 1889 as a case in point, the first class of Decorative Needlework had seven students and four of that number enrolled in other classes as well.[46] For example, Miss A. Daw took a daily elementary course but enrolled in that course only after she had commenced Decorative Needlework. Only two of the seven students were solely enrolled in just Decorative Needlework. By the end of the session, the others were attending at least three other classes each week. This same pattern continued the following year. In the Winter session of 1890, Miss F. Birks and Miss R.M. Johnstone began in Decorative Needlework and then also enrolled in Tuesday and Friday morning School of Design classes along with another more well-known student, Rosa Fiveash.[47] This is how the Decorative Needlework course had the effect of enticing new enrolments into the broader and more rigorous syllabus.

Women in differing circumstances enrolled in the Decorative Needlework classes and this led to broader admissions, some of whom became full-time students. Essentially, it became common for women to enrol in the same courses as their own children or siblings. Again, just shining a light on the Winter session of 1890, Mrs Frances Austin Frampton (1844-1934) simultaneously enrolled in Decorative Needlework when her son Napier enrolled in Geometry. This in turn paved the way for her daughter Arundel Emily Paul Frampton (1873-1959) to enrol later in Wood Carving. Family enrolments suggest a safe learning environment at the School making it less daunting for married women who had previously not engaged with an educational facility. These enrolment statistics also infer an approachable environment, one that induced single women to enrol and then kept them repeatedly enrolling. Of interest to this study are the women who began with an enrolment in Decorative

[46]Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 14.
[47] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 16.

Needlework and then took up the opportunity of full-time arts education. In the same Winter 1890 session, Miss Maria Ethel Hughes (1868-1951) ended up paying for All Day enrolment, an option where students could attend the School of Design classes each day for an entire session at the cost of £3. This is significant because an All Day enrolment meant a student was fully investing in a full-time higher education at the Adelaide School of Design.

As the Society's rules make clear, design underpinned their work but the element of original design also drove the opportunities for women to engage in the broader syllabus at the School. Regardless of their enrolment being full-time or for a single course, the element of design was in fact the central focus of the women's education. This was because Gill believed that all students at the Adelaide School of Design should continuously execute original work no matter which course they chose to study. For example, six times a year, for a prize of £1 and 10 shillings, students were invited to submit their sketches for design on prescribed topics. The design subjects included a variety of items such as 'a yard of silk … corner of a lace handkerchief … a gas bracket, either in wrought or cast iron, which material is to be stated in the design [and] a geometric colored design for a fire hearth.'[48] Gill placed these design skills above all else, even learning the basic elements of primary and secondary colours and he wrote that 'the teaching of design is paramount, the teaching of color is necessary.'[49] The instruction of design was therefore front and central within the arts education he implemented and as the sketching prize indicates, design was a transferable skill that could be applied to a range of different mediums and products. This meant that a student who enrolled in Art Needlework as an entry point of study at the School of Design was then able to apply foundational design skills across the broader syllabus. Conversely, those

[48] "Sketching Club Subject," Syllabus pamphlet, Autumn Session 1889 in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
*color spelt without a 'u' in the source.
[49] H.P Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 18 May 1892, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 203,4.

studying other subjects at the School were able to engage with Art Needlework and the Art Needlework Society because they were using the transferable design skills they were learning in the School's theoretical curriculum.

The rigorous nature of the curriculum into which women began to enrol is evident from an examination of the syllabus in the same year the Art Needlework Society began its operations. In 1889, four Artizan classes consisted of the following: Lecture classes in Plane Geometry, Solid Geometry, Perspective, Theoretical Perspective, and Perspective Projection of Shadows. Evening classes in Model Drawing, Geometry Plane and Solid, Perspective, Drawing from Ornament in Outline, and in Light and Shade from Models and Casts and for Designing.[50] These classes did not include painting in either oil or watercolour, life drawing, machine or building construction, nor architectural modelling or pottery because those classes were offered separately at different times. The four Artizan classes were specifically catering for a scaffolded design education and in the Autumn session of 1889, the day classes were entirely made up of women. For example, twenty-three women took the morning class and a different eleven enrolled in the afternoon class. Added to this, 50% of the enrolments of the evening classes in Perspective and Geometry were women.[51] Although women also enrolled in painting classes, the majority in the Artizan classes clearly shows that women were seeking more than just an education in painting or watercolour sketching. They were engaging in an education built on original design that could potentially afford them more opportunities over and above painting lessons. Gill went so far as to state that 'the idle unimaginative dilletante should obtain their instruction elsewhere.'[52]

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[50] Syllabus pamphlet, Autumn Session 1889 in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909,* GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.
* Artizan was spelt with a Z by H.P. Gill and is therefore recorded as such in this thesis.
[51] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*.
[52] H.P Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 31 (illegible) 1888, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia.

A second new class called Design as Applied To Art Needlework also introduced other students to the syllabus options at the School in 1892. It was intended as an adjunct subject to enrich the Decorative Needlework course which had been renamed the Art Needlework. Existing students (Mary) Frances Birks (1867-1917) and Annie Gill's sister, Helen Lucy Wright (1873-1949), enrolled however most of the first students in the Design as Applied to Art Needlework class had not enrolled at the School. The class promised to give them a better understanding of the design process, presumably to enhance their existing needlework skills. Just like the Art Needlework class, it proved to be a springboard to the other courses in the wider syllabus.

A case in point is the enrolment of Henry Ayers's granddaughters, Edith Amelia Lungley (1876-1939), Margaret Beatrice Lungley (1881-1962) and Katherine Lungley (1877-?) who all took the Design as Applied To Art Needlework course. As juniors, Edith and Katherine first enrolled in the junior Elementary class on Thursdays in preparation for their South Kensington examinations. At the time, they were 14 and 13 years old respectively.[53] The following year, Beatrice also enrolled in the Elementary classes. The sisters' combined enrolment in Design as Applied to Art Needlework can be understood in the following way: they were not in the class to learn Art Needlework, rather, they were choosing to gain skills in original design for Art Needlework. In other words, they were enrolling in a subject to give rigour to an applied arts practice, one in which they most likely had existing skills from home or early schooling. Their enrolment in the Design as Applied To Art Needlework class as young adults served as a transitional subject for them to enrol in other courses across the broader curriculum. It also paved the way for other members of the family because their sister Dorothy Lungley (1885-1962) would also enrol in 1900 and their mother, Margaret Elizabeth

[53] They attended Miss Thompson's School in Childers St, North Adelaide where Rosa Fiveash taught art so it was probably on her recommendation that they enrolled at the School of Design given her own involvement with the institution. Rosa Fiveash lived in Gable House, Ward St, North Adelaide.

Lungley (née Ayers 1849-1887) enrolled in Art Needlework herself in the same year. The Lungleys enrolment at the Adelaide School of Design spanned a total of fifteen years.[54] At times, the sisters were studying in multiple classes each week. In fact, by 1894, Dorothy was enrolled as All Day which meant that she was at the Adelaide School of Design as a full-time student.

Delving deeper, a spotlight on just Edith Lungley's enrolment shows the foundational arts education that led to a successful career as an artist abroad. The specific details of her enrolment are captured in the rolls of the Adelaide School of Design.[55] As a teenager, Edith first took classes in subjects to support her South Kensington Certificates: First and Second Grade Geometry, Freehand, Model and Perspective, Flat Tinting, Colouring, Elementary Design. As a young woman, she took a number of courses in Design as Applied To Art Needlework, and consecutive classes in general Design. Edith left Australia at the age of twenty-four to pursue a career as a stained glass and metal worker within the Arts & Crafts scene in England. She exhibited at the Royal Academy and the Arts and Crafts Society, London. Her stain glass window *Knowledge* was installed in the Mitchell Building of the University of Adelaide to commemorate Professor Thornburn Brailsford Robertson (1884-1930).[56] The secretary of the British Institute of Industrial art gave her *Roundel* to the Victoria and Albert Museum.[57] Edith became a member of both the Society of Women Artists and the International Women Artists, and the third female member of the British Society of Master Glass Painters.[58]

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[54] During this period, the Lungleys were also members of the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild.
[55] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheets 16-25.
[56] Edith Amelia Lungley, *Knowledge*, 1931, glass, 2.9 x 0.75m, University of Adelaide.
[57] Edith Amelia Lungley, *Roundel*, 1925, glass, 70.2 x 73.2cm, Victoria and Albert Museum.
[58] *The Advertiser*, 29 November 1939, 23. Both *Knowledge* and *Roundel* show her personal style, a further examination of which is beyond the scope of this thesis - suffice to note that it was akin to the ecclesiastical embroidery that led to the secular Art Needlework scene in South Australia.

Edith was not the only sister to pursue a career in the arts. Her sibling Beatrice involved herself in wood carving at the School of Design before moving to England. Dorothy became a printmaker and her work is represented in the National Gallery of Australia and the Art Gallery of South Australia. Three of the Lungley sisters used the arts education available to them at the Adelaide School of Design as a platform for independent Arts and Crafts careers. The subject they repeatedly took was Design, beginning with Design as Applied To Art Needlework.

Clearly, the two subjects instigated to feed the work of the Art Needlework Society opened up opportunities for women to study other subjects at the Adelaide School of Design. Both Decorative Needlework and Design as Applied To Art Needlework could be approached by women from different angles. Even women with a basic level of education could leverage their own domestic needlework skills to confidently enrol in Decorative Needlework. Alternatively, existing students at the School could pursue the Art Needlework content as an applied art utilising transferable design skills learnt in other subjects. Those who enrolled in Design As Applied To Art Needlework could also engage using their domestic needlework experience or School-based design skills. The fundamental outcome important to this thesis was that Art Needlework brought the student into the realm of the School and once there they could engage in other opportunities, one of which was the ability to earn a commission through their membership in the Art Needlework Society.

Earn and Learn: The School of Design Art Needlework Society Atelier

Women's pathways into higher education at the School of Design were significantly increased when the School took over the Society's operations completely in June of 1892 and the Committee of the School of Design Art Needlework Society amicably resigned. Gill

wrote that as a result of the work done by the Committee of the Art Needlework Society during the past three years, Art Needlework had 'become a recognised part of the School curriculum.'[59] This brings forth two points. First, the acknowledgement that Art Needlework was embedded in the School's curriculum was not an overstatement; in a symbiotic relationship, the course was the nursery of the work of the Society and the Society nourished the School enrolments and syllabus. Although the Society transitioned to the complete governance of the School without a committee, it kept the same name and operated as an authentic atelier in the manner of the South Kensington School of Art Needlework. This is exactly what Gill had planned. He had even written this when he first introduced the concept of an Art Needlework Society to the Fine Arts Committee back in 1889: 'I hope that soon this School may be looked upon as having produced a School of Needlework on the lines of the S.K. School of Needlework.'[60]

Second, it was very much in the interest of the School to take over the operations of the Society. At this time, there were more students in the Art Needlework class than the Building or Machine Construction classes. The Art Needlework students were also sharing lessons with junior students and a fresh batch of pupils were constantly coming through the ranks.[61] The Society continued to function as a business within the School with orders for commissions but with no Committee. The Society had the same prioritisation of design that was pervasive throughout the School so when the Committee stepped down, it operated under the same name, but on a larger scale offering more opportunity for women to earn from its business.

[59] Board to Fine Arts Committee, 10 June 92, *Cruickshank Papers*, Sheet 7, B8, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 10.
[60] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 10 July 1889, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 44.
[61] Junior students shared classes with adults. For example, Gracie Mary Way (1876-1961).

The added benefit at the Adelaide School of Design, over and above a higher education at alternative institutions, was the ability to 'earn and learn' through the Art Needlework Society. The market for original design made this possible. Gill's prioritisation of design in all aspects of the curriculum equipped students of the School with the necessary design skills to earn from the Art Needlework Society.

The vast majority of the Society's business under the School's governance was for modest designs and/or objects made for the home. It tapped into a market seeking affordable and fashionable objects not replicated in the homes of one's social circle. For the workers taking commissions, larger objects took a great deal of time to produce whereas smaller items provided a steady stream of income from the general public seeking bespoke objects specially designed. For instance, a decorative cushion, purse, tablecloth or photo frame could be designed, transferred and executed more easily than a large object. Portières or larger scale embroidered curtains could be fully worked across the surface, or for a similar style with less effort, they could alternatively be designed with large areas of unworked space to achieve an overall effect. Less time spent on one article meant more objects could be produced for payment.

The focus on original design in the other applied arts produced through the Art Needlework Society created even more opportunities for women to learn and earn. The continued inclusion of the term Art Needlework in the name of the Society is confusing because they also produced wooden carved objects and repoussé, although it does recognise the Art Needlework as the first of the applied arts. A more accurate title would have included the word 'design' because the Society only produced works of original design. To support this, the School continued to offer a range of dedicated design for anyone who wanted to elevate

their design skills over and above the level of design instructed throughout the syllabus. The Design as Applied To Art Needlework class was followed by other dedicated design classes varied in names such as Designing Ornament from Nature in the Spring term of 1893.[62] The following year it was called Design and Tempura but held at the same time as the previous incarnations of the class.[63] Sometimes the focus of this adjunct class was switched so that students of design and applied arts were encouraged to hone a particular skill. An example of this was the Autumn 1896 class entitled Six Geometry Lectures for Designers, Wood Carvers, China Painters Etc.[64] Therefore, although the Society was initially only the students who could design for Art Needlework, all students enrolled in an applied art found themselves learning through the lens of original design and could therefore learn to earn.

The expanding Arts & Crafts applied arts syllabus that supported the work of the Society meant that students could also approach Art Needlework from a purely design entry point. This is different to what has already been shown of students such as Edith Lungley engaging with the School through the class for Design as Applied To Art Needlework before broadening their experience to other applied arts.

As a case in point, it is useful to analyse the enrolment of Maude Prosser. She began to earn significant amounts through the Society because of her background in design followed by a specialised applied art training rather than the other way around – an applied arts speciality supported by extra design training. Maude first enrolled in a Design class in the Autumn session of 1892. She was allowed to pay for half the session and only attended the second

[62] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 26.
[63] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 27.
[64] This was an advanced class because students were requested to have already taken prior courses in Solid Geometry. See Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 33.

half of each lesson.[65] It was a soft start. There were thirteen other women in the class and most of these were also enrolled with her in a Monday and Thursday morning class as well. Maude quickly began enrolling with serious ambition. During the next term, the Winter session, she enrolled in the same morning classes and by this time, the class had grown to twenty-seven. She also took the Design course. This pattern of enrolment was replicated in the Autumn session of the following year.[66] By the Winter session of 1893, Maude took a special class to prepare for South Kensington examinations as well as two morning terms, each three hours in duration. She also enrolled in two evening classes from 7pm to 9pm. Clearly, she was highly motivated, and her studies were taking up a significant proportion of her week.[67] In the final session of the year, Spring, she continued the two daytime terms and enrolled in the Designing Ornament from Nature class.[68] Design was unambiguously her preference because in 1894 she was taking Elementary Shading, the Antique drawing class as well as the Designing Ornament from Nature class. In 1895, newly enfranchised, she attended four evening classes in Architecture, Antique Drawing and Solid and Plane Geometry, evening Life classes. In the final session, she added two morning classes of Shading and continued the daytime class for Design.[69] Finally, in 1896 Maude cut to the chase and enrolled as 'All Day' for £3 per session which meant she was a full-time student immersed in higher education.[70] She continued as a full-time student for a further two years, although at times she could only afford to do the second half of the term.[71] The following year, having gained the necessary foundational and specialist design skills, she enrolled in the second half of Miss Meek's Art Needlework Tuesday afternoon class.[72] Maude Prosser consistently

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[65] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 21.
[66] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 24.
[67] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 25.
[68] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 26.
[69] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheets 30-32.
[70] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 33.
[71] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheets 35-40
[72] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 41.

enrolled as an All Day student, occasionally supplementing it with additional subjects such as Advanced Painting. She ceased enrolling in 1904 when her sister Rebe Ireen Prosser (1888-1991) entered full-time study at the School, by which time Maude had taken over teaching the Art Needlework classes and the superintendence of the Art Needlework Society, a position she held from 1901 to 1907.[73]

The anomalies in Maude Prosser's fee payment allude to the fact that she could not always afford to learn. In an interview later in her life, she explained that she was a 'public school girl' who left at fourteen to keep house.[74] When she enrolled at the School, she could only take a few lessons a week but H.P. Gill saw that she was 'anxious to get on' and 'procured work' for her so that she 'earned sufficient money at length' to be able to pay her own way. In her interview, Maude Prosser claimed that the work she did for H.P. Gill was the enlargement of drawings. However, this would not have provided her with enough money to support her full-time study, nor her living costs. Maude income was mostly derived from designing and executing for the Art Needlework Society. She earned the highest amount of all the students because of the popularity of her designs and her level of industry. Between 1903 and 1907, she supplemented her income with earnings over £155 with just designs and transfers alone.[75]

A range of other students also benefitted from the earn and learn scheme. Between the same date range, Gwendoline L'Avance Adamson (later Barringer 1883-1960) supported her studies with transfers and designs earning over 58 pounds. Lena Anna Unbehaun (1881-

[73] 'Superintendent of Art Needlework, Miss M. F. Prosser – appointed 1/2/01. To receive fees from Art Needlework students less 10%. Resigned 14 December 1907,' in Finance, *Cash Book of the School of Design Painting and Technical Art*, GRG/329, State Records of South Australia, 143,144.
[74] "An Artist in her Studio: Artcraft and Utility: Miss Maude Prosser's success," *Mail*, 15 July 1922, 18.
[75] Analysis of payments for designs and transfers – general designs – from January 1903 to December 1907 Document requested for the Gill Enquiry and prepared by Lucy May Harwood, in *Cruickshank Papers*, *Volume 1*, 552: 287, 3-4. *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia.

1964) earned nearly £24. It wasn't just women earning to learn through the Art Needlework Society, it was men too. Lawrence Hotham Howie (1876-1963) would go on to take over the directorship of the School from H.P. Gill and the Society afforded him an extra income of £38 during this period to supplement his teaching wage. Other males earned too such as Charles John Pavia (1880-?), Robert Craig (1871-1933) and Charles Jose (1888-1955). Gill also benefited with an extra £101 for his own designs which were commissioned by clients approaching the Society and engaging in a business transaction. The table in Figure 16 shows the extent of the Art Needlework earning from transfers and design in the period between 1903 to 1909. These statistics are from a document prepared by Lucy Harwood. It does not include payment for designs which would have substantially increased the figures, nor does it include the amount paid for executing commissions so it cannot be interpreted as the sum total of earnings for members of the Art Needlework Society but it is still a useful source of information. For example, although Maude Prosser was paid £21, 11 shillings and 2 pence by the Board in 1906 for teaching students in Art Needlework, she was able to supplement this income with a further £69.10.6 of payment for her designs, transfers and the execution of needlework commissions.[76] Therefore, as a designer and worker, she was earning more than she could teaching. Alas, the full record is not extant but taking the missing fees for execution into account, the existing evidence does give a good indication of these particular 68 students that benefitted from the Society 'earn and learn' system.

Although only scant financial records of the Art Needlework Society exist, there are other indications of the amount paid for execution of work, not just design or transfer. The table in Figure 17 does not attribute amounts to individual students but it does offer an insight into the amount of money workers from the Art Needlework Society could earn from not just designing or transferring but executing. Looking at the totals of each aspect of the process,

[76] H.P. Gill to Sub-Committee, 5 June 1907, *Cruickshank Papers*, *Volume 1*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, B41, 34.

transferring paid the least and workers executing the applied arts product could on average earn double the amount of the designers.

Figure 16.

Analysis of payments for designs and transfers – general designs – from January 1903 to December 1907 Document requested for the Gill Enquiry and prepared by Lucy May Harwood.					
Name	**Entries**	**£.s.p**	**Name**	**Entries**	**£.s.p**
Maude F. Prosser	400	155.18.4	Muriel Key	2	0.7.6
H.P. Gill	212	101.11.9	B.G. Bayly	2	0.4.0
Gwen Adamson	263	58.4.9	? Bagot	2	0.6.0
Rebe Prosser	211	26.2.6	M. Verco	1	0.5.0
Lawrence Hotham Howie	129	238.16.0	A. Oldham	1	0.3.0
M. Brownette	65	5.10.9	R. Bullock	1	0.3.0
Lena Unbehaun	58	23.16.2	W. Weston	1	0.2.6
Beulah Leicester	19	2.15.6	R. Smith	1	0.2.6
Henrietta Porter	20	4.3.6	L. Carruthers	1	0.1.3
B. Bevin	13	2.15.9	M? Murphy	1	0.3.0
Eva Lawrence	15	3.2.9	E.E. Oliphant	1	0.3.3
M. Pile	14	2.8.3	? Coghlan	1	0.3.0
Charles Jose	13	2.5.0	G. Mills	1	0.1.3
E. Gurner	11	1.12.6	D. Fairweather	1	0.2.0
J.P. Tonkin	11	1.19.5	? Moncrieff	1	0.2.6
M. Powell	9	1.13.0	C. Jennings	1	0.5.6
C.E. Smith	8	1.4.3	H. Saunders	1	0.2.0
M. Church	8	1.6.0	E. Austin	1	0.6.6
Helen Dowie	7	11.3.0	E. Warren	1	0.2.0
M. Daw	8	0.19.9	Hilda Fray	1	0.3.0
Charles J. Pavia	6	1.4.6	Oswald Pryor	1	0.2.6
Robert Craig	5	0.17.3	? Eglington	1	0.3.0
M Hodgson	5	1.5.6	R. Sutherland	1	0.2.0
Lily Hope Goode	5	0.16.9	C. H. Hyde	1	0.9.0
Muriel Jefferis	4	0.6.3	Annie Hornabrook	1	0.10.0
Ethel Jude	4	0.11.9	Lucy May Harwood	1	0.3.6.
J. R. Morris	4	0.15.3	Erold Waring Gill	1	0.0.6
Hilda Schlank	3	0.8.0	Annie Waring Gill	1	0.2.6
Garfield Daly	3	0.11.0	L. Lucas	1	0.4.3
M. Sprod	3	0.5.0	K. Lucas	1	0.2.3
D. Liston	3	0.6.0	E. S. William	1	0.4.3
G. Gurr	3	0.5.6	C. Fisher	1	0.2.6
Missing	3	0.10.0	M. Hart	1	?
Missing	20	2.14.4			

Cruickshank Papers, *Volume 1*, 552: 287, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 3-4.

Figure 17.

Details of receipts and expenditure connected with the Art Needlework and other technical work produced in the School of Design, which have not been paid by the Board.						
Year	**Designers**	**Transferers**	**Workers (present students)**	**Total amount paid for production**	**Total Receipts**	**Number of designs produced that sold**
1897-1898	?	?	?		£410	?
1898-1899	?	?	?		£351	154
1899-1900	?	?	?		£423	250
1900-1901	?	?	?		£427	200
1901-1902	?	?	?		£700	230
1902-1903	£96/2/6	£7/7/6	£83/18/3	£187/8/3	£716	300
1903-1904	£64/3/1	£9/3	£82/5/3	£155/11/4	£678	300
1904-1905	£50/6/2	£6/19/6	£118/18/0	£176/3/8	£640	200
1905-1906	£75/19/10	£17/15/5	£180/7/0	£273/12/3	£836	339
1906-1907	£105/9/2	£11/2/9	£221/17/0	£338/8/11	£1,034	268
TOTALS	£392/0/9	£51/18/2	£687/5/6	£1131/4/5		

Table compiled from *Cruickshank Papers*, *Volume 1*, 552: 287, *Gill Enquiry*, State Records of South Australia, 3-4, and H.P. Gill, Witness Statement, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence Book 3, *Gill Enquiry*, State Records of South Australia, 493.[77]

The extant financial records prove that under H.P. Gill's leadership, students were empowered to push their skills into the market for financial rewards. When he first presented the idea of an Art Needlework Society to the Fine Arts Committee, he wrote that it was his hope that the School would one day be remembered as having established a school of Art Needlework 'along the lines of the South Kensington School of Needlework,' but also that it would be 'practically self-supporting.'[78] This turned out to be the case. He referred to the designers, transferers and workers as Industrial Workers and they were denoted as such in the Art Needlework Society financial statements listing assets, liabilities and wages.[79] Although the Art Needlework Society provided the bulk of work, throughout his tenure Gill also

[77] *Cruickshank Papers*, *Volume 1*, *Gill Enquiry*, State Records of South Australia, 552: 287, 3-4, and H.P. Gill, Witness Statement, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence Book 3, *Gill Enquiry*, State Records of South Australia, 493. These figures are given by H.P. Gill in his witness statements however, it is likely that the number of total receipts and number of designs may not correlate with the figures he gave on the payment for designers, transferers and workers. It has not proved possible to resolve this issue. They are offered here as a presentation of finances and a representation of the scale of operation.

[78] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 10 July 1889, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, 44.

[79] For example, H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 2 March 1891, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, 114.

supported payment for students outside of that system and this too contributed to their ability to earn and learn. For example, he recommended Rita Crawford be paid in £2 10 shillings for drawing original designs for the South Kensington Science and Art examination certificates.[80] In another instance, in 1905, Millicent (Millie) Hambidge (1872-1938) replied to H.P. Gill's offer of executing a commission of a portrait for a person outside of the School. She laid out her pricing schedule for a head and three-quarter figure or £50 for a full-length portrait. Gill then sent her letter to the Secretary of the Public Library recommending her as 'quite capable of doing the work satisfactorily.'[81] These cases illustrate how H.P. Gill facilitated commercial outcomes for his student's developing skills, skills that provided them with the necessary experience to execute small and large-scale commissions, hence the phrase 'earn and learn.'

Conclusion

The exploration of Art Needlework at the Adelaide School of Design has brought into focus the rigorous design curriculum that women transitioned towards, a far cry from the traditional acquisition of Victorian accomplishments. What began as preparation for South Kensington examinations developed into design education for a range of practical applications. This occurred because Art Needlework was acknowledged as an applied art through the efforts of the Art Needlework Society. The work of that organisation also opened up positions of paid employment for women to teach not just Art Needlework but other subjects within the Arts & Crafts suite of technical arts to support the broadening of the School's syllabus and reflect the growing fashion for Arts & Crafts design and products in the market.

[80] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 9 August 1887, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909,* GRG19/248, 3.
[81] Letter from Milly Hambidge, Jeffcott St, 22 June 1905, and letter from Harry P. Gill, Director of Technical Art to Secretary of Public Library, 23 June 1905 in Principal Librarian and Secretary Letters, *Volume 1*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia.

Both the Design as Applied To Art Needlework and the Art Needlework courses served as a springboard to other applied arts within the Arts & Crafts Movement. The cross-referencing of enrolments of individuals who began in these classes has shown that needleworkers were enticed through to other aspects of the design-based syllabus, and those already studying the Artizan design class were able to engage with Art Needlework because of their transferable design skills. The constant was the element of design in the School of Design curriculum which primed women to interact with a range of applied arts. In this way, the scene was set for the formalisation of an Arts & Crafts syllabus to blossom at the School which opened up another range of opportunities for women.

Chapter Five

How women's potential for independent agency was fostered at the School of Design

The Adelaide School of Design was the beating heart of the Arts & Crafts Movement in South Australia. There was a desire for hand-made Arts & Crafts ornamentation on domestic objects amongst a public increasingly familiar with design vernacular. This chapter shows how the appeal of the Arts & Crafts movement contributed to a critical mass of enrolments at the School of Design which legitimised the School as an avenue of higher education. Consequently, the School at this time held more opportunities for females than the university pathway. Once enrolled in the School, the Arts & Crafts syllabus also fostered women's potential for independent agency by way of its three main concerns: prioritisation of original design, a methodology of practical application, and an intention for profitable outcomes. As well as this, the School's Art Needlework Society provided the commercial exemplar for those wanting to establish their own Arts & Crafts enterprises. Furthermore, the syllabus supported the ongoing professional development for women already earning an independent living by Arts & Crafts industries. These combined factors created a learning environment where women were thinking for themselves rather than replicating the work of others.

The True Extent of Women's Engagement with the Arts & Crafts Syllabus

> It is the cynical bachelor who thinks that most marriageable young women have graduated from the school of design.[1]

This line appeared in a South Australian newspaper in 1893. It suggests that single men looking for a wife were confronted with an increasing number of women educated at the

[1] *Mount Barker Courier and Onkaparinga and Gumeracha Advertiser*, 11 August 1893, 4.

School of Design. The wording of the line reveals that it was common knowledge amongst newspaper readers that women 'graduated' from the School of Design. Clearly, such an education was recognisable to the general public which meant enrolments had reached a critical mass.

In contrast to a university pathway, the extent of women's opportunities in Arts & Crafts training at the Adelaide School of Design is statistically revealed in the four volumes of *Art Masters Sessional Returns of Students and Fees, School of Design Cash Books 1885-1909*.[2] These have been recreated as the *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909* to itemise individual classes and cohorts for every year. The rolls show the popularity of the Arts & Crafts syllabus in specific detail. Distinct class rolls offer comparative statistics for gender and age analysis and make it possible for more nuanced examinations of individual enrolments and re-enrolments.

It is necessary to begin with a general overview of the syllabus. Each year, there were three terms referred to as 'sessions' - Autumn, Winter and Spring. Individual courses were mostly a series of lectures, practical tutorials or a class of instruction. These were held once a week in the mornings, afternoons, and in the evenings from 7pm to 9pm every day except Sunday. Evening classes and Junior courses were offered at a reduced rate. Popular subjects or those with scaffolded skill levels were held at different times over the weekly timetable.

An analysis of the rolls makes it possible to observe the gendered nature of the cohorts and patterns of enrolment. The majority of students in the morning and afternoon Design courses were female but evening classes were mixed genders and it can be seen that sometimes

[2] Jodie Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, Art Gallery of South Australia Research Library, from *Art Masters Sessional Returns of Students and Fees, School of Design Cash Book: 1885-1909*, GRG19:95, State Records of South Australia.

women such as Jean L. Wilson enrolled in both daytime and evening courses in the same term.[3] Married women and men were with singles, juniors and apprentices so class cohorts were not defined to certain age groups or marital status. As has been noted earlier in Chapter Three, families often attended together. For example, in the Winter session of 1888, the three Kay sisters enrolled in the same two afternoon classes and the three Crawford sisters took the same two morning sessions. However, the rolls also show that as their interests varied, the enrolment of individual family members spread across different courses offered in the syllabus, courses held at separate times to those of their siblings.[4] Men were enrolled in the School as juniors, apprentices and adults and evening classes were made up of both genders. There were initially two courses entirely consisting of male students: Machine Construction and Building and Construction. These subjects were dropped by the end of the Winter session of 1891 but in general, between 1885 and 1909 evening classes were co-educational and the majority of day classes were made up of females.

To fully realise the extent of women's opportunities for higher education at the School, the rolls afford a comparative look at the School of Design and the more recognised tertiary pathway at the University of Adelaide. The following analysis is based on a comparison of data taken from the University of Adelaide Calendars and the recreated rolls from the School's financial books for three significant years within the date range of this study, beginning with the year the Society began and ending with the year South Australian women gained enfranchisement. This data is enriched with comparative statistics of examination results and female employment at both institutions to give a comprehensive picture of the findings.

[3] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 11.
[4] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 10.

In 1889, the year the School of Design Art Needlework Society was established, in just one single term the School had 204 individual student enrolments of which 102 were female – exactly half. Of the female enrolments, 55 were enrolled in more than one course.[5] In comparison, the University of Adelaide enrolled 118 undergraduates for the entire year of 1889.[6] Of these students, 41 were female and of those 41, only 10 were studying a course other than Music. Whereas the evening classes at the University did not accumulate towards an accreditation, women could enrol in an evening class at the School and be examined. Added to this, there were prospects for female employment at the School. Whereas the University of Adelaide Calendar for 1889 gives no indication of any female staff, the School of Design employed two women, Elizabeth Meek teaching Decorative Needlework and Lucy Harwood in administration. Undeniably, the entry requirements for the University differed from the School however my examination is focused on women's engagement with higher education institutions, not academic prowess. Thus in 1889, there were more options for women at the School than at the University, and the School had substantially more female enrolments.

In 1892, the year the School took over governance of the Art Needlework Society, the School was employing five women but still the University of Adelaide Calendar indicated no female employees. Again, just examining only one of the three terms of classes for the year, the School of Design had 222 individual enrolments of which 132 were female. The predominance of females over males was higher than this suggests when it is taken into consideration that 32 of the 90 males were juniors in the Saturday morning class. Of the 132 females, 47 were enrolled in more than one course. Seven of these were full-time students studying each day of the week and sometimes evening and/or Saturday classes as well,

[5] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 14.
[6] Calendar of the University of Adelaide, 1890. Statistics appear in the Calendar the following year.

depending on their focus. For example, Mary Anstie Overbury (1851-1926) took day, evening and out of hours sessions. The overall enrolments at the University of Adelaide appear to be very low as recorded in the Calendar for that year which shows only 29 new undergraduates, nine of whom were women, and again, the majority were studying music.[7]

Before observing the third year chosen for scrutiny, it is useful to note the opportunities for examinations at the two institutions in 1892 because a similar contrast is reflected. In 1892, the University listed 107 results for Ordinary examinations in First, Second and Third year undergraduate degree courses but only nine were women. On the other-hand, women at the Adelaide School of Design were much more likely to pass examinations. In the same year, the colony put forward 147 examination papers and canvases for South Kensington accreditation.[8] Of that total, the School successfully presented 116 and 54 of those were from women which is a far more substantial number than the nine University candidates. Notably, entries from other schools in the colony made up the total of 147. (Interestingly, teachers of these schools were also current students of the School of Design such as Mary Overbury who simultaneously taught at Unley Park School.) It should be added that South Kensington examinations were not just taken by the young. In fact, entries were from a wide gamut of ages. Both Elizabeth Armstrong and Lucy Harwood, already employed by the School and earning independent incomes, were listed in the South Kensington examination results of 1892, a detail which suggests an environment of professional development and continuous improvement. In fact, unlike the Ordinary examinations at the University, examination candidates at the School did not stop at the end of the third year. When the nine women took undergraduate Ordinary examinations at the University of Adelaide, the School facilitated eleven examinations for the South Kensington Art Teachers Certificate, nine of whom were

[7] Calendar of the University of Adelaide, 1893.
[8] "South Kensington Science and Art Examinations," *South Australian Register*, 6 March 1893, 3.

from women.[9] Moreover, these women could continue on this path towards the coveted Art Masters Certificate which was H.P. Gill's qualification. As Gill himself stated, he wished to offer advanced students an opportunity for certification higher than those taken by ordinary students.[10] In contrast to the limited opportunities at the University of Adelaide, women at this time were choosing to pursue accreditation through South Kensington examinations and were statistically more likely to engage in the School of Design as an alternative pathway to qualification than the University.

The final year chosen for comparative analysis is 1894, the year South Australian women were granted enfranchisement and a year after the line 'marriageable women [who] graduated from the school of design,' appeared in the newspapers.[11] By this year, the flexible learning timetable at the School was an advantage for women otherwise occupied during the day. It meant they had the option of evening classes to prepare for examinations. Added to this, the rolls show that the School was making it possible for students to enrol in half sessions if their funds were low and they wanted some continuity. Of course, those with the requisite level of skill could learn and earn through the Society. In short, 18 Art Class Teachers examinations were taken by students at the School and 14 successful entries at this elevated and internationally recognisable level were from women. In stark contrast, only one woman graduated from the University of Adelaide in 1894.[12] Therefore, by the time South Australian women were franchised, the Adelaide School of Design had well and truly established itself as a pathway for higher education.

[9] "South Kensington Art Examinations," *Express and Telegraph*, 3 October 1892, 2.
[10] "School of Design," *Bunyip*, 27 November 1891, 2.
[11] *Mount Barker Courier and Onkaparinga and Gumeracha Advertiser*, 11 August 1893, 4.
[12] Marion Chapple B.A. (1874-1930), University of Adelaide Calendar, 1895, 43.

To summarise, the School provided women with significantly more opportunities for learning during the time of transition of Art Needlework towards the wider Arts & Crafts syllabus than has been previously recognised. It has to be acknowledged that the Teacher Training College was also an avenue for women's individual agency at this time but the School offered a more open-ended education to that of the pupil teacher whose only destination was teaching. Students from the School could choose to teach or embark on their own Arts & Crafts practice, or do both. Statistically, the School was a popular option in South Australia for those women seeking an accredited higher form of education, one which began by participation in Arts & Crafts courses and South Kensington examinations. Nevertheless, participation alone does not foster independent agency. This chapter also finds that women's potential for agency was developed by their engagement in the Arts and Crafts syllabus; one that began with the ornamentation of Art Needlework objects and grew to encompass a wide range of technical arts.

The Arts & Crafts Syllabus Fostering Agency

Although Gill stated that 'ever since the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition in 1889 the Board encouraged the practice of arts and crafts,' it was in fact his own strategies and the success of the Society that came to nourish the Arts & Crafts technical skills within the syllabus.[13] Before Gill's directorship, women could only enrol in painting. As previous chapters have shown, Art Needlework was established as the first profitable technical skill and within a few years the Arts & Crafts syllabus presented more opportunities for women across a suite of applied arts. Enrolling in any day or evening course of applied art allowed students to deploy the transferable design skills to other subjects. They could consequently work with a variety of mediums from Art Needlework silks, metal, plaster, ceramics and wood. The broadening

[13] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Volume 2*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 720.

of the syllabus was echoed in the School's somewhat confusing name changes throughout this period but the nomenclature makes sense once the syllabus's development from Art Needlework to the wider Arts & Crafts syllabus is taken into account.[14] For the first decade of Gill's tenure, the institution was known as the School of Design but in 1893 the adjunct School of Painting came under the governance of Gill's School of Design and the School's name was changed to School of Design and Painting. Very quickly, it was re-named the School of Design, Painting and Technical Art in another more accurate adjustment that recognised 'the value … of the growing Arts & Crafts.'[15]

Throughout this time, the Arts & Crafts syllabus fostered women's potential for agency in three ways, the first of which was the intention for commercial outcomes for students. In other words, the objective of the student creating income from the production of Arts & Crafts designs and objects whilst still at the school. This goal was a direct development of the original commercial intentions of the early Committee-led Art Needlework Society. These commercial intentions were set out in their rules and discussed in the previous chapter. As well as producing Art Needlework for sale, the Society brought to the public's attention other applied arts taught at the School when the Committee invited students to include technical designs with their own display in their second exhibition held in December 1889. Just ten years later, the School offered a comprehensive list of fifteen different applied arts objects that could be designed and produced by students on commission, a record of which is reproduced in Figure 18. The commercial intent is signalled in the trade language describing each of the possible works. For example, descriptions such as 'Artistic Furniture: Executed in cheap woods' promoted a decorative upscaling of a less expensive medium. Some

[14] For example, see Weston, "The Professional Training of Artists in Australia, 1861-1963, with Special Reference to the South Australian Model, 2006.
[15] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Volume 2*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 712.

descriptions mentioned customised options calculated to capture more of the market. For instance, prospective clients could commission one particular furniture treatment or select 'a combination of one or more.' Patently, as Figure 18 shows, by 1899 the list of works that could be designed and produced on commission at the School of Design as a result of the Arts & Crafts syllabus is of more substantial scope that would be expected of an ordinary school assignment. Rather, the applied arts are described from the perspective of meeting the domestic market's desire for Arts & Crafts ornamentation.

Figure 18.

H.P. Gill's list of works that could be designed and produced on commission at the School of Design, 1899	
Furniture	Decorated by means of wood inlay, fretwork or Carving, a combination of one or more of these.
Artistic Furniture	Executed in cheap woods decorated with ornament carved out in various stains.
Furniture	Ornamented with Australian flora painted decoratively.
Gesso Work	As practised for the decoration of Furniture & smaller articles and designing therein of smaller works to be carried out in cast metals.
Metal Casting	Suitable for Doorplates, Candlesticks, Trays, Fire backs & Plaques for insertion in cabinet work.
Cut & Chiselled Metal	For hinges etc.
Silver Work	Cast & finished for pendants & ornaments.
Metal Work	Treated in Repoussé for objects of use & decoration.
Sheet Metal Work	Suitable for ordinary domestic purposes fused in a combination of 2 or more metals.
Pottery	Modelled, colored, glazed & burnt, suitable for insertion as plaques & panels in Buildings.
Pottery	Decorated in Sgraffito, painted, burnt & glazed.
Stencilling	As practised for the decoration of wall hangings & the printing of pattern on fabrics in dyes.
Leatherwork	Stamped, repousséd, carved & embossed & inlaid suitable for bookbinding, chair backs & seats etc.
Art Needlework	Showing the application of designs based upon local flora & other ornament to the decoration of textile & fabrics.
Sgraffito	Decoration for Architectural purposes & the imposition of ornament by the use of colored plaster & by modelling in lime.

H.P. Gill, 16 October 1899, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee, Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery of South Australia*, GRG19/248,
State Records of South Australia, 418b.

In pursuit of commercial outcomes, the School sought to link its Arts & Crafts syllabus with local industry, just as the arm of Art Needlework began as a collaboration with the existing ecclesiastical ateliers. Gill's objective was most evident in 1900 when he applied for a sum of

£250.00 to make-up examples of student designs for a display at the South Australian Chamber of Manufacturers Century Exhibition of that year. In particular, he wanted to focus on Wood Carving, Pottery Painting, Stencil Decoration, Gesso Decoration, Stained Glass Windows, Ornaments for reproduction in Iron, Brass, Pewter & Silver casting and Brass and Copper work. He proposed these to be made 'with the assistance of a manufacturer.'[16] This association between the products of the Arts & Crafts syllabus and outside industries enhanced the potential for agency for women enrolled at the School because it meant they were not making objects detached from commercial outcomes. Furthermore, the production of a widening list of Arts & Crafts products resulted in more opportunities for women to not only find agency from learning technical arts but also be paid for their work through its sale by the Society.

Working symbiotically with the intention for commercial outcomes, the second aspect of the Arts & Crafts that fostered women's agency at the School was the teaching methodology's focus on practical application over and above theory in isolation. The hands-on approach stemmed from H.P. Gill's awareness of Arts & Crafts tenets espoused by leading contemporaneous designers and manufacturers. The middle column of Figure 18 is a list of citations from Arts & Crafts designers put forward by Gill as influencing the methodology he implemented at the School.[17] In each citation, it is possible to recognise a common thread advocating theoretical knowledge through practical application. Gill referred firstly to the philosophy of William Morris to advocate that 'design should be carried out to completion,'

[16] H.P. Gill, 5 October 1899, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery of South Australia, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 418a.

[17] In 1908, H.P. Gill gave a lengthy account of his administration of the School of Design to an enquiry held by a special committee of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery Board. The account was part of a pre-prepared reply to a question concerning his advice on the proposed transferal of the School of Design, Painting and Technical Art's work to either the Education Department or School of Mines.

and then John Ruskin's views on design to explain the necessity of practical experience.[18] By mentioning the opinions of Vernon Lee, he reconnected 'craft' with 'art' and then elevated 'craft' above 'manufacture' by referencing Lewis F. Day. He pointed out the importance of artists working interactively amongst the Arts & Crafts skills within the higher education teaching institutions by quoting the views of Walter Crane and Sir James Linton. Gill's cherry-picked citations were all from designers known to manufacture, or designers working with other manufacturers to produce domestic products for commercial sale. In essence, the School's ambition for commercial outcomes through a methodology of practical application was the implementation of the Arts & Crafts principles. As Gill explained of William Morris's principles, if students could not 'carry out designs to their completion' they would 'only be educated in part' meaning that practical application was more empowering than theory in isolation. In time, women could leverage hands-on skills to design and make their own products or pursue an independent career of making or teaching others the aspects of design theory they had learnt by practical application at the School.

The hands-on methodology also encouraged a particular cohort of women who may not have otherwise entered higher education to take independent action. As the information in the right-hand column of Figure 19 demonstrates, the clinical distillation of Gill's interpretation of Arts & Crafts principles makes it clear that his practical application of design was in essence a push for local students to execute their original designs; products that were both beautiful and useful within the South Australian colonial home. Although Arts & Crafts objects from companies such as Morris & Co were imported into South Australia, this was an

[18] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Volume 2*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 717.

expensive option.[19] The School's methodology presented a way for women to produce fashionable Arts & Crafts objects for their own home at a fraction of the cost. For these women, enrolling personally in any of the Arts & Crafts courses was a result of a decision to take individual action.[20] In doing so, they acquired skills that could be transferred across the curriculum offerings. Therefore, this is another example of how the Arts & Crafts methodology fostered independent agency by equipping students with proactive skills.

Figure 19.

H.P. Gill on the importance of the practical application of Arts & Crafts designs at the Adelaide School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts.		
Arts & Crafts proponent cited by Gill	**Citation**	**Gill's interpretation of the citation**
Mr. Wm. Morris the well-known decorator, speaking at Burslem, in 1881.	"Time was when everybody that made anything made a work of Art besides a useful piece of goods, and it gave them pleasure to make it."	That which Morris spoke of as a practical designer is now wholly accepted by English and Continental schools of Art who recognise that the drawing of a design only affords an experience in part. To obtain the full experience it is essential that the design should be carried out to completion so that it can be seen, as it were in situ, and judged in connection with its accessories. If students cannot carry out designs to their completion they will only be educated in part, and I shall endeavour under new conditions to attain to the whole.
Vernon Lee In writing in the "Contemporary" 1880 on "Art and Usefulness"	"There is no necessity or essential difference between a work of Art and what we call Craft. It is pure accident, in all probability a temporary one, which has momentarily separated the two in the last 100 years."	The School of Design by its movement in the Arts and Crafts was filling a place which should not be left unfilled or the State would be the poorer. We shall push on towards attainment.
Vernon Lee	"All spontaneous art is the making and doing of useful things in such manner as shall be beautiful……Art is born of the utility of Life and Art is in itself one of Life's greatest utilities."	We were engaged in rounding off the corners of our students' lives in as much as we were filling out their art frame by inciting that growth which can only be attained by the creation of Art works.
Ruskin In "The Two Paths" page 111.	"The design depends entirely in your own sense and judgement." "A knowledge of the Principles of design are insufficient to produce good design."	It is essential that the judgement should be formed, built up, and strengthened by a sufficiency of practical experience without which the forms might expand in monstrosities or shrink into caricature. We were moulding our students, preparing and cultivating their judgement.

[19] For a list of seven families who imported Morris & Co objects, see Christopher Menz, *Morris & Co*, Adelaide: Art Gallery of South Australia, 2002.
[20] See for example Joanna Gosse, nee Barr Smith in Jodie Vandepeer, "South Australian Women Wood Carvers 1885-1923," Masters. diss., University of Adelaide, 2018.

Lewis F. Day The designer and writer, at page 40 of the Magazine of Art 1888.	"The substitution of what we call manufacture for old fashioned handicraft has been and promises further to be, absolutely detrimental to Art."	The School's practice of handicrafts was therefore of much artistic good.
Walter Crane At page 89 of the Art Journal, 1896.	"That the movement of the Arts and Crafts Society has made arts and crafts exhibitions numerous (he uses the word common), and has introduced handicraft classes, under expert teaching into the Municipal Schools of Art with a result of remarkable work."	The work which in England had been accomplished in its schools by the energy, work and example of a body of artists outside those schools, has, in South Australia, been initiated by the staff of your school, and the influence of the School's work has so spread, through the production of its students, assisted by your staff, to the houses of the people that while other cities may and do reflect the opulence of their citizens, it has been acknowledged that South Australian houses evince the exercise of a more discriminating, and finer judgement. I therefore propose to continue our Arts and Crafts Section of the School …

Witness H.P. Gill. Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Volume 2*, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG19/75, State Records of South Australia, 715-720.

The most significant aspect of the Arts & Crafts syllabus that fostered potential for women's agency was the prioritisation of original design – the same prioritisation that had ensured the success of the Art Needlework Society. The precedence of original design in the broader Arts & Crafts syllabus nurtured agency in two ways. First, the foregrounding of original design associated the female designers and makers with the prevailing fashions, and this contributed to their success. Put simply, in the same way as contemporary 'influencers' leverage their own agency by connecting themselves with leading fashion, female designers of bespoke Arts & Crafts products were associated with the foremost trend in South Australia. This notion of original design contributing to agency is elusive but evidence can be discerned in the vernacular of ornamentation surrounding exhibitions and the promotion of objects. This is because the objects produced through the Arts & Crafts syllabus at the School were commissioned or sold to a public with a growing familiarity for Arts & Crafts design language. Exhibition critiques in the press blithely used historical design references because the public of the time understood the vernacular. For example, objects in the Society's second

exhibition were labelled by type but also by design style. Catherine Crawford's bellows were noted as referencing a Pompeiian ornamentation which assumes the public understood that particular historical character. In the same exhibition, other designs were described as Bulgarian or Roman without any further explanation because the public were familiar with those terms.[21] Therefore, the type of design was every bit a selling point as the type of object. However, even though the Society began to label designs of historical reference in its promotions, the underlying prioritisation of original design was the basic ingredient to the Society's success. In other words, original design was key to what would be termed 'branding' in the contemporary vernacular. For example, the executed Art Needlework designs of 'cushions, chairbacks, table covers and opera bags' in the same second exhibition were all original. Other applied arts products and drawings were shown and these too were all original designs. Although Catherine Crawford's design for bellows were reminiscent of a Pompeiian pattern, importantly, anything produced and exhibited by the School was always an original design, not a copy.[22] In this way, we can see that the School's constant prioritisation of original design worked with the public's growing understanding of visual language. It meant that the public's perception of the School's applied arts products of original design was that they were even more in vogue than other retailed goods because they were one-off as well as bespoke. The School was therefore positioning its students at the top of a fashionable Arts & Crafts scene by teaching students how to design and produce original objects. Albeit superficial, it cannot be discounted that this was one way the School's prioritisation of original design fostered women's potential for agency.

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[21] "Port Adelaide School of Design," *The Advertiser*, 10 February 1898, 6. A domestic bellow is a device to project air onto a fire. At the School of Design, they were constructed of two pieces of wood, each with a handle and ornamented with carved motifs. The side were connected with leather and a small tube of brass was connected at the end so that when expanded, the air was expelled through the tube.

[22] "Art Needlework," *South Australian Register*, 12 December 1889, 7.

More profoundly, the prioritisation of original design underpinning the Arts & Crafts syllabus resulted in women thinking for themselves. After the second exhibition opened, one writer commented:

> Altogether the exhibition to which the public will be admitted free from today up to Saturday (inclusive) is well worth visiting, as it gives such a good idea of the development of the Art Needlework, painting, and designing here under the hands of a careful and skilled master who has the hardihood to strike out off the beaten track and teach his pupils to think a good deal for themselves.[23]

The author of this article pinpointed the critical effect the technical Arts & Crafts syllabus fostered in Gill's pupils: independent thought that began with the creative process of original design. The effect this had on fostering agency can be understood by the value Gill placed on an Arts & Crafts syllabus over and above one of traditional Victorian accomplishments. He stated that a student who could 'design a piece of furniture and its ornamentation in relief or colour was of a far higher and more beneficial production to the colony than that single facet student, the painter whose livelihood cannot be obtained within the length and breadth of the country.'[24] He likened artists who purely specialised in painting as 'hothouse plants' that could not live in the native conditions. By this, he meant that there was insufficient work for anyone who narrowed themselves purely to painting accomplishment. In essence, this stance summarises Gill's core motivations and the value he placed on the importance of design. It shows that although he was an accomplished painter himself, his key priority was design and, ultimately, design for commercial means. It makes sense of the hands-on methodology at the School that could lead to multi-faceted students capable of earning their own livelihood. It

[23] "Art Needlework," *South Australian Register*, 12 December 1889, 7.
[24] H.P. Gill to the Sub-Committee of the Fine Arts Committee, 25 April 1895, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 297.

also explains how the Arts & Crafts syllabus's focus of original design fostered individual agency because pupils could be thinking for themselves 'to strike out off the beaten track' rather than solely pursuing painting skills with limited chances of employment.[25]

Even after students had begun to realise their potential, the School continued to support their independence as artists. The most concrete way in which the Arts & Crafts syllabus nurtured artists at the beginning of their career can be seen in the School's flexible enrolment arrangements. Gill structured the timetable so that a student could fully enrol by attending each day and evening for the full week, or just enrol in an individual technical art class. The option to partially enrol in a single course meant that women who had already taken the step towards an independent career in the Art & Crafts syllabus could continue to use the School as a source of professional development. These flexible enrolment options can be seen in the case for Jean L. Wilson who will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter. Jean first enrolled in Geometry and the Projection of Shadows course in the Winter session of 1885.[26] As well as day classes, she was able to study in the evening such as in Autumn when she took the Tuesday evening Design course.[27] Over the next few years, her engagement with the School increased to include a variety of day and evening courses. After a period of full-time enrolment for all of 1890, 1891 and the first term of 1892, at which time she had completed the equivalent duration of a Bachelor degree, Jean began working, first as Art teacher at the Misses Brown's School (now Wilderness School) and then operating her own business, the Central Art School and Studio. However, simultaneously and for the next decade, she continued to enrol back at the School for up to four night classes a week in a combination of a variety of core subjects such as Application of Design on Various Surfaces, Geometry,

[25] "Art Needlework," *South Australian Register*, 12 December 1889, 7.
[26] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 1. She was enrolled in the Geometry with Projection of Shadows class on Tuesday evening class from 7-9pm with Rosa Fiveash and Miss Benham. The others in the class were men. Jean signed her own name as Jean L. Wilson, hence the articulation in this thesis.
[27] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheets 2 and 3.

Architecture, Shading or Freehand. Occasionally, she also took a day class when it was a new course.[28] The School also assisted her with extra lessons outside the timetable when she needed more specific help and this can been seen in the rolls for 1898 in the both Winter and Spring when she enrolled in up to eight extra lessons on top of two day classes a week in Design.[29] In these ways, the Arts & Crafts syllabus at the School provided Jean L. Wilson with the opportunity for ongoing professional development to support her ability to both teach for a wage, and offer tuition in Art Needlework, drawing and painting to support her own studio practice.

Conclusion

Without a doubt, the learning environment at the Adelaide School of Design fostered the potential for individual agency not least because women who enrolled at the School were at the centre of the Arts & Crafts scene in South Australia. The School responded to the public desire for fashionable Arts & Crafts ornamentation on domestic objects. Art Needlework stimulated a broadened Arts & Crafts syllabus to include a suite of technical skills within the Arts & Crafts oeuvre. The School's hands-on methodology, underpinned by original design, encouraged independent thinking and enabled women with the practical skills to create marketable objects. Added to this, the Art Needlework Society at the School provided a successful model of commercialisation for students to pursue themselves in independent careers. In a spirit of continuous improvement, those whose agency had already been activated by the Arts & Crafts syllabus were able to operate their own businesses during the day and undertake professional development evening classes through the School's flexible timetable.

[28] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheets 23 and 32.
[29] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 39.

The data from the rolls gives clear evidence that the School of Design was a more popular pathway of higher education for women than the University of Adelaide next door. The popularity of the School's courses led to a critical mass of female enrolments which endorsed the School as an alternative pathway of higher education. Qualifications, such as the Art Teacher's Certificate undertaken by Jean L. Wilson, offered a recognisable accreditation that could be used to secure teaching appointments or leveraged to promote the individual's own studio practice.[30] Once enrolled, women were taught to think for themselves in order to design and make Arts & Crafts bespoke objects that could be sold for profit through a commercial process. By the time Jean L. Wilson established her own studio in 1894, she had the essential practical techniques, creative design skills and preliminary business acumen to realise her own independent agency.[31]

All of this can be sourced back to Art Needlework: to the commercial models of the ecclesiastic ateliers adopted by the Arts Needlework Society; to the Society's profitable objectives that filtered through to the Arts & Crafts syllabus; to Art Needlework as the first applied art at the School of Design and its role in opening opportunities for women. Women such as Jean L. Wilson who went on to operate their own independent studios that took on commissions, taught and designed Art Needlework, were able to do so because the Adelaide School of Design became the fulcrum from which independent agency could be purchased.

[30] "South Kensington Examination of Works," *Evening Journal*, 3 September 1896, 2.
[31] "Central Art School and Studio," *Evening Journal*, 23 June 1894, 4.

Chapter Six

Independent initiatives and expressions enabled by the art and design education at the Adelaide School of Design

'Graduates' of the Adelaide School of Design were able to pursue independent incomes because they were provided with both the skills and a model on which to develop a commercial enterprise.

This chapter is in three parts. The first section investigates direct links between the School's commercial Art Needlework model and that of three women who sought an independent income by establishing their own Art Needlework businesses. A comparative analysis of their business practices and that of the Adelaide School of Design finds parallels in their marketing activities including the activation and promotion of social connection, and the leveraging of exhibitions and patronage. As well as a focus on marketing, this first section also observes the common commercial model of multiple income streams carried forward from the Adelaide School of Design Art Needlework Society's articulation of labour. The second section of this chapter notes individuals who did not operate dedicated Art Needlework studios but instead included Art Needlework in their business models as a means to support other Arts & Crafts practices or painting. To that end, the enterprises of another two key women are examined in depth. The third section is a modest case study of how a student of Art Needlework used her studies at the Adelaide School of Design as a launchpad for a range of independent expressions and initiatives beyond studio practice. A survey of the career of Amy L. Tomkinson shows how her early studies in art and design became the foundation for a life of public advocacy, travel and writing. This last case study is in effect a bookend to the thesis because Amy was the elder sister of Edith C. Tomkinson, whose diary was analysed in

Chapter One to establish women's existing needlework skills prior to the trend for Art Needlework.

Hundreds of female students went through the Adelaide School of Design and many went on to become teachers or pursue other careers. Their combined activities are beyond the scope of this thesis so this final chapter explores the activities of a select few who represent the first to operate Art Needlework studios and use the commercial practices they learnt at the School of Design. These women became active around the time of enfranchisement.

Independent Studio Practice Dedicated to Art Needlework

In 1889, the *South Australian Register* announced the Adelaide School of Design's newly formed Art Needlework Society as 'an opportunity for young women to secure training necessary for enabling them to earn an independent living.'[1] The first South Australian Art Needleworker to establish her own studio practice was Mary Isabella Hamilton (1854-1941). Mary leveraged both her skills and social connections for commercial benefit. Several similarities can be observed between Mary's business practices and those explored in previous chapters of the Adelaide School of Design and its Art Needlework Society. This is because Mary was a former pupil and Society member.[2]

Over an enrolment period of seven years, Mary studiously prepared herself for an independent career. Each year, she registered for all three terms in various classes of Design. She initially entered the Adelaide School of Design in 1883 and enrolled in a morning Design

[1] *South Australian Register*, 26 June 1889, 5.

[2] Although it is likely that Mary I. Hamilton was in the Guild of St. Paul given that her family worshipped at Christ Church and she was well connected with others who were in the organisation, evidence to support this theory has not come to light yet. After Mary moved overseas, her sister joined the St. Peter's Guild in 1902, around the time Elizabeth Green's eyesight failed and the Guild of St. Paul dissolved. Given that Mary was already proficient by the time she was active in the Adelaide School of Design, it is most likely that both she and her sister's Art Needlework skills were honed through ecclesiastical forerunners explored in Chapter Two.

class.[3] These skills were enriched with courses in Geometry and Perspective. For example, like other early students pursuing an independent arts career, Mary took up the opportunity to enrol in a course of dedicated geometry lectures offered by H.P. Gill in 1887.[4] In these lectures, she learnt the extent to which 'geometric principles underlie not only constructive and decorative rules, but the very order and beauty of Nature herself' meaning that the study of geometry was linked to forms and structures of nature that could be interpreted through her designs of Art Needlework.[5] She did not enrol in the first Decorative Needlework class in 1889 because the general Design class held on Tuesday and Friday mornings was the cohort committed to executing Art Needlework intended for the showcase at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition, so there was no need. However, in 1890, Mary was the very first student to enrol in the newly named Art Needlework class.[6] When viewed as a whole, her combined enrolment at the School over the seven year period is testament to her level of motivation.

Mary showed early promise as a student and she benefited from the attention of influential members of society. For example, whilst still a pupil at the School, her 'tussmore' silk tablecloth executed in yellows, browns, greens and pinks was included in the combined School and ecclesiastical Guilds' exhibit at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition 1888-1889.[7] Mary's 'workmanship' was described as 'perfect' and the tablecloth as 'the most exquisite thing in the whole section.' [8] In the first of a series of vice-regal connections that would

[3] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 2. Mary Isabela Hamilton was enrolled in the same class as Miss J. Barr Smith, Mabel Boothby, two of the Kay sisters, the three Crawford sisters, Elizabeth Stow and Elizabeth Wright.
[4] Rosa Catherine Fiveash also enrolled in this series of lectures.
[5] "Review," *The Advertiser*, 15 May 1893, 7.
[6] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 15.
[7] "No. IX. Specially for the South Australian Ladies," *Evening Journal*, 11 August 1888, 6.
[8] Tussure silk, also known as Tussmore and Tassaur is an Indian wild silk product from a large silk moth. Thomas Wardle overcame the longstanding resistance to dying and he displayed tussore silk samples at the Paris International Exposition of 1878. The samples included dyed yarns and cloth block printed for Liberty & Co, and cloth printed with William Morris designs.

enhance her career, she created an embroidered folding frame 'illuminated with sketches of native flora' for the Governor's wife, Lady Olivia Edith Deane Robinson (née Townsend 1842-1915).[9] In July of 1889, Mary announced her endeavour with the following advertisement:

> ART NEEDLEWORK – Miss M. Hamilton, late Student School of Design, gives Lessons and executes Commissions in Art Needlework. Private Lessons at Pupils' own residences. For terms and particulars apply Robe-terrace, Medindie.[10]

The Melbourne Centennial Exhibition ignited Mary Hamilton's career at the same time that it sparked the School of Design's Art Needlework Society but it was her seven-year enrolment at the Adelaide School of Design that served as a solid foundation for her work as an Art Needlework practitioner.

Whilst a member and after she left, the Adelaide School of Design's Art Needlework Society business model of multiple income streams underpinned Mary's independence. As Chapter Three established, the Society charged separate fees for the individual processes of design, transfer and commission. Mary joined the Society as its youngest founding committee member in addition to teaching her own students and executing her own commissions. It meant that Mary could earn additional funds from these three elements through her membership rather than relying purely on her own business independent of the School. Potentially, she could receive five different income streams: payment for teaching and commissions from her own business, and funds from designs, transfers and executions

[9] "Church Intelligence," *The Express and Telegraph*, 8 December 1888, 4 and "Presentation to the Governor," *The Express and Telegraph*, 7 December, 3.
[10] *South Australian Register*, 25 July 1889, 7.

through the Society. This model of multiple income streams was an approach she continued to implement throughout her career.

The Art Needlework Society actively supported Mary's quest for independence. Clearly, from the Society's perspective, it was apparent from the beginning that her work was outstanding and the Society's second exhibition, held in the ballroom of Government House, specially showcased 'specimens of her Art Needlework.' Essentially, Mary's work was afforded a separate display in addition to the rest of the Society's display, meaning that her Art Needlework was an added attraction.[11] Inevitably, she sought a larger market but even after she left, the Society championed her work. In May 1892, H.P. Gill reported to the Board that Miss M.I. Hamilton was 'opening up in Melbourne a connection whose benefits to her [were] owing to the training received [at the] School and to the work of the Ladies Committee.'[12] In fact, by the time Gill reported to the Fine Arts Committee, Mary Hamilton had been out of the colony of South Australia for almost a year.

As well as adopting the Art Needlework Society's articulated fee structure, Mary also used the same promotional techniques repeatedly deployed by H.P. Gill to elevate the work of the School and Society. On her arrival in Melbourne, she positioned her practice and herself with elite and vice-regal connections. Her useful social connections had begun back in Adelaide when she benefitted from the interest of Lady Kintore, a connection which led directly to the patronage of the Melbourne philanthropist, Lady Janet Marion Clarke (née Snodgrass 1851-1909).[13] Initially, Mary resided as Lady Clarke's guest at Clivedon, a substantial home in East Melbourne famous for both its sheer size and its generous female host. Lady Clarke's championing of Mary was first made public in May of 1891 at a large event for 200 people

[11] "Exhibition of Art Needlework," South Australian Register, 26 September 1890, 6.
[12] H.P. Gill to Fine Arts Committee, 10 May 1892, in *Reports made by the Director for Technical Art to the Fine Arts Committee 1882-1909*, GRG19/248, State Records of South Australia, 200.
[13] "Our Melbourne Ladies Letter," *The Mercury*, 1 June 1891, 4.

where Mary's work was displayed in Clivedon's morning room and it is likely that Figure 20 is an image of Mary's Art Needlework at that particular exhibition. In a glowing report, the *Melbourne Punch* described Mary's work as 'unequalled' a 'revelation' and 'unique in its excellence.'[14] Even the newspapers in Tasmania reported 'Lady Kintore [was] bringing out a stock of suitable materials for Miss Hamilton' and that 'Miss M. Hamilton, late of the School of Design, Adelaide' was proposing 'giving lessons in her beautiful art in Melbourne.'[15] Although Mary began conducting her Art Needlework lessons inside Clivedon itself, by June *Melbourne Punch* declared that Mary Hamilton had 'already successfully launched … her career' with several large classes and liberal orders, and, moreover, the Countess of Hopetoun was showing an interest in the 'new movement' of Art Needlework.[16]

Figure 20.



Cliveden Mansions - interior of drawing room, c1901, State Library of Victoria.
*This scene from *Clivedon* is in the Hamilton archive and is a display of Art Needlework draped over furniture as described in contemporary newspaper articles of Mary Hamilton's exhibition in 1891.[17]

[14] Rhoda, "Ladies Letter," *Melbourne Punch*, 21 May 1891, 14.
[15] "Society and Fashion: Lady Clarke at home by Queen Bee," *The Australasian*, 23 May 1891, 23.
[16] Rhoda, "Ladies Letter," *Melbourne Punch*, 11 June 1891, 12.
[17] This image has only been estimated to be c1901 and the State Library of Victoria was not able to locate any further provenance.

Mary promoted her prestigious connections whilst she established her business in the same manner as H.P. Gill publicised the School's social connections and patronage. For example, the Countess of Hopetoun and Lady Scott attended the opening of Mary's first Victorian public exhibition held in Melbourne's Art Salon the same year. Their attendance was reported in the press. The exact time the Countess of Hopetoun would be present was advertised through the vice-regal diary movements and she 'allowed the exhibition to be under her patronage.'[18] As well as this type of publicity, Mary also took advantage of status commissions connected to elevated individuals in her exhibitions, again, just as the Adelaide School of Design had done. She did this by showing the most substantial objects made for the more socially elevated in colonial society in addition to the displays of smaller, easily affordable items. Objects such as a 'large carriage rug' and a bedspread made for Lady Kintore were displayed alongside of painted dessert d'oyleys, teacloths and piano drapes. This overt association of her work with high profile people added an element of glamour to her products and elevated the status of her work in the same way as a company might promote its Royal seal of approval as a marketing tool.

By offering objects of varying scale (and therefore price), Mary curated her exhibitions with a similar commercial approach to that of the Adelaide School of Design under H.P. Gill's watch. For example, larger items such as billiard covers brought a higher price. The game of billiards was surging in popularity as a form of entertainment in more affluent private homes so billiard table covers were included in Mary's canon. Another expensive object was the carriage cloth, which when embellished, such as the one made for Lady Kintore, was transformed from a practical and necessary item into a bespoke piece. Substantial portières were fashionable during the 1890s, as were drawing rooms decorated with Art Needlework

[18] "Social Notes," *Australasian*, 13 June 1891, 28.

tablecloths like the 'gold coloured silk worked in shades of copper and green' commissioned by Lady Clarke.[19] These types of larger objects purchased by well-connected patrons served to market the smaller, high turn-over items which were essential to cashflow, particularly in Melbourne during the financially strained 1890s. This was the case in her second exhibition of 1892 where the embroidered screens, photo frames, blotters, sachets and workbags found 'many buyers.' It was reported that 'many objects were for sale, and a number found ready purchases, notwithstanding the hard times.'[20]

By employing the marketing strategies she had learnt at the Adelaide School of Design, Mary's business managed to weather considerable financial pressure. She launched her Melbourne endeavour just prior to the crippling financial crisis of the 1890s, yet she kept trading even throughout 1893 when thirteen of Australia's banks suspended trade.[21] During this time, her business also tolerated the additional pressure from the popularity of machine embroidery. The Singer Manufacturing Company held an exhibition of machine-made embroidery in the middle of the bank shutdown claiming that 'at first sight one would pronounce it to be an exhibition of Kensington Art Needlework … but that the exquisite effects [were] produced by machinery.'[22] However, the business plan Mary had learnt from the Adelaide School of Design was centred on exclusivity and social connections and so in 1893 she counteracted these business pressures by oiling her more lucrative market with repeated personal attendances at events patronised by wealthy, potential customers – occasions such as a large reception at Government House in August, the Countess of

[19] "Social Notes," *The Australasian*, 29 October 1892, 42.
[20] "Social Gossip," *Leader*, 29 October 1892, 29.
[21] D.T. Merrett, "The Australian Bank Crashes of the 1890s Revisited," *Business History Review*, *Volume 87*, no. 3, 2013, 407-29.
[22] "News of the Day," *The Age*, 13 April 1893, 5.

Hopetoun's 'At Home' in September and Mrs Urquhart's dance in November.[23] In short, she was effectively networking by attending social events with potential clients who exuded the same elevated tone as her exquisite objects.

Another strategy Mary implemented from her training at the Adelaide School of Design was teaching and exhibiting in central locations. Despite it being originally reported that she would establish classes in the suburbs, her teaching rooms and public exhibitions were always in the centre of Melbourne, just as the School of Design and all its exhibitions were in the heart of Adelaide. After Mary's initial start at Clivedon, she taught in rooms at the Austral Building in Collins Street. Her first public exhibition in 1891 was held in the Art Salon rooms, Elizabeth Street, also in the central business district.[24] A year later, she exhibited in the home of Mrs Urquhart at the English, Scottish and Australian Chartered Bank, 86 Queen Street, which again was in the centre of the city.[25] Throughout her time in Melbourne, Mary continued to place her teaching studio and exhibitions in upmarket, readily accessible central locations. Even at the end of her Melbourne sojourn, she was still exhibiting in Russell Street, not far from where she first began in Clivedon.

As well as choosing central positions and leveraging social connections in Melbourne, Mary integrated the multiple income approach she first learnt from the Art Needlework Society's differentiation of design, transfer and execution with the concept of exhibitions as sales opportunities. In a minor way, she exploited this strategy whilst still a guest at Clivedon. Before her Art Needlework enterprise became viable, she initially offered an interior design

[23] "The Countess of Hopetoun 'At Home'," *The Australasian*, 9 September 1893, 33, and "Social Note," *The Australasian*, 19 August 1893, 34, and "Mrs. Urquhart's Dance," *The Australasian*, 11 November 1893, 36. Mary's appearance was noted for her beetle wing embroidered clothing.
[24] "Social Notes," *Australasian*, 13 June 1891, 28.
[25] "Social Notes," *The Australasian*, 29 October 1892, 42. Mrs Urquhart was the wife of the bank manager of the English, Scottish and Australian Chartered Bank and they lived on the premises.

service, described as 'drawing room decoration.'[26] After a time, her employment of this strategy was more overt. First, she gained income from instructing Art Needlework students. Second, she sold designs as well as fully executed work.[27] Third, she sold objects through her exhibitions which were effectively sales rooms for all three aspects of her business. The press commented on her individual designs in descriptions of her exhibitions and this in turn helped to promote further sales of designs for the home needleworker to purchase and execute in their own time.

Considered through a business lens her exhibitions can be regarded as multi-faceted promotions. She held them not just for the sale of works and designs but also as opportunities to sign up new students. An example of this multi-layered approach was her exhibition in Queen Street where 'during the day, many visitors … entered their names to join classes under Miss Hamilton's instruction.'[28] Seen as a whole, Mary's exhibitions of Art Needlework realised maximum potential for not only did they serve as commercial opportunities for commissions, object and design sales, they also attracted business from future pupils to sustain the next episode of the enterprise and lead it towards subsequent cycles of instruction, all of which culminated in pupil exhibitions to attract sales and recruits.

A decade after she started, Mary's last exhibition at her Melbourne studio work appears to have been held in 1898 at the Independent Hall, Russell Street, once again, in the heart of the city. By this time, her style had evolved to include folk designs from India, Japan, France, Rome and Spain. However, her commercial exhibition practices remained consistent in that she displayed her own work as the centre piece surrounded by objects executed by students. She also continued to facilitate more than one income stream and by the end of the decade

[26] "Our Melbourne Ladies Letter," *The Mercury*, 1 June 1891, 4.
[27] "New Music," *Melbourne Punch*, 24 November 1898, 19.
[28] "Social Notes," *The Australasian*, 29 October 1892, 42.

she was offering completed work for sale together with her own designs 'at moderate terms.'[29] By 1899, the *Critic* in Adelaide was referring to her as 'Melbourne's most swagger instructress in the art of wielding the fancywork needle.' Her business model – based on social connection – was reiterated in an article noting 'Janet, Lady Clarke, Mrs C. M Lloyd, Miss Carter, Mrs John Cooke, Mrs S. McCulloch' as well as 'dozens of other wealthy fad followers amongst her pupils.' South Australian readers were reassured of the outstanding success of their own glamorous Art Needleworker whose studio and connection were not only one of the most swagger' but 'by-the-way, so [were] her prices too.'[30] If the intention of the Art Needlework Society was to 'afford opportunities to young women to secure the training necessary for enabling them to earn a livelihood' then Mary Isabella Hamilton was the epitome of that aim.[31]

Mary's younger sister, Emily Seton Melville Hamilton (1857-1917) also set up her own practice.[32] The influence of the commercial activities first observed in the Guilds and then the School of Design and Art Needlework practises can also be seen in Emily's approach.[33]

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[29] "New Music," *Melbourne Punch*, 24 November 1898, 19.
[30] "In Society's Moods," *Critic*, 4 February 1899, 19.
[31] *South Australian Register*, 26 June 1889, 4.
[32] N.B. Mary and Emily sought an independent income not least because they were from a family of ten children when their mother Isabella née Melville (1833-1889) was widowed. Upon his death, her father James Hamilton (1810-1871) was described as 'an old colonist' who came to South Australia in 1839 on the Recovery. He first entered into the mercantile firm of Hamilton & Henderson with a fellow passenger before becoming the manager of the English and Australian Copper Company's smelting works at Kooringa. Emily's mother was the daughter of the Mr D. Melville, the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce. Therefore, the family was well connected in Adelaide and both Robert Barr Smith and Captain Bagot amongst others were in her father's funeral procession. They worshipped at Christchurch, North Adelaide. Her social circle and connection with the same North Adelaide congregation where the Wrights and Gills worshipped meant that she was well positioned to utilise her existing connections to leverage her needlework skills for an income. See "Mr James Hamilton," *South Australian Register*, 12 August 1871, 7.
[33] The source of Emily's Art Needlework training is unclear. She did not show the same tenacity of enrolment as her sister although ten years after Mary joined the Adelaide School of Design, Emily enrolled in the 1895 Autumn session of Elementary Shading. Substantiating evidence is yet come to light but it possible that Emily's Art Needlework skills were honed through the Guild of St. Paul because she, like others who were known to be in members, joined the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild after its demise. It is likely that her initial instruction came from her sister Mary but it would have been prior to Mary moving to Melbourne in 1890.

There are two main similarities in the way the Hamilton sisters operated their businesses. First, they both began their enterprises from the family home at 12 Robe Terrace, Medindie before taking up central business district positions. In Adelaide, Emily exhibited in locations such as the Mikado Rooms, Rundle Street, and the showrooms of Messrs S. Marshall & Sons on Gawler Place. Second, Emily exhibited larger more expensive objects in amongst many smaller, affordable items priced to sell, just as Mary did. For example, a 'bedspread with lion's heads' and another with 'two sunflowers with large leaves and birds intermingling' were displayed with 'panels for photographs, blotters, paper and envelope cases, handkerchief and glove sachets and doyleys.'[34]

The most obvious difference between the sister's modus operandum was that unlike Mary's elegant business promotion, Emily's approach was blunt. Whereas Mary's business was subtly advertised through press columns that named significant attendees, Emily took out paid advertising space and chose to use commercial language in her advertisements such as 'Public invited' and 'Work for Sale.'[35] Just five days before the South Australian House of Assembly passed the Bill affording women enfranchisement, Emily advertised her own Art Union exhibition on view in Victoria Hall, Gawler Place, in the heart of the city of Adelaide. In another example, she entered her Art Needlework into the Centenary Exhibition in 1900 and won first prize for silk embroidery.[36] She then promoted that success by proclaiming it in a paid advertisement for her teaching practice, unabashed in declaring herself as 'originator and Manager.'[37] From that point on, her advertisements continued in the same vein:

[34] "Sale of Nicknacks," *South Australian Register*, 23 December 1896, 3.
[35] *Evening Journal*, 12 December 1894, 1.
[36] "The Exhibition," *The Express and Telegraph*, 31 March 1900, 7.
[37] *South Australian Register*, 30 September 1897, 5.

> ART NEEDLEWORK. Miss EMILY HAMILTON Resumes Classes. Century Exhibition 3 Prizes. Designs and Materials supplied. Orders taken. Reduced terms beginners. Robe-terrace. Medindie.[38]

Although Emily made the most of high society social connections in the same way as her sister, she did so without a modicum of subtlety. Instead of relying on the press to make mention of her connections in social columns, Emily aligned herself with South Australian Governor's wives and used their names in press promotions which she paid for herself. For example, she advertised in 1897 that Lady Victoria Buxton, the Governor's wife, had 'promised to be present' at her exhibition and sale of work.[39] Regardless of their different approach, both sisters sought to associate themselves with elevated society and would no doubt have been delighted when the Table Talk gossip column of the *Evening Journal* reported 'that the Melville-Hamilton family of North Adelaide [were] related to Scotch peers.'[40]

Even though Emily did not aspire to the more discreet promotional approach of Mary, she certainly safeguarded her finances with more than one source of revenue. Just as Mary initially offered an interior design service for drawing-rooms in Melbourne, Emily operated a side business for at least two years before her teaching studio became sustainable, again in the central business district of Adelaide. In 1889, she conducted Caligraph type-writing service where her typing services could be hired at short notice. In the beginning, she was based in the Grenfell Chambers before moving to the Albion Chambers, Waymouth Street,

[38] *South Australian Register*, 14 May 1900, 2.
[39] *South Australian Register*, 30 September 1897, 5.
[40] "Table Talk," *Evening Journal*, 24 May 1902, 4.

the following year.[41] Five years before women in South Australia were enfranchised, she appears to be the only female carrying out this type of independent secretarial business.

The most obvious contrast between Emily and Mary's approach was a collaboration with other practitioners of the applied and domestic arts. For example, in 1893, Emily joined 'Mabel Boothby, Miss Lucas and Miss L. Hawker' in the Home Workers' Society to mount an exhibition at Messrs. S Marshall and Sons.[42] The following year, she collaborated with eight other women in an exhibition of Arts & Crafts work at the May Club (an offshoot of the Home Workers' Society) selling chip-carving, Mountmellick embroidery, painted d'oyleys and pen and ink drawings.[43] In an 1897 exhibition timed for Christmas sales, her own work was headlined but displayed with that of ten of her students, alongside etchings, sketches in oil, 'watercolour and sepia by the Misses King, Filgate and Turnbull.'[44] Again, in 1899, she shared an exhibition in the Brookman's Building of her own Art Needlework with 'Miss Sanderson's display of cakes.'[45] Although clearly operating an independent enterprise, Emily realised the business potential of collaboration and its multiplying effects on promotion, attendance and sales.

The scant evidence on Emily Hamilton all points to a woman who readily embraced commercial measures that could lead to an independent income. Emily's career in Art Needlework did not attract the glamorous reviews that her sister Mary garnered but she still demonstrated the same motivation to operate her own teaching studio, and she used similar

[41] For example, *Evening Journal*, 27 November 1889, 1 and *Express and Telegraph*, 28 March 1890, 1. The Caligraph typewriter was a form of blind type writing where the text could not be seen until the page had advanced.
[42] "Home Workers Society," *The Advertiser*, 15 November 1893, 6.
[43] "The May Club," *The Advertiser*, 1 November 1894, 7. Mountmellic is an Irish form of whitework embroidery. The stitches are designed to form a three-dimensional decorative pattern on the surface with as little thread as possible on the underside.
[44] "An Art Collection," *The Advertiser*, 18 November 1897, 6.
[45] "Exhibition of Art Needlework," *South Australian Register*, 7 June 1899, 7.

commercial business practices. Although she collaborated with others, she always headlined joint exhibitions. At a time when it would have been unusual for a woman, she bolstered her income with a type-writing service, and like her sister, she never married.

The third former Adelaide School of Design pupil to establish her own Art Needlework studio practice was Ethel Luxmoore Macgeorge (1866-1954).[46] Ethel demonstrated an equivalent tenacity of application in her time at the School as Mary Hamilton. She first enrolled in the Freehand class at the School in the Spring Session of 1888.[47] Then in 1895, she enrolled in Art Needlework with Elizabeth Meek, Wood Carving classes, Life class as well as nightly evening classes in Solid Geometry, Model and Shading, Freehand and Perspective.[48] This pattern of enrolment continued and in 1897, having passed her Freehand and Model drawing examinations, like Mary Hamilton, she took up extra opportunities to enhance her design education by enrolling in a series of lectures on Shading held on Friday afternoons.[49] Unquestionably, Ethel's studiousness speaks of a motivation far beyond feminine accomplishment and much more akin to that of a New Woman pursuing foundational skills in order to establish an independent, commercial career.

The way Ethel Macgeorge established her commercial Art Needlework business in Melbourne was similar to the Hamilton sisters. Eleven years after Mary paved the way and four years after Emily first advertised her Art Needlework practice, Ethel also placed an advertisement:

[46] Sister of Norman Macgeorge ((1872-1952),
[47] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 11.
[48] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 32.
[49] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 36.

> MISS MACGEORGE is now forming CLASSES for ART NEEDLEWORK. Terms, town classes, one guinea; suburban classes and private lessons by arrangement. Stalbridge chambers, Little Collins-st.[50]

The advertisement reveals two contrasting aspects. First, the tone of Ethel's advertisement is as assertive as Emily Hamilton's in that it is up-front about the cost, and this is what makes it clear that she was conducting a business enterprise. Second, like both the Hamilton sisters, the advertisement showed that Ethel placed herself in the central business district but differed in that she was prepared to work in the suburbs as well. This is significant because at the time of this advertisement, clearly Ethel was willing to look further than the central business district for a market share in the Art Needlework business because she was not yet living in the suburban Malvern home she occupied with the rest of her immediate family after they followed her to Victoria.

Ethel's utilisation of exhibitions was also like that of Mary Hamilton. Even before her practice was established, Ethel immediately held an exhibition to kick-start her enterprise, exactly as Mary had done at Clivedon. Just as Clivedon was the most glamourous town house, Ethel's choice of the Johnstone O'Shannessy rooms on Collins Street were described as 'the most luxurious salon' in Melbourne. The rooms were part of a fashionable, upper floor photographic studio.[51] Also like Mary and Emily, and as modelled to all three by H.P. Gill, Ethel harnessed individuals of elevated social status to promote her exhibitions. For instance, rather than through paid advertisements as Emily pursued, Ethel invited the wife of the Governor of Victoria, Lady Sybil de Vere Brassey (née Capell 1858-1934) to be present

[50] *The Australasian*, 27 August 1898, 52.
[51] *Table Talk*, 25 December 1891, 14.

at the official opening of her second exhibition held in 1899 at the same premises.[52] Her attendance was announced in both Victorian and South Australian gossip columns and served as an elegant promotion of Ethel's business.[53] For a time, Ethel and Mary Hamilton shared the Art Needlework teaching market in Melbourne, both as prominent instructors enjoying prestigious patronage but independent of each other.[54] Each enjoyed considerable admiring press coverage of their Art Needlework exhibitions, including their special commissions, and the press regularly noted that both were South Australian.[55]

Regular exhibitions remained part of Ethel's business model but one particularly noteworthy commission was exhibited without her intervention. Like the Hamiltons, Ethel's Art Needlework was included in high-profile exhibitions but unlike the sisters, her products were sometimes entered by the owner, rather than herself. This was the case with her 'piano slip of pale blue and silver embroideries on groundwork of deeper blue' which was lent by Lady Northcote to the loan section of First Exhibition of Women's Work in 1907.[56] The provenance of this loan is significant. Lady Alice Northcote (née Stephen ?-1934), pictured arriving at the event in Figure 21, was the wife of Australia's Governor General and the instigator and President of the nation-wide exhibition. After a series of preparatory state versions, the culminating national First Exhibition of Women's Work was host to over 16,000 exhibits, the most popular of which was needlework 'with over 7,000 examples on display.'[57] Not only was Ethel's piano slip one of the key objects to receive press coverage from the largest display section, it was commissioned and then loaned by the most important

[52] "The Gay Metropolis," *Critic*, 10 June 1899, 28.
[53] *South Australian Register*, 19 June 1899, 4.
[54] Ethel branched out into Sydney briefly and gave a successful exhibition of her work and that of her students at the Needs Rooms in 1903 but the following year, her studio practice was back in Melbourne in premises within the Victorian Building, Swanton Street.
[55] For example, *Critic*, 4 February 1899, 19.
[56] "Womens Work Exhibition," *Observer*, 9 November 1907, 5.
[57] *Museums Victoria Collections*, URL accessed 22 January 2022.

member of the organising committee because at the time Lady Northcote was the wife of Australia's ranking highest official. Therefore, Ethel's piano slip was a very prominent exhibit in one of Australia's most important exhibitions.

Figure 21.



Welcoming Lady Northcote at the first Australian Exhibition of Women's Work, Melbourne, Victoria, 1907, Object 153094521, National Library of Australia.

From this point on, Ethel Macgeorge was on the other side of the exhibition displays and this is how her career differs from the Hamiltons. In 1908, she became the honorary secretary of the Arts and Crafts Society whose aim was to further 'an interest in the proficiency of all arts and crafts.'[58]As well as managing the Society and teaching Art Needlework within the suite of other applied arts, Ethel designed Art Needlework for other members of the Society to render and exhibit.[59] She also judged Art Needlework exhibitions around Victoria.[60]

[58] "Handicrafts for Women," *Australasian*, 24 July 1909, 45.
[59] "Social Circle: Society Letter," *Leader*, 8 October 1910, 47.

In common with the Hamiltons, Ethel created multiple revenue streams from her Art Needlework activities but Ethel added a further source of revenue. Unlike Mary who initially benefited from Lady Clarke's purchases of expensive silk materials, Ethel imported her own patterns and materials from England, selling them from her own studio.[61] She value-added to these product lines by partially completing 'portières, book covers, photo frames, table spreads and work bags' as kits that could be completed at home.[62] Eventually, she swapped the financial liability of importing her own stock with a management role for the same process at the Arts & Crafts Society Depot. The Depot subsequently advertised that she was 'eminently qualified' for the position, given her prior retail experience.[63] From this point on, Ethel relied heavily on the teaching aspect of her business and took up the opportunity of a more secure income by teaching the Continuation School pupils of the Eastern Suburbs Technical School. In these ways, she created an independent multi-streamed income for herself through the sale of goods by way of exhibitions or commission, retail of imported stock which developed into a manager's wage, and payment for teaching.

An account of Ethel's design teaching methodology bears strong similarities to that of her training at the Adelaide School of Design. Like the School's curriculum, Ethel's was devised to 'prove the commercial possibilities of decorative needlework produced by properly trained workers,' and train the future teachers of manual arts.[64] Below is a brief description of her methodology:

> A given space is indicated, and this space is filled with squares forming a pattern. These squares are worked either solidly or in outline with tapestry

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[60] For example, the Ballarat Ladies' Art Association in 1913, "Items of News," *Mount Alexander Mail*, 13 September 1913, 2.
[61] *Punch*, 19 May 1904, 23.
[62] Ibid.
[63] *Leader*, 2 August 1913, 50.
[64] *Leader*, 2 March 1912, 47.

> wool in darning stitch. From this is gradually evolved a whole series of geometrical patterns. These are followed by flooring patterns, applique work, embroidery or linen or so forth. From the very beginning, however, the work is both beautiful and useful.[65]

Gill's own approach to teaching elementary design was the same:

> One of the earliest lessons is that the student must rule out certain shapes. An isosceles triangle, an equilateral triangle, a rectangle, a square, a pentagon. The student has to fill these up, and as many times he or she fold one of those figures, so that student is taught that the law of symmetry in design is either the law of symmetry plain or of bi-symmetrical or the law of multi-symmetrical.[66]

Both approaches describe an initial process of filling a given geometrical space with pattern to learn symmetry and repetition. Ethel then instructed the student to apply that process to a variety of applications such as design upon an existing ground pattern, and designs for mediums like linen. Whereas the key point of Gill's instructions focused on symmetry, Ethel articulated the Arts & Crafts ethos of 'beautiful and useful' a reference from William Morris's famous golden rule of having 'nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful.'[67] This account of Ethel's teaching practice demonstrates that her study at the Adelaide School of Design prepared her to teach others, despite the fact that she did not attend teacher training or university. In this way, the design methodology she implemented is another example of how the School created a foundation for independence.

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[65] *Leader*, 2 March 1912, 47.
[66] Witness H.P. Gill, Principal Librarian and Secretary Evidence, *Gill Enquiry*, *Volume 2*, GRG 19/75, State Records of South Australia, 3414.
[67] William Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art: Five Lectures Delivered in Birmingham, London and Nottingham*, London: Ellis and White, 1883, 108.

This methodology, combined with her business operations are clear evidence that, like the Hamilton sisters before her, the commercial model and instruction provided by the Adelaide School of Design became a springboard for women's independent careers.[68]

Art Needlework Supporting Independent Painting Studios and Applied Arts Studios

Other women incorporated Art Needlework into independent studio practices as a means to an end. A lesser known example of someone else that used Art Needlework as a side-line business in an otherwise well-documented career was Margaret (Rose) MacPherson (later Preston 1875-1963). Rose operated a painting and Art Needlework studio in 1900 to sustain her core business of painting.[69] However, Rose was not the first Adelaide School of Design student to do so and her Art Needlework activities were short lived. Jane (Jean Lilias) Craigie Wilson (1854-1937) is another example of a successful artist who used the Adelaide School of Design as a platform for an independent painting career but unlike Margaret Preston, she has been forgotten. Jean L. Wilson was the first South Australian Art Needleworker to use Art Needlework as purchase to pursue a career of a different expression and she too utilised the Art Needlework Society's business model in her quest for financial independence.

Jean's enrolment history at the Adelaide School of Design, like Mary Hamilton and Ethel Macgeorge, shows a determination over and above that of other students. As touched on in the Chapter Five, her name appears in the earliest enrolment archives as the 18th student to enter the Adelaide School of Painting in 1882 and then the School of Design in 1883.[70] Three times a year, Jean joined a variety of courses from Design to Geometry with a Projection of Shadows, Life, and Art Lectures. In 1885, she began taking evening classes which suggests

[68] Ethel Luxmoore Macgeorge was awarded the British War Medal for her war work. She worked in the St John's Ambulance Brigade and as librarian at the Australian Army Base in Le Havre, Normandy, France for the W.M.C.A. "Soldiers Prefer Poetry," *The Herald*, 13 July 1918, 4.
[69] "Fair and Unfair," *Quiz*, 13 September 1900, 7.
[70] *Volume 2*, GRG 19/98, State Records of South Australia, 111, 113.

she had obligations during the day. By 1889, when she also enrolled in Elizabeth Meek's first Decorative Needlework class, she took both day and evening classes, including the Artizan course. She consistently balanced several Design courses with Life classes meaning that she was effectively a full-time student with the exceptions of Sunday and Monday. In fact, that is precisely what she did in 1890 when she paid the full three shillings as an 'All Day' full time student. This type of enrolment meant that she studied every course available.[71] Jean remained an All-Day student for two and half years until the Winter session of 1892. At this point in her studies, the School supported her with out-of-hours lessons in return for half the All Day fee which meant that she was receiving private tuition. She supplemented this with two morning design classes.[72] Each time a new opportunity arose in the curriculum, Jean enrolled in it. For example, she joined the Tapestry Painting course with Madame Mouchette, Design as Applied to Art Needlework, Design and Tempura, and evening Architecture classes. Over a period of sixteen years, Jean continued taking classes in most sessions through to 1898, many of which were evening courses that would have supported her daytime studio business.

Whilst still a student, Jean took active steps to advance her independent career prospects. She sat the examinations for South Kensington accreditation.[73] In 1890, she completed her Art Teachers Certificate examinations at the same time as Rosa Fiveash, Mary Overbury, Elizabeth Armstrong and a number of others who went on to become well known artists and teachers.[74] Like the Hamiltons and Ethel Macgeorge, Jean quickly began exhibiting her work regularly as a way of establishing herself as an artist. For example, in an exhibition of the South Australian Society of Arts, she showed early promise being awarded second prize

[71] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 15.
[72] She was in the same class as Lady K. and E. Keith Falconer, the Governor's daughters. See Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheet 22.
[73] "Educational," *South Australian Register*, 1 October 1888, 1.
[74] "South Kensington Art Examinations," *South Australian Register*, 9 October 1890, 3.

behind Mary Overbury for her still life watercolour, an acknowledgement that saw her pip Rosa Fiveash who ran third.[75] The following year, she showed another still life in watercolour at the Jubilee Exhibition, coming first in front of Helen Hambidge (1857-1937).[76] Although the artists Mary Overbury, Rosa Fiveash and Helen Hambidge have been remembered, it has been overlooked that Jean was more successful at the time. In 1893 her flower painting was selected as one of twenty-three works sent from South Australia to an exhibition of British pictures in Melbourne. This and her other accumulating achievements must have been encouraging because in the same year, Jean established her own teaching business. Just like the Hamilton sisters, Jean's first attempt at an independent income was from home, as the following advertisement attests:[77]

> A CARD – MISS JEAN L. WILSON, ARTIST and PORTRAIT PAINTER. Reference, S.A. Society of Art Exhibition, Nos 40 to 44. For Terms, & c., address S.A. Society of Arts, Institute, North-terrace; or 91 Glover-street east, N.A.[78]

Although she began from the safety of a home, very quickly Jean set up her own teaching studio in the centre of Adelaide calling it the Central Art School and Studio.

Jean's commercial enterprise differed from the Hamilton sisters and Ethel Macgeorge because Art Needlework only played a supporting role to her main focus of painting. However, the importance of Art Needlework bolstering her teaching studio is evident in her advertisements. In 1894, painting was her main focus and at first she tried to only offer

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[75] "S.A. Society of Arts Exhibition," *South Australian Register*, 19 June 1885, 6.
[76] "Jubilee Exhibition in the Town Hall," *Evening Journal*, 23 October 1886, 6. These types of references are not isolated. For example, at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition, she exhibited 'with "A Life Study of an Old Women," a fruit painting in watercolour, and still life in oils, the last two being particularly good.' "Paintings by ladies," *Evening Journal*, 11 August 1888, 6, No.1X.
[77] Mr Geo. Wilson is listed as manager, news office *Register*, Grenfell St: p.r. 91 Gover St, North Adelaide, *South Australian Directory, 1893*, State Library of South Australia.
[78] "*The Express and Telegraph*, 4 February 1893, 5, and another example in *Evening Journal*, 10 September 1893, 8.

tuition in 'Drawing and Painting (oil and water) [along with preparatory lessons for] the Art Examinations.'[79] By mid-year, she was also offering Art Needlework but it was relegated to the last place of her advertisement:

> Miss J.L. Wilson, Principal, Certified. Art Class & Painting, South Kensington. Artiste and Portrait Painter. Commissions desired.
>
> Select classes for Drawing and Painting (oil and water).
>
> Pupils Prepared for the Art Examinations.
>
> Morning Class 10 to 12, afternoon 2 to 5.
>
> FEES - Elementary, £1; Advanced do., £1.10s.: Shading from Casts and Models, £1: Model and Freehand Drawing, Geometry, or Perspective,
>
> From 5s., Outdoor Sketching, £1; Art Needlework.[80]

However, by 1895 Art Needlework headlined her list of available tuition and like her predecessors Jean capitalised on her design education at the School and provided original designs.

> CENTRAL ART SCHOOL AND STUDIO.
>
> COMMERCIAL CHAMBERS, GILBERT-PL.
>
> NEXT BANK OF AUSTRALIASIA.
>
> SPECIAL CLASSES (NOW RESUMED).
>
> Art Needlework (Original Designs supplied.) Monday Afternoon.
>
> Model Drawing, Tuesday Afternoon.
>
> Outdoor sketching Wednesday Afternoon.
>
> Classes for Drawing and Painting Daily. Miss J.L. Wilson, PRINCIPAL.[81]

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[79] *South Australian Register*, 30 May 1894, 2.
[80] *Quiz and the Lantern*, 28 June 1894, 12.
[81] *South Australian Register,* 2 February 1895, 2.

Although Jean only used Art Needlework to fund her painting focus, it can be observed that like the Hamiltons and Ethel Macgeorge, she utilised the same Art Needlework Society business practices, one of which was capitalising on her own successes through the press to build a business as an independent artist. For example, the advertisement for Jean's first home studio in Glover Street, North Adelaide (reproduced above) was timed to coincide with the S.A. Society of Arts Exhibition and the enthusiastic reviews of her entered portrait 'An Old Colonist' indicate her growing reputation:

> It is an oil under glass, painted almost daringly, a head and bust of a lady in the prime of life; a strong, expressive dace, full of character, kindly in the eyes, with a clear-cut, meaning mouth, showing decision, originality, and self-reliance. We gather this from the painting, for the name of the original is not disclosed, and the fact that the picture suggests so much is a tribute to the artist, who, by the way, had not exhausted her energies on the features and the complexion, but has bestowed equal care upon the moss-green or olive-green silk dress. It shows her confidence in her command of pigments to select such an intractable colour. [82]

Added to this type of review, Jean was not shy of benefitting from her father's position as superintendent of mechanical works at the *South Australian Register*. In the manner of the Art Needlework Society and later Mary Hamilton and Ethel Macgeorge, public announcements and the subtle advertisement of notable guests were noted in the paper on Jean's behalf. For instance, in the same edition as her paid advertisement quoted above, a column was devoted to her 'art and high-class needlework' instruction and readers were informed of the 'pitch of perfection' reached in her work shown at a recent Chamber of

[82] "South Australian Society of Arts," *Adelaide Observer*, 30 September 1893, 35.

Manufacturers' Exhibition earlier in the year in which all her Art Needlework designs had been 'entirely original.'[83] This level of comprehensive publicity continued to the point where her 'at home' style exhibition at the Central Art School and Studio was afforded an entire column in 1897.[84]

A further example of a student applying the elements of the Art Needlework Society business model was Jean's deployment of multiple revenue strategy, the only variant being that Jean's Art Needlework ensured a reliable income for her focus on painting. Whilst Jean built a reputation as a home-grown artist of substance from her studio practice, she derived enough profit from Art Needlework to employ 'skilled assistants' to help in its instruction and render 'important commissions.'[85] In other words, Art Needlework funded her painting and her painting practice benefitted from a financially supported studio. This dual management of both Art Needlework and painting can be seen in her activities in 1899. In January, the *Adelaide Observer* featured fourteen individuals in a special article on South Australian artists, only three of whom were women and of those three, Jean was considered the most significant.[86] At the time the article was written, Jean had just taken over the Wadham and Sinclair studio in Grenfell Street and under the Elder bequest the Board of Governor's had selected her study of crimson gum blossom to be hung in the Australia Room of what is now the Art Gallery of South Australia.[87] Simultaneously, her Art Needlework tuition, the sale of products as well as commissions provided other earnings. Maximising this potential, Jean also sold her designs for others to render, a case in point being 'a handsome tablecloth cover … worked in soft shades of terra-cotta and green designed by Miss Wilson of graceful

[83] "Art and High Class Needlework," *South Australian Register*, 1 April 1895, 5.
[84] "Central Art Studio," *Evening Journal*, 11 September 1897, 4. The *Evening Journal* was owned by the *South Australian Register*.
[85] "Art and High Class Needlework," *South Australian Register*, 1 April 1895, 5.
[86] "Some South Australian Artists: Past and Present," *Adelaide Observer: Illustrated Supplement*, 7 January 1899, 3.
[87] "Art Exhibition," *Register*, 10 April 1923, 11.

flowing conventional foliage' but 'worked by Miss Duncan.'[88] Therefore, as 'one of the more accomplished students of the School of Design' she utilised her 'special aptitude' for Art Needlework to support her painting practice; a practical business measure similar to the multiple income streams already observed in the commercial practices of the Hamilton sisters, and first modelled by the Art Needlework Society's division of artistic labour.

After Federation in 1901, Jean's studio was renamed an 'academy' from which she taught and hosted exhibitions.[89] Like Emily Hamilton, Jean collaborated with others in joint exhibitions or visiting exhibitions but her work always headlined.[90] Her work was exhibited in Australian states and New Zealand, and towards the later part of her life she held a major solo exhibition in the Institute Building.[91] By this point in her career, Art Needlework no longer played a role in her business model but it had served its purpose of assisting her to establish an independence.[92] Like the other Art Needleworkers pursuing independent careers, Jean L. Wilson never married, focusing instead on establishing her commercial and artistic self-determination.

Jean L. Wilson or others such as Rose MacPherson were not the only women to train at the Adelaide School of Design to use Art Needlework to bolster their own independent studios. However, rather than to support a painting focus, other women incorporated Art Needlework as source of income whilst their studio practice transitioned to the wider suite of applied arts. Maude Prosser falls into this transitional category. Although the Art Needlework studios examined earlier in this chapter were in the Victorian and Edwardian eras, Maude Prosser's

[88] "Sale of work at the May Club," *Evening Journal*, 31 October 1899, 4.
[89] In 1901, Jean L. Wilson exhibited her own work with her students. Her work included a half-length portrait of the late Sir Thomas Elder wearing the insignia of his order, "Miss J.L. Wilson," *Advertiser*, 29 June 1901, 8.
[90] For example, "Exhibition of Pictures," 6 June 1906, 9.
[91] "Art Exhibition: Paintings by Miss Jean Wilson," *Register*, 10 April 1923, 11.
[92] "A Talented South Australian," *Advertiser*, 10 April 1923, 11.

adult career spanned the Modernist era and like those other Art Needleworkers who paved the way, Maude was similarly an example of a former Adelaide School of Design student who was enabled by its training and commercial model.

A brief examination of Maude Prosser's independent commercial activities gives further evidence that the business activities of the Adelaide School of Design's Art Needlework Society provided a self-determining income model for those operating independent endeavours. As previously noted in Chapter Three, in 1907 Maude Prosser left her position as Superintendent of Art Needlework at the School of Design to operate the Liberty Depot at 28 Gawler Place with Annie Gill as a silent partner. Like the Art Needlework Society, Maude imported materials from England.[93] As the historian Bridget Jolly observed, 'by the time [Maude] resigned [from the Adelaide School of Design], she had already established her expertise in work she was to continue as an independent craftswoman.' This thesis has shown independent Art Needleworkers such as Maude Prosser not only honed their skills at the School, they also learnt the allied commercial business strategies to successfully operate an independent enterprise.[94] This is because Maude deployed the same differentiated income strategy as the South Australian Art Needleworkers previously discussed in the first section of this chapter. For example, in her combined income of 1906, the year prior to leaving the School to establish the Liberty Depot, her teaching wage of £21, 14 shillings and 2 pence was supplemented by work through the Art Needlework Society of £69, 10 shillings and 6 pence, as well as additional earnings from commissions and colour drawings. Like Mary Hamilton, she also offered an interior design service.[95] In the same manner as Ethel Macgeorge, she

[93] Prior to Maude Prosser's employment as Art Needlework teacher at the Adelaide School of Design, Elizabeth Meek, Maude's predecessor imported the requisite Art Needlework materials, as delegated by H.P. Gill.
[94] Bridget Jolly, "Maude Fanny Prosser – An Adelaide Decorative Artist," History SA Community Program Grant: South Australian Embroidery Guild, 9, URL accessed 22 January 2021.
[95] Maude Fanny Prosser, Letter to Principal Librarian and Secretary, 11 July 1907, *Gill Enquiry*, GRG 19/75, State Records of South Australia.

procured materials for retail. Clearly, she was capitalising on the opportunity of different income streams rather than relying on teaching alone. As Jolly's scholarship demonstrated, she sustained this approach by teaching at the School but concurrently operated her own studio.[96] Although her independent practice began with Art Needlework, she also learnt other Arts & Crafts applied arts at the School and so her independent studios practice included leatherwork and copper repoussé, as well as continuing to import fashionable materials suitable for Art Needlework and other textiles. Like Jean L. Wilson, she combined teaching with commissioned work because although she was on the staff of the School for decades, at the same time, she was able to simultaneously establish and operate a number of studios producing the wider applied arts. Even though her career was towards the end of the era of Art Needlework and edging into Modernism, Maude Prosser's actions and pursuit of an independent income were just the same as Jean L. Wilson, the Hamilton sisters and Ethel Macgeorge because they each shared the same foundational skills and commercial modelling of the Art Needlework Society connected to the Adelaide School of Design. Like the others, Maude Prosser showed initiative in her pursuit of an independent income and she too remained single until her death in 1950.

Throwing a wider net, other South Australian Art Needleworkers who trained at the Adelaide School of Design established practices that transitioned into the applied arts throughout the Modernist period of the early twentieth century. Whereas Maude Prosser confined her endeavours to South Australia, women such Louise (Loui) Benham (1868-1949) took their Art Needlework training beyond the geographical borders of South Australia. Although Mary Hamilton and Ethel Macgeorge had done this a decade before, Loui differed in that branched out into other areas of applied arts to establish independent financial security. At the

[96] Jolly, "Maude Fanny Prosser – An Adelaide Decorative Artist," 9.

beginning of her professional life, Loui's Art Needlework at the Adelaide School of Design secured her a paid position as an instructor in Art Needlework at the branches of Perth Technical School in 1904.[97] At the same time, she operated her own private Art Needlework studio in the Commercial Building in Adelaide Street, Fremantle where she took on commissions and taught students. She specialised in original Australian floral motifs (the style of which can be seen in Figure 22) and sold partially worked Art Needlework kits of her own designs.[98]

Figure 22.



ART NEEDLEWORK.

Original designs of Art Needlework by Loui Benham and worked by her students. "Fremantle Technical School: Work Of The Students," *Western Mail*, 8 August 1913.

Like Maude Prosser, Loui continued to study the applied arts so that she could practise and teach wood carving, leather work, gesso, marquetry, pyrography and painting throughout her

[97] Dr. Dorothy Dickson, "Angels in the Studio' in Western Australia part 4: Those who stayed," *Australiana*, *Volume 43*, no. 3, 46-56.
[98] "Social Notes," *The West Australian*, 28 September 1904, 8. The image seen in Figure 22 shows her design style and the presence of the encircling device utilised by designers trained at the Adelaide School of Design.

career.[99] She travelled abroad at least twice to further her training. There is an account of her travelling to London and Germany in 1909 to study art, and she also travelled with the decorator Mary Campion to at least London and Marseille in 1930.[100] By 1915, Loui owned her own studio on the second floor of the Princes Building, St. Georges Terrace, Perth.[101]

The success she demonstrated as an independent female artist making her own living is evidenced by the details of her estate after she died. Having remained single, her trustees auctioned off a portion of Perth Town land at 9 Malcolm Street which Loui had 'improved' with a two-story residential building containing three self-contained flats.[102] She also had another residence at 57 Havelock Street, Perth.[103] As Loui's estate illustrates, her transition from Art Needlework to the other applied arts made it possible for her to usurp the expected path of a wife, financially dependent upon a husband.

Art Needlework Leading to Independence and Initiative Beyond the Studio: Case Study – Amy L. Tomkinson, Former Student of the Adelaide School of Design

Of all the woman who used their initial design and Art Needlework training to launch a life of independent expression, Amy Louisa Tomkinson (1856-1943) is the most compelling example. Amy was the elder sister of Edith Tomkinson, the ecclesiastical needleworker in the Society of St. Paul and St. Peter's Guild whose 1878 diary entries of needlework were analysed in Chapter One. As well as needlework, Edith also mentioned Amy in her diary because that year, the sisters trekked the countryside or travelled together and Amy often

[99] Dickson, "Those who stayed," 46-56, and "Applied Arts: Interesting Exhibition," *The Daily News*, 24 November 1915, 9, "Social Notes," *The West Australian*, 16 August 1910, 7, and *The Mirror*, 3 September 1909, 5.
[100] *Sunday Times*, 10 January 1909, 6.
[101] Loui Benham's studio had a capital value of £183 in 1915, "City of Perth Rate Book, South Ward, 1880-1946, State Records Office of Western Australia, Series S2512.
[102] *The Western Australian*, 14 April 1950, 25.
[103] *The Western Australian*, 23 December 1949, 22.

drove the horses.[104] Whereas Edith enjoyed staying at Mongona, their summer residence in the Adelaide Hills pictured below, Amy increasingly pursued interests in Adelaide, living in the family's Adelaide residence in the storey above the Bank of Australasia on the corner of King William and Currie Street seen in Figure 23b. Both homes were impressively substantial at the time and would have provided Amy with a relatively carefree domestic arrangement. Yet Amy chose to become particularly active in a number of areas of social reform and in so doing travelled widely and practised independent written and oral expression, all very much in the public realm.

Figure 23a.



Mongona, the Tomkinson family residence at Mount Lofty, State Library of South Australia, PRG 631/2/308

[104] For example, Mary de Crespigny, *The Adelaide Establishment: the 1878 Diary of a Provincial Lady of Mount Lofty and Adelaide*, Adelaide: Gillingham Printers Pty Ltd, 1987, 54.

Figure 23b.



Samuel White Sweet, *View of the Bank of Australasia on the corner of King William and Currie Streets*, Acre 109 collection, State Library of South Australia, B42996.

Around the time of enfranchisement, the formative training at the Adelaide School of Design not only opened a student's eyes to wider horizons but also formed the launchpad to broader studies. In her own words, Amy Tomkinson said that her studies gave her 'light and knowledge.'[105] She first enrolled at the Adelaide School of Design for Tuesday and Friday morning Design classes with H.P. Gill in 1886.[106] The following year, she re-enrolled in Design and also took the pottery class and the Perspective Drawing course.[107] At the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition in 1888, she exhibited Art Needlework in the form of a 'pretty sachet-bag' which she had 'designed and worked' in pink and green silks to a clover design.[108] As well as this, she exhibited her coloured designs for 'plaques and other objects' along with the rest of her design class.[109] These early courses in Art Needlework and Design

[105] "The School of Design," *Register*, 2 December 1915, 10.
[106] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheets 4,5.
[107] Vandepeer, *Adelaide School of Design Rolls 1885-1909*, sheets 6,7.
[108] "No.IX: Specially for South Australian Ladies," *Evening Journal*, 11 August 1888, 6.
[109] "The Art Section: South Australia," *Argus*, 9 October 1888, 4.

in the conducive environment at the Adelaide School of Design became a launchpad for Amy's independent activities, not least travel.[110]

Mostly, Amy travelled for the purposes of study. For example, after two years at the Adelaide School of Design, she journeyed to Norway, England, France, Germany, Bavaria, Sweden, Italy, visiting many other places.[111] Initially, her studies in Europe were an extension of her arts education at the Adelaide School of Design with a particular interest in the Scandinavian Sloyd method of education, but she also explored other applied arts, spinning, weaving and music believing that 'hand and brain should ever work together' to create both 'use and beauty.'[112]

These travels for the purposes of learning also fuelled Amy's literary aspirations. Some of her articles in the receptive repository of the School of Design's *Every Day Art Club* magazine date to this time, including a paper on the Paterkirchen, a wood carving school in Bavaria.[113] Other articles were a safe deposit for her independent opinions. For example, in an illustrated article on Port Lincoln, Amy did not just recount her travel, she also expressed her thinly veiled outrage at local Aboriginal 'survivors' of 'fierce encounters' being 'caught' by police to reside at the Poonindie Mission, and commenting on the 'unspeakable sadness' of a 'subdued and melancholy bush that [does] know more than is wise to tell.'[114] Amy continued to express her independence and initiative in the written word throughout her life. For instance, after she visited India, she published a ten-page pamphlet recounting a journey from

[110] "The School of Design," 2 December 1915, 10.
[111] "Our Adelaide Women of Interest: Playgrounds for the Little Children: A Chat with Miss Tomkinson," *Daily Herald*, 19 July 1913, 5.
[112] Ibid. She was not averse to travelling alone such as her journey to Russia.
[113] *School of Design. Art Club Magazines: 1894-1908*, *Volume 1*, 1891, 41-45, Special Collection, University of South Australia.
[114] *School of Design. Art Club Magazines: 1894-1908*, *Volume 1*, 1889, 10-15, Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Calcutta along the Ganges River in a steamer followed by various gauges of train and finally on the back of ponies through mountain country to Darjeeling.[115] Later, upon her return from Italy, she wrote a play called 'The Moorish Maid' which was acted in the Torrens Park home of the Robert and Joanna Barr Smith family.[116] Mostly, her writing was of a more serious nature and connected to her work in social justice and political reform.

Amy was interested in the advancement of social justice throughout her life and her initiatives in this area mostly involved collaborating with others. For example, she took a leading role in committee of the Aborigines Protection League and with her help, (as well as her own financial support) the League wrote a manifesto for an Aboriginal State. The manifesto argued for land rights, suggesting a large section of northern Australia, such as the 'Arnhem Land' be 'handed back' to Aboriginal people to be 'managed by themselves.' The League also objected to children, particularly 'half-caste' minors, being 'taken from their country, their home, their parents, from environments' and being 'placed with people of alien habits and speech, ostracised from association on equal terms with white children … unable to share in national traditions which are held to be most powerful factors in creating character.'[117] As part of this same organisation, Amy wrote to the Prime Minister of South Africa in 1928 to 'express alarm' at the 'Colour Bill' that defined apartheid, and objected to 'persistent attempts to repatriate Indians' because it encroached 'on their rights as free citizens of the British Commonwealth.'[118] Much of her collaborative initiatives were on behalf of other women. For instance, Amy was one of three women who established the Adelaide Women's Club, which unlike the Queen Adelaide Club or Lyceum Club whose

[115] Amy. L. Tomkinson, *Darjeeling*, Adelaide: J. H. Sherring & Co, 1888.
[116] Lucy Morice quoting Amy Tomkinson in "Stately Homes: Links with the Early Days No.1 – Torrens Park," *Mail*, 19 May 1928, 13.
[117] "Proposed Aboriginal State," *Voices of the North*, 10 June 1926, 18.
[118] "Our Dark Brethren," *Daylight*, 31 January 1927, 5.

membership was contingent on association or qualification, was an organisation for social justice that welcomed working women alongside society doyennes and housewives.[119]

As well as collaborating with others on matters of social justice, Amy actively involved herself in social reform across an impressive range of areas. For example, she was the sixth female Justice of the Peace in South Australia, sitting regularly on the bench over a period of 26 years. She was an early member of the Kindergarten Union and advocated both for kindergarten reform as well as for local councils to establish children's playgrounds.[120] She was on a committee for the School of Mothers.[121] As early as 1903, she promoted the 'scientific and practical training for women in relation to agricultural pursuits, dairy farming, fruit culture, horticulture, &c' questioning why women were only allowed into the relatively minor courses at the Adelaide School of Mines and precluded from more rigorous studies at Roseworthy Agricultural College that would have afforded them independent 'profitable occupations.'[122] Amy was still active this movement in 1916 with her establishment of a womens branch of the Farmers and Settlers Association.[123] Two years later, she gave a speech in Riverton, South Australia on 'What Women are Doing on the Land in Other Lands.'[124] With food production in mind, during World War One she instigated a Soldiers Cabbage Patch League, encouraging others, especially children, to supply the Cheer Up Hut with food for soldiers at home seeking relief.[125] Amy became a committee member and president of the Travellers' Aid Society, officer of the Adelaide Rescue Society, the Lady

[119] Amy was a member of every executive until her death. At the centenary of South Australia's colonisation in 1936, Amy wrote an article on the significance of women's clubs and organisations during the first one hundred years. Louise Brown, B. Ch.de Crespigny, Mary.P. Harris, Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, Phebe. N. Watson, "Women's Social Clubs in Adelaide," *A Book of South Australia: Women in the First One Hundred Years*," Adelaide: Rigby Limited, 1936, 240-242.
[120] "Our Adelaide Women of Interest: Playgrounds for the Little Children: a Chat with Miss Tomkinson," *Daily Herald*, 19 July 1913, 5.
[121] "School for Mothers," *Daily Herald, 16 September 1913, 8.*
[122] "Women as Agriculturalists," *Evening Journal*, 30 April 1903, 1.
[123] "Women in Agriculture," *Advertiser*, 14 December 1916, 6.
[124] "Notes from Country Centres," *Chronicle*, 9 November 1918, 11.
[125] "An Appeal," *Southern Argus,* 29 March 1917, 3.

Victoria Buxton Girls' Club, Victoria League and the League of Empire.[126] She was also a 'secretary of the League of Nations Union, a leading member of the Cheer-Up Society and Navy League, of the Workers Educational Association Council and Friends of the Public Library.'[127] These kinds of social reform activities in the public realm are just some examples of Amy Tomkinson's leadership.

Much of Amy's advocacy was for other women. She was on a committee to establish female student housing in Adelaide.[128] During her time in England, she supported the militant suffragette movement fighting to gain the right to vote. Already enfranchised herself, in London she worked 'side by side in the fight at the London Centre Station.'[129] At home, she took on the role of Secretary of the National Council of Women and joined Rosetta Birks and Catherine Helen Spence (1825-1910) to meet Vida Goldstein (1869-1949) on the train platform on her campaign for candidature of the Federal senate in 1903.[130] She visited 'prominent women workers' around Australia as an 'enthusiastic advocate of the higher education for women, particularly in economic and political subjects, as a means of preparation for the exercise of the franchise, and for making woman a complement to, and co-worker with man instead of a mere adjunct.'[131] Her visit to Sydney for this purpose was even reported as far away as Queensland but for Amy, her advocacy for women was much closer to home. She publicly stated that 'Holloway was the only place any self-respecting woman could reside in nowadays in England.'[132]

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[126] "Obituary," *Advertiser*, 24 November 1943, 6.
[127] "Death of Miss A. Tomkinson," *News*, 23 November 1943, 5.
[128] "Housing for women students: a co-partnership scheme," *Advertiser*, 26 November 1913, 18.
[129] "Our Adelaide Women of Interest: Playgrounds for Children: A Chat with Miss Tomkinson," *Daily Herald*, 19 July 1913, 5.
[130] "Miss Vida Goldstein: Arrival in Adelaide: An interesting Interview," *Express and Telegraph*, 22 September 1903, 1.
[131] "An Interesting Visitor," *Brisbane Courier*, 27 March 1902, 6.
[132] "Our Adelaide Women of Interest: Playgrounds for the children: a chat with Miss Tomkinson," *Daily Herald*, 19 July 1913, 5. She also kept a 'suffrage corner' in her house complete with British newspaper articles and a photograph of leading suffragette, Christobel Pankhurst.

As part of her advocacy for women, Amy took an active interest in politics and political reform. For example, she was one of the few 'colonial ladies who managed to get into the House of Commons to hear the second reading of the Commonwealth Bill' in 1900.[133] Moreover, twice she ran unsuccessfully for positions as councillor along with another former pupil of the Adelaide School of Design, Annie Hornabrook (1865-1938) and member of the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild. Both Amy and Annie believed that 'women [were] needed to represent women and children, especially in the matter of foods, sanitation, health and recreation.'[134] If successful, they would have been the first female councillors in Australia, hence their campaign was reported in newspapers across the country.[135] Together, Catherine Helen Spence and Amy L. Tomkinson founded the grass roots Social Students Society with Amy as the first secretary. The Social Students Society was a non-political group for the 'intellectual and moral development' of its members.[136] Again with Spence as President, in 1909, Amy was the first treasurer of the Women's Non-Party Association, a group that framed its constitution as a 'platform demanding equal Federal' laws addressing equal pay for equal work, 'education reform, appointment of women to municipal and district councils and international peace and arbitration and proportional representations' amongst other matters.[137]

The independence, initiative and advocacy that Amy L. Tomkinson's showed after she left the Adelaide School of Design is representative of a number of the early Art Needleworkers. For example, Annie Hornabrook was similarly active in public advocacy for women and, as mentioned, stood for council election at the same time as Amy.[138] Gertrude Josephine Jude

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[133] "Personal," *Express and Telegraph*, 3 July 1900, 3.
[134] "Takes the Cake," *Critic*, 18 October 1916, 7.
[135] For example, "Lady Shire Councillors," *Queanbeyan Age and Queanbeyan Observer*, 5 December 1916, 5, and "Lady Councillors: Candidates in Adelaide," *Daily Mail*, 27 November 1916, 2.
[136] "The Late Catherine Helen Spence: An Autobiography: XXX111-Women and Children," *Observer*,
[137] "Political Interest was Unladylike in 1894," *The Advertiser*, 20 July 1949, 7.
[138] "Women Candidates," *Daily Herald*, 18 November 1916, 4. Annie Hornabrook was also in the Guild of St. Paul. See Chapter Two, 77.

(1880-1868) initially made a living from Art Needlework whilst acting as Secretary and Treasurer of the Liberal Union.[139] Hilda Schlank (1877-1959) and Olive Dutton Green (1878-1930) went on to carve out careers as artists in Europe.[140] Like Amy, Constance Thallon (1874-1937) furthered her study of the applied arts overseas and ran a successful studio in Adelaide very early on in the Arts & Crafts movement, specialising in Art Needlework and chip-carving.[141] Gwen Barringer (née Adamson 1882-1960) and Maida Wright (1871-1929) both began as Art Needleworkers but transitioned to operating their own studios over a number of decades in painting and china painting respectively.[142] Isabel (Maude) Priest (1885-1945) attended the Adelaide School of Design on a scholarship and went on to study overseas before being accepted into the Royal Drawing School. She proceeded to operate her own successful studio.[143] Lena Anna Unbehaun (1881-1964) initially launched a career in Art Needlework before embarking on a distinguished nursing career 'in the Far East, USA and Europe' and in 1916 she travelled alone to London to offer her services to the War Office culminating in 'three years' war service.'[144] Closer to home, Winifred Julia Purton Scott (1865-1950) went on to establish a long career as an author and journalist under the pen name of Magpie. Further explanation of these women's independent initiatives is beyond the bounds of this thesis and this incomplete list merely serves to reinforce the trajectory that women were able to make after gaining foundational art and design skills. Amy L. Tomkinson was chosen as a case study because there is irrefutable evidence linking her initiatives to her initial, alternative tertiary education at the Adelaide School of Design.

[139] For example, "Liberal Union," *Advertiser*, 24 June 1914, 18.
[140] "London Personal Notes," *Chronicle*, 22 December 1906, 3.
[141] *Chronicle*, 30 November 1912, 57.
[142] Maida Wright was in the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild, see Appendix 1.
[143] "Adelaide Girl's Art: Miss Maude Priest," *News*, 5 July 1924, 7.
[144] One Hundred Years of Nursing in South Australia: S.A. Nurses in the West," *Advertiser*, 16 November 1937, 8, and "Personal," *Albany Advertiser*, 23 September 1922, 3.

Amy herself observed the effect of her early, alternative arts education at the Adelaide School of Design. She wrote to the *Register* publicly stating that H.P. Gill and her studies at the Adelaide School of Design School gave her a grounding in education that she valued. She praised the 'thoroughness of the teaching, its scientific-value, and its creative inspiration' explaining that under H.P. Gill's guidance, the institution 'reached a level so high that its influence extended throughout Australasia, and its excellence was acknowledged even in European centres.'[145] She described the 'permanent debt of gratitude' she and former students felt to H.P. Gill and most persuasively, articulated that for her 'personally, it was an all-round educational experience.'[146]

> … in reference to the Adelaide School of Design … when under the inspired direction of the Mr. H. P. Gill, reached a level so high that its influence extended throughout Australasia, and its excellence was acknowledged even in European centres. As a former student, I can bear ample testimony to the thoroughness of the teaching, its scientific-value, and its creative inspiration. Art was revealed in an entirely new light to us students, and became a free and living thing under the instruction of our able master. There are many among past students of Mr. Gill who are now artists on the high rungs of the ladder of fame, and others, like myself, who feel under a permanent debt of gratitude to him for giving us the light and knowledge to understand and appreciate the great works of art and handicraft that we have had opportunity to see in the famous galleries and collections of the world, both old and new. The Adelaide School of Design enjoyed a reputation of which any place might be proud, and

[145] "The School of Design," *Register*, 2 December 1915, 10.
[146] Ibid.

> we honour the man whose ability and integrity raised it to such a point. Personally, it was an all-round educational experience.[147]

As her letter to the *Register* in 1915 demonstrates, for Amy L. Tomkinson the Adelaide School of Design was an 'all-round educational experience.' She herself linked the South Australian design education to other artists paths of curiosity, one in which she also designed without the domestic expectations of marriage and children.

Conclusion

This study of the neglected field of Art Needlework in South Australia demonstrates that it was an avenue of achievement and independence for women in the late 19th century. These women exemplify the phenomenon of the New Woman. New Women had new choices. The historian Clare Wright found that the Australian New Woman was not only encouraged towards 'rational dress,' but also 'affectionate parenting, companionable marriage, higher education [and] outdoor exercise.'[148] In South Australia, as Alison Mackinnon showed, New Women took up the new choice of higher education in the hope that it would offer 'financial and emotional independence,' perhaps a 'dispassionate' choice of marriage, a career, or the opportunity to play an active part in public life. [149] However, by 1900 only 24 women had graduated from the University of Adelaide.[150] On the other hand, the alternative form of higher education at the Adelaide School of Design next door undoubtedly provided Art Needlework students with leverage to pursue their own agency.

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[147] Amy L. Tomkinson, "The School of Design," *Register*, 2 December 1915, 10.
[148] Clare Wright, *You Daughters of Freedom: The Australians Who Won The Vote and Inspired Freedom*, Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2018, 24.
[149] Alison Mackinnon, *The New Woman: Adelaide's Early Graduates*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press in association with the University of Adelaide Foundation, 1986, 210.
[150] Mackinnon, *The New Women: Adelaide's Early Women Graduates*, 27.

As the first to pave the way in establishing their own Art Needlework studios, Mary Hamilton, Ethel Macgeorge, Jean L. Wilson and Emily Hamilton eschewed the traditional expectations of women to marry and raise a family. Instead, they tenaciously pursued an arts and design education at the Adelaide School of Design for the purpose of utilising their Art Needlework skills to earn their own living. Not only did these women activate their design skills, they also leveraged the financial and marketing behaviours first modelled to them through the commercial operations of the Adelaide School of Design. As a promotional technique, they each aligned themselves with elite society, and they all used exhibitions as sales rooms in central locations. Each Art Needleworker pursued multiple income streams to sustain their endeavour and they all traded on their ability to design their own work.

Although Loui Benham and Maude Prosser used their design and Art Needlework training as a means to transition into other applied arts, they also utilised the same financial and marketing skills first demonstrated at the School through the Art Needlework Society. Even though the scope of their practice was broader than those purely dedicated to Art Needlework, their sewing skills served the same purpose in launching and sustaining an independent income, one that was derived from their ability to trade upon both the foundational design and execution skills they first learnt at the Adelaide School of Design.

In particular, Amy Tomkinson's case study proves the environment of the Adelaide School of Design clearly provided a foundation for the type of characteristics of the New Woman of the time. As an alternative form of higher education to that offered at the University of Adelaide, the Adelaide School of Design became a launch pad for the New Woman to express her agency in word and deed.

Conclusion

Needlework was ubiquitous women's work during the Victorian era so in the 'watershed moment for the women's movement' it is not surprising that women made use of their sewing skills to secure new choices as New Women.[1] In taking South Australian women's needle skills for granted, we have neglected the journey that many middle and upper-class women took in moving from the domestic to the public sphere. Furthermore, we have ignored their transition in the very place in the world where women first gained the dual right to vote and stand for parliament. As this thesis has shown, in both Art History, and the history of South Australian women, Art Needlework was more significant than has previously been appreciated. The Adelaide School of Design played a forgotten role in providing women with skills to realise their own agency, independence, and income.

The 1873 *Special Loan Exhibition* at the South Kensington Museum set a course for secular and ecclesiastical Art Needlework. The transition towards the commercialisation of Art Needlework in South Australia was made possible by women seeking to improve themselves and beautify their surroundings. Underpinning the role of Art Needlework in South Australia was the desire to adorn, the leadership decisions taken by H.P. Gill at the Adelaide School of Design, and the prioritisation of original design. In essence, South Australian women absorbed the influence from abroad and began to beautify and improve their often harsh or undeveloped surroundings; new churches surrounded by dust were provided with the relieving contrast of a beautiful altar frontal and other vestiture. After all, the women engaging in ecclesiastical embroidery and Art Needlework were of the same ilk as the North Adelaide ladies who raised the seed funding for Christ Church on their side of the Torrens

[1] Clare Wright, *You Daughters of Freedom: The Australians Who Won The Vote and Inspired Freedom*, Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2018, 23.

River so that they could arrive at their weekly service less wet and dishevelled from crossing its muddy bed.[2]

After the committee of the *Special Loan Exhibition* elevated the tone of ecclesiastical embroidery, the South Australian newspapers repeatedly mentioned Art Needlework's key English institutions with writers rarely failing to acknowledge royal patronage. This elevated tone on the subject of Art Needlework was apparent on a local level too with vice-regal attendances at exhibitions which, again, the press never failed to mention.[3] Constant values of progress, aesthetic fashions and improvement were drip-fed to the South Australian public through the media.

In conjunction with influencing the fashion of the more elegantly toned Art Needlework, the South Australian press reinforced the validation of Art Needlework as an acceptable form of employment for middle and upper-class women further down the social ladder than the patrons of the English institutions. The same Princess Christian who signed the letter secreted inside the back cover of the *Catalogue of the Special Loan Exhibition of Decorative Art Needlework Made Before 1800* book in the library of the Embroiderers' Guild of South Australia was also the patron of the School of Art Needlework, and the School's purpose was to provide financially compromised gentlewomen with an income. In this way, royal patronage of Art Needlework institutions softened the otherwise unacceptable notion of middle and upper-class women working for a living. This filtered through to South Australia with the Ladies' Work Society recorded in the Adelaide press as 'a new avenue of feminine employment' producing high quality Art Needlework.[4] Essentially, a transmuted elegance of

[2] Cheryl Williss, *Miss Marryat's Circle: A Not So Distant Past*, Mile End, Wakefield Press, 2018, 47.
[3] For example, "Lady Jersey in Adelaide," *South Australian Register*, 11 August 1891, 4.
[4] "The History of the Fortnight, *Express and Telegraph*, 21 September 1881, 2.

tone in ecclesiastical and secular Art Needlework opened the space for women to turn their needlework to commercial ends.

Arguably the most beautifully embroidered ecclesiastical work in the colony of South Australia was executed by the Community of St. Dominic. This is because the nun's skill level was beyond that of the existing skills of someone like Edith Tomkinson whose entry level skills when she joined the Guild of St. Paul would have been domestic in nature. Like the Sisters in North Adelaide, the Protestant women also worked collaboratively. By working together, they were able to increase the skill level of those less experienced through a system of hierarchical skill, probation and quality control.

The constant between the Protestant Society of St. Paul and the St. Peter's Cathedral guilds and the Catholic St. Dominic's atelier was the desire to adorn. The ecclesiastical embroiderers sought to beautify the sacred spaces of the colony at a time when there was a proliferation of new churches. Just fifty years after proclamation in 1886, there were already 820 places of worship in the colony.[5] In a symbiotic relationship, the desire to adorn sacred spaces tapped into the commercial market. Expensive silks for Tractarian style ecclesiastical vestments had to be imported and so the cost was offset by embroidery sales, which is how a cycle of beauty for cash, and cash for beauty, inevitably resulted in a commercial model.

The new Director of the Adelaide School of Design, H.P. Gill, quickly realised the potential of the fledgling commercial model first used by South Australia's three ecclesiastical ateliers. With a personal background conducive to a commercial artisan environment, and prior

[5] H.J. Scott, *South Australia in 1887-8: A Handbook for the Melbourne International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1888, Adelaide: H.F. Leader, Government Printer, 1888*, 112-122, recorded 820 places of worship in South Australia three years after the St. Dominic's atelier was instigated and just one year after the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild was established.

experience working with women on an equal footing, he tapped into his wife's ecclesiastical embroidery connections for the benefit of the students at the School. This was timely because not only was the South Australian embroidery work held in high repute, there were also nascent government notions of a future sericulture industry that would have provided home grown silk. Gill's harnessing of the existing ecclesiastical needlework skills in a combined effort to exhibit South Australian Art Needlework at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition of 1888/1889 was inspired. In an extremely effective marketing launch, he created national press attention for Art Needlework as the first technical art at the Adelaide School of Design.

During his tenure, Gill's leadership decisions opened opportunities for whole cohorts of women in multiple ways. First, the launch of Art Needlework as the first technical art did not just come at a time when there was a desire to adorn sacred spaces. Art Needlework was also the fashionable needlework style of the Arts & Crafts period, one that dismissed the previous trend for Berlin wool work, or tapestry, into darker corners. In an atmosphere of self-help, women who wanted to beautify their own domestic spaces but did not have the wherewithal to import expensive Morris & Co textiles or kits could instead enrol in courses at the Adelaide School of Design to make their own objects. Regardless of prior education, and in contrast to the University requirement for matriculation, students under Gill's leadership leveraged their existing needlework skills as an entry point into courses such as Decorative Needlework or Design for Art Needlework. Once enrolled, they could transfer foundational design skills across to other technical arts in the syllabus.

Second, Gill advocated and invested considerable time implementing and sustaining the South Kensington examination system. It became a desirable assessment in the South Australian education system, which in turn resulted in women gaining qualifications to

improve their own skill level and/or teach others in the private and government schools. It also gave those women already working in art and design an opportunity for continuous professional development, and because Gill offered evening as well as daytime classes they were able to engage in flexible conditions. As Chapter Three demonstrated, statistically, many more women engaged with the Adelaide School of Design as an alternative form of higher education than the University of Adelaide just down the road.

Third, the Art Needlework Society that Gill instigated and then brought under the governance of the School provided women with the ability to learn and earn. Not only did the Society unlock remunerative opportunities for women, it also validated the work of the School as reputable and came open up the first teaching and administrative employment opportunities for women at an arts institution in Australia.

The commercial model of the Art Needlework Society was crucial to the success of individual women because it provided an exemplar and led to practitioners such as Mary Hamilton, Ethel Macgeorge and Jean L. Wilson to be amongst the first to operate their own art and design studios, certainly in South Australia. As the comparative analysis of business styles in Chapter Four established, they not only implemented the articulated payment scheme that differentiated design from execution, they also created multiple income streams to ensure commercial sustainability. Just as they had observed from their unofficial apprenticeship in the Art Needlework Society, they leveraged exhibitions and patronage, and promoted social connection.

Women engaged with Art Needlework from a desire to adorn, but their trajectory through the Adelaide School of Design was underpinned by the element of design itself. It was design

that drove the Tractarian style and it was the desire of the South Australian women to adorn their sacred spaces, which in turn created the need for a commercial model to afford the silks. It was original design that was embedded in the rules of the Art Needlework Society and original bespoke design that sang to a clientele seeking fashionable Arts & Crafts objects. It was the same element that allowed for the differentiated payment scheme that afforded a financially viable model for those who went on to operate independent studios. The very fact that design was foregrounded in the syllabus of the Adelaide School of Design made it possible for students to transfer their skills to other fashionable Arts & Crafts applied arts whilst at the School and throughout their careers.

Former Art Needlework students such as Amy L. Tomkinson and Mary I. Hamilton were emblematic of the New Woman outlook and accomplishments, yet their achievements at a time when South Australian women were only just realising enfranchisement have been completely overlooked. For example, in 2019, a State Dinner to Commemorate 125 years of women's suffrage in South Australia was held in the Adelaide Town Hall. Neither Amy or Mary, nor any other women mentioned in this thesis were included in the impressive portrait gallery of trailblazers projected on the walls throughout the evening.[6] Despite Art Needleworkers establishing and operating their own businesses at a time when that was radical, the women brought to light in this thesis were unable to be celebrated because both they, and the significance of Art Needlework, are missing from the existing scholarship. Art Needlework has been neglected in the scholarship because, as suggested in the Introduction, the existing literature has presumed that needlework was a tedious chore for women and dismissed it.

[6] "State Dinner to commemorate 125 years of women's suffrage in South Australia," 6 August 2019, Adelaide Town Hall – Auditorium, Premier and Cabinet & Office for Women, DCP21/2128: B1212881, URL accessed 22 January 2023. The images of significant women of South Australia were projected onto the recesses of the Town Hall walls.

In investigating Art Needlework in South Australia, I have revealed a story not just about an overlooked field of art practice, but of significant female emancipation. As Chapter One demonstrated, sewing was a prevalent, if not *the* prevalent Victorian woman's skill, but its role in pivoting the South Australian women towards independence has not hitherto been examined. Likewise, there has been no scholarship on the South Australian ecclesiastical ateliers, yet by 1889, Adelaide was already a city of churches so it is logical that those sacred spaces would engender embroidery workshops. Also, Art Needlework was such a prominent style of artistic endeavour in the late 19th and early 20th century but only with this study, has it been recognised as the first technical art at the Adelaide School of Design.

There are a number of other ways in which this thesis is original and a contribution to the existing scholarship. Margaret Allen, Mary Hutchinson and Alison Mackinnon have all demonstrated how examined the colonial South Australian woman's diaries can offer significant insights into their lives. By applying a new methodology to shining a different light on Edith Tomkinson's activities recorded in her diary, I believe I have been able to more fully illuminate the pervasive needlework skills inherent in the day of the life of a 19th century woman.[7] V. Irene Cochrane observed that the employment opportunities created for women by Arts & Crafts Movement in Britain translated to needlewomen working anonymously for men or isolated at home. I have shown that in South Australia, women worked collaboratively in the ecclesiastical ateliers and the Art Needlework Society.[8] Moreover, the Guilds and the Society brought the women into the heart of the city and their names and their objects were more often than not listed individually in descriptive newspaper articles. Both R. M. Gibbs and Helen Jones drew attention to female school children

[7] Margaret Allen, Mary Hutchison, Alison Mackinnon, *Fresh Evidence, New Witnesses: Finding Women's History*, Netley, S.A: South Australian Government Printer, 1989, 26-27.
[8] V. Irene Cockroft, *New Dawn Women: Women in the Arts & Crafts and Suffrage Movements at the Dawn of the 20th Century*, Guildford: Watts Gallery, 2005, 15.

receiving sewing instruction whilst boys were given extra lessons in arithmetic however, I have shown that needlework skills were seen as valuable to the economy, particularly in light of a nascent sericulture in South Australia, and furthermore, needlework provided employment for women from teaching positions through to studio practice.[9] Pat Kirkham cautioned about exaggerating the success of independent female practitioners but I have recognised many women who studied Design and Art Needlework at the Adelaide School of Design before establishing successful careers that afforded them independent livelihoods, women such as those discussed in Chapter 6.[10] Bridget Jolley previously recovered the long career of Maude Prosser, but I have been able to show exactly how she was supported by the School and in particularly the Art Needlework Society.[11]

In particular, this thesis addresses a significant gap in the scholarship focused on colonial South Australian women's entry into higher education. Fiona Sherwin and G.L. Fischer studied H.P. Gill's paintings and career in Adelaide but I have been able to expose how his background and personal connections led to the Art Needlework being the first technical art at the Adelaide School of Design, and furthermore, how his support of women's education bore out in the School's enrolments.[12] Neville Weston's thesis recorded the statistics of original designs sold through the Art Needlework Society but his study did not explore the earn and learn system H.P. Gill created for his students, nor realise the full extent of educational opportunity that the School of Design offered women at a time when that was

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[9] R.M. Gibbs, *Under the Burning Sun: A History of Colonial South Australia, 1836-1900*, Adelaide: Southern Heritage, 2013, 369, and Helen Jones, *In Her Own Name: a History of Women in South Australia from 1836,* Netley, South Australia: Wakefield Press, 1986, 46-77.
[10] Pat Kirkham, " 'If you have no sons': Furniture Making in Britain," in Judy Attfield and Pat Kirkham (ed), *A View From The Interior: Feminism, Women and Design*, London: The Women's Press, 1989, 109-130.
[11] Bridget Jolly, "Maude Fanny Prosser: An Adelaide Decorative Artist," Embroiders Guild of South Australia, 2012-2013, URL accessed 21 January 2021.
[12] G.L Fischer, "That the Future Might Find its Past: Some Notes on Harry Pelling Gill (1855-1916) Art Teacher; Curator of the Art Gallery of South Australia, Artist," unpublished manuscript, Art Gallery of South Australia Library,1982, and Fiona Sherwin, "Harry Pelling Gill: A Practising Artist," Hons. diss, Adelaide: University of Adelaide, 2003.

radical.[13] Alison Mackinnon investigated the South Australian New Women early university graduates. This study finds the far larger proportion of women, who, around the same time pursued an alternative art and design education a few doors down North Terrace at the Adelaide School of Design. This is one of the most significant gaps in the existing scholarship that my thesis addresses by illustrating its previously unacknowledged significance in this process.[14]

Why has the significance of Art Needlework been neglected in the historiography? One possible reason is because, as a technical art, Art Needlework offered a smooth transition for women from the domestic to the public sphere. It was neither nonconformist, dissenting, disruptive nor subversive. Instead, it was a quiet practice. As this thesis has shown, Art Needlework fell within the bounds of gentile acceptability. It was not threatening, nor frowned upon. There was less likely to be opposition from Victorian era parents or husbands who might not encourage a woman to enrol in a class. For these reasons, Art Needlework gave women an opportunity to activate an existing domestic skill to project themselves towards self-determination.

The importance of late 19th and early 20th century South Australian women receiving an education in design has been emphasised throughout this thesis. Design was not only the foundation of the female Adelaide School of Design student's education but an undercurrent that propelled them into designing their own lives away from the predictable Victorian and Edwardian expectations of wife and mother. This was the case for Amy L. Tomkinson and the others explored in this thesis. These women became the 'influencers' of their day, the

[13] Neville Weston, "The Professional Training of Artists in Australia, 1861-1963, with Special Reference to the South Australian Model," Ph.D. diss, Adelaide: University of Adelaide, 2006.
[14] Alison Mackinnon, *The New Woman: Adelaide's Early Graduates*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press in association with the University of Adelaide Foundation, 1986.

New Women of their time. What began with Gill seeing the Art Needlework Society as 'an opportunity for young women to secure training necessary for enabling them to earn an independent living' ended up, in the words of Amy L. Tomkinson, as 'an all-round educational experience.'[15] Not only was Art Needlework an acceptable practice for the middle and upper-class South Australian women to not only stitch embellishments and adorn but it also became a conduit for them to design their own initiatives. Art Needlework was an elegant thread to emancipation.

[15] *South Australian Register*, 26 June 1889, 5, and "The School of Design," *Register*, 2 December 1915, 10.

Appendix 1.

Roll of St Peter's Cathedral Guild as synthesised from Roll Call Book, *Volumes 1 & 2*
State Library of South Australia SRG 94/A1/15 and SRG 94/A1/51

Name	*Year joined*	*Address *those with an address were still listed as being in the St. Peter's Cathedral Guild Roll of Members 1906, 1909, 1917, 1924. This means that those without addresses resigned prior to 1906 or 1909.*
*The following are noted as member of the "work meeting" in the first notes establishing the St. Peter Cathedral Guild held on 30 March 1885. State Library of South Australia SRG 94/A1/51 It should be noted that some are not listed below in the Roll and Roll Call. Mrs Cussons, Grant, Ebsworth, Wright, Misses Borrow (2), Bagot, Back (2), Stevenson, Doswell, Wigley, Bath, Gill, Ward, Krieg, Drew.		
Henrietta Kennion	1885	*left 1894 and was presented with an Illuminated Address *most likely also in Guild of St. Paul
Elizabeth Downer	1885	
Isabella Colley	1885	
Caroline E. Dendy	1885	
Mrs Francis. J. Wright	1885	Later noted "In England". *also in the Guild of St. Paul.
Bessie Scott	1885	
Mona Jane O'Halloran	1885	
E.L. Tweford (illegible)	1885	
Sara. A. Evans	1885	
Beatrice Moffatt	1885	
Annie Honeywill	1885	
Annie James	1885	
Marion Phillips	1885	
Mrs Mary Dean	1885	Barton Terrace East, North Adelaide Prospect Road, Prospect Melbourne Street, North Adelaide 107 Gover Street, North Adelaide
Isabel Scott	1885	

Minnie Boothby	1885	
E. Mabel Lawrance	1885	
Miss Ethel King (1/2)	1885	“Kildare” Melbourne Street, North Adelaide
Evelyn M. Bath	1885	
Fanny Edith Borrow	1885	“Heycliffe”, Gilberton
Anna M. Wyrill	1885	
Julia Doswell	1885	*Edith A. Doswell in Guild of St .Paul
Mary. F. Milne	1885	
Lizzie G. Grant	1885	
Katrine A. Hawker	1885	
Maria Morgan		
Esther M. Board		
Miss Amy. Richardson	1885	Hawkers Road, Medindie
Fanny M. Richardson	1885	Also in the Guild of St. Paul
Mrs Grosset	1885 *not on earlier roll but later roll states 1885.	122 Barton Terrace, North Adelaide
Annie. W. Gill (wife of H.P. Gill)	1885	
Alice Kate King	1885	
N (?). H (?) Attenborough	1885	
Jessie Thorusou	1885	
Ethella Andrews	1885	
Miss Krieg 2/2	1885	Melbourne St, North Adelaide
Miss Georgina Hill	1885	“Alex House” South Terrace
Miss Werlin 1/2	1885	Clifton Street, Prospect
J. W. Hodgson	1885	

Mrs Grant	1885	Victoria Street, Prospect Ward Street, North Adelaide
Miss C. Frances. Tomkins	1887	Angas Street, Adelaide
Misses Evans (2) Grace A. Evans	1886	Barnard Street, North Adelaide Wellington Square
Miss Stedman Later Mrs Acraman	1886	146 Gover Street, North Adelaide Easter St (or Carter), Prospect
Mrs. W.S. Milne	1887	145 Jeffcott Street, North Adelaide Pennington Terrace, North Adelaide 40 Beaver Road
Ethel Cooper	1887?	
Alice Russell	1887?	
Edith Russell	1887?	
Miss Krieg 1/2	1887	Melbourne Street, North Adelaide
Miss Wright Helen L. Wright?	1889	"Claufearyeat" Gilberton
Miss Jacob	1889	"Tormore House" Childers Street, North Adelaide Barton Terrace, North Adelaide 5 Andover Flats, Childers Street, North Adelaide C/- Miss Poole, Rose Street, Prospect
Mrs Bodley	1890	Childers Street, North Adelaide
Miss Mabel Lloyd	1890	LeFevre Terrace, North Adelaide Archer Street, North Adelaide
Frances Hunt	1892	
Mrs Sweetapple	1892	Childers Street, North Adelaide
Beatrice E. Beevor	1893	
Lizzie Demper	1893	
Mrs Ada. Watson	1894	White Street, Walkerville
Miss Alice Maude Dean	1894	Molesworth Street, North Adelaide
Eveleen King	1894	
Miss Barnes	1894	Barton Terrace, North Adelaide
Miss Krieg 2/2	1894	Melbourne Street, North Adelaide
Miss Evelyn King 2/2	1894	Melbourne Street, North Adelaide
Mrs H.P. Parkhouse	1895	

Alice L. Steeds	1895	
Annie Satine (illegible)	1895	
Florence J. O'Halloran	1895	
Miss Werlin 1/3	1895	Clifton Street, Prospect
Susan Harmer	1896	
Eva Sturcke	1896	
Margaret Rowe	1896	
Mary Dorothy Harmer	1896	
Anna M. Moulden	1896	
Miss Ethel B. Bloxam	1896	Barton Terrace, North Adelaide "Mundow" Mount Lofty
Constance M. Stuckey	1896	
Hilda F. Hewgill	1896	
Mary Cusseu (illegible)	1896	
A. M. Barnes	1896	
Jlau Campbell	1897	
Florrie Campbell	1897	
Miss Emilie A. Law	1897	Kermode Street, North Adelaide Denbigh Cottage, North Adelaide
Mrs De Courcy Connor	1897	Barton Terrace, North Adelaide Barnard Street, North Adelaide
Misses Lungley (2)	1897	"Lexden" Molesworth Street, North Adelaide
Maude Todd	1897	
Lucy Mabel Oldham	1897	
Ethel (?). M. Gosse	1897	
Helena Judye? (illegible)	1897	
Carline Louisa Francis	1897	
Maggie English Brown	1897	
Ella E.M. Evans	1897	
Miss Joner. (illegible)	1897	Brougham Place, North Adelaide

Peacock (could be Pracock)		
Mrs Sillifant	1897	The Semaphore
Miss Toswell (illegible)	1897	Hawkers Road, Medindie
Miss J. Farr	1897?	Hill Street, North Adelaide
Miss C. Jennings	1897?	Brougham Place, North Adelaide Melbourne Street, North Adelaide
Miss Geneta Higgin	1898	Molesworth Street, North Adelaide
Mrs Ellen McKail	1898	Buxton Street, North Adelaide Palmer Place, North Adelaide 38 Ward Street Glenford Avenue, Myrtle Bank
Eleanor Alyson	1898	
Miss Amy Luxmore	1898	"Kingsmead" Brighton
Nancy Gosse	1898	
Minnie Mann	1898	
Elizabeth Werlin	1898	
Alice Wilson	1898	
Mrs Sarah Mumme (or Mann)	1898	Walkerville Road, East Adelaide Henley Beach
Miss Frances Lillicrapp	1898	Cambridge Terrace, Malvern
Mrs Bryant	1898	Burlington Street, Walkerville
Miss Ellie Johns	1899	Torrens Road, Ovingham
Marion Ayers	1899	
Mrs Chapman	1899	Church Terrace, Walkerville
Miss Doughty	1899	C/- Miss Chapman, Church Terrace, Walkerville
M. L. Stewart Browne	1900	Flora Terrace, Prospect *also in Guild of St. Paul
Miss O'Halloran	1900	"Font Hill" Childers Street, North Adelaide *also in the Guild of St. Paul.
Hilda Halcourt	1901	
Annie de Nenferille(?) Lucas	1901	

Miss Edith C. Tomkinson	1901	Commercial Bank, corner of King William St "Scarborough" Brougham Place, North Adelaide, later England Frome House, North Terrace *still on roll as member 1920 *also in Guild of St. Paul
Amy Berry	1901	
Miss Frances Wyatt Later Mrs Thompson?	1901	North East Road, Medindie Cowell, Franklin Harbour National Bank, Port Pirie C/- Mrs Wyatt, Northcote Terrace, Medindie
Irene Stafford	1902	
Miss. Jean H. Procter	1902	Hill Street, Glenelg
Daphne J. Horrocks	1902	
Emily Melville Hamilton	1902	
Constance Wakefield	1903	
Kate Turnbull	1903	
Helena B. Gray	1903	
Lillian M. Gray	1903	
Emily. E. Law	1903	
Miss J. Werlin	1903	
Ruby Clayton	1903	
Miss Doris Brown	1903	Lefevre Terrace, North Adelaide Stanley Street, North Adelaide
Mrs Drummond	1903	Mile End Rose Park Coffee Place, Hindley Street 21 South Terrace 5 Jervois Street, Hyde Park
Miss Carrie Clayton	1904	Robe Terrace, Medindie
Gertrude Jeffrey	1904	
Jennie I. Whittington	1904	
Mrs Alison Pope	1904	"Mount House" 114 Strangways Terrace, North Adelaide
Miss Amy. Fisher	1905	Walkerville

Effie Tolmer	1905	
Dorothy Lungley	1905	
Ellen Graham (illegible)	1906	
Maria Hughes	1906	
Miss Maida Wright	1906	Childers Street, North Adelaide
Mrs Millicent Mary McArthur	1906	Mount Lofty
Lilla B. Hornabrook	1906	*sister Annie Hornabrook was in Guild of St. Paul
Almerie C. May	1906	
Maisy (illegible) Downer	1906	
Mrs Harriet Holt	1906	Largs Bay
Kathleen R. Isaachsen	1906	
Miss A. Bray	1906	39 Molesworth Street, North Adelaide
Miss Annie Coglan	1907	102 Barton Terrace, North Adelaide
Maude H. Bayly	1907	
Mary Sillifant	1907	Semaphore *sister or niece of Ellen Green in Guild of St. Paul
Miss D. Sell	1907	"Seawall" Glenelg
Mrs F. Dunn	1907	Childers Street, North Adelaide "associate"
E. Thomson	1908	
Miss Edith Daw	1908	"Deconica" Hewitt (illeg) Avenue, Rose Park
Miss Warren	1909	Church Road, Walkerville Wilsden Street, Walkerville The Avenue
Mrs Pellew	1909	"Minyarra" Hill Street, North Adelaide
Mrs Gould	1909	C/- Mrs Pellew, Hill St, North Adelaide
Mrs Day	1909	Hawkers Road, Medindie
Mrs Cecily McKail	1909	84 Barton Terrace, North Adelaide Molesworth, North Adelaide
Mrs Harrison Mrs Lucas	1909	St. Oswalds Rectory, Parkside
Miss J. Farr	1909	Barnard Street, North Adelaide "associate"

Miss Jean Connor	1909	Barnard Street, North Adelaide
Miss Hornabrook	1909	Aceual (illegible) Gardens, Medindie *Her sister Amy was also in Guild of St. Paul
Misses Hart (2)	1909	Barton Terrace, North Adelaide
Mrs C. Davey	1909	Finnis Street, North Adelaide “Mornington” (illegible) Palmer Place
Misses Williams	1909?	Archer Street, North Adelaide
Mrs Leishman	1909	Bishops Court *also in Guild of St. Paul

Appendix 2.
'Work Completed' over 37 meetings held on Friday mornings at 11am in 1905 by the Guild of St Peter's Cathedral as set reported by Miss Amy Richardson and recorded in the Continuation of Minute Book in Minute Books of St. Peters Cathedral Guild *Volume 1*, 1905-1927, SRG 94:A1/14, State Library of South Australia.

Commissioned by	*Object*	*Commissioned by*	*Object*
Port Darwin	Violet Altar Frontal	Rev. W. H. Winter	Violet, Red Stoles
Saddleworth	White Altar Frontal	Port Darwin	4 White Bookmarkers
St. Cyprians, Adelaide	Violet Altar Frontal	Lady Baker	3 White, 3 Red, 3 Green, 3 Violet Bookmarkers
Mintaro	Red Altar Frontal	Mrs Berry	2 Red Almslap
Melanesia	Green Altar Frontal	Rev. E. S. Jose	2 Red Almslap
Port Darwin	(illegible) and curtains	Manoora	Centre Frontal Design
Rev. J. Seules (illegible)	Violet Stole	Port Pirie	4 Altar Panels
Robe	Violet Stole	Port Elliot	Linen Pall
Rev. A. King	Worked designs	Miss Well	Credence Cloth
Rev. G. H. Jose	Green, Red, Violet	Port Pirie	Red Banner
Arch. Uprey	White	Yankalilla	White Banner
Arch. Russell	White, Red, Green, Violet	Unley	Red Chalice Veil and Burie
Miss Sanders	Green	Crafers	White, Red, Green, Violet Veil and Burie
"Altar linen is embroidered by members who do not attend as a rule on the Friday mornings and is paid for. Gifts to the Cathedral: 4 cassocks, 5 surplices, Amice linen stole, 5 bread cloths. Superfrontal, new material (illegible) old designs green, white, violet, pulpit hangings, 2 red look markers. Altering white frontal. Melanesia set of Altar linen. St Paul's Port - Superfrontal. Saddleworth -Design and Chalice veil. S. Luke (illegible) 2 Panels. These amounted to £16.4.6."		Bowden	White Veil and Burie
		Edithburg	Red Pulpit hanging
		Wallaroo	Red Pulpit Hanging
		Proceeds of Work for 1906: £50.3.6	

Appendix 3.
Guild of Church Workers St. Peter's Cathedral, 1994
[also known as St. Peter's Cathedral Guild]
Names transcribed from Henrietta Kennion's *Commemorative album containing illuminated addresses, photographs and a book of signatures presented by Churchwomen of the Adelaide Diocese, 1894*, PRG885/1, State Library of South Australia.

Mrs Dendy (Committee)	Fanny M. Ward (Committee)
Mary F. Milne (Committee)	F.M. Richardson (Committee)
Jennie Hawkes (Committee)	Frances J. Wright (Committee)
W. J. Attenborough (Committee)	Amy Richardson (Hon. Secretary)
E. Downer	Frances O'Halloran
Lizzie G. Grant	Annie F. Ross
Frances Tompkins	Bessie Scott
L.F. Hall	A. Isabel Scott
E.L. Tweford	Eilish (?) S. Hamilton
M. M. Hamer	Jeannette W. Phillipson
Ethel King	Beatrice E. Meevor
Agnus H. Stedman	Jessie Thorusou
H.M.S. Stedman	Ethel Cooper
Annie W. Gill	Eveleen King
Hilda Bodley	Maude Dean
Ethel Andrews	Georgina Hill
Annie Saturg? (illegible)	Sissie Derryer? (illegible)
Fanny Warner	Millie Honeywill
Emily Lawrance	Annie James
Mabel Lawrance	Caroline Jacob
Mabel Lloyd	Fanny Edith Sheridan
Mary Dean	A. F. Keith Sheridan
Frances E. Back	Lavinia Back
Julia Doswell	Alice M. S. Narroway
Gertrude Thornton	Katrine A. Hawker
Evelyn M. Bath	Esther M. Board or Beach
Alice Russell	Edith Russell
Mabel Hardy	Ethel Barton
Isabella Colley	Helen L. Wright

Appendix 4.
South Australian ecclesiastical embroidery and Art Needlework exhibited at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition, 1888.
Information synthesised from:
"No IX. Specially for the South Australian Ladies," *South Australian Register*, Saturday 11 August, 1888, 6, and "South Australian Fine Arts Court," *South Australian Advertiser*, Wednesday 1 August, 1888, 6.

Designer	Maker	Lender	Object	Description	Notes
Ellen Elizabeth Green?	Guild of Perseverance of St. Paul's	Dean of Adelaide	Large altar frontal	White satin altar frontal	"The articles are hung in a specially constructed case, and the general effect of the exhibit is heightened by the fact that the goods are suspended by invisible silver wires."
Ellen Elizabeth Green?	Guild of Perseverance of St. Paul's	Guild of Perseverance of St. Paul's	Processional Banner	"Beautiful processional banner worked by the ladies and lent by the committee of the Guild	
Ellen Elizabeth Green?	Guild of Perseverance of St. Paul's	Guild of Perseverance of St. Paul's	3 stoles	"Three stoles of great beauty"	
Miss Denny Scott	Miss Denny Scott	St. Peter's Guild	Altar frontal	"The design is not anything special, but the chalice itself is a fine proof of patience and skill, outlined in white cotton upon cambric."	
Mrs Dendy	Mrs Dendy	St. Peter's Guild	Chalice veil	"A very nice piece of work."	
Adelaide School of Design	Miss F. Wright	St Peter's Guild	Pall and Corporal	Emblemizing "the five wounds of Christ".	"Splendidly finished, and has been appreciatively criticized, though the stitching is not so fine as cotton would be, because the thread of silk is courser."
Adelaide School of Design	Miss Scott	St. Peter's Guild	Altar frontal		
Adelaide School of Design	St. Peter's Guild	Rev. J.S.Ives	Stole		
Miss E.E. Lawrance	Miss.M.J. Korff	Adelaide School of Design	Chair-back	"an applique of white satin upon old rose silk with a filling in of various other silks."	
H.E. Sibley	Miss.E.H. Meek	Adelaide School of Design	Cushion	"worked after an old Flemish model"	
James Keane	Mrs.H. O'Halloran	Adelaide School of Design	Sideboard cloth	"after an old German model" "an outline of blue is filled in with carious linen stitches."	"This work is very beautiful, and the design keeps it company in excellence."

H.E. Sibley	Miss Helen.J. Crawford	Adelaide School of Design	Sideboard cloth	"designed after a Moorish pattern"	(No entry)
Miss Amy.L. Tonkinson	Miss Amy.L. Tonkinson	Adelaide School of Design	Sachet bag	"designed and worked by Miss Amy.L. Tonkinson…low pink and green colour. The student has ingeniously introduced a decoration of clover upon it."	"This is in the language of impressionable young ladies 'a perfectly sweet thing.'"
Miss Amy Richardson	Miss M.J. Korff	Adelaide School of Design	Point lace handkerchief		"purposefully left incomplete so that anybody looking upon it might see the various stages through which a point-lace handkerchief has to pass."
H.E. Sibley	Miss Millie Downing	Adelaide School of Design	Chair-back ornament	"pattern being based upon the pomegranate"	
Mr. H.P. Gill	Miss Lurline Kirkpatrick	Adelaide School of Design	Cushion of darned work		"lack of harmony…the defect is due to the inability to obtain certain silks necessary to perfect the design and the scheme of colours. The result is consequently spotty."
Mr. H.P. Gill	Miss C.C. Crawford	Adelaide School of Design	Afternoon teacloth	"neat little arrangement of floral forms. It is executed on linen, and done in coloured linen flourishing threads – the first of the kind brought into the colony."	"viewed with much interest."
H.E. Sibley	Miss E. Amand Wright	Adelaide School of Design	6 D'oyleys	"Dresden blue…based upon some old tiles at Sienna, in Italy, and being worked only in outline the ornament is more filled in than the original"	"D'oyleys provide a special part of this Fine Art Show."

Mr. H.P. Gill	Mrs (Annie) Gill	Adelaide School of Design	6 D'oyleys	"In every one of them there is a composition of dolphins, which is very much used by the old Italians and old Germans. They are harmonious in colour – pinks, pale blues, golden yellows, and pale greens on white China silk. They are worked in six silks on this clear material, which is remarkably flimsy stuff. Great trouble is experienced in doing this kind of work, much care being necessary to prevent the threads from drawing the ground too tightly, and thus causing puckering and unevenness in effect. In these specimens all such bad results have been avoided."	(No entry)
Miss A.E. Stow	Miss Ella Stow	Adelaide School of Design	Cushion	"darned silk…based on the magnolia"	"all these designs only approach nature. There is no attempt to imitate nature, but simply to suggest natural beauties, since no work can hope to rival them, the character of the material precluding any successful imitation. Thus is presented the alliance of nature with art."
Mr H.P. Gill	Miss Lottie (Charlotte Adelaide) Benda	Adelaide School of Design	Handkerchief sachet		
Miss A.E. Stow	Miss E.M. Laughton	Adelaide School of Design	Tablecloth	"pretty effect of grey and pink on red"	"it is very difficult to get this combination on a red ground, but the colour in this specimen is really good"
Miss L.C. Teasdel	Miss L.C. Driffield	Adelaide School of Design	Chair-back	"worked in silk with a darned background"	

H.E. Sibley	Miss G. Crawford	Adelaide School of Design	Chair-back	"A Roman scroll is executed in blue and deep red, outlined in yellow."	"This is an effective piece…The design is unfinished, because the workers ran out of silk and could not get any more of the kind in all Adelaide."
Miss E. Kay	Miss E. Kay	Adelaide School of Design	Tablecloth	"brown and yellow silks and wool on a brown background"	"a fine harmonious effect"
Mrs M.O. Liston?	Mrs M.O. Liston?	Adelaide School of Design	Chair-back	Cross stitch	"lent"
Mrs H.G. Hopkins?	Mrs H.G. Hopkins?	Adelaide School of Design	Chair-back	Cross stitch	"lent"
H.E. Sibley	Miss M.J. Hamilton	Adelaide School of Design	Tablecloth	"an all-over repeating pattern, worked on Tussore silk in yellows, browns, greens, and pinks"	"this is one of the most exquisite things in the whole section…and the workmanship seems perfect"
Miss M.A. Overbury	Miss M.A. Overbury	Adelaide School of Design	Wooden block cut	"repeating pattern…medium used being Rickett's Paris blue"	"a new departure in methods which is very convenient. It allows you to stamp in two hours a design which it would take a fortnight to draw."
Mr .A.E. Hamer	Mr. A.E. Hamer	Adelaide School of Design	Needlework patterns		
Mr .W.P. Nicholls	Mr .W.P. Nicholls	Adelaide School of Design	Trestle afternoon tea-table	"a novel idea for a trestle afternoon tea-table, with a let-down shelf"	"Many other things are coming, but those now in position are sufficient to show how successful have been Mr. Gill's efforts to lighten up our homes with beautiful little art-works, indicating the skill and the patience of the ladies of Adelaide."

Appendix 5a.

Art Needlework exhibits on view at the School of Design Art Needlework Society Exhibition, Government House, 1890, synthesised from "Art Needlework Exhibition," *Express and Telegraph*, 26 September 1890, 4, and "Art Needlework Society," *Advertiser*, 19 September 1890, 3.

Object description	*Commissioner*
Piano cover. Ground work of rich red brown a design of Oriental character elaborately worked out in leak silk of various harmonious colors.	Mr Aloysius McDonald.
Two curtain bands. Blue grey ulster cloth upon which a tapestry pattern is tastefully worked.	
Portière. Grey crash, a substance having a resemblance to canvas. On this a furze blossom is painted in oil, and the mounting is on grey art serge.	
Design on paper for a portière. Roses trailing up the side and branching off into a deep floral frieze at the top. It is noticeable that there are no violent colors to shock the eye, all tints being in gentle shades.	
A bed spread. Grey-green ornamented with a device of fruit and flowers in a different shade, and with a fringe of Pongee silk.	
Full sized curtains. Green art serge decorated with a drapery of conventional floral form worked in shades of yellow, green, and pale red. The effect of these hanging is far more artistic than might be gathered from the description.	
Design on paper. Window curtain of white serge representing a pugnacious looing Griffin in fighting attitude.	
Small table covers. Fine silk.	
Cosies. Rich material and elaborate pattern.	
Photograph holders. Dainty designs.	
Green Portière. Design worked in white thread.	Lady Kintore
Large Portière. Dragon's blood Donegal linen. The design of a conventional flower and leaf type is as yet only traced.	
Drawing room screen. The most beautiful object in the exhibition. Made of silk in a walnut frame comprising four panels working on double hinges. Priced at 25 guineas. On each about a foot from the bottom is a conventional border suggestive of butterflies and leaves, which design is repeated in fretwork on the top of the frame. The main device of the panel consists of hanging sprays of leaves and flowers worked in yellow gold, and lilac silk.	Mrs Tom Horn
Photograph holder. Delicate fretwork, white holy mounted in basswood.	
Hanging for a bookcase on which is worked in appropriate res a dragon of fiery aspect, the device being in spirit of the Italian Renaissance School of Art.	
Portière. Heavy, white saddlecloth, the design worked in shades of cream, terra cotta, and brown, being a frieze of flowers with gracefully hanging floral festoons.	
Colored designs of proposed screens.	
Two cane chairs. Comfortable looking, designed by Mr. Gill's pupils and worked out by inmates of the Blind School.	
D'oyleys. Fine muslin on which appear little rustic figures exquisitely painted by Miss Fiveash.	
Designs on paper. Work that has been executed by members of the society.	
Embroidery work on linen with a design of pomegranates worked with minute accuracy with the finest lace stitches.	
Watercolors. Worked by Mr Gill's pupils.	
Watercolors. Worked by Mr Gill. Scenery on the coast of Noarlunga, Glenelg in the gloaming from where Goyder's Creek intersects with the road to the city.	
Prints. From an etching on copper executed by Mr. G. A. Reynolds. The subject being the back of an old mill in England sowing the wheel at rest with the water diverted. This is a really fine piece of work, the like of which has not yet been produced in South Australia.	

*color spelt as in original source.

Appendix 5b.

Transcription of Art Needlework exhibits on view at the School of Design Art Needlework Society and Every Day Art Club Exhibition, 1891.
from uncited newspaper article authored by Victorine Selby cut and pasted into Album in *Papers of Algernon Keith-Falconer, 9th Earl of Kintore, 1889-1914*, Series 1, *Volume 1*, National Library of Australia.

** The critic noted that there were other Needlework objects on display not mentioned but considerably less than in the exhibition held at Government House the year before.*	
Object description	*Commissioner*
Art Needlework Society - Tablecloth and d'oyleys to match. The material was the finest white muslin tacked on white silk, and on the muslin was painted a border of exquisite wattle and gum blossoms in the richest shades of red and gold. The d'oyleys to match had orchids and wild flowers. Painted by Miss Fiveash.	
Art Needlework Society - D'oyleys on white silk, also of native flowers, very much admired. By Miss M. Boothby.	
Art Needlework Society - A screen of two panels, a lovely flowing design in the finest embroidery, with little painted panels introduced.	
Art Needlework Society - A cover for a large sofa, of blue cotton material, worked in a bold design in dark blue silk.	
Art Needlework Society - A curtain with large conventional glowers in blue and pink.	
Art Needlework Society - A curtain, quaint, peacock feathers on what looked like cheesecloth.	
Every Day Club Painting - "Tranquil Autumn," by Miss M. A. Overbury, "a broken down shanty on a steep hillside: this hill is thickly wooded, and in the distance are some hills which looked to me like the rises above Yankalilla and Rapid Bay. The colouring is soft."	
Every Day Club Painting - Panel by Miss E. Amand Wright. Pomegranates just bursting open. - Portrait "Maude." - Portrait "Daffodil."	* it is likely the writer of the critique was the subject of one of these portraits.
Every Day Club Painting - Panel by Miss Hope. Japanese Quince "one of the prettiest there, such an exquisite shade of green for fruit and leaves."	
Every Day Club Painting - Panel by Mrs Bragg (nee Gwendoline Todd). "Long panel of beautiful pansies." - Painting "Port Willunga." - Painting "Paddling" "pretty figure in the foreground." (Prize winner)	
Every Day Club Painting - painting by of Henley Beach by Mrs Creswell "a most truthful picture."	
Every Day Club Painting - painting. "The Port River," by Mrs Creswell.	
Every Day Club Painting - painting by Miss Fiveash. Daffodils.	
Every Day Club Painting - painting by C.B. Whillas. oranges and loquats. "Fruit."	
Every Day Club Painting - Painting by Miss Armstrong. "Roses."	
Every Day Club Painting - Painting by Miss Daw. "Poppies."	
Every Day Club Painting - Painting by Miss Wilson. "Thumb Sketch, Hallett's Cove."	

Appendix 6a-r.
Gallery of Art Needlework: Adelaide School of Design exhibition photos and two significant Art Needlework objects: *Kintore Screen* and the *Portière*.

Figure a.



WORK AT THE SCHOOLS OF DESIGN, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

WORK AT THE SCHOOLS OF DESIGN, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The above photograph reproduces a portion of the practical art work executed by the art schools in connection with the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery of South Australia. The picture shows specimens of carved furniture (the forms taken from fifteenth and sixteenth century designs), art needlework, copper repousse, decorative and burnt earthenware, fretwork shutters, and a design for a race cup. Most of the work was executed to order of Adelaide residents. It was designed, applied, and worked solely by students. No design is ever repeated, and the copyright becomes the property of the purchaser. The school, of which Mr. H. P. Gill is director, commenced an exhibit of art needlework for the Centennial Exhibition, and has since continued with such success that over a thousand original designs in art needlework have been executed.

"Work at the Schools of Design, South Australia," *The Australasian* (Melbourne), 4 December 1897, 31.

Figure b.



School of Design Technical Art Work, September Exhibition 1897,
School of Design, Student Exhibition Photographs: 1898-1906. Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure c.



School of Design annual exhibition photographs. *The Australasian*, 17 August 1901, 30.

Figure d.



Art Needlework Portière shown with a settle, cabinet and fuel box commissioned by the Barr Smith family exhibited by the School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts, September Exhibition 1898,
Art Club Magazine 1891-2, Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure e.



School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition, September Exhibition 1897,
School of Design, Student Exhibition Photographs: 1898-1906,
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure f.



School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition, September Exhibition 1898,
School of Design, Student Exhibition Photographs: 1898-1906.
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure g.



School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition 1899
School of Design, Student Exhibition Photographs: 1898-1906,
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure h.



School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition 1901
School of Design, Student Exhibition Photographs: 1898-1906,
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure i.



School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition 1901
School of Design, Student Exhibition Photographs: 1898-1906,
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure j.



School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition 1904
School of Design, Student Exhibition Photographs: 1898-1906,
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure k.



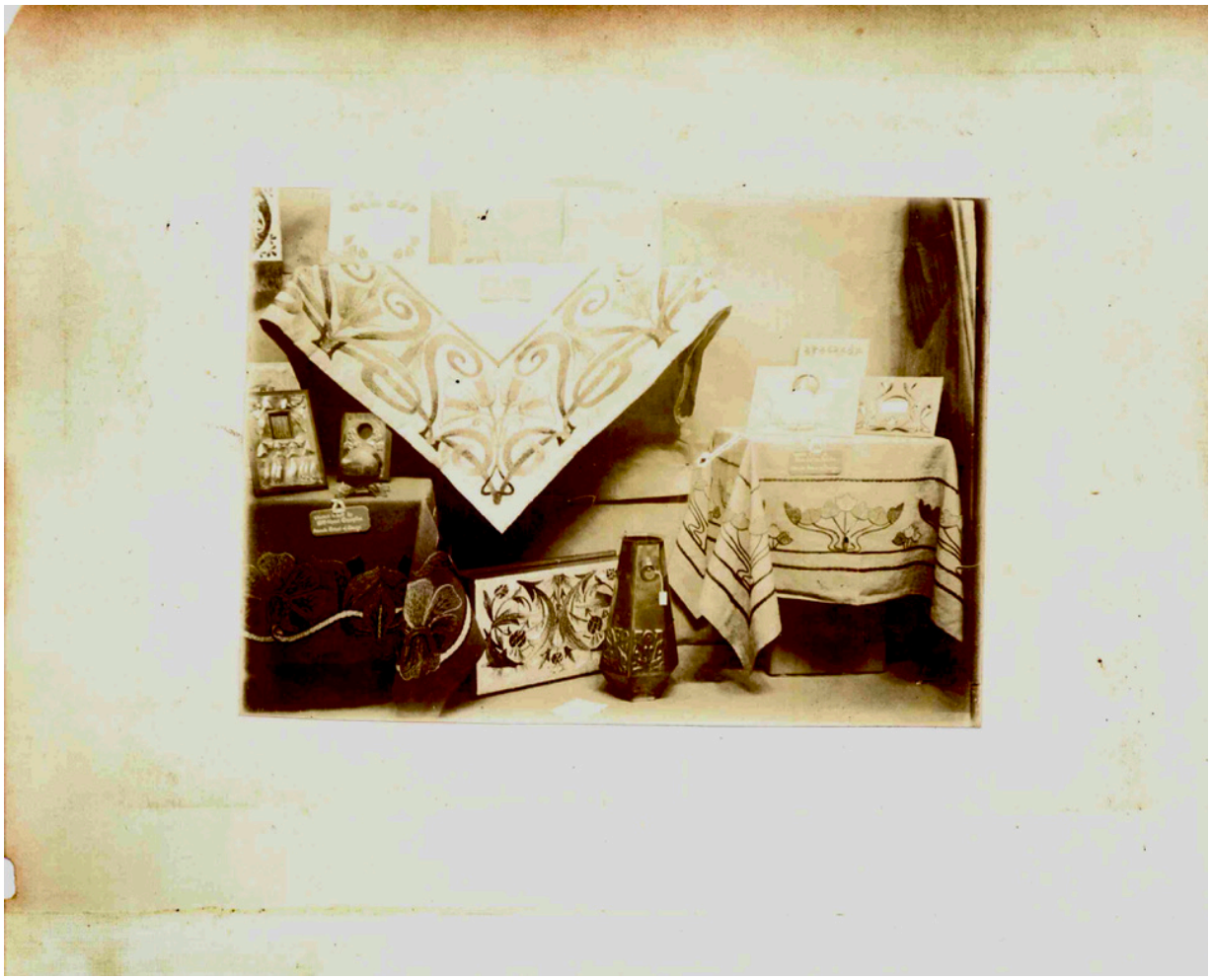
School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition 1906
School of Design, Student Exhibition Photographs: 1898-1906,
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure l.



School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition 1907
Everyday Art Club Magazine August 1907,
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure m.



School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition unknown date,
School of Design, Student Exhibition, photographs: 1898-1906 (sic)
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure n.



Photograph sent by Maude Prosser to R.T. Baker, Sydney
Art Gallery of South Australia Collection, AC2/4468.

Figure o.



School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts Student Exhibition 1911,
School of Design, Student Exhibition Photographs: 1898-1906 (sic)
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure p.



The Adelaide School of Design, *Kintore Screen*, 1894-5, silk, oil, gesso and blackwood, 182.88cm height, unknown width, whereabouts unknown.
Embroidered side worked by Elizabeth Meek. Gesso panel by A. A. Pedvin.
South Australian School of Design: Photographs of Students' Work,
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure q.



Panels: Sturt pea by Annie W. Laughton; Rundle and Hindley streets, and Blanche Point by Norman Macgeorge; Waverley Ridge by Harry P. Gill; Clematis by Rosa C. Fiveash; Sun Dews by Denny Scott.
South Australian School of Design: Photographs of Students' Work,
Special Collection, University of South Australia.

Figure r.



Adelaide School of Design, *Portière*, 1901, silk on silk moire, 233.0x178.0cm,
Royal Collection Trust/© His Majesty King Charles III, 2023.
Designed by H.P. Gill. Worked by Elizabeth Meek, Maude Prosser, Lily Hope Goode and Lena Unbehaun.
Commissioned by Lady Way, Lady Baker, Mesdames Lendon, Harmer, Marryat, Bragg, Waite, Pope, Davies, Thomas, Fisher and Girdlestone, and Miss Howard.

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