

CHARLES ROBERT ASHBEE: FROM LONDON TO CHICAGO

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
(Art History)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

1984

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is grateful to many individuals who have assisted with and encouraged the completion of this Master's Thesis on Charles R. Ashbee. The topic was first selected for research while a full-time student in the Christie's Fine Arts Course in London, England in 1979-80. The course included the writing of a lengthy research paper and this requirement was met with a study of Ashbee's silverwork and private press in order to characterize a unique Guild of Handicraft style. The numerous individuals who assisted so generously then with the Ashbee research have been previously acknowledged; however, the encouragement of course tutor Deborah Lambert and Director Robert Cumming has been much valued.

Since the summer of 1981, when a proposal to investigate further the career of Charles Ashbee and participation in the Chicago Arts and Crafts movement was accepted in the UW Department of Art History, other individuals and institutions have kindly and generously assisted by providing suggestions and comments throughout the writing of what became a larger and larger research project. As thesis advisor, Professor Narciso Menocal has

strictly guided the organization and breadth of the thesis. His countless questions, comments and revisions, while sometimes frustrating, have undoubtedly clarified ambiguous sections of the text. As members of the Thesis Committee, Professor James Dennis and Barbara Buenger raised pertinent questions and suggested different approaches that will certainly enhance efforts to present my findings to the field in the near future. To the entire thesis committee, then, the author expresses his appreciation for their encouragement and interest. In addition, Professors Robert Beetem and Warren Moon have provided helpful comments and suggestions throughout the writing process. At the Kohler Library, I would like to thank Director William Bunce, Librarian Beth Abrahms, and Reference Librarian Louise Henning for their unending assistance.

Further away, appreciation is extended to Victoria and Albert Museum Curator Clive Wainwright for his suggestions and encouragement to pursue further Ashbee's association with Frank Lloyd Wright as well as Ashbee's relationship to the Chicago Arts and Crafts movement and its nascent acceptance of the machine. Also in London, Lawrence Rich of the National Trust is hereby acknowledged for his efforts to locate Ashbee material in

their records. At the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, Michael Vickers' interest in and ideas about Ashbee's association with J. D. Beazeley were welcomed and are hereby acknowledged. At the Victoria and Albert Museum Library, Director Robert Strong and the entire staff cooperated generously during research visits to study Ashbee's unpublished "Memoirs."

In Chicago, Chicago Historical Society Curator Sharon Darling and her staff made Kalo Shop silver and documentation from the collection available for detailed study. Ms. Darling's helpful comments, suggestions and support for this study are remembered and much appreciated. The staff of the Art Institute of Chicago Library are acknowledged for their assistance in locating Ashbee materials and exhibition catalogues. Jane Colokathis, Research Assistant at Jane Addams Hull House, searched through records at Hull House for any pertinent references to Ashbee and her efforts are appreciated. Katherine S. Howe, Associate Curator at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, responded to an enquiry in Antiques Magazine about American collections that included Ashbee silver. Her interest and information are also appreciated.

In addition to photographs taken by the author in London of Ashbee material at the Victoria and Albert

Museum, the copy-photography for this thesis was exceptionally well executed by Anne Biebel, copy photographer and graduate student in the UW Department of Art History. Appreciation is extended to Sotheby's Belgravia, the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Victoria and Albert Museum for providing photographs for study.

For typing, encouragement, errands, friendship and all of the invaluable assistance so often and so generously given toward the writing of and research for this thesis, the following people deserve warm and special thanks: Louise Clark, Elizabeth Frick, Professor Gail Geiger, Professor Sandy Kita, Norma Lien, Stephen McGough, John Marshall, the late Katherine Mead, my brother Chris, Mark Spencer, Janet Stockhausen, Christine Sundt, Gertrude Wilson, Rose Zingleman, and the friends made while working at Paul's Bookstore. The thesis went through some important changes while alphabetizing hundreds of dusty Cliff Notes. The final copy of this thesis was expertly typed by Dorothy Simons.

Appreciation of an entirely different nature is given to two people. My father has continuously provided support and encouragement throughout my years of study in Art History at the University of Wisconsin. His generosity has made it possible to pursue studies and research freely

and for that fortunate opportunity I am deeply grateful. For Ann Jordahl, my fiancée, I have saved the last words. To the very end of this long and exhausting thesis process, you have been there often to lend an ear, to provide a good laugh, to comfort and to calm many of my cranleighs,* and to edit or type too many pages of thesis drafts. Most importantly, your faith and constant friendship were revitalizing at the times when reassurance was most needed. For all you have given and endured throughout the last year of this thesis, I extend heartfelt thanks. And thank you for the flowers.

Richard Stephen Sennott
May 15, 1984

*"Cranleigh (n.) A mood of irrational irritation with everyone and everything." From Douglas Adams' and John Floyd's The Meaning of Liff (New York, 1984) p. 20.

PREFACE

Ashbee has been variously interpreted by all of the important architectural critics interested in the influence of the British Arts and Crafts movement. At the same time Ashbee chose to reflect upon his career when he compiled his four-volume "Memoirs" in 1938, other scholars were writing about British architects and designers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Writing in the late 1930s when what Summerson calls the "cult of the pioneer" was widespread, Nicholas Pevsner wrote Pioneers of the Modern Movement. Since revised and retitled, the book includes references to Ashbee, "a more original thinker and more energetic reformer than [Walter] Crane," who, Pevsner believed, surpassed William Morris. Pevsner attributes a style "more revolutionary than Voysey" to Ashbee, architect of the Cheyne Walk houses. Pevsner documents Ashbee's shift in attitude about the machine that occurred near the Guild's close and quotes Ashbee's 1911 Axiom that incorporates the use to the machine with the Guild Idea. Pevsner then disqualifies Ashbee from the ranks of "true pioneers of the Modern Movement" because Ashbee had not "from the outset stood for machine art."

In 1936, Nikolaus Pevsner wrote an important article on Ashbee and William Morris that appeared in Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte which has been translated as "William Morris, C. R. Ashbee and the Twentieth Century" and published in the Manchester Review in 1956. In the 1956 foreword to the article, Pevsner apologized for this early article, but stated also that the part on Ashbee was still sound. Pevsner singled Ashbee out as "a really original and extensive thinker," whose ideas went beyond the general trends of the Arts and Crafts movement.

For the sake of purity of definition and of thought, Ashbee's consistent attempts to regulate the machine are dismissed. This thesis is based in part on a premise that movements, far from exclusive from one another, do not spring forth suddenly and without relation to the preceding generation. Moreover, Ashbee's career with the Guild of Handicraft extends throughout the transitional years when British experimental design reforms of the Arts and Crafts movement were inherited and chosen as models for architecture and the production of the applied arts in Germany and America. It seems, therefore, that Ashbee's contribution to the important ideological shift to the machine age merits scholarly treatment

that neither succumbs to the "cult of the pioneer" nor ignores entirely Ashbee's position in the formulative years of the Modern movement in Germany and America. While the study focuses upon Ashbee's work in Chicago and London, the recognition of Ashbee's ideals by progressive designers and reformers of the Vienna Secession substantiates further the significance of the Guild Idea.

Sigfried Giedion, in Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of A New Tradition (1940), wrote of the Arts and Crafts movement, paying special attention to the generation after that of William Morris, which had made a serious effort to reform the public's appreciation of household furnishings. Citing Arthur H. Mackmurdo, T. J. Cobden-Sanderson, and Charles Ashbee as artists "who did not share Morris' hatred of modern techniques and business methods," Giedion recognized importantly the more realistic and flexible approach to the machine taken by Ashbee and his generation. Such conciliatory efforts were thought to be significant by design critics of around 1900 and by later design historians such as Alf Bøe.

In a 1952 Victoria and Albert Museum exhibition of Victorian and Edwardian decorative arts, Charles Ashbee's and M. H. Baillie Scott's cooperative decorative work at the Palace at Darmstadt was given particular

focus. Carried out for the Duke of Hesse in 1897-98, the architecture and furnishings marked a turning point in Ashbee's international reputation. Over fifteen silver designs by Ashbee were included in the 1952 exhibition, particularly those pieces which showed "originality" rather than those which depended upon past styles for their stylistic inspiration. In this study, an effort was made to identify influential sources for Ashbee's silver designs.

In his 1957 book, Gothic Revival to Functional Form, Alf Bøe was the first modern critic to recognize the depth of Ashbee's contribution to the ideological acceptance of the machine as a writer and as an architect-designer. Like Ashbee, Bøe recognized the split between the craft tradition and small workshop on the one hand and mechanical mass-production and commercialism on the other. Bøe pointed out that some important solutions to the questions raised by the first generation of Arts and Crafts reformers were found in Britain by Ashbee and his generation, which had been able to unite the interests of commercial mechanization with the standards of the architect-designers. Furthermore, Bøe considered Ashbee "the chief progenitor of this school of thought--an artist and an organizer of outstanding ability," whose success

was due to his architectural training and his sympathy with the "humanism" of Ruskin and Morris. Bøe, elaborating on this idea, also provided support for the purpose of this thesis when he wrote on page 150:

This [humanism] became an integral part of his own programme; but with the greater understanding of a younger man he ventured to combine it with the forces of modern industry. His writings and his activities merit a profounder study that can be given here, however intimately connected with Victorian theories of design they may be.

Bøe seems to resist assigning Ashbee to the exclusive and restrictive category of pioneer and acknowledges the multifaceted character of the architect Ashbee and the experimental movement in which he participated.

In 1967, Shirley Bury wrote an article entitled, "An Arts and Crafts Experiment: The Silverwork of C. R. Ashbee," for the Victoria and Albert Museum Bulletin in which she spotlights Ashbee as "one of the most original designers of silver working under the aegis of the Arts and Crafts movement." The article neatly summarizes the chronology and development of Ashbee's Guild and School of Handicraft. Although the movement was founded upon a variety of reasons, there is no discussion of Ashbee's ideas about machinery or its role in a society that was increasingly taking it for granted.

More recently, Gillian Naylor devoted an entire chapter to Charles Ashbee in her book, The Arts and Crafts Movement. The first author to treat in detail Ashbee's ideas on the machine and his relation to the Modern movement, Naylor points out Ashbee's national and international recognition both in exhibitions and publications as well as his shifting thoughts at the time after Ashbee and Wright had met and traded ideas. Subordinating the part played by both the failure of the Guild and the climate at the time, Naylor assigns prime importance to Wright's influence in the radical change of thought by Ashbee. Naylor concedes correctly that Ashbee went no further than Wright and although he envisions a system of standards that incorporate craft ideals with the new system of machinery, Ashbee remained persuaded largely by the handicraft ideal. Nonetheless, it can be argued that however hesitant this opinion was, Ashbee's late acceptance of the machine was one of the few links between the two centuries separated by ethics of design, one guided by hand production and the other guided by machine production.

A second major exhibition, held at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1972, was entitled "Victorian and

Edwardian Decorative Art: The Handley-Read Collection. Charles Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft received considerable attention, especially in their association with the Glasgow School. Discussing Ashbee's preference of handicraft, nowhere is the role of the machine discussed in detail. Alastair Service recognized the character of the British Arts and Crafts movement in Edwardian Architecture: A Handbook to Building Design in Britain 1890-1914. Describing the "elegance and power of Voysey" in Ashbee's well-known Cheyne Walk buildings, Service describes Ashbee as "one of the most magnetic characters and wide-ranging craftsmen in the Arts and Crafts movement" and as "founder of the progressive and influential Guild and School of Handicraft." Service admires the simplicity of Ashbee's interiors at 39 Cheyne Walk and prefers some of Ashbee's architecture to Voysey's.

John Summerson wrote in his 1976 Glasgow lecture, "The Turn of the Century: Architecture in Britain Around 1900," that the forty-year-old emphasis on that period as "progressive and modernizing" was exploited in order to justify the British Modern movement. Summerson asserts correctly that such a narrow interpretation distorts an understanding of the reformative architectural

climate of London around 1900 and he therefore avoids entirely the trap of what he calls the "cult of the pioneer." Examining the controversies about architecture at the R.I.B.A., Summerson illuminates the significant architects of turn of the century London in a far more objective context. Stressing the leading role held by George Bodley and Richard N. Shaw, Summerson singles out "other self-assertive individualists in search of what they took to be essential" that includes Ashbee, an architect of "picturesque artiness." While this thesis purposefully avoids exaggeration of Ashbee's pioneering role in late nineteenth century British architecture and design reform, it nevertheless reveals in detail the acknowledged importance Ashbee carried in London and Chicago around 1900. Similarly, the third chapter incorporates a brief discussion of the Vienna Secession's strongly-felt affinity with Ashbee's Guild Idea.

Ashbee's influential role in the Midwest is recognized by Sharon Darling in a Chicago Historical Society catalogue and exhibition, Chicago Metalsmiths in 1977. Ashbee's visit to Chicago, his relation with Jane Addams and Hull House, the meetings between Wright and Ashbee, the importance of Oscar Lovell Triggs, and the

intimate connections between Chicago and the British Arts and Crafts movement are given careful review by Darling. Ashbee's significance in the history of Chicago metal-smithing is attested to stylistically by the Kalo Shop whose metalsmiths crafted silver objects very similar in design to silver objects designed by Ashbee. Although Ashbee's ideas about machinery are not the concern of this exhibition, it is significant that one of Chicago's most important silver shops, in its desire to craft objects in a modern style expressive of the progressive ideals of the Midwest, looked to the silverwork designs of Charles Ashbee for their early inspiration. Ashbee's silver represented a model of excellence in modern design that this shop felt equalled the best of the English Arts and Crafts.

Although more active in decorative arts than in architecture, Ashbee is considered by Henry-Russell Hitchcock important as "one of the first Europeans to appreciate the significance of Wright" and the appropriate European architect-designer to write introductory remarks in the 1911 Wasmuth publication of Wright's work. Hitchcock, like other writers, considers the Cheyne Walk houses as Ashbee's most significant architectural

projects, "at least comparable to Voysey's." Hitchcock emphasizes in this context that "English decorative art exercised a major influence on the Continent." Although not the primary focus of this thesis, Ashbee's influence upon members of the early Vienna Secession, treated in Part III, provides clear evidence to support the idea that Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft, his Guild Idea, and his later writings were used as workshop and ideology models on the Continent.

In contrast to scholarly opinions that place Ashbee in the context of the Modern movement, Anscombe and Gere consider his role as leader of the Guild to be more important than his role in the Modern movement's nascent ideology, omitting Ashbee from a chapter on Modernism except for his role as a transmitter of ideas. Significant is the description of Ashbee's visit to Chicago, where he was so strongly impressed by Wright.

Recently, two of the most important books related to the career of Charles Ashbee have been published. In 1980, Lionel Lambourne wrote Utopian Craftsmen which examines the Arts and Crafts movement in both England and America. An entire chapter, "Utopia Versus Reality" is given to the history of Charles Ashbee's Guild

of Handicraft, paying special attention to the Guild's move to Chipping Campden. The author characterizes Ashbee as "both the most successful and the most enigmatic exponent of the ideology of the Arts and Crafts Movement," yet ignores entirely Ashbee's struggle with the role of machinery, his influential trip to America, and his friendship with Frank Lloyd Wright. Lambourne's efforts are praiseworthy, nonetheless, for assembling many important Arts and Crafts subjects under one title.

In support of this interpretation of Ashbee's contribution, Peter Davey breaks rank with his British scholars to consider Ashbee as an Arts and Crafts architect who, Davey believes, was "the most original thinker of the later Arts and Crafts movement." Davey is the first to treat seriously Ashbee's writings that deal specifically with machinery and his interpretation lends credibility to Ashbee as a modern thinker, whose firm training in ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement sustain him in his search for a positive position for machinery.

Fiona MacCarthy's book, The Simple Life, is devoted entirely to Ashbee's rural life experiment of the Guild moving to Chipping Campden. This thorough and detailed investigation is concerned more with the history

of England's back-to-the-land movement than with architectural or design history. Much of Ashbee's personal biography is illuminated, discussing many of his lifelong friends such as Edward Carpenter, G. L. Dickinson, and nearly every important figure of the late Arts and Crafts movement. MacCarthy engages the complicated question of Ashbee's contributions to the late Arts and Crafts ideology that was embraced by the Modern movement only to dismiss any connection between Ashbee and the acceptance of the machine in European circles of applied arts design. That Frank Lloyd Wright selected Charles Ashbee to introduce his work--intimately committed to the positive role of the machine--is evidence enough to render Ashbee's position in the formative years of the Modern movement worthy of examination. To ignore this role is to ignore the conclusions about machinery Ashbee himself drew from his Guild experience and, worse yet, to promote a long-standing myth that confines Ashbee to the neat and tidy medievalist interpretation of the Arts and Crafts as a whole.

British interest in Ashbee and the Guild was amply demonstrated by the recent Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum exhibition held by the Fine Art Society of

London, which assembled a retrospective exhibition of the Guild's work and published a catalogue to accompany it. Written by members of the Society, the essays discuss Ashbee's life from college days throughout the tenure of the Guild, placing Ashbee strictly within the British Arts and Crafts movement both aesthetically and ideologically in terms of his role in improving social welfare and the living conditions and educational opportunities of the laborer. The author chooses to omit any of Ashbee's travel to America and any of his connections with the early Modern movement.

Similarly, Peyton Skipwith describes the history of the Guild and Ashbee's life in an entirely British setting, thus choosing to deny again the obvious role played by Ashbee in modern design history. Both of these British studies are sufficient in their treatment of the Guild's handcrafted production, however, such an approach emphasizes the need to treat in detail Ashbee's contribution to Modern design in its formative years after 1900.

INTRODUCTION

"Charles Ashbee and the British Arts and Crafts Movement"

Charles Robert Ashbee (1863-1942) is considered a leading figure in the Arts and Crafts Movement because of his Guild of Handicraft, which operated from 1888 to 1908.¹ Ashbee was the Guild's chief designer and primary spokesman, remembered primarily for his silverwork designs and for his many writings on design reform for the crafts within the modern industrial conditions. It has been generally understood by most architectural historians that the Arts and Crafts movement did contribute significant and useful axioms and principles of design to the twentieth century. Nonetheless, important, if not pivotal, contributions made by Ashbee to the formulative stages of the Modern movement through his writings and some of his designs for silverwork have been repeatedly subordinated or totally ignored in scholarly criticism of Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft. It is my opinion that Ashbee's consistent efforts to identify an acceptable role for machines in design and manufacture of useful objects without sacrificing the integrity of the craft tradition or

craftsman is an important ingredient too long ignored. The so-called Guild Idea and the questions it raised were addressed in the Guild's twenty-year history by Ashbee, whose answers were important ideological contributions to the early years of the Modern movement. The long success of the Guild of Handicraft provided Ashbee the workshop experience needed to formulate a modern conception of the role of machinery in the production of the applied arts. This thesis investigates the development of Ashbee's ideas about machinery throughout the Guild of Handicraft's history. The twenty-year history of the Guild of Handicraft enabled Ashbee's ideas about the machine to evolve in response to the practical and ideological answers he found in the workshop and, very significantly, in his travels to America.

The late nineteenth century in England was a period of aesthetic conflict, ideological uneasiness, and experimentation in the arts, both fine and decorative. Old traditions and old artistic standards, though not entirely rejected, were found to be insufficient for serving the needs of a massive industrial society. Not only were painters and sculptors in search of a meaningful modern style, but architects and designers were seeking to establish a prominent role for the decorative arts in this quest. Writers on and practitioners of the decorative

arts, often architects by training, reacted by creating new ideals and production standards. One trend of this reaction is the crafts ethic set forth in theory by John Ruskin and in practice and theory by William Morris. Although closely allied with past standards--pre-industrial standards--the Arts and Crafts movement,² most significant from ca 1860 to 1915, was, above all, a social, aesthetic, and moral protest against the deplorable effects of unregulated industry upon modern life. For Morris and his followers of the Arts and Crafts movement, modern life was inseparable from aesthetic experience. To maintain daily life at a high standard required artistic expression of a high standard.

John Ruskin (1819-1900) and William Morris (1834-1896) are the acknowledged forefathers of this varied reformative design effort collectively known as the Arts and Crafts movement. Most influential during the third quarter of the nineteenth century, Ruskin wrote abundantly about architectural design, history, and ornamentation in books such as The Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849) or The Stones of Venice (1851-3). The latter contained the important chapter, "The Nature of Gothic," a formative essay for the Arts and Crafts movement. Because he was not a draftsman, Ruskin played his most influential role in the movement as a critic and

theoretician. Ruskin believed the Gothic period to be superior to all others, especially his own, because the Gothic allowed the individual craftsman freedom to create handcrafted useful objects, for example. The medieval guild became the production model because the small workshop encouraged the individual craftsman's creative efforts and, because there was no machinery, the craftsman could work in a meaningful way directly with his material. Each object, whether it be carved from wood, hammered from precious metal, or formed from clay, would be made entirely by one craftsman.

Most important, perhaps, to this nineteenth-century craft ethic formulated by Ruskin was the belief in the benefits of manual labor, rather than dependence upon the machine; individual creative design, rather than mass-production; intimate contact with the material to be crafted, rather than the division of labor that accompanied mechanization; and the integrity of a single handcrafted object designed for its beauty and function, rather than for its likeness to a historical style or for its commercial value. The small handcrafted useful object captured the attention of the movement which sought to raise the aesthetic rank of decorative arts from its low position as a trade. The movement sought fervently to equate craftsman with artist and the decorative with

the fine arts. In reaction to the squalid industrialized urban setting, Ruskin, Morris, and their many subsequent followers believed that a better life would be ensured when society surrounded itself with honestly made, beautiful objects. The movement was moralizing; its proponents preached not only methods of craft production and workshop organization, but also the need for honest and just citizens.

Many of Ruskin's writings inspired later Arts and Crafts designers and idealists; however, his essay, "The Nature of Gothic" of 1851-3, elaborated best the movement's ideals for William Morris and other reformers. In this essay, Ruskin defined Gothic with two broad meanings: Mental Expression and Material Form. While the latter described the actual architectural features such as pointed arches and windows or foliate ornament, the former characterized "internal elements" which are the "mental tendencies of the builders."³ Six different but overlapping characteristics were given by Ruskin (Savageness, Changefulness, Naturalism, Grotesqueness, Rigidity, and Redundance) to define these subjective aspects of the Gothic period's style. He believed that every building or handmade object held emotional meaning and intellectual content in addition to the physical appearance.⁴ This didactic concept was seminal to the Arts and Crafts

movement and instilled many of the objects with added meaning.

For Ruskin and many of his followers, the Gothic period provided the best example of a happy life due largely to rewarding and meaningful labor. The intellect and labor--or, as stated later, the mind and the hand--were inseparable in the best conditions. Ruskin believed in the handicraft tradition, with all of its errors and imperfections in production, because such mistakes meant freedom of thought and represented what he termed the "whole majesty" of humanity.⁵ Ruskin and those who thought like he did disliked the flawless perfection of industrialized mass-production, for it erased all evidence of human creativity and application. A perfect surface, for instance, unornamented and unadorned, meant mechanization to the educated Victorian viewer. Workers forced to produce within the constraints of machines, Ruskin believed, would lose their soul and humanity within such a degrading system of manufacture. The division of labor, moreover, was equal to the division of the whole person, "broken into small fragments and crumbs of life," wrote Ruskin.⁶ Those who agreed with Ruskin, then, protested strongly against society's increasing dependence upon the machine. Concerned about the effects of prolonged hours minding a machine, Ruskin wrote the following grey outcome

for society:

But to feel their souls withering within them, unthanked, to find their whole being sunk into an unrecognized abyss, to be counted off into a heap of mechanism, numbered with its wheels, and weighed with its hammer strokes...This humanity for no long time is able to endure.⁷

Ruskin's distrust of mass-production originated in his definition of Gothic architecture, which insisted that every Gothic building differs in some important respect from every other.⁸ Ruskin praised variety and change in design, too, and rebelled against the monotony and exact repetition found in industrial methods. This merely echoes his dislike of mass-production, a system which was defined not by variety but by monotony. Important to the Arts and Crafts movement's attention to the small individual decorative art object, Ruskin believed that in a small project--such as a hammered silver bowl--one man's thought could not be expressed by another. Furthermore, in regard to sound craft production, Ruskin wrote that "the difference between the spirit of touch of the man who in inventing, and the man who is obeying directions is often all the difference between a great and a common work of art."⁹ Here Ruskin recognized the importance of creative experimentation with materials. This ensured that each object would be different from every other.

Ruskin made exception to his guideline, however, in regard to larger projects with measurable dimensions, in which "it is indeed both possible and necessary that the thoughts of one man should be carried out by the labor of others."¹⁰ Such an axiom may have applied to Gothic architecture, but Ruskin's contemporaries extended its meaning to include a chief designer who guided the labor of the craftsmen through the completion of their design. Ruskin's guidelines in "The Nature of Gothic" were very influential to the architect-designers who formed small workshops or craft guilds to attempt to realize Ruskin's ideals. Frequently the guild would have a leading designer who may or may not have been a craftsman. A group of skilled workers in wood, glass, metal, or clay, for instance, would carry out the designs executed on paper by the chief designer. In other workshops, the designer was himself a skilled craftsman who could carry out their own designs. Ruskin apparently allowed for both systems. It is generally well-known that many of these pioneering designers were inspired both by Ruskin's writings as well as by the then debased state of contemporary design.

Regarding principles of craft manufacture, Ruskin laid down in "The Nature of Gothic" three rules which formed the basis of all future Arts and Crafts

movement workshops. Although many of the craft guilds developed their own style, Ruskin's principles served as the starting point of handicraft production. To ensure "healthy and enobling labor," Ruskin wrote the following rules for craftsmen and designers, which were at the core of Ashbee's experiment and that of others:

1. Never encourage the manufacture of any article not absolutely necessary, in the production of which Invention has no share.
2. Never demand an exact finish for its own sake, but only for some practical or noble end.
3. Never encourage imitation or copying of any kind, except for the sake of preserving record of some great works.¹¹

The designer who followed these rules was effectively putting Ruskin's theory partially into practice. To an audience aware of Ruskinian principles, a handcrafted object from one of the guilds would express not only its style or outward form, but also an ideology of craft production that was defined by honesty, individuality, and liberty. Like the Gothic building, the handcrafted object was defined by its form and carried meaning through its method of production. Ruskin's principles insisted that each decorative art object should be created out of necessity, nobility of purpose, and individuality of design, all of which were embraced and enlarged upon by subsequent design reformers who were guided in their

efforts by Ruskinian ideas of design.

The notion that decorative art and architecture could convey social and aesthetic ideals appealed immediately to the early Arts and Crafts reformers around 1860 who, after reading Ruskin's works among others, rebelled against an over industrialized and inhuman production system. This reaction frequently found expression in the small craft guild or workshop. Craft designers believed strongly that with the dignity of sound craft production came a real improvement in the standards of daily life.

The most influential designer and writer early in the Arts and Crafts movement was William Morris, remembered for his titanic energy as a socialist, designer, writer, and craftsman. Morris's ideals were inspired by both the writings of John Ruskin and his own early association with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood or PRB.¹² Formed in 1848, this secretive fraternity of painters and poets insisted upon serious subjects with symbolic meaning. They painted in a realistic and medievalizing style reminiscent of Italian painting of the late 14th century. Ruskin defined the PRB's single principle as "that of absolute, uncompromising truth in all that it does, obtained by working everything, down to the most minute detail, from nature only."¹³ Morris

associated with many of the PRB and discussed with them new standards of beauty that recognized the importance not only of the fine arts, but also of the decorative arts. Consequently, the PRB painters William Holman Hunt, Ford Madox Brown, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Edward Burne-Jones¹⁴ began designing simply styled furniture which they painted with scenes from English legend. The PRB and William Morris sought to design artistic objects for their homes, paying special attention to decorative detail, truthfulness to materials, honest and straightforward construction, and the benefits of a small workshop.

These early experiments in design reform were successful enough to permit the formation in 1861 of a design firm known at first as Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Company.¹⁵ The company was organized within a year after Morris moved into his famous Red House, designed by Philip Webb in 1859-60. Inspired by Ruskin's writings, Morris wanted nothing ready-made for his new home and set out to furnish the entire interior with hand-made items of his own design. Morris and friends of the PRB, particularly Rossetti and Burne-Jones, collaborated in the house's interior decoration. Resulting from this small private effort at reformative design and craftsmanship, the interior decoration company that produced wallpapers, tapestries, stained-glass windows, private-press books,

and furniture throughout the long tenure of Morris and Company. Morris increasingly took over the design of the firm's objects, which were praised in major international exhibitions. Together with his lectures and his numerous writings, the designs of Morris made him extremely influential throughout most of the Arts and Crafts movement. Walter Crane¹⁶ wrote later of Morris and Company that their rebellious efforts

represented in the main a revival of the medieval spirit (though not in letter) in design; a return to simplicity, to sincerity, to good materials and sound workmanship; to rich and suggestive surface decoration, and simple constructive forms.¹⁷

The successful example of William Morris's design firm encouraged architects and reformers of the next generation to begin other craft guilds and workshops, especially during the 1880s.

Arthur H. Mackmurdo (1851-1942), trained as an architect under James Brooks,¹⁸ recognized the need for unity of design in an "organic" architecture;¹⁹ thus he designed every object for use in his buildings. An avid reader of Ruskin, Mackmurdo realized the need for his designs to be carried out by other craftsmen. Further contact with Ruskin lead Mackmurdo to enroll in Ruskin's class at Oxford, from where the two travelled to Italy in 1874. In 1882, having trained himself in various crafts, Mackmurdo founded the Century Guild, one of the Arts and

Crafts movement's earliest experimental guilds based on the teachings of Ruskin and the example of Morris. The Century Guild, Mackmurdo believed, was formed in order "to render all branches of art the sphere no longer of the tradesman, but of the artist..." and to "restore building, decoration, glass-making, pottery, and wood-carving and metal to their rightful place beside painting and sculpture."²⁰

Mackmurdo's guild gave recognizable form to ideas that at that time were shared by many architects and craftsmen interested in redefining standards of beauty and conditions of craft production. Mackmurdo's aesthetic, under the new influences of Italian Renaissance and Japanese art, extended the stylistic boundaries established by Morris and Company. Moreover, Mackmurdo promoted experimentation and individuality through his guild example and his own design aesthetic. Lastly, Mackmurdo began an important early quarterly publication devoted to the nascent craft ethic called Hobby Horse (1884) wherein Ruskin, the PRB, and other reformers wrote to encourage the spread of their ideas. The Century Guild ended its successful activity in 1888 as individual members followed their own careers.²¹

In 1883, several architect-craftsmen, known as the St. George's Society, began to meet in order to

attempt to improve art and architecture. The group sought to bring together artist, architect and craftsman and thereby restore the unity of the arts, namely "architecture, painting, sculpture, and the kindred arts."²² This group was joined in 1884 by another group known as the "Fifteen" that included Lewis Day, John Sedding and Walter Crane. That year, 1884, the highly important Art Workers' Guild was founded in London by the leading members of these two groups. The membership in the early years included C. F. A. Voysey, Harrison Townsend, Arthur H. Mackmurdo, William Morris, Charles Ashbee, Richard Norman Shaw, Edwin Lutyens, and Roger Fry.²³ From this group was formed the important Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in 1888. These two organizations, the Art Workers' Guild and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, were the most important organizations for the exhibition and encouragement of new design and standards of beauty in the handicrafts created by the most significant figures in the Arts and Crafts movement.

The interpretation of Ruskin's and Morris's goals varied in this second generation of reformative architects and designers that included Walter Crane, William Benson, C. F. A. Voysey, M. H. Baillie Scott, A. H. Mackmurdo, William Lethaby, and Charles Ashbee.²⁴ Cumulatively, their work and writings brought forward Art

Nouveau or the Modern Movement in design and architecture. To many of the Arts and Crafts designers, the Art Nouveau seemed artificial and in conflict with many of their ideals. The sinuous curves and abundant ornament that characterized much of Art Nouveau design was considered to be contrary to Arts and Crafts beliefs in simplicity and the frank expression of construction and materials. On the other hand, some of the later Arts and Crafts reformative ideas contributed to American and Continental efforts in the early years of the Modern movement.

The Arts and Crafts movement began undoubtedly in part as a reaction against the machine and its obviously detrimental impact on the production of applied arts. But the machine could not be denied. The conflict between the applied arts and the machine was inevitably to be reconsidered and theoretically resolved by later more realistic thinkers, including Charles Ashbee, who believed that only good artists and designers could adequately solve these problems of production. By the late 1880s, even William Morris had shifted his thinking to grant machinery a limited role and, by the year 1900, a small group of more realistic designers in England developed an ideology which encouraged the acceptance of the machine. The generation after Morris included the most conclusive thinkers in regard to the machine conflict. A leading

British architect and designer who contributed significantly to the early stages of the resolution of this conflict between art and industry was Charles Ashbee. Only recently have his ideological efforts carried out during the history of the Guild of Handicraft received any scholarly attention.²⁵ One purpose of this thesis is to make evident the contributions Ashbee and his Guild of Handicraft made to bring together hand-craftsmanship and the machine in the production of decorative art objects during the early years of the Modern movement.

The purpose of this Master's Thesis devoted to Charles Ashbee (1863-1945) and the Guild of Handicraft is twofold. Its broadest goal is to summarize Ashbee's ideological and aesthetic contributions through the Guild to Arts and Crafts design from 1888 to 1908 and after, as well as to investigate his ideas about the growing role of machinery in the production of the applied arts. This primary purpose will be substantiated by the second, which is to study the profound influence of the Arts and Crafts movement, carried beyond its native soil by Ashbee, upon America, particularly Chicago and some East coast cities.

Regarding art historical method, the writer believes that an accurate appraisal of Ashbee's contribution to modern design theory will result when one places him within the multiplicity of the artistic setting in the

years after 1898. At this time Ashbee began to formulate his mature definition of standard in craftsmanship and machinery's role in the production of beautiful objects. In addition to England, this setting most certainly includes, above all, Chicago, where Frank Lloyd Wright and members of the Prairie School were active.

Until recently, art historians have been comfortable treating Ashbee strictly within the confines of the Arts and Crafts, thereby maintaining a precise pattern of development in the history of architecture and design from the Arts and Crafts movement into the Modern movement. It would be dangerous for an art historian to isolate Ashbee from the numerous significant influences which he, more than most of his contemporaries, became involved with. Ashbee not only contributed significantly to the Arts and Crafts movement with his designs for silver, jewelry, furniture, and typography, but also, through his activities in America and Austria, recognized very early in Europe the growing role of the machine. This contribution is often subordinated to the Guild's successful years around 1900. It is pertinent, therefore, to underscore Ashbee's role in convincing the Europeans to accept the machine in matters of design and craftsmanship early in the twentieth century.

Chronology

- 1863 Charles Robert Ashbee born in London to Elizabeth and Henry Spencer Ashbee.
- 1869 Frank Lloyd Wright born.
- 1883 Ashbee enters Wellington and King's College, Cambridge.
- 1884 Art Workers' Guild founded in London.
- 1886-7 Ashbee articulated to Gothic Revival architect George F. Bodley for two years while living at Toynbee Hall in London's East End. Ashbee begins teaching a Ruskin reading class there.
- 1888 Ashbee establishes the Guild and School of Handicraft. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society is founded in London.
- 1893 Frank Lloyd Wright begins practice of architecture.
- 1894 Ashbee publishes A Few Chapters in Workshop Reconstruction and Citizenship.
- 1895 Ashbee's "Magpie and Stump" House completed on Cheyne Walk in London and is decorated by the Guild of Handicraft.
- 1896 Ashbee visits East Coast cities in America that includes Philadelphia, Boston and New York.
- 1897 Chicago Arts and Crafts Society founded.
- 1898 Darmstadt artist's colony established by the Grand Duke of Hesse. The furnishings were designed by M. H. Baillie Scott in collaboration with Ashbee and executed by the Guild of Handicraft. Ashbee and Guild of Handicraft are exhibited for the first time in America at Philadelphia's

T-Square Club and then at the Chicago Architecture Club.

Ashbee starts the Essex House Press in London. Liberty and Company introduce "lymric" style silver in London.

First Secession exhibition in Vienna.

1900-1

Ashbee tours American cities on behalf of the National Trust and also lectures on the British Arts and Crafts movement. He meets Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago at Hull House. Chicago Architecture Club exhibits work of Charles Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft as well as work by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Clara P. Barck (later Welles) begins Kalo Shop in Chicago.

Oscar Lovell Triggs, Professor of English at the University of Chicago, founded the Industrial Art League, which is largely shaped by Ashbee's ideas. Eighth Secession Exhibition devoted primarily to the applied arts in which Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft are represented by a room of Guild designs. Koloman Moser purchases Ashbee-designed silverwork.

1901

Rose Valley Association founded by William L. Price.

Wright delivers lecture "Art and Craft of the Machine" at Chicago's Hull House.

1902

Ashbee and Guild of Handicraft moving to rural setting of Chipping Campden.

Fifteenth Secession Exhibition features jewelry designed by Ashbee and executed by the Guild of Handicraft.

Triggs publishes Chapters in the History of The Arts and Crafts Movement.

1903

Seventeenth Secession Exhibition includes jewelry by Ashbee and executed by the Guild of Handicraft.

Morris Society founded in Chicago by Joseph Twyman and Oscar Lovell Triggs.

1906

Twenty-fourth Secession Exhibition features silverwork and jewelry designed by Ashbee and executed by the Guild of Handicraft.

- 1908 Guild of Handicraft is ended.
Ashbee returns to America for lecture tour which included a visit to Chicago.
Ashbee publishes Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry.
Wright publishes first version of "In The Cause of Architecture" in the Architectural Review.
- 1909 Ashbee publishes Modern English Silverwork.
- 1910-11 Two editions of Frank Lloyd Wright's Ausgeführte Bauten are published in Berlin. The 1911 edition, Frank Lloyd Wright Ausgeführte Bauten, includes Ashbee's Introduction (See Appendix 3).
Wright visits Ashbee in Chipping Campden.
Ashbee publishes Should We Stop Teaching Art?
Ashbee writes series of articles "Man and The Machine" for House Beautiful.

PART I

Charles Ashbee and the Guild Idea

Originally founded as the Guild and School of Handicraft in 1888, Ashbee's cooperative and educational experiment in craft reform was active for twenty years. By 1895, the Guild workshops had consumed all of Ashbee's attention and so the school was closed in that year. Known thereafter simply as the Guild of Handicraft, Ashbee's craft workshops produced furniture, leatherwork, jewelry, metalwork, decorative painting, and art books in keeping with the designs supplied by Ashbee.²⁶ From this workshop experience, Ashbee was able to refine his Guild Idea which, in essence, was the ideological hub of the workshop. The Guild Idea defined for Ashbee and his workers the meaning of their handicraft and set before them the problems of design and execution that were in need of improvement within the modern industrial setting. The Guild Idea, through all of its changes, stood for individuality of design, the importance of crafts as a measure of beauty, and for the improved character of daily life by means of a standard of beautiful production within a craft context.

Charles Ashbee was the only son born to his Jewish mother from Hamburg and his father, a successful British export businessman and bibliophile. Deciding to begin his college education rather than to continue the

family business, Ashbee attended Wellington and King's College in Cambridge from 1883 to 1886 and graduated with an M.A. in history. It was at Cambridge that Ashbee was instilled with much of the idealism that continued to nurture the Guild of Handicraft and the Guild Idea.

At Cambridge, Ashbee was exposed to a variety of reformative trends gathering momentum in the 1880's. He was receptive to movements promoting a return to rural ways of life and seeking to better the conditions of the working class. Ashbee was impressed most by his readings in art and architecture, the most influential of which were the writings of John Ruskin. Not surprisingly, Ashbee became acquainted with others who shared these ideals of reform in the arts and in the daily lives of the working class. His two most valued and influential friends at Cambridge were Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson and Roger Fry.²⁷ However, it was Edward Carpenter²⁸ who most intensely affected Ashbee's youthful and expanding idealism. Through this small group, Ashbee was exposed to all the leading ideas about communal life, beauty, truth, craft ethics, democratic principles, and Socialism. Most important, perhaps, was Ashbee's introduction to William Morris. Morris provided a model of reform through the crafts and Ashbee was attracted to his efforts to revive handicrafts in order to bring about needed aesthetic and

social reform. Recognizing the apparently unreconcilable conditions of their society in which free life at Cambridge contrasted with the obviously degrading and unhealthy conditions of the industrial working class, Ashbee and his comrades sought practical means to improve the social and industrial setting of late nineteenth-century England.

As a student and through his interest in the newly forming craft ethic of Ruskin and Morris, Ashbee was undoubtedly aware of the efforts of many significant reformative architects and designers working since the 1860s in the English Gothic Revival style, such as James Brooks, Richard Norman Shaw, George E. Street, Philip Webb, and George F. Bodley.²⁹ Learning the influential social and aesthetic position of the architect-designer, Ashbee at Cambridge thought he would make a career in architecture. To this end, he was articled to George F. Bodley from 1886 to 1888. At this time, Ashbee lived and worked at the University's settlement at Toynbee Hall in the squalid East End of London, where philanthropic efforts had been underway for over ten years to assist the city's poor working classes. As the resident architect, Ashbee taught a Ruskin reading class and a few drawing and decoration classes. Important lessons were learned here by Ashbee, whose Cambridge-born idealism was forever

tempered by the reality of the industrial horrors and their subsequent demeaning influence on the laborers' daily lives that Ashbee witnessed so vividly while working at Toynbee Hall. It is significant that Ashbee's Guild Idea was born not in the quiet sunshine of Cambridge among the intelligentsia, but in the smoggy, dense and clattering East End of London among the downtrodden workers, while he was a student of George F. Bodley.

From 1886 to 1888, Ashbee was articled to George F. Bodley (1827-1907),³⁰ a first generation Arts and Crafts architect recognized for his ecclesiastical projects in the Gothic Revival style. Bodley is also known in this context as a very early customer of Morris and Company. Over fifty years later, Ashbee recalled Bodley's lesson that "for the architect, the first aim in life was the search for beauty."³¹ Bodley had developed an English Gothic Revival style of architecture, as seen in his St. Augustine's Church (1870-74) in Pendebury,³² that reflected the teachings of A. W. Pugin. Bodley and his contemporaries John P. Sedding, James Brooks, and George E. Street were significant to Ashbee's generation for their interpretation of Ruskin's ideals and because their offices provided a meeting place for their students to discuss the new ideas of architecture and the crafts. Shaw's office, for example, contained students and

associates that formed the nucleus of the St. George's Society, a chief ingredient of the important Art Workers' Guild.

Bodley's reputation was recognized past 1900 not only in England but also in America.³³ This important early link between American and English Gothic Revival architecture, represented in part by the work of Bodley, bore fruit later during the Arts and Crafts movement when his pupil, Charles Ashbee, developed further the aesthetic dialogue between English and American centers of design reform. Like Bodley, Ashbee also influenced the Arts and Crafts movement in America. Like his teacher who encouraged a return to English stylistic precedents to find sources for a truly modern style, Ashbee studied English craft precedents in order to evolve a Guild style that was both modern and English. This dual aesthetic was inspired by the previous generation's, such as that of Morris, the PRB, and other designers, who sought to revive an appreciation of English art during the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s. Most designers of the Arts and Crafts movement held this regard for an earlier English tradition, believing that the origin of a new and original modern style lay in an understanding of past styles.

Nevertheless, there is evidence of a particular practice by Bodley that would certainly have caused second

thoughts in Ashbee, just as they did in Norman Shaw who, in writing to J. D. Sedding, complained:

Look at the enclosed photo and say it is not copied (and I use the word advisedly). I don't mean imitated--but clean copied from old work--general design and detail down to the smallest cusp. It is possible that this can be great art--I fear not--and yet it is a good work of Bodley's...³⁴

Although no building is identified, this statement reveals much about the Arts and Crafts movement's meaning of individual style and its disapproval of direct copying from older examples. Progressive Arts and Crafts designers, such as Ashbee, insisted upon individual artistic expression that was bred from a thorough knowledge of traditional handicraft techniques and regard for materials; the final product was to be completely modern in its style.

Regarding the generation of Bodley, Ashbee felt that its members perpetuated a tradition based upon the false separation of the fine arts of painting and sculpture from the minor arts such as metalwork, weaving, bookmaking, or some other handmade utilitarian objects. As an architect, and inspired somewhat by the expression of Italian Renaissance art in which all the arts were unified by architecture, Ashbee believed that unity of design expressed through an identifiable guild style could be achieved in the small workshops directed at Essex

House, the Georgian style building in London that was the Guild's home from just after 1888 to 1902.³⁵ There his improved production conditions could elevate current standards of beauty. Ashbee wrote:

Bodley and the architects...Leighton, Watts, Holman Hunt, even Burne-Jones were all, however sympathetic, aloof from the new movement. I think perhaps the cleft between us was of the beautiful world of our desire and the materialistic universe were incompatible...The real help now came from our East London workmen [who] revealed to me that not only were the materialistic Universe and the mechanical conditions of life we were fighting inseparably connected, but that we were also passing out of them. This was a matter not merely of science but of poetic vision through the arts.³⁶

It seems that Ashbee recalled his years as a writer and designer during the late Arts and Crafts period as a time of ideological struggle. Ashbee's answers were provided by the workshop experiences in which the ultimate challenge was to instill human qualities in the arts for a society bogged down by industrialism, and thereby to improve the sense of beauty. The Arts and Crafts problem was summarized well by Ashbee when he wrote: "There it was this commodity...if you make one you could make many but you must make it human; that was the test."³⁷ The experimental purpose of the Guild Idea was to explore the capacity for architect-designers to preserve the integrity of a sensitively designed, handmade art object.

Together, the idealism of Cambridge, the readings of Ruskin, the training with George Bodley, and the reality of working with the underprivileged laborers were contributing factors to the formulative development of Ashbee's Guild Idea. This concept was summed up within the Arts and Crafts context by Ashbee when he wrote:

The movement shall be a workman's movement; that it shall be one for the nobility and advance of English Art and Handicraft; that it shall be developed not on the basis of mastership in the ordinary sense, but co-operatively as an industrial partnership and that the arts and crafts, united in the Guild, shall be the children of the mother art of architecture.³⁸

The Guild Idea was not an inflexible system for Ashbee, and when reconsidering the history of the Guild of Handicraft, two rather different expressions were born from Ashbee's thesis. The earlier definition, closer in spirit to Ruskin's and Morris' concepts of a guild and the rejection of the machine, paralleled the approximately first decade of the Guild, from 1888 to 1900. The second and later definition still relied upon the Guild's founding principles, but by the close of the Guild of Handicraft in 1908, the Guild Idea meant something quite different to its originator. The shift was defined by the incorporation of the machine. Ashbee was able to bring together the machine and the handicraft ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement.

To Ashbee and many of his colleagues, one of the most perplexing questions addressed at the time was the role to be played by machinery in the production of high-quality applied arts. The Guild Idea addressed this issue early in its history. It is the author's belief that Ashbee posed important and relevant questions about the machine very early in the Guild's development and within its more Medieval revival context. Ashbee was able in 1894 to describe the Guild Idea in the form of what he called aphorisms. In the spirit of a motto, Ashbee's aphorisms were essentially ideological guidelines within which his notions of beauty, workshop production, handicraft, and modern design were contained. From the early 1890s to around 1900, they succinctly summarized the various evolutions of his Guild Idea as it was modified through workshop experience, changing public taste, or the nascent Modern movement.

In his 1894 book, Chapters in Workshop Reconstruction and Citizenship, Ashbee wrote an important introductory chapter, "Some Definitions Towards an Ideal," in which he discussed beauty or production standards in relation to social development or the craftsman. The following chapter centered around the "need for the cultivation of beauty" and in discussing at length this aspect of the Guild Idea, Ashbee laid down some of the workshop's

early guiding aphorisms. Addressing the machine problem was for Ashbee only one of five early goals (Appendix 1). The urgency of this production issue remained alive throughout the Guild of Handicraft's evolution. Ashbee believed in 1894 that his Guild plan was a significant attempt to resolve the machine-handicraft conflict, for he wrote:

That the problems of machine production will have by degrees to be solved from within the workshop. That a sharp distinction will have to be drawn between what is produced by machinery and the direct work of man's hands, and that the standard of artistic excellence must depend ultimately upon the pleasure given, not to the consumer, but to the producer.³⁹

This statement concisely defines how Ashbee set out with his investigative Guild Idea to resolve the machine conflict.

The second and more mature phase of the Guild Idea, nurtured within a progressive and more modern context than was present in the early 1890s, could be characterized as a time when Ashbee was able to resolve his questions about the machine which were raised earlier in the Guild experiments. Still maintaining his preference for a handicraft ideal, Ashbee carefully shifted from his dislike of the machine toward an acceptance of its place in the area of applied arts design. This shift took time to occur and it is now important to consider this process within the development of the Guild of Handicraft.

Arts and Crafts ideals germinated with Ruskin and Morris were put into practice when numerous small craft guilds formed in the 1880s and 1890s. Clearly, Ashbee was motivated by many forces, both creative and social, and by his own belief in the possibility for improvement in design through his own ideas. Ashbee was stepping in time with the rapidly growing Arts and Crafts movement, founding the Guild and School of Handicraft in 1888, the same year as the important Arts and Crafts Exhibition society first exhibited the movement's leading designers and craftsmen. The surprise to many, including Ashbee, was that the Guild of Handicraft was so successful. It prospered for twenty years. From his formulation of the Guild Idea, his Guild experiment, and from his efforts to write profusely about the problems in art and industry, Ashbee was able directly to address with some profound implications--if not solutions--the issue of machinery as it applied to the decorative arts.

During the two years with Bodley, Ashbee lived at Toynbee Hall in London's East End, where he formed a Ruskin reading class and taught drawing and decoration. The students attempted to apply their ideals, inspired by Ruskin, to practical education, but they found

apprenticeship defunct...destroyed by subdivision of labour and mechanical production...the teaching function and the workshop function

everywhere divorced...The application of the principles of art to material, to its limitations and necessities, nowhere taught.⁴⁰

With three founding members and four workmen, Ashbee began the Guild and School of Handicraft: "Very undefined at first, the notion was that a school should be carried on in connection with a workshop." Ashbee began as director of both, but as the Guild expanded, he concentrated his efforts upon it and the school came under another director.

The Guild of Handicraft met with widespread and great prosperity. From 1888 to 1902, when the Guild and its galleries were located primarily at Essex House in London, Ashbee's designs as executed by the Guild members were increasingly praised as his craftsmen's skills developed and Ashbee's sense of a Guild style matured. In 1890, the Guild members moved from a nearby warehouse to larger premises on Mile End Road to the Essex House which provided larger working spaces than the upper floor of a Commercial Street warehouse. At the same time, a retail shop was opened on Brook Street. Not only were Guild of Handicraft items purchased by private customers, contemporary architects, or the London School board, for instance, but they were repeatedly exhibited in international expositions and illustrated in reputable professional journals.

As an architect affiliated with the Royal Institute of British Architects, Ashbee was active as an architect of new structures and as a preservationist of old structures.⁴¹ Ashbee participated with the so-called "anti-scrape" architects who were best represented by Morris and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. Around 1900, Ashbee was active with the National Trust, which sponsored his trip to America in 1900-1. As a preservation architect, Ashbee was attracted to Chipping Campden for its restoration potential as well as for its idyllic setting for the Guild members.

As stated in the Foreward, Davey, Pevsner and Hitchcock address Ashbee's architectural designs. The 1895 "Magpie and Stump" house was perhaps the best of a series of original buildings (Plates 1 and 2) designed in 1897 by Ashbee for Cheyne Walk in Chelsea (Plate 3). 72 and 73 Cheyne Walk (Plate 4) appear to be more inspired by Shaw, while the only surviving examples, 38 and 39 Cheyne Walk (Plate 5), are equal with the work of C. F. A. Voysey in originality and simplicity of design. This is particularly true, writes Alastair Service, of the exterior and interior (Plate 6) of 39 Cheyne Walk. Particularly good evidence exists to support the suggestion that vernacular Cotswolds architecture influenced the work of Arts and Crafts architects such as Ashbee. Local

materials and skills used to construct buildings in Chipping Campden (Plate 7) combined to create what Edith Brill labelled "urban vernacular." That was expressed in large buildings of revived style such as Rodmarton Manor (Plate 8). Ashbee's surviving Cheyne Walk buildings combine contemporary needs and abstract and simple surfaces with a picturesque elevation that recalls the Cotswolds vernacular building tradition. Lastly, Ashbee's collaboration with M. H. Baillie Scott for the decoration of the Palace at Darmstadt for the Duke of Hesse was widely published and contributed significantly to establishing the Guild of Handicraft's reputation in 1898.

In 1898, the Guild of Handicraft was registered as a limited liability company in order to deal more soundly with financial matters, a constant problem. A period of well-being followed. By 1900, with seventy workmen, the Guild produced silverwork, jewelry, wrought iron furniture (Plate 9), and printed books, all of which conformed to the stylistic guidance of the head designer, Charles Ashbee. In such a position of stylistic supervision, Ashbee and the Guild members functioned in the manner of the model Italian Renaissance guild, in which the minor arts were subordinated in style to the overriding influence of architecture.

The Guild of Handicraft's recognition increased throughout the late 1890s in England and on the Continent. Numerous exhibitions, commissions, and reviews were complemented with the silverwork, furniture, jewelry, leatherwork, modelling, and private press books produced by the Guild of Handicraft. Ashbee was a familiar name to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society's audiences in London and to similar groups abroad. The Guild's work was known to readers of important periodicals such as Art Journal or The Studio, Dekorative Kunst, or The Builder.⁴² The Guild's work, especially Ashbee's silver and jewelry designs, received much praise in a circuit of exhibitions in the European cities of Manchester, Liverpool, Dublin, Berlin, Munich, Vienna, Frankfort, and Paris, as well as in the American cities of Chicago, St. Louis, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, New York, Philadelphia, and others. Ashbee or the Guild, or both, were represented in every exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society from its first in 1888. It is notable, too, especially in view of the many German cities where Ashbee's work was exhibited, that around 1900 Ashbee became a member of the Vienna Secession, founded in 1897.

The early Ruskinian interpretation of the Guild Idea was outlined at the start of the Guild and school of Handicraft when Ashbee translated and published The

Treatises of Benvenuto Cellini on Goldsmithing and Sculpture in 1888. When he focused his attention upon the life and work of Cellini, Ashbee revealed one aspect of the Guild Idea, which was the organizational role played by the architect. Recognizing how in the Italian Renaissance architecture was seen as the mother art of all the arts, Ashbee believed that the architect-designer was an irreplaceable figure in a small workshop. Just as the master architect of the Renaissance oversaw the various craftsmen engaged in a large project, architect Ashbee brought discipline of design and synthesis of style to every object crafted by the Guild of Handicraft craftsmen.

Ashbee considered Cellini's writings to be a set of guidelines or a "workshop book" that was intended to instruct Guild members and other craftsmen in techniques and methods of the Renaissance goldsmith. The book provides a great deal of information about metalwork techniques. For the purpose of detailing Ashbee's early handicraft attitudes, the preface allows for early glimpses of his attitude toward the machine. Ashbee wrote:

To those of us who in recent years have been seeking to lift the art of the goldsmith out of the slough of industrial despond, to show once more what the human hand and fancy can create, and to relegate, without repudiating it, the machine to its right place in relation to human endeavour, all this manifold

production of rubbishy trinkets, useless ornaments, and things made for 'the Market,' is stupid and wasteful and makes for the destruction not the ennobling or beautifying of life.⁴³

It is important to note two things about this 1888 statement, which was an attempt by Ashbee to define the place of machinery. First, rather than completely rejecting the machine, Ashbee implies that he accepts its position somewhere. Ashbee's definition is novel when compared to many of his predecessors, but at this early point, his ideas about the machine are somewhat undefined and untested. The widespread use of machinery was uncontrolled in the craft setting and, consequently, blamed for "useless ornaments." He urged that machinery should be consigned to a position inferior to that of the handicrafts. What is important is that the machine's position is included in Ashbee's reformatory scheme rather than rejected outright and that its position is one of low rank. The second point to be made is that Ashbee implied that he was part of a larger group of Arts and Crafts designers and writers seeking common goals, one of which was to bring aesthetic standards to the application of machinery to handicraft production.

Regarding the surviving examples of Cellini's metalwork, Ashbee makes clear his own aesthetic preferences by detailing what he saw as problems, or a

"vulgarity about Cellini's work, from the modern point of view--the point of view that distinguishes between goldsmith and sculptor, between craftsman and designer."

Ashbee also complained of "a want of feeling for proportion" and that "the whole is marred by the overcrowded detail."⁴⁴ Considering the Arts and Crafts movement's dislike of the overabundance of useless ornament found on so many Victorian objects, it is no surprise that Ashbee protests when he finds Cellini's work lacking the unity of a well designed and carefully ornamented object.

Thus Ashbee, as a designer of silverwork for the craftsmen of his Guild, preferred spirituality, a good sense of proportion, and a unity of parts for his designs. As an architect, Ashbee preferred each part to be simple and distinguishable. Although names such as Voysey, Baillie Scott, and Ashbee were, by the 1890s, more frequently mentioned in publications than the name of Morris, it is necessary to discuss Ashbee's relation to Morris in the years surrounding the formation of the Guild and School of Handicraft. Although in the years after 1900, Morris' ideas seem to be of less immediate significance to Ashbee, at no time did the influence of Morris disappear from Ashbee's career. The early Guild years, in the late 1880s and early to middle 1890s were when Ashbee was most closely tied in spirit to William Morris.

According to an entry in his "Memoirs," Ashbee met Morris for the first time in July, 1886 at Toynbee Hall where Morris was delivering a lecture on the aims of Art.⁴⁵ At this time, Morris had been designing tapestries for mass-production, which was an early indication that he allowed some role for the machine. The beliefs held by Morris in relation to machinery in 1886, two years before Ashbee's Guild experiment was begun, are important, therefore, for outlining Ashbee's earliest ideas about the machine. It is clear that late in his career, Morris, after leading the craft reform movement through nearly three decades, redefined his previous notions about machinery. Morris had become more flexible, it seems, and tolerated the machine for the production of art objects. Ashbee jotted down some of Morris' most striking ideas from the lecture and one note refers specifically to Morris' idea about machinery. Ashbee quoted Morris as having said:

This ugliness of our age is seen in the growth of machinery. But in the use of machinery note two things the one good the other evil, the good where the machine is auxilliary (sic) to the man, the evil where the man is auxilliary (sic) to the machine.⁴⁶

Morris claimed in the lecture that contemporary society had succumbed to evil conditions dominated by the industrial and commercial system. Ashbee noted from the lecture that, for daily needs and for minor forms of art,

society could improve its conditions substantially if machinery was limited to a subordinate position.

In an essay written by Morris in 1888, "How We Live and How We Might Live," there is reference made to machinery as part of the ideological baggage inherited by Ashbee and his contemporaries at the time when Ashbee had begun to formulate his Guild Idea. This essay by Morris was written at the same time that Ashbee was first introduced to him. In this essay, Morris wrote:

I have spoken of machinery being used freely for releasing people from the more mechanical and repulsive part of necessary labour and I know that to some cultivated people, people of the artistic turn of mind, machinery is particularly distasteful, and they will be apt to say you will never get your surroundings pleasant so long as you are surrounded by machinery. I don't quite admit that it is allowing machines to be our masters and not our servants that so injures the beauty of life nowadays. In other words, it is the token of the terrible crime we have fallen into of using our control of the powers of nature for the purpose of enslaving people, we care less meantime of how much happiness we rob their lives of.⁴⁷

When Ashbee confronted Morris in December 1887 with the idea of a related school and guild, Morris was apparently less than enthusiastic and considered the scheme to be "useless."⁴⁸ Ashbee's effort was not without precedent because other guilds had been attempted with some success earlier in the 1880s. However, Morris' response may indicate his displeasure at the number of craft guilds springing up at the time and that were in competition with

Morris and Company or he may have been unfamiliar with a guild as experimental as Ashbee's Guild and school of Handicraft would be.

Ashbee began the Guild and School of Handicraft with untrained workers recruited from London's East End, which indicated that he may have been concerned with revising traditional methods of workshop organization that relied on well-trained craftsmen. To Ashbee, the means of production were more important than the finished product, which emphasized again Ashbee's belief in the importance of joy for the producer. Such a belief is one of many Morrisian ideas admired by Ashbee early in the 1890s. Ashbee believed that when the workshop conditions were improved from the present ones in which the industrial and commercial needs dominated the human needs, then the product would improve. Secondly, Morris may not have understood Ashbee's Guild to be fundamentally different in spirit from his own efforts, which depended more on historical precedent for their sources than Ashbee's would. Despite Morris' hesitation, Ashbee was committed to seeing his reformatory guild plan tested. His enthusiasm and his trained sense of a unified style led the Guild of Handicraft through twenty years of success.

Ashbee was not alone in his questioning of the place for machinery. Indeed, some of his contemporaries

in the Arts and Crafts movement designed for machine production, which seems to contradict the early aims of the movement. Rather than avoiding the machine in handicraft production, Walter Crane, A. H. Mackmurdo, Lewis Day, C. F. A. Voysey, and William Morris are known to have designed occasionally for machine production. Moreover, W. A. S. Benson and Reginald Silver designed metalwork exclusively for machine production. Silver designed finely proportioned silver vessels in a Celtic Revival style, known as the Cymric line, for Liberty and Company. Mass-produced and consequently less expensive, both the Tudric and the Cymric style of Liberty's silver was in competition with Ashbee's designs and contributed to the decline of the Guild of handicraft, especially after 1902.

The most innovative of Ashbee's contemporaries in metalwork was W. A. S. Benson. Both are mentioned in periodicals and exhibition catalogues as the most individualistic in their designs of lighting fixtures and vessels made of precious metals. For instance, the respected German critic in London in the late 1890s, Hermann Muthesius, wrote in Das Englische Haus that Benson was the first to develop designs for lighting fixtures "from [the] purpose and character of metal as material."⁴⁹ Benson was educated at Oxford and received some architectural training. However, he gave up this career when

he chose to open his own metal shop, after much persuasion from William Morris. Benson was closely associated with Morris and Company, for whom he designed metal fixtures. Benson was also associated with the Art Workers' Guild and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. Benson's style of metalwork was very simple and austere, due in part to the wide use of mechanical spinning. The very highly finished surface differed significantly in appearance and aesthetic intent from the hand-hammered surface of a silver object executed by hand in Ashbee's workshop.

As the Guild of Handicraft's two decades passed, Ashbee's goals remained relatively unchanged. He sought to improve standards of beauty for the applied arts, to find modern solutions to the problematic application of industry standards to artistic handicraft production by means of the small workshop, and to encourage the expression of individual craftsmen.

The Ashbee "Memoirs" provide additional information concerning Ashbee's Guild Idea and its practice in the Guild of Handicraft during its formative years that stands out more prominently than his books and articles already discussed. Around the same time that Frank Lloyd Wright wrote his autobiography, Ashbee was compiling in 1938 all the letters and personal journal entries for his "Memoirs," writing introductions to each of the major

parts. Such reflective and autobiographical writing, benefitting inevitably from hindsight, must be approached with caution. Yet, a certain awareness of people, ideas, and events survived from the past as the essence of Ashbee's idealistic younger days. Such reflective writing serves to summarize, in Ashbee's words, the ideas and people most significant to achieving his goals as the leader of the Guild and School of Handicraft.

Regarding the entire Arts and Crafts movement, Ashbee described those years as

a time moreover when new forces were shaping that were to have great influence in English aesthetics. Among them were the Art Workers' Guild, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, --and generally what is sometimes called the Arts and Crafts movement; a term now of the old world because the ideas it embodies have become part of European and democratic equipment.⁵⁰

Looking backward on his career as an architect-designer, Ashbee acknowledged how many of the important lessons of his Guild Idea in particular and the Arts and Crafts movement in general had been incorporated within modern design in the years following the close of his guild. Ashbee, then, was an active participant in the formation of "new forces" which significantly affected applied arts design in the early twentieth century.

The last two decades of the nineteenth century in London were years when the leading designers and

writers of the Arts and Crafts movement displayed their best efforts through guilds and societies for lecture and exhibition purposes. For Continental and American architects and designers alike, British design was the model to be emulated in the 1870s, 1880s, 1890s, and early 1900s. On the Continent, the most highly regarded Arts and Crafts designers were William Morris, Walter Crane, Charles Ashbee, C. F. A. Voysey, M. H. Baillie Scott, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh. All of these figures were active in two organizations that define most succinctly the British movement. An examination of these two, the Art Workers' Guild and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, is useful for outlining the London Arts and Crafts setting in which Ashbee began his career.

A radical reformatory trend such as the Arts and Crafts movement, in its early history, when composed of many differently tempered designers, sculptors, and painters, benefits from a sense of unity if any legible message is to be conveyed. For the diverse group who sought to re-establish a close and cooperative relationship between architects, artists, and craftsmen, the formation of the Art Workers' Guild in 1884 by a group of Richard Norman Shaw's pupils was a much needed step toward organization. Another group, known as the Fifteen, was led by Lewis F. Day and Walter Crane and it joined the

Art Workers' Guild to form a larger and more effective organization. Its clearly-stated purpose was to exist for "craftsmen in architecture, painting, sculpture, and the kindred arts, as an alternative to the Royal Academy and the RIBA."⁵¹ Strangely, the Art Workers' Guild preferred not to gain a great deal of publicity and chose instead to provide a secluded setting for the exchange of ideas, techniques, and aesthetics. Members of the Art Workers' Guild included J. D. Sedding, C. F. A. Voysey, Harrison Townsend, William Morris, Walter Crane, A. H. Mackmurdo, Richard Norman Shaw, Edwin Lutyens, Roger Fry, and Charles Ashbee.⁵²

Writing in his "Memoirs" in the 1930s, Ashbee underscored the importance of the Art Workers' Guild: "Most English painters, architects, sculptors, and craftsmen of distinction who have been touched with the modern spirit have in the last fifty years at one time or another been members of or been influenced by the 'A.W.G.'..."⁵³ Ashbee, as founder of the School of Handicraft must also have known that the true significance of the Art Workers' Guild lay in areas of art administration and education, for to be elected to its membership qualified the holder to highly respected administrative positions.

Administration did not, however, suit the needs of another faction of the Art Workers' Guild who felt the

need to exhibit their work and to proclaim their beliefs on a regular basis. Thus, in 1888, under the direction of Walter Crane, and through the devoted efforts of members such as T. J. Cobden-Sanderson, William De Morgan, Lewis F. Day, and especially W. A. S. Benson, the first Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society's exhibition was opened.

Although nowhere in the catalogues is there discussion devoted to the role of the machine in handicraft production, the Society did not exclude craftsmen who were known to design for mass production. For instance, Benson is recognized as a designer of metalwork to be mass-produced by machinery and his work was often exhibited. The society's exhibitions were held annually for the first three years and then tri-annually in order to maintain standards of high quality. Important here, Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft exhibited twelve pieces in the first exhibition.

The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society published catalogues for each exhibition and The Studio devoted lengthy illustrated and detailed reviews of the artistic handicrafts. If the exhibitions provided visual testimony to the movement's ideals, then the society's catalogues provided readers with their message, which sums up quite accurately the beliefs of most of the major Arts and Crafts designers, no matter how different were their

individual contributions.

The exhibition catalogues were often prefaced by the society's president, Walter Crane. His ideas, identified closely with those of the society, are important to quote in some detail because Crane, like Ashbee, was one of the first British representatives of the Arts and Crafts movement to visit Chicago and to comment upon his visit. Crane, in the first catalogue, regrets the loss of important individual contributions within the modern industrial system, which was permitted by society to operate under the "misapplication of machinery, driven by trade competition, purely commercial affairs instead of growing out of 'organic necessities.'"⁵⁴ He complained further of the art market which was artificially controlled by salesmen and advertisers. Much to the detriment of skilled individual craftsmen and ultimately to society's standards of beauty, Crane and his supporters believed, the current commercial system neglected skill and fine design in favor of cheap products and high profits.

Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society feared that traditional English handicrafts were endangered to the point of disappearance, wiped out by mass-production, and were to be replaced by men who minded machines rather than men who used their creative

sensibilities and their hands to design and to produce individual art objects. To remedy this situation, the exhibition catalogues listed both the designers and the producers. The temperament is clearly one which sides with the individual craftsman rather than with machinery. Thoughtful design, creative energy, and well-applied craft skills were clearly emphasized. In a movement without a recognizable or self-proclaimed style, there was ample latitude for individual design.

The Arts and Crafts movement's most fervently held beliefs were summed up by Crane when he wrote, "If Art is not recognized in the humblest object and material and felt to be as valuable in its own way as the more highly rewarded pictorial skill--the arts cannot be in a sound condition."⁵⁵ For the important Arts and Crafts designers, the minor arts, the result of individual skill and design, were to be considered as significant as the fine arts. This embracing theory of design, with architecture as the unifying element, was an essential feature of Ashbee's Guild Idea and the movement in general. An ideal which echoes in America during the next decades was summarized by Crane in the second Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society's exhibition of 1889 when he claimed that "Any attempt to initiate or render the qualities peculiar to one material in another leads the workman on a false

track."⁵⁶ Lastly in regard to materials, Crane wrote, "Plain materials and surfaces are infinitely preferable to inorganic and inappropriate ornament." Aesthetic language was employed in London describing the preference in 1889 for unornamented plain surfaces on objects which have been made with attention toward organic principles of design. Such language relies on aesthetic principles which will become central to what Ashbee calls in 1911 "the style of the Middle West."⁵⁷

An important publication organized by the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Arts and Crafts Essays by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, was prefaced by William Morris. The book was twice reprinted, which testifies to its widespread importance as an influential disseminator of Arts and Crafts ideals. A new definition of beauty, which relied for its strength upon the decorative arts, was sought to replace the current definition of beauty that relied almost exclusively upon pictorial standards. This opposition between the decorative and fine arts could be viewed as a measure of how far removed from the accepted standards of beauty handicraft production had been pushed by the industrial system. Exhibitions and catalogues, espousing Arts and Crafts ideals, were believed to help establish a new standard which incorporated the fine and decorative arts within an

improved standard of beauty that relied largely upon unity of parts, simplicity of surface and ornament, and organic necessity as a guiding design principle.

Not surprisingly, the book's leading essay by Crane is entitled, "Of the Revival of Design and Handicraft," in which he states, "The true root and basis of all Art lies in the handicrafts." Artistic instability would prevail, Crane argued, if there existed "no room or chance of recognition for really artistic power and feeling in design and craftsmanship."⁵⁸ In regard to machinery, which was the perceived enemy of beauty allied to use, Crane expressed an idea which will reoccur later when Ashbee and Wright debated the proper place for the machine. Crane wrote of the effects of machinery:

With the organization of industry on the grand scale, and the enormous application of machinery in the interests of competitive production for profit, when both art and industry are forced to make their appeal to the unreal and impersonal average, rather than to the real and personal you and me, it is not wonderful that beauty should have become divorced from use, and that attempts to concede its demands, and the desire for it, should too often mean the ill-considered bedizenment of meaningless and unrelated ornament.⁵⁹

The conflict between the needs of the average and the needs of the individual are what will separate Ashbee and Wright in 1900, according to Ashbee's "Memoirs."

Crane expressed many ideas which were eagerly supported by his contemporaries, many of whom were members

of the Society. Thus Crane summed up quite well in his essay the thrust of the Arts and Crafts movement when he wrote:

It is a protest against that so-called industrial progress which produces shoddy wares, the cheapness of which is paid for by the lives of their producers and the degradation of their users. It is a protest against the turning of men into machines, against artificial distinctions in art, and against making the immediate market value, or possibility of profit, the chief test of artistic merits.⁶⁰

Ashbee's writings, it will be shown, contained similar language when he was working in the 1890s. Moreover, Ashbee was writing from the point of view of a practicing designer in charge of a small workshop. The Arts and Crafts movement stood for the needed improvement in a wide variety of aesthetic, social, educational, and industrial issues. The Art Workers' Guild and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society were two long-lasting and significant platforms from which the reformative architect-designers could espouse their ideals.

An architect-designer like Ashbee was someone who fashioned not only the plans and elevations of a building, but also someone who might oversee the creation of the furnishings to be included in a building's interior. In the 1890s, the building and its interior were not often viewed as unified in the same sense as they were by other architects, such as Frank Lloyd Wright, in

the 1900s. An architect-designer was concerned almost exclusively with residential architecture and thus supervised the design of a building intended to be beautiful, useful, and protective. The objects for household use that he designed were also intended to be useful, beautiful, and in aesthetic harmony with the character of the house's interior. The house and decorative art object were viewed separately in terms of an identifiable style; thus a handcrafted object was thought to have an integrity of beauty all its own.

The architect-designer was primarily an architect and secondarily a designer and so aimed for an overall unity of parts in an architectural sense whenever a fixture or utilitarian object was designed. The architect-designer had been trained to subordinate all parts of a design to the effect of the whole building. In turn, the most successfully designed object, to an Arts and Crafts architect-designer, expressed an architectural elevation of character in which each element, like each part of an elevation, was subordinated to the whole composition. Ashbee's silverwork, it will be shown, exhibited just such an architectural sense of design. Moreover, its success lay partially in its conformation stylistically to the important Arts and Crafts ideals of simplicity of surface, judicious and appropriate ornament, and an expression of

the character of the material.

Perhaps the largest group of architect-designers and the first to be recognized as coordinated movement was that group active in Great Britain and America throughout the years of the Arts and Crafts movement, from about 1860 to 1912. Prominent members of the British movement included G. E. Street, William Burges, Richard Norman Shaw, Philip Webb, M. H. Baillie Scott, C. F. A. Voysey, and C. R. Ashbee.⁶¹

The last point regarding the late nineteenth-century Arts and Crafts architect-designer's role is that rarely did any of them actually make the objects they designed. In the case of Ashbee, his well-known silverwork was made by the Guild metalworkers after his designs. Ashbee oversaw the production of the Guild's wares not as a craftsman with tool in hand, but rather as an architect-designer with an overall Guild style in mind. Ashbee's responsibility was to see that each object conformed to his idea of the Guild style. This all-encompassing method of design and craftsmanship was executed in the small workshop and published in Ashbee's books and articles. Ashbee's ideas were frequently expressed by means of design, thus injecting objects with design-related ideologies. For example, Ashbee's silverwork was composed around architectural ideals whereby all of the different

parts were held together by an architectural sense of the whole. Ashbee addressed this major point when he wrote, "the Arts and Crafts, united in the Guild, shall be the children of the mother art of architecture."⁶²

The architect-designer stood for the individuality not only of the craftsman or producer, but also for that of the client. Often each object was designed for a particular house setting by an individual designer who had only one project or one interior in mind. This design process eliminated demand for and reliance upon the mass-produced and manufactured article from the trade. M. H. Baillie Scott, the well-known contemporary of and collaborator with Ashbee, wrote, "The fastenings for the doors and windows, the grates and furniture, all should be specially designed for their special positions and not selected from the pattern book of the manufacturer."⁶³ Ashbee, in agreement with Baillie Scott's belief, sought to design useful objects to be executed by the craftsmen in an identifiable Guild style. This preserved the object's integrity as well as the Guild of Handicraft's individuality. It is important to distinguish from Baillie Scott's idea, however, that a Guild object was not always designed for only one setting. Rather, such an object was designed as an individual handcrafted item meant to suit aesthetically a singular type of modern

setting. This setting was characterized by an anti-historicist approach to previous English art traditions.

Ashbee's workshop experience paralleled many larger issues important to the Arts and Crafts movement. Some specific design reform principles are attributable to Ashbee alone. For example, Ashbee's ideas of the 1890s, the first decade of the Guild of Handicraft, are quite distinct but not entirely different from his ideas of ca 1900 to 1908, the second decade of the Guild. What dramatically and certainly represents a sizeable contributive effort to the early transitional years of the Modern movement are Ashbee's aphorisms, mentioned earlier in relation to the Guild Idea.

The early goals and foundations of the Guild and School of Handicraft are succinctly gathered by Ashbee in his book, An Endeavour Towards the Teaching of John Ruskin and William Morris, which was written from a retrospective point of view in the years around 1900. The Guild of Handicraft owed its origins to three trends in England which Ashbee identified as the Socialist movement, the call for technical education, and the revival of English decorative or industrial arts. Ashbee expanded upon one of the craft revival's definitive purposes which,

implies a rebellion against inutilities, a conviction that machinery must be relegated to its proper place as the tool and not the master of the workman, that the life of the producer is

to the community a more vital consideration than the cheap production which ignores it, and that thus the human and ethical considerations that insist on the individuality of the workman are of the first importance.⁶⁴

When Ashbee and some of his students at Toynbee Hall attempted to apply their new ideals, inspired by reading Ruskin and Morris to practical application, they found

apprenticeship defunct, the time-honoured manner by which a youth learned his craft, destroyed by the subdivision of labour and mechanical production, we found the teaching function and the workshop function everywhere divorced, which for the proper study of industrial art to material, to its limitations and necessities, nowhere taught;--Those principles, the understanding of which is the glory of every great aesthetic period, and gives to the workman the subtle sense of true craftsmanship...⁶⁵

At first, Ashbee sought to improve these conditions by closely associating a school with a workshop. However, the Guild's growth, success, and his determination to find practical solutions to problems of craft production within the Arts and Crafts ideals absorbed Ashbee's full attention.

Similar to ideas of Ruskin and Morris and during the early years of the Guild of Handicraft, Ashbee regarded the medieval guild as a workshop tradition with standards of production that were applicable to modern design needs. Because the Arts and Crafts writers and designers were striving for a system of handicraft production guided by the unifying effect of architecture, the

modern idea of a guild of workmen or craftsmen whose efforts were guided by a central designing architect was widely supported. The Guild of Handicraft was Ashbee's clearest statement of his belief that a similarly organized workshop could substantially improve the application of design to industrial conditions. An important ingredient in the solution to the machine-handicraft conflict, Ashbee believed, lay in the small guild-like workshop, where questions of utility, beauty, ornament, materials and production could be answered in the application of hand and mind to design and material.

The most substantial book written by Charles Ashbee during the Guild's first decade was Chapters in Workshop Reconstruction and Citizenship of 1894. In this book, Ashbee's primary objective is to answer questions about art and technical education; however, some chapters reveal Ashbee's ideas about industry, craftsmanship, standards of beauty, and the role of machinery. From these considerations, an understanding of the Guild Idea emerges. These terms, central to the problems which the Guild was established to deal with, are distinguished by Ashbee in the following manner. Art was "the highest imaginative production for human delight or service," and he accepted Ruskin's definition that "the object of Art is either to tell a true thing or to adorn a serviceable

one..." Ashbee defined Craft as "technical production, in which the hand works alone or under the immediate guidance of the brain" and Industry as "production in which the machine or the hand works, but not under the direct guidance of the brain."⁶⁶

Obviously, these definitions provided for some overlapping and a degree of flexibility for which Ashbee should be credited. Ashbee's reformative design plans centered around the acknowledged ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement throughout the history of the Guild. Ashbee's conception of the interrelation of art, craft, and industry expanded as the Guild progressed into the 1890s and as the artistic climate responded to the growing effects of the Arts and Crafts movement.

In his essay, "On the Teaching of Design and Its Bearing on Workshop Reconstruction" from Chapters in Workshop Reconstruction and Citizenship, Ashbee revealed an affinity with earlier Arts and Crafts ideals. Central is the belief that the medieval guild tradition and the work produced in England under these pre-industrial conditions were the standards at which modern designers should aim in their pursuit of a new style. He defined these as "the tradition of the Guild and the tradition of the Workshop," which "implied a system of cooperation and a passing down

of methods of craftsmanship." Ashbee then contrasted unfavorable modern conditions of an industrial system to what he believed to be the more favorable conditions of the medieval past. But it is crucial to point out that Ashbee qualified his ideas and cast this retrospection in a thoroughly modern context. He believed it would be "grotesque to require that old traditions shall be applied to these conditions,"⁶⁷ the latter referring to his own time. Ashbee pressed instead for:

any development of the Co-operative Society, or embryo Guild, [that] brings us nearer, not to the medieval workshop, to that we can never return, nor should we seek to do so, but to the conditions that made possible the production of its commodities.⁶⁸

The Guild of Handicraft was the stage on which Ashbee was to test this early belief in pre-industrial conditions which in 1894 did not openly advocate or even accept machinery in the small workshop. Ashbee believed firmly at this time that in order to re-establish good design in the small workshop, old traditions must be combined with new conditions. For instance, individuality of expression and fine craftsmanship united with good design were for Ashbee outstanding characteristics of past traditions. He sought to apply such standards to the new conditions defined by industrial mass-production of the applied arts.⁶⁹ Such a belief seems to imply, however, that at

this early date Ashbee was seeking to justify rather than to deny the dominating, but aesthetically uncontrolled position machinery had already assumed. Ashbee looked to the past for a new design standard by which modern machines could be regulated, rather than for a means of escape from present design problems. Unlike some early Arts and Crafts promoters, Ashbee sought means to regulate--not to refute--the machine in design.

This sought-after standard envisioned a recall of those identifiable aesthetic standards and workshop conditions that regulated the craftsmen and tools in a medieval workshop. Under these conditions, Ashbee believed individual expression, high quality craftsmanship, and careful subordination of skills to a greater aesthetic aggregate, or a unifying workshop style, would exist to the benefit of the worker. Ashbee did not promote a blindly romantic return to past centuries, but rather to the favorable conditions that would encourage high-quality craftsmanship. As the chief designer for the Guild, Ashbee understood the similarity that might exist between a craftsman and his tools contemporary with Cellini's workshop and the modern factory worker and his tools--the machine. The medieval craftsman was seen to be in control of his tools or, in other words, joyful in the production of his craft. The factory worker was seen to be at the mercy of his machines, which by dominating the

workers' lives and stifling their individually creative efforts, eliminated any joy in production. What was needed desperately soon, Ashbee persuaded, was a reorganization of the modern factory modelled in spirit after the standards and small workshop conditions of the medieval guild. Ashbee sought to test his Guild Idea by means of the lessons learned in the small Guild of Handicraft workshops.

His Guild Idea, elaborated upon early in the Guild's history in Chapters in Workshop Reconstruction and Citizenship, was admired in the 1890s and later embraced on the Continent and in America where designers attempted to establish standards of beauty for machine production. Ashbee elaborated further on the workshop organization in the above mentioned book:

for though the workshop will always need its architect or constructive designer, our newer system of responsible cooperation will inevitably approximate the medieval guild system, in which the workman was enabled to put his own individuality into his work.⁷⁰

Ashbee recognized the special task that was required of an architect-designer who was organizing the efforts of a craft guild. The workshop simply could not function without the architect. This "constructive designer," said Ashbee, had the training as an architect to compose a unified style through the individual labors of his craftsmen. Each workshop, though similarly organized, had its

own potential style, depending upon the ability of the architect-designer's sensitivity toward harmonious composition. Just as an architect channeled the many different parts of a building into a unified aesthetic statement, an architect-designer channeled the multiple efforts of his craftsmen toward a recognizable workshop style.

Ashbee was quite successful at achieving a Guild style in his workshops, particularly in silverwork and printing. This style, briefly, is characterized by sweeping curves in wirework, some elements of floral ornament, and small colorful enamel or precious stone details. Working closely with inexperienced craftsmen may have enabled him to mold their growing ability into his own distinctive guild style more easily than if he had worked with established craftsmen with many years of experience. Ashbee recognized this need to tune the workshop to the high standards of beauty and design that a professional architect was so well equipped to guide. Each craftsman's individual effort could be seen as a spoke of the larger and more important wheel, the workshop style.

The ideological step from coordinating the multiple efforts of men with tools to guiding the production of numerous machines was taken somewhat experimentally by Ashbee in the late years of the Guild of Handicraft, just after 1900. This is not to say that Ashbee equated men and machines. Ashbee recognized that a

workshop principle could be applied beneficially to the production of objects by machines. Ashbee remained loyal to the aesthetic standards recognized in the handicraft tradition, yet he was able to provide a feasible workshop model that would preserve high standards of beauty in a modern industrial setting.

The early Modern movement's concern with the limitations of materials and the derivation of a beautiful form from the object's intended function were questions raised by and ideals inherited directly from a number of Arts and Crafts writers and designers, one of whom was Charles Ashbee. The workshop provided the setting conducive to testing the qualities of the craftsman's materials and tools. Ashbee wrote, "In the first place, the right understanding of forms of ornament,--elements of design, is only possible in their direct bearing on forms of material,--elements of construction."⁷¹ With regard to the producer's role, Ashbee wrote, "The complete power of the craftsman over his material can only be achieved by learning the values of material."⁷² Technique and style were concepts of great importance to Ashbee who thought that neither could be taught successfully in classrooms. The small workshop remained the laboratory for testing Ashbee's suggestions for the improvement of decorative art. In the 1890s, Ashbee's activities with the Guild of Handicraft could be viewed as a series of

searches or experiments whose scope of interest was wide. Nonetheless, Ashbee set down a number of aphorisms or principles that characterized the Guild's and his own ideological goals. For the widely recognized problem of machinery and the factory, Ashbee wrote that

the problem of machine production will have by degrees to be solved from within the workshop. That a sharp distinction will have to be drawn between what is produced by machinery and the direct work of man's hands, and that the standard of artistic excellence must depend ultimately upon the pleasure given, not to the consumer, but to the producer.⁷³

This statement is at the core of the aesthetic and industrial dilemma that Ashbee was attempting to solve through the craft experiments of the Guild of Handicraft.

From within this highly regulated, yet highly experimental small workshop, Ashbee sought to define standards of beauty and handicraft production that would be applicable to the inevitably soon-to-come workshop that was organized almost entirely around the machine rather than the workbench. The secret ingredients which Ashbee pursued were quality of design and manufacture, both of which he saw as having been largely ignored, when compared to the urge for profit. This quality of craftsmanship would only be defined with the actual materials being manipulated in the hands of a sensitively guided and admirably trained craftsman. In other words, the joy given to the producer was considered more important to

study than the joy given to any unknown consumer of trade objects.

With regard to Ashbee's Guild Idea, pleasure in production implied a complete sympathy of the craftsman with their material and a total understanding of the boundaries of its manipulative capability. With this intimate understanding of the materials, a craftsman was free of the shackles of machinery to create a beautiful and useful object. The root of this thought lies in the ideas of Ruskin and Morris who believed labor to be both beneficial and pleasurable to the workman. Thus, Ashbee was assured as the lead designer that the craftsman's individual integrity would not be lost.

Ashbee paralleled what was machine-made with pleasure given to the consumer and what was handmade with pleasure given to the producer. Ashbee and his contemporaries realized that unfavorable industrial conditions existed and they believed them to be detrimental to modern standards of beauty and artistic production; but Ashbee, nearly alone, chose not to fulfill the handicraft conditions by depending completely upon tradition. Instead, Ashbee sought to interrelate what were then seen as opposing forces: machine production and handicraft standards of beauty. The Guild Idea, implemented for twenty years through Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft, was a realistic attempt to link the standards of beauty

established in a small workshop with the inevitable larger-scaled manufacture of applied art objects by machines.

Progressive changes to modern conditions were what Ashbee was seeking. The distinction between man-made and machine-made was necessary; however, Ashbee tried to improve upon the definition of machine-made to instill the process with standards derived from hand-made craftsmanship. This was indeed a new craft ethic.

In the early 1890s, Ashbee's attitudes toward the machine, unrefined and untested, included both recognition and rejection. Acknowledging machinery as he did in the aphorism last quoted, Ashbee also condemned in 1901 the overwhelming role it held:

The factory system as applied to industrial art is harmful, and by the factory system I take as implied the method of organization by which large bodies of men work under mechanical conditions with subdivision of labour. To extend this system to the production of a work of art and attain satisfactory results is impossible.⁷⁴

Regarding the admittedly enormous question of the relationship between the decorative arts and the industrial system, Ashbee wrote:

The whole ethics of industry are involved in this, but the ethics of industry will be determined in the workshop only...The dignity of labour, the standard of life, the necessity of leisure, the need for curtailment of unnecessary and unproductive labour, and of national waste, the province of the machine, its position as the basis of social re-construction, these are all primarily workshop problems, and will, in due course, be settled from within, not without, in fact, are being settled now. They are, many of

them, questions we cannot shirk, but they are, many of them, questions whose consideration we can postpone. Upon them, however, Art depends.⁷⁵

There can be no doubt, then, that Ashbee considered the mission of the Guild Idea to be broad and serious in its scope. From his position as an architect, he realized that the current design problems would be corrected within the context of the modern guild where the individual craftsman would be able to determine the limits of his material as well as the practical application of machinery to reputable production.

A second, but less significant primary source for study of Ashbee's early conception of the Guild Idea was published in 1892, four years after the Guild experiment had begun. The Manual of The Guild and School of Handicraft, that Ashbee characterized as "a statement based upon the experience of several years' successful practical work," was intended primarily for school teachers; however, certain statements bear examination in order to define Ashbee's ideals early in the Guild's history.

Ashbee was keenly aware that the Guild and School of Handicraft were novel--or experimental--and recognized the special place his efforts held at that time, referring to the Guild members as "pioneers."⁷⁶ As such, Ashbee believed his group to be actively searching for new answers to identifiable design problems in unknown

intellectual and untested artistic areas. In the Guild manual, Ashbee attempted to define the Guild Idea as he understood it in the 1890s, when, through the guiding principles, he insisted:

that there is a dignity in handicraft rightly pursued and rightly understood; that the cry of the application of art to industry, of sounder technical training, can only be met by the right understanding and study of handicraft;...that, in order rightly to understand and to produce, production must be founded on some sort of cooperative basis, and the principles of master-ship modified so as to give freedom to the individuality of the producer...The principles which went so far towards the success of the recent Arts and Crafts Exhibition--of bringing forward the designer and the exutant of each piece of work--we consider, are fundamentally sound;...that any productive business, where a man's brain and hand are brought into play, should be based upon them.⁷⁷

Ashbee continued by stressing the great importance of the individual producer and the leading design role to be held by an architect, "a senior workman," with whom the craftsmen should have as much direct contact as possible. When describing handicraft production, Ashbee defined the "workshop principle" as unteachable in classrooms; instead, Ashbee urged that production "must have direct relation to material in every possible variety." For himself, the chief designer, Ashbee believed that "a designer cannot be taught on paper; he must be taught in wood, in clay, in leather, in metal, in wax, in the actual substance in which he is to design."⁷⁸

In summary, the Guild Idea was intimately

connected with direct contact with materials to be crafted. For the craftsman, the primary focus of much of Arts and Crafts ideals, they were simultaneously to maintain direct contact with their material and with their designer as frequently as possible. In this process, the architect-designer was able to confront questions about the part to be played by the machine. Ashbee sought to maintain fine handicraft standards within an industrial setting, but without sacrificing the integrity of the individual craftsman, his traditional skills, or his sense of design to the machine process. From the above-quoted statements, it appears that some of Ashbee's ideas conflict with one another and that he chose to address or to ignore some of the important design questions of the day. This may be true of Ashbee in the 1890s, however, the "American Interlude," as Ashbee called his trip to America in his "Memoirs," was to provide Ashbee with insight needed to synthesize his Guild Idea.

The remainder of Ashbee's writings throughout the 1890s were concerned with the many different techniques of jewelry and metalwork. Of most importance in the present context of workshop organization is the 1894 Art Journal article devoted to the manufacture of 16th-century Italian jewelry.⁷⁹ Studying the sixteenth-century Italian Renaissance workshop, this article reveals Ashbee's admiration of the workshop organization, the

unity of all the arts in the Renaissance period, and the insistence upon the "intrinsic worth" of each handmade object. Again, rather than favoring the copying of Renaissance jewelry or attempting to lapse romantically into the past for escape, Ashbee celebrated sixteenth-century workshop conditions as models to be regarded when seeking to improve modern conditions and to raise the standards of beauty. In the nineteenth century, much of what Ashbee praised in the Renaissance workshop methods, he strove to improve even more as the leading designer in the Guild of Handicraft. Fine metalwork distinguished the career of Ashbee and Cellini, the Renaissance metalworker Ashbee so admired. Fine metalwork stood out as the Guild of Handicraft's most successful emulation of the "workshop principle" Ashbee so often wrote about.

The early decorative work of William Morris was displayed in the fixtures and decorations he designed with members of the PRB in his own house, the Red House. Charles Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft were able in 1895 to design and execute the decoration and fixtures for Ashbee's own house on Cheyne Walk in Chelsea. Known as the "Magpie and Stump" House (Plate 5), the building and its contents were published in the May, 1895 issue of The Studio where the house was described as a "successful experiment." The use of Gothic detailing, undoubtedly

learned in the office of his teacher Bodley, is subordinated to the "sensible use of good material" and "artistic reticence of expression." The designer's house, "very comfortable and eminently practical," is described in detail, contrasting the offices and studio with a "more medieval" dining room.⁸⁰

Regarding ornamentation in the "Magpie and Stump" House, Ashbee's work is praised for "here Mr. Ashbee had tried by its simplicity of form or beauty of surface to let the item in question serve its purpose thoroughly with no added ornament whatever."⁸¹ Such a statement attests to Ashbee's awareness of form, material, and function. The hall fireplace is illustrated and singled out in the article as particularly well designed. The fireplace was frequently the center of attention for the designer of a room and so the hearth carries some importance to English domestic architecture in the Arts and Crafts movement, both symbolically and stylistically. Architecturally, the interior was praised for "an air of space...secured by a fine sense of proportion," while the exterior is noted for "its picturesque quality by means of red brick and white stone." If this seems to resemble common Queen Anne style architecture of the day, the reader was encouraged to realize that "little of Queen Anne or any other prevailing fashion" is apparent, yet also that the house "does not arrogantly insist on forcing

originality as its chief claim." The article did not assign a brand new style to the house, but found Ashbee's design to express originality in "a distinguished manner."⁸²

The article continues in descriptive terms to demonstrate Ashbee's successful solution to a narrow site and to echo in its review some of Ashbee's most treasured ideals. The most highly regarded aspect, it seems, is Ashbee's originality of detail when decorating the interior. Thus, all the metalwork and particularly the electric light fixtures carried out by the Guild received praise. As an example of Ashbee's architecture and his design abilities in the applied arts, the "Magpie and Stump" House, taking its name from an old inn on the site, was as important to Ashbee's reputation as the Red House was to that of William Morris. Here Ashbee expressed his role as the Guild's architect-designer in an identifiable and succinct manner.

Only a few years later, in 1898, Ashbee was part of a highly important commission to be carried out in collaboration with M.H. Baillie Scott for the Grand Duke of Hesse at his new palace in Darmstadt. Although Baillie Scott was the chief designer of the furniture, which was then made by Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft, the metalwork, including the electric light fixtures, was designed by Ashbee alone. This large and important Darmstadt

commission from a leading patron, recognized in its own day as very significant, underscores the wide reputation Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft carried in progressive circles only ten years after their experimental start in design and decoration. A pair of articles was published in The Studio International in August, 1898 and April, 1899 by M.H. Baillie Scott to discuss the importance of the commissioned work and to illustrate examples of the palace's decoration which he designed for the Guild to produce.⁸³ Much of what Baillie Scott wrote reflected his consistent agreement with Ashbee's Arts and Crafts ideals.

The first article dealt specifically with the furniture for a sitting room for the Grand Duchess, some of which were modified from designs by Ashbee that had been featured in an Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society exhibition. Whether designed by Baillie Scott or Ashbee, all of the objects were crafted in the Guild of Handicraft workshops under Ashbee's supervision. The furniture is highly decorative and colorful due to the use of inlaid stained woods and ivory and polished metalwork applied over colored leather. The motifs were primarily floral and the most exuberant decoration, in the form of colorful inlaid materials, was reserved for the interior surfaces of desks, secretaries, and writing cabinets. Severity and simplicity were expressed in the outline of the pieces,

much like the elaborately inlaid, but severely outlined furniture of the eighteenth-century English cabinet-maker, Thomas Sheraton. The article raised issues which by 1898 were familiar themes to believers in the Arts and Crafts ideals of craftsmanship.

Baillie Scott summarized in his article the current state of design, immersed in the art and machine dilemma, in terms that were very similar to Ashbee's dismayed evaluation when the Guild and School of Handicraft first started. He wrote:

The old traditional knowledge is dying or dead, and as yet we have nothing to replace it. The prevalence of the commercial spirit, the influence of machinery on the minds and the hands of the workman, and, above all, the want of perception on the part of the public, are all causes to retard the development of a true knowledge of craftsmanship.⁸⁴

A "true knowledge of craftsmanship," in the context of Baillie Scott's comment, probably implied more than just technical ability. High quality workmanship was essential, of course, but Baillie Scott, as well as Ashbee, was seeking a new attitude towards craftsmanship based upon workshop experience that could monitor the role of the machine in the applied arts. For both designers, the machine was still interpreted largely as outside of this "true knowledge." Some years later, however, after going to America and after the Guild had closed, Ashbee reinterpreted the terms of this "true knowledge of

craftsmanship" after grappling with the many-sided issues of machine production. Although Ashbee never gave up his devout belief in high-quality handcraftsmanship, he did find, for the first time in England, a significant place for machinery in Arts and Crafts vocabulary. Unlike the more narrow-minded and stubborn Arts and Crafts thinkers who refused to allow a respectable or praiseworthy place for the machine, Ashbee permitted his thinking, if not his workshop practice, to change in accordance with his single most important endeavor, the Guild of Handicraft.

Baillie Scott concluded the article by stressing that the harmony of the Darmstadt Palace commission furniture and metalwork was due to the integration of sound craftsmanship with consistent design exhibited by Ashbee and his guild members. Baillie Scott's task as the project's chief designer was to coordinate the overall design of every object so that all commissioned items would be unified by an individual and recognizable style. Baillie Scott realized that when it was important for a number of differently crafted items to be harmonized in such a way, Ashbee's craftsmen were well trained in conforming their varied craft productions and individual skills to a uniform guild style. Regarding this, Baillie Scott wrote:

The fact that there is a unity about the carrying out of all these designs is largely due to

the sense of school and individuality that the Essex House craftsmen display, and which Mr. Ashbee's system encourages and makes possible. 85

Baillie Scott praised Ashbee's ability as an architect-designer to integrate a building's interior architecture with its many forms of decoration such as lighting fixtures, furniture, or metalwork. The Guild of Handicraft was unique in its time for providing this kind of work, noted above for its "unity of design." This notion was significantly different from previously accepted modes of Victorian design that, by copying the infinite variety of historical styles, was defined by a lack of harmony. When architects such as Baillie Scott and Ashbee became involved with designs for houses, their architectural training encouraged integration of all parts to form a unified whole. The Guild of Handicraft, whether it was producing cabinets, silverwork, leatherwork, or metalwork, manufactured individual items united in design by the guild style as defined by Ashbee. Although individual stylistic features are difficult to isolate, the Arts and Crafts movement enlisted identifiable rules of design. Most important were individuality of style, simplicity, and formal qualities that expressed the character of the crafted material.

In the second article for The International Studio, Baillie Scott continued his ideas and criticisms

in a vein similar to the first article. His comments on the meaning of certain ornamentation is especially relevant to Ashbee's use of floral ornament and figural repoussé decoration which so clearly dominated his designs in the 1890s. Until near 1900, few surfaces remained untouched and, thus, remain associated stylistically to Arts and Crafts standards of beauty derived probably from Ruskin's and Pugin's definition of ornamentation based upon Nature or Gothic ornament. Compared to the methods and the decoration used in Cellini's metalwork, on the other hand, which Ashbee criticized for its overcrowded and richly detailed ornament, Ashbee preferred still a Ruskinian treatment of natural ornament that was reduced to decoration which unified and articulated the parts in an architectural sense.

When describing color and ornament chosen for the Darmstadt Palace, Baillie Scott pointed to an unspecified poem as a source for the prevalence of white, green, and orange. Such colors contrast strongly with one another in a coloristic effect and thus amplify the role of decoration. The extensive use of ornament, which implied a variety of intricate and carefully executed handicraft techniques, may serve as a visual protest against machinery. Machine-work largely eliminated any effects of handicraftsmanship, such as hammer marks in

silver objects, by homogenizing the surface effect and necessarily eliminating details of ornament usually carried out by hand. For instance, a superficial comparison of Ashbee's handcrafted metalwork with W.A.S. Benson's work designed for and executed by machines will bear this idea out. It is necessary, however, to detail what had been characterizing the Guild style of Ashbee's metalwork in the first decade of the Guild of Handicraft.

Charles Ashbee's most successful designs of decorative art objects were the silver utilitarian and commemorative vessels made between the years 1898/ 1899 and 1908. Although the Guild of Handicraft metalworkers were active from the start, the earliest metal objects were of insufficient quality in both design and technique to merit attention (Plate 10). It took some years for Ashbee to synthesize a Guild of Handicraft style and for the apprentice metalworkers to attain the proper knowledge of their materials, craft, and individual limits. That the metalwork designs and their execution matured gradually through many years of experimentation in design and techniques in the small workshop is testament to the potential inherent in Ashbee's Guild Idea.

By the late 1890s, Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft was widely acclaimed in publications and exhibitions for its beautiful metalwork which was individual in style and

expressive generally of the reformatory craft ethic. Ashbee's silver designs, moreover, were much in keeping with the expressed desire of creating a modern style which had been derived with respect to past traditions as well as within reformed workshop conditions. Thus, in metalwork more than in other Guild media, the Guild Idea was shown by Ashbee and his craftsmen to be a reputable craft ethic and method of production. The best Guild silverwork exhibited individuality of style, expressed clearly the limits of the material as well as its craftsmanship, and stood for a revised standard of beauty that enveloped the handicraft tradition.

Any elaboration upon Ashbee's silverwork designs begins with his own publication, Modern English Silverwork, which illustrated one hundred silver designs that Ashbee in 1909 believed to be the best guild efforts in precious metals.⁸⁶ The introductory remarks are significant for their more specific attention to the workshop tradition which Ashbee had sought to revive within the modern industrial setting when he began the Guild of Handicraft. For Ashbee, the workshops stood for style, high standards, individuality, and character in craftsmanship. The workshop, furthermore, was an experimental setting in which sensitive craftsmen and their chief designer collaborated to identify useful application of modern machinery to

craft traditions without loss of integrity to workman, craftsmanship, or product. This goal would inevitably take time, Ashbee realized, but would protect handicraft from the misapplication of machinery. Ashbee believed that this protection would benefit industry's future. Thus it seemed evident to Ashbee himself that this Guild experiment was a transitional element in the process of machine regulation.

For Ashbee, the traditional workshop setting instilled a type of craft knowledge, acquired through personal experience, that was defined by three elements: history, technique, and style. The study of Cellini's metalwork and methods of craftsmanship, for example, equipped Ashbee and the metalworkers with an understanding of both the craft's history and its various techniques. An understanding of the history of metalwork enhanced modern techniques. Style, however, was a far more elusive and challenging concept for Ashbee and the Guild because it required of Ashbee the ability to design objects in a modern, identifiable stylistic language that expressed modern conditions and the revived craft ethic of Ruskin and Morris.

Ashbee described three requisites of a good silver object. These ideas underpinned the spirit of the Guild's work and were realistic expressions of the Guild

Idea in the workshop. Both the designer and craftsman should allow the piece to express "feeling and character," which Ashbee found difficult to define precisely, but which, to some extent, must have implied individuality. His second rule, guarded by his training as an architect, called for "an appreciation of the whole." This principle would seem to deny the possibility of excessive or vulgar ornament, which often obscured an object's profile; thereby its proportions and overall form were lost to the viewer. Moreover, the individual efforts of each craftsman who worked on a single piece were unified and guided toward the all-important guild style. The third requisite was "traditional workshop knowledge," which meant the silversmith must understand the history of their craft and, most importantly, its techniques when adapted to the modern workshop.⁸⁷ Creation of individual style required a far deeper knowledge of the material itself than did the mere copying of already accepted styles and tested techniques. The latter requisite, furthermore, allowed for the craftsmen to suggest new ideas to the designer and thus further the development of an individual guild style.

Finely-crafted silver objects brought the most serious attention to Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft. The Guild silverwork, all of which was guided by Ashbee, ranged in style from elaborate figurative or floral

ornamentation preferred by Ruskin, for instance, to the comparatively simple and sparingly ornamented pieces preferred in the late 1890s and early 1900s by the second generation of Arts and Crafts designers (Plates 11 and 12). The Guild silversmiths crafted items for religious and secular purposes that included chalices, challenge cups, mustard pots, tea pots, table utensils, and fine jewelry (Plates 13 and 14). An examination of exhibited or published silverworks or the illustrations from Ashbee's Modern English Silverwork, reveals that, as a designer, Ashbee was not afraid to ornament his pieces in a rich and decorative manner throughout the Guild's history. Ashbee had been trained in modelling and this, his single craft skill, probably influenced much of the silverwork designs. Similarly, his selective regard for the workshop of Cellini, and Renaissance Italy in general, sustained his interest in figural and floral motifs.

On many elaborate commissioned pieces, for example, Ashbee was probably requested to embellish an object with floral or figural ornament. On the other hand, Ashbee could also keep ornamentation to a minimum, beginning especially in the years around 1898-99. He disliked the so-called vulgar quality of some of Cellini's over-ornamented designs and likewise harassed the contemporary taste for not only too much ornament, but also for

historical ornament copied from earlier styles. Rather than copying ornament from books, Ashbee insisted that he and his workshop try to create their own modern style and types of ornament. At the same time, Ashbee's Guild Idea was imbued with the history of English art and handicraft; Ashbee believed that important lessons in design could be learned from studying past English traditions. A plate from Modern English Silverwork, for instance, illustrates a silver cup that was modelled after an earlier Elizabethan prototype, but which differs in the treatment of the floral ornament.

Ashbee relied essentially on two design principles. A craftsman, first of all, should exploit the limitation of his material and his own skill. With these two forces linked and through the individual efforts of the craftsman with a chief designer in a workshop, a modern and individual style could emerge. Secondly, the workshop should allow the particular intended function of a piece dictate first its form and, dependent upon that, allow the form to dictate the amount and type of ornament to be used.

Ashbee's silver can be distinguished by numerous stylistic features including the use of colorful enamels, solid cast figural supports, pronounced embossing and repoussé work, and the shimmering handwrought silver

surface (Plate 15). The repeated use of cast figures on standing cups or other objects can be traced to Ashbee's skills as a modeller. A taste for the youthful male may have originated with his aesthetic preference for Italian Renaissance and Classical Greek art (Plates 16 and 17). Furthermore, two technical features single out some of Ashbee's silver designs: the graceful manipulation of silver wire and the careful placement of precious stones (Plate 18). Judging by the surviving silverwork and the designs illustrated in Modern English Silverwork, these two features, used alone or in combination, identify silver or jewelry produced by the Guild of Handicraft. The most popular objects were ones which employed these distinctive elements, such as the green glass decanters mounted with a silver cover and twisted wire handles or glass lined silver dishes with curving wire handles and set stones (Plates 19 and 20).

In order to summarize the Guild style in Ashbee's designs for silverwork, four important sources will serve to represent the variety of designs completed from 1888 to 1908. The widest selection of Ashbee silverwork is provided in his 1909 book, Modern English Silverwork. The second source is the small collection Ashbee silver at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, begun in the late 1950s. The third source is Sotheby, Park,

Bernet Company in London whose catalogues provide illustrations of Ashbee silver recently offered for sale at auction. The fourth source is the important exhibition catalogue from the 1981 exhibition, "C.R. Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft," organized by the Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum.

A survey of Ashbee silver designs has led me to conclude that, broadly speaking, two periods of production can be discerned within the twenty years of Guild production. The first is approximately from 1888 to 1898-99 when the Guild of Handicraft was begun and during which time Ashbee and his workmen were able to evolve an identifiable style which emerged around 1898-99. It was at this time that the Guild of Handicraft received its earliest international recognition and praise. The second period lasted approximately from 1898-99 to the close of the Guild in 1908. Although some similarities exist between objects made late in period I and period II, in the nature of ornamentation, for instance, objects made in the last decade of the Guild appear to be of higher quality design. Further, there seems to exist a more consistent and individual expression of a Guild style, modern in its definition and representative of Ashbee's reformed ideas about handicrafts and the machine that coalesced after his study and tours in the United States.

Silverwork from the first decade of the Guild of Handicraft was technically clumsy and stylistically more dependent upon past examples than that of the second decade. Relying closely upon Cellini's methods, Ashbee and the metalworkers produced objects that appear more heavily ornamented and complicated in form than the lighter proportioned and more simply ornamented objects made later. For example, an 1899 brass charger (Plate 21), a ca 1890 salt cellar (Plate 10), and a ca 1895 gilt metal sporting cup are all examples of early Guild of Handicraft metalwork in which richly decorated surfaces, embossed or incised exuberantly, cast elements, and a rich and complex profile define an object type far more historicist in its technique and decoration. All three are derived loosely from a Baroque vocabulary of form and decoration that included scalloped edges, circular bosses, cast brackets, and embossed floral motifs. An excellent example of embossed silverwork survives in the V & A collection (Plate 22). Although the technique evokes the common Baroque preference for embossing, Ashbee has employed a very modern decorative motif, the peacock. Whiplash curves, in an Art Nouveau manner, help to contain the design of this large salver. A second example of period I silver from the same collection is an unmarked silver bowl (Plate 23). Peculiar in proportion and

unsettling in its arrangement of parts, the most obviously historicist feature is the use of a cabriole leg, complete with pad-like feet; five of these legs, usually found on furniture, are joined by wire stretchers, also of an elongated cabriole form. Only the embossed and incised floral band along the upper part of the bowl expresses the stylistic preference in the 1890s for abstracted natural forms.

From illustrations in Modern English Silverwork, examples similar to the above three pieces are found on plates 6, 38, 40, and 70. A cup and cover, typically richly colored and decorated in enamels and precious stones, is enriched with embossed elements and dolphins as well as with cast sea-horses. Baroque in its rich variety of materials and colors, the cup also adheres to a neo-classical style with the dolphins and sea-horses. This piece was probably a commission and appears to date to the early period because of its Cellini-like enrichment and Baroque quality of color and ornament. A mustard-pot and two salt cellars (Plate 24) probably dates to the early Guild years for the repeated use of circular bosses and vines, like that of the above-mentioned salt cellar. Items A and B repeat the use of the neoclassical dolphins which resemble their eighteenth-century predecessors very closely. Such exact adherence to historicist elements

appears to fade as Ashbee and the Guild workers approach their own individual style in the years around 1898-99. At this time, unprecedented stylistic features appear on a variety of Guild of Handicraft objects that identify the work of Ashbee during the latest years of this first period.

By 1898-99, Ashbee and the Guild metalworkers had found an individual Guild style. Abandoned completely on such pieces are the Baroque complicated forms and rich use of polychromatic materials. Instead, plain hammered surfaces without any embossing or incision reveal simply the form of the piece (Plate 25). The shimmering surface, rippled by the repeated hammering, sufficed in Ashbee's opinion to express the material's character as well as the craft process. For color or for visual interest, occasionally a single small precious stone would be set so as to complement the form and surface rather than to dominate it (Plate 26). Essentially, Ashbee found at this time an individual aesthetic expressive more directly and far more simply of silver as a material. Fine proportion and plain surfaces expressed Ashbee's Arts and Crafts sensitivity and displaced the more Cellini-like or Baroque manner of earlier guild silverwork. Nonetheless, Ashbee continued to design richly ornamented pieces that at times relied upon historical models.

Two objects from the V & A Collection, for example, express this newly discovered sense of a Guild style for both are very different from previous Guild metalwork and exhibit qualities for which Ashbee was praised as the designer. A silver bowl and cover (Plate 27), the latter decorated with plain red enamel and a single precious stone, carries a noticeable architectural quality in its clear articulation of parts and simultaneous unity of design. The arcade-like supports of wirework hold a silver bowl with beading that resembles an architectural molding in its role of determining the proportions. Circular bosses, once part of a complex Baroque ornamental vocabulary, become instead part of a modern Arts and Crafts aesthetic expressed through simple proportions, plain surfaces, and clear geometric forms. A silver dish is even more simple in its form and decoration (Plate 28). A low broad bowl, unornamented except for the lip, is held by a gracefully curved handle consisting of a pair of joined silver wires that extend and flatten where they join the bowl. The hammered surface expresses the character of silver as well as the craft which formed it into a useful object. A hand-hammered surface also expressed the labor of the craftsman who formed the object. Wire handles express what only metal can be shaped into. Absent are the naturalistic motifs

and ornamental elements from past stylistic periods. What is left is an individual guild style indicative of the designer's aesthetic and of the crafted material.

Such plain and simple items were representative of the Guild Idea and were recognized in their time for their individual character. The Guild Idea was for Ashbee representative of the comradeship and communal effort inherent in the small craft workshop. It also stood for individuality of style and the worthiness of human labor and the dignity of craft. Like the fine arts and the artists, the decorative arts and craftsmen were guided by reputable standards of beauty and the modern call for a new craft ethic. The silver bowl, for example, expressed individuality of style. Moreover, in the workshop a variety of craftsmen would have worked on the bowl's various parts: a silversmith would have hammered up the bowl, another would probably pull out the wire, and a third would set the stone. If there was enamelling, yet another craftsman would contribute to the bowl's manufacture. All of these efforts were then guided and united in their application to a design by Ashbee, who acted as the craft guild's overseeing architect-designer. Just as architecture was viewed as the mother of the arts, Ashbee as architect acted so as to unify the individual efforts of his apprentice craftsmen into a clear and

recognizable Guild style. This workshop organization, in its recognition of individual effort and comradeship, was to Ashbee very expressive of his Guild Idea. The silver bowl (Plate 29) expressed the Guild Idea through its architectural proportions and composition of parts, its plain and simple surfaces so expressive of the material and the craft, and its individuality of style.

An important part of the Guild Idea which finds expression through Ashbee's silverwork was a respect for traditional handicraft skills and styles, particularly as represented by pre-industrial periods. A reformed craft ethic derived its stylistic guidance, in part, from a study of historic precedent. The idea was not to copy directly from historic examples, but instead to adopt respectfully forms and inspiration from England's artistic past. In the metalwork shop, there survives clear evidence that, for Ashbee, the last quarter of the eighteenth century represented a significant precedent from which to derive a truly national stylistic expression.

In the workshop, Ashbee seems to have used "Adapted Designs" as a source for developing a new style. Employing the well-known double-handled silver butter dish or bowl of (plate 28) ca 1900-02 as an example, there appears to be some evidence of earlier English silver forms being used to develop a guild styled piece. From an unpublished photograph album

in the V & A library, a series of hand drawn "adapted designs" exist (Plate 30). One in particular may have inspired the double wire curved handles of the butter dish. The drawn design was clearly derived from English silver tureens executed throughout the 1770's by silversmiths such as Matthew J. Boulton (Plate 31). Particularly similar in inspiration to the Ashbee butter dishes is the horizontal character and the attenuated double handles of silver wire. The adapted design probably played an intermediary role in the stylistic transition from historic precedent to modern example. Thus, as part of the Guild Idea's respect for historical precedent, these adapted designs were drawn as prototypes to be studied while a craftsman was searching for a modern and individual expression of style.

Another stylistic source to be briefly considered for Ashbee's silver designs is the graphic design required for the Essex House Press. Begun in 1898, this private press effort was inspired by Morris' Kelmscott Press. Indeed, Ashbee was able to secure much of the Morris press equipment and some technicians in order to begin the printing of the books which he himself designed. For this, in the spirit of small medieval hand-pressed books, Ashbee designed his own typeface and, important for the influence upon aspects of the Guild silverwork, ornamental alphabet. Three different complete alphabets of ornamental

initials were designed by Ashbee, all of which express the imprint of his style (Plate 32). When compared, the underlying Guild style is expressed similarly in the metalwork and graphic designs by Ashbee from ca 1898 to 1905.

There is an important precedent for an obvious and strong exchange of influence between graphic and metalwork design. For Ashbee this probably became a factor of his design principles in 1898 when he was required to compose his own style of ornamental letters. Already favoring elegant curves, Ashbee proceeded to design letters that were decidedly curvaceous. At the same time, ca 1898-1900, Ashbee identified particular stylistic features with which to identify his silverwork. It would be logical for the designs of his letters to influence his two dimensional designs drawn for silverwork. The single ornamental letter, because of its decorative function, need not conform to the lines of a page nor to adjacent letters. It becomes more than a letter to be read, to become a two-dimensional design and bears the maker's style. For Ashbee, the broad whiplash curve of the ornamental letters is noticeably present in the whiplash curve of the wirework handles on the double handled bowls or on the curving wires of the decanters.

In his book, Art Nouveau, Robert Schmutzler characterized Ashbee's style as a "curved and swinging

style of Art Nouveau."⁸⁸ In his own time, Ashbee objected to an association with the French style that was viewed as being superficial. The exception in Ashbee's design, however, could be his silver or his graphics. If the whiplash curve or curvilinear elements in general best summarize Art Nouveau style metalwork, as in the jewelry of René Lalique, for instance, then much of Ashbee's silverwork and ornamentation could be included within the boundaries the Art Nouveau style. Some of Ashbee's graphic designs serve to justify an Art Nouveau stylistic characterization. The impressed red and black bookcover to Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry, has been favorably and accurately compared by Bury to his silverwork (Plate 33). The sweeping, curvilinear, thread-like silver wire is clearly a whiplash-like design and conforms to Art Nouveau tendencies.

The bold bookcover is mostly ornamental and highly decorative in its effect and may be compared briefly to Art Nouveau examples. Another more immediate source of graphic design for Ashbee might be the work of Aubrey Beardsley, who was active in the late 1880s and 1890s and played an important part in the private press movement.⁸⁹ Beardsley embodied in his style the long, sweeping and sensuous curving line, a highly decorative composition, and harmony between solid and void that characterized the

Art Nouveau style. "London Art Nouveau," as Schmutzler calls the work of other more conservative British designers, was more rectilinear and simpler in style than Beardsley's work. Ashbee's designs for his Essex House Press seem more comparable to the continental Art Nouveau than to what Schmutzler called London Art Nouveau. Nonetheless, Ashbee's silverwork seems to employ a simple surface and less exuberant system of ornament and could be favorably compared to London Art Nouveau as Schmutzler defined it. But Ashbee had little regard for Art Nouveau design and protested when his name was included in any Art Nouveau context.

Schmutzler pointed out Beardsley's great appreciation for Attic vase painting, especially of the red-figure style. This type of ceramic decoration depends largely upon a thin but tautly contoured black line for its aesthetic effect. It has not yet been suggested that Ashbee may have found inspiration for his graphic and silver designs from Attic vases. There is evidence, however, that Ashbee was actively interested in the history of the craft. Ashbee wrote in his "Memoirs" of a visit to Sicily where his house, Villa San Giorgio, was under construction in 1907. He records having visited the site with none other than J.D. Beazely, the contemporary British connoisseur and widely-published scholar of Greek

vase painting from Oxford. Ashbee and Beazely, while examining the house's foundation, uncovered fragments of ancient Greek vases. Ashbee, appreciative of the individual craftsmanship and skilled design inherent in Greek vase painting, wrote in his journal:

When in Sicily this time I travelled with J.D. Beazeley (sic). He was studying Greek vases, and we wandered around together. Here was a man whose aesthetic approach fascinated... his scholarly point of view as we poked about among the potshers, his drawings, his pencil interpretations of Greek vase painters as we fingered the fragments revealed the real thing--sympathy for the hand and the tool.⁹⁰

Given this association with the design and craftsmanship of Greek vases, some of Ashbee's graphic designs compare well with the best work of red-figure vase painting that relied upon taut black outlines and perfect control of two dimensional design for its effect. Against a red clay background, areas of solid black and black outline contribute equally to compositions balanced by the juxtaposition of solid, void, and line. Compare, for example, the design of any typical red-figure kylix by the Penthesileia Painter to Ashbee's well-known cover to his book, Chapters in Workshop Reconstruction and Citizenship (Plate 33). Both designs were composed entirely of areas of solid black and black outlines, although Ashbee's design is somewhat Art Nouveau in character. Notice the elongated swirling and curvilinear outlines. The book

cover design consists of compositional elements not dissimilar from those used by the ancient Greek vase painter. If the exclusive use of solid black shapes and outlines were not enough evidence to confirm Ashbee's strong interest in Attic red-figure vase painting, consider that the book cover's color is clay red with the black industrial motif set against it much like an Attic warrior is represented in outline against the red ceramic body.

Lastly in regard to Ashbee's silver designs and their relation to ancient Greek vases, shape must be considered. The exchange of stylistic influence, and in some cases exact replication, between the silversmith's and potter's crafts is documented throughout the history of the decorative arts. Renaissance Italy, Rococo France, or Neoclassical England are periods when close stylistic ties existed between silverwork and pottery. Although not the most frequent source for the Guild's silver objects, Greek vases may have provided some models for proportions or profiles for Ashbee's silver designs. One of the Guild's most popular shapes, a butter or jam dish (Plate 34), exhibits a horizontal quality due to the broad bowl and elongated pair of wirework handles. Similarly, a Greek kylix is composed of a broad bowl and elongated handles that may have provided Ashbee with a point of departure for his own design. Ashbee would not have preferred to

slavishly copy this historical form, but may have recognized the intimate bond between utility and beauty that exists in the best Greek pottery. These design principles may have inspired Ashbee, who looked to traditional models to confirm his belief in the need for truth to materials in the production of beautiful and useful objects.

From our modern point of view, Ashbee's earlier desires for extensive and complicated hand-crafted ornamentation have little to do with the plain surfaces and simple forms derived from an aesthetic which pursued a clear expression of function and utility through a lack of ornamentation. Some of Ashbee's early silver designs seem to be an overindulgence in handicraft techniques. From Ruskin and Morris forward, ornamentation meant handicraftsmanship. It took some time before plain surfaces, so often linked automatically with machine production, could also mean handicraftsmanship. This is particularly true for silver, which is made primarily through hammering. A hand-hammered silver surface shimmers beautifully as a result of the production and thus expresses the material and the craft. Handcraftsmanship was expressed by the rippling surface of the silver vessel, an expressive quality of silver well-suited to Ashbee's craft ethic. Within the context of Ashbee's metalwork, plain and simple pieces, sparsely ornamented, appeared,

although by no means exclusively, around 1898-99. These simple vessels were the designs that brought about the early definition of a true Guild style and which received the praise of native and foreign critics in exhibitions and publications.

Ashbee's silverwork was exhibited frequently at home as well as on the continent and in America. The Guild's productions were featured in the initial exhibitions sponsored by the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society of 1888, 1889, and 1890 and thereafter in each of the tri-annual exhibitions. International Studio featured reviews of the exhibitions and such influential praise, read in Europe and America, contributed much to a designer's success. Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft were featured and illustrated often in the International Studio reviews, most favorably in the late 1890s, at the same time Ashbee was able to isolate a guild style. Patrons, as well as other designers abroad who studied such reviews would likely be influenced by the featured designers. For example, in a review of the fourth Arts and Crafts exhibition in 1896, the writer claims that an entire number could be devoted to Ashbee's exhibited pieces, most of which were metalwork and jewelry. A large covered dish was praised for good proportions and curves which "show vivid appreciation of the simple grace

obtained by direct treatment." Ashbee, the writer continued, "knows when to be silent, when to let the broad sweep of the undecorated surface prepare you for the final ornamentation which heightens the beauty of the object, instead of hiding it underneath a superfluous mass of applied ornament." The author expressed clearly that beauty was to be equated with a plain and unornamented surface, which nearly opposed Ruskin's insistence that beauty, in part, arose from naturalistic ornament. When a piece by Ashbee was more richly decorated, the design's integrity was maintained because this enrichment was "subsidiary to the main form." Much of Ashbee's jewelry was illustrated to point out that the common association between precious stones and vulgarity could be broken by the exemplary work of Ashbee.⁹¹

Aymer Vallance wrote for International Studio a review of the 1899 Arts and Crafts exhibition in London and chose this year also to review the then present state of the decorative arts in Great Britain.⁹² Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft at this time was acknowledged as one of the most important Arts and Crafts workshops, a reputation established at about the time of the Guild style's definition. Part II of the series of articles devoted some pages to defining the relationship between the artisans of the Guild of Handicraft and their designer,

Ashbee, who tried "to elicit the potential talent of the workshop."⁹³ His job was to supervise the execution of his designs and to suggest changes in the workshop according to his ideas of the Guild's own particular workshop style. "It is not, of course, to be pretended that they have yet inaugurated a fully equipped organic style of ornament on totally fresh lines," Vallance wrote,⁹⁴ and then stated that Ashbee would have agreed with him. Furthermore, Vallance wrote that the Guild's advance toward a fresh style is more apparent in jewelry and metalwork than in the other guild productions. The article seemed to imply that the Guild's work had the potential to create a new style of ornament.

For Ashbee, then, the first ten years of the Guild of Handicraft was a period much under the influence of the writings of John Ruskin and William Morris; however, by the close of the Guild in 1908, Ashbee had taken important theoretical steps into the Modern movement. A combination of workshop experience and, very likely, his contact with the American architect-designer, Frank Lloyd Wright, brought the realization to Ashbee that the machine filled an undeniable role in contemporary applied arts production and education. By 1911, when Ashbee had written Should We Stop Teachin Art?, Ashbee had modified, but had not entirely abandoned his traditional and

conservative Arts and Crafts position in regard to handicrafts.

Writing from Toynbee Hall, before the School of Handicraft had closed, Ashbee encapsulated the central purpose of his guild experiment in the following terms:

The main object of the Guild and School of Handicraft is the application of Art to Industry. In all the work of both the School and the Guild, the actual designing is considered the most important thing. In the Guild, it is sought to encourage the workman's individuality...⁹⁵

This statement was written before 1895 and contained ideals that have implicitly dismissed certain beliefs important to Ruskin and Morris. For instance, Ashbee sought to re-establish the importance of the draftsman's individual contribution not only to the production of an object, but also to the process of its design. Concurrently, Ashbee has quietly accepted a very modern sensitivity toward the design process. Rather than praising the benefits of labor of the actual hand manufacture of an object as Ruskin and Morris would have, Ashbee, in the position of an architect and not a craftsman, emphasized design, the more intellectual side of the workshop system. This was a position Ashbee was well-suited to take as an architect in the 1890s when the meaning of design was being redefined to include more and more the ability of the architect. For instance, Modern English

Silverwork, is more accurately an architect's portfolio than a design book, which illustrated Ashbee's silverwork designs with plans and elevations much like an architect's presentation drawing.

Secondly, Ashbee pointed out that from the beginning the Guild and School of Handicraft was dedicated to "the application of Art to Industry." This quest, far more experimental in the late 1880s and 1890s than a simple rejection of the machine, carried Ashbee to America where applied arts and the machine were found to be more compatible than in England. The reasons for this acceptance of the machine in America are manifold, but certainly Ashbee felt it necessary to travel there to examine workshop conditions. His experience had indicated to him that answers to the questions raised by the Guild Idea were not to be found in England any longer, but rather in the more progressive cities in America.

The so-called "happy nineties" were to close with Ashbee introducing a decisive element to his guild experiment, one which was to affect profoundly the last years of the Guild of Handicraft and which consolidated the sought-after conclusions implicit in the Guild Idea. Ashbee visited the United States and lectured in the leading artistic centers. The subsequent effects of this new and critical ingredient can be traced ideologically in

Ashbee's writings and visually in Ashbee's mature silver-work during the last decade of the Guild of Handicraft.

PART II
An American Interlude

By the mid-1890s, machinery's fixed position had largely been acknowledged within the context of applied arts production. By means of the Guild Idea and the products of the Guild of Handicraft, Ashbee contributed to defining the limits to which machinery could be applied in the production of the decorative arts while simultaneously maintaining high artistic standards of design, truth to materials and the craft, and individuality of the craftsman. Ashbee inherited a knowledge of the evils of industrialism in arts and crafts production, and he took the initiative to regulate its use and to restrict its application, so that human creativity, artistic excellence, and, indeed, the knowledge of craft production and the handicraft standard would not be lost. This change of attitude, demonstrated by comparing Ashbee's aphorisms from 1894 with those of 1909-11, are the consequence of a significant new influence introduced to the Guild experiment by Ashbee in the late 1890s. The important trips to America, where Ashbee was exposed to all that was best in the American Arts and Crafts movement, are thought to be the starting point for Ashbee's shift toward an acceptance of the machine.

Referred to as "An American Interlude" in his "Memoirs," Ashbee's first trip to America was in 1896, from March 22 to May 11, when he visited many East coast cities that included Boston, Philadelphia, Ithaca, and New York. The second trip lasted from October 28, 1900 to February, 1901, when Ashbee toured many more cities on behalf of the English National Trust. In addition to promoting the National Trust, the second trip provided countless opportunities for Ashbee to enquire further and more widely about American industrialism. The indices to the "Memoirs" included numerous cities where he was able to deliver lectures regarding the National Trust objectives as well as architecture and the related crafts.

Ashbee's ties with America in 1896 seemed to be strongest in Philadelphia, a leading American city of architecture and design, where he delivered lectures on the Arts and Crafts movement. One reason Ashbee was keenly interested in Philadelphia may have been the presence there of Charles G. Leland, known for his craft education courses for children. Leland had lived in England during the 1880s, the decade when many of England's Arts and Crafts guilds and societies were being formed. It is likely that Ashbee knew of Leland and his educational efforts because of Ashbee's work at Toynbee Hall. There Leland's craft manuals, published in both England

and America, may have been available for study. Secondly, Leland published "Education in Industrial Art" in the 1885 Art Journal, which Ashbee probably had read while an enthusiastic student in Cambridge, newly committed to the arts as a means of social reform.

In her article, "An Arts and Crafts Experiment: the Silverwork of C.R. Ashbee," V & A Museum Curator of Metalwork Shirley Bury pointed out that when Ashbee was formulating his Guild Idea, he claimed it was not original but had roots in "the practice of Medieval Italy and Modern America."⁹⁶ The latter may well have been a reference to Leland. The reference to Medieval Italy has been discussed in reference to Ashbee's interest in Cellini's work, the Renaissance ideals of architecture as the superintendent of all the arts, and the workshop conditions of the medieval guild.

Both Leland and Ashbee believed in the ability of the untrained child or laborer to benefit from learning to design and to execute by hand some kind of manual craft such as embroidery, leatherwork, modelling, woodcarving, or metalwork. Students were taught to design, not to copy, patterns which were simple enough to be executed in many different media. When Leland published his designs and these ideas in England, promoting schools of handicrafts in every village, the idea was supported in London

with the formation of annual exhibitions and small craft societies. The Home Arts and Industries Association was founded in London in 1884 as a result of these and similar ideas. Charles Leland eventually returned to Philadelphia where similar plans of his were carried out when the Arts and Crafts movement was growing in America. Drawn to Philadelphia perhaps to enquire about such efforts, Ashbee was able there to pursue his questions about the machine at the art schools and museums.

Ashbee was given a tour of Philadelphia's Industrial School and Museum, where he recorded his impression of a technical school whose program included training with machinery. An awareness of America's practical accomplishments and its positive view of machinery had been pointed out earlier in British journals and Ashbee probably expected to witness America's pride and faith in industrialism. Given that a part of the Guild Idea's purpose was to regulate machines in the applied arts, it seems plausible to imagine that a primary reason for Ashbee to visit America in 1896 may have been to investigate the conditions under which machinery was finding such widespread praise, at a time when in England machines were rejected from the small craft shop. At this time, also, American and Continental design was beginning to surpass British efforts, which may have provided an

incentive to learn from leading centers.

One of his journal's longest entries, devoted to describing his tour of the machines at an industrial school, may support this motivation. Ashbee wrote the following description of his tour-guide's response to the machine:

When he got into the great machine room, where all the engines were at work, the American soul in him came out. The whir and the noise transformed the thousands in which his thoughts were measured into millions, it intoxicated him.⁹⁷

When the guide turned to declare enthusiastically to Ashbee that machinery was the hope of America's future, Ashbee wrote that

in a manner he was right, dimly, and fundamentally, for the result of it all, so far is zero, but right still because it represents foundation laying, and when all the machines have been invented and we at last have the perfected types, I suppose we shall begin to live life...⁹⁸

Ashbee's vision into a vaguely utopian society included not only a few necessary machines, such as the labor-savers limitedly outlined by Morris in his essay "How We Live and How We Might Live," but machines of many descriptions. Inherent also is the idea that the machine's role would by then be perfectly defined. Ashbee was clearly aware of the art-industrial calamity of the period, however, he envisioned a time when the questions about machinery's role in the handicrafts he and the Guild

addressed would be answered. Then, as a result of experimental guilds like his own, wealth and leisure could be pursued with productive results.

While in Philadelphia, Ashbee also noted the presence of wealth and leisure, but complained that the holders of this wealth should be taught to use it for better ends, noting households "full of endless unnecessary rubbish."⁹⁹ Thus, Ashbee identified similar attitudes and tastes in America that he protested against in England and recognized the affinity between the English and American craft movements. Although he recognized similarities in their goals, Ashbee needed time to learn the differences in means to achieve them in America. Near the end of the Guild in 1908, Ashbee's attitude toward the machine had shifted in a manner similar to the attitude of his colleague and friend, Frank Lloyd Wright.

In Philadelphia, Ashbee noted that the school's machinery was donated by large manufacturers with the hope of training an optimistic generation of America's youth to believe in machinery. Ashbee believed that this faith in the machine was developing from a sound training that recognized the limitations of machinery. Devoted to improving a sense of beauty, Ashbee was impressed in the school's machine room where he noticed "a bright American boy playing the threads of one of the

machines hard by, and as I watched him, he tossed me a nod and a smile at his work..."¹⁰⁰ For Ashbee, one remembers, pleasure in work was for the producer rather than for the consumer. Ashbee witnessed in Philadelphia the smiling approval of machinery by a young student minding a machine; it was likely to have been one of the earliest confident associations with the machine that Ashbee had seen.

In America, Ruskin and Morris were also widely read and their craft ethic was the foundation of Arts and Crafts societies and craft guilds in most cities across the country. The craft societies of the 1880s and 1890s in Minneapolis, New York, Boston, and Chicago were some of the significant regional groups in the United States which gave the American craft reform movement its formulative definition. Although by the 1880s Philadelphia had lost prominence in the arts to Boston or to New York, where Tiffany Studios and the Herter Brothers were so successful, the Centennial City was not left out of the Arts and Crafts movement as it emerged in the late 1880s and 1890s. In addition to the publication of The Ladies Home Journal and House and Garden, Philadelphia's Arts and Crafts movement¹⁰¹ gave birth to a craft community known as the Rose Valley Association. Located in a rural setting very close to Philadelphia, the community was inspired not only by William Morris's News From Nowhere, but also by Ashbee's

Guild of Handicraft.

The Rose Valley Association's founder was the Philadelphia architect, William L. Price, who, like Ashbee, made an effort to publish his thoughts in his own periodical, The Artsman, published from 1902 to 1907. Price, again like Ashbee, directly addressed the problems of machinery in the arts and insisted upon the importance of materials, handcraftsmanship, and honest construction to the individual craftsman.¹⁰² Best known for its medievalizing furniture, the Rose Valley Association made pieces that were heavily ornamented in an unoriginal and imitative Gothic Revival style, with little regard for simplicity. Price's craftsmen fell into a romantic interpretation of Morris's reforms, evoking a crafts community like that described in News From Nowhere.¹⁰³ Large amounts of Price's furniture were decorated with historical ornament that often obliterated a piece's structure and expressed the style of an earlier era. The craft community was only briefly successful, going bankrupt in 1909 at a time when the popularity of the Arts and Crafts movement in Europe and America was declining.

Significant to this analysis of Ashbee's influential travels in America at the turn of the century, the Rose Valley Association originated and flourished during the second decade of activity for the Guild of Handicraft.

Price's community is good evidence that Ashbee's Guild Idea attracted adherents outside of England during the Guild's important later years.

At Cornell University, "one of the great centers of future America," in Ithaca, New York in April, 1896, Ashbee was truly excited by the prospects of machinery as it was applied to the American standards of production. Referring to the campus as the "university of the future" and frequently returning to Cornell as exemplary in the regulation of machinery and instruction of its proper use, Ashbee recorded that

If any place is to tame these young Titans of blind force, these men of electricity and steel,--the perfectors of the mechanical bases of life, Cornell will do it. It was as evident as day to me, when I passed from those magnificent workshops, all a-storm with mechanical force, the boys labouring at the forge and the engine...104

The tone and vocabulary of Ashbee's comments excel the resigned acceptance of the machine expressed by the first generation of Arts and Crafts thinkers in the late 1880s. At Cornell, Ashbee could envision with some enthusiasm what he may have thought to be the ideal workshop for the future, where machinery was regulated in such a way as to produce beautiful utilitarian objects and to preserve high artistic standards. The Guild's and Ashbee's role was to pass on true artistic standards based on past traditions of handcraftsmanship to those designers capable of

applying them to larger workshops where machinery was employed. Ashbee, like other leading modern designers, recognized that America was the contemporary leader of sound machine production standards. In devoting his efforts to the potential capabilities of machines in modern life, perhaps Ashbee passed the torch from one tradition based on craft to another based on machinery, but which also looked to its own immediate past--the early Arts and Crafts movement--for standards of beauty.

Ashbee found little to praise in some areas of the Northeast, where the academic Beaux-Arts tradition in architecture and decoration had become so prevalent. While at Cornell, for example, Ashbee wrote: "These academic architectural schools must remain dead unless like the schools of engineering and mechanics, they touch actual material."¹⁰⁵ This single statement embodied the essence of what characterized the historicist tradition of architectural styles as well as a central premise of Ashbee's generation of Arts and Crafts designers and writers in both America and England, united in their reaction against academic training. For Ashbee's generation, design taught in studios from textbooks was entirely inadequate. The Guild Idea was dependent upon the direct manipulation of materials by a craftsman in a small workshop.

In the above quoted statement, Ashbee rejected an architecture based upon past styles or books of ornament that paid no attention to the working of materials. Instead, Ashbee promoted a system of architecture and related design standards based upon direct contact with the materials or upon an expression of the materials used. This strong awareness of materials arose directly from Ashbee's small workshop production, which proceeded from an individual craftsman's direct manipulation of silver, copper, wood, leather, or paper in the manufacture of Guild objects. Clearly, Ashbee applied this workshop method and standard, his Guild Idea, to a system of architecture and decoration as a means of expressing a modern aesthetic. The direct experience of creating a design within the limits of a material formed the core of Ashbee's standard. He sought to apply this workshop principle to all of the decorative arts which were guided in style by what he called the mother art of architecture.

Visiting the city of New York in April, 1896, Ashbee toured Sloane and Company, a reputable American metalwork shop. Ashbee was disappointed when he was shown "endless symbols of waste and luxury;--nothing that revealed any real joy in the producer, or character in the product."¹⁰⁶ Apparently in the same setting, Ashbee found a hand-hammered silver cup with a good sense of design and

which was expressive of its material. When Ashbee remarked that it was the best piece of silverwork he had yet seen in the United States, his host explained that it was too costly to produce and that nobody wanted to buy it. Such standards had been only too familiar to Ashbee during the 1890s in London.

Although Ashbee himself left America for London in May, 1896, and would not return again until October, 1900, his architecture and designs for the Guild of Handicraft were first exhibited in America in Philadelphia in 1898. Ashbee's circulation in 1896 among Philadelphia's architectural circles and among the important industrialists and educators must have provided this important opportunity to promote his Guild Idea and the Guild of Handicraft. In addition, his own publications and other critical reviews of the Guild's work had appeared in International Studio. Thus, by 1898, Ashbee's ideas and the Guild designs were familiar to those in America concerned with the reform of design standards along the lines of the English Arts and Crafts movement's experiments. After a decade of production and design improvement, Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft represented a very successful guild experiment to Americans in the late 1890s.

The host organization for the Guild's first exhibition in Philadelphia was the T-Square Club, which

exhibited the work of significant architects and designers in their annual exhibitions. From Philadelphia, the exhibition reached Chicago, where the Chicago Architectural Club had been exhibiting the early work of Frank Lloyd Wright and his contemporaries. It is significant that Frank Lloyd Wright's work was exhibited in the same exhibition as Ashbee's first Chicago exhibition. Thus, the two Arts and Crafts architects were associated in a professional sense two years before they actually met.

Two years later, in 1900, works by Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft were exhibited a second time by the T-Square Club in Philadelphia and by the Chicago Architectural Club, giving more exposure of Ashbee and his Guild to its increasingly enthusiastic American audience. Two critics for Inland Architect and News Record wrote reviews of the 1900 exhibitions in Philadelphia and Chicago and drew attention to the increasingly strong link between Arts and Crafts movements in America and England, whose purpose in part was to resolve the conflict between the machine and the applied arts.

In his review of the 1900 T-Square Club exhibition, Herbert Wise chose to illustrate two entries, one of which, Woburne Wodehouse, belonged to Ashbee. Regarding the entire exhibition, Wise commented that "the standard of work and the general character of the designs are

excellent," singling out for lengthier criticism the work of Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft. Wise wrote:

The interior and exterior views of Mr. C.R. Ashbee, as well as several drawings by him of detail in metal and wood, are highly individual and show a rare character and refinement. We are fortunate in having such an interesting feature in our exhibitions as this simple and refined work...107

Although the complete endorsement of Ashbee's work is significant for his early American exposure, the most important characteristic in regard to Ashbee's emerging modern viewpoint is the obvious simplicity of his designs. It would be difficult to pinpoint which examples were in fact exhibited, however, from the metalwork shop, the butter dish, the glass decanter, and similar types were very popular Guild products. These were illustrated often as typical Ashbee metalwork designs, which were repeated variations from a single design. Thus, each decanter was assured to be individual in design as well as representative of the Guild style.

In the 1900 exhibition, the Chicago Architectural Club displayed the work of Ashbee and Wright together for the second time. The catalogue listed the participants and their objects, many of whom were British. Among Ashbee and the Guild's thirteen exhibits were included silverwork designs, the Magpie and Stump House, furniture designs, and interior and exterior views of

Woburne Wodehouse. This selection accurately summarized the best of Ashbee's architectural and design efforts completed thus far in fulfillment of the Guild Idea. Important, too, the exhibition presented an Arts and Crafts audience the prominent Ashbee designs, such as the Magpie and Stump House, which had already been published in International Studio and Art Journal. Similarly for Wright, the catalogue listed his important works such as designs for his studio, the N.G. Moore residence, the A.C. McAfee residence, and the E.C. Waller residence.

The Chicago Architectural Club, which stood for "the new thought in art and design,"¹⁰⁸ played a significant part in the development of that city's progressive architecture by establishing an exhibition to bring together native and foreign architectural talent for study and comparison. The importance of this setting can not be overemphasized, for during the late 1890s, Wright and other leading Chicago architects had just begun to express their new design ideas. Their development benefitted from exposure to important British Arts and Crafts architects shown at the Chicago Architectural Club exhibitions. Chicago, along with Philadelphia, New York, and other cities, was receptive to most Arts and Crafts writers and architects, including Charles Ashbee and his British contemporaries.

The 1900 Chicago Architectural Club catalogue included some introductory remarks that reveal the club's and the Chicago design reform group's ideals, which they believed were exemplified in the work of their selected participants. The club was assisted by the Chicago Arts and Crafts Society and together they stood for "art which is fundamental, in which form follows and expresses function--which aims to solve problems of utility in terms of beauty" and which respects the past but strives concurrently to place "principle before precedent."¹⁰⁹ Such ideals were considered then to be modern and innovative when compared to design from the immediately preceding decades. That Ashbee was included in this select group is further testimony supporting the belief that Ashbee should be considered as a participating--but not the decisive--figure in early modern design when its ideals were being formulated in Chicago.

For the Arts and Crafts movement in Chicago, the Chicago Arts and Crafts Society provided a needed focus to the emerging reformative architects and designers. This organization was founded in 1897 in Jane Addams' Hull House in circumstances that were not very different from London's Toynbee Hall. As a result, the goals of the Chicago Arts and Crafts Society echoed the ideals set down by the Morris generation, but the Chicago goals were,

slightly different from those of its British counterparts. Whereas the early Arts and Crafts reformers of the 1860s and 1870s in Britain sought to expel the machine from the handicrafts, Ashbee's generation of reformers of the 1890s and early 1900s sought to include, within strict limitations, the machine in the production of art objects. This belief was far more widespread in Chicago and other American cities than it was in London and other important British cities.

The Chicago Arts and Crafts Society published its constitution in the 1898 Chicago Architectural Club catalogue. Necessitated by the prominent place held by the machine in American industry, the Society's fifth and sixth objectives directly engaged in a discussion of the role machinery was to hold in the reformed setting. The fifth rule sought to encourage handicraft production among its members in order to develop sound and tested ideals of beauty to be applied to design for machine production. This is essentially identical to one of the key principles which guided Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft, which sought to establish standards for industrial design through small craft workshop conditions.

The Chicago Society's sixth objective is most noteworthy for its definition of the boundaries within which the machine would be encouraged to operate.

Although there is an identifiable Morrisian tone, the sixth objective's intentions are far more closely related to what Ashbee had defined as the Guild Idea and what his guild was practicing than to what the previous Arts and Crafts reformers had done. Outlined in the 1880s and 1890s, the principles which formed the Guild Idea and the British Arts and Crafts movement generally compare well with the sixth objective of the Chicago Arts and Crafts Society:

To consider the present state of the factories and the workmen therein, and to derive lines of development which shall retain the machine in so far as it relieves the workman from the drudgery and tends to perfect his product; but which shall insist that the machine no longer be allowed to dominate the workman and reduce his production to a mechanical distortion.¹¹⁰

When Ashbee was in Chicago, where he circulated with members of the Arts and Crafts Society, the Chicago Architectural Club, and the Art Institute of Chicago, he must have sensed the similarity between his own Guild Idea and some of the goals of American reformers.

The Chicago Architectural Club and the Arts and Crafts Society were influential contemporary groups whose purposes overlapped and differed. When comparing their ultimate goals, a strong similarity existed between the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in London and the combined efforts of the aforementioned Chicago groups. Both the American and British societies provided

organizational platforms so that prominent Arts and Crafts architects-designers could exhibit their work, publish their ideas, and thereby bring about needed reforms in standards of beauty and methods of craft production. An apparent difference, on the other hand, rested in the reasons for the establishment of the two groups.

In London, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society was formed in an atmosphere of strong protest, of rebellion against the existing establishment as represented by the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Royal Academy, and as a protest against the deplorable social, economic, and aesthetic conditions which were the consequences of an over-industrialized society. The Chicago Arts and Crafts Society was born out of local industrial and handicraft conditions that, while at times believed to be inhuman, were considered by many to be more beneficial to society than their European counterparts. Ashbee had witnessed this distinction in Philadelphia in 1896. In Chicago and other American cities, industrial expansion was accompanied by an emerging standard of beauty which guided the use of machinery towards what Ashbee referred to as "new thought in art and design." Problems in American industrial design and craft production were not absent, however, and this condition encouraged the formation of Arts and Crafts societies devoted to

maintaining high standards for production of beautiful utilitarian objects within an increasingly mechanized and, to many, ugly society. In Chicago and other like-minded cities he visited, Ashbee must have noticed the contrast of attitudes toward machinery between England and America.

The architectural climate of Chicago in the late 1890s was intimately connected with the British Arts and Crafts movement which was the most influential design trend in Chicago at the time. Beginning in the 1880s, direct links existed between London and Chicago. The most obvious example of how Chicago's Arts and Crafts movement was inspired by its English counterpart was Jane Addams' Hull House. Addams' efforts were founded upon her exposure to Toynbee Hall which she visited while in London in the late 1880s. Toynbee Hall and Hull House, with their leaders Charles Ashbee and Jane Addams, promoted the pursuit of handcraftsmanship in response to the poverty-ridden conditions and spiritually vacant conditions of the modern, machine-age city.

Ashbee was not only introduced to Chicago's most prominent Arts and Crafts leaders such as Jane Addams, but also met with other citizens and educational figures, such as Oscar Lovell Triggs. A professor at the University of Chicago, Triggs authored numerous articles discussing art and the machine and was perhaps best known as a leading

figure in the Industrial Art League. The League, founded in 1899, was one, among many, late nineteenth-century organizations formed in response to the recognized need for guiding the new industrialism in matters of art and design. After Ashbee returned to London in February, 1901, Triggs heralded Ashbee as a vital ingredient to the successful blend of art and the machine which was being formulated at that time in Chicago under the leadership of Ashbee's and Triggs' contemporary, Frank Lloyd Wright. Thus, it is not surprising to find that Ashbee was the focus of Triggs' study regarding industry and the machine.

The guiding principles of the Industrial Art League were published in Triggs' book, Chapters in the History of the Arts and Crafts Movement. One chapter, "Ashbee and the Reconstructed Workshop," described for the Chicago audience the importance of Charles Ashbee and the Guild and School of Handicraft. In writing this favorable review of Ashbee's guild, Triggs believed that the goals and concerns of the Industrial Art League in Chicago and the Guild of Handicraft in London were alike. This point of view, perhaps, was the result of discussions held between Ashbee and Triggs in Chicago. Triggs borrows lengthy sections in order to define Ashbee's beliefs during the early Guild years. Discussing the question of production, Triggs quoted the following query from Ashbee:

This mere trifle of mine, of what use or beauty may it be, will it give any one delight? Maybe not, maybe it is useless and unlovely, and will give no man pleasure. What then?¹¹¹

This simple question, to both Ashbee and Triggs, was the essence of the handicraft-machine debate in which the craftsman was at the core. Triggs wrote articles as well as books in support of a new standard of design. For instance, Triggs published an article in House Beautiful in 1902 that outlined the Industrial Art League's goals to the magazine's national audience.

The article, reprinted as an appendix to his book, outlined the League's four primary goals, which were to provide guilds with the necessary workshops, tools, means of exhibition, and instruction in the industrial arts; to set up libraries and museums devoted to industrial arts; and, finally, to promote arts and crafts by means of publications, lectures, or exhibitions. All these goals originated earlier with the English Arts and Crafts movement, and thus resemble Ashbee's Guild Idea quite closely. The Guild of Handicraft was based upon instruction, manual work, exhibition, and publication. Very similar to Ashbee's guild experiment, the Industrial Art League was described by Triggs as "a sort of industrial laboratory where new materials and processes may be experimented with, and special invention encouraged."¹¹² The motives of the Industrial Art League, then, modelled

as they were on Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft, were testimony to the influential role held by Ashbee in the Arts and Crafts movement in Chicago.

However similar were the motives and envisioned goals of these Chicago and London reformers, important differences existed in their respective means. The Guild of Handicraft was based on a fundamental respect for the English craft tradition from medieval times through the late eighteenth century. The Industrial Art League, in contrast, tended to emphasize its enthusiasm for the nascent application of machine technology to the manual arts. It is significant, especially when studying Ashbee's impact upon the Chicago Arts and Crafts movement, that Triggs recognized the Guild of Handicraft as the exemplary English craft guild by which to model a reformed modern industrial workshop. This position places Ashbee and the Guild squarely in the center of the transition, during the years between approximately 1900 and 1905, from the English Arts and Crafts movement with its emphasis on manual production, to the American Arts and Crafts movement with its emphasis, after 1900, on machine production.

With regard to the Industrial Art League as an "industrial laboratory," there appeared to be a close link to Ashbee's Guild Idea. This concept would have been well understood in Chicago due in part to Ashbee's visits in

1896 and 1900 and to earlier publications which familiarized Chicago's Arts and Crafts designers and architects with Ashbee. What changes in Chicago is the position held by the machine in the scheme for reform. Like Ashbee who urged direct contact with materials, experimentation in production in a small workshop, and individuality of expression, Triggs applied the Guild Idea to the industrial arts setting found in Chicago. He suggested direct contact and experimentation with new materials as well as special invention, or individuality. Here is Ashbee's workshop principle adapted to modern American conditions, which employed new materials and praised the machine.

The application of Ashbee's Guild Idea in the formation of the principles and daily practices of the Industrial Art League by Triggs must have been quite deliberate. Triggs' chapter on Ashbee in his 1902 book, written in part, perhaps, when Ashbee was in Chicago, summarized Ashbee's Guild as "another milestone on the road to Industrial freedom--on the testimony both of its work and of its purpose as recorded in the writings of C.R. Ashbee."¹¹³ Triggs, a leader of the Chicago Arts and Crafts movement and a respected supporter of the machine, regarded Ashbee's combined efforts as an architect-designer and as a reformative writer to be significant for the achievement of his own goals as well as for the

fulfillment of industrial design reform. Not only was Ashbee's design work praised in Chicago, then, but his numerous books and articles were avidly read and promoted in Chicago by leading industrial design reformers, such as Oscar Lovell Triggs.

Triggs wrote that Ashbee continued his argument by stating that the handmade object was symbolic, for "its goodness consists in the spirit put into it, and the doing it..."¹¹⁴ Triggs seemed to admire Ashbee's 1894 attitude toward hand-production; he quoted another far-reaching idea of Ashbee's that described an example of machine-made work as "soulless." Tempering this tone slightly, Ashbee encouraged the return of individuality to industrial design which had destroyed fine-quality products and, consequently, the producer. Triggs elaborated more upon Ashbee's ideas from his book, quoting large portions to demonstrate Ashbee's ideal workshop. For instance, Triggs cited Ashbee's definition of design, strongly architectural in character, as "that element in any art or craft by which the whole hangs together, first constructively, then aesthetically."¹¹⁵ To Ashbee and Triggs, the skillful manipulation of materials, the actual handcraftsmanship, would encourage a beautiful product.

Triggs' clearest acceptance of Ashbee's Guild Idea rests near the end of his chapter where he quoted

Ashbee's brief comparative definitions of art, industry, and craft. Triggs discussed the Guild, or "workshop as factory," as a production system which

shall be integral as to its work, human as to its motives, artistic as to its ends. By integral labor is meant that the workman must give his entire energy, physical, moral, and intellectual to his work, and that all his faculties must touch his work at all points. By human motives is meant that the producers and not the things produced, are to be valued and conserved. By artistic ends is meant that work must constantly tend towards imaginative production. 'Art' is the 'higher production,' differing from 'craft,' which is technical production, and from 'industry,' which is mechanical production, only in the degree of personal creativeness involved in the process.¹¹⁶

The language and ideals employed by Triggs to summarize the Industrial Art League's aspirations are very closely related to those held by Charles Ashbee. Given the above definitions of art and industry, one implicit purpose of the Industrial Art League was to find ways to guarantee high quality mechanical production which was guided by artistic standards and fine craftsmanship. The factory was to become a workshop, urged Triggs, who turned to Charles Ashbee's Guild and School of Handicraft as a model.

The architectural climate of Chicago in 1898 and 1900 was intimately connected with the British Arts and Crafts movement which was the most influential design trend in Chicago at the time. Beginning in the 1890's,

direct links existed between London and Chicago.

Although Walter Crane visited Chicago and lectured there in the early 1890's, significant efforts to introduce the ideas of Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement to Chicago and the Midwest were being taken very near 1900 by an Englishman, Joseph Twyman (1842-1904), who had earlier moved to Chicago. He lectured frequently around Chicago about the new crafts ethic begun by Morris and, significantly for this study, read a paper entitled "Furniture" at the 1900 Chicago Architectural Club exhibition. Twyman argued for design principles based upon "honesty of construction [and] the nature of material,"¹¹⁷ which were dear to leading craft reformers in England and America including, among others, Frank Lloyd Wright and Charles Ashbee.

In regard to the use of the machine, Twyman echoes his English Arts and Crafts counterparts, including Ashbee, when he condemns the carving machine which "has not added one spark of joy to the maker of furniture nor the user."¹¹⁸ Not surprisingly, Twyman had collected the work of Morris and Company. In 1903, at the Art Institute of Chicago, he established a permanent William Morris room.

Although Ashbee and Wright had still not met face to face, their work was shown together for the second

time in the 1900 Chicago Architectural Club exhibition. Given this repeated association between Wright and Ashbee and the favorable reviews of Ashbee's designs in American periodicals, the progressive-minded viewer would no doubt consider Ashbee a comrade with Wright in the establishment of a new and thoroughly modern architecture and design. The Chicago Architectural Club's 1900 exhibition was given more prominence by the arrival there of Ashbee later that year in December while he was touring America promoting the English National Trust.

The two Chicago Architectural Club exhibitions in 1898 and 1900, where Ashbee and Wright were displayed as co-members of the movement devoted to finding a solution to the conflict between machinery and the crafts, were fairly conclusive proof of Ashbee's pivotal position as a link between London and Chicago. Although Ashbee had apparently made contact with progressive thinkers and writers in Chicago years before this first visit, his actual contact in 1900-1 with the leading members of the Chicago efforts provided Ashbee the catalytic environment within which he may have modified forever his attitudes toward the machine.

Thus, Ashbee's work was exhibited in 1898 and 1900 in two of the most prominent American Arts and Crafts societies, the T-Square Club of Philadelphia and the

Chicago Architectural Club. The years between 1895 and 1900 witnessed the formation of many American crafts societies and so widespread was the English movement's influence that by 1900, the Arts and Crafts movement was more highly regarded in America than in its homeland. In Chicago, for instance, Ashbee was surrounded in 1900 by strong arguments in favor of a total embrace of machine production which was not too unlike that which he had witnessed in Philadelphia four years earlier. But Chicago was the ideological melting pot for two components of the Arts and Crafts debate, the machine and the individual craftsman.

When Ashbee returned to London from his 1900 tour of America and his visit in Chicago, he had been exposed to most of the significant industrialists, design reformers, craftsmen, artists and architects who were taking an active part in the American Arts and Crafts movement. In Chicago, Ashbee was introduced to Jane Addams, Joseph Twyman, Oscar Lovell Triggs, Frank Lloyd Wright, among others with whom he discussed the movement's goals and limitations. Ashbee's "Memoirs" clearly describe his excitement about Chicago's prominent advances in architecture and design as well as some of the trends which encouraged for Ashbee the validity of his Guild Idea.

However much Ashbee was impressed or influenced by the work of Wright and the Prairie School, Jane Addams at Hull House, the Chicago Architecture Club or The Chicago Arts and Crafts Society, the effects of Ashbee's visit and the success of the Guild were felt in Chicago, too. There is proof in Chicago, moreover, just as there is in Philadelphia with The Rose Valley Association, that Ashbee's Guild--and, more particularly, his silverwork designs--provided a highly regarded workshop methodological and stylistic model to at least one very important Chicago Arts and Crafts metal workshop, the Kalo Shop.

Small shops producing furniture, ceramics, glass, and fine metalwork opened throughout the city during the late 1880's, the 1890's, and the early 1900's, when the Arts and Crafts ethic was so highly respected and widely embraced in America. One of Chicago's most significant contributors to Arts and Crafts metalworking was Clara Welles' Kalo Shop, which was opened in 1900 in Park Ridge, a suburb of Chicago. The household shop was organized very much like Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft. Like the metalworkers working with Ashbee, silversmiths in the Kalo Shop produced by hand fine silver objects after line drawings by their chief designer, Clara Welles. Not only workshop method, but also the importance of workshop style was introduced to the Kalo metalworkers by Welles

who must have been aware of Ashbee's contributions to the Arts and Crafts movement.

Clara Barck Welles (1868-1965) was only five years younger than Ashbee. From Oregon, she had come to Chicago where she enrolled in the Art Institute School's department of decorative design. Upon completion of her coursework in 1900, she opened the Kalo Shop which takes its name from the Greek word for beautiful, kalo. This idealistic title reappears in the Kalo Shop motto: "Beautiful, useful, and enduring."¹¹⁹ 1905 marks the year when the Kalo Shop began producing jewelry and metalwork, a decision due in part to Clara Barck's marriage to a metalworker, George S. Welles. In their Park Ridge home, the Welles couple set up a combined school and workshop known as the Kalo Art-Craft Community, an organization which echoes Ashbee's communal Guild at Chipping Campden as well as William Price's Rose Valley Association. In the workshop, young men and women--unlike Ashbee's all male workshop--learned the craft of metalworking in the Kalo manner perfected by its designer Clara Welles. Much like Ashbee's Guild and School of Handicraft, Welles taught techniques of metalworking to young apprentices through actual workshop experience in what she herself called "a school in a workshop."¹²⁰

As stated previously, Ashbee's silver can be

distinguished most clearly by his use of simple hand-wrought silver surfaces which are enhanced by the use of wirework or the placement of a single precious stone. The silverwork of the Kalo Shop designed by Clara Welles around 1910 employs a similar aesthetic, one which points to Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft as a stylistic source. Pitchers, tea accessories, and jewelry were popular Kalo Shop items (Plates 35-9). The latter, in the form of stick pins or brooches, exhibits the same emphasis on the careful placement of colorful precious stones (Plates 40-1). Although it is clear that Welles must have been aware of Ashbee's precedent, particularly in the use of set stones, both were designers in their small handicrafts workshops where metalworkers were encouraged to conform to an individual workshop style.¹²¹ The Guild Idea was adopted by Clara Welles, then, for use by silversmiths in the Kalo Shop.

In 1908, Ashbee and his wife Janet travelled to many of the same cities visited in 1900. They made a brief visit to Chicago and Oak Park where they visited Wright. However, this visit was of little significance compared to his earlier National Trust tour. In his Memoirs, Ashbee notes in a disappointed manner, that Chicago has lost much of its vigor as he had understood it in 1900. Having also met with Louis Sullivan and Jane

Addams, Ashbee wrote the following description of the changes in his journal:

The Soul of the City is sick, and she knows it, poor thing.... It is more than merely a temporary check to material development, it is a growing belief among her finer minds that we are not as certainly on the right lines as eight years ago we had the conviction we were.¹²²

About his friend Wright Ashbee sensed that Wright "has grown bitter, he has drawn in upon himself..."¹²³ While in Chicago, Ashbee delivered two lectures at the Art Institute of Chicago entitled "William Morris" and "The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood And Their Influence Upon Modern Life."¹²⁴ Although this trip may have contributed to his four-part series "Man and the Machine" for House Beautiful published 1909-10 (See Part III), it appears from Ashbee's "Memoirs" that this 1908 trip to America only contributed to a sense of resignation to the machine age felt by Ashbee at the very time his Guild of Handicraft was forced to close.

Chicago was an American hotbed of architectural innovation, both in writing and in practice. It is difficult to summarize all that had been accomplished in progressive design after the 1893 Columbian Exposition, however, one topic was celebrated whose validity and significance remained unchallenged: the machine. In the machinery building, "Palace of Mechanic Arts,"

mechanization was praised and its permanent position was genuinely acknowledged. Its definite place in modern civilization was welcomed. Unlike England, where the sordid effects of machinery upon the daily life and the arts were vigorously protested through socialist propaganda as well as through the efforts of certain Arts and Crafts leaders (which did not include Ashbee), America increasingly acknowledged that its future, both economically and architecturally, rested with the promotion of the machine. Ashbee had been made aware of the attitude during his first trip to America in 1896, when he visited Philadelphia, New York and other East coast cities. Although artistic guidance had not yet caught up with the rapidly expanding system of machinery during the 1890's, when most American architects and designers were striving furiously to replace European historicist styles with a truly expressive American style of design, by the turn of the century, Chicago architects had brought forward new designs and thinking to express the American machine age. In Chicago, where the British Arts and Crafts movement had its most significant and influential impact, the handicraft revival was paralleled by an embrace, not a rejection of machinery.

Concluding, London and the British Arts and Crafts movement represented the rejection of the machine

in favor of the revival of handicrafts, while Chicago and the Midwest Arts and Crafts movement represented the acceptance of the machine. As an important part of a progressive and positive-minded attempt from the start to reconcile art and industry, Ashbee, although his roots lay in London, was intimately connected with the Chicago Arts and Crafts movement through the exhibition of his work, his Art Institute lectures, his association with Wright, and his Guild's capacity as a model. Ashbee, unlike most of his British counterparts, sought to reconcile art and industry from the very early years of his Guild experience. Thus, this ideology links Ashbee closely to the Chicago Arts and Crafts movement and specifically to the American desires to develop its crafts ethic in tandem with the machine. As such, Ashbee could clearly be viewed, from the American Arts and Crafts movement's development, as an important participant in this movement, which contributes so significantly to the early Modern movement. If Ashbee's position in 1900 should be diluted due to his retention of a purely handicraft guild operation, then his writings after the Guild closed most assuredly define Ashbee's later contribution as modern. By 1910, Ashbee had realized the undeniable position of the machine, both through the guild experience and through his association with Frank Lloyd Wright.

The importance of Charles Ashbee to the development of the Chicago Arts and Crafts movement, which was more progressive and modern in its aims than the London counterpart, has been demonstrated thus far by three phenomena. Needless to say, Ashbee surely benefitted from this unique position. First, Ashbee's designs for the Guild and some of his architectural projects were exhibited in 1898 and 1900 at the Chicago Architectural Club exhibitions. Important enough as a forum from which to exhibit his own work, the real significance of the annual exhibitions lay in Ashbee's repeated association with Frank Lloyd Wright and his progressive contemporaries. Secondly, while Ashbee promoted the British arts and crafts ideals when he was in Chicago in 1900, he also searched for American solutions to problems of art and industry faced at home by the Guild when in conference with Wright, Jane Addams, Louis Sullivan, Joseph Twyman, and perhaps Oscar Lovell Triggs. Lastly, more than most other British Arts and Crafts designers, Ashbee and the Guild were recognized as a model--particularly in Chicago--of those ideals of the British movement which were held most highly by Chicago architects and design reformers. The Kalo Shop and Wright's recognition of Ashbee's talent are substantial evidence to support this influential role held by Ashbee.

Any perception in Chicago of Ashbee's modernity, whether intended or accidental, will help to establish Ashbee's recognizable role in the formative years of the Modern movement in America, no matter how passive when compared to his Midwest colleagues. When contrasted with his British contemporaries or to the previous generation of British Arts and Crafts reformers, who admittedly at times made room for the machine, Ashbee participated more actively in the formulative debate in the early years of the twentieth century that established a positive rapport between handicrafts and the machine. This participation began in Chicago and elsewhere in America around 1900. It continued to develop during the next decade through his continued contact with Frank Lloyd Wright and thus with the entire Midwest progressive movement and secondly through the conclusions he drew during last years with the Guild of Handicraft.

Ashbee's passive activity, which could be interpreted as a period of reflection upon the obvious contrast between the Chicago and London movements which only Ashbee could carry out effectively due to his exposure to Chicago, became active in the years around 1910 when he wrote his most important book on the ideological and practical conclusions of the Guild Idea experiment. For Ashbee, the conclusions to be drawn from the guild

experiment amounted to a series of aphorisms, one of which promoted an acceptance of the machine in the realm of the applied arts. But this is getting ahead of the argument. In Chicago, where the machine was already praised and completely acknowledged as a potentially vital and beautiful artistic force, Ashbee's ideals that blended fine craftsmanship, the small reconstructed workshop, and the simplicity and individuality, were recognized as the sought-after guiding principles.

According to the appropriate entries in his "Memoirs," Ashbee was in Chicago in late November and early December, 1900 and apparently met Wright at this time. Just as when he met William Morris for the first time and recorded his impressions in his journals, Ashbee records in some detail his first meeting with Frank Lloyd Wright:

Wright is to my way of thinking far and away the ablest man in our line of work that I have come across in Chicago, perhaps in America. He not only has ideas, but the power of expressing them & his Husser house over which he took me, showing me every detail with the keenest delight, is one of the most beautiful and most individual of creations that I have seen in America. He threw down the glove to me in characteristic Chicagoan manner in the matter of the Arts & Crafts & the creations of the machine. 'My God' said he, 'is machinery, & the art of the future will be the expression of the individual artist through the thousand powers of the machine, the machine, doing all those things that the individual workman cannot do, & the creative artist is the man that controls all this and understands it.' He was surprised to find how much I concurred with him, but I added

the rider that the individuality of the average had to be considered, in addition to that of the artistic creator himself. As we looked at building after building in Chicago, we put the common denominator of our principle to the test, and found much wanting.¹²⁵

Ashbee and Wright spent about one week together in Chicago, but their professional relationship extended most importantly throughout the first decade of the twentieth century. Their discussions of the meaning of art, craft, industry and the role of man and machinery were significant for both architect-designers and it was some years later, around 1910 in England, when Ashbee's ideas about handicraft production truly showed the long-term impact of Wright's ideas. Both Wright and Ashbee corresponded during this decade after their first meeting and Ashbee returned to Chicago in 1908. A comparison of Ashbee's early and late aphorisms will show quite clearly this ideological influence.

Most importantly, the continued contact with Wright provided Ashbee the opportunity to write in London, after the Guild had closed, his reflections on the effects of his American interlude. The Guild of Handicraft closed, but it could never be considered a failure. The twenty-year period of active Guild production answered for Ashbee many of the industrial and craft questions that brought about its foundation. Where London's Arts and Crafts movement failed to answer more

realistically certain queries about the machine, the American Arts and Crafts movement, as experienced most importantly for Ashbee in Philadelphia and Chicago, provided acceptable guidelines regarding the machine for mechanical production. Ashbee participated directly in the Midwest progressive movement around 1900 and throughout the following decade by correspondence with Frank Lloyd Wright.

PART III

The Style of the Middle West:

Frank Lloyd Wright, Charles Ashbee, and the Modern Movement

Ashbee returned to London in February, 1901 where he continued to work as an architect and the chief designer for the Guild of Handicraft. Major changes were to come to the Guild as a result of many factors, not the least of which were Ashbee's ideas brought back from his meetings with Wright. The climate and conditions of the British Arts and Crafts movement were beginning to show important changes, too, which were to affect significantly the last years of the Guild. The Guild style in metal-work, attained around 1898-99, was to undergo little alteration during this period.

Ashbee was able to synthesize the lessons of the guild experiment in two major books, Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry (1908) and Should We Stop Teaching Art? (1911) in which the art-industry inquiry, pursued through Ashbee's application of his Guild Idea to a small workshop, is resolved as completely as his experience would permit. Although Ashbee, to the end, remained committed to the handicraft ideal, his writings reveal clearly his recognition of the important role in design held by machinery.

It seems plausible to speculate that Ashbee, a close associate of Wright when he wrote "The Art and Craft of the Machine," considered himself to be a significant member of this pioneering and experimental group in

Chicago. After all, the Guild of Handicraft was explicitly pioneering and experimental from the start and, seeking answers to similar problems in the machine debate, was regarded by the Chicago Arts and Crafts movement as a model craft workshop.

Clara B. Welles and the Kalo Shop and Oscar Lovell Triggs and the Industrial Art League were founded upon guidelines derived largely from the example of Charles Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft. Their efforts continued past Ashbee's 1901 Chicago visit. So, too, did the association between Ashbee and Wright, an association that began in part in the 1898 Chicago Architectural Club exhibition. The most significant results of their communications, for Ashbee, occurred throughout the ten years after 1901. Letters and visits were exchanged between the two architect-designers and finally in 1911, Ashbee was asked by Wright to contribute an introduction to his 1911 book of designs, Frank Lloyd Wright Ausgeführte Bauten. During the last decade of the Guild, then, Ashbee remained a contributing designer and writer in both Chicago and London during the formulation of modern design.

Having discussed the goals and activities of Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft from 1888 to 1899, there remains the last years of Guild work to discuss. By 1900, the work of Ashbee and the Guild was respected and well

known to its London audience through the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society exhibitions and through the Guild's gallery and exhibition spaces at Bond and Brook Streets. Their work was known abroad, furthermore, through exhibitions at the Turin International Exposition as well as through the eighth (1900) exhibition of the Vienna Secession.¹²⁶ The best efforts of the Guild of Handicraft were the designs commissioned by the Duke of Hesse at Darmstadt, however, their high quality metalwork continued to be produced in the recognizable Guild style, with silver wirework, occasional colored enamels, and carefully-set precious stones as the identifying elements.

Within the five years or so following the successful Darmstadt commission, Ashbee designed what remained to be the best examples of Guild metalwork. The most striking, perhaps, is the green glass decanter (1902) mounted with a silver wire handle and ornamental straps that surround the glass body (Plate 41). A simple bottle is made elegant by the addition of a triplet of silver wires that encircle the base and join at the handle's base. From this, a half dozen silver wires emerge and then twist to form the handle which is attached to the bottle at the neck with a simple embossed strap. Again, Ashbee exploits the malleability of silver to express the material through the narrow and twisted wires. The

translucence of the glass and the volume of its shape are expressed by the wires which are visible through the glass as well as around the blown glass form. This was a popular type and numerous variables on the design exist. Ashbee considered it a very successful design and included it as Plates 59 and 20 in his design book, Modern English Silverwork (Plates 11 and 42). From his description, two types of these bottles existed. The second was designed with a lip and spout with hinged cover, allowing the contents to be poured.

Another popular design was the single or double handled silver bowl set with one or two precious stones (Plate 43), which made its initial appearance late in the first period. Like its predecessor, a 1902 example consisted of a plain hammered silver bowl, low and horizontal in profile, and held by a pair of silver wire handles (Plate 28). Numerous variations of this type survived and Ashbee considered it, too, important enough to include as Plate 17 in Modern English Silverwork (Plate 20). When a cover was included, it was apparently enamelled and set with a precious stone.

With regard to the above decanter and silver bowl, it is noteworthy that Ashbee had drawn a single principle design from which variations could be crafted. It has already been shown that these pieces perhaps best

represent the Guild style, however, they also went far in fulfilling the Guild Idea's importance attached to individuality. From the single design, a craftsman was apparently allowed--and probably encouraged--to interpret this type in order to create an individual decanter or bowl. Such creative participation in the design and execution of a piece would likely bring a sense of joy to the producer and thus enhance his life according to Ashbee's ideals. Finally, such individual expression would be at no cost to a Guild style as long as the essential character of the design was maintained. To that end, Ashbee was present as the chief overseeing Guild designer to insure harmonious stylistic expression.

Nonetheless, variety remained the key feature of Ashbee's metalwork forms. The Guild style elements remained intact frequently on one-of-a-kind examples, such as the tall covered cups represented as Plates 72 and 65 in Modern English Silverwork (Plates 44 and 45). The latter, richer in its ornament than some other Guild silverwork, is decorated with set stones and a wirework cone. The floral ornament is decidedly modern in its abstraction. Such geometric simplification was prominent in the period around 1900. The craft itself is well expressed through its casting and embossing techniques, while the form, based generally on historical

examples remains simple in profile. Ashbee's Plate 72 is yet more modern in its expression, particularly with the attenuated silver wires and set stones that combine to evoke a modern abstract aesthetic. Again, the simple form of the cup retains the designer's and the period's expressed preference for simplicity, despite the rather pronounced embossing on the foot and lid.

Ashbee's only craft skill, it was noted, was three-dimensional modelling. He also seemed to prefer male figures in both his silverwork and press designs. Such preferences were repeatedly shown on Ashbee's designs, which were probably influenced as well by his respect for the Italian Renaissance period when the male figure was admired as a source of ideal beauty. The Guild style in metalwork, then, was at times punctuated by supporting male figures such as those reproduced on Plates 100, 79, and 68 in Modern English Silverwork (Plates 46, 16-17). Example A on the latter plate survives today in the Victoria & Albert Museum Collection. In each of these examples, a classically proportioned male nude serves as a support of the vessel's bowl and may be yet another indication that Ashbee was seriously interested in ancient Greek as well as Neoclassical artistic expression.

In summary, Ashbee sought to express his Arts and Crafts ideals such as truth to materials, individuality,

and simplicity of form and ornament in deference to function, through plain hammered silver surfaces, simple wirework and stone settings, and a modern vocabulary of abstract ornament (Plates 47-8). When necessary, Ashbee did not hesitate to adapt a historical precedent to a form expressive of the Guild style, but which also expressed the Guild's respect for past tradition (Plate 49). On the other hand, it must be made clear that the stylistic exchange between Ashbee metalwork designs and both Chicago metal workshops and American metalwork designs in general was from London to America. At no time is it apparent that Ashbee's Guild style was influenced by American designs in metalwork or other crafts pursued by the Guild of Handicraft.

Both stylistically and ideologically, Ashbee's Guild Idea and Guild style, as expressed through the silver designs, were important contributions made to the British and American Arts and Crafts movements. In this sense, Ashbee can be seen as a transitional figure who emerged from a Morrisian handicraft reform movement and who, in the end, had shed his medievalizing background in favor of a more modern and realistic approach to design reform. The last decade of the guild years provided Ashbee the knowledge with which he could adapt his own ideals to the demands of the machine tradition. By no

means, however, was this shift felt to be a surrender. Idealistic throughout the last years of the Guild, Ashbee incorporated his recognition of the machine within a set of aphorisms which applied handicraft standards to machine production methods.

Although neither employed to the same extent nor with the same cheap standards of mass production as by the large commercial competitors, the machine, in the form of saws in the furniture shop or as used to roll out sheets of silver, was used by Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft in a very limited and regulated manner. For Ashbee, these machines assisted with drudgery, but by no means were they allowed to become part of the creative handicraft process. In short, machines were not permitted to overcome or replace hand-production.

The Guild's last years after 1900 were frustrating for Ashbee and its members who were faced with imitative competitors who introduced mass-produced and inexpensive decorative arts. Most significant stylistic imitation and market competition came from the Cymric and Tudric style metalwork mass-produced by Liberty and Company beginning in April, 1899. While the Cymric style metalwork (Plate 50) was not entirely derived from ancient Celtic art, the more successful examples closely followed silver designs by Ashbee. It is surprising to

realize that the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society exhibited such work, but it is not at all surprising to realize that less-expensive Liberty and Company metalwork damaged the financial security of the Guild of Handicraft.¹²⁷ Having become a limited company in 1898, the Guild of Handicraft was unable to escape from financial confusion and monetary loss. This, along with shifting tastes, forced the Guild of Handicraft to close in 1908. Some members remained affiliated and continued to produce Guild of Handicraft objects for a few years. Another very significant factor contributing to the Guild's frustrations in its last years was the group decision to move the Guild of Handicraft--its members and their families totalling 150 people--to the rural setting of Chipping Campden.

This idyllic agricultural Cotswolds village was located north of London about seventy miles and was believed to be close enough to London for the Guild members to improve their daily lives through living close to the land while maintaining the vital link to their handicraft retail market. The idea to move the Guild to a rural, agricultural setting was not new for Ashbee, who had rented cottages for weekends during which Guild members would be able to relax their bodies and to improve their minds in the natural surroundings.¹²⁸ The movement

had largely been a protest against demoralizing urban squalor; part of its solution, widely believed at the time, was to improve character and standards of living by working in an idyllic setting.

The late 1900s, rife with utopian schemes beginning with Morris and News from Nowhere, gave rise to a back-to-the-land movement much in step with the handicraft ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement. Like the desires for simple and honest handicraft production as a means to express the individuality of the craftsman, the dignity of his labor, and the character of the material, the so-called "simple life" was an attempt to return to basic needs or life functions. Rejecting the complexities of urban industrial life, simple-lifers embraced the straightforward, simple lifestyle demanded in an agricultural setting. Raising their own food, making their own clothing, exercising regularly, making their own furniture and participating in the Guild were, to Ashbee, sources of spiritual enlightenment, moral integrity, and a healthy life consistently denied in the city.

The village of Chipping Campden was carefully selected. Its English rural beauty survives to the present and in 1902 its native stone buildings were vacant and in need of restoration. Here were ready-made, simple, vernacular old buildings ready for adaptation to the needs

of a craft guild. In turn, the Cotswolds craft tradition and architecture, as well as the untarnished landscape and traditional lifestyle were to influence profoundly artists and architects such as Ernest Gimson (1864-1919), the Barnsley Brothers and Charles Ashbee.¹²⁹

The Guild experience itself did not suffer from the move. The library, museum and all of the craft workshops, including the press, were moved to Campden. Visitors arrived in large numbers to view Arts and Crafts principles in action as a way of life.¹³⁰ Quarters were made for guests to stay in and for a few short years after 1902, it appeared that the Guild of Handicraft would survive in its rustic setting. After 1905, however, the financial picture grew dim and for reasons cited above, the Guild of Handicraft was ended in 1908.

The setting and the fortunes of Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft changed during its second decade. So, too, did the Guild style during the late 1890s and early 1900s when the simple proportions, plain silver surfaces and reticent ornament of the silver-mounted green glass decanter or two-handled silver butter dish, for instance, stood out as more modern in design and expression than previous medievalizing examples. The underlying source for modification of the Guild experiment lay, ultimately, with a slight but significant shift in Ashbee's Guild

Idea. These changes were largely caused by resolutions, if not practical answers, to questions about art and industry. Ashbee had found, after more than ten years of experience with the Guild and direct contact with leading reformers in the American Arts and Crafts movement, especially in Chicago, that the machine could be regulated. Moreover, the standards by which to regulate craft reform and applied arts design, unknown largely in 1888, had been discovered in part by 1908 through the small experimental workshops of the Guild of Handicraft.

This is not to say that Ashbee actively experimented at length with machines in his workshops, but rather that he strove there to establish handicraft standards of beauty and production. Seeking ideals more than practical machine definitions, Ashbee incorporated the machine into his Guild Idea. Although there were machine-driven tools in the Chipping Camden workshops after 1902, the machine was not incorporated into Ashbee's axioms until 1912. As before, he made these ideals public through his writings. As before, also, it appears that foreign designers, after 1908, profoundly impressed with Ashbee's ideals, adopted his mature Guild Idea as an important part of their definitive principles of design.

Ashbee's seasoned Guild Idea was discussed in two important books, Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry

(1909) and Should We Stop Teaching Art? (1911). The latter evolved from a series of articles published in America in House Beautiful in 1910 entitled "Man and the Machine." Writing from a set of aphorisms in Should We Stop Teaching Art?, Ashbee addressed the machine in four out of six idealistic guidelines that characterized the Guild Idea around 1910, two years after the Guild of Handicrafts had ended (Appendix 2). Thus, the Guild Idea had been drawn to concentrate upon the machine for its conclusions and, as will be shown, to step out of the Arts and Crafts movement's earlier rejection of the machine as set forth by John Ruskin.

Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry covers a variety of subjects dear to Ashbee but many are irrelevant to this discussion of Ashbee, art, and industry. Thus, only subjects relevant to the Guild Idea and the limitation of machines in the craft workshop will be discussed. In the first chapter, Ashbee reiterates the importance of the Arts and Crafts movement and its quest to resolve questions of standard, production, materials, limitations of the machine and quality of life for both the consumer and the producer. Ashbee believed that the movement carried "an ethical significance" and furthermore that it

brings indeed into modern Industry a little of that Soul, that imaginative quality in which our civilization is so lacking. It reminds us that the imaginative things are the real things, and it shows us that when they are to be expressed in man's handiwork, they must come into immediate contact with material, must touch actuality.¹³¹

Present problems were to be dealt with through "sound production" and "the inevitable regulation of machine production and cheap labour," Ashbee wrote, much in keeping with previous fundamental notions of his Guild Idea.

The second chapter discusses problems encountered with the Guild of Handicraft and some of its goals, such as "to uphold Standard and humanize work." Much of this reiterated earlier writings and so does not need repetition. Nonetheless, Ashbee had the benefit of twenty years of experience and could discuss certain issues with more clarity. Ashbee was able to recognize the forces which brought the Guild experiment to a close. More importantly, he identified the value of his Guild Idea as beneficial to future generations' "aspirations of labour and craftsmanship."

The machine issue was considered directly and Ashbee's pursuit of "principles of right and wrong in craftsmanship and the use and abuse of machinery" had led him to conclude that workshops such as his could indeed benefit from the use of the machine without totally sacrificing handicraft standards, as previously thought. For

instance, Ashbee used the furniture and metalwork shops to distinguish between the hand and the machine. For Ashbee,

machinery was not repudiated, but the idea was that in those cases where the hand was better used it should be used, and that the customer was not to be put off with the machine-made article on the score of cheapness, nearness or trade finish.¹³²

In the woodworker's shop, the Guild Idea allowed for the use of a machine-driven circular saw to cut a plank, but should there be any additional carving it was to be done with tool in hand and not by any carving machinery. Likewise, is the metalworker's shop, a silver plate could be rolled out by a milling machine, but any subsequent work must be done by hand. A bowl was to be raised by hand-hammering and not spun in the chuck. As discussed, this handicraft method clearly expressed the material and the method of manufacture. Ashbee illustrated the tall cup and cover presently in the V & A Collection (Plate 15) as an example of silver which was raised by hand from a sheet of silver pressed by a machine.

In this context, the machine finds its way into the Guild experiment and contributes to the manufacture of Guild products, but its actual process is kept secret in any expressive sense. A piece of Ashbee silver never revealed any use of the machine, even if made in accordance with sound machine application. Ashbee and the Guild of Handicrafts stood for the handicraft tradition,

nurtured by architecture; at no time did their work express a machine aesthetic. Nonetheless, Ashbee did introduce limitations of the machine that were in keeping with his Guild Idea. Ashbee permitted machine production in his craft workshops, but only under regulations that protected handicraft skills, individual design, direct contact with materials, and the dignity of labor from the censorship of a machine-dominated production process.

In the third chapter, he attempted to find ways to eliminate competition between the hand and the machine by regulating each in a small workshop. Another unfair competitive factor Ashbee sought to eliminate was that of the amateur. The quality of product and method of production surveyed through the careful training of Guild members was at risk due to the influence of both machinery and the amateur. Ashbee strove to witness

the province of the handwork and the province of the machine work so defined, that the former when it is demonstrably better in its direct product and its human resultant than the latter, shall not continue to be at the latter's mercy.¹³³

Ashbee recognized that his efforts, as well as those of many of his contemporaries, had provided the methodological means to regulate both handwork and machine work so that one did not benefit at the expense of the other. The remaining thirteen chapters of Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry explore political and economic

philosophies not relevant to the purpose of this thesis, but which are not thereby undervalued by their exclusion.

Although already discussed as a source for metalwork designs, Ashbee's Modern English Silverwork (1909) provides some additional insights to his ideas--some of which are contradictory and comparatively extreme--about the machine. Ashbee stated quite frankly that the machine was what separated good work from bad, what interrupted the technique's integrity, what eradicated traditional handicrafts, and what obliterated individual style. When unregulated (and this is the distinction for good and bad use of the machine) the machine threatened the very existence of Craft believed Ashbee, who wrote "when the machine enters the Craftsman disappears."¹³⁴ This strong condemnation refers most specifically to the inability of a craftsman to appreciate his craft as a whole, when machinery was allowed to interrupt the process of hand-crafting a single object. Using the process of spinning off a chuck as an example, Ashbee noted that the problem of machinery is not exclusively aesthetic, but rather of process of technique. A workshop ceases to function in a traditional craft sense with the introduction of machinery. Unregulated machines destroyed traditional handicrafts and to Ashbee, the experimental Guild of Handicraft sought ways to define regulation.

Ashbee did not favor total rejection of the machine. Its significance was defined by its place in the production process. He specifies quite clearly where machinery's place was to be in the crafting of silver when he wrote the following in Modern English Silverwork:

I have no objection to using the dental fret for modelling in silver...still less do I mind the polishing lathe, or belting it to the engine, but if the doing of these accessories,--for observe they are accessory, not vital to my craft as a Silversmith,--disorganizes the economy and inventive power of my workshop, then as a Silversmith I am better without them.¹³⁵

Ashbee recognized the value of machinery as a labor-saving device and as something--when unregulated--to protect craft production from. His design theory was essentially rooted in the handicraft tradition and was not an embrace of a new machine aesthetic.

Ashbee's opinion against machinery must be understood within the context of the British Arts and Crafts movement and in contrast to the American Arts and Crafts movement's different and more progressive adaptation of the machine. Ashbee had studied the American application of machine product to its craft tradition and, in a position to recognize what he was searching for in an ideal fulfillment of his Guild Idea, found the American ideas superior to those in London. Citing Louis C. Tiffany (1848-1933) and his methods of craft production, Ashbee witnessed the machine problem "much more highly and

intelligently worked out." As chief designer of the studies, Tiffany had proven how helpful it was to invite artists and designers to assist with their designs for machine production. On the other hand, Tiffany Studios were not without stylistic influence from British and Continental design sources, one of which is the jewelry of Charles Ashbee. Louis C. Tiffany's Peacock necklace of 1902 was probably inspired substantially by Charles Ashbee's earlier and widely illustrated Peacock brooch of 1900.¹³⁶

In England, Ashbee was frustrated by the apparent insensitivity of the trade which exploited machinery's capability to reproduce cheaply any number of poorly designed and executed silver objects. The distinction could be made visually between good and bad work. Ashbee wrote that "...wherever it can be shown that the introduction of machinery destroys human inventiveness, skill, and imagination, it is harmful, wasteful and futile."¹³⁷ Thus, Ashbee made clear in Modern English Silverwork the limited conditions under which the machine could be tolerated in a craft workshop without loss to either product or producer.

Before examining Ashbee's second British publication on art and industry, an important series of articles appeared in an American periodical considered to

be progressive in its period. Beginning in June 1909 and ending in September 1910, House Beautiful published a four-part series written by Ashbee entitled "Man and the Machine." The four two-part articles were entitled "Arts and Crafts in England," "The Pre-Raphaelites and Their Influence Upon Life," "The Soul of Architecture," and "The Return of the Village." Ashbee's reputation had already been established in leading American cities by the Arts and Crafts exhibitions or articles reviewing Guild products that were prevalent around 1900. Ashbee's participation in the American Arts and Crafts movement continued beyond his 1901 visit by means of the House Beautiful articles, his ongoing association with Wright and, later, through his Introduction to Wright's Frank Lloyd Wright Ausgeführte Bauten.

In the first article for House Beautiful, "Arts and Crafts in England," Ashbee summarized the movement in England and his own place within it by 1908-9. Much of this may have already been known to participants in the American Arts and Crafts movement, especially in Chicago, but the periodical's national audience was likely to learn from Ashbee's experience. Defining the movement's origins and its purpose as "Those occupations or pursuits in the practice of which the individual comes into direct contact with his material, and is enabled to give expression to

his own fancy, invention, imagination,"¹³⁸ Ashbee then distinguished what was peculiar to either the British or American movements. Protesting against "the sporadic hammering on metal of the lady amateur,"¹³⁹ Ashbee asserts that in England, craftwork "must have the individual touch of the maker; there must be no machine between him and what he is producing"¹⁴⁰ and there must be some human expression. Given this conception of the machine's position, it appeared that true production, in the creative sense, began after any labor-saving machine work had been finished. Thus, the machine, although allowed into the workshop, was divorced from the individual creative process. The "making of useful things has brought it into direct conflict with the dominating power of modern life; industrial machinery,"¹⁴¹ according to Ashbee writing to an American audience in 1909.

In the second part of the same article, Ashbee defined his guild's purpose as a craft-by-craft struggle to separate what is best made in direct contact with the material by hand from that best made by machine. Admitting, importantly, that the movement's outlook had changed during the previous forty years, Ashbee pointed out that "the development of industrial machinery in America has not affected the arts and crafts here as seriously as it has affected ours in England."¹⁴² This

benefit was not without a price, however; with the dominance of machine production over an already scarce tradition of handicrafts, Ashbee believed there to be less opportunity for aesthetic production in America.

The second article dealt exclusively with the importance of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in the motivations of the craft reform movement and is, thus, of little relevance to this study. Similarly, the fourth article, "The Return of the Village," dealt with the questions of an agrarian lifestyle and pertains very slightly to this thesis. One point, however, from the latter article served to summarize well the place of the Guild of Handicrafts within the back-to-the-land movements of the early 1900s. Just as in the workshop, so too in the field a boundary of control must be drawn between the manual and the mechanical. The land reform efforts stood "for the use of the hand as against the machine; it dignifies labor; it cancels the casual, the product of the machine. It insists upon the best land, the best material, as a condition of success; it necessitates certain forms of machinery."¹⁴³ Ashbee reaffirmed also that the problems associated with the machine could be solved without "placing an embargo upon the invention of machinery."¹⁴⁴

"The Soul of Architecture" was the third article in the series and is important to this study because it

deals explicitly with some of Ashbee's ideas about the machine. Writing that "architecture expresses life" and assigning much ethical, political and social significance to his profession, Ashbee blamed the then current "disintegration of architectural traditions"¹⁴⁵ on the machine. Without the architect the crafts were left powerless against mechanical industry or, worse, "industrial chaos."¹⁴⁶ Two essential solutions rested with the architect's profession that could bring life to the soulless industrial setting. As an architect, Ashbee believed he could give every building some idea or character that distinguishes it from others and work truthfully with every material that he designed for. Repeating from an earlier article the meaning of arts and crafts as occupations in which the individual craftsman, without being cancelled by the machine, is allowed to work directly and creatively with his chosen material, Ashbee related this cardinal Guild principle to modern building in two ways:

In old days, before the coming of industrial machinery, all architecture was the architecture of fine craftsmanship, all of it was what would now be called 'arts and crafts architecture'...

In our day, however, architecture is both the work of machinery and the work of craftsmanship. We are the richer by this new, this second means of approach, if we will only learn to choose between what should and what should not be done by machinery...¹⁴⁷

In this statement, Ashbee encompassed the machine and craftsmanship within a very positive context. An important

final distinction between the American and British movements is made. In England, Ashbee wrote, "We do not object to good standardized machine forms, but we prefer the craft when we can get it, and we will not have the machine-made detail or machine-made ornament of any sort. Detail implies the human, the individual..."¹⁴⁸ His new resolution incorporated both the machine and handicrafts but with important limitations. Rather than separating the two issues, Ashbee celebrates the potential benefit to society from combining machinery and craftsmanship in this new approach.

It is precisely this "new approach" that Ashbee had grown to support which culminated in the last major book relating to the Guild Idea. The resolutions of the art-industry questions he had found from over twenty years of experience were published in the form of six aphorisms in his 1911 book, Should We Stop Teaching Art? Having worked through many of the problems of art and the handicrafts under industrial conditions, Ashbee attempts to outline an educational system based upon these six principles. Although much of his theoretical text is not germane to this investigation, the chapter defining and developing these axioms is a valuable source for summarizing Ashbee's ideas about the machine. Four of the six axioms relate to the machine and thus indicate how crucial

an ingredient this art-industrial question was in the Guild Idea. (Appendix 2)

Ashbee did not introduce any radical new elements to his craft ethic in 1911, however the resolved tone of the selected axioms indicated his own recognition of the limitations inherent in the Arts and Crafts movement and his Guild Idea. In contrast to American ideas about the machine, Ashbee realized that in Britain, the Arts and Crafts movement had accomplished all that it could.

Of the four relevant axioms, numbers I, V, and VI are of the most direct consequence to ideas about the relation of art and industry. Axiom I stated:

Modern civilization rests on machinery, and no system for the endowment, or the encouragement, or the teaching of art can be sound that does not recognize this.¹⁴⁹

Ashbee placed full emphasis on the position held by the machine without the previous fearful belief that all craft, all individuality would be consequently destroyed. Ashbee redefines his generation's attempts to resolve Arts and Crafts movement issues when he defines it as the "first consistent attempt to give expression to the Arts under the conditions which Machinery imposes."¹⁵⁰ How different this is from the generation of Ruskin which sought to evade the machine completely.

This shift of thinking for Ashbee can be illustrated more clearly if his views toward Ruskin in 1888 are contrasted with those of 1911. Remembering that the Guild and School of Handicraft began from the efforts of a small Ruskin reading class at Toynbee Hall, it is indicative of the shift in his thinking by 1911 that he wrote of John Ruskin that he "never got beyond the débâcle of the arts at the time of the industrial revolution in the 18th century; they have never seen the need for reconstruction. Their philosophy of Art has never been brought up to date."¹⁵¹ Like Wright, Ashbee rejects the Arts and Crafts movement to an extent unimaginable when it is remembered that the Guild began as a Ruskin reading class.

Axiom V reiterates what Ashbee had already concluded by this date and related to the above axiom:

Machinery is neither all good nor all bad. An intelligent community will distinguish which is which, and the aesthetic education of the community in our day should be directed towards this distinction between the bad and the good.¹⁵²

Here, again, the Arts and Crafts movement is revealed for its inherent ethical stand; it was a movement unrecognized by any single overriding style, but which was clearly defined by its principles. Ashbee stressed that part of the difficulty lay in simply admitting to the problem. Once this was done, Ashbee knew from his Guild experience that the solutions had already been defined.

Resting upon the results of his workshop experiment, Ashbee answered the machine question with a final and conclusive statement in Axiom VI:

The experience of the last twenty-five years has shown that in many trades and crafts the distinction between what should and what should not be produced by machinery has already been made.¹⁵³

Ashbee concluded the chapter by stating that the above discovery, the result of experimental guilds, craft societies and diligent training in a small workshop, was the "achievement of the Arts and Crafts movement."¹⁵⁴ In addition to protesting against using the machine to produce things better made by hand, Ashbee attests that the movement protested against the obverse. It was wrong to promote craftsmen to make mechanical things by hand when the machine could do the work as well or better. Ashbee used the production of chain links as an example.

The achievements of the Arts and Crafts movement were produced through similarly guided craft guilds and design reformers not only in Britain, but also in Germany and America. It is apparent that Ashbee participated in the American Arts and Crafts movement, especially around 1900, and, furthermore, that he learned much about the proper application of machinery from efforts in Chicago. In particular, it was Ashbee's meeting with Wright in 1900 and their continued contact in the years following that

contributed significantly to Ashbee's "new approach" to the machine question. Undoubtedly, the Guild of Handicraft provided Ashbee with the practical workshop solutions to craft techniques and materials, as well as the development of an individual style, but it appears that the association with Frank Lloyd Wright may have provided the catalytic theoretical impulse for a change in Ashbee's ideas about the machine.

That the aesthetic climate of Chicago was more compelling to Ashbee than any other American city is shown in his 1901 publication, A Report By Mr. C.R. Ashbee to the Council of the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest and Natural Beauty, on his Visit to the United States in the Council's Behalf. Having travelled through fourteen states where he addressed fifty to sixty different groups, Ashbee wrote most approvingly of Chicago. While there, he spoke to ten different audiences: three at the Art Institute of Chicago, one at Hull House, one at the Jew's Institute, as well as at the Chapter of Architects of Illinois, the Archaeological League, and the University of Chicago. In addition, a committee was formed from members of the city's various art and social reform groups that included the Architectural Club, the Arts and Crafts Society, the Christian Socialist League, the Antiquarian Society, the Public Art

School Society, the Chicago Art Association, and the Municipal Art League.¹⁵⁵ Ashbee thoroughly immersed himself in the city's Arts and Crafts movement and, having met with its leading reformers, wrote in his report that "Chicago is the only American city I have seen where something absolutely distinctive in the aesthetic handling of material has been evolved out of the Industrial system."¹⁵⁶ There Ashbee felt strongly that questions about art and industry which he himself had raised were being effectively dealt with by the leading architects of Chicago. For Ashbee, one architect in Chicago was important enough to identify by name in his report and that was Frank Lloyd Wright, whom Ashbee described as "one of the leading spirits among the younger architects."¹⁵⁷

Around 1900, an important design idea was being formulated in the Chicago chapter of the Architectural League known as "pure design." Emil Lorch and Robert Spencer were then credited with defining the principles of this abstract form of design, which promoted the use of geometric forms in architecture. By using simple geometric shapes such as the cube or square, pure designers would express the building and its parts in an abstract manner rather than through historical styles. Although it is not known whether Ashbee was immediately aware of pure design while he was in Chicago in 1900, it

is generally known that Frank Lloyd Wright was influenced by some of its principles. In this important year formulating pure design principles, Ashbee was represented in the Chicago Architectural Club exhibition of 1900 by fourteen entries, which was more than what Wright was represented by.¹⁵⁸ Ashbee and Wright were associated with one another throughout the years after 1900 and it is conceivable that Ashbee may have been introduced to pure design principles through his discussions with Wright.

Even so, it would be difficult to imagine that Ashbee was unaware of pure design notions while in Chicago. In the Chicago Architectural Club Catalogue of 1900, the authors identify their club's close connection with the Architectural League of America which stood for "the new thought in art and design."¹⁵⁹ Lorch and Spencer had defined this new design as "pure design" based on abstract forms. The catalogue continued: "It [pure design] stands for art which is fundamental, in which form follows and expresses function--which aims to solve problems of utility in terms of beauty."¹⁶⁰ Even more similar to a British Arts and Crafts movement idea was the Chicago Architectural Club's respect for the past which, unlike much of the British movement, was able to place principle before precedent. Thus, the association between Wright and Ashbee, the fact that Ashbee's exhibits outnumbered

Wright's in the 1900 Chicago Architectural Club and the Architectural League of America in matters of new pure design, together imply that Ashbee's position in the Chicago Arts and Crafts setting could well have been pivotal. Ashbee's Guild Idea, his workshop principles and already before 1900, some of his silverwork designs, stood for many of the same basic principles that Lorch and Spencer employed to characterize their new thought in art and design. Wright, influenced more than many of his Chicago colleagues by pure design, may well have learned important handicraft principles, particularly in regard to materials, from C.R. Ashbee.

Nonetheless, Wright went much further than Ashbee in his acceptance of a modern design system that embraced the machine. Whatever Ashbee may have aspired to in his idealistic writings, he never actively espoused a machine aesthetic to the same degree that Wright did. In order to enhance an understanding of Ashbee's ideas about the machine and their rank in the early formulative years of the Modern movement, two highly important essays by Wright, written in 1901 and 1908, should be examined.

On March 6, 1901, Frank Lloyd Wright delivered a lecture to the Chicago Arts and Crafts Society at Hull House entitled "The Art and Craft of the Machine." Two weeks later in a revised edition, the same paper was

delivered to the Western Society of Engineers. It was first published in the catalogue of the 14th Annual Exhibition of the Chicago Architectural Club in revised form the same year. It was a lecture of fundamental impact upon the architecture and design of the Midwest, in which Ashbee had participated and had since followed through continued contact with Wright. Many of Wright's ideas were similar to Ashbee's, yet the Chicago architect had slightly different opinions about the machine.

Unlike Ashbee by this date, Wright had fully accepted the machine, in which "lies the only future of art and craft."¹⁶¹ Wright did not simply reject, either, the ideals of the craft movement but rather believed that old ideals would appear redefined. Wright believed that Morris "miscalculated" the machine, but every artist honored the ideals of Morris. Art in the traditional handicraft sense had been made "obsolete and unnatural" by the machine said Wright, and it was the responsibility of the architect to discover a new aesthetic language, "the poetry of this Machine Age."¹⁶² In part, Wright argued for the machine which would free society from poor-quality artistic efforts and for SIMPLICITY, a concept which Morris recognized, Ashbee incorporated in his Guild style and which Wright focused on as "vital to the Art of the Machine."¹⁶³ Wright, however, defines simplicity

differently than the English who use it as a form of protest. Rather Wright described simplicity in art as "a synthetic, positive quality in which we may see evidence of mind, breadth of scheme, wealth of detail, and withal a sense of completeness found in a tree or a flower."¹⁶⁴

Wright thought it time to learn from the machine rather than to be defiant in the midst of the machine age. Wright translated Morris' sense of simplicity into a process of "elimination" by means of an understanding of the machine. From the British movement, so bound by a sense of protest, only Ashbee and a few others were able to perceive that the machine was "salvation in disguise." Ashbee was clearly the most outspoken English design theorist writing in a spirit similar to Wright's in favor of the machine.

Wright's idealistic language rarely contains the practical teaching found in the writing of Ashbee, who had only to study his Guild development in order to examine the potential of his ideals to actually affect production standards. In the closing paragraphs, Wright spoke of a workshop situation that was not dissimilar from Ashbee's Guild experiment. Although Wright does not identify Ashbee's Guild, by that date Wright would have recalled Ashbee's work when he sought:

an experimental station that would represent in miniature the elements of this great pulsating web of the machine, where each pregnant process or significant tool...would have

its place and where the best young scientific blood could mingle with the best and truest of these things.¹⁶⁵

For Wright, "these things" likely referred to large modern machines that were in need of application to a small workshop setting. Ashbee was praised in Chicago, if not openly by Wright, then by equally important design groups, for his experimental guild in which Ashbee attempted to define limitations for machines.

Like Ashbee, Wright believed firmly that the problems of the machine and art were going to be solved well and appropriately by the artist alone who was capable of grasping the significance of the machine. Like Ashbee's purpose, also, Wright's purpose in "The Art and Craft of the Machine" was largely an appeal on an ideological level for attempts to define a new and modern art that rested firmly and confidently in the Machine Age. Like Ashbee, Wright recognized the value of experience to function for the artist as the means "to prove, that the machine is capable of carrying to fruition high ideals in art--higher than the world has yet seen!"¹⁶⁶

Ashbee, in 1900, was not as confident with the machine as Wright, however much he was able to recognize its permanence. While in Chicago, Ashbee and Wright spoke frankly and openly about their ideals' similarities and differences with regard to the machine. Their discussion

was noted earlier from Ashbee's "Memoirs", however, their association was to continue across the Atlantic by means of correspondence and, apparently, even a contract from Wright to Ashbee requesting some type of Guild of Handicraft product.¹⁶⁷ The letters began in 1902 and continued through 1939 and thus only a select number of the earliest letters are pertinent to this study.

Although the letters are important for proving Ashbee as a trusted link between the British Arts and Crafts movement and the early Modern movement as it was developing in Chicago just after 1900, none of the letters reveal any significant contribution to the design ideals of either Wright or Ashbee. Their solutions to the machine problem were different and they were discovered in writings and experience rather than in letters.

The first published letter is from Wright to Ashbee on January 3, 1902, written in response to an invitation to England. Wright replied that poor finances kept him in the Midwest, however, he stated that he had read Ashbee's Report...to the Council of the National Trust... on his Visit to the United States (1901) "with avidity." Wright spoke well of Ashbee's Endeavour type, designed in those years for the newly founded Essex House Press, and also was glad to tell Ashbee that he had recently read of him in an American periodical as well as "the Review,"

referring most likely to the Architectural Review. Wright, in a friendly and professionally interested tone, concluded the letter with the following: "You see my ears are pricked up for news of you and my eyes are on the watch for signs of your work."¹⁶⁸ Clearly, Wright held Ashbee in high regard and acknowledged Ashbee's interest in the Chicago craft reform, an interest which Ashbee probably made known to Wright while they were in discussion.

The elusive "signs of your work" which Wright was looking for may simply refer to the illustrations in periodicals. On the other hand, it seems equally plausible that this phrase may mean some tangible design efforts or workshop organization that reflected the influence of Ashbee's Guild Idea or his work. If this is so, then it can be concluded rather safely that Wright was implying his respect for Ashbee's efforts and was also aware of the potential the Guild Idea held for assisting with a solution to the machine problem. This letter, written after Wright's appeal for a solution in "The Art and Craft of The Machine," may indicate Wright's recognition of Ashbee's work as a body of experience and ideas that could contribute some of its wisdom to an American solution to a problem originally identified by the British Arts and Crafts movement.

After this letter, unfortunately, there is a gap of six years before the second preserved letter. In reference to a possible trip to Chicago while on another lecture tour, Ashbee had written Wright in October, 1908, which is an important year for both architects. For Ashbee, the Guild of Handicraft had shut down; late in 1908 he began the series of articles "Man and the Machine" for House Beautiful; and, perhaps because of these two factors, made a trip to America. For Wright, 1908 was the year of, among other projects not relevant to this study, his important essay, "In the Cause of Architecture."

In reply to Ashbee, Wright wrote in October, 1908, that he knew of no one he would rather see in Chicago. Wright looked forward to seeing Chicago with Ashbee and noted that he had recently read a review of Ashbee's 1908 Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry and was pleased to have had a chance to read it.¹⁶⁹ In relation to previous discussions, Wright asked Ashbee just how much they might differ in 1908 contrasted with their earlier views. Wright implied that perhaps they would agree about some points over which they had once differed. Thus Wright was acknowledging the shift in Ashbee's ideas in regard to the machine. By 1908, Ashbee was convinced that there was a position for the machine in handicraft production that, if regulated, would not necessarily mean

the destruction of that craft or of handicraft standards in general.

Later, in December, 1908, Ashbee travelled to America with his wife and stayed with the Wrights. This Chicago visit was by no means as exhilarating for Ashbee as his 1900 visit. His "Memoirs" record his disappointment with the climate in Chicago then which seemed "toned down from eight years ago." From a long journal entry, Ashbee wrote that "the Soul of the City is sick and she knows it...It is more than merely a temporary check to material development, it is a growing belief among her firmer minds that we are not so certainly on the right lines as 8 years ago we had the conviction we were."¹⁷⁰

Ashbee also discussed his meetings with Wright and Louis Sullivan; it was the former, Ashbee believed, who had made "the school of the Middle West," later known as the Prairie School. While Wright was described as bitterly withdrawn, Sullivan was described as "the strange half coherent genius who first struck the light of life into architecture here." Sullivan had given Ashbee MS chapters of "Democracy--A Man's Search," which Ashbee described as "a dreamy chaotic prose epic."¹⁷¹ This Chicago trip was, then, reflective for Ashbee and a time to visit old friends, including Jane Addams.

The visit did not provide for either Ashbee or

his colleagues in Chicago any new direction. It is very likely, yet, that Ashbee and Wright discussed art and architecture and they probably talked about Wright's ideas as they were then recorded in his essay "In the Cause of Architecture." Ashbee, in turn, was preparing to write his series "Man and the Machine," and probably shared his ideas with Wright. Clearly, the tone of Ashbee's acceptance of the machine, discussed already, reflected not only his own conclusions about the machine as a result of the Guild experiment, but also what he inevitably learned from his discussions with Wright.

Two letters from July, 1910 suggest the possibility that Wright, either for himself or for a client, ordered two items from the Guild of Handicraft sometime during the six-year hiatus in the surviving correspondence. In the July 8 and 24, 1910 letters to Ashbee, there was reference made to "two items in which you are concerned unpaid."¹⁷² Wright then asked for the craftsman's name but forgot to enclose the check which was sent in the July 24, 1910 letter. That Wright had sent to Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft for decorative items, presumably for one of his recent buildings near Chicago, indicated that Wright could look to Ashbee for objects fitting to a Prairie School interior. In Wright's eye, perhaps, Ashbee's Guild style

expressed simplicity and material sufficiently close to Wright's ideals to be included within a Prairie School design. The Chicago-London exchange, then, between Ashbee and Wright may not have been equal, but it was certainly an exchange in both directions.

The July 8 and 24, 1910 letters from Wright to Ashbee are significant for other reasons too. Wright discussed in the earlier letter how he and Ashbee approached a particular point in their practice of architecture, which seemed to include their ideas about the so-called established order. Wright claims that to build he must tear down and the art of building for him is then contrasted with Ashbee's ability to influence Wright toward a more conserving approach, a quality in Ashbee much admired by Wright. Although exactly what order Wright referred to was unclear, it was clear that he looked to Ashbee as someone whom he could learn from. Describing their similar goals and different approaches as practicing "from different ends of the same stick," according to Ashbee, Wright concluded that "I have learned much from you already in ways you little suspect--and will learn more."¹⁷³ Wright confessed that he was seeing things in ways that Ashbee would have liked and wrote "I would like to see some of them (worldly things) through your eyes."¹⁷⁴ Although tempting to draw broad conclusions, it

seems evident that Wright had a high regard for Ashbee's vision and ideas about design that has not been given much attention. In support of this is the way in which Ashbee outnumbered Wright in exhibits at the 1900 Chicago Architectural Club exhibition.

The July 24, 1910 Wright-Ashbee letter was interesting for its reference to the Wasmuth publication project that was so completely occupying--and frustrating--Wright while in Italy. So frustrated was Wright that he suggested pulling out of his commitment and employing Ashbee's help to find someone more suitable as a publisher. More importantly, Wright turned to Ashbee for editorial assistance, perhaps due to Ashbee's experience with his own Essex House Press. Wright wrote "I will send you a proof or two so you may judge of the scope of the work and its character...I should like your criticism, too."¹⁷⁵ Wright then described the proposed editions, including the Sonderheft, for which Ashbee was eventually asked to write an article. This was published in 1911 entitled, Sonderheft der Architektur des XX. Jahrhunderts: Frank Lloyd Wright. Ashbee's contributing article was titled "Frank Lloyd Wright: Eine Studie seiner Würdigung von C.R. Ashbee F.R.I.B.A." The Sonderheft was published separately as Frank Lloyd Wright Ausgeführte Bauten.¹⁷⁶ The Introduction by Ashbee for the popular edition, Frank

Lloyd Wright Ausgeführte Bauten was requested the following September when Wright stayed with the Ashbees in Chipping Campden. Ashbee's Introduction was translated into English under the title, "Frank Lloyd Wright: A Study and an Appreciation by C.R. Ashbee, F.R.I.B.A." (Appendix 3) and was also published in Western Architect.

Alan Crawford, English scholar on Ashbee, describes Ashbee's Introduction as "sympathetic, but not uncritical" and which "runs mostly along expected lines."¹⁷⁷ Crawford concludes that "Though he may be said to have 'introduced' Wright's work to Europe, he did not introduce him as a model to be closely followed. It was his principles, and not his style, that Ashbee admired."¹⁷⁸ Most significant for this study is Ashbee's consideration of Wright as an architect who, like himself, has grappled seriously with the problem of the machine. Although they differed in the stylistic expression of their own resolution of standards of beauty and the impact of the machine, both Ashbee and Wright should be recognized as being in agreement about the inevitably positive influence the machine was to have in the fields of architecture and applied arts design.

A brief examination of Ashbee's Introduction will serve to highlight what Ashbee regarded as significant contributions made by Wright in Chicago that could be

useful and beneficial within the European architectural context, which was concerned with similar issues. To a European audience, Ashbee began, American buildings evoke four things in style: the English tradition, the French Beaux-Arts, the purely utilitarian skyscraper, and lastly "the buildings of a new spirit, as we see it on the Pacific coast and in the Middle West."¹⁷⁹ Pointing to Wright as the first and best architect to embody the latter style, Ashbee described the characteristics of this new spirit as lacking reference to any European tradition to which Europeans were so accustomed. In sum, its features included "a departure from tradition, a distinctiveness of surroundings, and a consequent character of its own, a delight in new materials, and an honest use of machinery."¹⁸⁰ Ashbee, having described Wright's training, characterized the difficult conditions under which Wright isolated "a manner of his own and worked out his own principles" prior to the arrival in Chicago of influence from progressive schools abroad, including the British Arts and Crafts movement.¹⁸¹

Ashbee continued by describing the Winslow House and Unity Temple and then quoting ideas about design and the machine from some of Wright's essays. Like Ashbee, Wright was praised for identifying an artist's limitations as his best features. Ashbee had already put his faith in

an apprentice's limitations as sources of individual creative design. Ashbee also agreed completely with Wright's belief that the machine was a permanent fixture of modern civilization. Declaring that in America an "imbalance" existed between the standards of craftsmanship and the power of mechanical conditions, Ashbee described Wright as "the first American architect who has sought consciously to express this fact, to readjust this balance."¹⁸²

The result of Wright's efforts, in which Ashbee himself played a developmental role, was described by Ashbee as "the style of the Middle West."¹⁸³ In language rather contradictory to his Guild Idea, Ashbee then insists that individualism in America was too strong and was in need of some softening qualities. When Ashbee turned to compare Wright's work with British architecture he declared

We feel that between us and him there is a kinship. We may differ vitally in our manner of expression, in our planning, in our touch, in the way we clothe our work, in our feeling for proportion, but although our problems differ essentially, we are together at one in our principles. We guard in common the lamp of truth. We hold equally with Lloyd Wright that structure should be self-explanatory, that iron is there for man's service, only he must learn to use it rightly...¹⁸⁴

This phrase serves well to summarize how Ashbee himself believed there was a close connection as well as an exchange in both directions between himself and Wright.

Since his earlier and pivotal visit to Chicago in 1900, Ashbee followed the work of Wright and the "style of the Middle West" very closely. Although Ashbee found the Prairie School to be too severe stylistically, there was agreement in principle over what would best resolve the machine issue.

For Ashbee, this realization came after many years within the Guild workshops, his travel to America, and his contact with Wright. In some of his silverwork around 1898-1900, and in his books Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry and Should We Stop Teaching Art? of 1909 and 1911, Ashbee readjusted his craft principles to allow the machine a favorable position in the Guild Idea as it matured during the last decade of The Guild of Handicraft. From his studious travels in America and particularly in Chicago, Ashbee learned that the machine could be involved successfully in the new spirit of architecture and design in which he played such an important transitional part during its formulation.

From Wright, Ashbee learned a more positive view of the machine, which was reflected in his own writings around 1910. Ashbee and Wright exchanged reading large parts of each other's work at the time and both indicated in their correspondences how they benefitted from the other's ideas. From differences arose compromises that became the

legacy of the Arts and Crafts movement. Ashbee's Introduction to Wright's Frank Lloyd Wright Ausgeführte Bauten quoted at length from Wright's In The Cause of Architecture (1908)¹⁸⁵ which is ample evidence of Ashbee's respect for that important essay. In a letter to Ashbee, Wright regretted their quarrel over this article, which apparently arose out of a misunderstanding of the notion of individualism, as well as to what extent Ashbee believed Wright to have been influenced by Japanese design.

In the end, the machine was part of Ashbee's final definition of axioms that made up the Guild Idea. Elusive, yet commanding much of Ashbee's attention throughout the twenty-year Guild of Handicraft experience, the machine question, as addressed by Ashbee, served as an important contribution to the next generation of designers. Not excluding Wright, those who benefitted from Ashbee's understanding of the relationship between traditional handicraft ideals and modern machine production included Koloman Moser, Henri van de Velde, and members of the Vienna Secession who modelled their workshops after Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft.¹⁸⁶ Secure within the American movement, Ashbee and his work were followed by a number of important Continental designers, who carried the Guild Idea's implications one step further.

CONCLUSION

Charles Ashbee and Modern Design

Primary sources studied in this thesis have included articles, books, and the unpublished "Memoirs" of Charles Ashbee as well as the silverwork designs executed by the Guild of Handicraft from 1888 to 1908. Having described the history of the Guild and having elaborated upon the meaning of Ashbee's primary concern, the Guild Idea, there is no doubt that Charles Ashbee was a prominent figure in the Arts and Crafts movement as an architect, designer, and author. Ashbee's designs and objects executed by the Guild of Handicraft were exhibited and published in England, Germany, France, and America where reformative designers often responded with praise and respectful adoption of the Guild Idea.

At the same time, however, the primary evidence suggests strongly that Ashbee can not be considered only as an Arts and Crafts designer devoted blindly to handicraft revival happily existing in a rural medieval-like setting. From the early 1890's through 1911, Ashbee has been shown to be committed to finding a resolution to the art and machine conflict that originated nearly a century earlier. Learning from the Guild of Handicraft experience, Ashbee

was a second-generation Arts and Crafts movement designer committed to incorporating the machine into the craft workshop. In order to define the machine's limits, Ashbee experimented within his own Guild workshop and examined successful machine-run workshops in America. Finally, in 1911, Ashbee redefined the Guild Idea with a set of axioms which were intimately connected to regulation of the machine within standards of beauty which sustained the handicraft ethic he was so committed to. Ashbee's mature Guild Idea of 1911 represents a significant ideological and practical contribution to the formative years of modern design. It was then that the next generation looked to the conclusions of the Arts and Crafts movement for support. As an important link between the new spirit in design and architecture in London and Chicago, Ashbee transformed his craft ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement into a thoroughly modern language in keeping with the machine age. He was assisted in this pursuit by his long contact with Wright; but so, too, was Wright's new ideological expression enhanced by his contact with Ashbee.

Widely praised in America, but nowhere more than in Chicago, Ashbee also was respected in progressive circles on the Continent. His Guild experience and his origins in the British Arts and Crafts movement appealed to a European audience eager to advance their aesthetic language

and stylistic expression into the twentieth century. However different were Ashbee's and Wright's solutions, their agreement in principle allowed Wrightian ideas to be ushered into the European design theatre through the eyes of Ashbee.

On the Continent around 1900, Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft was embraced by members of the Vienna Secession. Koloman Moser bought examples of Ashbee silver for his personal collection. Henri van de Velde looked closely at Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft when he modelled the founding principles of the Wiener Werkstatte. Hermann Muthesius devoted an article to Ashbee in Dekorative Kunst (1898) and discussed his role in the formulative years of the Modern movement by including Ashbee and his metalwork in Das Englische Haus.

The Continental adoption of the Guild Idea falls beyond the parameters of this thesis. Ashbee's long-term and influential exchange with Wright is strong enough evidence to secure rather permanently Ashbee's position in early modern design. Moreover, Ashbee's commitment to attempt to resolve the machine question characterizes the best of what the late Arts and Crafts movement offered to twentieth-century machine design ideas as they were being formulated from around 1900 to 1910. Unlike Wright's more revolutionary embrace of the machine instead of medieval handicraft as a source of design ideas, Ashbee's vigorous participation

in and contribution to the machine debate in London and Chicago in the last decade of the nineteenth century and first decade of the twentieth century confirm his position as an original contributor to modern design at the turn of the century.

APPENDICES

-APPENDIX 1-

"A Few Aphorisms"

from

Chapters in Workshop Reconstruction and Citizenship

(1894) p. 16.:

That the crown and fulfilment (sic) of national life is a wise understanding and enjoyment of Beauty.

That the only hope for the development of the sense of Beauty is among the artificially cultured class of artists and the artisan; the one concious, the other unconcious.

That under modern conditions of Art, picture painting is forced into an artificial prominence and the constructional and decorative arts, the real backbone, have, as yet, no right recognition among us.

That the problems of machine production will have by degrees to be solved from within the workshop. That a sharp distinction will have to be drawn between what is produced by machinery and the direct work of man's hands, and that the standard of artistic excellence must depend, ultimately upon the pleasure given, not to the consumer, but to the producer.

That at the present day the social problem has prior claim to the artistic.

-APPENDIX 2-

Guild of Handicraft Axioms
from Charles Ashbee's
Should We Stop Teaching Art? (1911) pp.2-3.:

AXIOM I.- Modern civilization rests on machinery, and no system for the endowment, or the encouragement, or the teaching of art can be sound that does not recognize this.

AXIOM II.- The craft cannot be learned in the school, the craft can only be learned in the life of the workman in the workshop.

AXIOM III.- The purpose of the "Arts and Crafts" is to set a standard of excellence in all commodities in which the element of beauty enters. The tendency of machine industry is to "standardize", that is to say, to create as many pieces of any commodity to a given type as is economically possible.

AXIOM IV.- Standard of excellence in the industrial arts acts in competitive industry as Gresham's Law acts in coinage. The bad coin tends to drive out the good. So the bad product tends to drive out the good product, the unskilled workman and the machine tend to drive out the skilled craftsman.

AXIOM V.- Machinery is neither all good nor all bad. An intelligent community will distinguish which is which, and the aesthetic education of the community in our day should be directed towards this distinction between the bad and the good.

AXIOM VI.- The experience of the last twenty-five years has shown that in many trades and crafts the distinction between what should and what should not be produced by machinery has already been made.

-APPENDIX 3-

"Frank Lloyd Wright:
A Study and an Appreciation by C. R. Ashbee, F. R. I. B. A."

Introduction by Charles Ashbee to
Frank Lloyd Wright Ausgeführte Bauten (1911)

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

A STUDY AND AN APPRECIATION BY C. R. ASHBEE, F. R. I. B. A.

IN the modern development of the arts America excels in the art of Architecture, and there are few cities upon the great continent but can show some piece of good building, or an effort in that direction; it is a popular instinct. The rich man strives to mark his wealth in stone; the cities have great libraries, clubs, colleges and schools; the states vie with one another in the splendour of their state-houses. Into spheres in which with us the architect seldom penetrates, he in America leaves his mark; the office and business building has become his province.

The names of many of the leading architects in the last two generations have been well enough known in Europe: Richardson, Hunt, McKim, Mead and White; Cope and Stewardson; Day, Clipston Sturges, Carrere and Hastings, Cass Gilbert, and many others. The buildings of these men will take their place in the sequence of architectural history; the libraries at Boston, and Washington, the Statehouses of Pittsburg and Providence, the Metropolitan Club in New York, the collegiate buildings in Philadelphia, in Cambridge, in San Francisco.

To us, who look at them with the eyes of the old world, American building connote four things in style. They stand first for the English tradition, whether through the "old Colonial" or more recent importation of English forms; the French "Beaux Arts" as we see it in Washington or Fifth Avenue, New York; the purely utilitarian as in that distinctly American Business Product, the "sky scraper"; and they stand lastly for what may be called the buildings of a new spirit, as we see it on the Pacific coast and in the Middle West. It is of these last as expressed by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, that I wish specially to speak, because he first and before all other American architects, seems to embody it.

This new spirit has for us in Europe a peculiar charm and piquancy, just because we do not see in it that reflection of European forms to which we have been so long accustomed. Its characteristics are a departure from tradition, a distinctiveness of surrounding, and a consequent character of its own, a delight in new materials, and an honest use of machinery. There are features that give to the buildings of the Pacific coast a character quite distinct from the School of Chicago as the conditions are not the same, and I have been in houses on the Aroyo that appeal to me more than Lloyd Wright's, but all the men of the new spirit have these characteristics, and the work of Lloyd Wright has them fundamentally and more markedly than any of his contemporaries. This is not to be wondered at, because it has grown within its own province—the sphere of the Middle West—and is something absolutely new and original. Trained in the office of Louis Sullivan, who first gave rational character to the industrial building of Chicago, Lloyd Wright has carried the new spirit into domestic work and produced a type of building that is absolutely his own. In so doing he has given to the great city of the Prairie something she had never had before, and what is equivalent to a new architecture.

In estimating the achievement for which Wright stands, we have to consider the difficulties he had to face. With no background of tradition, with no forms about him upon which to model a style, surrounded by purely commercial conditions, and in the face of actual and fierce hostility, or the persecutions of "that little knowledge which is a dangerous thing," he carved out a manner of his own and worked out his own principles of design, before the English Arts and Crafts Movement, the German Secession, or the European Art Nouveau had in any way touched America. His Winslow House (p. 19) was designed in 1893, and

other of his buildings in which the elements of his style are in formation, bear approximately early dates. I sum up the characteristics of his work thus: first, nobility of plan—some of Lloyd Wright's plans have the cleanness and simplicity we see in the planning of Gothic houses, or in the work of Bramante; then a fine proportion, witness the Oak Park houses (p. 28-87) with their long firm horizontal lines. Next, a feeling for mass and colour, as in the Unity Temple (p. 14) and the Coonly house (p. 118); a fertility of resource in adapting means to ends; and lastly a determination, amounting sometimes to heroism, to master the machine and use it at all costs, in an endeavour to find the forms and treatment it may render without abuse of tradition. In a suggestive and interesting monograph which he contributed in 1908 to the "Architectural Record" of New York, entitled 'In the cause of Architecture,' Lloyd Wright laid down the principles that inspired his work. From among them I am tempted to extract the following because it is so significant of the work and what it stands for:

"Buildings, like people, must first be sincere, must be true and then withal as gracious and lovable as may be."

"Above all, integrity. The machine is the normal tool of our civilization; give it work that it can do well—nothing is of greater importance. To do this will be to formulate the new industrial ideals we need if Architecture is to be a living Art."

Here we are brought face to face with the problem of our civilization, the solution of which will determine the future of the Arts themselves. It is significant that from Chicago, quite independently of England, of France, of Germany or elsewhere, here is a voice calling, offering a solution.

"An artist's limitations are his best friends. The machine is here to stay. It is the forerunner of the Democracy that is our dearest hope. There is no more important work before the architect now than to use this normal tool of civilization to the best advantage, instead of prostituting it as he has hitherto done in reproducing with murderous ubiquity

forms born of other times and other conditions, and which it can only serve to destroy."

There is greatness in this idea, and the future will I think show that, in the case of Lloyd Wright, the man's product has been worthy the idea that has guided its development and in a measure inspired its creation. Out of it has come a different conception as to what constitutes a modern building.

Greatness demands its price, and this has often to be paid in a certain barrenness and sterility of detail owing to the severity of the limitations, a certain disregard of the intimate and personal things that make a building lovable in the sacrifice of tenderness for integrity. This is not so much the fault of the architect as of the conditions in which he is set to work. The machine is not yet mastered in modern life, nor is it possible for any individual, however strong, to accomplish the mastery. This is the community's need, a social need, and it is one which we feel essentially in the Art of America.

Through the United States indeed the traditions of craftsmanship, upon which the arts professedly rest, have been broken down by mechanical power more than with us in Europe, and the American Architects, with all their greater organizing power, their combinations, and their opportunities which are supreme, have not yet devised a way of re-establishing them, of finding their equivalent, of readjusting the balance. It is to the credit of Lloyd Wright that he is the first American architect who has sought to consciously express this fact, to readjust this balance. He is thus a typical product of modern America, and of that aspect of America which is Chicago. He has its strength as well as its weakness, its romance as well as its freakishness and immaturity, its barrenness as well as its sanity, its fertility of resource, and he has perhaps in an exaggerated degree its individualism. I use the word as Murray defines it, of self-centered conduct or feeling as a principle, and mode of life, in which the individual pursues his own ends or follows his own ideas. I do not know why this individualism takes its

extremest form in Chicago. Every street, every avenue of that great-souled and generous, but at the same time brutal and remorseless city tells of this. It tells somehow of the New Englander driven westward and unrestrained, in a commercial world; of the Puritan cut adrift from his gods and from his conventions, striving to make new ones out of himself. "Striving," as Blake the Seer put it, "with systems to deliver individuals from those systems." I see this striving in the work of Lloyd Wright more than in any of his contemporaries.

The result is what has been called the style of the Middle West, and after accounting for him in his relation to Louis Sullivan, that style is more of his making than that of any other man. Destiny permits a man to strive; mocks him in his struggle, and in the end collects some of the fragments—that which was best and most enduring—for the greater work that is to remain. Thus styles are made, and this is so of architecture before all the arts. One may pardon in a strong man a display of individualism that one cannot forgive in a weaker; what is the character in the one, becomes pettishness, or mannerism or affectation in the other; but we artists of Europe, while we appreciate and criticise the product, and while we often admire, may be forgiven when we say that in our feeling it sometimes needs to mellow. Yet whatever we may think of this individualism, and however it may win or repel us personally, it expresses for the time being a national condition. For my own part, speaking as an architect, I think this individualism as seen in Lloyd Wright's work, strong and sound to the core; there is in it a national ideal, but I do not always like it. It gives me at times the same feeling of irritation which Walt Whitman gives me, when after some supreme passage at which one's whole heart goes out, the poet tumbles over some trifle badly handled, as when, for instance, in that subliment of his songs, "Come, I will make the continent indissoluble," he ends up with the words "For you, Oh Democracy, MA FEMME!" He forgets that we are of the same flesh and blood, and have a sense

of humour; that this trivial note tumbles us from the sublime, into detail that is badly done. I do not mean to insinuate by this example that Lloyd Wright's work has inconsistency of this nature; the analogy cannot of course be pressed, and the deduction applies only to my own personal feeling regarding the sometimes undigested trivialities I find. I hold moreover that his work is architecture, while it merits the comparison, in greatness and unity, with Whitman's work in literature, is quite strong enough to stand a corresponding criticism of its limitations or its faults.

A comparison of the work of Lloyd Wright with modern work in England or Germany would take me too far afield; but a certain kinship is significant and may be referred to in passing. In Germany the names of Olbrich, Hoffman, Moser, Bruno Paul, Mohring, suggest themselves. In England those of us who are sometimes called the Arts and Crafts men, Lethaby, Voysey, Lutyens, Ricardo, Wilson, Holden, Blow, Townsend, Baillie Scott. We feel that between us and him there is a kinship. We may differ vitally in our manner of expression, in our planning, in our touch, in the way we clothe our work, in our feeling for proportion, but although our problems differ essentially, we are altogether at one in our principles. We guard in common the lamp of truth. We hold equally with Lloyd Wright that structure should be self-explanatory, that iron is there for man's service, only he must learn to use it rightly, and not learn to lie or cheat about it, that the forms of the ancient world, the traditions of the "Beaux Arts," and the old Colonial, even "Greek purism" have their place, but that their place is not necessarily the Prairie. Their place may be Connecticut, or Virginia, may be the Boulevard Montparnasse, or Buckinghamshire, but for the great open spaces of the new world something else is wanted. This land, pierced by the great trunk lines of the Middle West, the new cities of the miners, the cattle-breeders, the canners and the grain exporters, the men of ideas and invention, make a new appeal. The men who

have created it, however we may view them, stand for something new, and the time is ripe for a new form to express the life they lead, or toward which they may aspire. And this life is a large life; it has given to the work of Lloyd Wright that unity of idea, that largeness which his plans and drawings reveal. I have seen it, too, in such buildings as the Coonley House near Chicago (p. 118) and the Larkin Building in Buffalo (p. 131). It is the architect's business to express life, and to ennoble it in the expression: Lloyd Wright has done this; and yet all the honour is not his. To see these buildings, or think through these drawings, brings home to one how much he owes his clients. They have felt the greatness themselves, and have themselves sought to become articulate. No one can study the simple and convincing forms of the Larkin Building in Buffalo (pp. 129-130) without a feeling that bigness in business organization has called forth a corresponding mood in the architect.

We artists ourselves are too apt to think that we are the discoverers of forms that come new to us. It is not so. We ourselves are but the instruments through which breathes the Over-soul, the Zeitgeist. Those rapid nervous lines, those big masses, this sense of a new proportion, this breaking away from old traditions, this monotony that results from constant mechanical repetition, this longing for individual expression as a refuge from it, we all have this in our work, and it has its psychological reason. Industrial concentration, rapid locomotion, the telephone, the electric light and the lines it demands, mechanical power, which has enormously cheapened and as equally permeated certain conditions of labour, the breakdown of the old productive system, the photograph, the telegraph, the development of the press and more particularly the illustrated press, these and many others are the influences that unconsciously move us all, and make us speak, puppets that we are, in ways we do not know, and what seems so strange

to each of us individually, make us speak with a common voice. Thus again, styles are made, and the style of the 20th century can never have real quality if it does not somehow express those influences behind the life of the time.

So far Lloyd Wright has been given but little opportunity in public building, but in what he has done he has left his mark. No one can look at the Unity Temple in Oak Park, its monumental character, its frank revival of the temple form as best suited to a place of modern worship, its method of construction, solid monolith, cast in concrete, reinforced with steel strands, a construction that will last for hundreds of years after the whole suburb has passed away, without a sense that here is the new spirit, and distinctively American.

On the Romanesque churches of the old world, later generations set the mosaic, the tracery, the refinement and the culture that came with more leisure and sympathy; another century may do the same with the great experiments in architecture that America is putting forth. I have seen buildings of Lloyd Wright's that I would like to touch with the enchanted wand; not to alter their structure in plan or form, or carcass, but to clothe them with a more living and tender detail. I do not know how, and the time is not yet—nor would I like to see Wright do it himself, because I do not believe he could; for thus to clothe them would mean a school of Craftsmanship that would tell of the intimate life of America, and imply a little of that quietude and poetry and scholarship which our English churches and country houses have received from the caressing hands of generations of craftsmen. Here at all events, witness these pages, the buildings are, and they are worthy of the life. Morris said to me once, in praise of noble decoration, we do not want it at all unless at the outset the buildings upon which we place it are noble. In the buildings of Lloyd Wright that postulate is granted.

C. R. ASHBEE,
Camden, Glos.
September, 1910.

PLATES

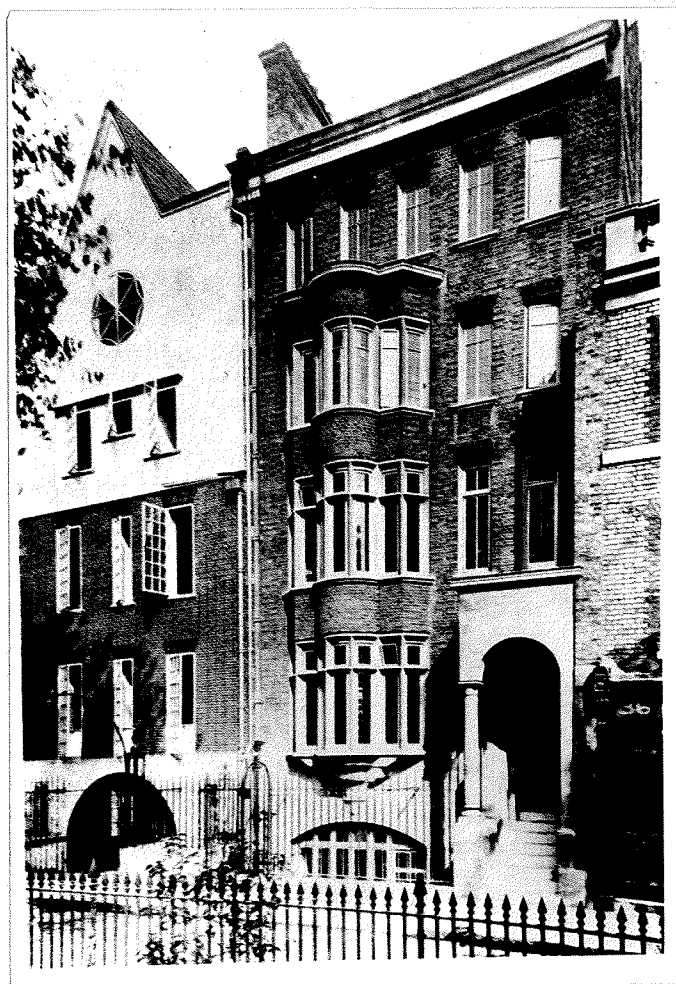


Plate 3

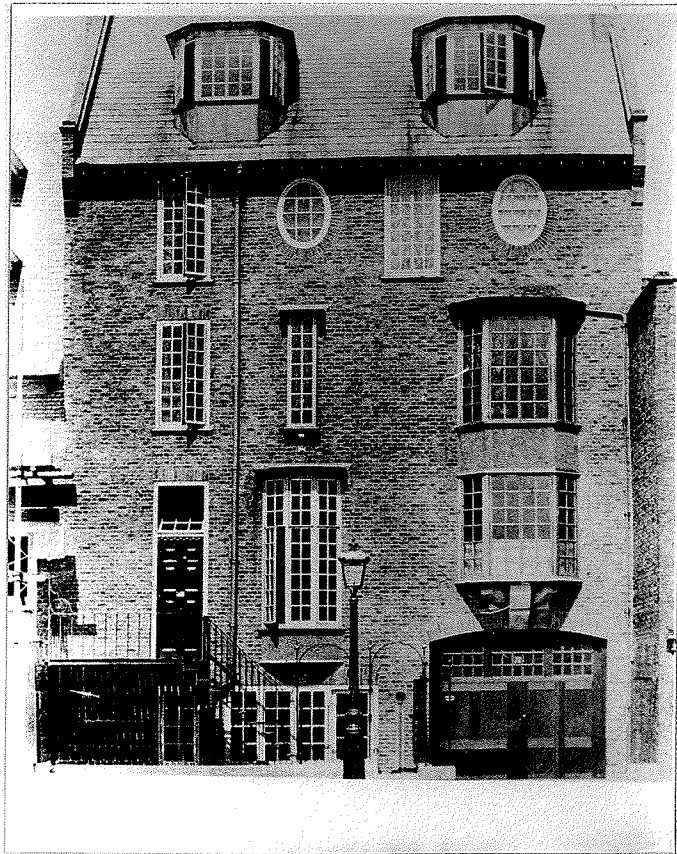


Plate 4



Plate 5

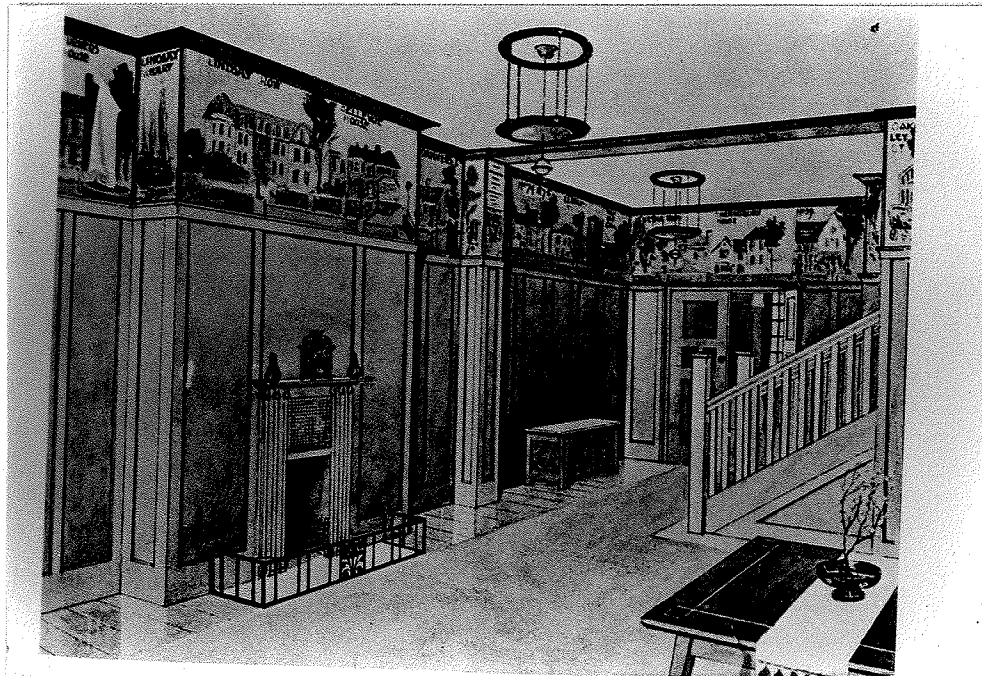


Plate 6



Plate 7



Plate 8

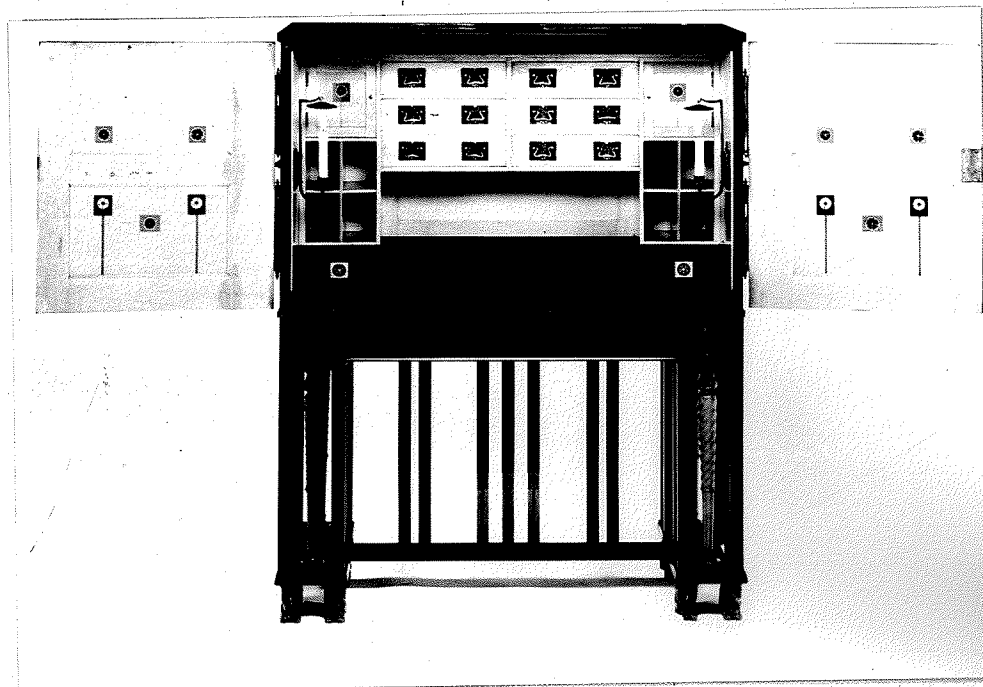


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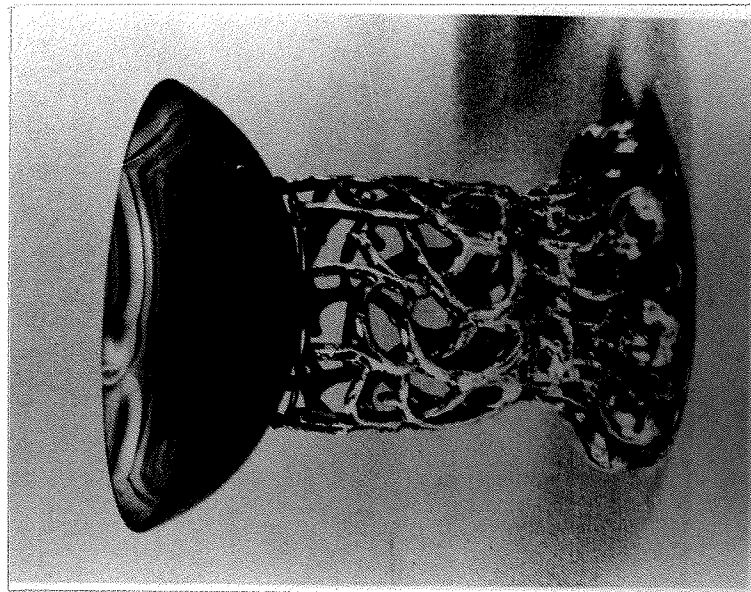
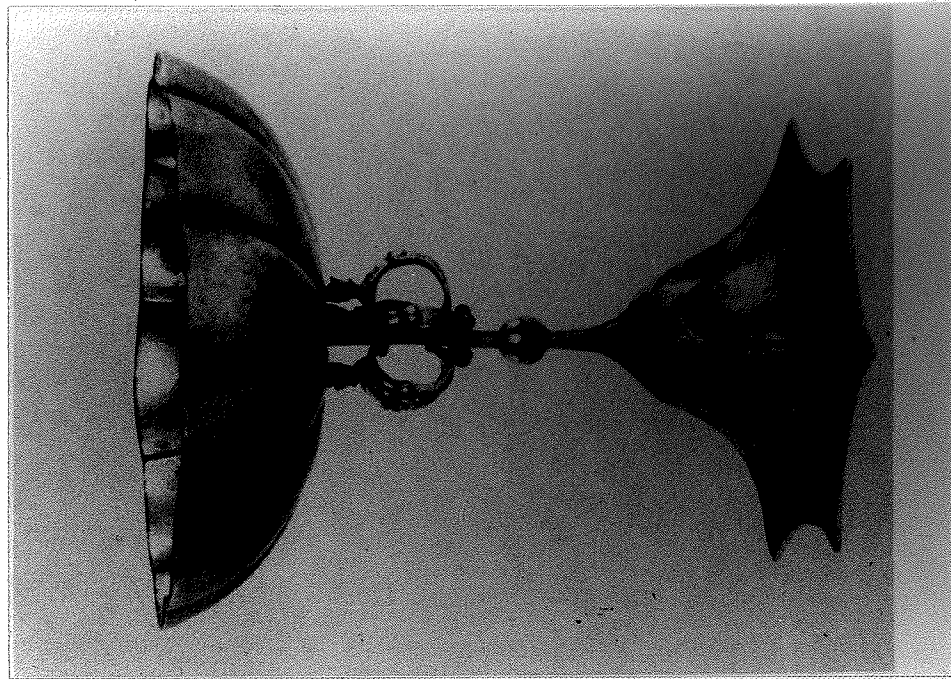


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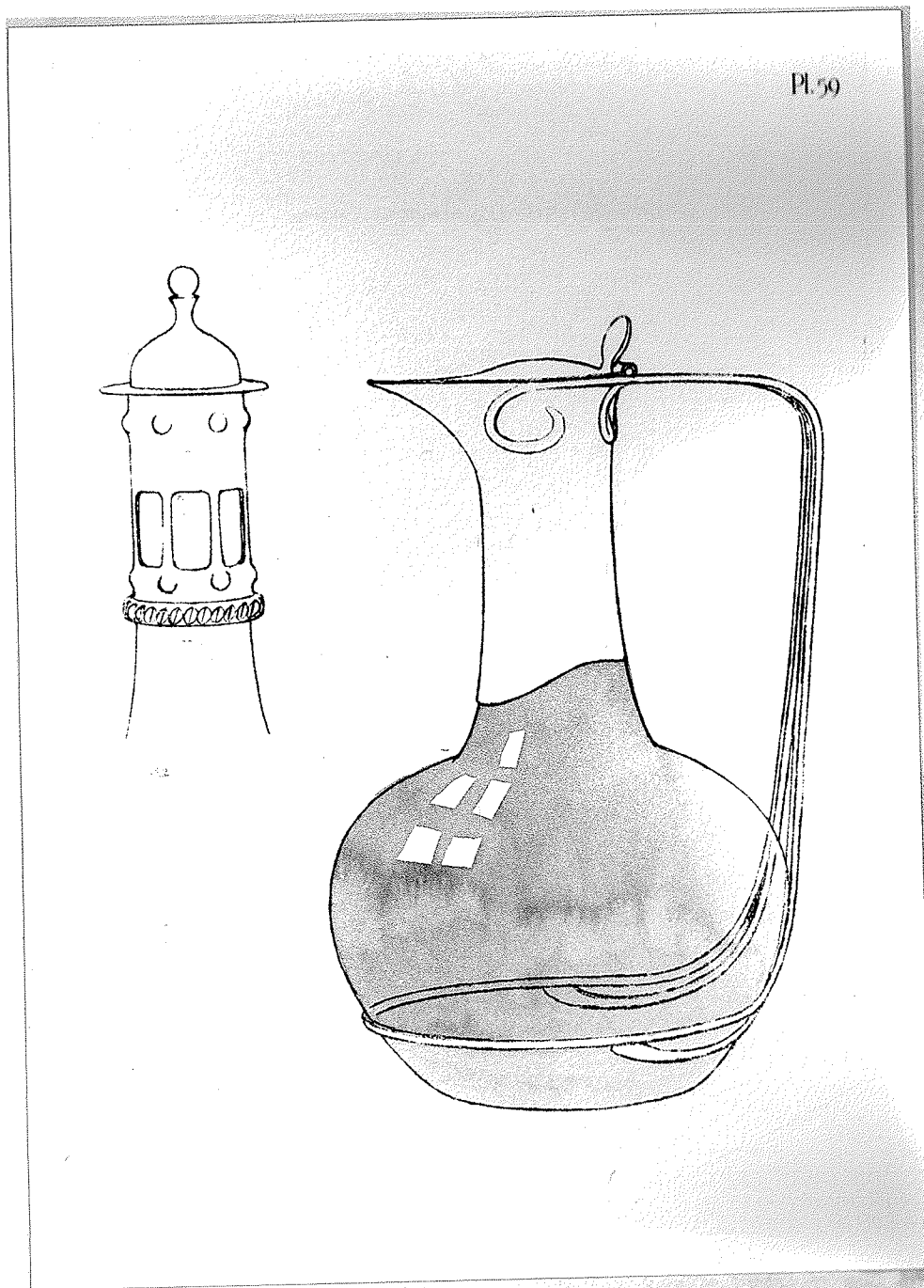
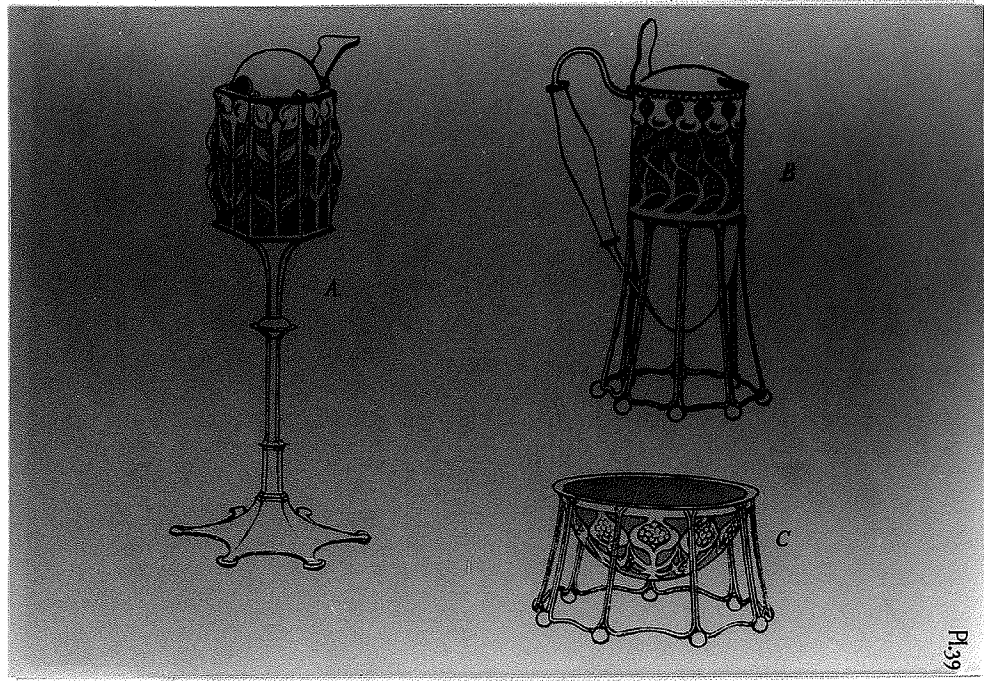


Plate 11



Pl. 39



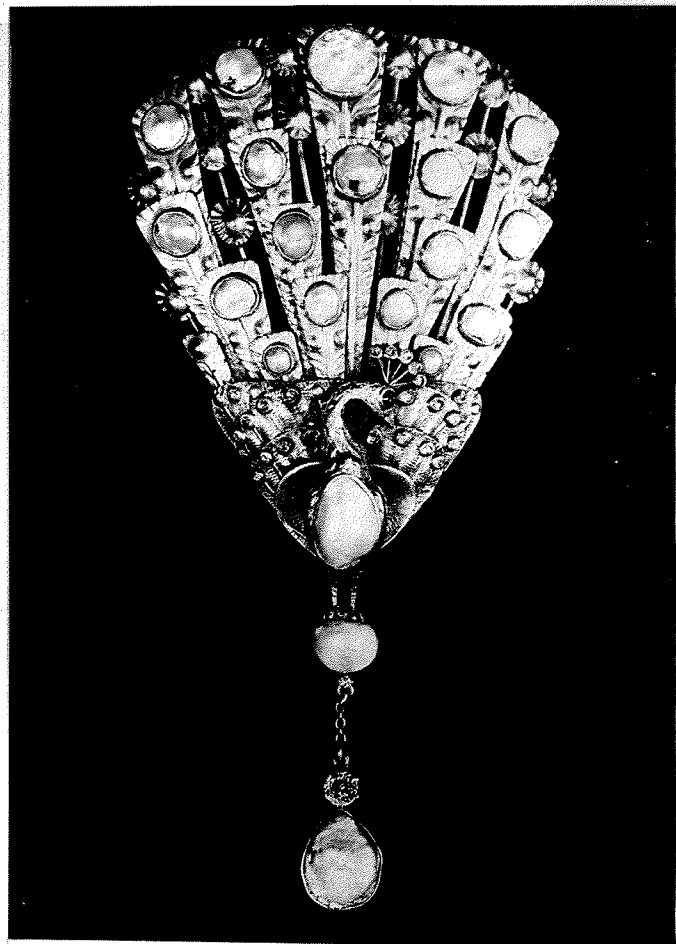


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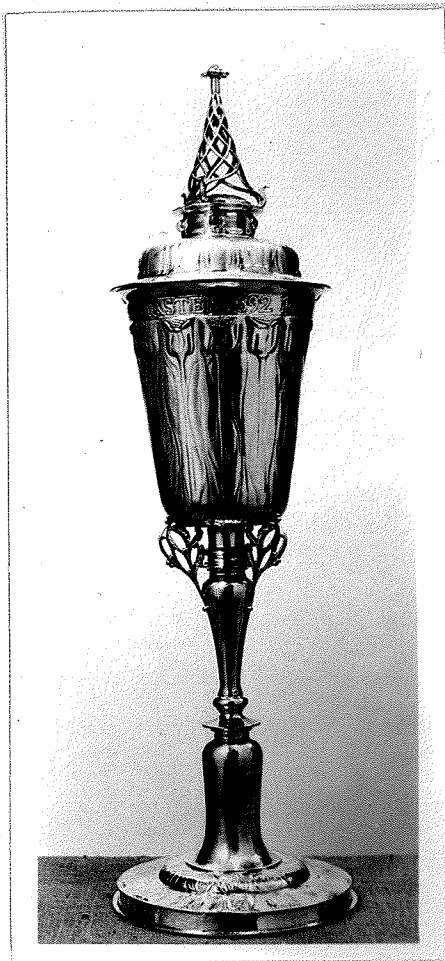


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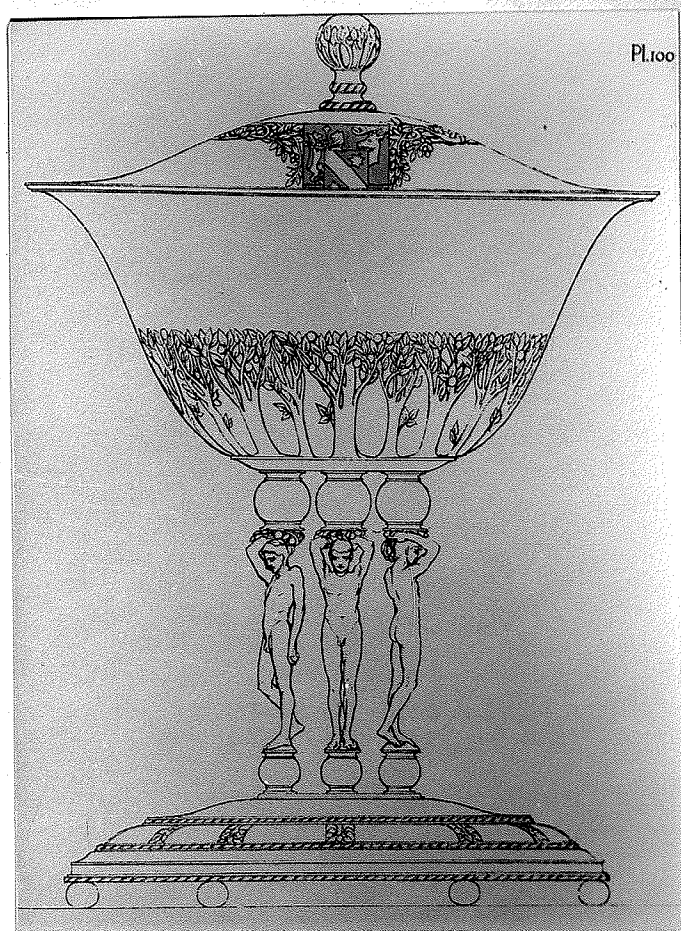


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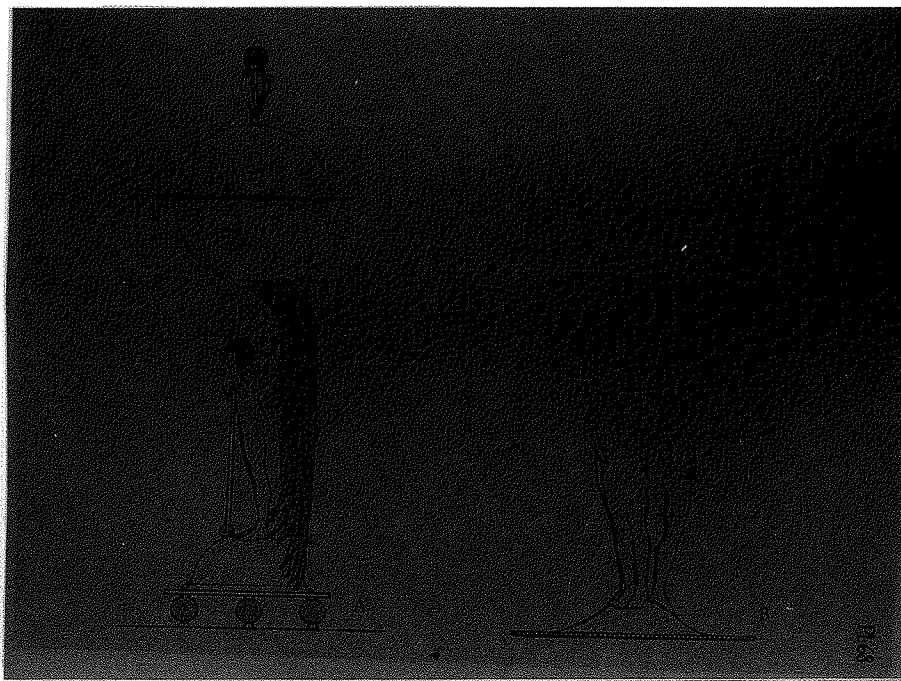


Plate 17



Plate 18

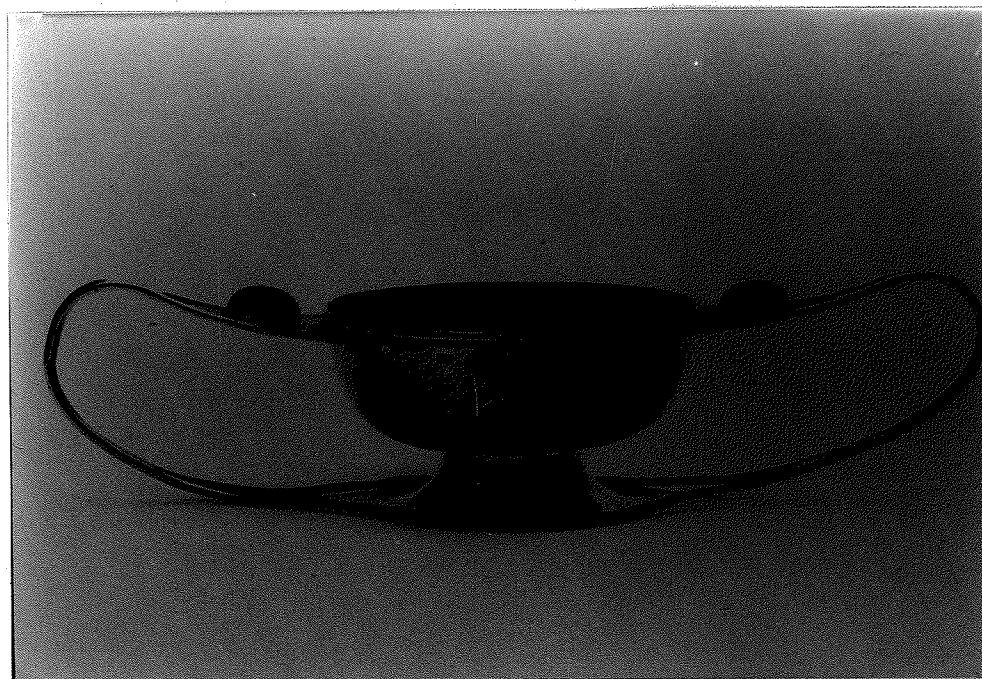


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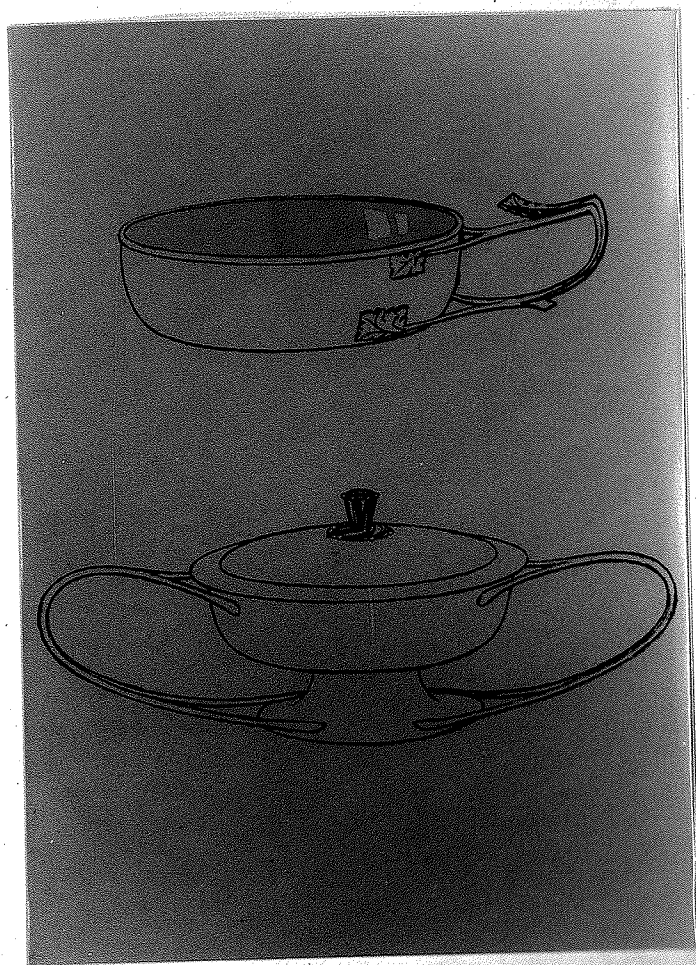


Plate 20



Plate 21



Plate 22



Plate 23

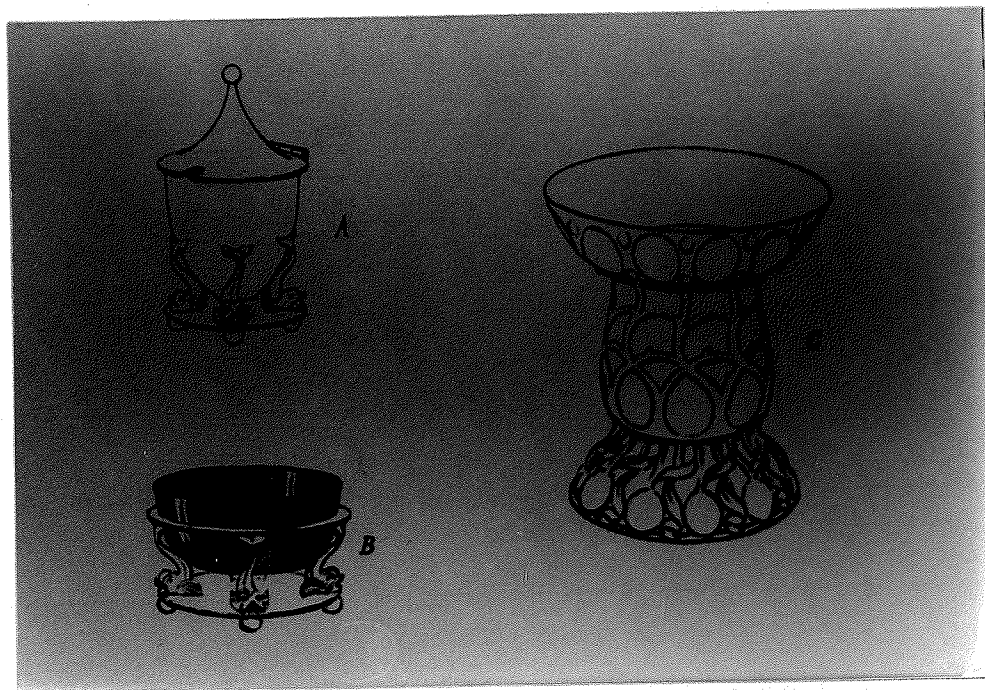


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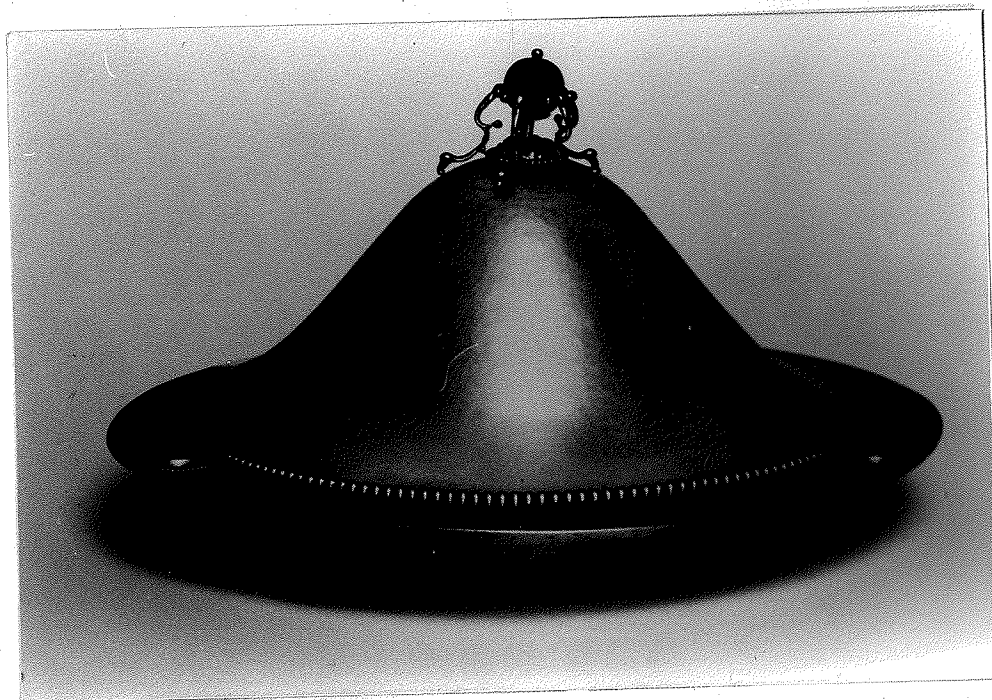


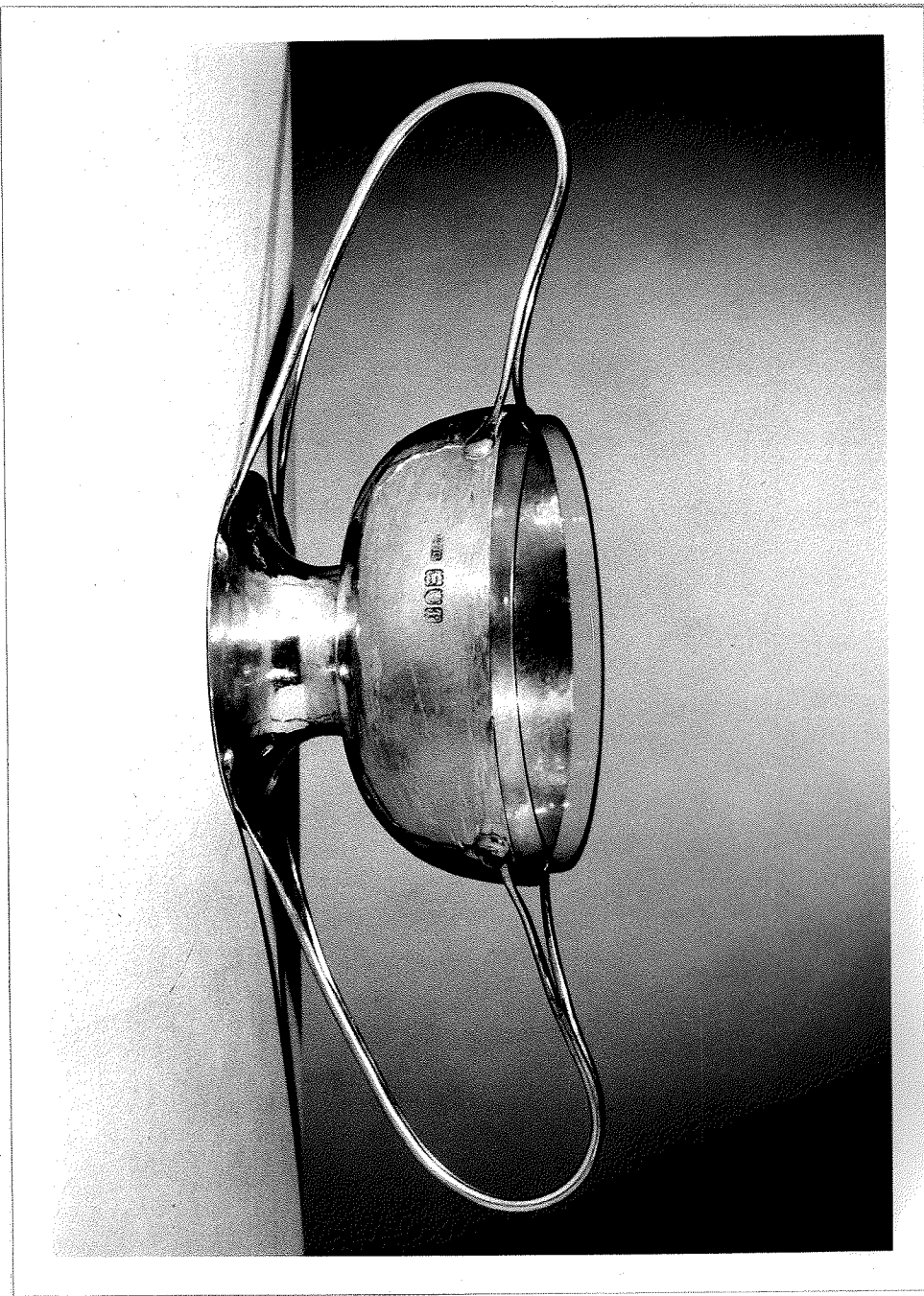
Plate 25



Plate 26



Plate 27



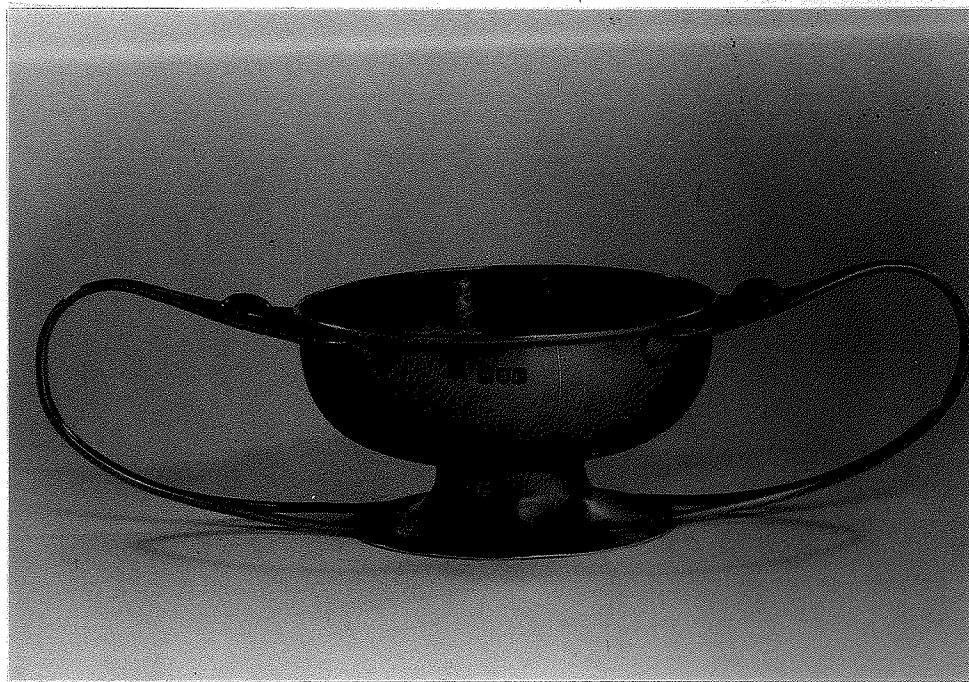


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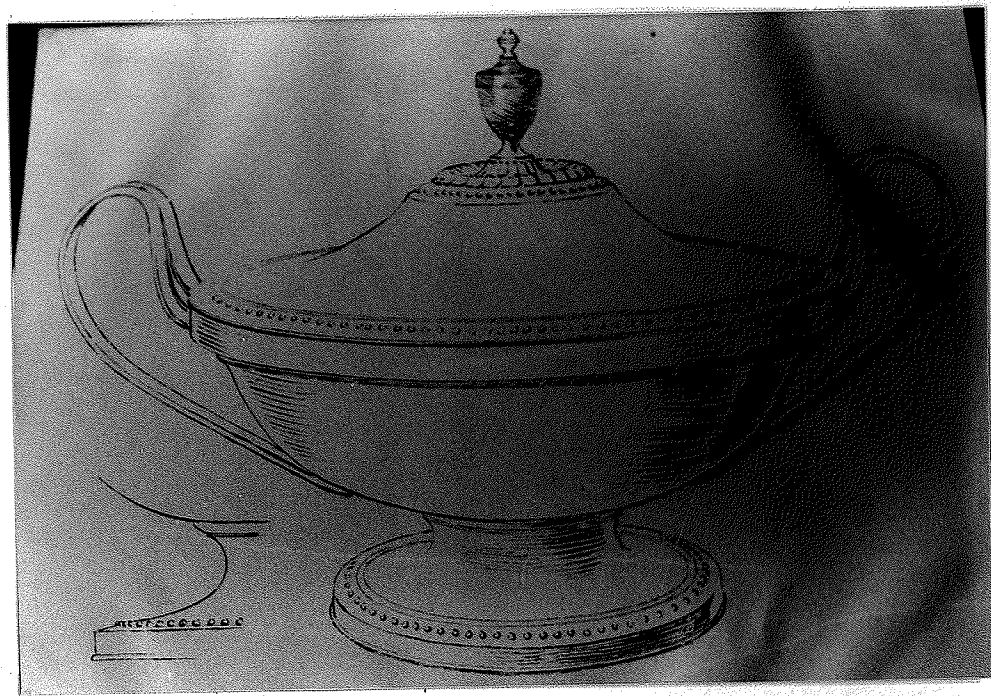


Plate 30



Plate 31

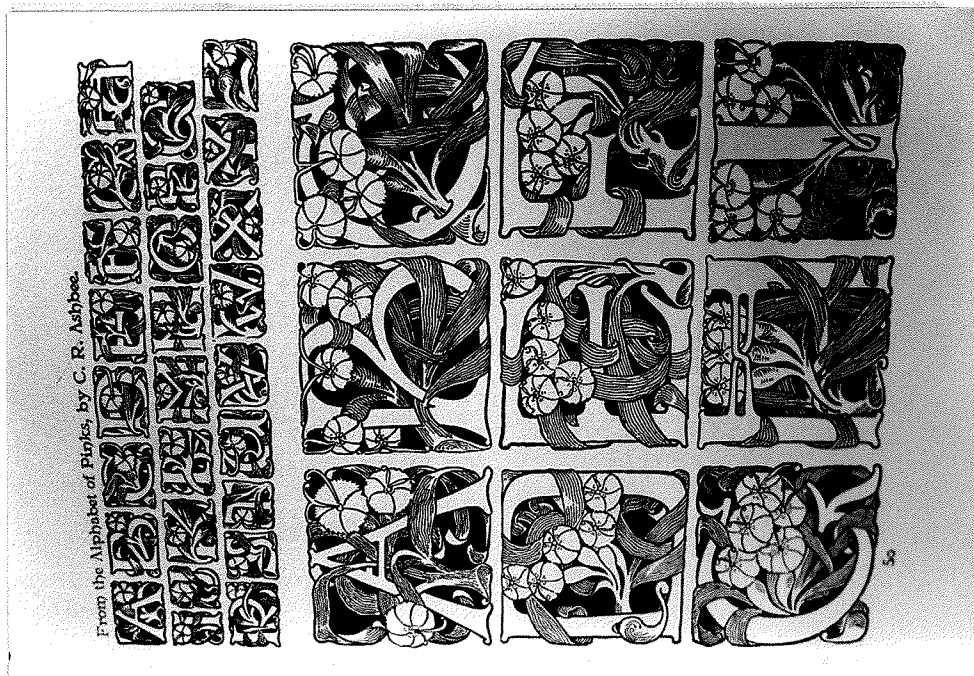


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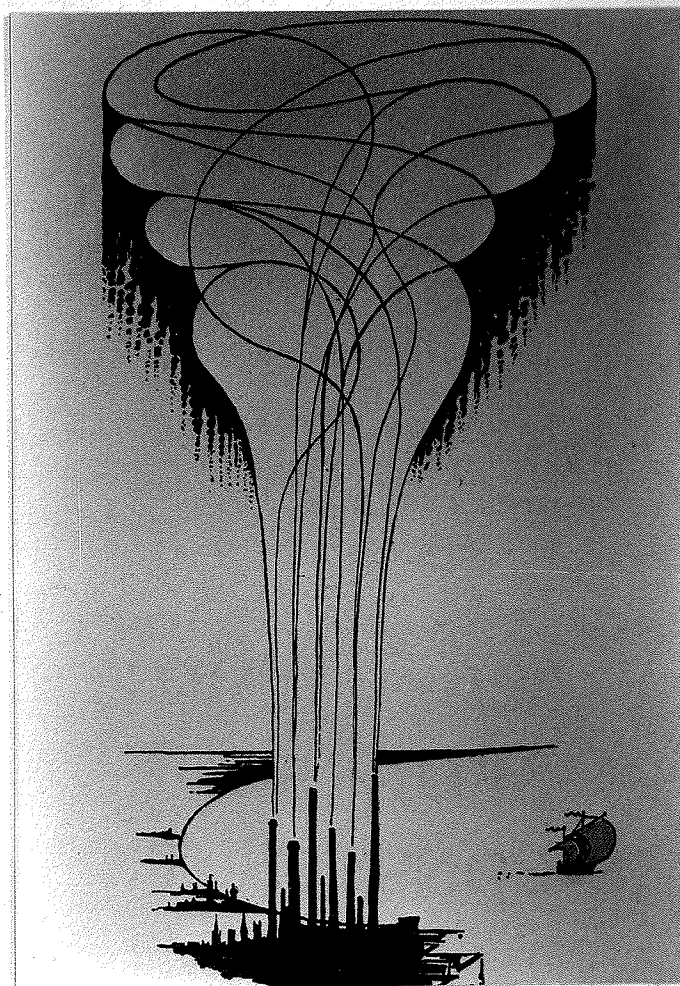


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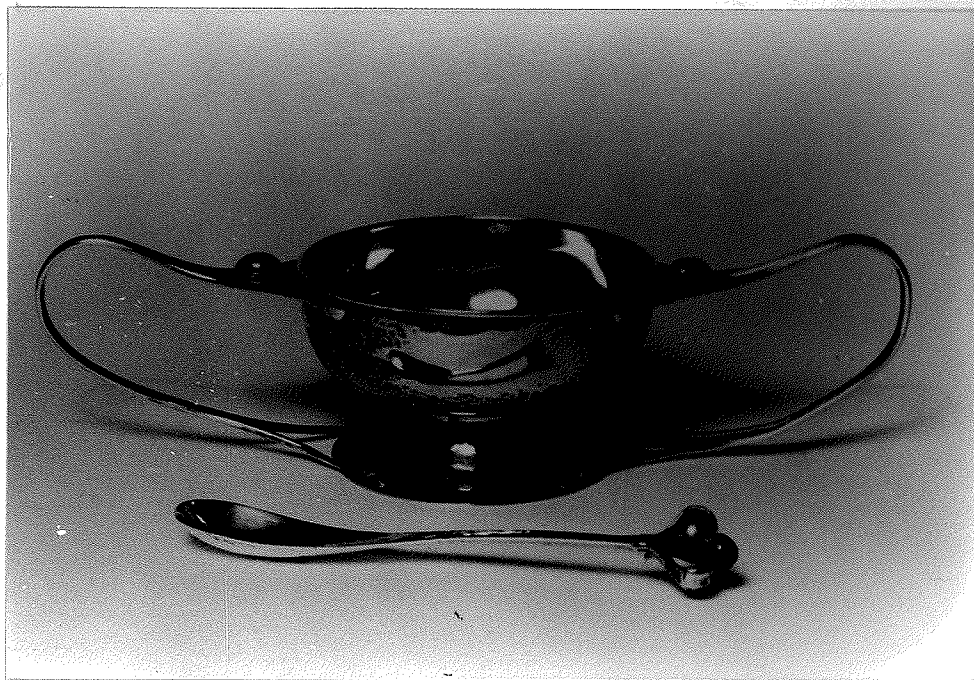


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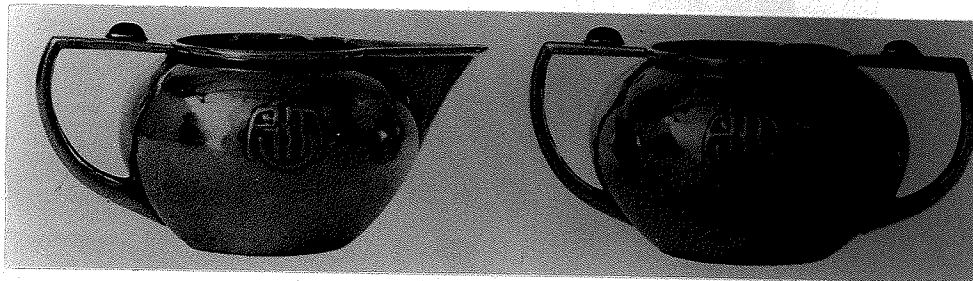


Plate 35



Plate 36

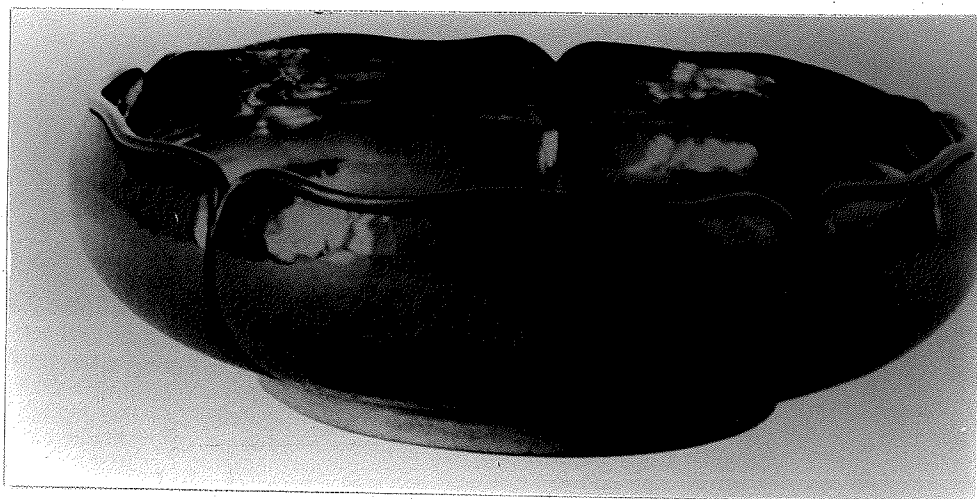


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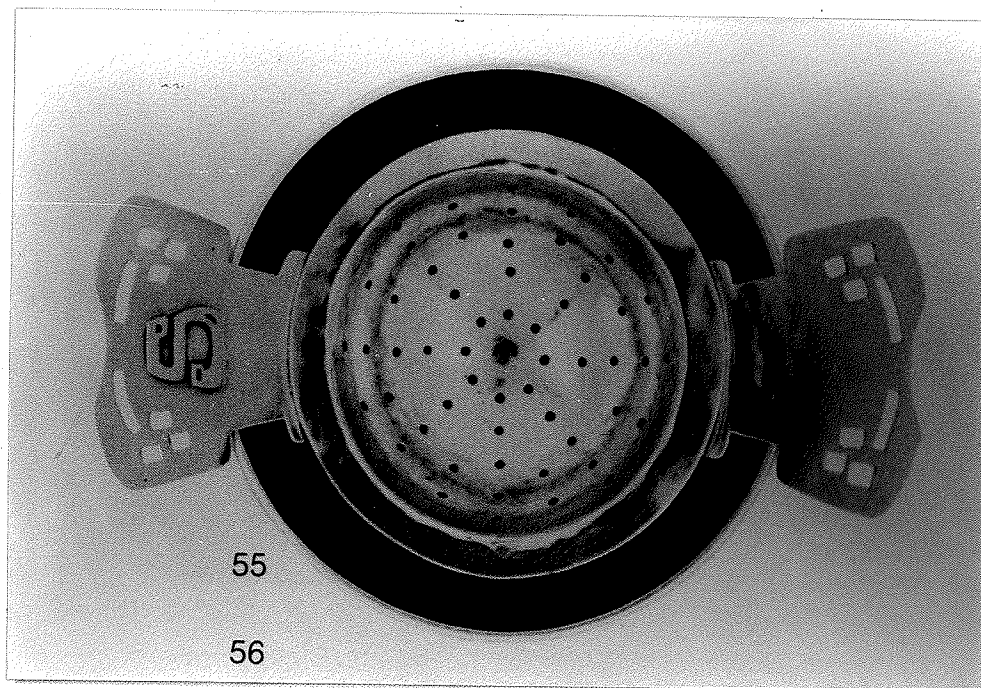


Plate 38



Plate 39

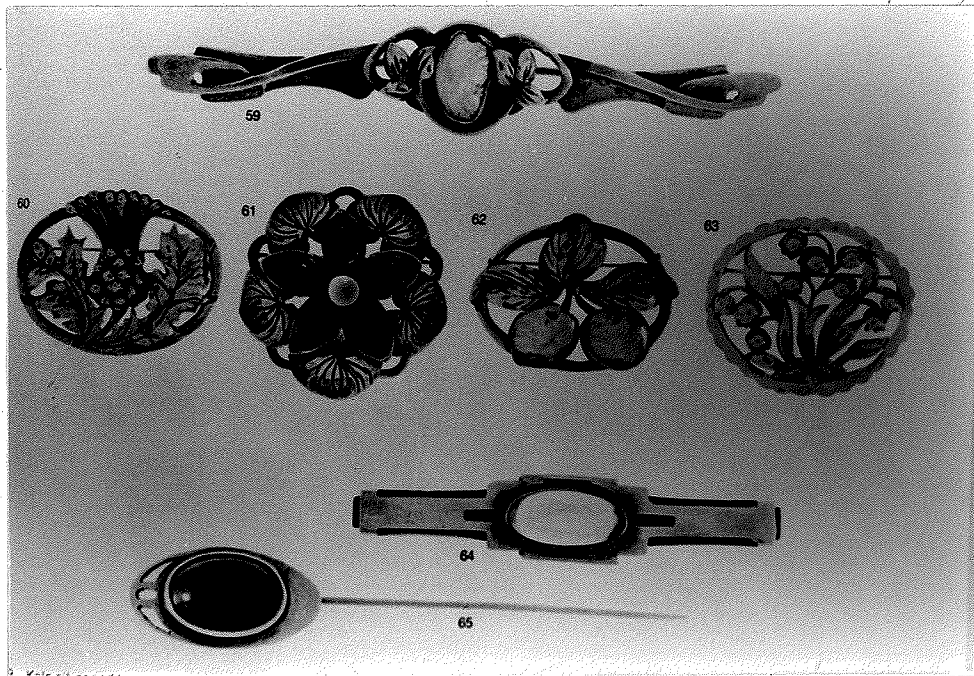


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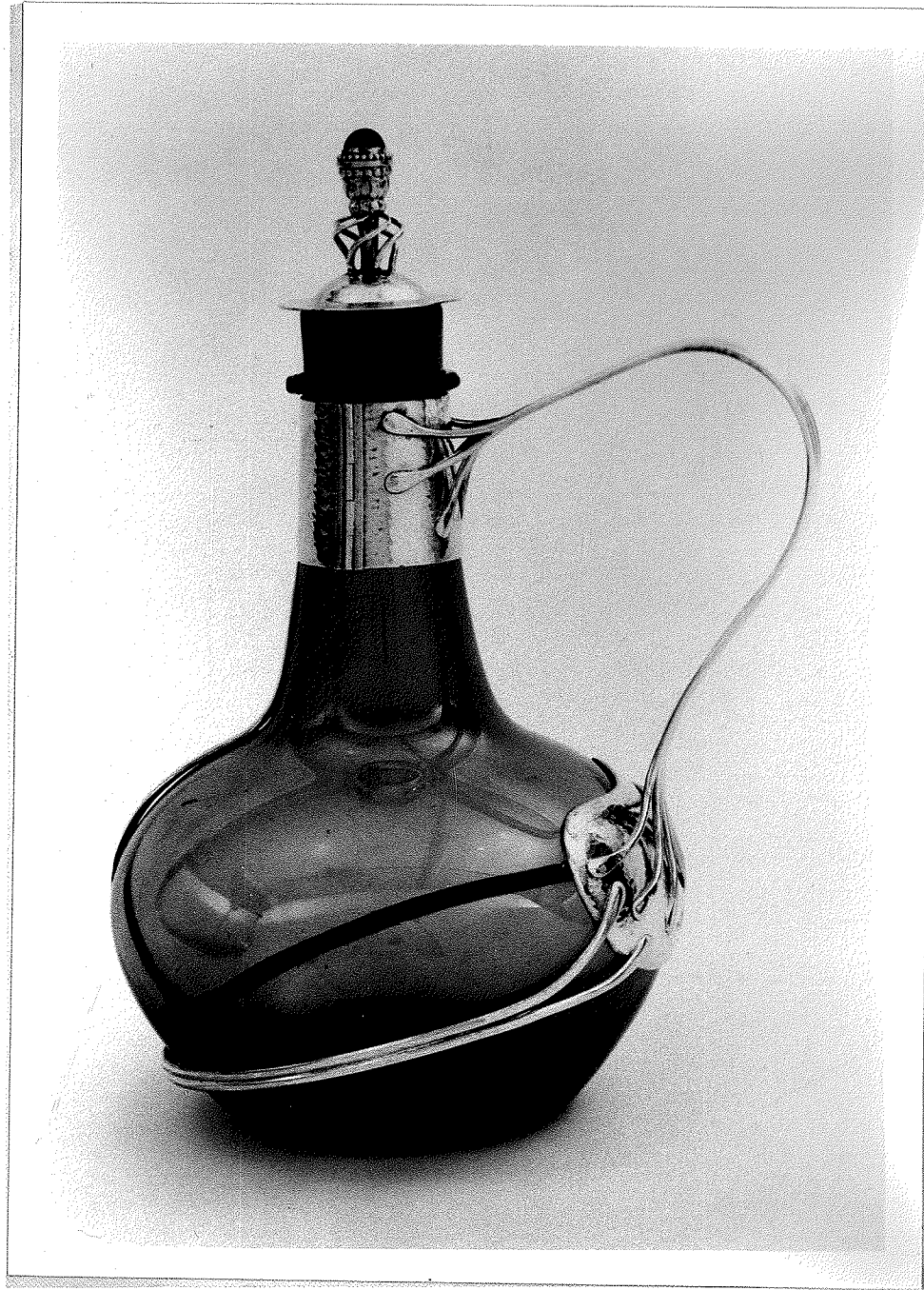


Plate 41



Plate 42



Plate 43

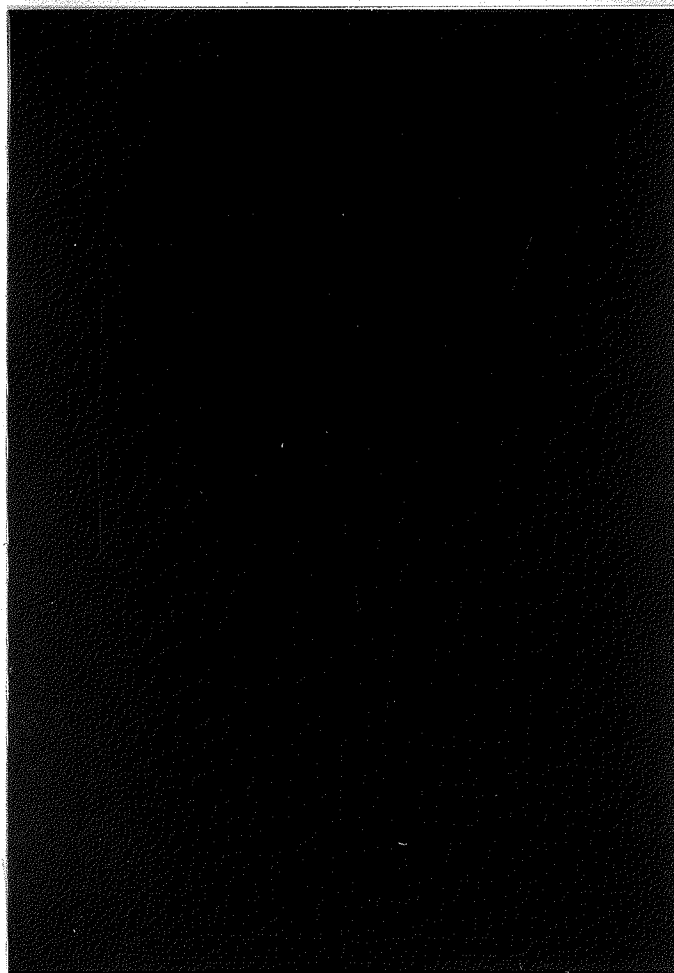


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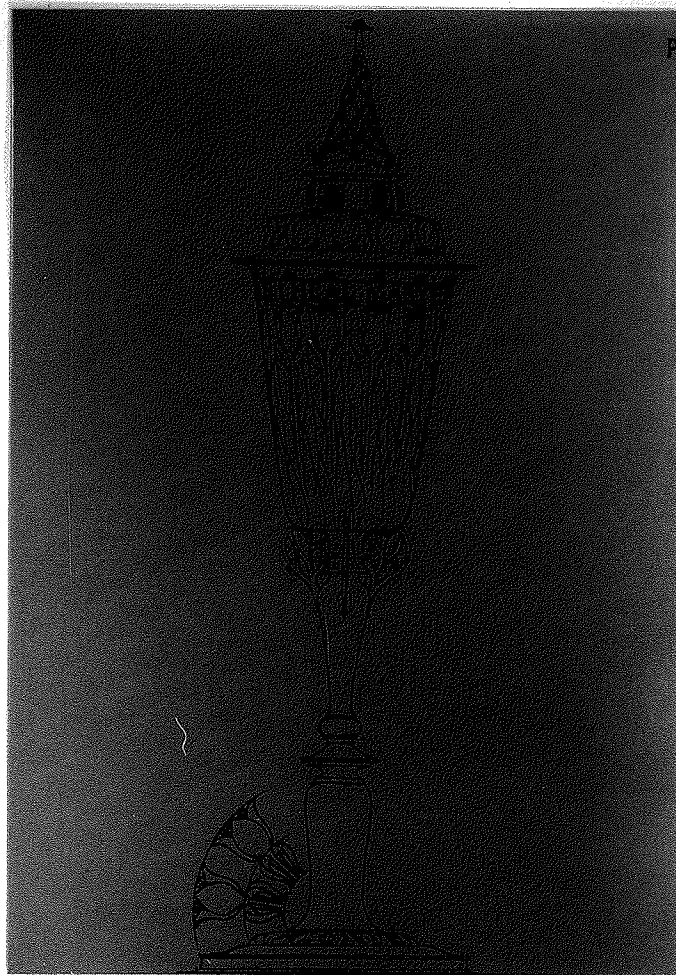


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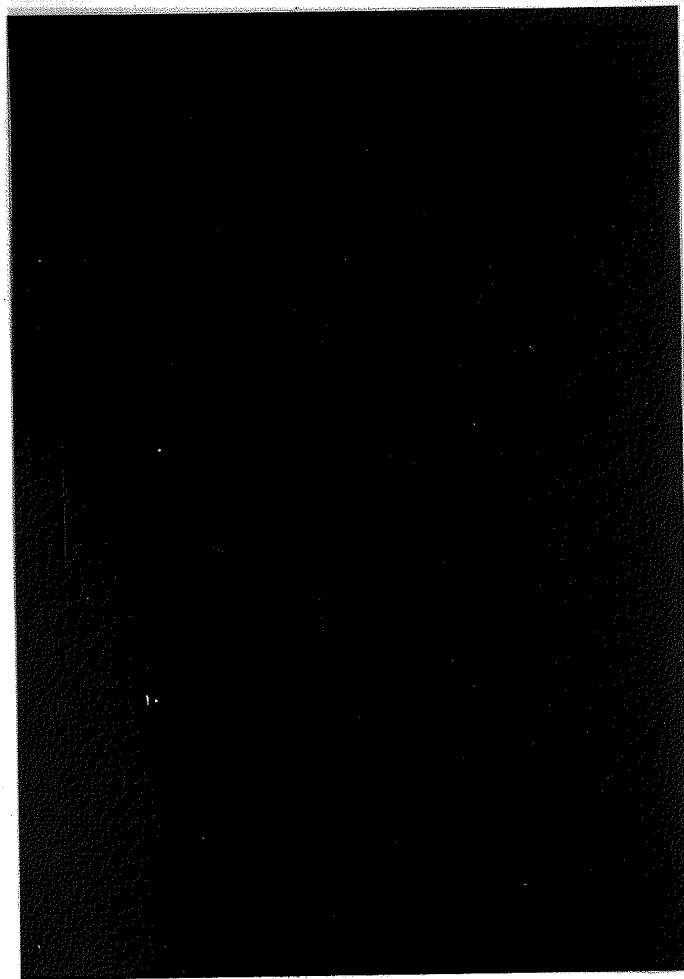


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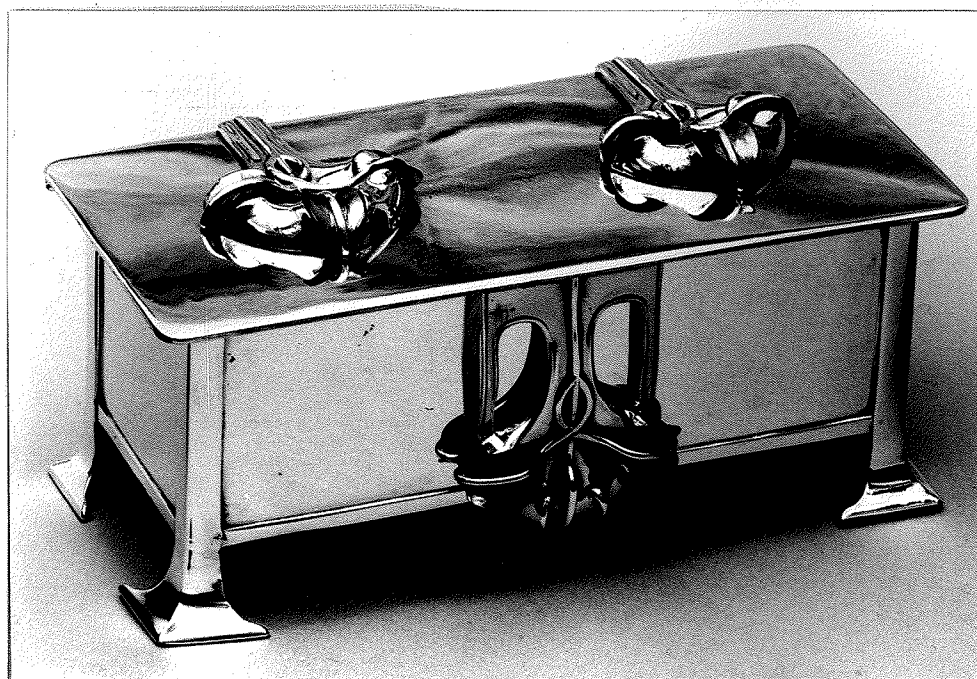


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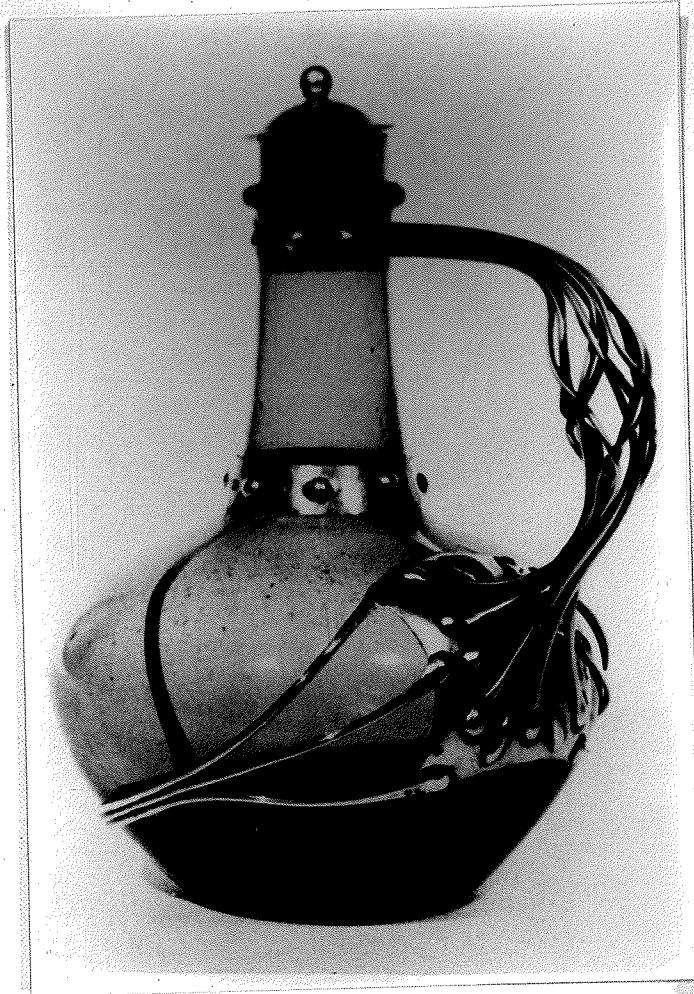


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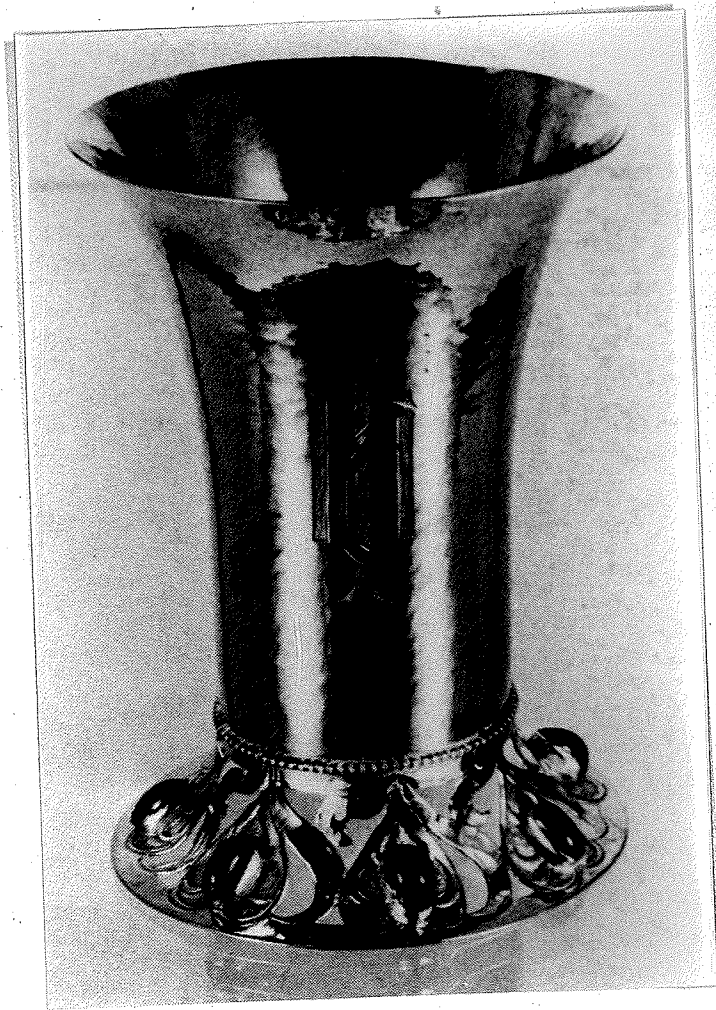


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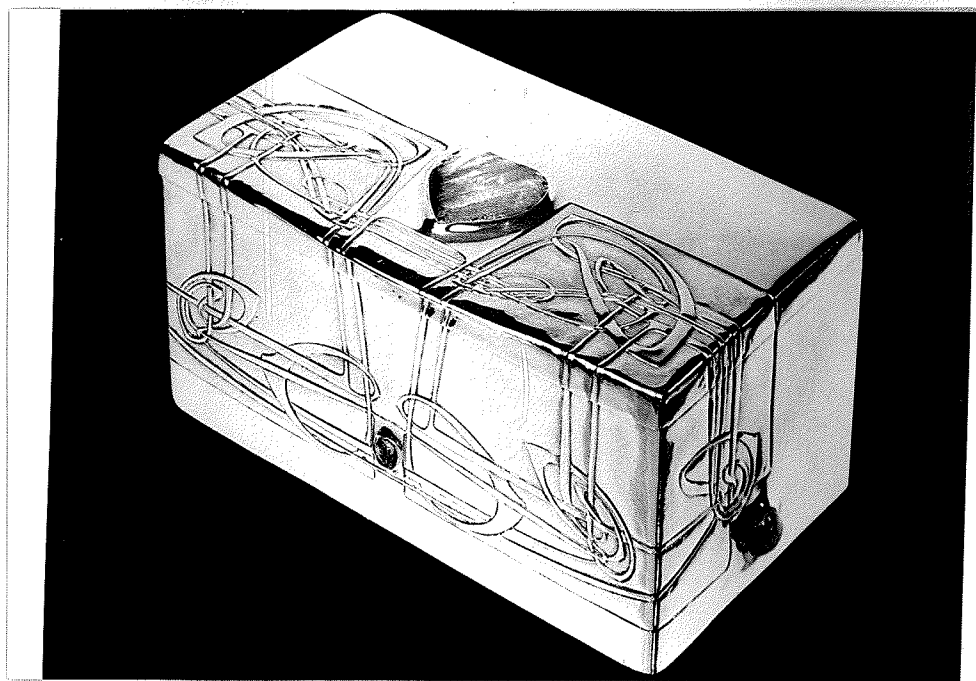


Plate 50

FOOTNOTES

Footnotes to Introduction and Part I

¹The Arts and Crafts movement's history has been adequately treated in the three standard works useful for additional information and bibliography:

Isabelle Anscombe and Charlotte Gere, Arts and Crafts in Britain and America, (London, 1978). (Hereafter as Anscombe and Gere.)

Robert J. Clark, The Arts and Crafts Movement in America: 1876-1916, (Princeton, 1972). (Hereafter as Clark.)

Gillian Naylor, The Arts and Crafts Movement, (London, 1971). (Hereafter as Naylor.)

²John Ruskin, The Stones of Venice, (Boston, 1851), p. 154.

³Ibid., p. 155.

⁴Ibid., p. 161.

⁵Ibid., p. 166.

⁶Ibid., p. 165.

⁷Ibid., p. 167.

⁸Ibid., p. 169.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 166.

¹¹For a very good recent investigation of the PRB, see Christopher Wood, The Pre-Raphaelites, (London, 1892).

¹²As quoted in Naylor, p. 97, n.5.

¹³For complete treatment of each of these painters, the reader is referred to Christopher Wood's book cited in N.11.

¹⁴Naylor, p. 101.

¹⁵Walter Crane (1845-1915) was an important early figure in the Arts and Crafts movement, best known for his designs as an illustrator. He was an author of many books on design and contributed a great deal to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.

¹⁶Naylor, p. 23.

¹⁷James Brooks (1825-1901) practiced church architecture in a Gothic Revival style comparable to that of William Butterfield. For a complete discussion of the movement, the reader is referred to Georg Germann, Gothic Revival in Europe and Britain's Sources, Influences and Ideas, (Cambridge, 1972).

¹⁸Naylor, p. 115.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 117.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 115-19.

²¹Ibid., as quoted on p. 120.

²²Anscombe and Gere, Arts and Crafts in Britain and America, pp. 112-13.

²³For brief biographies of each of these architects or designers, consult Anscombe and Gere.

²⁴The history of the Guild and School of Handicraft is summarized in the republication of Modern English Silverwork (Ashbee, 1909) with essays by Alan Crawford and Shirley Bury. See also the recent exhibition catalogue C. R. Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft with essays by Fiona MacCarthy and Alan Crawford, published by the Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum and exhibited through Fine Art Society in London.

²⁵For full discussion of Ashbee scholarship, please refer to Preface and appropriate bibliographical entries.

²⁶The following biographical summary of Charles Ashbee has been gathered from a variety of recently published sources, most importantly: Charles Ashbee, Modern English Silverwork (London, 1974 facsimile) (hereafter as MES); Fine Art Society, C. R. Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft (London, 1981) (hereafter as Fine Art Society); Lionel Lambourne, Utopian Craftsmen (Salt Lake City,

1980) (hereafter as Lambourne); Fiona MacCarthy, The Simple Life (London, 1981) (hereafter as MacCarthy); Peyton Skipworth, "Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft" (1981).

In 1902, after eleven years at Essex House, the Guild members voted to move their operation to the Cotswold village of Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, in search of an ideal rural setting where sound craftsmanship would be the expression of strong character. Additional retail space was opened on Bond Street and for awhile the move seemed to have been beneficial, especially as it affected the lives of the villagers and the Guild members and their families. Financially speaking, however, the move was disastrous and, with complications of distance to London and competition from larger commercial imitators of Guild of Handicraft objects, the Guild of Handicraft was forced to close in 1908.

²⁷For a thorough discussion of their lives and their relationship to Ashbee, consult MacCarthy, pp. 16ff.

²⁸Edward Carpenter (1844-1929) was an English poet and writer who strongly supported the needs of the working classes and who, like Ruskin, believed in the benefits of manual labor.

²⁹For a complete discussion of the careers of these important architects, consult Michael Davey, Architecture of the Arts and Crafts Movement, (London, 1981) (hereafter as Davey) and Mark Girouard, Sweetness and Light, (Oxford, 1977).

³⁰Consult Jane Fawcett, Seven Victorian Architects, and Edward Warren, "George Frederick Bodley, R. A.", Architectural Review 11 (April 1902): 130-9.

³¹Charles R. Ashbee, "Memoirs", Vol. I, p. 5. (Hereafter as "Memoirs".)

³²H. R. Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, (London, 1977), p. 270.

³³Ibid. This idea was also presented in a paper delivered at the 1982 Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians in New Haven, Connecticut.

³⁴Quoted in Lambourne, p. 54.

³⁵Ibid., p. 126.

- ³⁶"Memoirs", Vol. I, p. 60.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. 59.
- ³⁸Charles R. Ashbee, Transactions of the Guild and School of Handicraft, Vol. I, (London, 1890), pp. 21-2. (Hereafter as Transactions.)
- ³⁹Charles R. Ashbee, A Few Chapters in Workshop Reconstruction and Citizenship, (London, 1894), p. 16. (Hereafter as Chapters.)
- ⁴⁰Charles R. Ashbee, An Endeavour Towards the Teaching of John Ruskin and William Morris, (London, 1903), pp. 6-7. (Hereafter as Endeavour.)
- ⁴¹For a list of Ashbee's architectural work, see appendix to Alan Crawford, "Ten Letters From Frank Lloyd Wright to Charles Robert Ashbee", Architectural History 13 (1970). (Hereafter as Crawford.)
- ⁴²For a complete list of related publications, consult Shirley Bury, "The Liberty Metalwork Venture", Architectural Review 133 (February 1963): pp. xxiii-iv.
- ⁴³Benvenuto Cellini, The Treatises of Benvenuto Cellini on Goldsmithing and Sculpture, translated by C. R. Ashbee, (London, 1888), p. x.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., p. xi.
- ⁴⁵"Memoirs", Vol. I, p. 24.
- ⁴⁶Ibid., p. 25.
- ⁴⁷Asa Briggs, ed., William Morris: Selected Writings and Designs, (Baltimore, 1962), p. 177.
- ⁴⁸"Memoirs", p. 24.
- ⁴⁹Hermann Muthesius, Das Englische Haus, translated by Janet Seligman as The English House, (London, 1979).
- ⁵⁰"Memoirs", Vol. I, Introduction.
- ⁵¹Quoted in Naylor, p. 120.
- ⁵²Anscombe and Gere, p. 113.

- ⁵³"Memoirs", p. 64.
- ⁵⁴Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society Catalogue I, (1888), p. 5.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., p. 8.
- ⁵⁶Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society Catalogue II, (1889), p. 7.
- ⁵⁷Charles R. Ashbee, "Frank Lloyd Wright: A Study and an Appreciation by C. R. Ashbee." Western Architect 19 (February 1913).
- ⁵⁸Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Essays by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, (London, 1903), pp. 4-5.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., p. 10.
- ⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 12-13.
- ⁶¹Clive Wainwright, in Architect-Designers: Pugin to Mackintosh, (London, 1981).
Mr. Wainwright's essay contributes largely to the definition of architect-designer employed in the text. Mr. Wainwright, Curator of Victorian Furniture at the Victoria and Albert Museum, was selected by staff of the Christie's Course to review my course dissertation, "Charles Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft: The Search for a Guild Style." His comments, particularly those which gave merit to the attempt to establish Ashbee's links with the Modern movement, contributed significantly to the decision to pursue this as a thesis topic. His support is hereby acknowledged and appreciated.
- ⁶²Transactions, p. 22.
- ⁶³M. H. Baillie Scott, "An Artist's House", The Studio (October 1896): p. 31.
- ⁶⁴Endeavour, p. 22.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 6-7.
- ⁶⁶Chapters, p. 10.
- ⁶⁷Ibid., p. 91.

- 68 Ibid.
- 69 Ibid., p. 92.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Ibid., p. 41.
- 72 Ibid., p. 82.
- 73 Ibid., p. 16.
- 74 Endeavour, p. 24.
- 75 Chapters, p. 23.
- 76 Charles R. Ashbee, Manual of the Guild and School of Handicraft, (London, 1892), p. 10.
- 77 Ibid., pp. 18-19.
- 78 Ibid., p. 19.
- 79 Charles R. Ashbee, "Cinquecento Jewelry as Illustrated by the 'Trattati' of Benvenuto Cellini." Art Journal (1894): pp. 152-5.
- 80 The above paragraph's quotations are taken from the May 1895 article in The Studio, which discussed Ashbee's Magpie and Stump house. Another interesting source in the Victoria and Albert Library was the auction catalogue of the property which was sold in the 1920s.
- 81 Ibid., p. 72.
- 82 This and preceding quotations from Ibid., pp. 73-4.
- 83 M. H. Baillie Scott, "Some Furniture For the New Palace, Darmstadt" The Studio (1898) and "Decoration and Furniture For the New Palace, Darmstadt" The Studio (1899).
- 84 Ibid., (1898), p. 96.
- 85 Ibid., p. 97.

⁸⁶Charles R. Ashbee, Modern English Silverwork, (London, 1909). (Facsimile edition with essays by Shirley Bury and Alan Crawford.)

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, p. 6. All three requisites are treated here.

⁸⁸Robert Schmutzler, Art Nouveau, (London, 1964), p. 131.

⁸⁹See above cited text for further details about Beardsley's style.

⁹⁰"Memoirs", Vol. III, Introduction, p. 5.

⁹¹The quoted statements are taken from "Studio Talk" in International Studio (1896): 126-27.

⁹²Aymer Vallance, "Arts and Crafts in Great Britain" International Studio (November-December, 1899), Parts I, II.

⁹³*Ibid.*, Part II, p. 120.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*

⁹⁵B. G. Burrough, "C. R. Ashbee, His Guild and School of Handicraft", Collector's Guide (January 1974): 88.

Footnotes to Part II

⁹⁶Shirley Bury, "An Arts and Crafts Experiment: The Silverwork of Charles Ashbee," (London, 1967), p. 2.

⁹⁷"Memoirs", Vol. I, p. 78.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 79.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 79.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 80.

¹⁰¹Two important architect designers in Philadelphia's Arts and Crafts movement were Isaac Scott and Wilson Eyre. Scott produced Gothic Revival style furniture in Philadelphia from 1867 to 1869 before moving to Chicago where he designed furniture throughout the 1870s and early 1880s. Eyre developed a very personal interpretation of Arts and Crafts architecture, employing mostly brick and half-timber. For further information, consult Robert J. Clark's catalogue, The Arts and Crafts Movement in America 1876-1916, (Princeton, 1972).

¹⁰²David Handlin, The American Home, (Boston, 1979), pp. 442-43.

¹⁰³Robert J. Clark pointed this out in his catalogue cited in N.101.

¹⁰⁴"Memoirs", Vol. I, p. 86.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 87.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 96.

¹⁰⁷Herbert Wise, "The T-Square Club Exhibition" Inland Architect and News Record 1 (February 1900): 5.

¹⁰⁸Chicago Architectural Club, Chicago Architectural Club Exhibition Catalogue, (Chicago, 1900), p. 4.

While in Chicago, Ashbee presented two lectures at the Art Institute entitled "The Guild and School of Handicraft" and "William Morris," both of which were illustrated with a stereopticon.

- 109 Ibid., p. 6.
- 110 Chicago Architectural club, Chicago Architectural Club Exhibition Catalogue, (Chicago, 1898), p. 118.
- 111 Oscar L. Triggs, Chapters in the History of the Arts and Crafts Movement, (Chicago, 1902), p. 143.
- 112 Ibid., p. 147.
- 113 Ibid., p. 142.
- 114 Ibid., p. 143.
- 115 Ibid., p. 148.
- 116 Ibid., pp. 150-1.
- 117 Joseph Twyman, "Furniture" Inland Architect and News Record 35 (April 1900).
- 118 Ibid.
- 119 Sharon Darling, Chicago Metalsmiths, (Chicago, 1977), p. 45.
- 120 Ibid., p. 53.
- 121 A paper discussing the stylistic similarity between early Kalo Shop silver designs and Ashbee's silver of c1900-02 was delivered to the Department of Art History at the University of Wisconsin and to the Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Academy of Arts, Letters, and Sciences in April, 1982, by the author. The paper was entitled "From London to Chicago: The Silverwork of Charles Ashbee and the Early Silverwork of the Kalo Shop."
- 122 "Memoirs", Vol. III, p. 72.
- 123 Ibid.
- 124 Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago, (Chicago, 1908).
- 125 "Memoirs", Vol. I, pp. 241-2.

Footnotes to Part III

¹²⁶Horst-Herbert Kossatz, "The Vienna Secession and Its Early relations with Great Britain" Studio International (January, 1971) p. 18.

Ashbee's fifty-two works were given a special exhibition space at the entrance to the Vienna Secession's eighth exhibition (1900), which was principally devoted to modern applied arts. See also Peter Vergo's Art in Vienna 1898-1918 (Ithaca, 1975), pp. 62-4, 85, 131, 138, and 186 for further discussion of Ashbee and the Vienna Secession.

¹²⁷Shirley Bury, "The Liberty Metalwork Venture" Architectural Review 133 (February, 1963), pp. 108 and III.

¹²⁸The full implications and meaning of Ashbee's move to the country is thoroughly covered in Fiona MacCarthy's The Simple Life, (London, 1981).

¹²⁹Edith Brill, Life and Tradition on the Cotswolds, (London, 1973), pp. 37-8.

¹³⁰Ashbee kept a guest book which recorded a wide variety of interested visitors from all parts of the world, including Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Crane, and others.

¹³¹Charles R. Ashbee, Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry, (London, 1908), p. 9. (Hereafter as Craftsmanship.)

¹³²Ibid., p. 15.

¹³³Ibid., p. 26.

¹³⁴MES, p. 7.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 8.

¹³⁶K. Harlow, "A Pioneer Master of Art Nouveau: The Hand-Wrought Jewelry of Louis C. Tiffany" Apollo (July, 1982), p. 50.

¹³⁷MES, p. 9.

- 138 Charles R. Ashbee, "Arts and Crafts in England" House Beautiful (June, 1909), Part I, p. 14.
- 139 Ibid.
- 140 Ibid.
- 141 Ibid.
- 142 Charles R. Ashbee, "Arts and Crafts in England" House Beautiful (July, 1909), Part II, p. 35.
- 143 Charles R. Ashbee, "The Return of the Village" House Beautiful (August, 1910), Part I, p. 110.
- 144 Ibid., p. 109.
- 145 Charles R. Ashbee, "The Soul of Architecture" House Beautiful (June, 1910), Part I, p. 24.
- 146 Ibid.
- 147 Ibid., p. 25.
- 148 Charles R. Ashbee, "The Soul of Architecture" House Beautiful (July, 1910), Part II, p. 55.
- 149 Charles R. Ashbee, Should We Stop Teaching Art?, (London, 1911), p. 2.
- 150 Ibid., p. 4.
- 151 Ibid.
- 152 Ibid., p. 3.
- 153 Ibid.
- 154 Ibid., p. 13.
- 155 Charles R. Ashbee, Report...to the Council of the National Trust for...to 1901, (London, 1901), p. 10.
- 156 Ibid., p. 11.
- 157 Ibid., p. 10.
- 158 H. Allen Brooks, "Steinway Hall, Architects and Dreams" Journal for the Society of Architectural Historians (October, 1963), p. 173.

159 Chicago Architectural Club, Chicago Architectural Club Catalogue (1900), p. 6.

160 Ibid.

161 Frank Lloyd Wright, "The Art and Craft of the Machine" Frank Lloyd Wright: Writings and Buildings, (Cleveland, 1960), p. 55.

162 Ibid., p. 62.

163 Ibid., p. 62.

164 Ibid., pp. 64-5.

165 Ibid., p. 70.

166 Ibid., p. 55.

167 Crawford, p. 67.

168 Ibid., p. 65.

169 Ibid.

170 "Memoirs", Vol. I, p. 72.

171 Ibid., p. 73.

172 Crawford, p. 66.

173 Ibid., p. 67.

174 Ibid.

175 Ibid., p. 68.

176 The location and identification of Ashbee's Introduction is rather complicated, as Crawford points out. See Crawford, "Ten Letters From Frank Lloyd Wright to Charles Robert Ashbee" Architectural History 13 (1970), note 20.

177 Ibid., pp. 69-70.

178 Ibid., p. 70.

179 Charles R. Ashbee, "Frank Lloyd Wright, A Study and an Appreciation By C. R. Ashbee" (English text, 4 pp) Campden, 1910, Library of the Art Institute of Chicago, p. 1.

Crawford attempts to clarify the confusion that surrounds the various German editions, English translations, and republications of Ashbee's Introduction since it first appeared in the Wasmuth edition of 1911. The translation used here was obtained from the library cited in xerox form and is itself reproduced in part in Western Architect 19 (February, 1913), pp. 17-9.

180 Ibid., p. 1.

181 Ibid.

182 Ibid., p. 2.

183 Ibid., p. 3.

184 Ibid.

185 Completed in 1908, Wright's "In the Cause of Architecture" was written at the time Ashbee was visiting Wright in Oak Park. This was also the year when the Guild of Handicraft closed.

186 The Vienna Secession falls outside the parameters of this thesis devoted primarily to Ashbee in London and Chicago; however, Ashbee's influence is well documented in both primary and secondary sources. Like the study of Ashbee in Chicago, a detailed study of Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft and their relation to the Vienna Secession would shed light on Ashbee's varied career.

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17-II-84