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Conflicting Modernities?

Arts and Crafts and Commercial Influences in the Decoration of the Middle-Class Home 1890-1914

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Abstract

Aiming to study the nature and significance of the modern home, this thesis examines in detail two major influences affecting the furnishing and decoration of the middle class home in Britain for the period 1890 to 1914. This project considers a variety of representations of the domestic interior to identify the furnishing ideals they embodied. It focuses on the two major producers of such representations: the furnishing industry, and the design reform and Arts and Crafts movement. The commercial and art spheres they stood for approached and expressed in opposing ways the possibilities opened up by modernisation.

In trying to keep up with the growing demand of the middle class, the furnishing trade applied capitalist business methods, building a market and helping to create a consumer culture centred on the home and its equipment. Critical of the perceived ills of industrialization, reformers and Arts and Crafts designers contested the commercial sphere and promoted instead an artistic approach to design, responding mainly to aesthetic and social concerns. The resulting depictions of middle-class domestic interiors represented modern furnishing ideals, albeit contradictory ones.

Piecing together diverse and fragmentary historical evidence, this thesis studies in detail the large furnishing firms of the period, and the images, narrative and strategies they used to promote their goods. It also examines the design reform discourse and particularly the genre of advice literature. This project aims to unveil the hidden agendas reformers and advisers were engaged with in the pursuit of the modern home. The analysis reveals the varied ways in which advice authors portrayed the domestic interior, reflecting stylistic, aesthetic, technological and commercial concerns. The approach and analysis are interdisciplinary, and are grounded in the assumption that these representations and discourses, and the ideals they embody, are an essential account of modernity.

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Introduction

From the eighteenth century and increasingly from the mid nineteenth century the home in Britain, its furnishing and decoration, has been a subject of particular fascination. Accordingly, there has been an uninterrupted string of publications about it in the form of books, catalogues, magazines and journals;[1] and since the 1930s and 50s, new mass media formats have joined in, such as films, television and more recently the internet.[2] In an industrial and capitalist system the home has become more than just a place where the family unit nurtures itself. It has acquired and developed a rich significance for a sense of self and identity supported by family, class, gender and diverse cultural affiliations. Since the late seventeenth century increased levels of trade, production and consumption stimulated a growing awareness of goods and possessions, and what they represent and signify, not only for a privileged few but for an ever growing number of people. Within the fast paced process of modernisation, the fields of commerce and industry created unprecedented levels of material wealth reflected in the architecture, furnishing and decoration of the home. The process has also contributed to defining and redefining class and gender roles and boundaries to this day.

Because of the revolutionary nature of industrialization affecting every sphere of life, not everybody welcomed changes, and many resisted its effects. Influential groups of people, such as those formed around Prince Albert and Henry Cole, the pre-Raphaelites, and William Morris, came together to oppose what they interpreted as decaying standards in the decorative arts. In nineteenth century Britain, the home became a battleground for artists and traders who tried each, from opposing standpoints, to create and shape ideals in domestic decoration. Aligned with artists and architects, design reformers preached as arbiters of taste opposing the considerable and increasing influence large furnishing firms exercised in promoting a consumer culture centred on the home and its equipment. In attacking the products of the machine and the commercial system, they envisioned a world where not traders but craftsmen following artistic principles, would be commanding the design and making of domestic goods.

Within the bigger subject of the modern interior, this project aims to contribute to the understanding of the nature and significance of the modern home through the analysis of a variety of representations of English middle-class domestic interiors for the period 1890 to 1914. Crucially, at the time the home was the most important sphere for the display of class and

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[1] The present study uses these varied sources in the form of advice literature (which includes magazines and books), trade catalogues and advertising.

[2] Countless films and series featured on television portray the home and its contents. Since the 1990s programmes involving reality decoration makeovers became popular, such as *Changing Rooms*, *Design Rules*, *Home Front*, and more recently *House Doctor* and *60 Minutes Makeover*. Other current programmes focus on the project of building bespoke modern homes and include *Grand Designs* and *Build a New Life in the Country*. An additional category of television shows representing the domestic space is concerned with the home as property, and it includes *Location Location Location*, *Property Ladder*, *Open House*, *Put the Money Where Your House Is*, *To Buy or Not to Buy* and *Homes Under the Hammer* among others. Most of these series have links to websites.

cultural signifiers, and for most middle-class people, spending on furniture and furnishing was one of the most significant investments in material and symbolic terms. A wave of publications and advertising in a wide range of media reflected and supported this endeavour.

The study aims to consider in detail two major influences affecting domestic decoration in this period. It examines the contradictory pull exerted by the commercial and artistic spheres, paying particular attention to the impact that the furnishing and retailing industry, and the design reform discourse contesting it, had in defining decorative ideals for the middle-class home. In discussing the notion of the modern interior, as portrayed in advice literature, the project aims to unveil the hidden agendas reformers and advisers were engaged with in the pursuit of the modern home. Overall it aims to understand why and in which ways the sphere of art contested industry, as a key to reveal the conflicting modernity embedded in representations of the middle-class home. Additionally the project also aims to understand why in England, and particularly from 1890 to 1914, decorative artists, traders, and consumers consciously and repeatedly chose historical styles and designs to convey the modernity of the home. Such aim addresses the constant tension between tradition and innovation in the quest for the modern home, its furnishing and decoration.

Design history literature has given due attention to artistic design and artistic schools of the period. The aim here is to complement such approach by addressing and stressing the significance and relevance of commercial design, and its retailing, as cultural expressions of modernity. Based on the reconstruction of the origins, growth and expansion of a sample of furnishing firms supplying the middle class, the objective is to highlight the importance and strength of the retailing industry, and to examine its decisive role in the creation and shaping of a culture of consumption centred on the home. A key and distinct trait in the history of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries relates to a matter of scale. It was in response to the needs of a fast growing population that large-scale industries and businesses developed. The unprecedented scale of operations in production, retailing and therefore consumption, created of necessity a different type of home, one that expressed its modernity in the terms of the commercial sphere.

At the beginning, three intriguing aspects motivated this project. One was seeing that a considerable amount of literature on the subject of domestic decoration focused mainly on wealthy examples of the upper and middle-class, emphasizing the homes of distinguished owners and the work of famous architects and designers.[3] These homes, although important,

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[3] Well known examples are: Mario Praz, *An Illustrated History of Interior Decoration: From Pompeii to Art Nouveau*, 1st ed. 1964 (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994); George Savage, *A Concise History of Interior Decoration* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1966); Nicholas Cooper, *The Opulent Eye: Late Victorian and Edwardian Taste in Interior Design* (London: Architectural Press, 1976); Mark Girouard, *Sweetness and Light, The 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977); John Cornforth, *Quest for Comfort: English Interiors, 1790-1848* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1978); Charles McCorquodale, *History of the Interior* (New York: Vendome Press, 1983); Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor: The Domestic Interior, 1620-1920*, 1st ed. 1984 (London: Seven Dials, Cassell & Co., 2000); James Chambers, *The English House* (London: Thames Methuen, 1985); Jeremy Cooper, *Victorian and Edwardian Décor: From the Gothic Revival to Art Nouveau* (New

could not account for the interiors in the smaller type of house inhabited by the less affluent middle class, and which few authors seemed interested in discussing, particularly for the period from 1890 to 1914.[4] Perhaps the reason for this difference in attention is connected to sources, since the wealthy or renowned type of home tends to leave behind a fair amount of records; a factor that appeals to researchers. The historian Lori Ann Loeb ventures additional reasons:

> Curiously, the simple material abundance of the Victorian middle-class world has received little historical attention. Material culture studies have focused on the realities of everyday life of the working class. Studies of objects owned by the prosperous have been preoccupied with aesthetics and style rather than the object as embodiment of culture. Studies of Victorian interiors have stressed opulence. Historians of the industrial revolution have concentrated on mass production rather than mass consumption.[5]

In historical research it is inescapable that there should be a hierarchy of themes reflecting their relevance. Based on my initial impressions, the study of the furnishing and decoration of the ordinary middle-class home came across as being of marginal importance. It was not a good reason to dismiss it as a subject though, given that the significance of a particular topic is not always immediately evident. The domestic interior with its abundance of furniture and furnishing, as Loeb points out, is an embodiment of culture.

A second aspect relates to the references found in design history literature describing most of nineteenth century material culture as ugly, poor in quality and generally of a low order. Linked to that perception, middle-class interiors have been typified as excessively ornamented, cluttered and tasteless. For example, referring to the middle classes in the nineteenth century John Heskett said that their 'newly acquired wealth and position often manifested itself in a piling-up of decorative effect, resulting in an exuberant and florid vulgarity', and explained that the manufacturers who supplied them 'pillaged the stylistic canons of past cultures in search of novelty'.[6] In contrast to the above trait, in this same literature there is praise for the contributions to taste and design from artistic schools such as the Arts and Crafts and to this movement's mission of rescuing traditional handcraft working methods. In general surveys of movements and styles, it is not uncommon for historians to agree with the complaints of nineteenth century design reformers. These critics are portrayed, for example, as 'seeking to counter the negative effects of the industrial revolution through reforms in the areas of skilled

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York, London, Paris: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1987); Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth Century Decoration: The Domestic Interior from 1900 to the Present Day* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988); Charlotte Gere, *Nineteenth-Century Decoration: The Art of The Interior* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989); Clive Wainwright, *The Romantic Interior: The British Collector at Home, 1750-1850* (London, Yale University Press, 1989); Alan and Ann Gore, *The History of English Interiors* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1991); Charlotte Gere with Lesley Hoskins, *The House Beautiful: Oscar Wilde and the Aesthetic Interior* (London: Lund Humphries and The Geffrye Museum, 2000).

[4] Exceptions include: Alastair Service, *Edwardian Interiors: Inside the Homes of the Poor, the Average and the Wealthy* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1982); Stefan Muthesius, *The English Terraced House* (London: Yale University Press, 1982); Mark Turner and Lesley Hoskins, *Silver Studio of Design: A design and source book for home decoration,* (London: Webb & Bower in association with Michael Joseph, 1988); Helen Long, *The Edwardian House: Studies in Design and Material Culture* (London: Manchester University Press, 1993);Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour: A Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[5] Lori Anne Loeb, *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994), p. vii.

[6] John Heskett, *Industrial Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), p. 19.

crafts, social engagement, and development of taste [...] to replace cheap, poor-quality industrial products with qualitatively better products of a reformed skilled craft production'.[7] It is also the case that some authors register the reformers' complaints objectively, without agreeing with them, and seeing criticism as a matter of perception, but then proceed to discuss the designs and designers belonging to the reform movements while barely mentioning the mass products of commercial enterprise.[8]

It is interesting to see that few historians, until recently, have questioned such an approach. This historiographic trend, probably started by Nikolaus Pevsner, and reinforced by John Gloag and Herbert Read, repeats the nineteenth-century design reformers' belittling of commercial design and middle-class taste.[9] In their study of eighteenth-century commerce in England, N. McKendrick et al complain that 'the historian's distaste for the commercial aspect has led to a blindness to Wedgwood's achievements'.[10] If the design reform discourse was so powerful and pervasive that its echoes are still heard today, and if it was true that, with the exception of artistic designs from the Aesthetic, Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau schools, most ordinary domestic goods and interiors were 'cheap and nasty', it seems important to find out why. Historians have traditionally understood and presented the design reformers' motives as altruistic, artistic, noble and therefore justified. Instead of taking reformers' intentions and criticism at face value, the aim of this study is to follow an alternative approach searching for and questioning the drive behind them.

In the past two decades there has been a shift in focus in British design history from a cultural high ground and the sphere of production towards examining the role of consumers and consumption.[11] Although this has incited an ongoing re-evaluation of nineteenth century commercial design, it seems the retailing side of the furniture and furnishing industry is still missing its rightful place;[12] and there remains a hierarchy as to which goods and interiors are considered better or more important in terms of design and aesthetics. In reference to the Victorian and Edwardian periods, it seems inappropriate to compare, say, a chair that was created as a work of art with another that was produced as a commodity intended to be affordable. It is thus relevant to ask why the canon in design history has given place of honour

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[7] Thomas Hauffe, *Design: A Concise History* (London: Laurence King, 1998), p. 12.
[8] See for example Anne Massey, *Interior Design of the 20th Century* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), pp. 7-62.
[9] Victor Margolin, 'Design History or Design Studies: Subject Matter and Methods', *Design Issues*, 11 (1995), 4-15 (p. 7).
[10] N. McKendrick, J. Brewer and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society* (London: Hutchinson, 1983), as cited in Christopher Bailey, 'Review', *Journal of Design History*, 6 (1993), 136-37 (p. 136). Bailey reviews a book on trade catalogues and refers to McKendrick et al's book.
[11] *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914* (London: Verso, 1991); John Brewer and Roy Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London: Routledge, 1993); Don Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (London: Polity Press, 1996); *Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter*, ed. by Daniel Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Judy Attfield, *Wild Things: The Material Culture of Everyday Life* (Oxford: Berg, 2000).
[12] There are important contributions from retail and business histories and from the field of consumption studies addressing the department store, although not specifically the arena of house furnishing. In the field of design history a notable exception is Clive Edwards' recently published *Turning Houses into Homes: A History of the Retailing and Consumption of Domestic Furnishings* (Aldershot (Hants): Ashgate, 2005). This literature is discussed in Chapter 1.

to a few hundred artistic designs while neglecting the myriad of articles based on commercial design.

There was yet a third element motivating this research. When first examining sources such as trade catalogues and advice literature it became apparent that historical styles and models played a big part in domestic furnishing. With the exception of some designs in the style of the Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau, the overwhelming majority of representations of domestic interiors relied on historical designs or were clearly inspired by them. If these sources reflected a general preference, it was puzzling to see that designers chose to convey the idea of the modern home via a constant reference to the past. This was a trait I had already addressed when carrying out my MA research on the drawing room in Santa Fe de Bogotá in the nineteenth century.[13] The most fashionable rooms of the 1880s and 90s depended on imported furniture reproductions of English and French styles from the eighteenth century. The difference with England was that in Colombia a good number of people were not aware that these styles were based on past models and thus consumed them as totally modern products.

Initially this project centred on the visual and material culture of the middle-class home, as real practice. It set out to follow the methodological approach of piecing together diverse types of evidence, visual and written. Ideally the resulting image would reveal a typical interior and in that sense, would be representative. However, the type of sources available suggested a different approach, and the project moved from addressing the subject of the domestic interior as real practice, to focusing instead on its varied representations searching for the modernities they embodied.

The problem with aiming to show the real interior was not lack of sources. The years from 1890 to 1914 are still recent in historical terms and there is enough material evidence such as furniture and furnishings, designs, images and accounts about domestic interiors. There is, for example, a good amount of business and design records from the firms and shops producing and selling the multitude of articles the middle class required. This category includes trade catalogues and adverts published in newspapers, magazines and journals. While examining these sources it became clear that they could not reflect, however, how in reality the middle class furnished and decorated their homes. These documents reflected retailing strategies rather than consumption practices, which were quite different, even if closely connected. Trade catalogues of the period targeted the middle-class householder living on a moderate income offering model examples designed and exhibited to entice them. Images of domestic rooms in these catalogues, tended to include sets of things that the shop was interested in promoting; so the resulting picture was not intended to mirror the way furniture and furnishings would be arranged in a real room but to challenge it. Commercial images did not attempt to recreate real spaces but to resemble them enough to instil decorative ideals in consumers' minds.

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[13] Patricia Lara-Betancourt, 'La Sala Domestica en Santa Fe de Bogota, Siglo XIX' (unpublished master's thesis, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1997).

Photographic records presented a different type of obstacle. To begin with, not many people had access to photographic equipment, and interiors were difficult to record because of light conditions. If pictures survive it is difficult to date them precisely, but even when possible it is hard to be sure if the interior was recently decorated. It is unusual to find a set of photographs showing all the rooms in the household; more often they show just one space, which tends to be either the drawing room or the dining room, and very seldom the kitchen. Also, it is difficult to be sure about the extent to which any amount of photographic evidence gathered is representative of a sector of the population. Besides, interiors are not static creations but dynamic ones prone to changes. To do them justice would require fulfilling the improbable condition of having a sequence of records capturing the transformations, including those not evident at first sight. In real life it is more common for people to introduce gradual changes and updating than to transform an interior completely on a regular basis. This trait raises the question of how long can a modern interior remain so, and how does it need to alter to keep being modern. Also relevant would be to tell the difference between a modern interior and one that is not but is nevertheless of its time. What these issues point at is that photographs of real interiors are not a direct window on to the past, thus posing more questions than what they answer.

Another type of source that initially appeared relevant in the aim to pin down real spaces, were autobiographies written by women. I managed to locate eleven of these books each devoting several pages to the description of the homes and rooms the authors inhabited. They seemed like a promising source because this type of account links the personal description of the home with the modern act of exercising self-consciousness and reflection in leaving a record for posterity. It was no coincidence that the proliferation of autobiographical accounts, especially the ones written by women, came together with the industrial revolution and the important role given to the private and domestic sphere, which paradoxically increased the presence of women in the public sphere through their shopping and consumption activities. Autobiographies appeared like a rich source to illustrate the experience of modernity in three fronts, as a personal, family and historical record. The drawback was that these accounts were written at the end of a lifetime, and usually focused on the home of childhood. Some authors described other homes they inhabited throughout their lives, but their accounts are also the memory of a home and not a contemporary depiction, bringing with them an altered perspective given by hindsight. As with photographs, autobiographies, even if based on memory, provide a snapshot in time and do not tell of the vicissitudes of home arrangements through the years.

Besides autobiographies women also wrote books on a wide range of topics. One area that particularly engaged their attention was that of domestic decoration, usually linked to journalism and magazine writing. A good number of women published advice books on how to furnish the middle-class home. This was a genre originally practised by male writers, mainly those related to the design reform movement. As a source, it turned out to be a specific one in everything related to domestic decoration with the additional bonus that, for the period considered in this

study, it targeted the ordinary householder. The problem was that the intention of these books was not to reflect people's homes but to change them. Advice literature was a genre with a mission: not just that of giving advice but of transforming people's taste and attitude towards furnishing. Its point of departure was to exemplify something that did not exist, or rather, that existed mainly in people's imagination and reflected their aspirations.

As secondary sources, history and design history literature presented an additional difficulty concerning the way researchers have used primary sources, and particularly representations of the domestic space, usually taking them as indication of practice. In the introduction to the book *Imagined Interiors* its editors, Jeremy Aynsley and Charlotte Grant confirm that for many historians 'representations of the interior have tended to figure as evidence' and 'have all been examined for testimony of what the homes of our ancestors actually looked like'.[14] This behaviour is surprising given that as part of their trade, historians know that historical documents cannot be taken as direct reflections of the past; they are never transparent to the researcher's gaze and therefore need to be assessed critically. Perhaps the difficulty lies with the potency of visual images and the instinctive tendency of human beings to believe what they see. A good example of critical work is Emma Ferry's doctoral dissertation on Victorian advice literature, showing in detail how far prescriptive advice was from reflecting real practices.[15] In the case of the book *Imagined Interiors*, its contributors set out to identify, not the actual domestic space, but the conventions followed in representing them, to determine the particular point of view from which such representations were constructed and to reveal attitudes to the interior.

Regarding my project, that sources depicting the domestic interior had been used uncritically, pointed at the need to examine them for what they were and establish the kind of evidence they could provide. This implied interpreting the meaning of these images within the contexts in which they were produced. Even if representations did not reflect the materiality of real interiors it was reasonable to suppose that they could reflect revealing traits. Studying the context and identifying who produced these accounts and images and why, could disclose if not what people actually achieved in their homes and interiors, at least some insights into what they expected from them, and the kind of influences they experienced. Such an approach proved fruitful because it opened the theme up, showing its breadth and complexity highlighting aspects such as the potency of ideals, which were not initially evident.

In the case of commercial sources this method pointed in the direction of business and retail history. As a result the first chapter deals with the retail scene of the period to demonstrate its relevance in the discussion of the modern home. Chapter 1 examines the significant transformation of the retail sector supplying home furniture and furnishing. It reconstructs the

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[14] *Imagined Interiors: Representing the Domestic Interior since the Renaissance*, ed. by Jeremy Aynsley and Charlotte Grant (London: V&A Publications, 2006), p. 17.
[15] Ferry, Emma, 'Advice, Authorship and the Domestic Interior: An inter-disciplinary study of Macmillan's 'Art at Home Series' 1876-1883' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Kingston University, 2004)

origins, growth and expansion of a sample of furnishing firms supplying the middle class in England, including Shoolbred, Maple, Heal, Oetzmann, Whiteley and Waring & Gillow among others. The power of the large type of firm is seen in its adoption of modern business methods, in the increasing number and size of its shops, factories and depositories, and in the large and growing range of its goods, departments and services. Being by definition a retail concern, most significant of all is perhaps the domination the large furnishing house exercised over production, not just of furniture but of the myriad of goods required in the equipment of the home.

Addressing the development of furnishing firms in the period is necessary to understand the motives and interests driving supply and demand and therefore their implications in the production, retailing and consumption of domestic goods. It highlights for example, the visual abundance of commercial representations of the domestic space at the time, as seen in adverts, trade catalogues, showrooms, shops and exhibitions, reaching an audience of millions. Furthermore, this first chapter illustrates the modernity of a model of middle-class home as a reflection of advances in commerce and industry responding to the possibilities offered by a capitalist economic system. Crucially, recognizing the power of the retailing sphere helps to appreciate the nature and scope of the opposition it triggered from the design reform movement. The theme developed in the first chapter is essential to understand the reasons behind the design reformers' campaign.

While closely examining advice literature, two things stood out. One was the strong and constant criticism of traders and their products, and the portrayal of middle-class women's decorative efforts, and consequently their home, as the embodiment of bad taste. The other was the way in which the narrative clearly promoted principles and ideas belonging to the design reform discourse. This literature addressed people of moderate incomes trying to teach them artistic principles in furnishing and decoration. In disseminating the reform agenda advice literature acted as an ideological tool aiming to discipline the public's consumption habits and preferences and change them for those more akin to the artistic and moral ideals of the Arts and Crafts school.

This realisation prompted, as shown in Chapter 2, the examination of the design reform discourse and the wider cultural context in which it operated. This chapter addresses an artistic vision of modernity represented by the Arts and Crafts movement, developed in reaction to the perceived negative consequences of industrialization, and particularly those affecting the decorative arts and the domestic sphere. Artists, designers and reformers dreamt of a cultural order, where not commerce but Art had the responsibility for society's architecture and material culture. Their anti-industrial stance was based on and inspired by medieval notions of beauty and vernacular methods of production, and aspired to assert the role of the artist in the modern world. The analysis of the Arts and Crafts movement's reform discourse, and mainly its reflection in advice literature, reveals reformers' vested interest in discrediting trade to assert their own status as artists/designers at the top of the professional and cultural hierarchy.

Advice literature for the period 1890 to 1914 has been little examined. Without treating it as direct evidence of the visual and material culture of the middle-class home, its importance lies in its discussion and representation of ideals in modern decoration. Chapter 3 shows how advice literature disseminated some Arts and Crafts' reformist ideas and encouraged artistic ambitions for the ordinary householder. The analysis identifies two main groups of authors, one more emphatic than the other in its promulgation of art principles, and shows how the different writers grappled with the paradox of delivering a reformist agenda to a middle-class readership dependent on commercial goods.

Examining the advice itself, the chapter reveals diverse notions of the modern home that these authors promoted and represented. It becomes clear that different elements acted together in conveying the modernity of the home, including aesthetics, styles, method of production, technology and affordability. In the end authors expressed such modernity, not by separating but by embracing the conflicting influences from the spheres of decorative art and commerce. The result was a varied interpretation and representation of the modern home, overall showing a blend of traditional and innovative elements.

Grounding the study of the domestic space in the short but crucial period from 1890 to 1914, is the consideration that home furnishing and decoration, and the debates it generated, are an important part of modernity. In her discussion of feminism Rita Felski considers 'department stores and factories' as 'aspects of modernity that shaped the lives of [...] women'.[16] Cited by Felski, Martin Pumphrey goes on to add that:

> Any adequate reading of the modern period ... must take account of the fact that the debates over women's public freedom, over fashion and femininity, cosmetics and home cleaning were as essential to the fabrication of modernity as cubism, Dada or futurism.[17]

Agreeing with their approach this project understands the representation of the visual and material culture of the middle-class home and the discourses dealing with it (such as design reform, advice literature and advertising), as an embodiment, depiction and account of modernity, albeit one which contains tensions and contradictions. In this sense the notion of the modern home spurns a double act of representation. An image portrays an ideal conception of the domestic interior and this interior conveys modernity, among other things.

The question of modernity is inextricably linked to the process of industrialization and to the profound transformations it unleashed. Asides from a historical period, modernity has also come to be understood as a kind of discourse encompassing all sorts of testimony (written or otherwise) on those revolutionary changes. These accounts reflect the experience of modernity in its different manifestations and the way people made sense of it. The examination and

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[16] Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 28.
[17] Martin Pumphrey, 'The Flapper, the Housewife, and the Making of Modernity', *Cultural Studies*, 1 (1987), p. 181. Cited in Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, p. 28.

detailed analysis of these accounts are nowadays an active branch in the study of modernity seeking to answer the question of how in the past people went through modern life and how their understanding of it shaped their consciousness. It is not a homogenous discourse and its contents normally depend on the perspective used. Until the 1950s most writers and artists, engaged with representations of modernity, were male and tended to express the modern in terms of their particular masculine experience. In *The Gender of Modernity* Felski uncovers this appropriation of modernity by male literature. The gender critique of such representations shows how women were assigned a minor and inferior role in the construction of the modern world. As a result, recently there has been a growing interest in discovering not just the female participation and experience in the process of industrialisation and modern culture, but also other accounts of modernity that were hidden by a dominant and ideological version.

Being a product of industrialization, the history of the middle-class home, its furnishing and decoration makes it a legitimate subject of analysis as an embodiment and expression of modernity.[18] Martin Daunton and Bernhard Rieger point out that the study of British modernity for the nineteenth- and twentieth-century is a recent enterprise.[19] Focusing on the period 1870 to 1930, their book shows the centrality of the category of 'the modern' as used by contemporaries. While before 1870 the modern was thought of mainly in economic terms referring to the consequences of industrialization, from then on it became broader in meaning. It included, for example, the pre-eminence of secular over religious thought, the origins of mass politics and political parties, the growth of consumption habits in the working and middle classes, the expansion of popular entertainment and changes in women's status. The book explores the phenomenon of modernity in contemporaries' own terms analysing their writings to see how they experienced and perceived it. People's understanding of the modern was varied and sometimes contradictory in meaning hence the more appropriate plural word, modernities. There was a consensus about living in an era of profound changes but the meaning of those changes was not unanimous.

The terms industrialization and modernization are used to describe the changing process from a pre-industrial world to one pervaded by the effects of a capitalist industrial economy: urbanization, mass transport, mass media, etc. Because of the radical nature of many of these transformations, the tension between the old and the new world has been a leitmotiv in the historiography, discourses and accounts of modernity. The trait is so pronounced that it could be said that modernity is this constant negotiation and strife to harmonize tradition with innovation. Modernity means neither just leaving the past behind, nor only embracing the new but living somehow amidst both trying to cope with the challenges of a continuous state of transition. Another distinctive feature of modernity is the awareness of change it awakens, and the uneasy

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[18] Deborah S. Ryan, *The Ideal Home Through the 20th Century*, (London: Hazar Publishing, 1997). This book is based on her doctoral thesis 'The Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition and Suburban Modernity, 1908-1951' (University of East London, 1995). Ryan argues the case for the notion of suburban modernity related to the suburban middle-class home and the lower middle-class woman.

[19] *Meanings of Modernity: Britain from the Late-Victorian Era to World War II*, ed. by Martin Daunton and Bernhard Rieger (Oxford: Berg, 2001), p. 1.

and at the same time bracing feelings that come with it. The years between 1890 and 1914 were no exception and as people approached the end of the century there was an impending sentiment of the end of an era and a new beginning. A difficulty in dealing with modernity is that it can be represented as an exterior impersonal force modelling history obscuring the fact that it is the result of human agency. It is important to keep in mind that people were not passive victims or beneficiaries; they reacted to the forces of modernity, and helped to bring them along as much as they resisted them.

This study addresses the representation of the domestic interior in an attempt to reveal contemporaries' notions of the modern home. More than with modernity per se, it is rather more concerned with the way in which two different visions and expressions of modernity participated in creating and shaping ideals in the furnishing and decoration of the middle-class home and thus the modern interior. These versions opposed each other as discourse and on an intellectual level, but on a practical level they also complemented and influenced each other. This study is therefore a reading of the modernity of the domestic interior from the perspective of reformers, advice writers, furnishing firms, but also indirectly, of consumers.

Taking advice literature as an account of modernity, this study shows how those women who wrote articles and books about home decoration articulated the meaning of the modern home and, as authors and women, gave voice to their experience of modernity in a professional capacity. Their writing was influenced by the agenda and conventions of the design reform discourse but it also expressed their take on it. Although criticised by male authors and design reformers, female advice writers gave a relation of modernity through their understanding of the domestic sphere and its equipment, and the role of women in the creation of the modern home. Homemaking and house decorating, underpinned by consumption activities, was an essential part of middle-class women's identity, and the print media encouraged those roles becoming in that way an important source of feminine socialization for its representations of domesticity and femininity.[20]

In 1914 when the writer Mrs Jane Ellen Panton published a new book on home management and furnishing she admitted that although her most famous one, *From Kitchen to Garret*, had needed little updating for its eighth edition back in 1893, it was of no use anymore because '(p)laces and people, to say nothing of fashions, have all become so changed that it would be impossible to housekeep or live under the conditions I then described'.[21] Mrs Panton's awareness of change and its fast pace was a constant feature in most documents of the period. The author and her contemporaries seemed to be aware of and sensitive to the degree of change they encountered in their everyday lives, stressing it over continuity.

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[20] Penny Tinkler, 'Women and popular literature', in June Purvis, *Women's History Britain 1850-1945* (London: UCL Press, 1995), pp. 134-35.
[21] Mrs J. E. Panton, *Leaves from a Housekeeper's Book* (London: Eveleigh Nash, 1914), p. 11. The author cites *From Kitchen to Garret: Hints for Young Householders* (London: Ward & Downey, 1888).

The period considered here, 1890 to 1914, was one of numerous and profound transformations and also of contradictions and ambivalences in facing and negotiating the impact of these changes. Although most of the processes linked to modernisation did not start in this period, they became more pronounced and effected a qualitative leap. People had a heightened perception of living in a new age.[22] The domestic arena and home decoration were areas permeated with uncertainties. It was not only that people were sometimes anxious about conflicting demands or desires; it is even possible that they thrived in this situation because so many opportunities were open to them. People were obliged to become aware of the possibilities, reflect and somehow make sense of them.

One of the most dramatic changes brought along by industrialization was the growth in population and particularly, the growth of the urban middle class seen in the expansion of the suburban area throughout the nineteenth century. Just for the period between 1803 and 1867 the growth rate of the middle class was 223% while it was 206% for the population as a whole.[23] In London the population grew from 2,235,000 in 1841 to 6,581,000 in 1901. At the turn of the century there was a major suburban expansion in England and London, mostly driven by the middle class, that was accompanied and supported by the development of electric tramways and by improved and cheaper rail services.[24] Most suburban houses at the turn of the century were developed by speculative builders and would be available for people earning between £150 and £700 a year.[25] After the slump of the 1880s there was a building boom in Britain.[26] In 1891 there were 6,693,000 houses and by 1916 there was an additional 2,383,000 houses.[27]

What these statistics highlight is that the development of cities and the increasing number of new houses to accommodate millions of people necessarily demanded a huge urban infrastructure and complex systems of provision. It was in response to the needs of a multitude that large-scale industries and businesses grew and developed, such as those in building, furniture, furnishing and decoration. The modern home of the period was the result of an unprecedented scale of operations in retailing, production and therefore consumption. The new type of home signposted a world where industry and commerce were the main driving forces.

The dramatic growth of the middle class calls into question those elements that defined it as a social stratum. Throughout the nineteenth century this notion was not static and changed as the class grew and consolidated. Within this shifting picture there are different categories to consider: economic (based on income, salary and occupation), socio-cultural (family networks,

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[22] Jose Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), pp. 32-36. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875-1914* (London: Abacus, 2002), p. 6.
[23] Patricia Branca, *Middle Class Women in the Victorian Home* (London: Croom Helm, 1975), p. 2.
[24] Michael Jahn, 'Suburban Development in Outer West London, 1850-1900', in *The Rise of Suburbia*, ed. by F. M. L. Thompson (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), pp. 93-156 (p. 135).
[25] John Burnett, *A Social History of Housing 1815-1985* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 191
[26] B. R. Mitchell and Phyllis Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge, 1962), pp. 6 and 239. The figures, in thousands to the nearest thousand, are: 1890: **76**; 1895: **90**; 1896: **107**; 1897: **130**; 1898: **158**; 1899: **156**; 1900: **140**; 1901: **140**; 1902: **154**: 1903: **160**; 1904: **137**; 1905: **127**; 1906: **131**; 1907: **121**: 1908: **101**; 1909: **99**; 1910: **86**; 1911: **67**; 1912: **53**; 1913: **54**; 1914: **48**; 1915; **31**; 1916: **17**; 1917: **zero**. As cited in Alastair Service, *Edwardian Interiors*, p. 9.
[27] Alastair Service, *Edwardian Interiors*, p. 9.

religion, style of life, tastes, behaviour, values) and political. It is also relevant to include a sense of self-definition based more on aspirations and ideals than in statistics or factual information. This is useful for example, to understand why artisans with bigger incomes than lower middle-class clerks would still be, and consider themselves to be, working class. The definition of a social class is 'as much a cultural construct as a neutral tool of social classification'.[28] At the time, the middle class had its critics and it is interesting to see how they portrayed it. 'The Edwardians revelled in distinctions between and within classes. Middle-class emphasis upon status, social observances and material possessions was persistently attacked by such leading Edwardian writers as Bennett, Galsworthy and Shaw.'[29] In 1909 A. Bennett connected this class' affluence and consumption habits to large shops and shopping:

> people on whose foreheads it is written that they know themselves to be the salt of the earth. Their assured, curt voices, their proud carriage, their clothes, the similarity of their manners, all show that they belong to a caste and that the cast has been successful in the struggle for life. It is called the middle-class [...] I go to the Stores, to Harrod's Stores, to Barker's, to Rumpelmeyer's [...] and I see again just the same crowd, well-fed, well-dressed, completely free from the cares which beset at least five-sixths of the English race. [...] When they have nothing to do, they say, in effect: 'Let's go out and spend something.' And they go out. They spend their lives in spending. They deliberately gaze into shop windows in order to discover an outlet for their money. You can catch them at it any day.[30]

As the class kept growing, its boundaries kept changing and sub-divisions sprang up. Differences in income, which were linked to occupation, were reflected in ways and style of life. The upper middle class included the top industrialists, professional and business people. Less affluent manufacturers, managers and professionals populated the middle middle class; and modest employees, retailers and craftsmen belonged to the lower middle class.[31] Within this three-part division, and discussing the neighbourhoods the middle class populated, F. M. L. Thompson refers to the 'layer upon layer of subclasses, keenly aware of their subtle grades of distinction.'[32]

The middle-class was an urban class and its formation was indissolubly linked to that of towns and cities. Variations in housing patterns not only mirrored social distinctions but also helped in drawing them. In the suburbs the lower middle class lived in terrace houses; the middle middle class usually inhabited the semi-detached type while the upper middle class chose the bigger detached dwellings. More than anything else, the home and the way it was furnished represented middle-class identity throughout the century. As Ralph Waldo Emerson observed

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[28] Richard Trainor, 'The Middle Class', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain, 1840-1950*, ed. by Martin Daunton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), vol. 3, pp. 673-713 (p. 675).
[29] Donald Read, *Documents from Edwardian England, 1901-1915* (London: Harrap, 1973), p. 36.
[30] A. Bennett, 'Middle Class' (1909), in *Books and Persons* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1920), pp. 67-70. As quoted in D. Read, *Documents from Edwardian England*, pp. 44-45.
[31] Richard Trainor, 'The Middle Class', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, p. 686.
[32] F. M. L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain, 1830-1900* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 173.

when he visited England in the 1850s: 'If he is in the middle condition he spares no expense on his house [...] Within it is wainscoted, carved, curtained, hung with pictures and filled with good furniture. 'Tis a passion which survives all others to deck and improve.'[33]

Finally, this introduction ends with a word about the discipline that inspired it. The subject of the modern domestic interior, and the way this research addresses it, feeds from a range of disciplines and fields of study (history, decorative arts, anthropology, economy, semiotics, philosophy, etc.), each contributing not only with relevant literature but also with concepts such as visual and material culture, interior design, domesticity, gender, middle class, representation, identity, consumption, mass-production, industrialization, commodity and modernity, to name a few. Nevertheless the subject of this study belongs firmly to the field of design history, which being interdisciplinary itself allows for the integration of such diverse approaches and concepts. Not many disciplines can engage equally with aesthetics and industry, with meaning and function and with representation and actuality in addressing the design of things, be it an object or, as in the present case, a space and ensemble, the domestic interior. Furthermore, in dealing with spaces, surfaces, objects and ensembles this discipline supports a project concerned with the areas of production, distribution and consumption, while addressing aesthetic, socio-cultural and economic issues.

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[33] R. W. Emerson, *English Traits* (London, 1856), p. 61; quoted in John Burnett, *A Social History of Housing, 1815-1985* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 112.

Chapter 1

Large-Scale Retailing and Commercial Furnishing

Business without profit is not business any more than a pickle is candy.

Charles F. Abbott[1]

Probably the biggest source of representations of domestic interiors for the period 1890-1914 was the retail sector. This alone is a sign of the importance of retailing in the furnishing industry targeting the middle-class home. Directing production and guiding consumer choices, large furniture and furnishing firms assumed a major role in a trade where cabinetmakers, chair-makers and drapers had dominated until the 1850s. To promote their goods, firms used a range of advertising tools such as printed material, showrooms, window displays and exhibition stands in national and international events. Thousands of drawings and photographs were published on several media including trade catalogues, newspapers, magazines, journals and books, making these images reach millions of people. This abundant representation of goods and domestic interiors reflected the transformation and vigorous activity in the areas of retailing, manufacture and printing.

In the late nineteenth century the British furnishing industry was one of the most dynamic and influential in the world, supplying not only the British market but the colonies of the empire and other countries under its commercial influence. The expansion of this industry was based on the growth of the middle class, and vice versa, mass furnishing was vital to this sector of society. Jose Harris explains that 'the aim of many a middle-class father was not to provide his sons with an inheritance after his death [...] the middle-class family was usually much more concerned with immediate consumption than with long-term saving of accumulation of property. [...] all contemporary observers agreed that the ethic of conspicuous consumption had soared to a crescendo by the 1900s.'[2] The following quote by a middle-class historian remembering the early twentieth century illustrates the delight she found in the consumption of modern things:

> London, now that the reign of Edward VII had begun, became very pleasant [...] those who had not lived before 1914 could have no idea of the perfection to which civilization had attained. Travel by road, rail or sea had become cheap and easy, home life had been brightened by new schemes of architecture, house decoration and gardening, and craftsmanship had achieved a pitch never dreamt of during the Victorian Era. How beautifully things were made in those days! What exquisite furniture, glass and china, what lovely dress materials were to be found in the London shops![3]

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[1] Charles F. Abbott (1876-1936) was an American industrialist.
[2] Jose Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), p. 70.
[3] Nesta Helen Webster (1876-1960), *Spacious Days: An Autobiography* (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 142.

The middle class and the industry catering for it developed an inter-dependent relationship that strengthened a culture of consumption targeting the home and thus helped to define middle-class status.

This chapter tracks the development of the British furnishing industry in the second half of the nineteenth century, with emphasis on London and on the period 1890 to 1914. It shows how the industry, comprising manufacturing and retailing, contributed to shaping modern furnishing ideals informing the middle-class domestic visual and material culture. This is crucial to understand the furnishing options available for consumers and also the modernity embedded in representations of domestic interiors.

Given the importance of the furnishing trade in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, it is surprising that the numerous and successful businesses responsible for the production and distribution of most domestic goods have not been sufficiently studied.[4] Part of the current knowledge on commercial home furnishing is based on the criticism it attracted from design reformers in the nineteenth century.[5] As discussed in the Introduction, their complaints and point of view have permeated many historical accounts and have therefore hindered a balanced appraisal of the role and significance of commercial production and design, and therefore consumption, in this period.

The literature on large retail firms (including all types and not just furnishing) is the most developed. It includes the study of individual enterprises and also general surveys on the subject. One of the most influential books is still *Retail Trading in Britain 1850-1950* by James B. Jefferys covering the origins and development of multiple shop retailing, co-operatives and department stores as examples of 'the revolution of the distributive trades'.[6] Jefferys used a comprehensive data drawn from company records, directories and interviews for the study of multiple retail organisations although not for the study of department stores. On British department stores literature is significant but has tended to focus on shop biographies (often celebratory) – Whiteley, Lewis, Selfridges, Debenhams- more than on the discussion of the wider historical and business context. An exception is Alison Adburgham's *Shops and Shopping 1800-1914* which provides a general account of department stores in Britain centred on clothing and fashion.[7] Bill Lancaster does something similar, although only covering England, in *The*

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[4] For discussions of retail historiography see Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact of Large-Scale Retailing in Britain', in *The Retailing Industry*, ed. by John Benson and Gareth Shaw, 3 vols, (London: I. B. Tauris, 1999), II, pp. 233-263 (pp. 233-234); and John Benson and Laura Ugolini, 'Introduction: Historians and the Nation of Shopkeepers', in *A Nation of Shopkeepers: Five Centuries of British Retailing*, ed. by John Benson and Laura Ugolini (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), pp. 1-24.

[5] Probably the best-known example is Charles Eastlake's, *Hints on Household Taste in Furniture, Upholstery and other details* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1872). Similar criticism was repeated throughout the century particularly in the form of advice literature.

[6] James B. Jefferys, *Retail Trading in Britain, 1850-1950: A Study of Trends in Retailing with Special Reference to the Development of Co-operative, Multiple Shop and Department Store Methods of Trading* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954).

[7] Alison Adburgham, *Shops and Shopping 1800-1914: Where, and in What Manner The Well Dressed Englishwoman Bought her Clothes*, 2nd edn (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1981).

Department Store based on previously published business histories.[8] He documents the development of small drapers' shops into big department stores suggesting that this type of store was an English invention. In a different field, consumption historians have examined department stores for the period 1870-1914 studying them as icons of modernity and as gendered spaces. For example Erika Rappaport in *Shopping for Pleasure* addresses the significance of the department store as a space conceived for middle-class women encouraging pleasure, sociability and consumption.[9]

Robert D. Tamilia in his annotated bibliography of the history of the department store asks for a better understanding of the role played by retailing in economy and culture.[10] He points out that for the period 1850 to 1930 this commercial institution was one of the most innovative and influential in changing the business world by helping to create and develop a culture of consumption and the notion of the modern shopping centre. The department store 'revolutionized the retail store itself, the shopping experience, availability and assortment of goods, credit policies, price awareness, media and promotional techniques, and was a major contributor to new managerial techniques from hiring practices to inventory control procedures'.[11]

Department stores aside, there is an absence of studies on the large-scale furniture and furnishing shop. More research is needed examining not just the business side of it such as the industry's source of capital, its contribution to innovative selling and advertising techniques, the key relationship between retailing and production, but, most relevant to the present work's subject, the assessment of its role in the shaping and promoting of the middle-class home's material and visual culture. This is important because, as said, until now most accounts of the furnishing and decoration of the middle-class home of the period rely on a historiography repeating the anti-commercial prejudice and criticisms of the design reform discourse. The next chapter elaborates this topic.

A recent study addressing domestic furnishing within retail history is Clive Edwards' *Turning Houses into Homes*, where he traces for Britain, since medieval times up to the twentieth century, the development of a consuming culture linked to transformations in retailing and changes in consumer demands.[12] For the nineteenth century Edwards distinguishes and documents six different types of house furnishers: **department stores** (e.g. Whiteley, Browns of Chester, Wiylie and Lochhead of Glasgow), **specialist furnishers** manufacturing most of what they sold (e.g. Gillow, Morant, Hampton and Sons, Holland and Sons, Thomas Dowbiggin, Jackson and Graham, Hindley, Johnstone and Jeanes, and Wright and Mansfield), **second-**

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[8] Bill Lancaster, *The Department Store: A Social History* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1995).
[9] Erika Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).
[10] Robert D. Tamilia, *The Wonderful World of the Department Store in Historical Perspective: A Comprehensive International Bibliography Partially Annotated*, May 2002, pp. 1-89. Available at: http://faculty.quinnipiac.edu/charm/Docs/dep.store.pdf
[11] Robert D. Tamilia, *The Wonderful World of the Department Store*, pp. 2-3.
[12] Clive Edwards, *Turning Houses into Homes: A History of the Retailing and Consumption of Domestic Furnishings* (Aldershot (Hants): Ashgate, 2005).

hand and antique dealers (e.g. London businesses on Brokers Row, Moorfields, Wardour Street, Soho, and also antique departments in bigger shops), **complete house furnishers** (e.g. Maple, Shoolbred), **furniture shops** defined as those that based their sales mainly on low prices (e.g. Tarn, Oetzmann, Whiteley) and the last type of shop described as '**the bottom end of the trade**' based on open pricing and exaggerated promotional methods. Although this classification is useful for the period 1860s to 1880s, it does not reflect the significant transformations that took place during the years 1890 to 1914. As this Chapter demonstrates, shops and firms changed and kept developing. This chapter shows that by then, all large furnishing firms (Whiteley, Maple, Heal, Oetzmann, Shoolbred, Waring & Gillow, Hampton & Son, Tarn, etc.) had become department stores and complete house furnishers, many including antique departments. Also, by then most large firms based their growth on a policy of low prices. Edwards suggests another classification, which fits better the period 1890 to 1914, divided into three categories according to size and type of activity: retailers, small producer-retailers and large-scale producer-retailers. All large furnishing firms belonged to this last category and they dominated the trade and the market.

For the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, the field of design history in Britain has given priority to the aesthetic component in the design of domestic furnishing and has focused mainly on the study of wealthy or renowned interiors and on the work of specific artists and designers, of artistic movements and usually their handicraft production.[13] What are seldom considered are product design, production and distribution within a business environment, or the discussion of the wider economic context in which the work of designers, artists, manufacturers and retailers took place. Ignoring these links can give a distorted understanding of design's nature and significance. Very often, design history literature has placed the emphasis on the production of goods as artistic and unique pieces of work while neglecting or playing down links with trade and mass production. With a focus on elite manufacture this literature is therefore unrepresentative of a wider sector of the population.

In the period considered here, the main providers of furniture and furnishings were shops and large retailing firms selling ready-made goods. Only a minority of people could afford antiques, bespoke designs or could specially commission someone to decorate their houses. By the late nineteenth century most consumers bought (or received) their goods as ready-made pieces, even when purchased at second-hand shops. It is therefore intriguing that the literature on the subject has not given enough attention to the bulk of furniture and furnishings that was

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[13] See for example Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964); Fiona MacCarthy, *British Design Since 1880: A Visual History* (London: Lund Humphries, 1982); Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor: The Domestic Interior 1620-1920* (London: Seven Dials Cassell & Co, 2000); Jeremy Cooper, *Victorian and Edwardian Décor: From the Gothic Revival to Art Nouveau* (New York, London, Paris: Abbeville Press Publishers), 1987; Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth Century Decoration: The Domestic Interior from 1900 to the Present Day* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson: London, 1988); Charlotte Gere, *Nineteenth-Century Decoration: The Art of The Interior* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989); Ann Massey, *Interior Design of the 20th Century* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1990); Alan Gore and Ann Gore, *The History of English Interiors* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1991); and Charlotte Gere with Lesley Hoskins, *The House Beautiful: Oscar Wilde and the Aesthetic Interior* (London: Lund Humphries and The Geffrye Museum, 2000).

commercially, machine-produced and mass-retailed ignoring thus the goods and products intended for most consumers.

There are exceptions to this focus in design historical literature. Four important examples, although still production oriented, are John Heskett's *Industrial Design* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1980), Adrian Forty's *Objects of Desire* (1986), Penny Sparke's *An Introduction to Design and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (1986) and more recently Jonathan M. Woodham's *Twentieth-Century Design* (1997). Heskett's book has a double approach, 'discussing the contribution of individual designers as well as the social pressures that have moulded their work'.[14] But the emphasis goes mainly on production and his account of the Victorian period is style driven. Forty focuses on social, economic and technological processes as steering elements in the design process rather than on individual designers, movements and personalities. In doing so he highlights the role of the manufacturer in deciding which goods are produced. The purpose of the book is 'not to discuss whether, say, William Morris's furniture designs were more beautiful than those displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851, but rather to try to discover why such differences existed at all'.[15] Similarly, and within the framework of industrial capitalism, Sparke stresses the relationship between economics, technology, politics, society and design. Again, the design process is seen in a complex context responding to various forces, rather than as a result of individual genius or of particular artistic movements. The book concentrates 'on the function of design as a quality of 'consumer goods' –that is, products which are openly available through retail outlets- rather than of 'capital goods' which are more specialized products, available only to a specialist market direct from the manufacturer or wholesaler.'[16] Woodham's book acknowledges that 'the central focus of the history of design has moved away from such explicit emphasis on the artistic creativity of celebrated individuals towards an evaluation of the wider social, economic, political, and technological climate in which design has been made and used.'[17] He says that the new approach has been fruitful in studies about mass-consumption, gender and about the meaning of objects linked to issues of representation. In a short chapter addressing the last years of the nineteenth century, Woodham asserts the little impact the criticism of design reformers had on manufacturers who were responsible for the mass-production of consumer goods. He addresses developments in retailing in the United States (mainly the department store) and less so in Britain. The above authors exemplify the shift in the general approach to design history in the last two decades. Nevertheless the literature concerning the furnishing of the late Victorian and Edwardian domestic interior still stresses the role played by individual designers, workshops and artistic movements and neglects the importance of the commercial dimension to design.

Furniture history, seen in many cases as part of decorative art history, has followed a similar path. It has avoided rather than embraced the topic of mass production and distribution. For a

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[14] John Heskett, *Industrial Design* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1980), p. 8.
[15] Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society since 1750* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005).
[16] Penny Sparke, *An Introduction to Design & Culture in Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), p. xvii.
[17] Jonathan Woodham, *Twentieth-Century Design* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 9.

long time this type of history has focused on the matter of provenance and stylistic attributions. 'In the past, furniture history has been connoisseur's territory, concerned with the attribution of furniture to well-known designers and workshops.'[18] Furniture has been treated more as belonging to the sphere of decorative arts than as pertaining industry and commerce.[19] Paul Greenhalgh explains the situation as follows:

> There has been a tendency in the literature surrounding Modernist furniture to divide it off from the trades and practices from whence it sprang, to analyse it as a commodity floating free from such things as artisan traditions, retail outlets, popular demand and government legislation.[20]

Three important exceptions in this field, among others, are Pat Kirkham's et al. *Furnishing the World*, Penny Sparke's *Furniture* and Clive Edward's *Victorian Furniture.* Kirkham et al. study the London's East End furniture industry from 1830 to 1980, its production, distribution to the West End and the colonies, and its significance in a national and international level.[21] Providing a general survey of the subject and a wider geographical scope, Sparke's *Furniture* focuses on mass-produced domestic furniture in Britain, Europe and America since the 1860s. She considers this type of goods in the context of the interplay between economic, social, cultural and technological influences illustrating how 'the expansion of the furniture mass market and the rise of the modern furniture industry are two sides of the same coin'.[22] Regarding Edward's book, it addresses the goods intended for the popular market, but the focus goes mainly on furniture production and specifically deals with materials, technology and patents. The central question is 'how technology and materials were used to alter, improve or otherwise change furniture design and manufacture in the nineteenth century'.[23] Studies on British furniture history for the Victorian and Edwardian period, although abundant, rarely address or elaborate the connection between production and distribution. In many historical accounts, furniture often appears not as the product of industry and business but as the result of the talent of single men, artists, designers and architects, underplaying the links to commercial production and retailing. Also, it is not unusual for accounts of furniture history to be driven by a succession in styles giving pre-eminence to aesthetic theories, which although significant, cannot account on their own for the transformation in those styles.[24]

Applied to the study of furniture or any other product, more recently there is consensus among researchers about the fact that design history should consider the whole product cycle including production, distribution and consumption, even if focusing on just one of them. An example of this perspective is Leora Auslander's *Taste and Power* on the history of furnishing in modern France where she deals with furniture style and taste as embodiments of power, class and

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[18] Adrian Forty, 'Debate: A Reply to Victor Margolin', *Design Issues*, 11 (1995), 16-18 (p. 17).
[19] Judy Attfield, 'Review', *Journal of Design History*, 8 (1995), 231-235 (p. 231).
[20] *Modernism in Design*, ed. by Paul Greenhalgh (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), p. 53.
[21] Pat Kirkham, Rodney Mace and Julia Porter, *Furnishing the World: The East London Furniture Trade 1830-1980* (London: Journeyman Press and The Geffrye Museum, 1987).
[22] Penny Sparke, *Furniture* (London: Bell & Hyman, 1986), p. 5.
[23] Clive Edwards, *Victorian Furniture: Technology and Design* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), pp. 2-3.
[24] See for example, John Gloag, *English Furniture* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1981); Edward Lucie-Smith, *Furniture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1988); and the journal *Furniture History.*

gender among other meanings.[25] Her historical examination of the furniture trade charts changes affecting furniture makers, sellers, buyers, and taste arbiters, and relates them to political, economic and social transformations. Trevor Keeble, in his recent study on the late Victorian domestic interior, argues that domestic tastes, designs and representations were immersed in a culture of changing conditions in three main areas: professional design, manufacture and production; commercial mediation, distribution and representation; and domestic retail, purchase and consumption. He points out, for example, that in many ways the development of furnishing stores followed closely that of the department store, but that being specialists in furniture and furnishings allowed them to keep their links to the sphere of production and to claim their authority in that area.[26]

This chapter examines the way developments in the sphere of retailing in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries affected and changed the fields of production and distribution of furniture and furnishings. Overall it aims to highlight the expanding potency of trade in creating a middle-class consumer culture and it examines the role the large furnishing firms played in shaping the middle-class market and thus its ideals regarding domestic furnishing. To state the obvious, the furnishing companies of the period adopting modern business methods were very successful. The owners and managers of these firms became millionaires as numerous middle-class householders patronized their shops. Consumers relied on and responded to marketing efforts not just because they needed and could afford household goods but because these products responded to consumers' ambitions regarding the material representation of who they were in social, economic and personal terms.

This chapter brings together fragmentary and scattered published and unpublished data. It draws from existent research in retail, business and consumption histories and from primary and secondary sources related to shops and the furnishing trade. Among primary sources trade catalogues play a key role for their abundance during the years from 1890 to 1914 (with many surviving ones kept in archives), for the importance they had as a marketing strategy and for being an effective way of representing domestic interiors. Although expensive to produce, trade catalogues were widely distributed, very often freely, and were a fundamental tool in promoting firm's goods and in positioning these in the market. Since the 1850s and over the years they became more sophisticated and their high quality illustrations included photographs by the 1890s. Although their main aim was to promote and sell goods, this does not mean that the information they provide as a historical document is not reliable. Catalogues are full of factual information such as royal patronage, date of founding, address, telephone number, telegraph code, terms and conditions, delivery facilities, photographs of the shop's façade, showrooms and individual pieces of furniture and furnishing; sometimes showing photos of workshops and depositories. Each illustration of particular pieces was complemented by useful information such as dimensions, type of material and price. Something revealing is the title of these catalogues,

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[25] Leora Auslander, *Taste and Power: Furnishing Modern France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
[26] Trevor Keeble 'The Domestic Moment: Design, Taste and Identity in the Late Victorian Interior' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Royal College of Art, 2004), pp. 214-215.

giving important cues as to how they should be read and interpreted. Some titles are straightforward such as *A Guide to House Furnishing* (by Oetzmann ca. 1890) or *Complete House Furnishing* (by Hampton & Sons, 1894) and sometimes they are more specific, as in *Hints on Furnishing* (by Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co. ca. 1900), *Country Cottage Furniture* (by Heal & Son ca. 1905) or *New Artistic Furniture* (by Dryad & Co. 1910). For the purpose of this study, trade catalogues not only proved their relevance by giving evidence of commercial and business practices and for the way firms changed and developed but also by their contribution to the growth of these firms and sector. Catalogues, together with newspaper and magazine advertising, were an invaluable communication tool.[27]

The retail and distributive revolution

As a result of industrialization, changes in the methods of distribution of domestic furniture and furnishings were closely related to changes in the areas of production and consumption. According to James B. Jefferys, in the second half of the nineteenth century significant transformations took place in all distributive trades and retailing. Small shops and their traditional ways of selling goods were not prepared to deal with large volume production and with new kinds and bigger ranges of goods, and were gradually superseded by large-scale shops and department stores with their new and modern ways of trading.[28] Before 1850 small shops predominated either as sole retail units (as was the case of drapers) or as a combination of production and retail units such as the workshops of cabinetmakers and chair makers. On general terms drapers bought their goods from producers and intermediaries while cabinetmakers made and sold their own wares. Both kinds of retailers were apprenticed to their trades and were in charge of just one business or shop.[29] Regarding modes of selling and window display, although having a long tradition going back into the eighteenth century, they were not widespread, and open advertisement was still disapproved of by many traders. Hence before 1850 a good number of retailers relied more on their good reputation to attract and secure customers.

Because shoppers normally bought in bulk, traders needed a large stock and had to offer long credit.

> The purchases made by all classes of consumer of the goods that were not immediately perishable tended to be of large quantities. The practice of home cooking, baking and clothes making, the existence of large families and the lack of leisure for frequent shopping expeditions encouraged this tendency.[30]

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[27] This discussion of trade catalogues as sources continues under the section 'Advertising on a new scale' below. See also Gaye Smith, *Trade Catalogues: A Hundred Years, 1850-1949: An Exhibition Catalogue* (Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University, 1992).
[28] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Transformation of the Distributive Trades, 1850-1914', in *The Retailing Industry*, ed. by John Benson and Gareth Shaw, 3 vols, (London: I. B. Tauris, 1999), II, pp. 9-20.
[29] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Transformation of the Distributive Trades', pp. 9-10.
[30] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Transformation of the Distributive Trades', p. 12.

Besides fixed-shops, people could also buy their goods from travelling salesmen known as pedlars and from weekly markets and fairs. Haggling was usual in most trades and particularly in drapery. This state of affairs was to change radically in the second half of the nineteenth century and particularly in the period 1875-1914 when new trades, new types and quantities of goods, new kinds of retailing units, new methods of organization and new selling techniques developed. Jefferys has argued that the department store, the multiple shop and the Co-operative Society emerged as the new forms of large-scale retailing organizations while the fixed shop became the main form of trading.[31]

This retail and distributive revolution was the result of changes in Britain's economic and social structures. Throughout the nineteenth century the country played a dominant role in world trade. The industries of coal, iron, steel, shipbuilding and textiles kept growing, spurred by technological changes while influencing other areas of the economy to develop large-scale production techniques and to replace handicraft manufacture.[32] This was the case of the boot and shoe, men's clothing and food manufacturing industries, which changed from small-scale, handicraft production to factory mass production industries.[33] This phase of industrialization depended on big and growing amounts of fixed capital. As businesses grew they changed into limited companies which allowed for different and better forms of financial investment and control. Britain specialized in exporting capital, and industrial and consumer goods while importing cheap foodstuff and raw materials. Industrialization and large-scale industry developed together with the growth of the working class and working-class demand, which in turn helped to bring about large-scale distributive organisations such as the Co-operative Societies and multiple shops. Industrialization, world trade and the management and ruling of the British empire also encouraged the growth of the middle classes linked to new professions and types of jobs: clerks, managers, civil servants, investors and professional workers to name a few. For both the working-class and the middle-class markets, mass-produced large-scale factory goods could no longer be bought and sold following traditional ways.[34] New selling methods and new types of retailing units had to develop. Middle-class demand was different from that of the working-class and required new and different forms of distribution exemplified by department stores and some multiple shops. Goods were increasingly produced anticipating demand rather than only responding to it. Rises in economy productivity and reduction in prices accompanied these changes causing a sharp increase in real income per head, thus favouring conditions for growing demand. Circumstances changed when real income growth slowed down circa 1900 and prices started to rise after 1909.[35] Even so, 'average per capita income rose from a margin of 25 per cent above subsistence in 1870 to a comfortable 150 per cent above subsistence in 1914.'[36]

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[31] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Transformation of the Distributive Trades', pp. 9-20.
[32] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Transformation of the Distributive Trades', p. 13. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875-1914* (London: Abacus, 2002), pp. 50-55.
[33] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Transformation of the Distributive Trades', p. 15.
[34] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Transformation of the Distributive Trades', p. 14.
[35] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Transformation of the Distributive Trades', pp. 15-19.
[36] Jose Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit*, p. 33.

Among the changes that transformed retailing, selling techniques had a crucial role. With the new developments shops were gradually transformed into places with a mission to instil new desires in customers and to attract more consumers. New shops and shops which adopted new retailing techniques used specially designed displays of merchandise and visual aids to impress: big plate glass windows, gas and electric lighting together with eye-catching window arrangement and showrooms. Inside the spacious shops, clients, assisted by sales staff, could examine directly the wide range and variety of goods. There was no need for haggling since all prices were fixed and clearly displayed. In department stores women could enjoy several new facilities such as restrooms, tearooms, restaurants and other kinds of customer services designed to attract clientele and make shopping a respectable, pleasurable and comfortable activity. Shops and advertising were crafted to arouse desire and encourage demand thus creating a solid consumer market and what consumption historians have identified as a culture of consumption.[37]

This account of the revolutionary transformations taking place in retailing in the second half of the nineteenth century has been challenged and balanced by more recent studies covering the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Retail historians present a picture of gradual evolution rather than revolution and show that many of the innovative features attributed to post mid-nineteenth century were already in existence a century before.[38] They have also challenged the notion of the contrast between 'modern' retailing enterprises, such as the department store and chain stores, against 'primitive' pre-Victorian ones. 'Claire Walsh suggests, for example, that developments such as fixed-price cash sales, "window shopping, browsing, the use of seductive display and interior design to enhance the appearance of goods, and shopping as a social activity" [...] were already well in evidence a century and more earlier.'[39] Christina Fowler has also shown that many innovative retailing practices such as fixed pricing, branding, advertising and the use of loss leaders were normal practice in the eighteenth-century. She has also found evidence for cash trading as an alternative to credit sales.[40]

Nevertheless what is truly distinctive about the meaning of modernity in the Victorian and early twentieth century periods is the relationship with the large scale of retail operations suited to

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[37] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Distributive Trades', in *The Retailing Industry*, pp. 288-304 (pp. 300-01). Don Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), pp. 8-32.
[38] See for example, *The Emergence of Modern Retailing, 1750-1950*, ed. by Nicholas Alexander and Gary Akehurst (London: Frank Cass, 1999); and John Benson and Laura Ugolini, 'Introduction: Historians and the Nation of Shopkeepers', in *A Nation of shopkeepers*, pp. 1-24 (p. 2). Benson and Ugolini refer to several studies: Margaret Spufford, *The Great Reclothing of Rural England: Petty Chapmen and their Wares in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Hambledon Press, 1984); Hoh-Cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui, *Shops and Shopkeeping in Eighteenth Century England* (London: Routledge, 1989); Nancy Cox, *The Complete Tradesman: A Study of Retailing, 1550-1820* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); and Claire Walsh, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of Design History*, 8 (1995), 157-76.
[39] John Benson and Laura Ugolini, 'Introduction', p. 2. Claire Walsh, 'The Newness of the Department Store: A View From the Eighteenth Century', in *Cathedrals of Consumption: The European Department Store 1850-1939*, ed. by G. Crossick and S. Jaumain (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), p. 68.
[40] Christina Fowler, 'Changes in Provincial Retail Practice during the Eighteenth Century, with Particular Reference to Central-Southern England', in *The Emergence of Modern Retailing, 1750-1950*, ed. by Nicholas Alexander and Gary Akehurst (London: Frank Cass, 1999), pp. 37-54.

cater for the mass of population that kept growing and had an increasing disposable income. In greater London the population rose dramatically between 1801 and 1911. The figures in Table 1 look more significant when compared to the 500,000 people living in London in 1700. Clearly a significant increase in the number of inhabitants called for a different type of retailing system.

Year	Population
1801	1,117,000
1841	2,235,000
1871	3,890,000
1901	6,581,000
1911	7,251,000

Table 1 London's population growth from 1801 to 1911[41]

The main advantages of large-scale retailing were related to economies made through the size of operations. Being able to buy in volume meant retailers had the power to influence prices from producers thus reducing operational costs.

> A strong buyer in the market can influence the pricing decisions of the producers and this is seen in various forms, for example the existence of special arrangements between producer and buyer for quantity discounts and so on. The advantages arising out of economies of scale may take the form of lower operating costs [...] Firstly, the scale of operations may allow for considerable specialization in function such as specialization in buying, in selling, in administration, in advertising and display and in staff training. Secondly, the scale of operations may be accompanied by an increase in the rate of stock turn.[42]

Department stores relied mainly on middle-class demand, which was different from that of the working-class. For the latter, demand was strongly linked to low prices while for the middle class, although still related to price, choice and quality allowing for the expression of individual taste were more important. Retailers' specialization in buying was geared towards careful selection from different suppliers rather than just securing low prices. Therefore having access to many and varied small producers was key for the large-scale retailer providing for the middle class. Department stores competed against each other and against other retailers by achieving distinctiveness in their selection and range of products, by the artistic display of goods and through effective advertising.[43]

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[41] John Burnett, *A Social History of Housing 1815-1985* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 191. *The Times History of London*, ed. by Hugh Clout, 3rd edn (St. Helens: Times Books, 2000), p. 88. J. L. Oliver, *The Development and Structure of the Furniture Industry* (London: Pergamon Press, 1966), pp. 22, 61.
[42] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Distributive Trades', (pp. 288-304) pp. 300-01.
[43] J. B. Jefferys, 'The Distributive Trades', (pp. 288-304) pp. 298-99.

Retail growth

Retail historian Gareth Shaw in his study of the origins and evolution of large-scale retailing, agrees with J. B. Jefferys that in the case of the department store there were two evolutionary paths from small retail units: growth by making a shop bigger in size or growth by opening new branches in other areas of the city or the country (see Table 4). Sales could be increased by either having a wider range of goods and/or by opening more shops or branches. The first path was the one followed by drapers, mercers and furnishers, increasing the range of products and as a result developing gradually into department stores by adding new departments. In growing, these shops ended up adopting new business methods such as cash sales, centralized buying, control over production and standard work practices. One growth strategy used by some drapers early in the 1830s involved having fixed low prices while reducing credit. This meant getting payments sooner and improving the rate of stock turnover, thus liberating capital that could be invested in expanding the shop.[44] A notable example of the success of this practice was Shoolbred in Tottenham Court Road in London, originally a drapery and clothing shop targeting the lower middle class and operating on cash sales, fixed price and a quick turnover of high volume stock. Established in 1817 by mid nineteenth century the firm had an annual turnover above £1 million employing 500 people.[45]

J. B. Jefferys defined the department store as a large shop with a minimum of four departments selling different types of goods including women and children's wear. According to Alison Adburgham, Shoolbred, Bainbridge of Newcastle and Kendal Milne of Manchester all fitted the definition before 1850.[46] But based on that description, large furniture and furnishing shops could not be considered proper department stores since they did not sell clothes. Although they diversified their goods, they did it within the specialized field of home equipment and decoration. Furnishing shops grew to cover several departments such as furniture, cabinet-making, upholstery, carpets, curtains, wallpapers, ironmongery, glassware, etc. Many large furnishing stores and department stores of the second half of the nineteenth century were old established firms:

Gillow– Lancaster (1729)	Waring – Liverpool (1835)
Marsh, Jones & Cribb - Leeds (1760)	Kendal Milne – Manchester (1836)
Heal & Son – London (1810)	Anderson – Glasgow (1837)
Shoolbred – London (1817)	Jenners – Edinburgh (1838)
Simpson & Sons – Halifax (ca. 1820)	Bainbridge – Newcastle (1838)
Cockayne - Sheffield (1829)	Maple – London (1841)
Hampton and Son – London (1830)	Oetzmann – London (1848)
Harrod – London (1835)	

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[44] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact of Large-Scale Retailing in Britain', in *The Retailing Industry*, pp. 233-263.
[45] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, p. 236.
[46] As quoted in Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', p. 238.

Some shops, particularly the ones founded before 1850 evolved into department stores while some of those starting after 1860 were purpose built as such and emerged as large enterprises; for example Bon Marche in Brixton (named after the French store) in 1877 and Selfridges in 1909. Clive Edwards states that 'large-scale complete house furnishers such as Maples, and Waring and Gillow were not department stores in the true sense, but their size and trading volume puts them into a similar category, since they had a wide range of specialist departments in some cases including a fashion department.'[47] Whiteley had 17 departments by 1868 and by 1911 it reached 115; John Barker had 42 in 1892 and doubled the number to 64 departments two years later; T. B. & W. Cockayne had 19 in 1898 and 28 in 1913; Liberty had 7 in 1879; Hampton had more than 20 in 1903; Waring & Gillow had above 40 in 1906; Shoolbred had 80 in 1909 and Selfridges had 160 departments by 1914.[48]

In the later part of the nineteenth century, an additional feature that went along with the expansion in the range of goods, and was as crucial to the success of firms, was the provision of comprehensive customer services. To attract consumers, department stores initially focused on low prices, causing huge opposition from small-scale traders (Whiteley being a famous example). Gradually and mainly since the 1880s the stress on price was replaced by bigger advertising and marketing efforts and by having a wide range of additional services for clients to make shopping a more comfortable and pleasurable experience. Department stores were the first to include the latest in conveniences such as telephone and telegraph lines, gas and electric lighting, lifts and moving staircases. To get customers' attention shops would advertise the use of electricity, lifts, cash registers or visiting celebrities such as Lily Langtry and Ellen Terry.[49] Some of the largest stores would also provide entertainment in the form of lectures, plays and musical performances. Shops, to state the obvious, were very attractive places. A lot of thought went into shop decoration and on layouts and displays. They were full of eye-catching features, starting with the building itself which was usually of impressive size and architecture. The ground floor had big plate glass windows of long frontage, showing clever exhibits of merchandise. Inside customers were lured by the expanse of space, assortment and quantity of goods, exhibits and ornamentation. There were rest-rooms and restaurants, and clients had the help of numerous shop assistants. Some stores arranged for 'shilling cabs' to be waiting outside the entrance in case customers needed them. As this chapter demonstrates, for the period 1890 to 1914 firms would include a wide scope of services such as providing design and furnishing estimates, painting and decorating, building work, removals, storage, plumbing, electric fitting, heating, postal orders, deliveries and even those of an estate agency (letting, selling, valuation, surveying and auctioning of properties).

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[47] Clive Edwards, *Turning Houses into Homes: A History of the Retailing and Consumption of Domestic Furnishings* (Aldershot (Hants): Ashgate, 2005), p. 199.
[48] See references for these figures under the section 'Range of goods, departments and services' in this chapter, pp. 32-38.
[49] James B. Jefferys, *Retail Trading in Britain 1850-1950*, p. 20; Pat Kirkham et al., *Furnishing the World*, p. 60.

The furniture industry

As noted already, all large-scale retailers, due to the size of their operations, put pressure on manufacturers regarding production, prices and working conditions. Retail historians agree that the retail transformation that took place in the nineteenth century was dependent on changes in consumer demand that were in turn connected to population growth (specifically urban population), to the development of the transport system and to a consistent rise in real income per head.[50] As pointed out before, in contrast to working-class demand, middle-class consumers expected bigger choice and better quality. Hence shops required a combined supply from the larger-scale factory and the smaller-scale workshops to achieve a wide range and variety of products. Through their buying strategies, based on selection and economies of scale, large retailers affected conditions in production including aspects such as design, materials, techniques, use of machines, cost, labour organisation and wages. Although furnishing firms dealt with a wide variety of goods, furniture was the most important kind. This section examines the furniture industry in this period to clarify and understand better the close connection between the areas of production and retailing.

During the eighteenth century, most of the furniture industry still depended on bespoke orders. This had ensured that production remained a handcraft affair taking place in small workshops, and that manufacturing and retailing were the responsibility of the same person. With a big and constant increase in demand, this situation changed, mainly after mid-nineteenth century, in a process where workshops multiplied and the bigger ones used a combination of machines and traditional handcrafting. Some large factories emerged in the late nineteenth century but these still relied on finishing work by hand. The end of the craft stage and the development of machine assisted furniture production defined the period from 1870 to 1914.[51] Also, rather than combining manufacturing and retailing as was the tradition, many workshops geared their production to supply retailers, leading to specialisation of activities which reflected in a geographical separation. Particular areas of the city became identified either with production or retailing.

It is relevant to consider here the structure of the furniture industry in London. At the start of the nineteenth century this industry, located in inner London, was also the furniture centre for the rest of English cities.[52] In 1801 the *Post Office London Directory* registered for 'the City' sixty-six businesses related to furniture production such as cabinet making, chair making and upholstering. These establishments were in the districts of Finsbury, Curtain Road, Fenchurch

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[50] See, for example, Volume 2 *The Coming of the Mass Market 1800-1945* in *The Retailing Industry*, ed. by John Benson and Gareth Shaw, 3 vols, (London: I. B. Tauris, 1999); J. B. Jefferys, 'The Transformation of the Distributive Trades', in *The Retailing Industry*, pp. 9-20. J. B. Jefferys, 'The Distributive Trades', in *The Retailing Industry*, pp. 288-304; John Benson and Laura Ugolini, 'Introduction ...', in *A Nation of shopkeepers*, pp. 9-10; Gareth Shaw and Martin T. Wild, 'Retail Patterns in the Victorian City', in *Transactions, Institute of British Geographers*, 4 (1979), 278-91; and Frank Livesey, *The Distributive Trades* (London: Heinemann Educational, 1979).

[51] J. L. Oliver, *The Development and Structure of the Furniture Industry*, p 81.

[52] J. L. Oliver, *The Development ...*, p 23.

Street and St. Paul's Churchyard. The sub-district of Stepney in the East End had three cabinetmakers and three upholsterers. To the south of London, Rotherhithe had one upholsterer and Southwark contributed with three cabinetmakers, two chair makers and three upholsterers. In total, by this account the City, the South and the East End had eighty-one establishments. The West End of London (W1), according to the same Directory had fifty-seven furniture-making businesses. These served the wealthier type of costumers. The main streets were Piccadilly (7), New Bond Street (6), Oxford Street (4), Dean Street, Soho (4), and Broadwick Street (3). WC1 and WC2 contributed an additional thirty-six establishments. There were also three workshops in the districts of St. John's Wood NW8 and five in Westminster SW1 bringing the total to 101.[53] Compared to the figure of 81 given before for 'the City', the South and the East End, the West was clearly in the lead. This distribution is significant because it reverses noticeably in the second half of the nineteenth century when the East took the lead in number of establishments specializing in production and the West became a retailing district.

The other major furniture-making area was in High Wycombe with fifty-eight chair makers in 1798. These figures made London the undisputed centre for furniture manufacture in the country and it remained as such for the whole of the nineteenth century although with shifts and changes within its metropolitan area. Since the 1860s the City declined while the West and East expanded. In spite of the growth in the West, the East End took the lead after 1870.

Year	W1	W2	WC1	WC2	NW1
1801	57		(& WC2) 36		
1811	80				
1846	269	10	68	21	40
1859	380	29	73	32	54
1872	356	32	54	32	63
1911	289	28	34	11	124

Table 2 Number of furniture-making establishments in the West End 1801-1911[54]

Compared to other areas, there was always a preponderance of upholstering businesses in the West, which had 190 establishments in 1859.

> The peculiar nature of the West End furniture industry may be explained partly by the character of the demand and partly by the role played by the retail drapers in its genesis. [...] In the bespoke section of the trade, typical of the "west end" of a metropolis, upholstery has been in greater demand than in less opulent districts. Ready contact between makers and purchasers was of much account. [...] Drapers' shops evolved into influential department stores with furniture departments supplied from workshops in back streets near by.[55]

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[53] J. L. Oliver, *The Development* ..., pp. 25, 28.
[54] Based on information found in J. L. Oliver, *The Development* ..., pp. 31, 34.
[55] J. L. Oliver, *The Development* ..., pp. 31-32.

As Table 2 shows, there were hundreds of furniture making workshops in the West End supplying retail stores in the area. After 1859 the industry expanded north-eastwards from Oxford Street to the Tottenham Court Road area and to St. Pancras. At the same time many workshops in the East End also appeared and developed to meet the demand created by the stores in the West End. Henry Mayhew in his *London Labour* of 1861 described how East End manufacturers would transport the furniture on horses and carts to the shops in the West End.[56] Also, in 1888 the 'Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Sweating System at the East End of London' gathered evidence on this. In the 1890s Ernest Aves' chapter in Booth's survey described the development of the factory industry in the East End. There were only three to four factories but they were large, they had the latest in machinery and could employ close to 200 men. Rather than supplying wholesalers in the East End, these factories destined their production to retailers in Tottenham Court Road, the rest of the country and the colonies.[57] In the late nineteenth century the West End was still the district catering for the wealthier customer demanding bespoke furnishing while the Tottenham Court Road developed as the realm of the big furnishing houses and the East End specialised in factory and machine production.

With the gradual disintegration of the apprentice system, furniture production in the East End in the second half of the nineteenth century became a typical sweat trade: 'The East End trade was characterised by small workshops established with very little capital investment, low wages, long hours [...] unskilled labour, sub-contracting, specialisation, the subdivision of labour and a low degree of trade union organisation.'[58] There were a small number of large firms such as Messrs. Clozenberg, Lebus, H. Herrmann Ltd., Cohen & Sons and E. Kahn & Co. Ltd. (Figs. 1-4) specialized in wholesale production selling directly to retailers in the Tottenham Court Road area (such as Maple and Shoolbred). They made their profit out of combining machine work (sawing, planning, moulding, etc.) with unskilled and low cost labour.[59]

As Table 3 shows, in London's East End the production of furniture (began in earnest in the 1840s) developed so quickly that by 1872 it had surpassed the production in the West End in terms of volume, number of workers and factories. Two other furniture-making districts were the City (Fenchurch Street and St. Paul's) with 22 establishments and the South East (Southwark, Kennington and Walworth) with a total of 111.

'By the late 1880s, for instance, Maple & Co. made less than 10 per cent of the goods they sold under their own label.'[60] The same was true for Shoolbred in 1888 with the firm manufacturing less than ten percent of what they put on the market while claiming it had access to the

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[56] Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor* (London: Griffin Bohn, 1861), p. 224. As quoted in J. L. Oliver, *The Development ...*, p. 36.
[57] Ernest Aves, *The Furniture Trades*, in Charles Booth, *Life and Labour of the People of London* (London: Macmillan, 1893), 4, Chapter 6, p. 172. As quoted in J. L. Oliver, *The Development ...*, p. 36.
[58] Pat Kirkham et al., *Furnishing the World*, p. 3.
[59] Pat Kirkham et al., *Furnishing the World*, p. 19.
[60] Pat Kirkham et al., *Furnishing the World*, p. 15.

production of about a thousand different cabinetmakers in London and throughout the country.[61] This development was also reflected in the separation of firms' showrooms from their factories and depositories, a scheme replicating the way in which London developed specialized areas, the West End increasingly identified with retailing and the East End with furniture and textile production. As the next section in this chapter shows, by the end of the nineteenth century it was common for large retailers and department stores to expand the business by setting up and developing manufacturing units apart from the main store. This separation allowed more space for showrooms (space-rent was at a premium in the West) but also reduced costs of production by moving workshops and factories to an area where rents were lower and access to resources was easier and cheaper.

West London	1859	1872
West End W1	380	356
Paddington W2	29	32
Kensington W8	10	10
Notting Hill W11	10	17
Bloomsbury WC1	73	54
Strand WC2	32	32
St. Pancras NW1	54	63
Kentish Town NW5	2	6
St. John's Wood NW8	12	8
West. SW1	62	73
Chelsea SW3	--	33
TOTALS	664	684

East London	1859	1872
Stepney E1	88	90
Bethnal Green E2	84	121
Bow E3	5	13
Hackney E8	2	5
Poplar E14	5	10
Finsbury EC1	136	134
Curtain Road EC2	178	220
Hoxton N1	148	198
Holloway N7	8	9
	654	800

Table 3 Furniture making establishments comparing West London and East London in 1859 and 1872[62]

Besides the East End, retailers in the West End also traded with High Wycombe for chair supplies. The chair-making industry developed in this borough and surrounding area since the eighteenth century and became the sole leader in chair manufacturing throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[63] Between 1798 and 1875 the directory of High Wycombe showed a ten-fold increase in the number of chair-making establishments. 'In the decade 1831-40 one Wycombe manufacturer had hawked his chairs by horse and cart as far as Luton [...] In later years he sent his products to London, Liverpool and Manchester, i.e. to the metropolis [...] and overseas to Australia, Constantinople and New Zealand.'[64] Several High Wycombe manufacturers opened showrooms in London, such as 'Thomas Glenister in Wells St., 1905-21; Benjamin North, in City Road, 1890-1941; and Walter Skull (later absorbed into Ercol) in Whitfield St., Fitzroy Square, in 1886, in City Road, in 1891, and Berners St., 1901-32.'[65] In the

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[61] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.: Late Victorian Department Store Furniture' (unpublished master's thesis, Royal College of Art, 1985), p. 54.
[62] J. L. Oliver, *The Development* ..., p. 39.
[63] J. L. Oliver, *The Development* ..., pp. 45, 48.
[64] J. L. Oliver, *The Development* ..., pp. 63, 69.
[65] J. L. Oliver, *The Development* ..., p. 91.

whole country, besides London and High Wycombe only Brighton qualified as an important furniture centre with fifty-eight locations in the 1870s.[66]

In 1801 the main streets involved in the production of furniture in the West End of London were found to the south of Oxford St. After 1872 there was a shift to the north-east. In the 1870s and up to 1914 Tottenham Court Road became the heart of the West End furniture business. 'In its neighbourhood there was an agglomeration of makers and of ancillary trades: cabinet carvers, carvers and gilders, ironmongers, leather merchants, liners and inlayers, sawyers, tool merchants, upholsterers' warehousemen and upholstery spring makers.'[67] (Fig. 6) But also, as seen above, it was since the 1870s that the West End reduced the number of furniture-making establishments (with the corresponding increase in the St. Pancras area and in the East End) while expanding and specializing in retailing.

Furniture and furnishing firms and shops

This section describes and explains the power and strength that retailing and the large furnishing firms acquired in the second half of the nineteenth century and particularly for the period from 1890 to 1914. It is concerned with the expansion and modern business methods implemented by these firms, linking them to the growth of the middle-class and the type of demand they supported and encouraged. The aim is to show how the modernity of this market-oriented industry contributed to building a culture of consumption informing and supporting this class' furnishing ideals and expectations. Without a better knowledge of the goods and services that were available to consumers, it is not possible to understand the type of domestic interior that people wanted and aimed to create. The sustained success of the large furnishing companies is a strong sign of their impact and influence.

There are many common features in the development of the firms discussed below. The success and strength of these enterprises came not only from the owners' individual business skills but also from the booming business environment, the economic system and the strong industrial and financial situation of the country. Overall, large furnishing shops and department stores shared similar growth and expansion patterns and similar business methods. Most started as a small unit in the early part of the nineteenth century, growing gradually by buying adjoining premises and later on by separating shop and workshop space. Each new expansion, including opening branches in other cities and countries, demanded more staff. Most firms started and developed as a one-man affair or a partnership but it was common for owner's offspring or relatives to join the business turning it into a family enterprise. Profits were reinvested fuelling the growth and expansion process and when firms became large ventures some turned into private and most into public limited companies, bringing in more capital but

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[66] J. L. Oliver, *The Development ...*, p. 71.
[67] J. L. Oliver, *The Development ...*, p. 65.

requiring a more complex and efficient management of merchandise, resources and staff.[68] This process of expansion was constant and only came to a stop with the Great War in 1914.

The growth in building space went along with diversification in the type and range of goods and in the services the shop provided. A parallel and interesting phenomenon took place when, in the process of growing, many furnitshing firms became large stores with several departments while, by contrast, many general department stores opened a furniture and furnishing department that soon became one of the most important and profitable. Such was the case of Kendal Milne and Co. in Manchester. By the early 1890s the company decided to turn furniture into its most important line of business by building a seven storey cabinet factory and upholstering workshops employing 130 workers.[69]

Location and expansion

As discussed above, throughout the nineteenth century and until 1914 London was and remained the biggest and most important centre of furniture making and distribution for the domestic market and the colonies.[70] Until around the mid nineteenth century, London shops tended to concentrate in the west, following residential patterns of wealthier customers. Initially shops had been established along Holborn, the Strand, Fleet Street, Regent Street and Oxford Street. Later on other shopping areas grew in Bayswater (Whiteley), Knightsbridge (Harrod) and Kensington (John Barker). In the west, besides the traditional up-market bespoke and exclusive area linked to Bond and Oxford Street, there was the fast-growing Tottenham Court Road area. The latter included some of the largest furniture and furnishing shops targeting the middle-class consumer (Figs. 6, 7 and Table 4). During the 1860s and 1870s department stores and shopping centres also developed in the suburbs, in Holloway, Clapham and Brixton (Fig. 8).[71] Examples of furnishing shops in the suburbs include Williamson & Cole in Clapham and Tarn & Co. in Lewisham.[72]

Origins

The founders of what later became large furniture and furnishing businesses were usually born in the country or in small towns. As part of their training they followed an apprenticeship to a drapers or cabinetmaker and then moved to the big city to work for a large shop, workshop or warehouse. They soon mastered any novel retailing techniques, which allowed them to save enough capital or enter into partnership to set up their own business. During this period having an apprenticeship in retailing proved more important and useful than one in cabinet-making.

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[68] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact of Large-Scale Retailing in Britain', in *The Retailing Industry*, pp. 233-263.
[69] As quoted in: Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, p. 244. This information was taken from *The Century's Progress*, 1892, p. 19.
[70] Pat Kirkham et al., *Furnishing the World*, pp. 3, 15.
[71] *The Times History of London*, ed. by Hugh Clout, 3rd edn (St. Helens: Times Books, 2000), p. 106.
[72] Williamson & Cole, Hight Street, Clapham SW; Tarn & Co., Newington Causeway and New Kent Road SE.

Many entrepreneurs started as a one-man business, but many as well became family enterprises for two or three generations. The majority began with soft furnishings but all ended up including furniture and making it the core part of the business. The success of all these ventures highlights that the economic system allowed for social mobility and benefited not just those with inherited social privileges.

A classic example is John Maple (1815-1900) who started his career by becoming an apprentice to James Constable, a grocer and draper in Horley, Surrey from 1829 to 1835. He then moved to London where he found work with Martin Atkinson, owner of a large workshop and showroom at 70-75 Bridge Road, Lambeth (today Westminster Bridge Road), selling sideboards, wardrobes and desks to furniture retailers and individual customers. In 1841 he bought Francis Green's drapery in partnership with James Cook at 145 Tottenham Court Road. In December of that same year the partners took over the premises of Francis Godbold, upholsterer, at number 147 on the same road. Three years later Maple and Cook got married to two sisters from Horley, and Maple and wife Emily Blundell set up their home above the shop.[73]

A similar example was that of William Whiteley (1831-1907). He was born in Yorkshire where his father was a successful corn dealer. In 1848 he started an apprenticeship under Harnew & Glover, the largest drapers in Wakefield. Inspired by his visit to The Great Exhibition in 1851 he decided to start a career in London, where he moved four years later. He worked for Willey & Co. in Ludgate, then joined a large firm, Fore Street Warehouse, and finally took a position with Leat & Sons, specialists on the ribbon trade. After eight years of hard work Whiteley saved enough capital to pursue his own business, a fancy goods shop at 31 Westbourne Grove in 1863.[74]

John Barker (1840-1914) became a very successful salesman while working with Whiteley. Born in Kent to John Barker senior, a carpenter, and apprenticed for three years to a draper in Maidstone he gained work experience in other drapery shops before moving to London in 1858. In the capital he worked initially for Messrs Spencer, Turner and Boldero, a firm of furnishers and drapers in Marylebone, until some years later he was offered a position at Whiteley. Being a talented salesman soon he got promoted to department manager with an annual salary of £300 that became £600 within a year after doubling sales. Encouraged by his results Barker asked William Whiteley for a partnership. He did not get it but was offered instead a salary of £1000 a year, a substantial amount of money at the time.[75] In 1870 Barker decided to leave Whiteley in

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[73] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples Fine Furnishers: A Household Name for 150 Years* (London: Quiller Press, 1992), pp. 1-7.
[74] Gareth Shaw, 'Whiteley, William (1831-1907)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36870], pp. 1-3 (p. 1).
[75] Adrian Room, 'Barker, Sir John (1840-1914)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, May 2006, pp. 1-2 (p. 1) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38975].

order to open a small linen drapery shop in 43 and 44 Kensington High Street with the help of a partner, James Whitehead, who provided capital and credit.[76]

The history of Heal and Son illustrates the case of a family business. It started with Ambrose and Rachel Heal moving from Dorset to London where they saw better commercial opportunities for their two sons. John Harris and Ambrose Heal junior became involved in separate bedding factories early in the nineteenth century. John Harris, after working for a firm of feather-dressers in Leicester Square started his own feather-dressing business in 1810 at 33 Rathbone Place (off Oxford Street). The venture prospered and in 1818 he moved the factory and shop to 203 Tottenham Court Road (Fig. 9).[77] His son, also called John Harris Heal, moved the shop again to 96 Tottenham Court Road in 1840.

The firm Waring & Gillow illustrates a different case in that it involved the history of two different family firms, Gillow from Lancaster and Waring from Belfast and Liverpool. Robert Gillow senior (1704-1772) established his business as cabinet-maker, upholsterer and decorator in 1730 in Lancaster after following his apprenticeship as a joiner. 'He was a furniture maker, an undertaker, a jobbing carpenter, and a spirit merchant.' Around 1740 Gillow started to send furniture consignments to London eventually opening a branch there in 1744. In 1757 he took his son Richard (1734-1811) as full partner.[78] In 1764 they moved the London branch to 176 Oxford Road (now Oxford Street). Although the shop in London became the main part of the business all the furniture was made in Lancaster. When Robert Gillow senior died in 1772, the business went on in the hands of his two sons, Richard and Robert (1745-1793). Richard stayed in Lancaster and Robert moved to London but by 1830 the family connection had stopped. On the other hand John Waring, coming from Belfast, founded a wholesale cabinet-making business in Liverpool back in 1835.[79]

> The Waring family originated in Norway and emigrated to Ireland at the beginning of the 19th century where they became highly successful linen manufacturers. Samuel J Waring [senior] opened a branch in Liverpool where he not only sold his Irish linen but a range of household effects. Later they became wholesale cabinetmakers. In 1893 S. J. Waring's son, Samuel Waring junior, moved to London and established the Waring business in Oxford Street.[80]

At the end of the nineteenth century Gillow & Co. bought the firm Collinson & Lock (which had absorbed the firm Jackson & Graham back in 1885). Soon after that the new business ran into

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[76] Glasgow University Archive Services, 'The Story of John Barker & Co Ltd, Kensington, London', at: www.archives.gla.ac.uk, pp. 1-9 (p. 1). Reproduced from Michael Moss and Alison Turton, *A Legend of Retailing: House of Fraser* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989).
[77] Maurice Baren, *How It All Began Up the High Street* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1996), pp. 74- 77 (p. 74).
[78] R. S. Clouston, 'Minor English Furniture Makers of the Eighteenth Century Article VI – Robert and Richard Gillow', *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, 7 (1905), 41-47 (p. 41). Available at: http://www.jstor.org
[79] City of Westminster Archives Centre: Gillows of Lancaster and Waring and Gillow, reference code 344. Available at: Access to Archives website http://www.a2a.org.uk/html/094-344.htm
[80] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 159.

financial difficulty and in 1897 S. J. Waring & Sons bought it to found Waring & Gillow (Fig. 10).[81]

Harrod was also a family enterprise. Charles Henry Harrod, the father of Charles Digby Harrod (born 1841), had been a miller before moving to London where he became a tea merchant and a grocery wholesaler developing his own retail trade in Stepney. Charles Digby became a grocer like his father and learnt the trade at the family shop in the East End. Because of a cholera epidemic his father decided to move and bought a small grocery shop in semi-rural Knightsbridge in 1849. In 1860 Harrod senior sold the business to his son for £500.

Many other large furnishing firms also began as small affairs. James Shoolbred (1793-1862) started out as a linen draper in Broad Street, Bloomsbury, in 1814. Soon after that he got a partner called Cook and opened a shop in 155 Tottenham Court Road in 1817.[82] In 1838 the firm traded as 'linen and woollen draper, silk, mercers, haberdashers and carpet warehouse'. Hampton & Sons was established in 1830 as a cabinetmaker's shop.[83] Oetzmann launched his business in Hampstead Road (off Euston Road), London in 1848. He started trading in china and glass but quickly moved into furniture.[84] Many provincial firms had similar origins. Cockayne was originally a small drapers shop established in Sheffield in 1829. Marsh & Jones set up a cabinet making business in Leeds back in 1760. Just as Gillow did, it eventually opened a branch in London.

Extension of premises

Table 4 gives the location and founding dates of furniture and furnishing firms' shops, branches and workshops, factories and depositories. The address list is not comprehensive but it indicates and summarizes the type of growth and expansion of the different firms. Starting as a small endeavour most businesses gradually expanded to colonize a street or block. Maple, Shoolbred, Heal & Son, Oetzmann, Hampton & Son, Whiteley, John Barker and Harrod grew in size by buying adjacent stores, as did other type of shops expanding in this period throughout the country.[85] Many firms bought neighbouring shops and leases in order to occupy eventually the whole street block and secure what was called an 'island site' (Figs. 11, 15, 18, 21, 28, 29). The expansion strategies in buying land and premises and in having bigger shops with increasingly large showrooms reflected the growth and dominance of retailing activities over those related to manufacture. Not only individual firms consolidated their presence but,

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[81] H. J. Jennings, *Our Homes and how to Beautify Them* (London: Harrison & Sons, 1902), p. 62. City of Westminster Archives Centre: Waring and Gillow, available at: http://www.a2a.org.uk/html/094-344.htm
[82] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 4. Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 5.
[83] *The Victorian Catalogue of Household Furnishings*, introduction by Stephen Calloway (London: Studio Editions, 1994), p. 4 of Introduction (pages unnumbered). Re-print of Hampton & Sons, *Book of Specimen Interiors and Furniture*, trade catalogue, 1894.
[84] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 23.
[85] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, pp. 234-236. For the Parisian department store, Robert Proctor argues that 'acquiring, renting and expanding' property was a vital but usually long and difficult process. Commercial success depended on securing a strategic city plot. 'Negotiating Space: The Parisian Department Store and its Property', conference paper, CHORD Conference, *Buyer Beware! The Business, Politics and Pleasures of Commerce*, 15-16 September 2004, University of Wolverhampton.

collectively, they assured as well the strength of the retail district, which could only benefit them. To a great extent the creation of a consumer culture was dependent on this economic and geographical dominance that allowed firms to extend and multiply their influence.

In the 1830s Hampton & Sons grew to include adjoining premises combining Crown leases and freeholds. By 1855-60 the different buildings were altered to offer a unified run of shop windows along two sides. By the end of the nineteenth century the store occupied one entire block in Pall Mall East and Cockspur Street (Fig. 11) and the workshops moved out to Belvedere Road in South East London.[86]

Oetzmann opened his shop at 67 Hampstead Road in 1848.[87] By 1871 the business had grown to include 67 to 77 Hampstead Road and 41-42 Charles Street.[88] In the early 1890s the complete store address comprised 67-79 Hampstead Road, 146-148 Drummond Street, 15 William Street and 1-34 Eagle Place. Showrooms and warehouses covered an area of 255 feet by 274 feet (Fig. 12).

	Shop and branches	**Workshop / Factory / Depository**
Maple Ltd. Co. 1895 Royal Warranty in 1892	145 Tottenham Court Road in 1841 145-147 Tottenham Court Road and Torrington Place (a side street) in 1852 145-149 Tottenham Court Road, 1-15 Tottenham Place and 2-6 Grafton Street East in 1874 Boulevard de Strasburg, Paris ca. 1886 Opera House (near), Paris 1890s 141-150 Tottenham Court Road, Grafton Street and Gower Street by 1897 Euston Road (entrance) in 1903 Rue Boudreau, Paris by 1900 Calle Suipacha, Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1907 (agent since 1877) 109 Kings Road, Brighton in 1909 Montevideo, Uruguay by 1912 and Smyrna (Turkey) by 1916	'Three-Railway-Termini' (St Pancras?) in 1880s Beaumont Place, Midford Place, 14 Frederick Street, 15-23 Southampton Court in 1881 Tottenham Place in 1890s Paris, 1890s Highgate Road, Camden ca. 1900 Camden Street in 1910s
Heal & Son Ltd. Co. 1905	33 Rathbone Place in 1810 203 Tottenham Court Road in 1818 196 Tottenham Court road in 1840 196-198 Tottenham Ct Rd in 1854 196-198 Tottenham Ct Rd in 1917 (new building)	Francis Street and Torrington Place in 1860
Hampton & Sons Ltd. Co. 1908	Pall Mall in 1830 Pall Mall East and Cockspur Street by 1894	Belvedere Road SE in the 1890s, Queens Road, Battersea Park in 1920
Oetzmann Ltd. Co. 1909	67 Hampstead Road in 1848 67-77 Hampstead Road and 41-42 Charles Street in 1871 67-79 Hampstead Road, 146-148 Drummond Street, 15 William Street and 1-34 Eagle Place ca. 1890s Tottenham Court Road (close to Warren St Station) in 1914	Drummond Street, Hampstead Road and 98 Regent Street (branch offices) ca.1890s

[86] *The Victorian Catalogue of Household Furnishings*, p. 4 of Introduction (pages unnumbered).
[87] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 23.
[88] Oetzmann & Co., *Hints on House Furnishing and Decoration*, trade catalogue, ca. 1871.

Waring & Gillow Ltd. Co. 1903 Royal Warrant by 1897	**Gillow** Lancaster in 1730 London 1744 176 Oxford Road, London in 1764 North Road, Lancaster in 1881 **Waring** Liverpool in 1835 **Waring & Gillow** 118-124 Deansgate, Manchester by 1897 42-46 Bold Street Liverpool by 1897 181 Oxford Street in 1897 Paris by 1897 166-175 Sloane Street London in 1905 164-180 Oxford Street in 1906 70 Rue Caudenberg Brussels by 1912 62 Avenue des Champs Elysees Paris 2 Plaza de la Lealtad Madrid, 36 Calle Florida Buenos Aires by 1912 172 Avenida Alvear by 1913 3 Beaver Hall Square Montreal by 1912	St. Leonardgate area, Lancaster by 1881 Fleet Street, Liverpool by 1900 London by 1900 Hammersmith (Cambridge Road, London), Bloomsbury (Broad Street, London) Liverpool, Lancaster and Paris by 1913
Shoolbred Ltd. Co. 1913 Royal Warrant in 1880s	Broad Street, Bloomsbury in 1814 155 Tottenham Court Road in 1817 154-156 Tottenham Ct Rd in 1835 'Tottenham House' on Tottenham Ct Rd, Grafton St, Huntley St and University St by 1880s	Torrington Place, Upper Gower Mews, Midford Place, Queen's Buildings on Pancras Street in 1880s
Whiteley Ltd. Co. 1899 Royal Warrant in 1896	31 Westbourne Grove in 1863 31-49 Westbourne Grove in 1868 Purpose built Department Store Queensway in 1888 (burnt down 1897) Queensway and Westbourne Grove block in 1911	Queensway Avonmore Road, Kensington by 1899
John Barker Ltd. Co. 1893	43 and 44 Kensington High Street in 1870 Fifteen shops in both Kensington High Street and Ball Street in the 1870s & 1880s 63-65 Kensington High Street, 2-6 Young Street and 6 Ball Street in 1889	Cromwell Crescent 1895
Liberty Ltd. Co.1894	218A Regent Street in 1875 216, 218, 222 and 142-144 Regent Street in 1882 Birmingham and Paris in 1887 Agent representatives in New York, Toronto, Shangai and Tasmania by 1887 Regent Street, 1920s	Brooke Street (tailoring business) in 1881
Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co. Ltd. Co. ca 1905	Leeds in 1760 London, Cavendish Square Boar Lane Leeds in 1890s	Basinghall St, Globe Road, Water Lane, Leeds in 1890s
T. B. & W. Cockayne Ltd. Co. ca 1900	Sheffield, 1829	Sheffield

TABLE 4 Location of furniture and furnishing firms: shops, branches, workshops and depositories

There were two factories, 'Albion Works' in Drummond Street and 'Eagle Works' in Hampstead Road.[89] In 1901 the firm opened a new and purpose built edifice seven floors high in Drummond Street (Fig. 13).[90] By 1914 the shop had moved from Hampstead Road to Tottenham Court Road (across Euston Road) close to Warren Street station.[91] A press advert in 1922 announced 'further extension of premises' in its new warehouse, with showrooms in the floors above (Fig. 14).[92]

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[89] Oetzmann & Co., *Guide to House Furnishing*, trade catalogue, ca. 1890.
[90] *The House*, IX (1901), p.148.
[91] Oetzmann, advertising, *The Times*, Jun 02, 1914, p. 4, issue 40539, col F.
[92] Oetzmann, advertising, *The Times*, Oct 23, 1922, p. 5, issue 43169, col F.

Started a few decades earlier Shoolbred's growth process was similar to Oetzmann's. In 1817 and in partnership with a friend called Cook, Shoolbred moved the original shop to what would become its permanent site at 155 Tottenham Court Road. In 1835 the firm bought numbers 154-156 in the same street and built a new shop.[93] Following a piece-meal growth, it acquired two new properties in 1842 and between 1847 and 1861 bought any new leases on offer. Shoolbred's sons continued buying premises in the area until they owned a whole block plus additional buildings nearby. In the 1880s the shop was rebuilt as a large department store with an extensive range of goods.[94] After a fire in December 1891 the firm extended its premises completing building works in 1895 (Figs. 15-16) and also carried out large alterations and additions to warehousing depositories in 1899.[95]

In 1867, four years after opening his shop on Westbourne Grove, Whiteley was in a position to buy a row of shops on the same street housing seventeen departments.[96] In the early 1870s the firm added a furniture department.[97] By 1888 the shop included all the premises on Queen's Road excepting number 157 and 159. The business main trade then were its 'household furnishings departments'.[98] By 1899:

> The central business establishment consisted of fourteen shops in Westbourne Grove, seven shops in Queen's Road, and four houses in Kensignton Gardens Square. Dormitories were provided by 141 Queen's Road, twenty-one houses in Westbourne Grove Terrace, and two in Hatherley Grove. There were also nearby properties used as auction rooms, building yards and offices, and stabling in eight of the surrounding streets. There were eight freehold houses, while another twenty in the immediate area had recently been purchased with a view to development, as had two freehold plots of land. There were eight suburban distributing depots, and massive depositories in Avonmore Road, Kensington, with four staff houses. In addition there was the Hillingdon nursery of 9 acres and the Hanworth Farm of almost 200.[99]

A new grand scale purpose-built store opened on 21 November 1911 occupying a whole block on Queensway (Figs. 17-19). The store had 115 departments and employed 5000 staff.[100] Seven years after the Great War the building was once again being refurbished and expanded (Fig. 20).[101]

After leaving Whiteley, in 1870 John Barker opened a small linen drapery shop in 43 and 44 Kensington High Street. In the next ten years he acquired fifteen shops in both Kensington High

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[93] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 4.
[94] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 5.
[95] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 6.
[96] Gareth Shaw, 'Whiteley', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36870], pp. 1-3.
[97] Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly: The Life and Death of a Salesman* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2004), p. 39.
[98] *The Cabinet Maker*, 1 October 1888, p. 106.
[99] Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly*, p. 185.
[100] Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly*, p. 240.
[101] Gareth Shaw, 'Whiteley', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36870], pp. 1-3. Whiteley, advertising, *The Times*, Tuesday, Apr 12, 1910, p. 3, issue 39244, col A. Whiteley, advertising, *The Times*, Tuesday, Nov 21, 1911, p. 4, issue 39748, col A. Whiteley, advertising, *The Times*, Tuesday, Nov 29, 1911, p. 13, issue 39755.

Street and Ball Street and to his original drapery goods he added furnishings, ironmongery and groceries. Barker kept buying adjoining premises, leases and freeholds and in 1889 the shop expanded to a large purpose built six-storey construction on 63-65 Kensington High Street, 2-6 Young Street and 6 Ball Street. These new premises offered an 'American elevator', refreshment rooms and 30,000 square feet of space. By 1894 the company owned thirty-three shops housing sixty-four departments and had a staff of 1,500. In 1900 Barker secured a building lease for a site on the north side of Kensington High Street with 440-foot frontage. By 1907 a seven-storey corner building in the same street was completely dedicated to the selling of furniture and furnishings (Figs. 21-22).[102]

New buildings

Throughout the nineteenth century it was common for buildings to be afflicted by fires, and business owners took this as an opportunity to rebuild the stores to a grander scale and give them unified, impressive façades.[103] After the fires the shops re-emerged on a bigger scale (Figs. 23-26 for Harrod). The new edifices used the latest materials and building techniques, and incorporated new facilities to make shopping more appealing and comfortable for costumers. Maple suffered a big fire in 1871, Harrod in 1883 (just after a recent expansion, with all stock ready for Christmas), Shoolbred in 1891 and John Barker in 1912. Through the decades Whiteley survived a series of fires, most of them between 1882 and 1887. It was suspected his enemies and competitors probably caused some of them.[104] After the last fire Whiteley's successors planned a grand scale purpose built store, which opened on 21 November 1911 occupying a whole block on Queensway (Figs. 17-19). A press advert invited the public to 'heartily inspect its beautiful and spacious galleries, its lofty domes, its marble staircases [...] its modern equipment and convenient service'. It claimed it was the largest British store in the world. The new premises were a luxurious construction also housing a theatre and a roof golf course.[105]

Often firms embarked in complete building projects knocking down previous edifices or refurbishing the old ones and giving them new facades. When the partnership between John Maple and James Cook dissolved in 1851 Maple made his half brother, Henry Adams, a partner in the business. He then demolished the shops and built new premises with large shop windows to display furniture, carpets, sheets, mattresses and towels. The new building included workshops and provided accommodation for his employees, sales and clerical staff,

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[102] Glasgow University Archive Services, 'The Story of John Barker & Co Ltd, Kensington, London', at: www.archives.gla.ac.uk. pp. 1-9 (pp. 1-4). Reproduced from Michael Moss and Alison Turton, *A Legend of Retailing: House of Fraser* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989). Adrian Room, 'Barker, Sir John (1840-1914)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, May 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38975], p. 1-2 (p. 1).

[103] The reason for frequent fires was probably linked to an abundance of flammable material found in shops, workshops and depositories, such as textiles and wood, and to the lack of efficient alarm and security measures.

[104] Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly*, pp. 118-19, 120-22, 130-35, 136-38, 147-57, 160 and 162-63. Gareth Shaw, 'Whiteley', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36870], pp. 1-3 (pp. 1-2).

[105] Whiteley, advertising, *The Times*, Tuesday, Nov 21, 1911, p. 4, issue 39748, col A.

cabinetmakers and upholsterers (Fig. 27). Maple and family, who had been living above the shop, then moved to a house in Hampstead. In 1857 building works carried out next-door to the shop destabilised and collapsed its structure. The shop was then rebuilt as a five-storey building with the workshops and the new export warehouse annexed (Fig. 28).[106] In December 1871 a fire struck affecting the whole block and destroying part of the building and stock. The furniture department, silks and damasks were on the ground floor where the fire started. The bedroom department was on the first floor, and on the second floor they kept chair frames, upholsterer's fittings, etc. A year after the fire most of the block where the shop was located was sold at auction. The block faced the south side of Euston Road, New Road, Southhampton Court, Beaumont Place and Tottenham Place. The firm acquired the whole lot and rebuilt it expanding the store to occupy a big island site with showrooms, workshops and timber yards (Figs. 29-30). Although to some extent dependent on the East End furniture trade, Blundell Maple decided to keep the factories and workshops running and, additionally, to become involved in the timber business.[107]

In 1854 Heal & Son opened a new and large edifice incorporating 196-198 Tottenham Court Road. The architect J. Morant Lockyer designed it following the Italian Renaissance style and providing an arcaded shop front with big plate glass windows (Fig. 31). Almost sixty years later in 1913, Ambrose Heal junior, as new chairman, commissioned a new shop building from his cousin architect Cecil Brewer. After many difficulties because of the War, the new shop opened in 1917. The whole building was a statement in modern architecture. It had very large floor-to-ceiling windows and at the back of the shop it displayed a unique circular staircase with no resting landings, which was highly unusual at the time (Figs. 32-33). The new shop had four floors and housed the modern 'Mansard Art Gallery' on the top floor. Connecting to the Gallery was a winter garden leading to a small open court with fountain (Fig. 34). Brewer also redesigned the bedding factory including a dust extractor to clean the air, modern heating and ventilating systems and safety features such as fire escapes and sprinklers.[108]

Less than a decade after its founding, in June 1906 Waring & Gillow opened a large and luxurious purpose built eight-storey shop in 164-180 Oxford Street in London (Figs. 35-36). The new premises offered eight acres of space (40,000 square yards) mainly for the exhibition of goods and one hundred-and-fifty specimen rooms with over one hundred galleries. The building was designed to impress, with a 90 feet-high rotunda covered with a glass dome (Fig. 37) and with shop front windows forming islands and arcades. Facilities included four elevators, 'a prettily decorated Restaurant and a Ladies' Room where tea may be served'.[109]

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[106] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 1-15.
[107] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 20-21.
[108] Susanna Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter: A History of Heal's* (London: Heal & Son, 1984), pp. 33, 39 and 41. Also, Alan Crawford, 'Heal, Sir Ambrose (1872-1959)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33786]
[109] Waring & Gillow, *Souvenir of the Opening of Waring & Gillow's New Building*, June, 1906, p. 20.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of shop building belongs to Gordon Selfridge (1858-1947) (Fig. 38). Coming from Chicago, this American entrepreneur decided to open a shop in London convinced that the city lacked modern department stores. The new building cost £400,000 and was at first financially backed by the firm Waring & Gillow on the condition that the store would not sell any furniture and domestic furnishings. Later these two firms dissolved the initial financial partnership but the agreement remained and Selfridge never sold anything related to home furnishing. After a three-year battle with London County Council's regulations, the store got a license to use steel frames, which allowed wide interior spaces and very large plate glass windows. The large shop with its imposing façade was ready for opening on 15 March 1909. It was later expanded to its current size and was not completely finished until 1928 (Figs. 39-44). Nine passenger lifts, two service lifts and six staircases connected the building's eight floors (three below ground). Besides having a restaurant, luncheon-hall, tea-room and roof garden the store had an American soda fountain, a library, a 'Silence Room', a post office and 'typically furnished' rooms for foreign visitors.[110] Selfridge's building, store layout and retailing strategy had a considerable impact on the furniture and furnishing retail scene at a local and national level. The firm's grand scale of operations and particularly its retailing and marketing tactics set new standards others tried to emulate.

Workshops and depositories

The physical expansion of shops and related buildings was a material indication of the growth and success of the company. Shops, workshops and depositories grew to accommodate an ever-expanding range of goods, departments and services (see Figs. 30, 45-52). Although initially all buildings were located nearby, as the firm expanded, workshops, etc. moved to areas of the city where this type of constructions predominated (see Table 1). In the case of cabinet-making factories their location was determined by having easy access to materials like timber, which meant being close to canals and transport termini. For example, by the 1890s Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co. from Leeds had its showrooms in Boar Lane, but the workshops, timber yards and depository were in a different part of the city.[111] By 1913 Waring & Gillow had factories a long way away from the shops, not just in Hammersmith, London but also in Liverpool, Lancaster (were Gillow's workshops had originated) and Paris, fitted with 'the most modern machinery' (Fig. 51).[112]

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[110] Maurice Baren, *How It All Began Up the High Street* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1996), p. 122-126. Jeanne Catherine Lawrence, 'Steel Frame Architecture versus the London Building Regulations: Selfridges, the Ritz and American Technology', *Construction History Journal of the Construction History Society*, 6 (1990), 23-46. Erika Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 142-177. Also, *The Times History of London*, p. 106-107.
[111] Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Home Furnishing*, trade catalogue, 1890s, presentation page.
[112] Waring & Gillow, advertising, *The Times*, Wednesday, Mar 12, 1913, p. 6, issue 40157, col A.

Branches

As part of their development strategy some firms including Maples, Waring & Gillow, Liberty and Harrod opened branches in Europe, Asia and America (including South America). In 1897 Waring & Gillow's catalogue listed a branch in Paris besides the ones in England (London, Liverpool, Lancaster, Manchester and Blackpool) (Figs. 53-54).[113] By 1906 its catalogue included additional shops in Glasgow, Brussels, Madrid and Johannesburg. In the following years up to 1913, a branch in Cape Town opened and closed down but new ones prospered in Montreal and Buenos Aires.[114] In 1912 Harrod opened a shop in Buenos Aires, Argentina replicating almost exactly the original store in London, selling furniture and carrying out building and decorating contracts.[115] Maple had a shop in Paris since the 1880s and through an agent it had been doing business with Buenos Aires since the early 1877. The firm opened a proper branch there in 1907, listed an additional branch in Monte Video (Uruguay) by 1912 and by 1916 added another one in Smyrna (Turkey).[116]

Range of goods, departments and services

Firms showed their growth and success not only in the expansion of buildings and branches but also in the increasing range of goods, departments and services. Information regarding a company's specific activities and range of services was usually advertised in trade catalogues, adverts and on shops' façades. Post office directories are another good source as are the firms' legal documents where they had to state their purpose and scope. Seeing how activities and services changed over the years give clues as to the avenues of expansion chosen by businesses.

Although most furnishing firms became department stores, they did not use that term to describe themselves.[117] In the late nineteenth century and judging by the information that appeared in most illustrated catalogues, firms and shops portrayed themselves as an all encompassing kind of business, catering for anything related to the home and home furnishing: from selecting, inspecting and renting a house, to decorating, fitting and furnishing it. Firms would promote themselves as house furnishers, manufacturers, furniture designers, upholsterers, decorators, exporters and dealers in antiques. Services normally included removal, storage, delivery, expert advice from store decorators, preparation of estimates and designs, decorative schemes, model furnished homes and rooms, lighting, plumbing and heating. Some firms offered as well other services such as acting as estate agents, providing hire purchase, etc. As already mentioned, it was not unusual for the largest shops to include

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[113] Waring & Gillow, *Model House*, trade catalogue, Manchester, 1897. Bedford Lemere photographed this model house set up in the Manchester shop in 1897.
[114] Waring & Gillow, advertising, *The Times*, Wednesday, Dec 13, 1912, p. 41, issue 40081, col A.
[115] Maurice Baren, *How It All Began*, pp. 65-67.
[116] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 90.
[117] The phrase 'department store' was not used at the time. Current historiography does not normally consider the exclusive furnishing shop as a department store. Thus Whiteley is considered to be one but Heal is not.

among its customer services restrooms, a restaurant, reading rooms, and entertainment in the form of plays, concerts and other regular events.

Most descriptions of what a company did come as a long list of activities; but it is relevant to note that this list was an important advertising piece of information. Firms were trying to outvie one another in their competition for customers' patronage. The pattern of evolution went from selling a small range of merchandise to gradually increase the types of products and services, each one giving name to a department. Classifying things in this way helped both firms and consumers in understanding and handling what could have been overwhelming amounts and diversity of goods and information. An important consequence in terms of expansion was that each new department usually implied more staff and showroom and storage space.

Back in 1843The *Post Office Directory* described Maple as a 'Carpet Warehouse'. Five years later in 1848 the entry read 'Carpet and Furn. Warehouse Cabinet Maker'. In 1851 Maple built new premises with large shop windows to display furniture, carpets, sheets, mattresses and towels. The title of 'Upholsterer' was added in 1858 and by 1881 it read 'Cabinet Makers, Upholsterers and Carpet Factors'.[118] In 1870 Maple's adverts promised to furnish a house 'of any magnitude' in three days, a service of 'immense advantage to country purchasers'.[119] An advert published in the *Illustrated London News* of 1874 stated that the shop supplied '*every* requisite for house furnishing including linens, ironmongery, glass, crockery, bronzes, and every description of ornaments, whether for dining or drawing room or for Christmas and wedding presents'. It claimed that it had 'the largest selection in the world [of drawing-room furniture]' and 'five thousand [brass and iron bedsteads] to select from'.[120]

Besides the main business of home furnishing Maple also received other type of furnishing contracts such as the one to decorate and equip the Royal Station Hotel at York in 1878.[121] In 1885 the firm furnished the Grand Hotel at Charing Cross, the First Avenue Hotel in Holborn and the Holborn Restaurant.[122] To cope with demand by 1888 Maple was employing over 2000 staff, with 1295 men and boys working in the workshops, and 391 girls and 365 salesmen and clerks working at the shop. Additionally there were 144 cabinetmakers, painters and polishers employed at the factories in Islington working exclusively for the firm.[123]

Maple & Co. became a private limited company in 1891. In the Memorandum of Association the business owners were described as upholsterers, furniture manufacturers, furniture dealers, carpet manufacturers, linen drapers, ironmongers, braziers, builders, decorators, timber merchants, warehousemen, paper makers, general house furnishers, picture dealers, furniture

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[118] J. L. Oliver, *The Development ...*, pp. 32-33. Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 9.
[119] Maples Furniture, *Court* Journal, May 7, 1870, p. 538. Quoted in Lori Anne Loeb, *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 43.
[120] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 22 (quoted from image of advert).
[121] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 23.
[122] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 32.
[123] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 37-8.

removers, furniture stores, house agents, auctioneers and valuers.[124] The business also had a big exports department and claimed it dispatched goods and teams of decorators to any part of the colonial empire to fit and furnish homes, offices, hotels and palaces. By 1893 the shop and annexes occupied 20 acres.[125] Throughout the 1890s the firm bought more space for factories, workshops, stables and warehouses (Figs. 30, 45-46). In those years hotel work was a strong area of retailing, benefiting from Blundell Maple's association with Frederick Gordon, a hotel developer. Maple, Shoolbred and what was then a newcomer to the London business scene, S. J. Waring & Sons, received contracts for the Hotel Cecil in the Strand in 1894.[126]

In 1900 Maple's catalogue *Illustrations of Furniture* ran to 400 pages including black-and-white photographs.[127] There were now additional shop premises in Grafton Street and Gower Street housing mainly library and boardroom furniture. In 1905 by rebuilding and changing parts of the store premises the managers created 500 feet of uninterrupted showrooms and galleries while adding a new entrance on Euston Road. Also in 1905 Maple turned its Paris branch in Rue Boudreau into a separate company by creating 'Maple & Co. (Paris)'. In need of storage space and in response to increasing trade the Paris firm added a fireproof depository adjacent to the showrooms.[128] Maple had had an agency in Buenos Aires, Argentina, since 1877 and in 1907 opened a proper branch in Calle Suipacha called 'Maple & Co. (South America) Ltd.'. Because stock took twelve weeks to reach Buenos Aires, the management decided to build local workshops and warehouses to manufacture furniture for the Argentinian market.[129] In 1909 the firm also opened a branch in Brighton at 109 Kings Road.[130]

In the 1900s the firm started to replace its horse vans providing free delivery with motor vans. By 1910 Maple's shipping department was busier than ever sending consignments to several countries in Europe, South America and Asia.[131] The 1912 catalogue included new branches in Montevideo, Uruguay and in Smyrna, Turkey. This 300-page catalogue, titled *Illustrations of Furniture*, had many explicit references to modern furniture and to small households. It listed twenty-seven departments including 'furniture, bedding, carpets, curtains, blinds, chintzes, antiques, decoration, interior woodwork, parket flooring, specimen rooms, pianos, ironmongery, sanitary engineering, electric lighting, estate agency, timber yards, removals, warehousing, cold storage and renovations.[132]

Heal's is a similar case to Maple's but the firm never ventured too far from their original line of activity centred in providing bedroom furnishings and furniture. By 1840 Heal & Son had a mattress factory with modern equipment such as a feather-dressing mill, a wool-carding

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[124] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 42.
[125] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 52.
[126] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 56-7.
[127] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 70.
[128] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 88-9.
[129] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 90-2.
[130] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 93.
[131] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 93.
[132] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 95-97.

machine and a steam plant for purifying and dressing the feathers. Heal & Son's catalogue in 1852 included bedroom furniture and showed many different patterns of the then fashionable iron and brass bedsteads and cribs, half-tester bedsteads and mahogany four-posters.[133] As early as 1858, and perhaps inspired by the displays at The Great Exhibition, the firm was illustrating its catalogues with pictures of entire rooms.[134]

> One advertisement accompanying Charles Dickens' Mugby Junction (the part of All the Year Round for Christmas 1866) was devoted to inviting the public to see a series of small rooms showing bedroom suites in their appropriate atmosphere 'so that customers are able to see the effect as it would appear in their own rooms'.[135]

In 1860 the business added a cabinet-making workshop (expanded in 1871) to produce bedroom suites. The range of furniture was widened later, in the early 1880s, when the firm set up the new drawing room furniture department and launched a separate illustrated catalogue.[136] At the end of the century in 1895 Ambrose Heal junior, inspired by the ideals and designs from the Arts and Crafts movement and by his cousin, Cecil Brewer, an Arts and Crafts architect, published a catalogue of his own designs.[137] These designs were the origin for the firm's cottage furniture range that remained in production until after the War. The general catalogues of 1896, 1898 and 1902 presented the firm as 'bedstead, bedding and bedroom furniture manufacturers, feather dressers, and carpet warehousemen' and included photographs of the show rooms, specimen rooms and the bedding and cabinet factories (Figs. 48-50).[138] Although not mentioned in this presentation, the company also sold drawing room and dining room furniture. As mentioned before, an impressive new shop opened in 1917 (Figs. 32-34). The ground floor exhibited bedroom and bedding lines while the first floor displayed drawing room furniture and furnishings, in marked contrast, regarding style, to the cottage furniture found on the second floor. Antiques were housed on the third floor contrasting again with the modern 'Mansard Art Gallery' and the 'Mansard Flat' furnished in cottage style exhibited on the top floor.[139]

In 1894 Hampton & Sons shop's front read 'Hampton & Sons Cabinet Makers' and 'Carpet Manufacturers'. The catalogue of the same year presented the firm as 'Complete' house furnishers and included furniture, carpets, curtains, linens, blinds, china and glass. As part of the shop's services it provided refreshment for visiting clients and delivered goods free of charge within a radius of 12 miles. Those who could not visit were encouraged to order from the catalogue and have their goods delivered by the company's own vans, by a firm of carriers or by

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[133] Maurice Baren, *How It All Began Up the High Street* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1996), pp 74-77 (p. 74-75).
[134] *Heal's Catalogues 1844-1950,* Adam Matthew Publications, in www.ampltd.co.uk
[135] Susanna Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter*, p. 17.
[136] Susanna Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter*, p. 17.
[137] It was reprinted in 1898 accompanied by an essay written by the then editor of *The Studio*, Gleeson White with illustrations by C. H. B. Quennell. Heal & Son, 'A Note on Simplicity of Design in Furniture for Bedrooms with Special Reference to Some Recently Produced by Messrs Heal & Son', 1898. Gleeson White died in 1897 and perhaps that was the reason to reprint the catalogue.
[138] Heal & Son, *Bedsteads, Bedding and Bedroom Furniture Illustrated Catalogue*, trade catalogue, 1902. This was the 145th edition of the firm's trade catalogues.
[139] Susanna Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter*, pp. 39, 41.

railway.[140] Circa 1903, Hampton published a booklet called *My Week-End Cottage*. It stated that, besides the brochure on cottage furniture, the firm could supply on request 20 additional departmental catalogues.[141] In 1908 'Hampton & Sons Ltd. Furnishers and Decorators', took part in the Decorative Arts Palace of the Franco British Exhibition. The souvenir trade catalogue marking the exhibition stressed the firm's capability to 'provide the most Artistic Homes at the least cost compatible with reliable quality in materials and craftsmanship'. Among the recently created departments were the 'Fine Arts', pianos and 'Electric Fittings & Furnishing Ironmongery'.[142] During and after the War an important line of business was that of removal and storage as testified by the modern depositories built in Queens Road, Battersea Park (Fig. 52).[143]

In the early 1890s the catalogue *Guide to House Furnishing* was evidence that Messrs. Oetzmann & Co., 'artistic decorators, builders and sanitary engineers', had become a large business offering 'an immense assortment of every description of Goods required for the complete furnishing of a House of any class'. It catered for those with an 'artistic taste' and provided them with all sorts of 'artistic' furniture and furnishing (Fig. 55). The firm even boasted patents in 'art furnishing'. Regarding the building, it had recently incorporated the premises of the former Eagle Brewery turning them into showrooms for the display of 'specimen rooms'. Oetzmann & Co. also provided storage and removal services, had a postal order department, a wholesale and exports department, and an 'Auctioneers, Surveyors and Estate Agents' department recently opened in 98 Regent Street.[144] In 1901 the firm opened additional premises in Drummond Street (Fig. 13). The new and purpose built edifice was seven floors high and was used to display British and Oriental carpets, antique cabinets, inexpensive reproductions of 'old' carved furniture and decorative coppers and brasses.[145]

By mid nineteenth century the firm Gillow was known for providing a comprehensive customer service related to house furnishing although only directed at the wealthy sector of society. Its showroom held a strategic role in allowing and promoting the 'interactivity between vendors and purchasers'. The firm was not unusual in offering 'a wide variety of services – from house decoration, cleaning, altering and repairing, to house letting, advertising, making inventories, arranging removals and caretaking – and even to arranging funerals'. These services reveal 'the firm's active involvement in the private lives of its many eminent customers'.[146] As discussed above, by the end of the century, Gillow was no longer in a position to compete, and rather than

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[140] *The Victorian Catalogue of Household Furnishings*, introduction by Stephen Calloway (London: Studio Editions, 1994), p. 9 of Introduction (pages unnumbered). Re-print of Hampton & Sons, trade catalogue, *Book of Specimen Interiors and Furniture*, 1894.
[141] Hampton & Sons, trade catalogue, ca. 1903.
[142] Hampton & Sons Ltd., *Hamptons Furnishers and Decorators*, trade catalogue, souvenir of the specimen rooms exhibited by Hamptons in the Decorative Arts Palace of the Franco British-Exhibition, 1908.
[143] Hampton & Sons, *Spring*, trade catalogue, 1920.
[144] Oetzmann & Co., *Guide to House Furnishing*, trade catalogue, ca. 1890.
[145] *The House*, IX (1901), p.148.
[146] Akiko Shimbo, 'Archbishops, Dukes, Gentlemen, and Ladies: Shopping at Gillows London Furniture Showroom, 1844-6', conference paper, CHORD Conference, *Retail Trading in Britain*, 20 September 2006, University of Wolverhampton. Girling-Budd, Amanda, 'Holland & Sons of London and Gillows of London and Lancaster: A Comparison of Two Nineteenth Century Furnishing Firms' (unpublished master's thesis, Royal College of Art, 1998).

closing down they became part of Waring. It is revealing that since then the main focus of business became the growing middle-class market rather than the upper-class sector that Gillow had traditionally served.

The trade catalogue celebrating the opening of the new Waring & Gillow's store in 1906 gave extensive information about the store contents in its over forty departments 'connected to the equipment of the modern home'. Besides furniture for every room in the house, the list of departments included

> China and Glass, Oriental Wares, Ironmongery, Turnery and Brasswork, Toys, Books and Stationery, Tables and Bed Linens, Organs and Pianofortes, Trunks and Portmanteaux, Clocks and Ornaments, Plate and Cutlery, Ball Room Decorations, Garden Houses and Furniture, Prints and Engravings, Pictures and Statuary.[147]

A 1913 newspaper advert listed alphabetically the firm's forty departments.[148] Among its services the ad mentioned 'Building', 'Decoration', 'Estate Agency', 'Removals' and 'Restaurant'.

Just as many other businesses of its type, back in 1838 Shoolbred traded as 'linen and woollen draper, silk, mercers, haberdashers and carpet warehouse'.[149] Nearly forty years later the trade directory in 1874 listed Shoolbred & Co. as 'Cabinet Manufacturers & Upholsterers'. The firm had recently added the cabinet-making, upholstery and decoration departments. Since then, furniture and house furnishings became the shop's speciality. Also in 1874 the firm issued its first furniture catalogue, thirty-eight pages of *Designs of Furniture: Illustrative of Cabinet Furniture & Interior Decoration.*[150] A decade later, in 1884, the general catalogue ran to over four-hundred pages displaying not just furniture but the whole range of household wares. In the 1880s the shop was rebuilt as a large department store with an extensive range of goods.[151] The trade directory in 1892 printed a list of all the company's activities. Of the sixteen given, twelve were related to furniture and furnishing, such as 'bedding and cabinet manufacturers and upholsterers', 'curtain and window blind manufacturers' and 'manufacturers and patentees of removable parquet flooring'.[152] The illustrated furniture and decoration catalogue, published c.1895, advertised the recently completed factory 'for the manufacture of bedding, cabinet furniture and upholstery, and where work of the highest class is produced at moderate prices'. The catalogue promised the firm could carry out 'every description of house decoration including

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[147] Waring & Gillow, *Souvenir of the Opening of Waring & Gillow's New Building,* June , 1906, p. 6.
[148] The complete list included: Antiques, Building Department, Bedroom Suites, Bedsteads & Bedding, Carpets, Curtains, China & Glass, Clocks, Decoration, Draperies, Drawing Room Furniture, Dining Room Furniture, Easy Chairs & Settees, Electro-plate & Cutlery, Electrical Fittings, Electric Lighting & Heating, Estate Agency, Fancy Leather Goods etc., Garden Furniture, Glass & China, Hall Furniture, Ironmongery, Kitchen Furniture & Utensils, Library Furniture, Linoleums, Linens, Lampshades, Mantles & Grates, Office Furniture, Oriental Department, Pianos & Gramophones, Pictures, Removals, Restaurant, Screens, Second-Hand Furniture, Silver, Sanitary Department, Wallpapers and Wicker Furniture. In: Waring & Gillow, advertising, *The Times*, Friday, Mar 14, 1913, p. 6, issue 40159, col A.
[149] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 4.
[150] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 1.
[151] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 5.
[152] The other nine activities were: Linen woollen drapers; carpet warehousemen and importers of oriental carpets and rugs; interior decorators; gas fitters, plumbers and general sanitary engineers; general furnishing ironmongery; china and glass dealers; contractors for removing and warehousing luggage and furniture; Japanese, Indian and art showrooms; and picture dealers. As quoted in Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.' p. 5.

artistic painting, papering, parquet flooring [...] gasfitting, plumbing, tiling, bricklaying, carpeting, &c'.[153] By 1909 Shoolbred had eighty departments and used all the modern conveniences to promote business and shopping. Its several catalogues included an illustrated price list of one thousand pages and a fully illustrated furniture catalogue (Fig. 56).[154]

Perhaps the most impressive story of a shop's expansion is Whiteley's. The first Whiteley store was so successful that, as pointed out before, five years after opening it already housed seventeen departments. The firm followed the familiar growth pattern of adding hard furnishing to the initial soft furnishing range, and that of moving from only retail activities to include manufacturing. The *Post Office London Directory* listed the shop as 'Linen Draper' in 1864, 'General Outfitter' in 1872, 'Furnishing warehouse' in 1874 and 'Household Furniture Store' in 1876.[155] By 1888 Whiteley's 'stately range of premises in the Queen's Road [...] with the exception of Nos. 157 and 159 [was] entirely devoted to the household furnishings departments'.[156] An important reason for success was the extensive range and variety of goods plus the numerous customer services. According to its trade catalogue of that year, besides delivery, services relating to household furnishing included decorating and building, dyeing and cleaning, removing, auctioneering, hiring, export and shipping.[157] By 1905 the business had achieved a capital of £1,800,100 and the store had grown to include 159 separate departments. Its many conveniences and services included then refreshment rooms, an estate agency and dry cleaning.[158] After Whiteley's death his successors started to plan a grand scale purpose built store, which opened on 21 November 1911 occupying a whole block on Queensway (Figs. 17-19).[159] The new store had 115 departments and employed 5000 staff.[160]

Clearly influenced by Whiteley and trying to emulate his formula, in 1880 John Barker bought the premises in 77 Kensington High Street, those in 14 and 16 Ball Street and the stock of an ironmongers' business. These transactions were the beginning of the furniture, carpet, china and glass departments. In 1885 he bought more premises to extend the cabinet and upholstery departments which in 1889 expanded into a large purpose built six-storey construction housing the furnishing, upholstery and carpet departments with stock bought at the recent Paris Exhibition. As noted before, these new premises had the added benefit of providing a lift, rooms for refreshment and an additional 30,000 square feet of retail space. By 1892 John Barker & Co. consisted of forty-two departments including building and plumbing, and allied workshops. Two years later the number had increased to sixty-four departments and a staff of 1,500. In 1907

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[153] Information on this catalogue available at: http://www.hht.net.au/research/online_exhibitions/trade_catalogues/houseFurnishings. According to this website, Shoolbred's was a trusted store for many wealthy Australians.
[154] Shoolbred, advertising, *The Times*, Monday, May 24, 1909, p. 61, issue 38967 (first column, fourth paragraph).
[155] J. L. Oliver, *The Development ...*, pp. 32-33.
[156] *The Cabinet Maker*, 1 October 1888, p. 106.
[157] *The Cabinet Maker*, 1 October 1888, p. 106.
[158] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, p. 258.
[159] Whiteley, advertising, *The Times*, Tuesday, Nov 21, 1911, p. 4, issue 39748, col A.
[160] Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly*, p. 240.

there was a seven-storey corner building on Kensington High Street completely dedicated to the selling of furniture and furnishings (Figs. 21-22).

Although Liberty belonged to the more up-market slot, it is included here because in order to survive it also followed the expansion strategies of the large furnishing house. The firm started as a small shop of Oriental goods in 1875 closely connected to the vogue of the Aesthetic movement. Soon Arthur L. Liberty became a known importer of oriental furnishings and goods from Cairo, India, China and Japan and within five years the business grew to include seven departments: silks, embroideries, furniture, carpets, porcelain, curios and miscellanies. In 1882 he opened new premises at 142-144 Regent Street to house the 'Furnishing and Decoration Studio' and expanded the original premises to include 216, 218 and 222 on Regent Street (Fig. 57). Two years later he also added a new department dedicated to costumes and clothes with historical influences.[161] Initially it was imports and social and artistic connections that made Liberty's business base but when Aestheticism faded the firm quickly adapted to provide goods and ensembles in the style of the Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau (New Art) at the end of the century. This was a significant shift because from trading in imports the firm had to start working with local designers and manufacturers. A member of staff recalled:

> In 1898 the Cabinet Factories had moved from Newman Yard to Dufours Place, Soho, from where we carried out large orders and contracts, such as Wadhurst Park, the Piccadilly Hotel, etc. Then in 1912 we moved to Highgate. This was a complete up-to-date factory, and for the first time we had machinery and stocks of timber which might be regarded as worthy and adequate to the far larger and higher class of business which became entrusted to our hands.[162]

Provincial firms followed a similar pattern of development in their range of goods and services. In the 1890s, as printed on its catalogue, Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co. traded as 'upholsterers and decorators' and also as 'Designers and Manufacturers of furniture, decorative woodwork, parquet flooring and billiard tables' (Fig. 58).[163] A later catalogue ca. 1900 offered furnishing estimates and illustrations for an eight-room house at £350. This was a clear proof of the firm's widening the base of their target market to include customers of moderate means. The firm's departments included by then modern furniture, antique furniture, carpets, curtains, chimneypieces, painting & decorating, electric lighting & fittings, billiard tables, clocks, ornaments & pictures, and art fabrics.[164] (Figs. 59-60)

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[161] Alison Adburgham, *Liberty's: A Biography of a Shop* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1975). Maurice Baren, *How It All Began Up the High Street* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1996), pp. 87-89. G. D. Rawle, 'Liberty, Sir Arthur Lasenby (1843-1917)', rev. Gareth Shaw, *Oxford dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34528]. Jeremy Cooper, *Victorian and Edwardian Décor: From the Gothic Revival to Art Nouveau* (New York, London, Paris: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1987), pp. 238-239.

[162] Alison Adburgham, *Liberty's*, pp. 96-7.

[163] Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Home Furnishing*, trade catalogue, 1890s, presentation page. The catalogue's cover states 1790 as the founding date but this is changed to 1760, the accurate date, in later catalogues.

[164] Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., trade catalogue, ca. 1900 ('Hints on Furnishing').

T. B. & W. Cockayne started as a drapers shop in Sheffield in 1829. By 1898 besides drapery and clothes the business had increased its range of goods to nineteen departments including general furnishing, carpets, bedding, and the lucrative 'cabinet' department. The shop also had a tearoom and a restaurant. The firm was by then a limited company carrying out 'entire furnishing, decorating, lighting, plumbing and heating of private residences and public buildings' plus providing storage and removal services (Figs. 61-62). By 1913 the business had become a large store with 28 departments. New departments comprised glass and china, electrical, ironmongery and toys, among others. [165]

To finish this section on the expansion of furnishing firms' range of goods, departments and services, Harrod illustrates the only case in which what later became a department store with a large furnishing department had started selling foodstuff. After the move to Knightsbridge Harrod continued trading as a grocery shop but it quickly diversified and grew in range of products and number of departments. In 1863, within three years of buying the business from his father, Harrod junior added medicines, perfume and stationery. In 1880 he introduced his 'own brand' of groceries and opened new departments including poultry, wines and spirits, jewellery and china and glass.[166] Under new management, by 1895 the shop's catalogue illustrated the types of goods and services offered including building and decorating, furnishing and drapery, art needlework, ironmongery and fancy leather goods among others.[167] In 1898 a great attraction to the store was the installation of the first moving staircase, which caused a sensation throughout the city. In 1905 the store added a new gallery dedicated to antique furniture and second-hand modern furniture. By 1908 the staff had increased to 4,000 and there were new departments including modern furniture and furnishing.[168] In 1911, under Richard Burbidge's management, the shop expanded even more to occupy a whole island site with the main façade on Brompton Road.[169] The following year a branch was opened in Buenos Aires, Argentina replicating the original store, selling furniture and carrying out building and decorating contracts.[170] By 1914 Harrod's in London had a workforce of 6000.[171]

The main purpose in referring to the expansion process of individual firms was to emphasize the fact that even if in some cases, such as Whiteley's, the growth was spectacular, all businesses at the time were following a similar path. It shows that competition was strong and that to remain in business firms had to keep growing and diversify by adding new lines of products and services. At least until 1914 this type of expansion was cost effective, proving profitable as a whole, against adding more shop and warehouse space and hiring new staff. To conclude, most firms started as retailing units in soft furnishing and ended up including furniture, setting up

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[165] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, pp. 247-249.
[166] Maurice Baren, *How It All Began Up the High Street* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1996), pp. 65-67.
[167] A. Adburgham, *Victorian Shopping: A Facsimile of the Harrod's Stores 1895 Issue of the Price List* (England: Newton Abbot, 1972). This is Harrod's earliest surviving catalogue. It was 1510 pages long and contained 3776 illustrations.
[168] Maurice Baren, *How It All Began*, pp. 65-67.
[169] Richard Burbidge had previously worked for many years as manager at Whiteley's store. See Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly*, p. 153.
[170] Maurice Baren, *How It All Began*, pp. 65-67.
[171] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, p. 251.

workshops and maintaining a growing and diverse range of products and costumer services. The all-encompassing nature of the large furnishing house proved to be a profitable business strategy.

Modern business methods

In their aim to expand and become more competitive most firms followed similar business practices applied to the areas of retailing, manufacturing and advertising. As already mentioned, large firms bought high volumes of stock (at a discounted price) to sell for cash at low prices guaranteeing a quick turnover, which in turn gave liquidity and increased capital for further investment and growth. The formula worked because there was a strong and ever growing home middle-class market and an expanding overseas market both eager to acquire the necessary things and novelties a home required. Some firms such as Gillow and Hampton had a long history of catering for wealthy sectors of society but eventually, in the face of competition, they too had to widen their range of clients to include the large number of middle class households living on moderate incomes. Trade catalogues offer evidence of this trend.

From 1890 to 1914 increasingly and repeatedly the various firms claimed that they traded for the client of moderate means, that their goods matched taste with economy and that they could do it because the firm had adopted modern methods of production and retailing. These claims were sometimes made in trade catalogues' titles, such as in Waring & Gillow's *Substantial and Inexpensive Furniture* (ca. 1902) or Marsh, Jones & Cribb's *Furnishing with Taste & Economy* (ca. 1905). Marsh assured customers that 'they fully recognise the conditions of the present day, and have taken such steps that will enable them to meet the demand for artistic and soundly-constructed furniture at economical prices.'[172]

Most firms got involved with manufacturing at one point and this also proved crucial for business success. The use of machines, technology and factory methods made the process more efficient and allowed firms to exert control over certain goods. In the 1880s Maple and Shoolbred, for example, produced close to ten per cent of what they sold. Firms like Heal, Maple, Shoolbred and Whiteley, were involved in production but also depended upon a network of manufacturers, mainly local but also national and from abroad.[173] Relying on a modern factory system (their own or from suppliers), meant increased productivity and reduced costs. Advertising was also decisive in keeping sales and profit up and in promoting the firm's new products and services. The furnishing houses discussed here continually advertised in local and national newspapers and magazines, they issued expensively illustrated trade catalogues and used any other advertising media available at the time such as posters and bills. As the century moved forward competition increased and marketing tactics became more necessary and refined. Those firms that were not prepared to follow the new business practices suffered

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[172] Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Home Furnishing*, trade catalogue, 1890s, introductory pages.
[173] J. L. Oliver, *The Development* ..., p. 32.

severe competition and eventually some were forced out (Fig. 63). Such was the case of Johnstone and Jeanes, Wright and Mansfield, Hindley in 1892, Jackson and Graham in 1885 and Collinson & Lock in 1897. Clive Edwards explains that these firms 'succumbed to the pressures of the newer, larger-scale department stores and major furnishers such as Maple and Shoolbred'.[174]

What follows is the description of firms' varied modern business strategies such as buying and selling in bulk for cash, ticketing, fixed prices, some forms of credit, use of modern machinery, advertising with trade catalogues, targeting a wide range of clients but mainly the middle class, and becoming a public limited company, among others. Each firm is dealt with separately with a chronological approach telling of the company's specific evolution and the moment in which particular methods were adopted. Comparing the different companies it becomes noticeable, for example, that they all introduced a cash sales policy early on, while only being able to turn into public limited companies at a later stage of development, usually at the turn of the twentieth century. This was also the time when firms became more dependant on the ever-growing middle class market and when many decided to accept credit payments from the lower middle-class sector. In general the adoption of a new business method signalled a significant moment of expansion.

These brief accounts of evolution are not exhaustive. They depend on the kind of information and sources available. While there are books and research about the history of Maple, Shoolbred or Heal, there is no historical biography for Hampton & Son, Waring & Gillow or Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co. For the latter I have relied mostly on information contained in their trade catalogues.

In the 1860s Maple continued to grow and prosper benefiting from the opening in 1863 of the first underground line with Gower Street Station on Tottenham Court Road. In 1870 Maple's adverts promised to furnish a house 'of any magnitude' in three days, a service of 'immense advantage to country purchasers'.[175] Also in 1870 John Maple's sons, Blundell and Harry, became partners of Maple & Co. each receiving a quarter share. When Harry died of typhoid fever in 1879 Blundell Maple (1845-1903) obtained half of the company's share and became the governor of the firm. Using his newly acquired powers he then promoted an employee, Horace Regnart, as general manager who continued the firm's policy of buying stock for cash and selling goods for cash.[176] In 1897 prompt payments to manufacturers and having no debts to collect allowed the firm to save £35,000. Two years later it saved £5000 from manufacturers' discounts alone.[177] Blundell's interest in

> [t]he furniture trade was not as a cabinet-maker, or indeed as a connoisseur of furniture or decoration. He made no claim to have himself an eye for good design or good taste,

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[174] Clive Edwards, *Turning Houses into Homes*, p. 125.
[175] Maples Furniture, *Court* Journal, May 7, 1870, p.538. As quoted in Lori Anne Loeb, *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 43.
[176] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 24, 28.
[177] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 75.

> only, as a businessman, for what sold. He would have been perturbed by the commercial depression of 1877, but untroubled by Charles Eastlake's attack on Britain's textile art.[178]

In spite of a previous no credit policy, in 1901 Maple introduced a system of 'deferred payment' to favour young couples about to marry and furnish a house and who depended on a fixed income.[179]

In the 1890s in response to increasing demand for beds and bedroom furniture the firm extended its manufacturing facilities. Over the years the business had gradually built 'an empire of workshops of their own and of free-lance craftsmen in the West and East Ends'.[180] The 1892 catalogue invited customers to visit the factory next door to the warehouse to see the new machinery in action. The catalogue highlighted how the use of specialized machines allowed them to reduce costs while improving production.[181]

In the 1870s the firm secured a contract to provide the furniture and furnishing of the royal residence in Richmond Park, White Lodge.[182] This contract was the beginning of a long series of English and European royalties patronizing the shop. In 1892 Maple & Co. became 'upholsterers by Special Appointment to Her Majesty Queen Victoria', and the Queen conferred Blundell Maple a Knighthood.[183] The firm had an impressive list of customers in England and abroad including not only royalty, but also hotels, clubs, embassies and health institutions.[184]

> Maples had been honoured with the commands of King George V and Queen Mary, Queen Alexandra, the Czar of Russia, the German Empress, the Empress Eugenie of France, the King of Bulgaria, the Duke of Orleans, the Sultan of Zanzibar, the late King of Siam, and the royal families of Austria, Italy, Denmark, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.[185]

Maple & Co. became a private limited company in 1891 and was sold at one million pounds.[186] In that year alone the firm carried out business with 34,000 families.[187] Four years later Blundell Maple turned the company public and the firm's name was changed to Maple & Co. Ltd. It proved a successful move. The revenue that year was £149,516 and the next year the total profit excluding payments for management was £284,000.[188] By 1899 the company's £100 ordinary shares had increased to £450.[189]

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[178] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 23.
[179] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 83. In 1901 the shop opened a Hire Purchase Department.
[180] J. L. Oliver, *The Development* ..., p. 32.
[181] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 49.
[182] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 19.
[183] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 47.
[184] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 42-77.
[185] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 96.
[186] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 42.
[187] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 48.
[188] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 54-5.
[189] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 70.

After his father died in 1900, Blundell Maple realized that the best profits were made not from furnishing hotels and the palaces of the aristocracy but from catering for the ordinary, solid and growing middle-class market. This was an important move made by all large furnishing houses. In response to growing trade Maple bought large premises in Highgate Road, Camden to build large factories equipped with the latest machinery for furniture production.[190] Then when Blundell died in 1903, Henry Regnart became President and his brother Horace Regnart was appointed as Vice-President. The new management decided to concentrate their marketing efforts on domestic furnishing and on young customers setting up homes. A substantial part of the 11,250 square feet of showroom space was allocated to specimen one-bedroom flats.[191] This line of business provided the firm with liquidity and in 1905 Maple achieved a capital of £2,620,000 (followed by Whiteley's at £1,800,000).[192] When Horace Regnart died in 1912, trade and furniture sales were at a peak. That situation changed quickly with the Great War in 1914 and profits stopped. New contracts came then from the army and the navy.[193]

Back in the 1850s Shoolbred became involved in production by establishing a partnership with Henry Jecks Dixon who was a carpet manufacturer based in Kidderminster.[194] When James Shoolbred died in 1862 two of his sons, James (1830-1900) and Frederick (1841-1922), took over. By then the business was one of the largest in London with an annual turnover of over £1 million and a staff of 500.[195] The firm had been for decades operating on cash sales, fixed low prices and a large and fast stock turnover. The firm's slogan was 'Ready Money – No Discount'.[196] Purchasing high volumes of stock was possible due to factory production techniques (mainly applied in the textile industries), which meant a large output at low cost. By 1886 the business was employing 700 staff.[197] As already mentioned, in 1888 the firm manufactured less than ten percent of what it sold, but had access to the supply of about a thousand different cabinetmakers. Shoolbred, like Maple and most large firms, also relied on 'bought-to-order' goods, which were even cheaper. Nevertheless whoever the supplier, all pieces of furniture sold at the shop bore the firm's name acting as a brand.[198] Also in the 1880s the shop secured a Royal warrant.[199] In 1909 the terms of business were still based on buying 'in the lowest markets and at the lowest prices, consequently to sell at most moderate prices'.[200] The business turned into a limited company in 1913.[201]

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[190] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 70.
[191] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 87.
[192] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, p. 258.
[193] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, pp. 102-3.
[194] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, p. 236.
[195] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', p. 236. Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', pp. 5-12.
[196] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 43.
[197] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', p. 35.
[198] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', pp. 54-55.
[199] Available at: http://www.antique-antiques-uk.com/antique_upholstered_settees_chairs_%20stools.htm
[200] Shoolbred, advertising, *The Times*, Monday, May 24, 1909, p. 61, issue 38967. See text under *The Policy of the House of Shoolbred* on the right.
[201] Sophia J. de Falbe, 'James Shoolbred & Co.', 1985. Clive Edwards, *Turning Houses into Homes*, pp. 108, 111, 130, 192. Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, pp. 236-238. Shoolbred, advertising, *The Times*, Monday, May 24, 1909, p. 61, issue 38967.

The same as Shoolbred's, Oetzmann's development had been based on ticketing, fixed prices and cash payments. The firm saw credit as an obstacle for profit.[202] This was due to the costs of debt and debt collecting since money tied this way represented a lost opportunity for investment. Having doubled its revenue in the years before 1890, Oetzmann & Co. ascribed the firm's success to its business methods and boasted about:

> selling only such goods as are of sterling quality, and at the smallest possible profit. [...] Manufacturing largely, with all the latest improvements, they are enabled to guarantee the quality of materials used and the workmanship, at the lowest possible cost of production; and those goods which Oetzmann & Co. do not themselves manufacture, are purchased for **Cash** only of the best Manufacturers.[203]

Oetzmann & Co. had a postal order department (the firm claimed to have invented this system) covering the whole country and, like most of its competitors, offered free delivery to any of the London Railway stations.[204] In 1875 the *Furniture Gazette* published an article classifying and ranking furnishing shops. It placed Oetzmann in the fifth category, together with Whiteley and Tarn, and described them as the type of shop luring customers with low prices rather than with artistic appeal.[205] If this was the case, by the end of the century Oetzmann was still using a low-price policy while at the same time promoting its 'artistic furniture' and 'patents in artistic furnishings'.[206] Among Oetzmann & Co.'s patrons were the Queen, members of the Royal family, the nobility, clergy, County families, members of government, public companies, clubs, hotels, etc.[207] Nevertheless the foundations of the business were the thousands of ordinary middle-class families who had always patronised the shops.

When Whiteley founded his shop in 1863 he started out employing two girls as shop assistants (one of them would later become his wife) and a boy to carry out errands. By 1872 the business had 622 employees working at the shop.[208] Net profits were £26,000 rising to £66,000 three years later.[209] In 1888, to promote the shop's household furnishings departments, Whiteley published a profusely illustrated catalogue of over 700 pages. When a journalist asked how he managed to create his mega store Whiteley replied: 'Ready money is the corner-stone of my business. No margin is allowed for bad debts, advertising, or interest on overdue accounts.'[210] Four years before, this is how he described his success to *The Pall Mall Gazette*:

> Customers were never pestered to buy things they did not want; everything in the shop was displayed to the best advantage, and everything was marked in plain figures. All goods were sold at a reasonable profit.[211]

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[202] Oetzmann & Co., *Hints on House Furnishing and Decoration*, trade catalogue, ca. 1871, p. 294. Quoted in Clive Edwards, *Turning Houses Into Homes*, p. 116.
[203] Oetzmann & Co., *Guide to House Furnishing*, trade catalogue, ca. 1890.
[204] Oetzmann & Co., trade catalogue, ca. 1890.
[205] *Furniture Gazette*, 2 October 1875, p. 193. Quoted in Clive Edwards, *Turning Houses Into Homes*, p. 111.
[206] Oetzmann & Co., trade catalogue, ca. 1890, p. 8.
[207] Oetzmann & Co., trade catalogue, ca. 1890, presentation pages.
[208] Gareth Shaw, 'Whiteley', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36870], pp. 1-3 (p. 1). Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly: The Life and Death of a Salesman* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2004), p. 35.
[209] Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly*, p. 40.
[210] *The Cabinet Maker*, 1 October 1888, p. 106.
[211] Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly*, p. 21.

His talents also played a part. 'I knew a good article when I saw it. I had the faculty of hitting the public taste, and I had a knowledge of how to display goods when I had bought them in a nice, tasteful way.'[212]

To the painter William Frith he confessed: 'My notions of the advantage of advertising take the form of good things at so small a profit as to make the purchasers recommend their friends to come to my shops.'[213] By 1899 the shop reached a turnover of £1 million and was made into a limited company. Six years later the business achieved a capital of £1,800,100.[214] By 1910 (three years after Whiteley's death) the store started to offer what was called a 'system of easy payment' where customers could get their goods just by paying 10% of the total and the rest by monthly instalments within one, two or three years at a 5% annual interest. It proved to be a successful method with their lower end of the market.[215] Whiteley had been reluctant to spend money on direct publicity (that is, paying for adverts on newspapers or magazines) but he was ingenious in the way he promoted the shop. He did not believe in conventional advertising and preferred to distribute trade catalogues, handbills, price lists and to rely on word of mouth.[216] His was probably one of the first firms to issue almanacs and diaries.[217] In 1911, at the time of the opening of the new grand-scale shop, the firm advertised heavily. An advert in *The Times* invited customers to order by letter, telephone and telegraph with the promise that goods would be delivered within hours.[218]

As part-owner of the business in Kensington High Street John Barker had the opportunity to profit from his sales skills and the business methods he learnt at Whiteley's. He sold for cash at low prices and bought directly from manufacturers, a good formula for a quick turnover and business growth. In 1880, only ten years after starting, the annual turnover and profit were respectively £150,000 and £8,500. In 1893 the firm was made then into a public limited company with Barker as chairman and a team of directors.[219]

Heal & Son defined its terms of business as 'cash without discount or abatement of any kind'.[220] Together with this cash policy, John Harris Heal was convinced of the power of advertising and for twenty-eight years placed adverts in seven Charles Dickens' novels published by instalments.[221] He also took advantage of modern transport, by posting advertising bills on railway station platforms and by encouraging customers to treat the shop's catalogue as a mail order facility using the rail and post office services.[222] In 1900 Ambrose Heal junior took charge

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[212] Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly*, p. 21.
[213] As quoted in Linda Stratman, *Whiteley's Folly*, p. 22.
[214] Gareth Shaw, 'The Evolution and Impact ...', in *The Retailing Industry*, p. 258.
[215] Whiteley, advertising, *The Times*, Tuesday, Apr 12, 1910, p. 3, issue 39244, col A. (bottom right paragraph)
[216] Linda Stratman, *Whiteley's Folly*, p. 40.
[217] Gareth Shaw, 'Whiteley', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36870], pp. 1-3 (p. 1).
[218] Whiteley, advertising, *The Times*, Tuesday, Nov 21, 1911, p. 4, issue 39748, col A.
[219] Adrian Room, 'Barker, Sir John (1840-1914)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, May 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38975], p. 1-2 (p. 1).
[220] Heal & Son, *Bedsteads, Bedding and Bedroom Furniture Illustrated Catalogue*, trade catalogue, 1902. The same terms also appeared in the 1898 and 1896 catalogues.
[221] Susanna Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter*, p. 17.
[222] Maurice Baren, *How It All Began Up the High Street* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1996), pp. 74-77 (p. 74).

of the firm's advertising department and focused it on exhibitions, posters, periodicals and catalogues. Between 1902 and 1909 Heal & Son placed adverts in many newspapers and magazines. Some of the publication's titles included The Studio, The Tatler, The Illustrated London, Paul Mall Gazette, The Sketch, Ladies Pictorial, The Ladies Field, The Queen and The Sphere.[223]

By the end of the nineteenth century Hampton & Sons claimed it could 'put a tastefully furnished home within reach of the most modest income'. In 1894 the firm issued a lavishly illustrated catalogue printed by the new collotype process. It reproduced many 'artistic interiors, in various styles', and contained 'upwards of 2,000 Half-tone blocks of Furniture Photographed from Stock'. The catalogue explained that the firm's turnover was so high because the goods the shop offered were very popular. 'As a result, therefore, the firm was enabled to buy materials in considerable bulk and thus minimise costs for high quality articles'. The catalogue also 'proclaimed that all the furniture that was made in Hampton's own workshops was created with use of "all the latest machinery for preparing the woods and other material" but that every article was 'finished by hand by skilled, experienced craftsmen'. As was common practice at the time, the catalogue also included furnishing estimates for houses of different sizes, from eight rooms at £250 to eighteen rooms at £2000.[224] In 1903, Hampton published a different type of catalogue, a booklet written in the form of a magazine article called *My Week-End Cottage and How I Furnished it for £100.* It reflected and cashed in on the growing trend of renting weekend country retreats.[225] In 1908 'Hampton & Sons Ltd. Furnishers and Decorators', participated in the Decorative Arts Palace of the Franco British Exhibition. The firm displayed 'specimen rooms' interpreting traditional English styles. One of the exhibits, the 'Specimen House in the Colonial Adam Style', was set up in the shop's showrooms after the event.[226]

In this discussion of how the firms expanded through the adoption of modern business strategies, Waring & Gillow is unusual in that, as already mentioned, the Gillow part of the business dated back to the eighteenth century. Until the 1890s, when it ran into financial difficulties, Gillow had enjoyed a reputation for producing high quality furniture for the wealthier sector of the market throughout the country. During the 1880's Samuel Waring junior expanded the firm S. J. Waring & Sons by setting up 'Waring-White Building', a company that specialized in the furnishing of hotels and public buildings in England and Europe. Some of the well-known undertakings included the Liverpool Corn Exchange, and later on the Selfridge's department

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[223] Heal & Son Archive, Advertising cuttings, 1 volume, 1902-1909 AAD/1978/2/176. The complete list also included Westminster Gazette, The Connoisseur, The Collectors Circular, Country Life, The Bystander, The Architectural Review, African Review, Studio Christmas number, Country Gentleman, Gentlewoman, The World, Hearth & Home, The Standard, Daily News, Hazells Hotel mini booklet, Canadian Handbook Guide (Coronation event) and The Times. Smaller text adverts appeared in Standard, Daily Telegraph, Daily Mail, Daily News, Glasgow Herald, Morning Post, Evening News, Evening Standard, Spectator, Chronicle and Tribune.
[224] *The Victorian Catalogue of Household Furnishings,* introduction by Stephen Calloway (London: Studio Editions, 1994), p. 8-10 of Introduction (pages unnumbered). Re-print of Hampton & Sons, trade catalogue, *Book of Specimen Interiors and Furniture,* 1894.
[225] Hampton & Sons, *My Week-End Cottage,* trade catalogue, ca. 1903.
[226] Hampton & Sons Ltd., *Hamptons Furnishers and Decorators,* trade catalogue, souvenir of the specimen rooms exhibited by Hamptons in the Decorative Arts Palace of the Franco British-Exhibition, 1908.

store and the Ritz Hotel.[227] This company was in a solid position when it bought Gillow in 1897. The new firm started trading as Waring & Gillow 'with a capital of £1 million and since 1897 it was appointed as 'Furnishers and Decorators to Her Majesty the Queen'.[228] Soon after, it 'won the furnishing contract for the prestigious Carlton Hotel, and then the Waldorf and the Ritz.'[229] Nevertheless it also focused on the ordinary middle class as was shown by the *Model House* catalogue illustrated with photographs of the showrooms in Manchester.[230] A later catalogue ca. 1903, titled *Substantial and Inexpensive Furniture,* included colour illustrations for a £200 model house and stressed how 'successful decoration and furnishing does not necessarily involve the expenditure of a large sum'.[231] In its 1906 catalogue, at the time of the opening of its impressive new department store in London, the firm explained that

> great industrial organisation, and the labour-saving plant at their Hammersmith, Liverpool, Lancaster and Paris factories, now supplemented by the vast building and its showrooms in Oxford Street, Waring and Gillow are able to apply the principles of economical production and low prices to everything connected with the furnishing of a house.[232]

The firm also wanted 'to illustrate the principle that good design and sound workmanship can be combined with prices regulated by strictly competitive conditions. Every class of the community will be catered for'.[233] Besides trading in domestic wares, the initial decade of Waring & Gillow was also dedicated to 'the decoration and furnishing of palaces, theatres, hotels, clubs, art galleries, town halls, restaurants, ocean-going steamers, etc.'[234] The firm boasted about its ability to target and respond to the demands of different types of clients and consumers. That they had the middle-class families market firmly in mind is also seen in the 1906 catalogue making reference to 'a series of five Model Houses ranging from a country cottage at £100, by gradations to £200, £300, £500 and £750'.[235] These prices and gradation reflected middle-class budgets. Businesses at times faced difficult situations and the way they handled them could be bold. In 1913 Waring & Gillow's shares were decreasing in value so the debenture stakeholders stepped in to take over the company changing its strategy to raise money. With a capital of £1,005,000 and £287,000 in cash, the new management decided to sell the whole of the store's stock in one day and reopen the following day with renewed merchandise. They claimed the stock was worth £500,000 and it was offered for sale at £350,000.[236]

Although Harrod started as a grocery shop rather than dealing with soft furnishings, its trade methods were no different. When Harrod junior bought the shop from his father for £500 in

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[227] City of Westminster Archives Centre, at: Access to Archives website, available at: http://www.a2a.org.uk/html/094-344.htm.
[228] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 160.
[229] Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 58.
[230] Waring & Gillow, *Model House*, trade catalogue, Manchester, 1897. Photographs by Bedford Lemere.
[231] Waring & Gillow Ltd., *Substantial and Inexpensive Furniture*, Manchester, ca. 1902, presentation page 'Please Note'.
[232] Waring & Gillow, *Souvenir of the Opening of Waring & Gillow's New Building*, June, 1906, p. 4. Waring & Gillow, *Souvenir*, 1906, p. 6.
[233] Waring & Gillow, *Souvenir*, 1906, p. 8.
[234] Waring & Gillow, *Souvenir*, 1906, p. 4.
[235] Waring & Gillow, *Souvenir*, 1906, p. 16.
[236] Waring & Gillow, advertising, *The Times*, Wednesday, Jan 06, 1913, p. 3, issue 40101, col A.

1860, as sole owner he removed credit, cut prices and prospered quickly. Within three years he increased the range of goods and built a new shop front with large plate glass windows. By 1868 the turnover rose to £1000 per week. In 1880 Harrod introduced his 'own brand' groceries and opened new departments. The business became Harrod's Store Limited in 1889, the year in which Harrod retired and a general manager replaced him.[237] It was then that the firm decided to expand its furniture and furnishings department showing a clear connection between the need for business expansion and the lucrative home wares range.

Provincial stores in their way of carrying out business were similar to their London counterparts. As with most growing enterprises at the time, the terms of trade for Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co. were based on goods 'marked in *plain figures* at the lowest possible rates', and 'sold for *cash without discount*'.[238] According to its 1890s catalogue, only recently the firm had started targeting clients of moderate incomes. To fulfil that purpose the workshops had been enlarged and equipped with new machinery to reduce production costs. The showrooms had been thoroughly remodelled, redecorated and supplied with an extensive range of goods including the fitting of a model house.[239] Later catalogues ca. 1900 and in 1905 kept stressing the main orientation of the business towards assisting the middle-class shopper with an artistic taste but of moderate means (Fig. 59).[240]

In summary, all businesses followed a very similar growth and expansion pattern based on the application of modern business methods including setting a policy of low prices and a quick turn over of merchandise at the start, forming private and public limited companies at the end of the century, the wide use of advertising and the deliberate targeting of the costumer of moderate means since the 1890s.

Advertising on a new scale

Most firms, as the previous section on the development of furnishing firms showed, turned into wide comprehensive enterprises as an expansion strategy. Many grew from a small retail unit selling one type of goods in the first half of the nineteenth century, to a public limited company managing numerous departments, services, buildings and branches by the years 1890 to 1914. This growth pattern responded more to a business rationale and to commercial and economic conditions within a capitalist system, than to the kind of goods these shops sold. For any shop to do well, compete and survive it had to expand and adopt modern business methods. Apart from the accumulation of capital, which to a large extent the firm's profits provided, a crucial factor in the success of retail operations was publicity. Growing competition meant stores had to vie for customers' attention.

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[237] Maurice Baren, *How It All Began Up the High Street* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1996), pp. 65-67.
[238] Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Home Furnishing*, trade catalogue, 1890s. Original italics.
[239] Marsh, *Home Furnishing*, 1890s.
[240] Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., ['Hints on Furnishing'], trade catalogue, ca. 1900. Marsh, Jones & Cribb Ltd., *Furnishing with Taste and Economy*, trade catalogue, ca. 1905.

Supporting the retail revolution an unprecedented advertising craze emerged in the 1850s and intensified after the 1880s. The emergence of a strong advertising industry was the result of a combination of factors such as the growth of the press linked to an increased readership (fuelled by the ever expanding middle class), the abolition of newspaper stamp duty and advertising tax in 1855 and 1858 respectively, the development of illustration techniques and the emergence of marketing as a professional activity.[241] Population growth, transport and communication development, and powered and mechanized manufacture transformed readership, distribution and printing techniques. With a constant increase in urban population and incomes, the market for books, newspapers and magazines was greatly expanded. Readership was also based on the increase in literacy rates. Sunday and charity schools, the Elementary Education Act of 1870 and particularly the 1876 Act that made school attendance compulsory (although not effectively compulsory until 1891) improved literacy. In 1840 there was still a considerable difference between the proportion of men (close to seventy per cent) and women (just over fifty per cent) who could read and write, but by 1893 both rates were close to ninety per cent.[242]

Distribution of goods and printed material was significantly increased with growth in the transport and postal systems. In 1830 the railways covered just 157 miles. By 1901 there were 30,385 miles of rail tracks reaching most places in the UK. The postal system relied on trains for cheap and fast delivery. It had introduced the penny post system in 1840 and then the book post in 1848, the circular post in 1856 and the half-penny postcard in 1876. Consequently there was a massive rise in the distribution of written and printed material in the form of letters, postcards, books, newspapers, magazines and printed advertising. The post sent out an impressive 110 million newspapers and book packets in 1869 but this figure pales when compared to the 900 million it achieved by 1900.[243]

The second half of the nineteenth century was a decisive period for illustrated advertising, most of it being as printed material. This development was closely linked to the transformation of the printing industry. The process was remarkable, going from primitive small workshops at the beginning of the nineteenth century to a fully developed industry in the 1890s dominated by a few large firms operating in purpose built machine driven factories. Printing was mechanized early on with the introduction of the Wharfedale cylinder press in 1858. Another breakthrough was the use of the linotype developed at the end of the century, which replaced the laborious type composition by hand. As important was the mechanisation of paper production that went through a period of experimentation with all sorts of material (looking for an alternative to rags) until finding the use of esparto grass and wood pulp as the most appropriate. Back in the 1830s lithography had joined the traditional processes of relief and intaglio for the reproduction of

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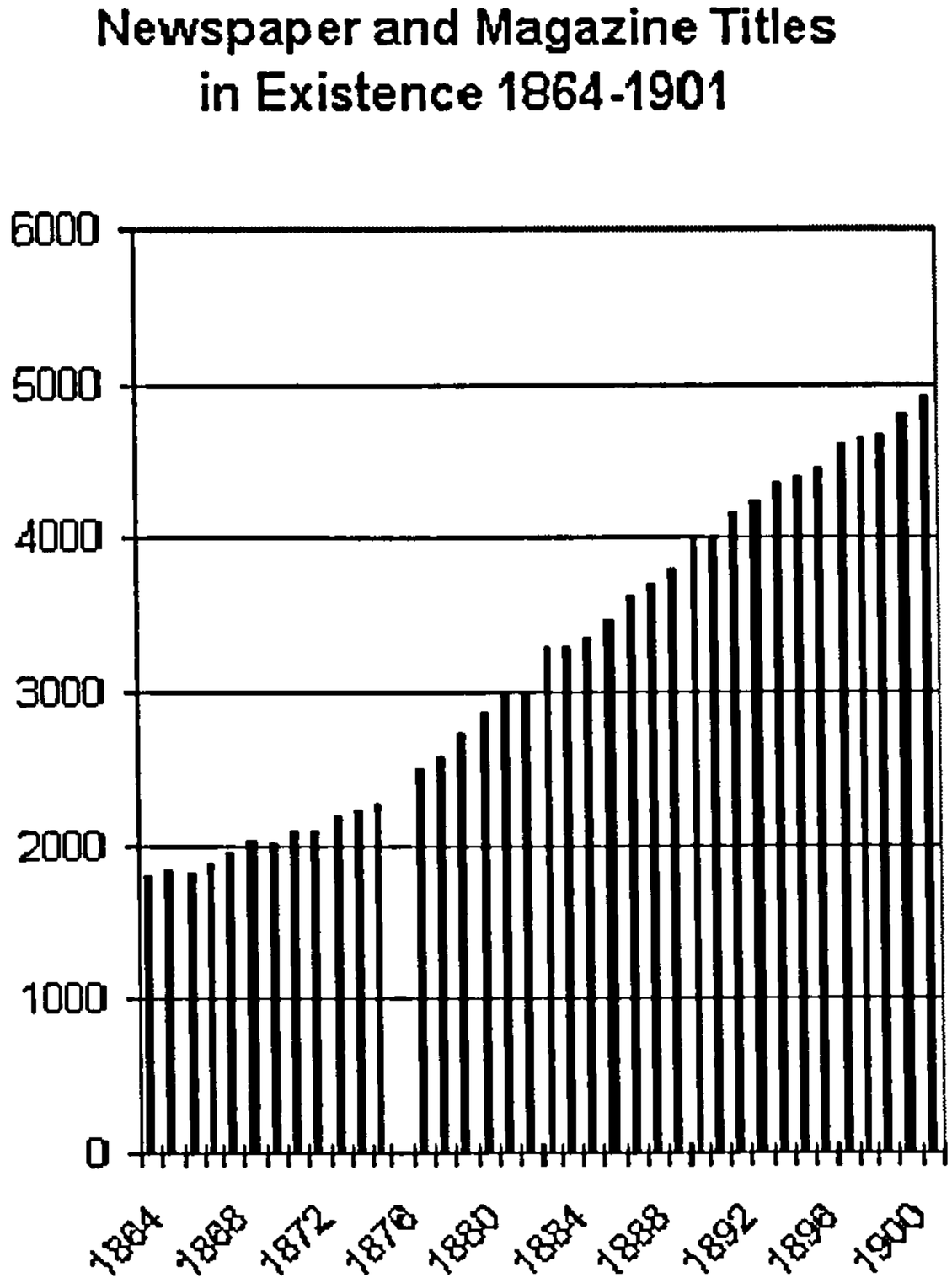
[241] British Library website, Virtual Exhibitions, 'Aspects of the Victorian Book', available at: http://www.bl.uk/collections/early/victorian/intro.html. Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957). John Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2006).
[242] British Library website, 'Aspects of the Victorian Book', op. cit. Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader*, pp. 141-172.
[243] British Library website, op. cit. Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader*, pp. 294-317, 348-64, 391-96. John Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, pp. 108-19.

illustrations. By the end of the century all three methods were using photography in transferring the original to the printing surface. Colour printing first appeared in the 1830s linked to expensive illustrated books. Soon after, brightly coloured text and images became widely available.[244] Photography had an enormous impact in the illustration of books and magazines once the cost of taking and printing photos decreased. Besides accuracy in representation, the biggest advantage compared to etchings and engravings was the possibility to multiply reproductions from one negative.



Graphic 1 [245]

As part of the industrial revolution, the significant developments in communications, transport and publishing accelerated the pace of economic, social and cultural changes by increasing the volume and speed in the flow of news and information. Books had a wide distribution but perhaps the most impressive success story in terms of sales, profit and readership was that of newspapers and magazines. Judging by the number of titles (125,000 between 1800 and 1900) and range of subjects, there was an insatiable search for information, knowledge, self-improvement and entertainment (see Graph 1).[246] Advertising firms made the best of the situation by working together with publishers to reach potential consumers through newspapers and magazines and also by means of handbills, leaflets, posters and trade catalogues.

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[244] British Library website, op. cit.
[245] Available at: http://www.bl.uk/collections/early/victorian/intro.html Graphic by Michael Twyman, *Printing 1770–1970: An Illustrated History of Its Development and Uses in England* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1970).
[246] British Library website, op. cit.

The power of images in advertising lay in the depiction of fantasies and ideals that people could easily relate to. These images constructed people's secret yearnings by giving them shape and presenting them as something tangible and within reach. Early on, advertising agents identified women and particularly middle-class women as their main target market.[247] Advertisers were quick to realize that, by being in charge of the household budget, they carried out a significant part of domestic purchases and household consumption.[248]

> [The] middle-class woman was the prime consumer of many of the new products of industrialization. She was the only woman who both needed and could afford the advances in technology [...] Other major industries, such as advertising and women's magazines, depended heavily on the middle-class woman as consumer. In other words, because of her new attitudes and her decision-making power, the middle-class woman emerged as a significant force for consumer-related economic development.[249]

Many adverts and the images they used reinforced and celebrated the perception of shopping and consumption as a feminine task. Figures 64 to 76 illustrate the link between shopping and women in visual documents of the period, and give examples of how women were portrayed in adverts promoting cameras, vacuum cleaners, fabrics and furniture. 'The establishment of the department store in the 1850s and 1860s provided an important new arena for the legitimate public appearance of middle-class women. [...] consumerism is a central aspect of modernity, and moreover mediated the public/private division'.[250] In using female images to represent shopping and consumption, women became a visual instrument of modernity.

Furniture and furnishing firms used the trade catalogue as a popular and effective way of advertising. Even William Whiteley, who repeatedly said that he never spent a penny on adverts, issued profusely illustrated shop catalogues. The one published in 1888 had over seven hundred pages and focused on household goods illustrating the contents of the shop's furniture and furnishing departments and showrooms. Whiteley exploited other forms of publicity, as evidenced by the press coverage he obtained for this catalogue in *The Cabinet Maker*. In doing so he was not unique. It was common for articles and features published in newspapers and magazines to be a disguised form of trade advertising.[251] Referring to Whiteley's shop, the author of the article in question admitted that 'both in this country and on the Continent, we can say that we know of nothing to compare with this complete furnishing palace'. The catalogue in reference was 'filled with artistic engravings of every conceivable thing likely to be wanted in the home, from the building and sanitary arrangements of the house itself, to the last finishing touches in the drawing room' (Fig. 77). The illustrations (some in colour)

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[247] Lori Anne Loeb, *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 5.
[248] Patricia Branca, *Middle Class Women in the Victorian Home* (London: Croom Helm, 1975), p. 50; Lori Anne Loeb, *Consuming Angels*, pp. 33, 34.
[249] Patricia Branca, *Middle Class Women...* p. 150.
[250] Janet Wolff, *Feminine Sentences: Essays on Women and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 45.
[251] This was the equivalent of what today is called 'below the line' advertising or 'infomercials'.

were such high-quality that 'it seems almost superfluous to see the goods'.[252] This comment alone highlights not just how developed printing techniques had become, but the crucial role of illustrations in the promotion of firms, shops and their contents. Although today it is taken for granted, that consumers were able to see the goods without being in front of them added a magical dimension to the printed page. If advertising was about selling dreams then images were their perfect embodiment.

A trade catalogue resembled a miniature version of the store. It acted as an enticement, an invitation to go and see the shop, and later as a useful reminder of that visit. In a very attractive way, due to its illustrations and layout, the catalogue depicted what the shop had to offer: not just goods and services but an experience of a world of consumption that indulged consumers' dreams. On a more utilitarian level, it contained all the information a potential customer needed, such as what the item looked like, its size, material, style, pattern, sometimes the colour, price and terms of payment (Figs. 78-79). The catalogue also contained a reassuring narrative telling customers this particular shop was the best place to buy regarding price, choice, quality and comfort.

At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, low prices and references to value were a leitmotiv in many catalogues and adverts. Shops did not tire of telling middle-class customers that their products were tasteful (or artistic) **and** inexpensive. Marsh, Jones & Cribb titled one of its catalogues '*Furnishing with Taste and Economy*' (Fig. 59), one of Waring & Gillow's was called '*Substantial and Inexpensive'* and another from Alfred Taylor & Sons had for title '*Inexpensive Furnishings*'.[253] Firms gave three reasons for being able to benefit customers with low rates. One was the ticketing (fixed prices) and cash policy: 'all goods are marked in *plain figures* at the lowest possible rates, and are sold for *Cash without Discount.*'[254] Oetzmann and Whiteley explained it well by saying that credit was expensive for both the shop and the customer and therefore they only traded for cash, which allowed them to keep prices down. Nevertheless, as discussed above, these two firms ended up introducing a system they called 'soft payment', which was effectually selling on credit. Another reason for offering low prices was linked to factory production: 'The works have been enlarged, new machinery put down, and everything done to lessen the cost of production'.[255] And there was yet another reason discussed already in connection to the retail revolution. Large firms traded high volumes of stock because doing so guaranteed them good discounts.

Although they were not cheap to produce, trade catalogues were sent free on application and also sometimes distributed through speculative builders to potential house and flat renters.[256]

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[252] *The Cabinet Maker,* 'Reviews of Trade Literature: Mr. William Whiteley's New Furnishing Catalogue', 1 October 1888, p. 106.
[253] Marsh, Jones & Cribb Ltd., ca. 1905. Waring & Gillow, ca. 1902. Alfred Taylor & Sons, 1890s.
[254] Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Home Furnishing,* trade catalogue, 1890s.
[255] Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Home Furnishing,* trade catalogue, 1890s.
[256] The firm Maple calculated that it had spent between £4000 and £5000 just on the preparation of the 901 print blocks required for its 1879 catalogue. As quoted in Trevor Keeble, 'The Domestic Moment: Design, Taste and

An important function was that of facilitating mail orders from customers who could not visit the shop. Ordering from a distance would have proved very difficult otherwise. Initially mail orders were a part of the shop's customer service but due to demand they became a separate department (Figs. 80-81). Catalogues and mailing, effectively extended the store's market throughout the country and the colonies. Large firms offered to deliver goods free of charge using their own coaches and vans within a radius of ten to twelve miles (Fig. 81). Heal & Son's 1902 catalogue gave customers specific instructions on how to place an order: 'All letters should be addressed to Heal & Son [...] Orders from the country to contain either a remittance of the amount, including packing, or a reference to a Banker [...] All orders over 40s [shillings] sent carriage paid to any railway station in England or Wales.'[257] Oetzmann & Co. claimed they had originated the system of postal orders and said they constantly received letters from customers 'expressing satisfaction with the Goods sent'. Their catalogue advised readers: 'In ordering per post, please do not cut the leaves for enclosure –quoting page, number and price will be sufficient.'[258] Thirty years later in 1920 Oetzmann still assured readers that 'when a visit to our showrooms is inconvenient, customers can rely upon every attention being given to their wishes by an efficient staff.'[259]

Trade catalogues acted also as a kind of press release. New editions would include recent news concerning the buying or building of premises or the installation of the latest machinery. Maple's 1892 catalogue informed clients about the new showroom for the display of 'electroliers and electric light fittings', an additional gallery for 'sterling silver and electro silver-plated wares' and about the improvement and extension of the china and glass departments.[260] Many general catalogues, in their aim to communicate capability and efficiency, had illustrations of the shop, factories and depositories. They could also include examples of the best recent work carried out by the firm including the furnishing of public buildings such as hotels (Figs. 82, 83). Additionally catalogues gave prominent place to the firm's founding date, and some mentioned prizes and awards won at important exhibitions. The news and illustrations were meant to reassure costumers this was an experienced **and** modern company. They were meant to convey a message of tradition, expertise and reliability. Besides their visual allure, catalogues were designed to impress by communicating the firm's sheer range and variety of stock, services and capability. Trade catalogues condensed various forms of marketing.

There were two common advertising strategies promoted by catalogues. One was the practice of fitting out model houses or 'specimen rooms' (as they were commonly referred to) in the shop's showrooms and the other was providing furnishing estimates for these rooms. The practice of setting up model interiors had started back in mid century and was firmly established by the 1890s. The original idea was probably taken from the impressive displays of furniture and

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Identity in the Late Victorian Interior' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Royal College of Art, 2004), p. 250. Quote taken from 'Furniture Catalogue Illustration' in *Furniture Gazette*, 11th October 1879, p. 255.

[257] Heal & Son, *Bedsteads, Bedding and Bedroom Furniture Illustrated Catalogue*, trade catalogue, 1902.

[258] Oetzmann & Co., *Guide to House Furnishing*, trade catalogue, ca. 1890.

[259] Oetzmann & Co. Ltd., *Delightful Homes*, trade catalogue, 1920, p. 49.

[260] Maple & Co., trade catalogue, 1892, p. 583. As seen in Hugh Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 49.

furnishings seen at The Great Exhibition in 1851 and succeeding similar national and international events. Judging by their continual inclusion in trade catalogues, 'model' exhibits proved an effective way of luring customers not only to visit the shop but also to place orders containing all the things the furnishing and decorating of a room required. The advantage for clients, according to the brochure, was that by looking at model rooms they could easily picture the end result and could judge the effect of assembled things. By virtue of their attractive arrangement the specimen rooms enhanced the qualities of the suites of furniture, acting as an ideal stage (Fig. 84). These rooms acted also as guides on how to decorate, arrange and coordinate, including notions of style, but also colour schemes, types of wood, materials and patterns. The strategy of setting up model rooms was so popular that firms used them at national and international exhibitions as an imposing way of conveying the firm's decorative skills and artistic competence (Figs. 85-88).

Regarding catalogues, the model house worked together with 'furnishing estimates' where every item required was listed and priced. These estimates claimed, for example, that it was possible to furnish a whole house for a set sum, be it £120, £250 or £500. Clients could also apply for bespoke designs and estimates, free of charge, to suit specific homes. Tarn & Co. assured readers they would 'be most happy to send experienced assistants to take measurements and particulars, and advise, for estimates free, for partly or entirely Furnishing'.[261] The combination of model rooms and furnishing estimates was a strategy devised mainly with the customer of moderate means in mind. One catalogue announced that 'recognizing the demand on the part of the public for Inexpensive and Reliable Furniture, Marsh, Jones & Cribb Ltd., have built in their showrooms an eight roomed house, completely furnished, for the moderate sum of £250.'[262] (Fig. 89)

Although there were noticeable changes in fashion and styles through the years, firms and shops stocked goods to match a broad range of tastes and differences in budget. Within their target markets shops always offered the widest possible choice in fashionable goods but also other items that although not belonging to the height of fashion were still marketable. As long as there was demand for a type of product, shops would stock and promote it. Conversely, when demand stopped or faded, shops would advertise special sales and cut prices to stimulate it (Fig. 90). From time to time shops would organize general sales, sometimes issuing a corresponding catalogue for promotion (Fig. 22).

Catalogues were varied. There was the general one displaying the goods in all departments, and additionally many smaller but specialised ones focusing on particular goods such as, 'cottage furniture', 'modern reproductions', 'drawing room furniture', 'curtains', 'easy chairs', etc. In 1903 Hampton & Son's encouraged clients to order from their series of twenty different

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[261] Tarn & Co., London, trade catalogue, ca. 1900.
[262] Marsh, Jones & Cribb Ltd., Leeds, *Furnishing with Taste and Economy*, trade catalogue, ca. 1905.

booklets and catalogues.[263] It was common for press adverts to appeal to readers of journals and magazines to order catalogues. Heal & Son in 1910 advertised a 'booklet "Christmas Presents" containing 130 illustrations sent free by post to all readers of the *Lady's Pictorial.*' Catalogues were also issued as souvenirs whenever the firm participated in an important exhibition, and these would praise and illustrate the firm's exhibits.[264]

Another aspect of advertising closely linked to model rooms and fundamental for shops was that of window displays. Retailers wanted potential customers to be drawn to shop windows as by magnets. Windows were the face of the shop and its engaging displays were meant to lure people inside. They tended to be arranged theatrically, giving the illusion of a domestic space. (Figs. 91-96) A sign of the importance of shop windows was reflected in their size and in the way they determined shop building architecture. Whenever retailers had the chance, for example in the case of extending premises, building new ones or because of refurbishing after a fire, in the new façade they would try and make the windows and their plate glass as big as possible. In architectural and business terms, the ground floor was the most important because, as the most immediately visible part of the building, it made the difference between potential clients coming inside or not.

Increasingly, advertising became essential to the success of any firm in the very competitive furniture and furnishing industry. Firms spent a lot of effort and money turning the name of the shop into a trademark, making it familiar to the public and associating it with notions of quality, value and expertise. Under new management since 1894, by 1902 Norman & Stacey Ltd. had spent close to £250,000 on advertising while having an annual turnover of £120,000. The shop had moved from Queen Victoria Street to Tottenham Court Road the previous year and to advertise the new address it gave out 'novelties in the shape of useful gifts'. But most important, the head of the company, Mr. J. T. Tanqueray,

> realized that to expand a business of this nature into the proportions and the high-class character that he aimed to make it, he must persuade the better class of buyers to sink any prejudices which might exist, and that to this end the Press could be made a most efficient instrument. He won the candid commendation of journals which mould social opinion [...] When such papers as the *Sketch* and the *Lady* advise their patrons "to get your house furnished by Norman & Stacey," the backbone of any antipathy in high social circles, even to countenancing the hire-purchase system, is effectually broken.[265]

Having the support of the press was vital to the successful running of any business and firms went into a lot of trouble to keep this relationship working to their advantage. A Daily Express's advert quoted Mr. John Lawrie, Chairman of Whiteley, saying: 'I cannot speak of the rapid growth of Whiteleys without acknowledging the important part played by press advertising.'[266]

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[263] Hampton & Sons, *My Week-End Cottage,* trade catalogue, ca. 1903, p. 24.
[264] For example the trade catalogue issued as souvenir by Christopher Pratt & Sons from Bradford on The Cartwright Exhibition in 1904.
[265] *The Furniture Record and The Furnisher,* July 25, 1902, p. 69-71. Found at AAD/1995/9.
[266] Daily Express, advert in *The Times,* May 20, 1925, p. 13, issue 43966.

Throughout the period, as the next chapter shows, artists, designers and architects writing as advocates for the design reform movement gave retailers and traders a bad press, blaming them for promoting bad taste through the selling of ugly, cheap and shoddy wares. To counteract them, retailers responded adopting the same language of the reform discourse, and the same media (newspapers, magazines and books), to advertise their shops and merchandise. Some advice authors, such as Miss F. Gardiner, Mrs. Peel and Mrs. Panton, wrote numerous articles (later published as books) where they would recommend specific goods and shops to readers. Oetzmann & Co. reprinted in one of their catalogues a series of articles published earlier in *The Lady*. These included 'How I Furnished my House for £120', 'How to Furnish a Country House', 'The Girls Own Room' and 'A Pretty Hall and Landing'.[267] The articles had been, of course, illustrated with examples exhibited in Oetzmann's showrooms. Mrs. Panton was already a well-known writer to the readers of *The Lady Pictorial* when she published her most famous book, *From Kitchen to Garret*. The book was based on her articles and included a furnishing estimate where she listed the names of the shops selling every article, such as Shoolbred, Maple, Whiteley, Smee, etc. (Fig. 97) A later book, *Suburban Residences,* included several adverts from furniture and furnishing shops. The one from Smee & Cobay illustrated a drawing room, which the firm had designed in collaboration with the author; the firm Godfrey Giles & Co. highlighted their 'Specialities and Novelties in Furniture and Decoration as recommended by Mrs. Panton'; and the page for William Wallace & Co. announced they would send free on application 'How to Furnish "Our Flat" or House for £100, and also for £300', by the same author.[268] (Figs. 98-100) Another example of a firm's advertising efforts was H. J. Jennings' book on home decoration, *Our Homes and how to Beautify Them,* using illustrations provided by Waring & Gillow and explicitly commending the firm for its contribution to the field of applied art and design.[269]

The close collaboration between writers (mainly women) and furnishing shops irritated the ranks of design reformers (mainly men) who accused these writers of doing it for the commission they would get from retailers rather than from a genuine interest and knowledge of the decorative arts.[270] The next chapters discuss this antagonism between the design reform movement and the furniture and furnishing industry, that is, between the fields of art (understood as decorative arts) and commerce, and show how this opposition informed the representation of the middle class domestic interior and shaped the ideal of the modern home.

This chapter has described in detail the growth and development of an important group of large furnishing businesses, with the aim of recreating the furnishing retail trade catering for the middle class for the period 1890 to 1914. Gathering information and data from several and diverse sources the aim has been to stress the patterns of expansion shared by these

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[267] Oetzmann & Co., *Guide to House Furnishing,* trade catalogue, ca. 1890.
[268] Mrs. J. E. Panton, *Suburban Residences and How to Circumvent Them* (London: Ward & Downey, 1896).
[269] H. J. Jennings, *Our Homes and How to Beautify Them,* 2nd edn (London: Harrison & Sons, 1902). See Chapter 3 of this thesis for the discussion of the way Jennings appropriated the advice discourse to promote Waring & Gillow.
[270] See W. S. Sparrow's criticism addressed in Chapter 2.

businesses and to show how their growth was closely connected to the expansion of the middle-class on the assumption that this class in turn depended on the machine-produced and mass-retailed goods. The success of the large furnishing firm is testimony of the impact their products and services had in the domestic culture of the nation. This retail sector, together with the consumers it targeted contributed to a large extent to the creation of a culture of consumption centred upon the middle-class home and influencing therefore its material and visual manifestation.

The large furnishing retail firm operated within an industrial capitalist system incorporating developments in transport, communications, literacy and advertising, and adopting and developing modern business methods to exploit economic opportunities. Economies of scale and modern advertising were two core strategies fuelling investment and growth. Usually from modest beginnings as a one-shop affair selling soft furnishings it grew to encompass hard furnishings and a wide range of goods, departments and services operating from one or more branches and requiring the separation of manufacturing and warehouse facilities from retailing functions and showrooms. The transformation in retailing had important consequences, exerting an unprecedented control over the sphere of production and particularly that of furniture making. Developments in retailing also reconfigured areas of London with the West end of the city becoming specialized in retailing and the East end in production.

In highlighting the power of the retail industry this chapter is crucial to understanding the design reform discourse and its influence on advice literature in their efforts to discredit trade and traders in favour of a narrow but powerful vision of the decorative arts and the role of the artist/designer in the modern world. To the loud modernity of the business world and its products, design reformers opposed their own take on modernity based on the belief in the superiority of art, the artist/artisans' workshop and the hand-made.

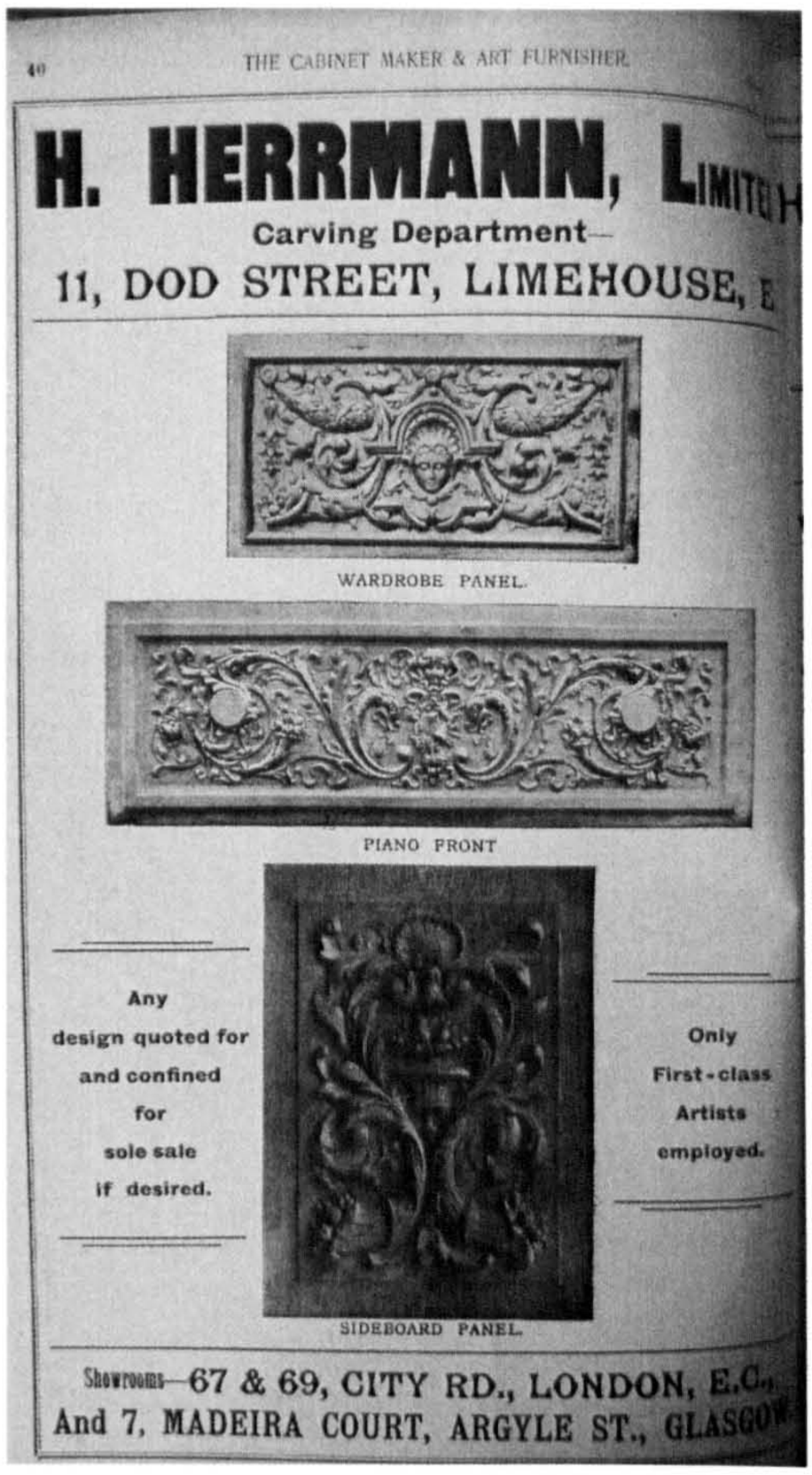


Figure 1 H. Herrmann, Ltd. (Advert in *The Cabinet Maker,* June, 1896, p. 40)

Figure 2 B. Cohen & Sons (Advert in *The Cabinet Maker,* June, 1896, p. 12)

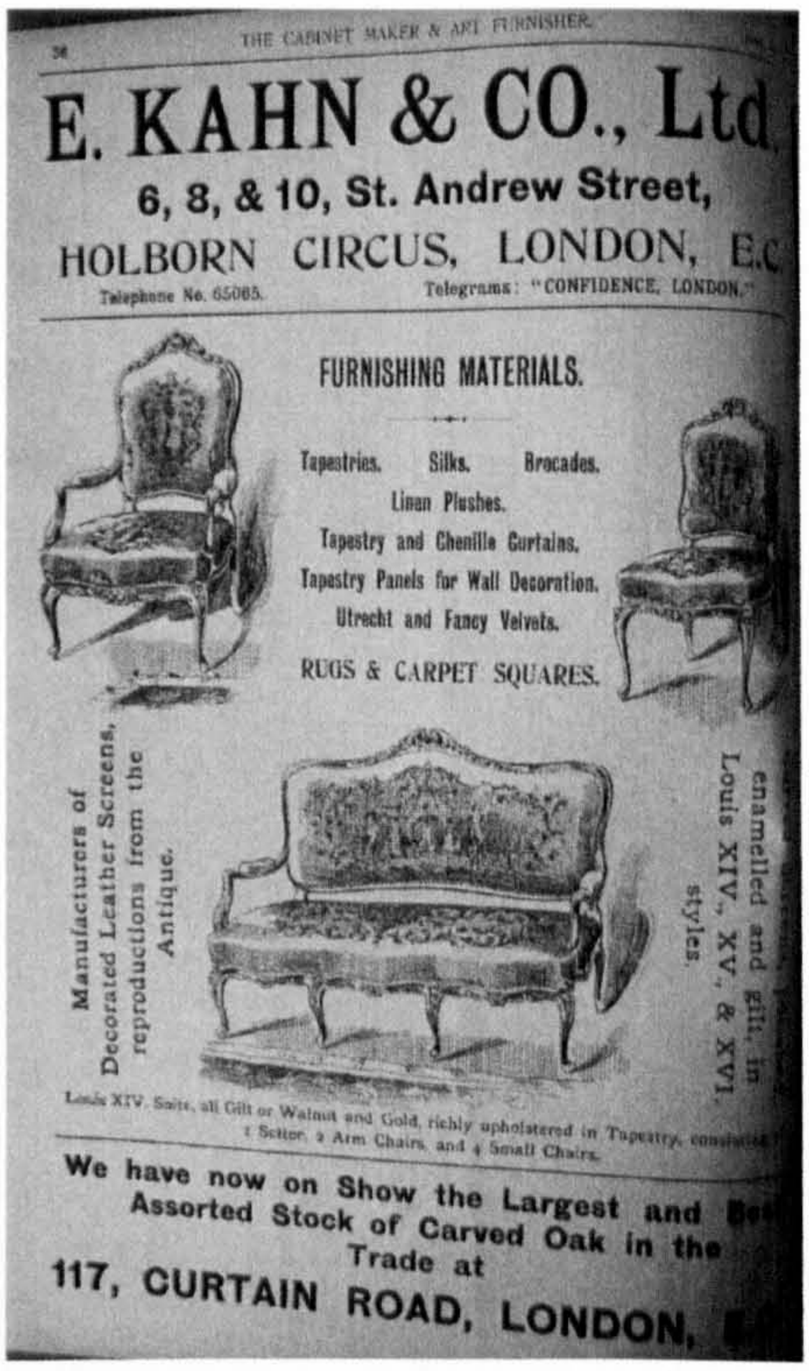


Figure 3 E. Kahn & Co., Ltd (Advert in *The Cabinet Maker,* June, 1896, p. 36)

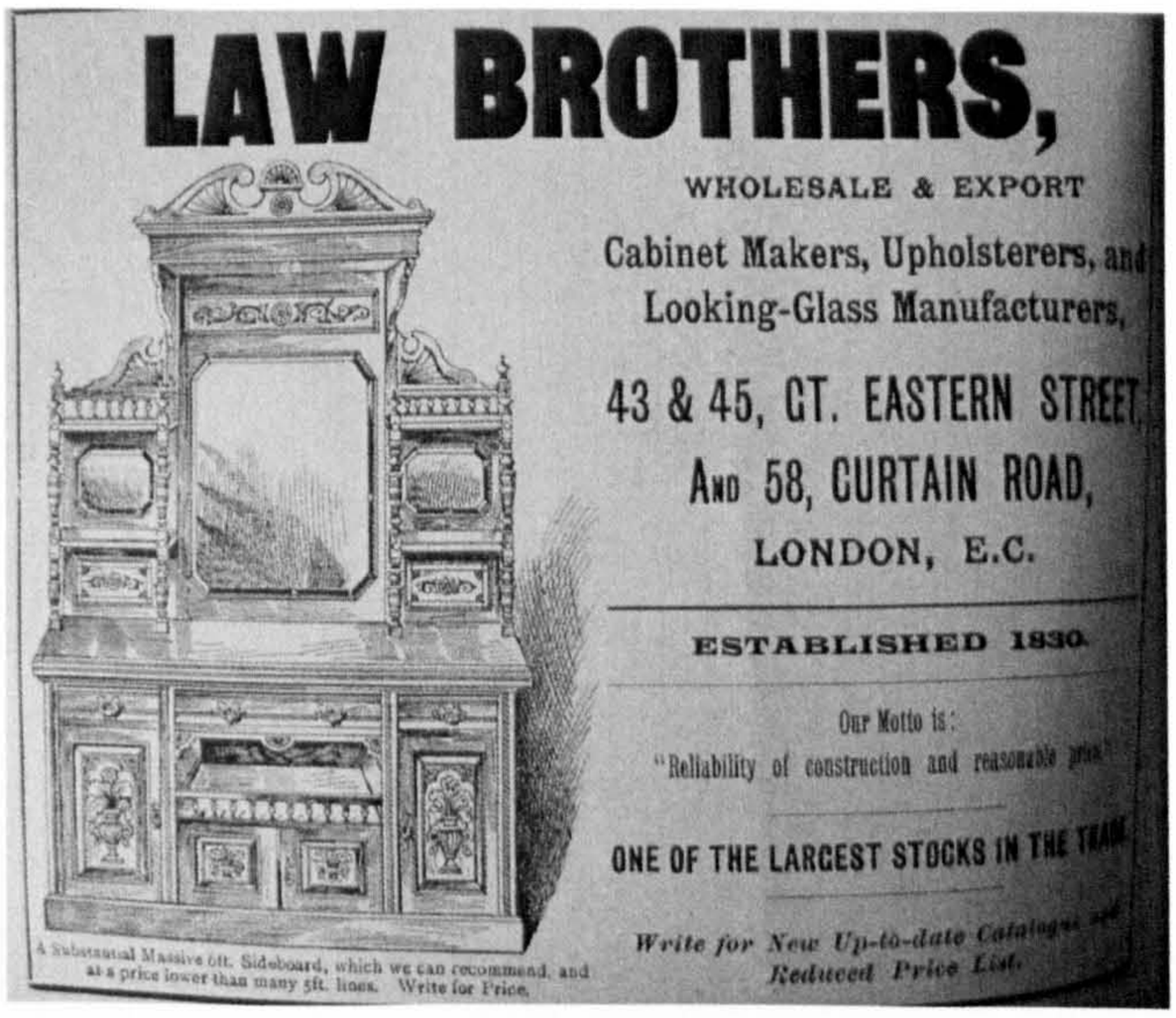


Figure 4 Law Brothers (Advert in *The Cabinet Maker,* June, 1896)

Figure 5 Longstaff & Pitcher (Advert in *The Cabinet Maker,* June, 1896)

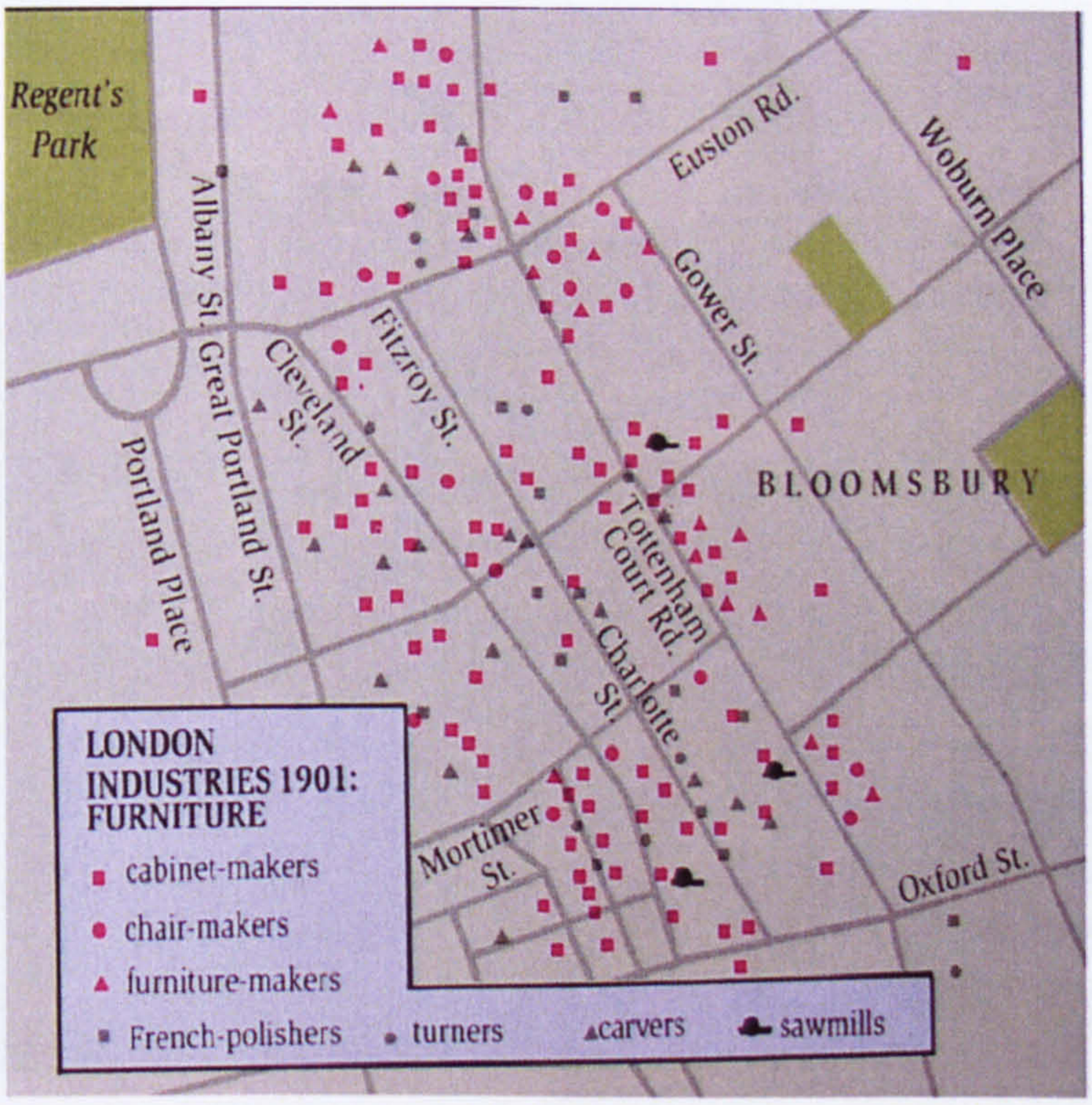


Figure 6 London's furniture industry in the Tottenham Court Road area, 1901 (*The Times History of London*, ed. by Hugh Clout, p. 92)

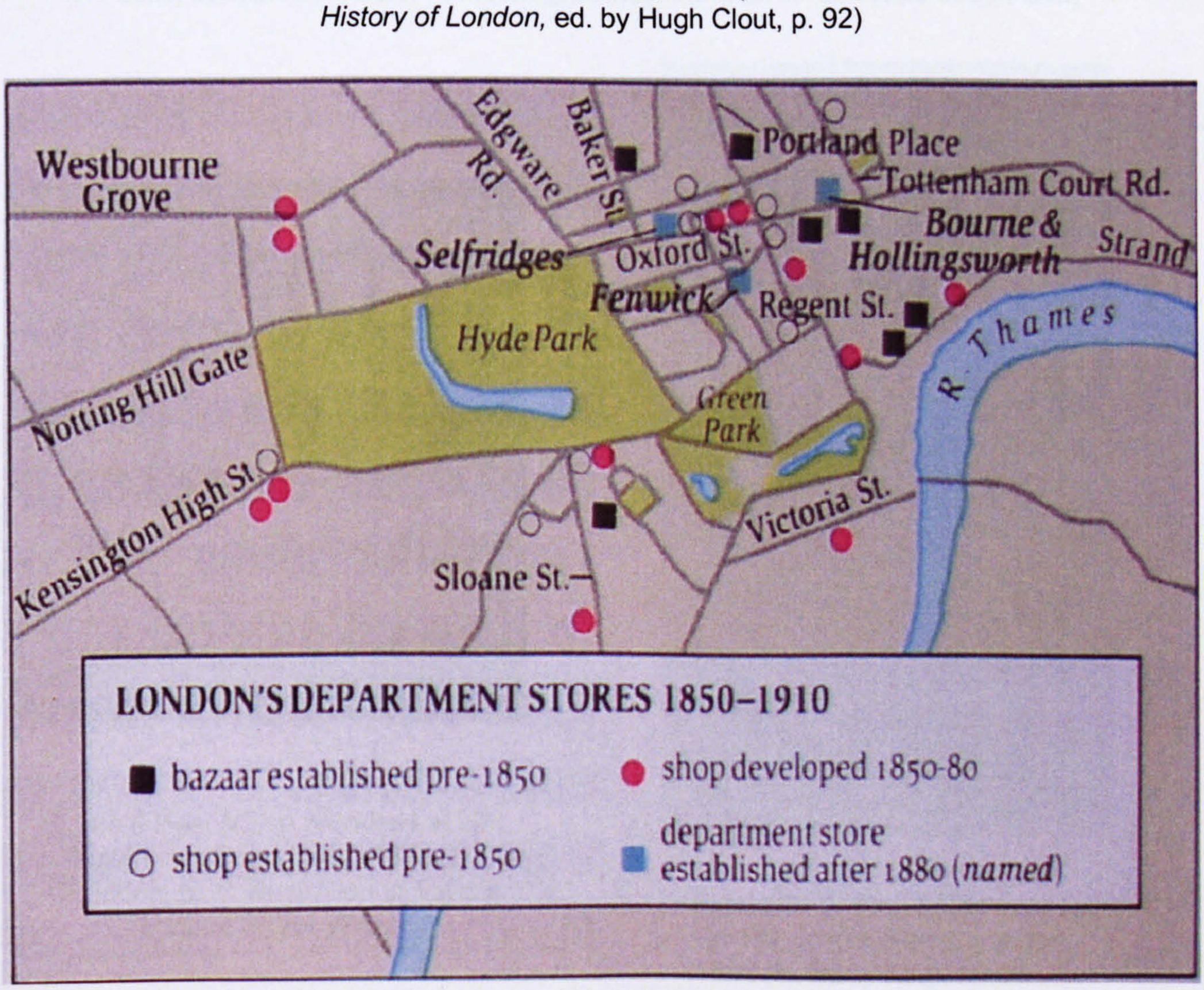


Figure 7 London's Department Stores established between 1850 and 1910 (*The Times History of London*, ed. by Hugh Clout, p. 107.

Figure 8 Brixton Road, Brixton, 1912, looking towards the railway bridge and Bon Marche. Erected in 1877, Bon Marche was one of the first purpose built department stores in England (Ideal Homes Suburbia in Focus, at http://www.ideal-homes.org.uk/index1a.html, brixton-road-00004-640)

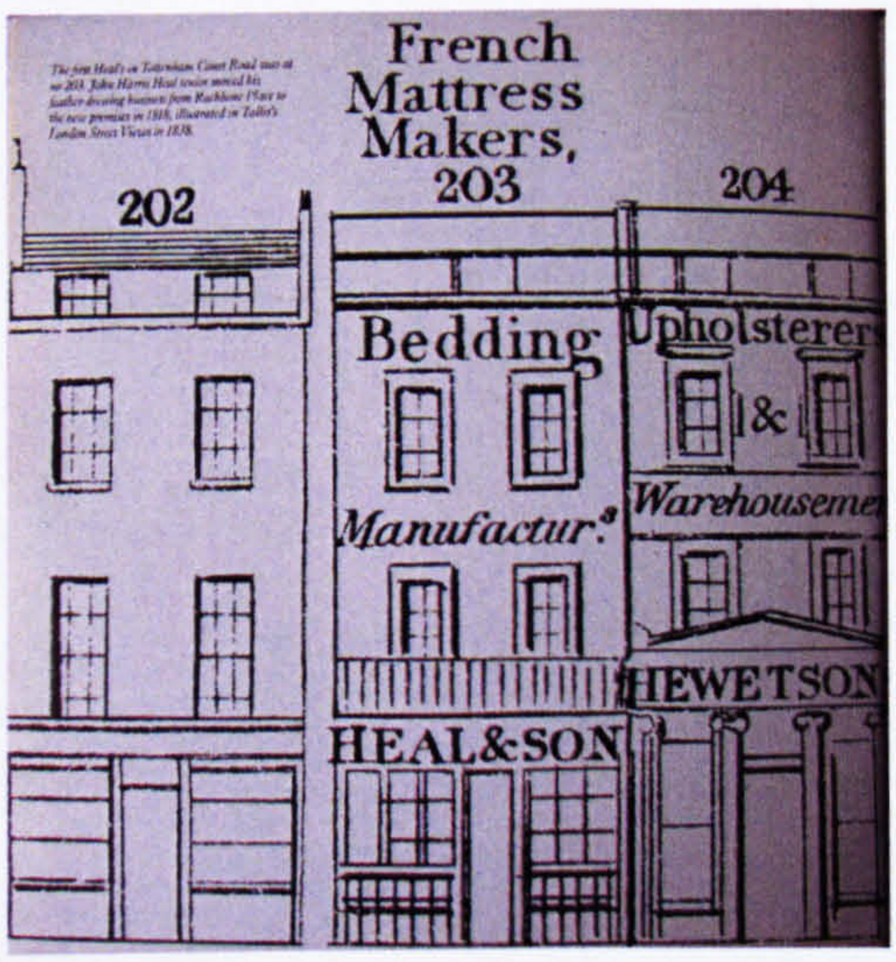


Figure 9 Heal & Son premises at 203 Tottenham Court Road, 1838 (S. Goodden, p. 2, illustration in Tallis's *London Street Views*)

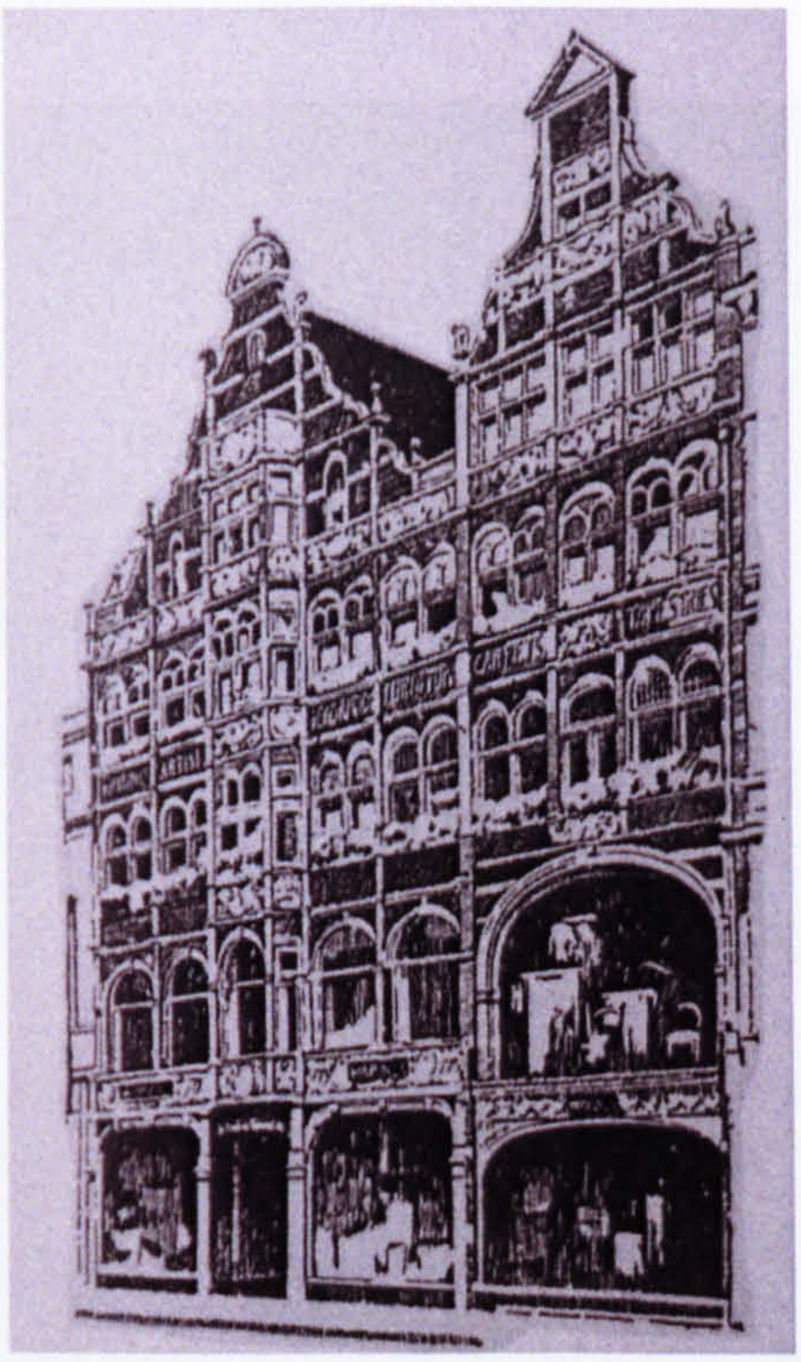


Figure 10 Waring & Gilow, shop in 181 Oxford Street, London, 1898 (H. Barty-King, *Maples,* p. 59)

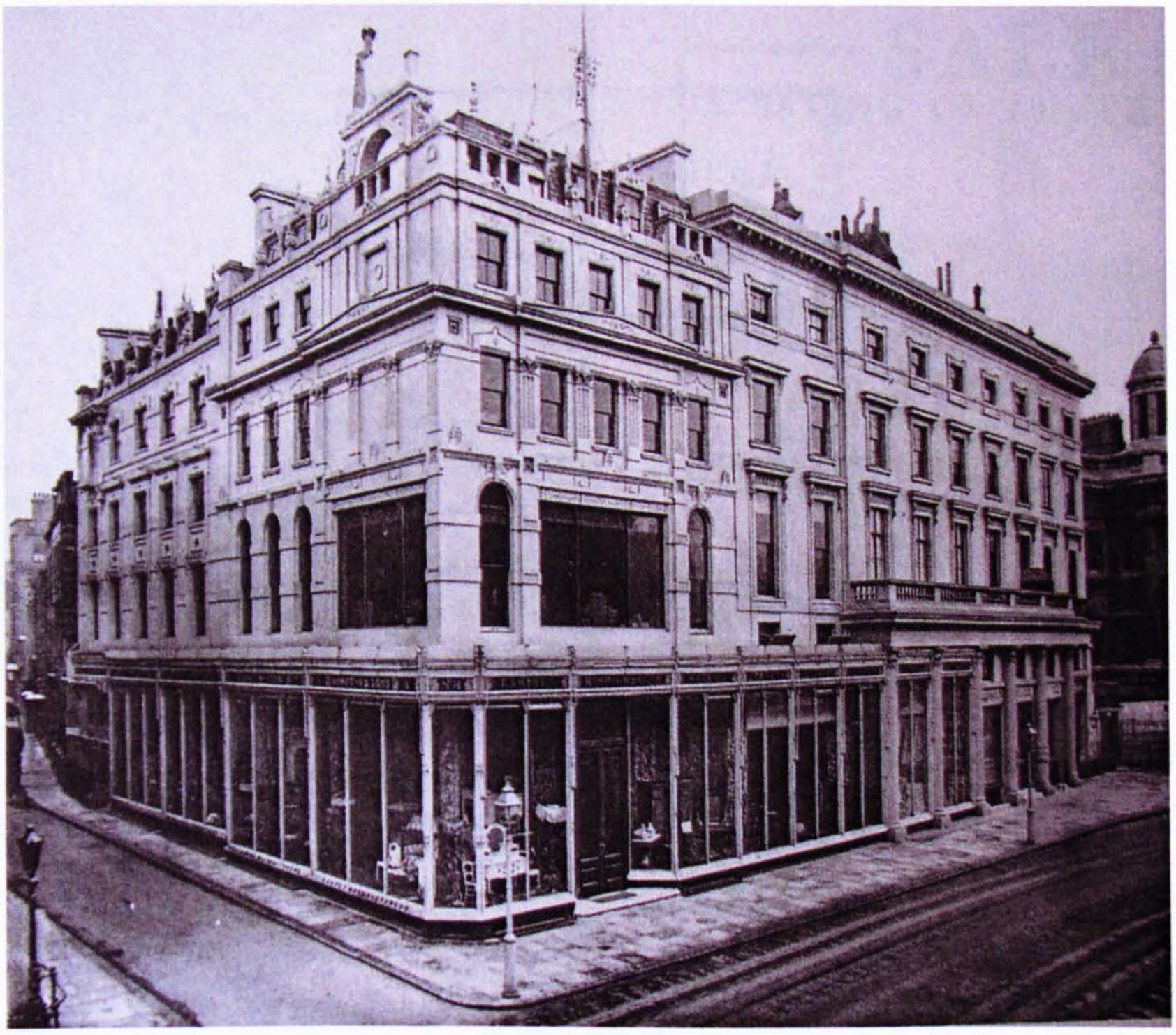


Figure 11 Hampton & Sons, premises on Pall Mall East and Cockspur Street , 1894 (*The Victorian Catalogue,* 1994; re-print of Hampton & Sons, *Book of Specimen Interiors and Furniture,* trade catalogue, 1894 *)*

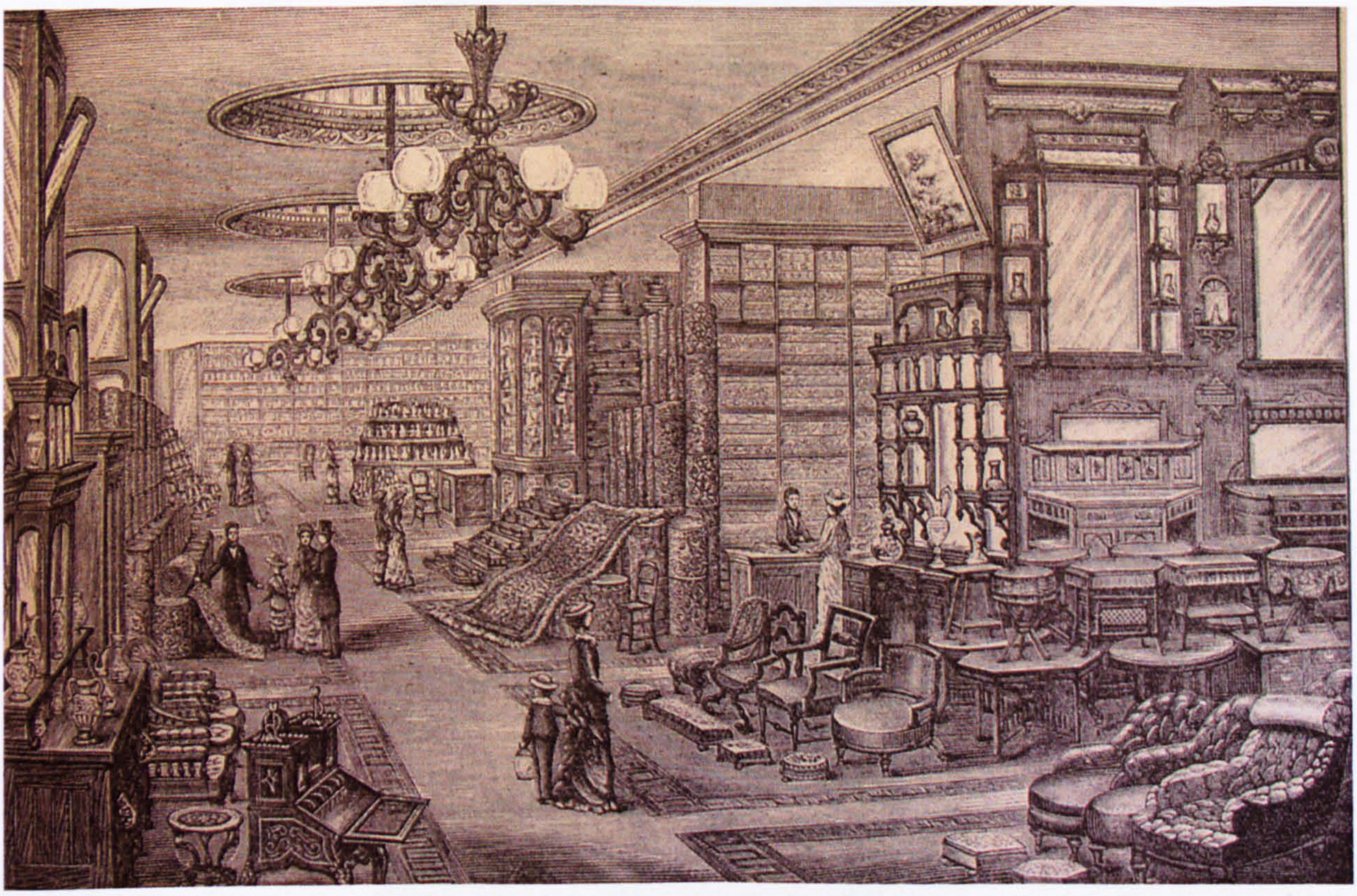


Figure 12 Oetzmann, 'Vestibule-Entrance to Show Rooms – General Furnishing' (Oetzmann & Co., *Guide to House Furnishing*, trade catalogue, ca. 1890)

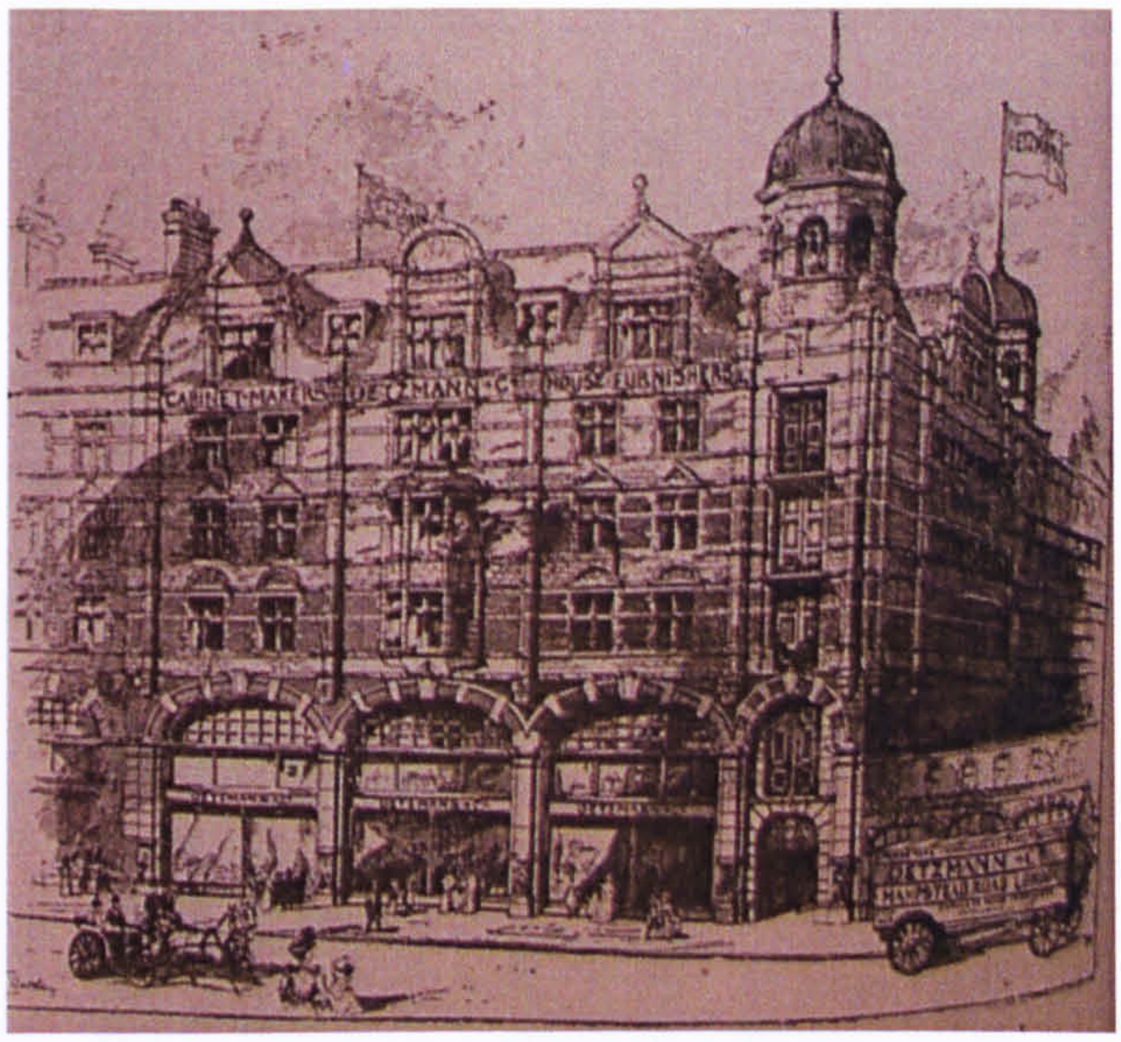


Figure 13 'New premises in Drummond Street for Messrs. Oetzmann', designed by Mr. Fred Eales, of Welbeck Street (*The House* Vol IX, 1901, p.148)

Figure 14 Oetzmann, 'View of town delivery new depot with showrooms over' (*The Times,* Monday, October 23, 1922, p. 5)

Figure 15 Shoolbred's shop, detail of advert (*The Times,* Monday, May 24, 1909, p. 61)

Figure 16 Shoolbred, store, 1912 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10101516, unnamed artist in London's Social Calendar)

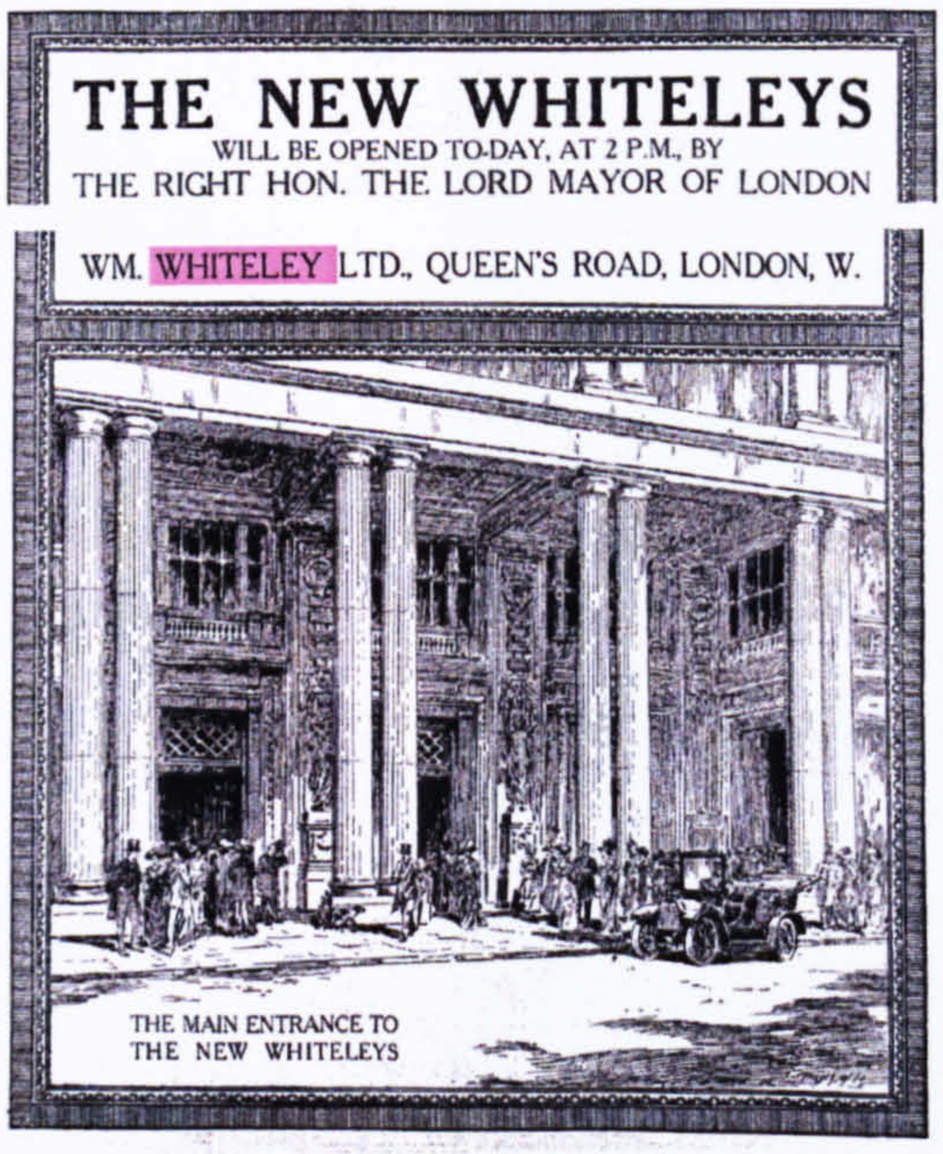


Figure 17 Detail of advert announcing the official opening of Whiteley's new store (*The Times*, Tuesday, November 21, 1911, p. 4)

Figure 18 Whiteley, new store, 1912 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10101519, unnamed artist in London's Social Calendar)

Figure 19 Whiteley, store, 1921 (English Heritage NMR, bl 25617, photograph by Bedford Lemere)

Figure 20 Whiteley's shop, building works. 'The prosperity of the big stores is reflected in the big additions and improvements which have been and are now being made to their premises.' (Detail of advert in *The Times,* Wednesday, May 20, 1925, p. 13)

Figure 21 'John Barker's New Premises exclusively for Furniture and Furnishings' in Kensington High Street (John Barker & Co., *Genuine Sales*, trade catalogue, 1907)

Figure 22 John Barker, cover of sales catalogue (John Barker & Co., *Genuine Sales*, trade catalogue, 1907)

Figure 23 Side of Harrod's store in Hans Road, 1901 (Edina, jd1851-001, Central Press)

Figure 24 Harrod's store, ca. 1904 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10101536, unattributed illustration on postcard)

Figure 25 Harrod's seen from Montpelier Street, 1906 (Edina, ha6626-001, London Stereoscopic Company)

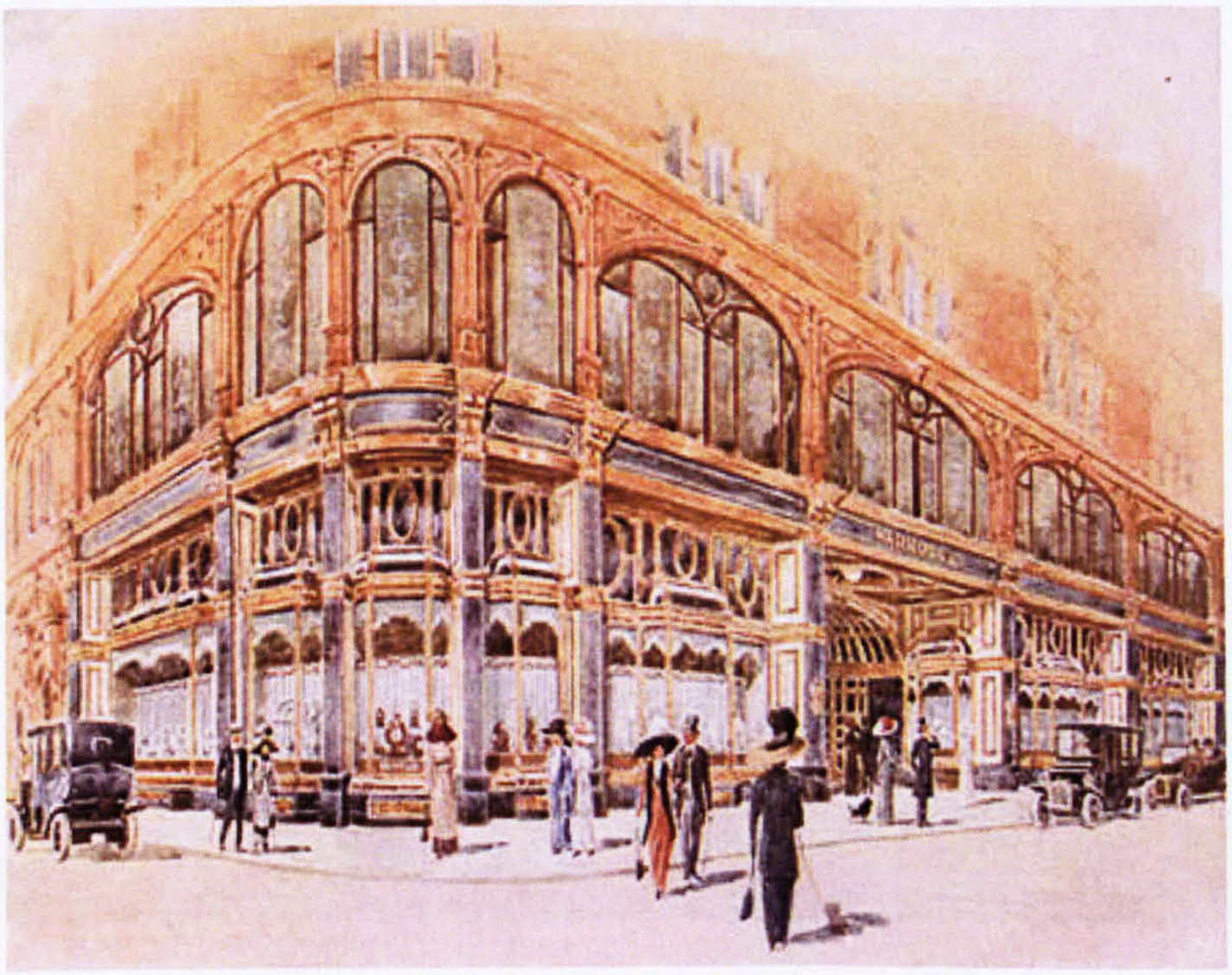


Figure 26 Corner view of Harrod's, 1911 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10101532, Advert in *The Playgoer & Society Illustrated,* vol.4 no.24)

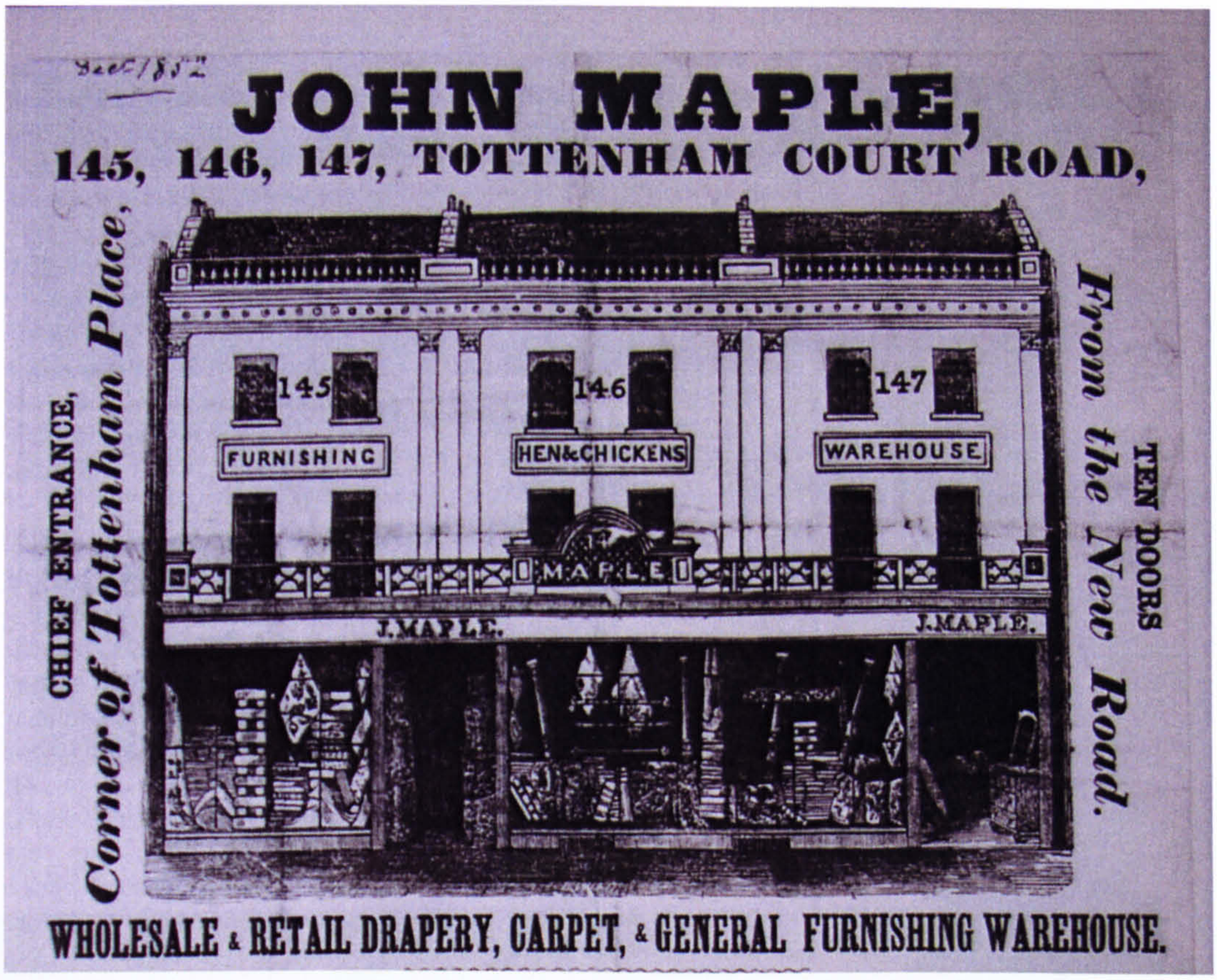


Figure 27 Advert for John Maple's drapery store in 1852. 'Hen & Chickens' was the traditional sign-board for a draper's shop. (H. Barty-King, *Maples*, p.6)

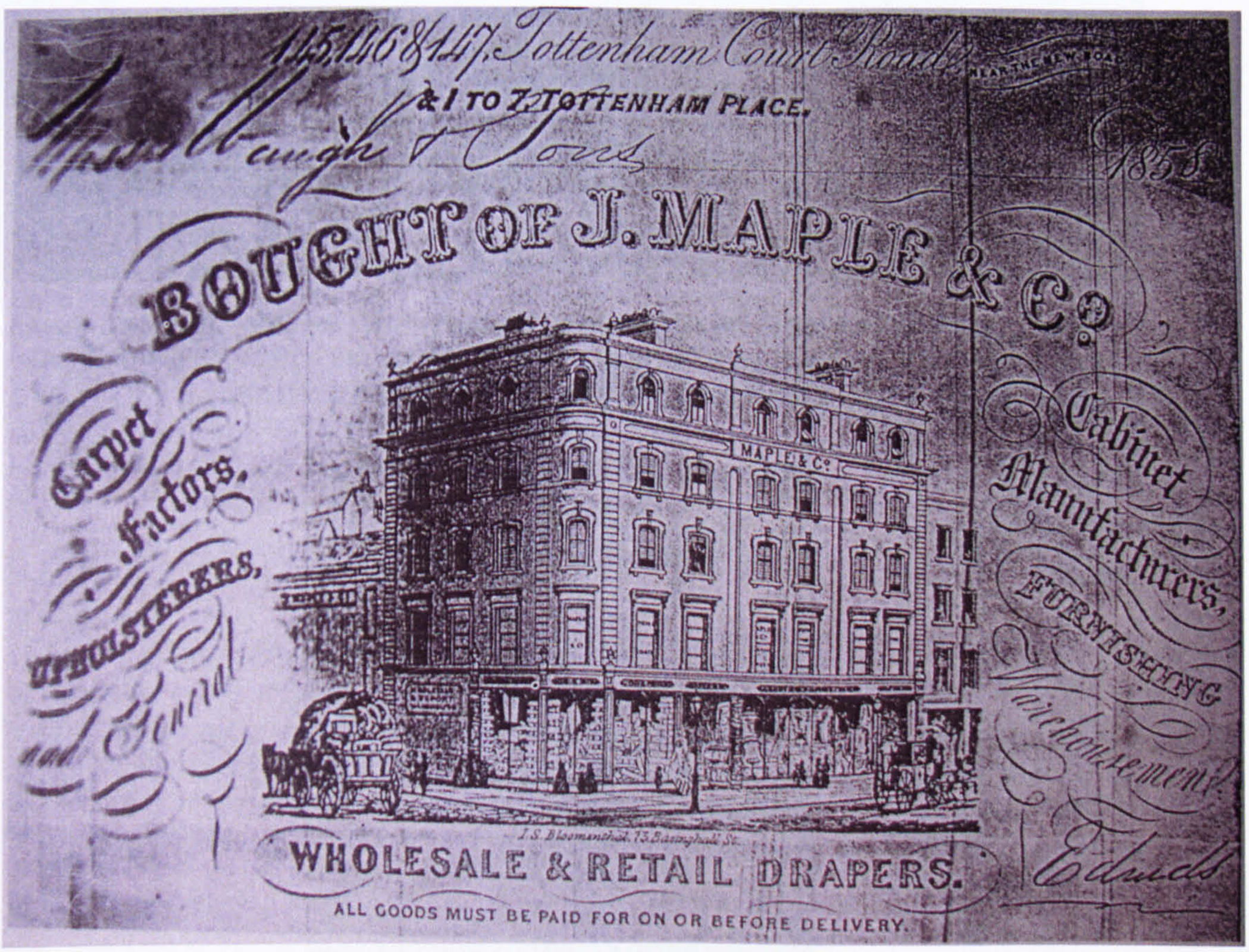


Figure 28 Maple, new shop in 1858 with additional entrance in Tottenham Place (H. Barty-King, *Maples*, p.12)

Figure 29 Maple, shop, 1890s (H. Barty-King, *Maples*, p. 55)

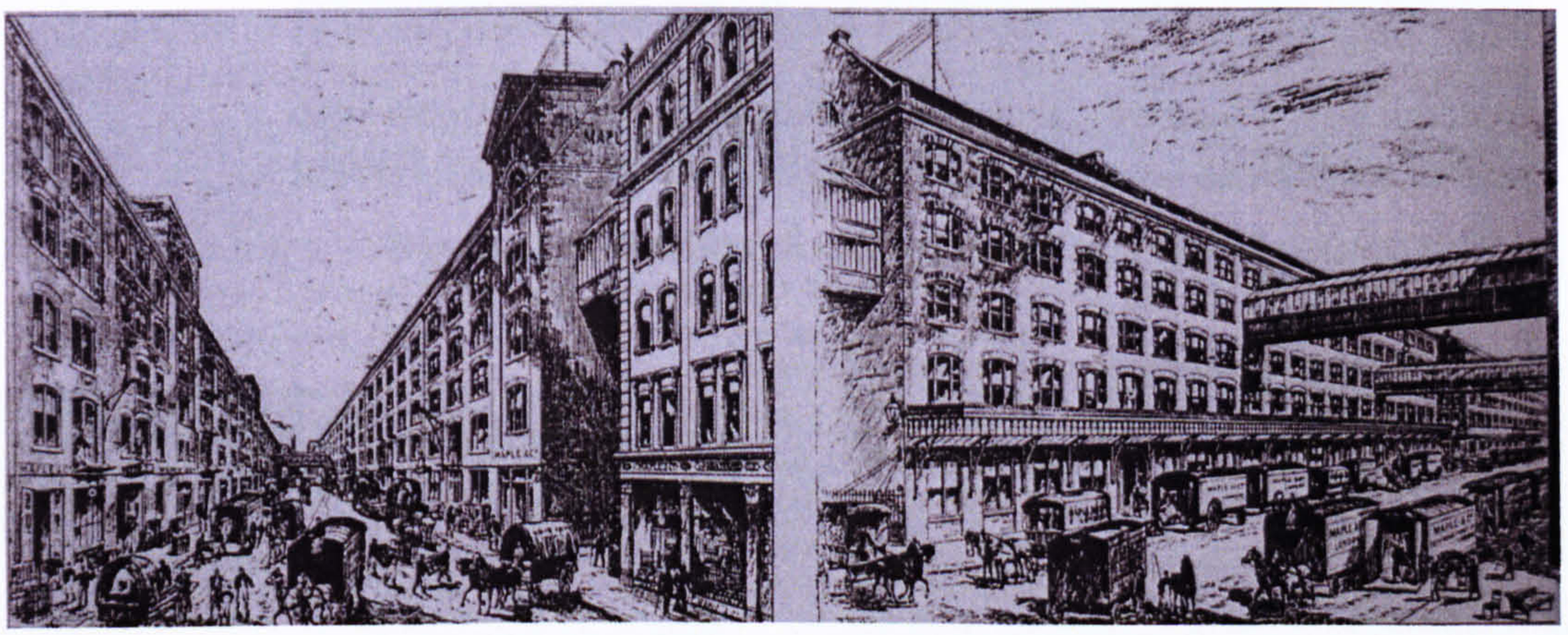


Figure 30 Maple, furniture factories in Southampton Court (left) and Tottenham Place (right) in 1890s. Notice the connecting passages between buildings so as to avoid disrupting street traffic (H. Barty-King, *Maples*, p.56)

Figure 31 Heal & Son store in Tottenham Court Road built in 1854 (Heal & Son, trade catalogue, 1902)

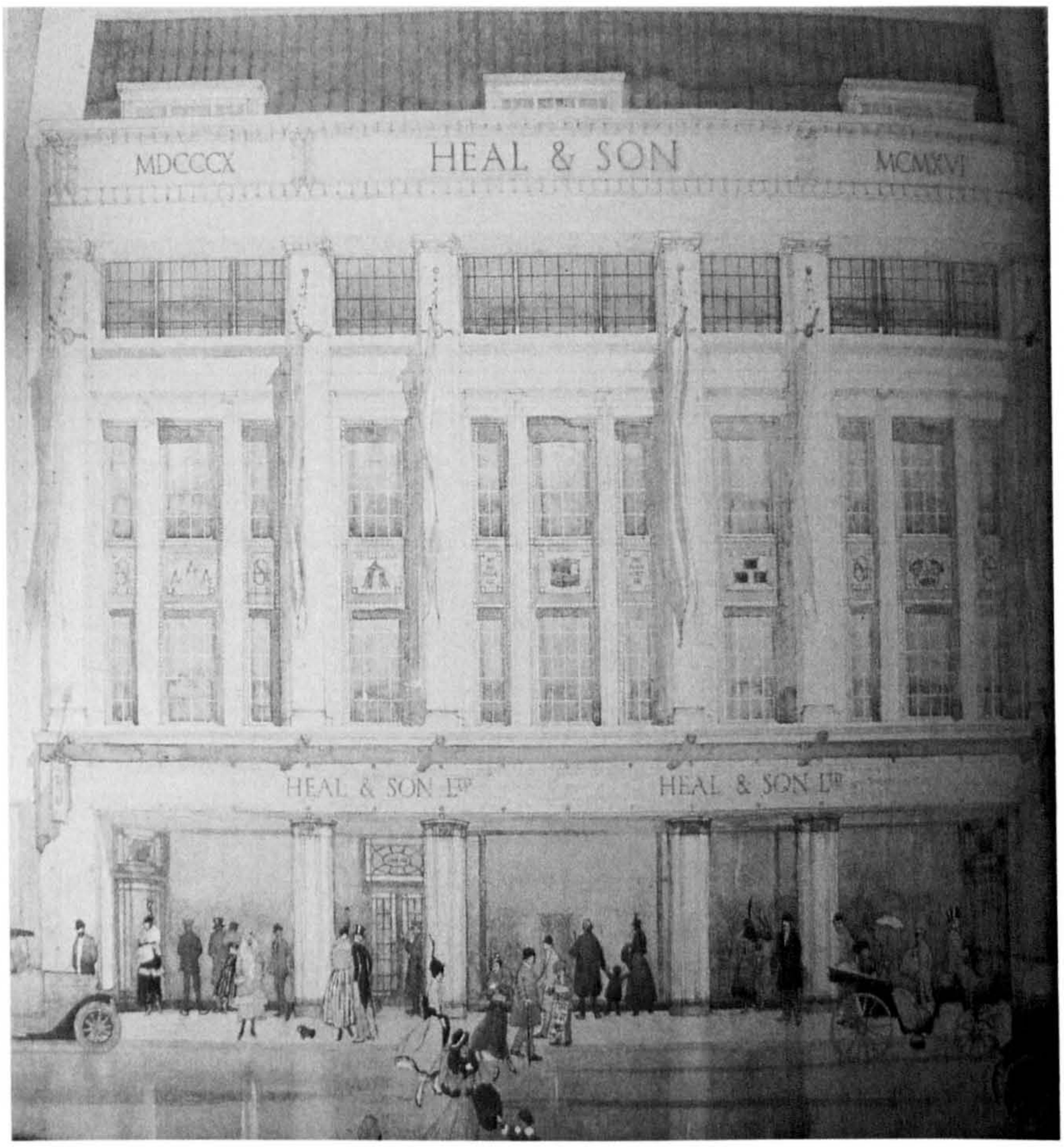


Figure 32 Heal & Son, new building by Cecil Brewer opened in 1917 (S. Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter*, p. 19, painting by Palmer Jones)

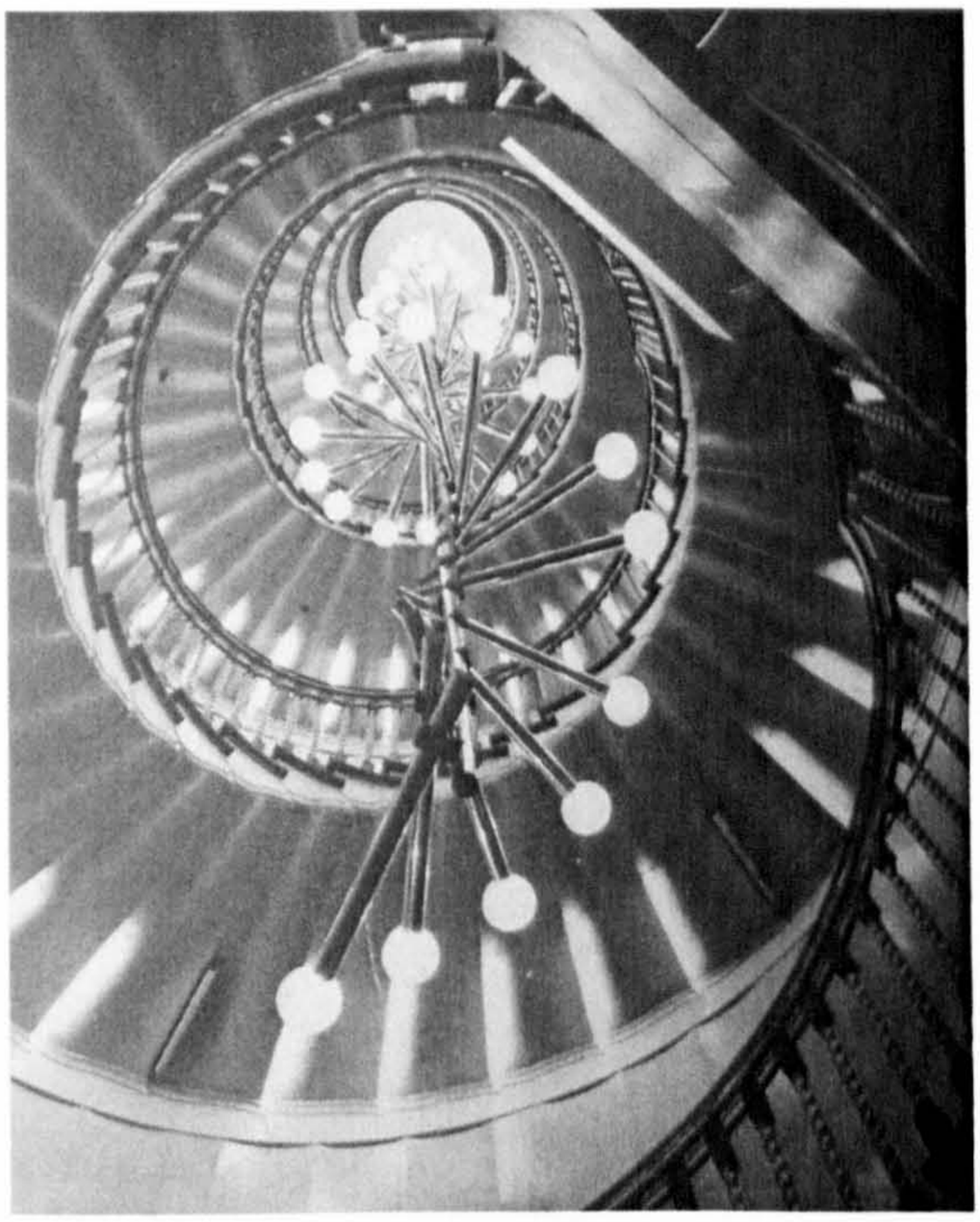


Figure 33 Heal & Son, circular staircase in the 1917 shop. Helix of lights installed after 1945 (S. Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter*, p. 92)

Figure 34 Heal & Son, annexe to the Mansard Gallery on the top floor of the 1917 shop (S. Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter*, p. 53)

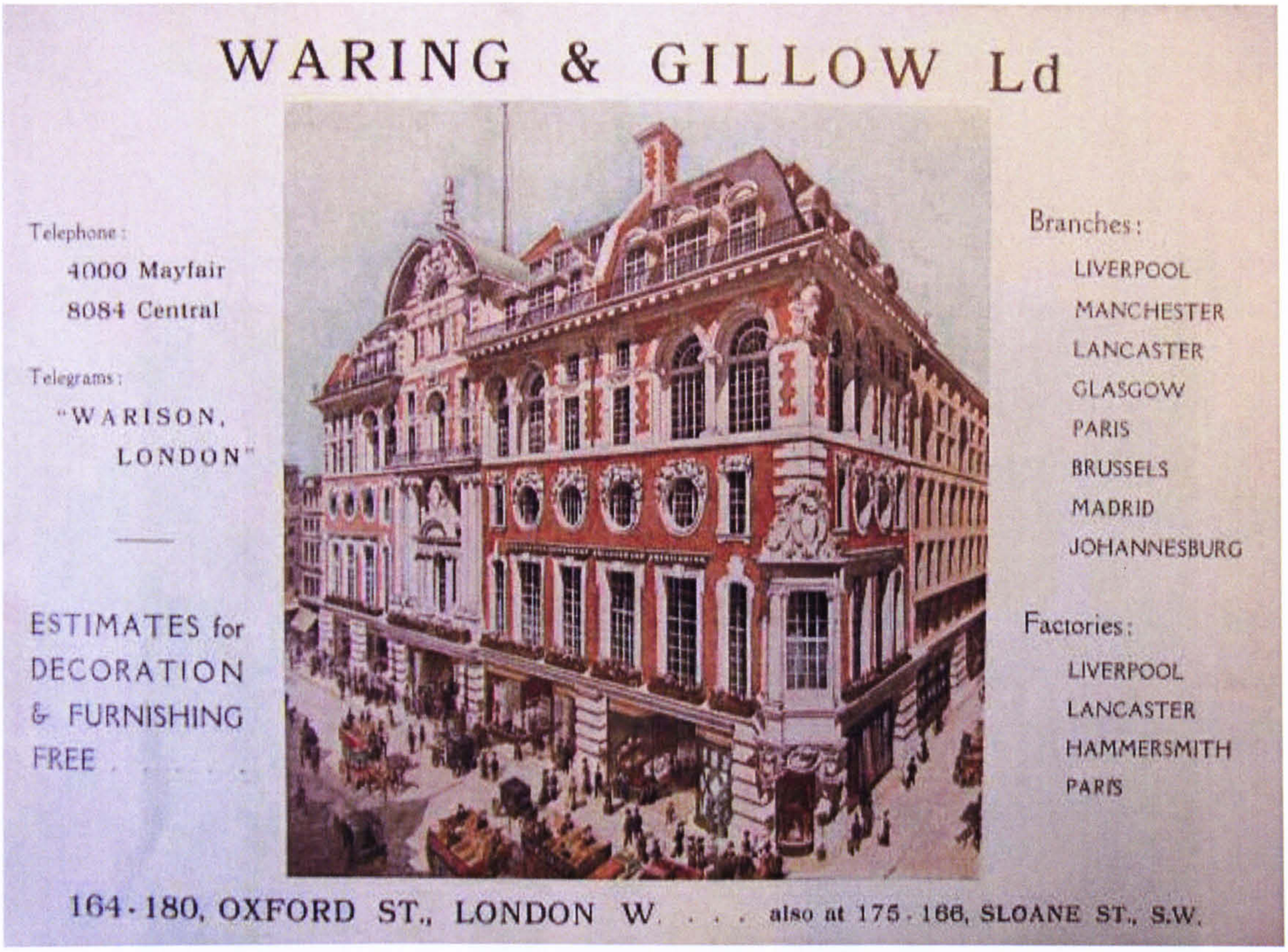


Figure 35 Waring & Gilow, new shop in Oxford Street, London (Waring & Gillow, *Souvenir of the Opening of Waring & Gillow's New Building,* trade catalogue, 1906)

Figure 36 Waring & Gillow, shop in Oxford Street, 1910 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No 10101518, unattributed photograph in *The Modern Building Record*)

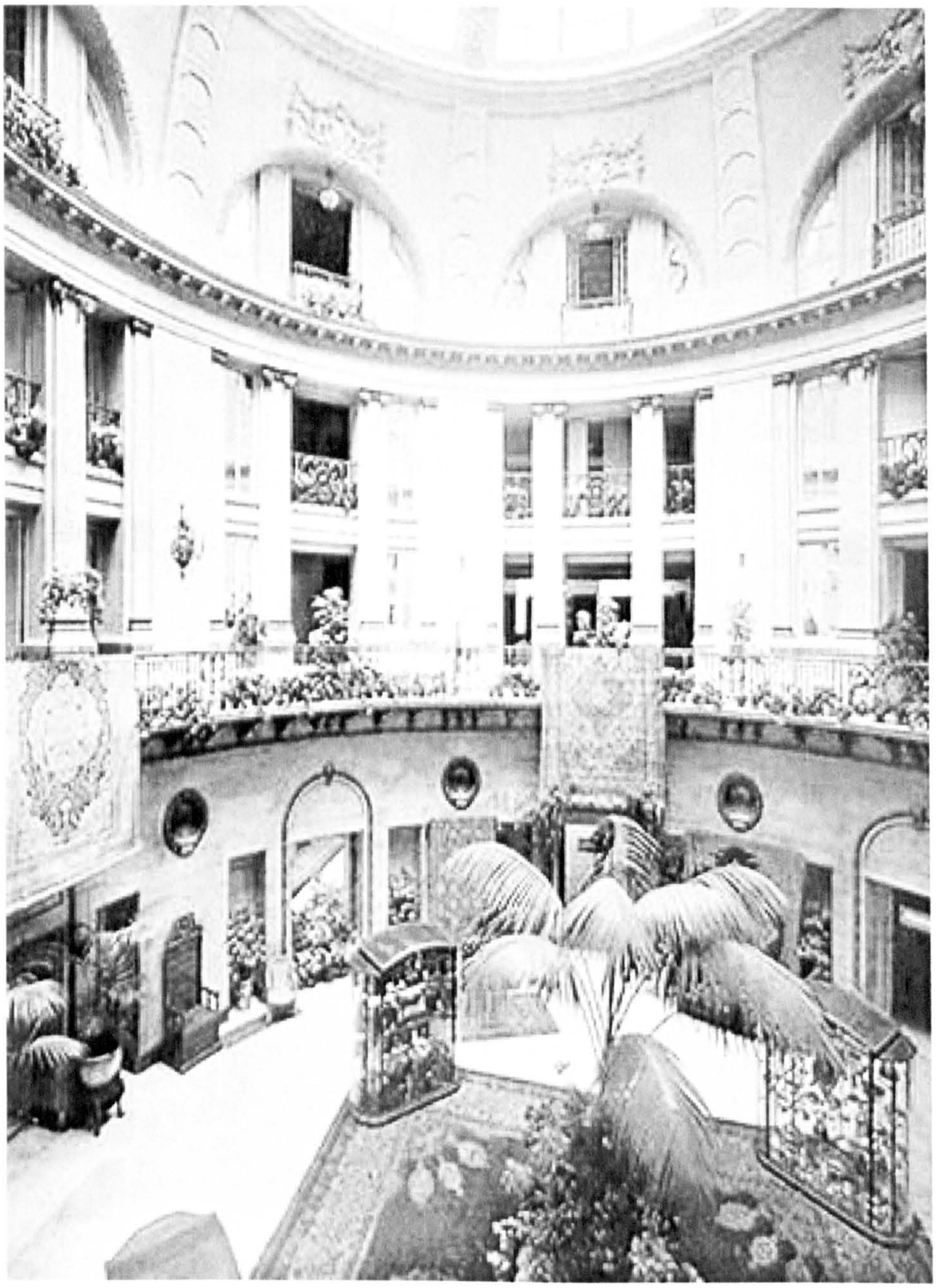


Figure 37 The 90 feet high rotunda inside Waring & Gillow's store, 1910 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10101517, unattributed photograph in *The Modern Building Record*)

Figure 38 Harry Gordon Selfridge, founder of Selfridge's store (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10027208, Alick P. F. Ritchie)

Figure 39 Selfridge's store, 400 Oxford Street, London, on its opening day, March 15, 1909 (Edina, ha4450-001)

Figure 40 Selfridge's, 1909 'The Largest Stocks and Assortments in London of Drapery, Outfitting, Clothing, etc., including nearly everything required for daily use of Ladies, Gentlemen, and Children (except Groceries, etc.), at *Lowest Prices always*' (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10101556, un-named artist on postcard)

Figure 41 Selfridge's store, corner of the roof garden, ca. 1918 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No 10101558, un-named artist on trade card in the Paul Keevil Collection)

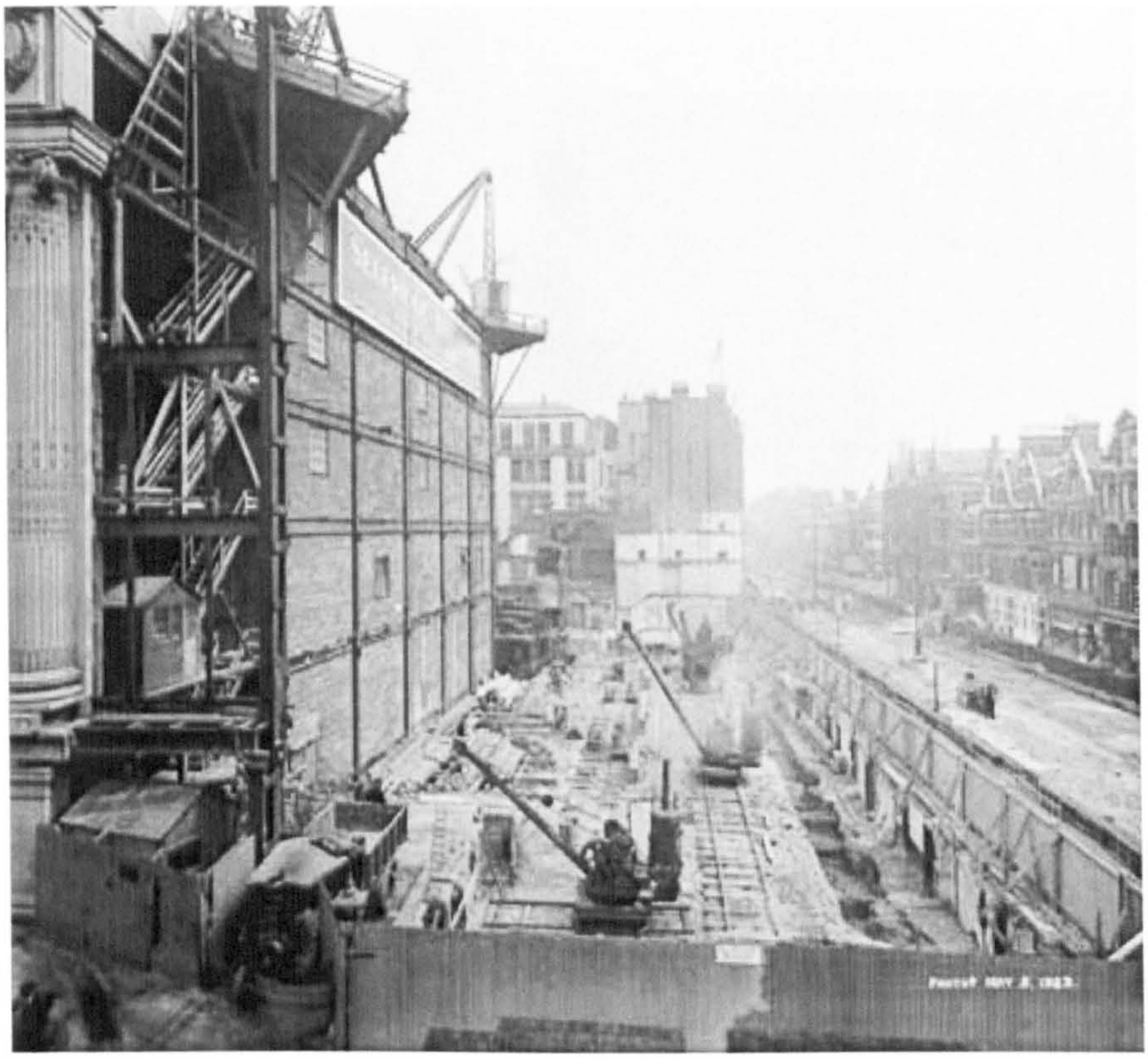


Figure 42 Selfridge's store in the middle of expansion, 1923 (English Heritage, bl 26600/01, photograph by Bedford Lemere)

Figure 43 Selfridge's, a tube ticket-dispensing machine at the store, ca. 1923 (Edina, hk1637-001, Topical Press Agency)

Figure 44 Building expansion completed at Selfridge's store, 1929 The façade in Oxford Street has now twenty four columns instead of the original eleven (RIBA, 11631)

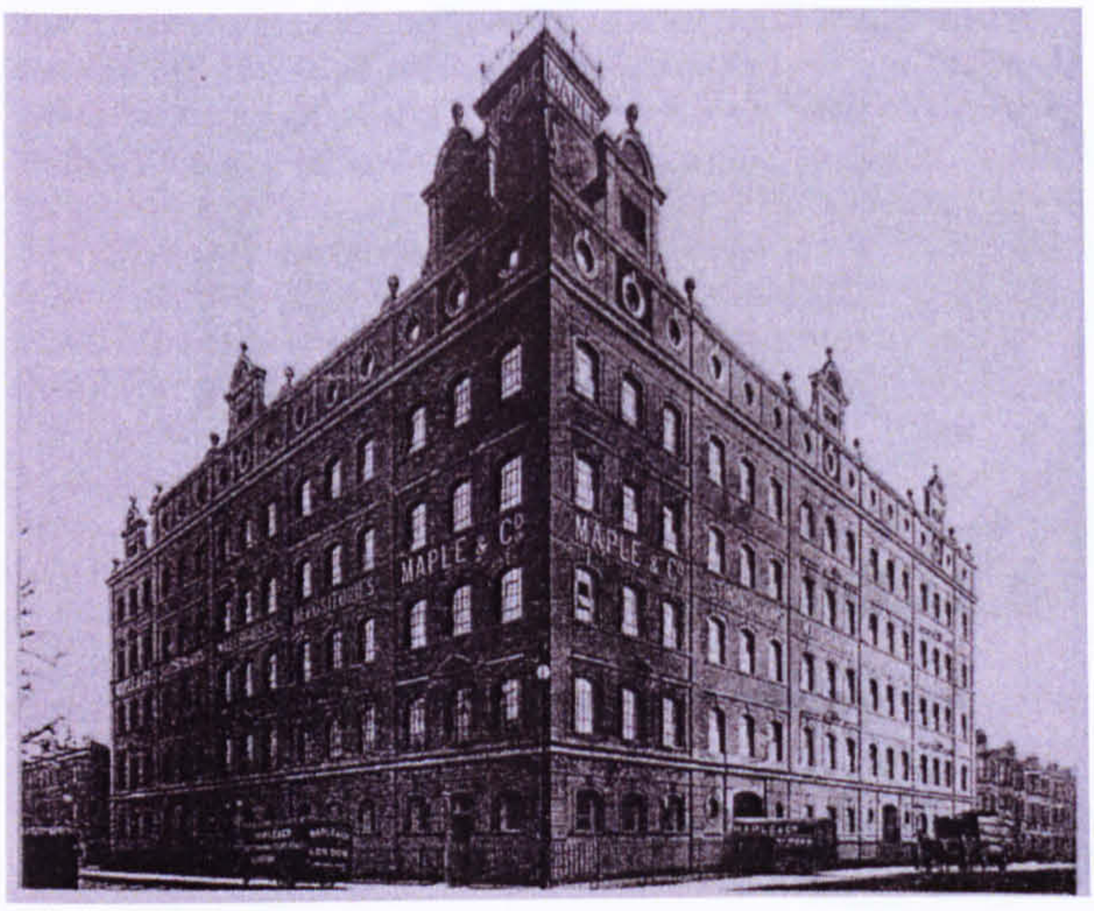


Figure 45 Maple, depository in Camden Street, Camden in 1910s (H. Barty-King, *Maples*, p.100)

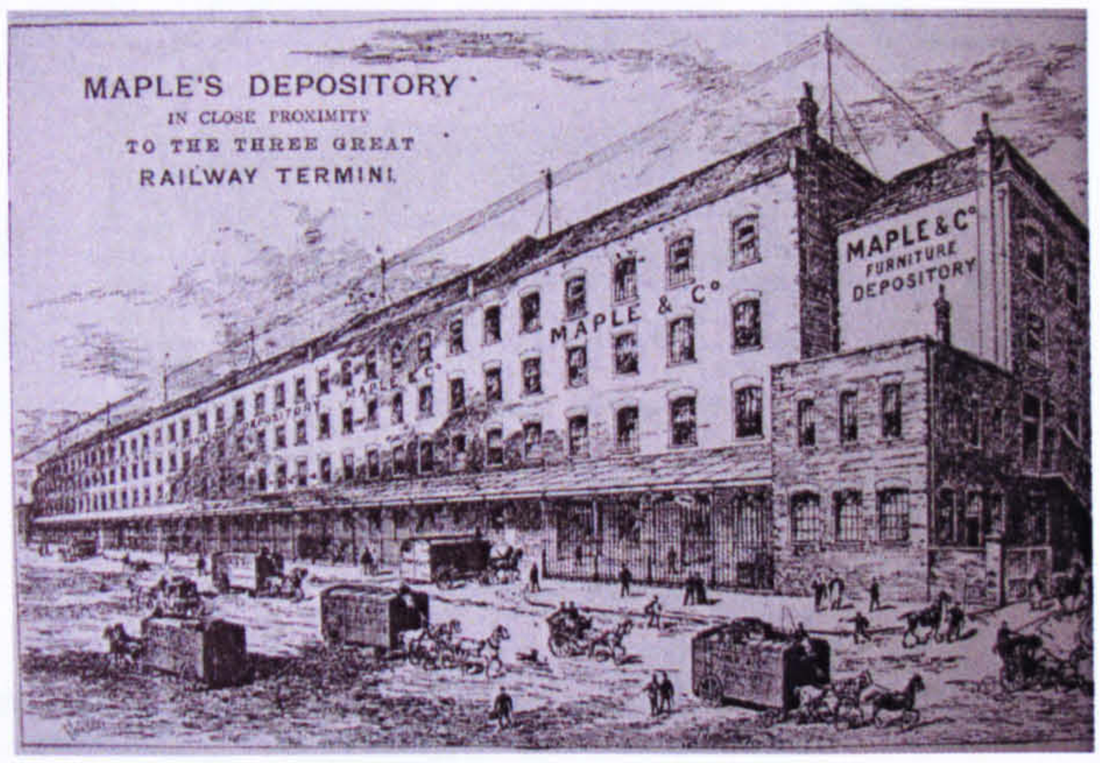


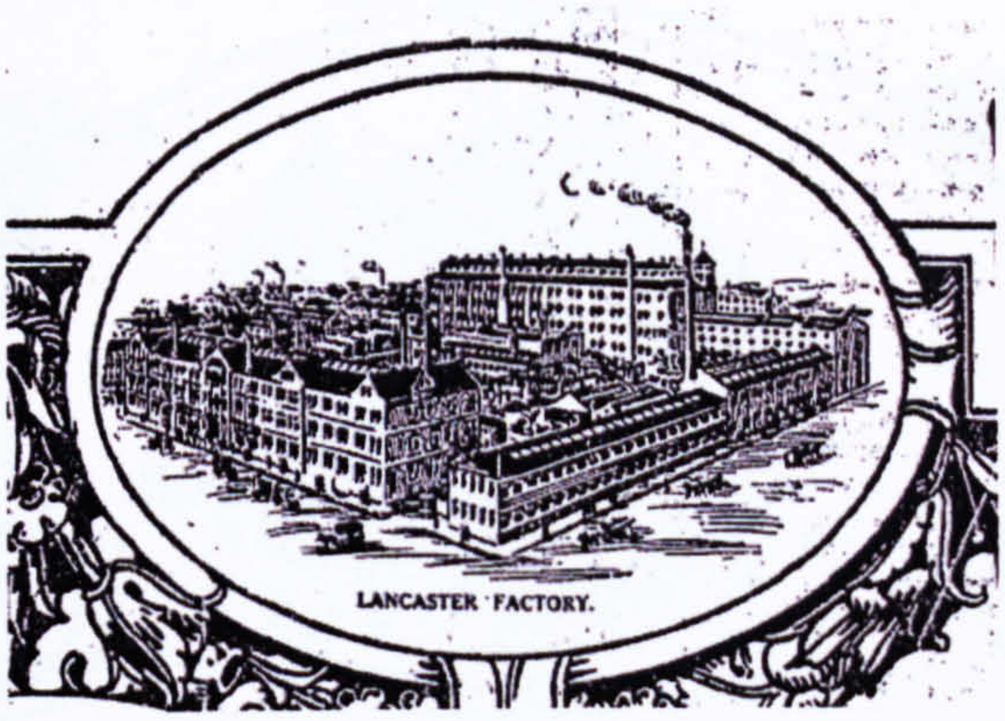
Figure 46 Maple, depository close to the 'three great railway terminal' (H. Barty-King, *Maples*, p.30) in 1880s

Figure 47 Heal & Son loading yard, Torrington Place, 1897 (V&A Images, PC098202-01, anonymous)

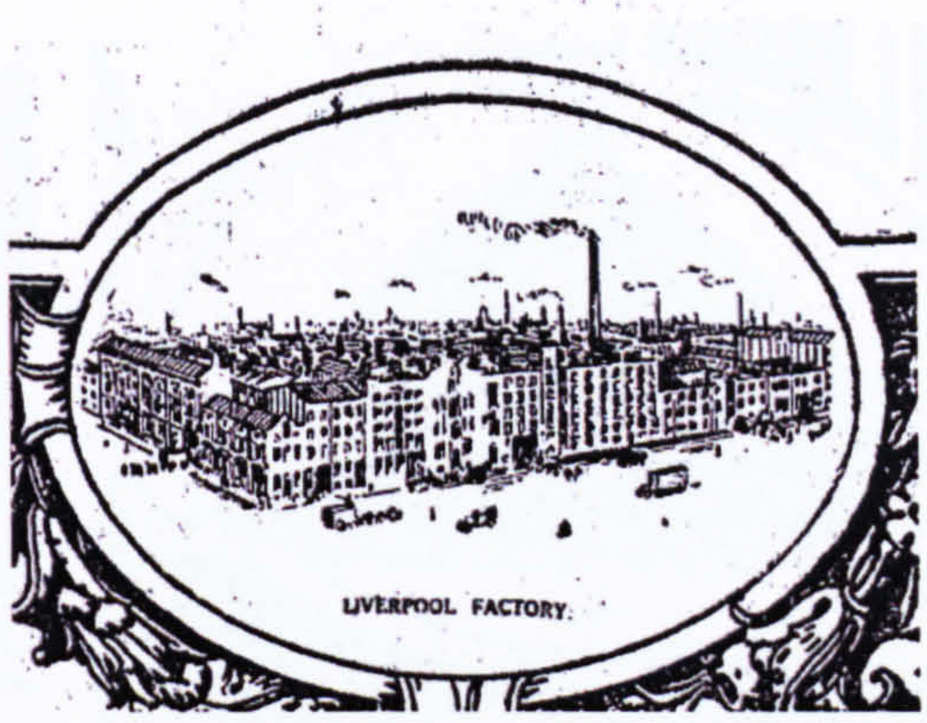
Figure 48 Heal & Son, 'easy chairs showroom' (Heal & Son, trade catalogue, 1902)

Figure 49 Heal & Son, ground floor bed showrooms (S. Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter*, p. 12, photograph by Bedford Lemere)

Figure 50 Heal & Son, bed factory (S. Goodden, *At the Sign of the Fourposter*, p. 12, photograph by Bedford Lemere)



Lancaster factory



Liverpool factory

Hammersmith factory

Figure 51 Waring & Gillow, detail of advert showing some of its factories (*The Times*, Wednesday, March 12, 1913, p.6)

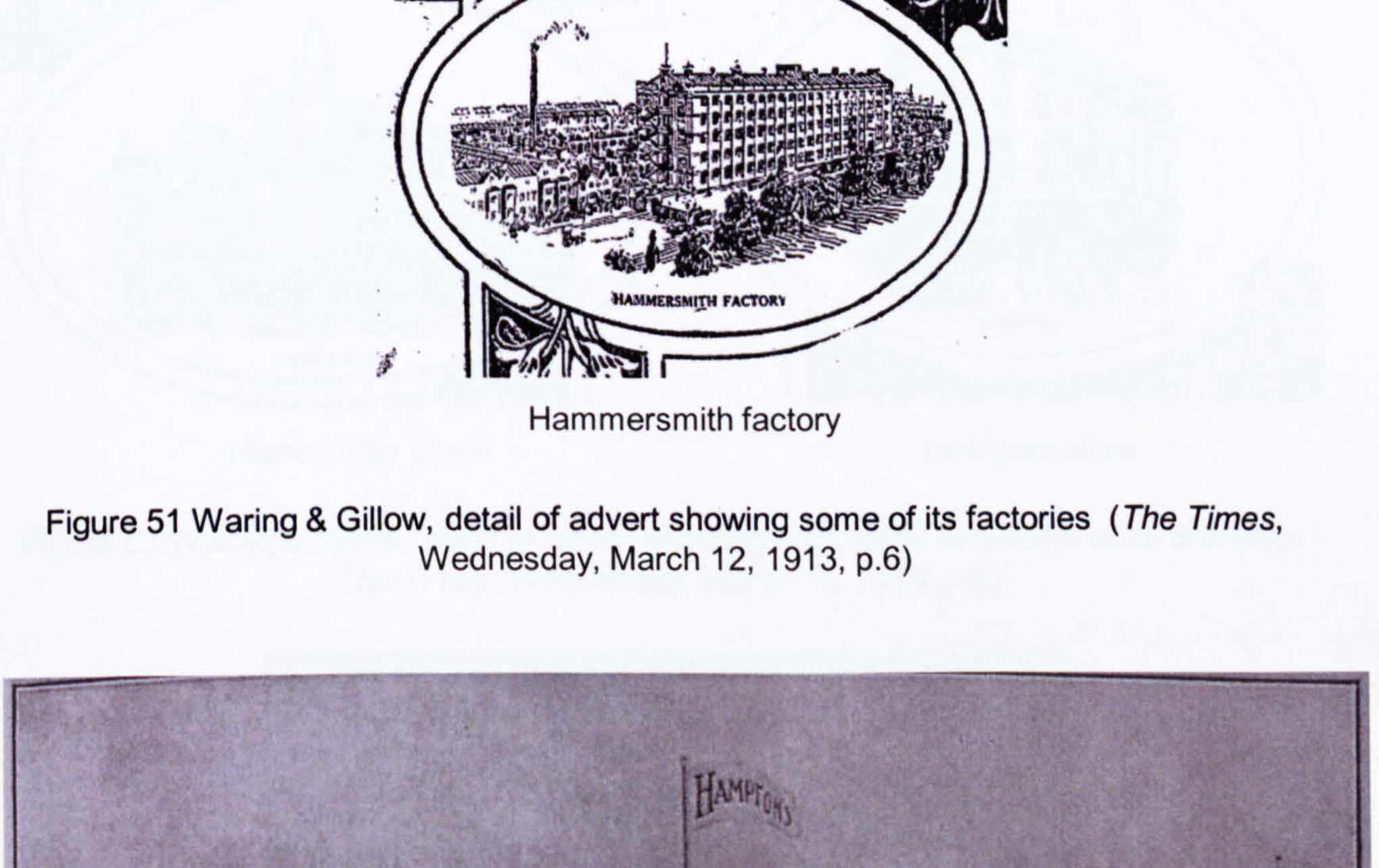


Figure 52 Hampton & Sons, depositories, Queen's Road, Battersea Park (Hampton & Sons, *Spring,* trade catalogue, 1920)

Oxford Street store, London

Paris store

Manchester store

Liverpool store

Figure 53 Waring & Gillow, detail of advert showing main store and some of its branches
(*The Times*, Wednesday, March 12, 1913, p.6)

Figure 54 Waring & Gilow, shop in Manchester, 1897
(Waring & Gillow, *Model House,* trade catalogue, Manchester, 1897)

Figure 55 'Artistic Decorators, Builders and Sanitary Engineers' (Oetzmann & Co., *Guide to House Furnishing*, trade catalogue, ca. 1890)

Figure 56 Shoolbred, advert (*The Times*, Thursday, Mar 31, 1910, p. 3)

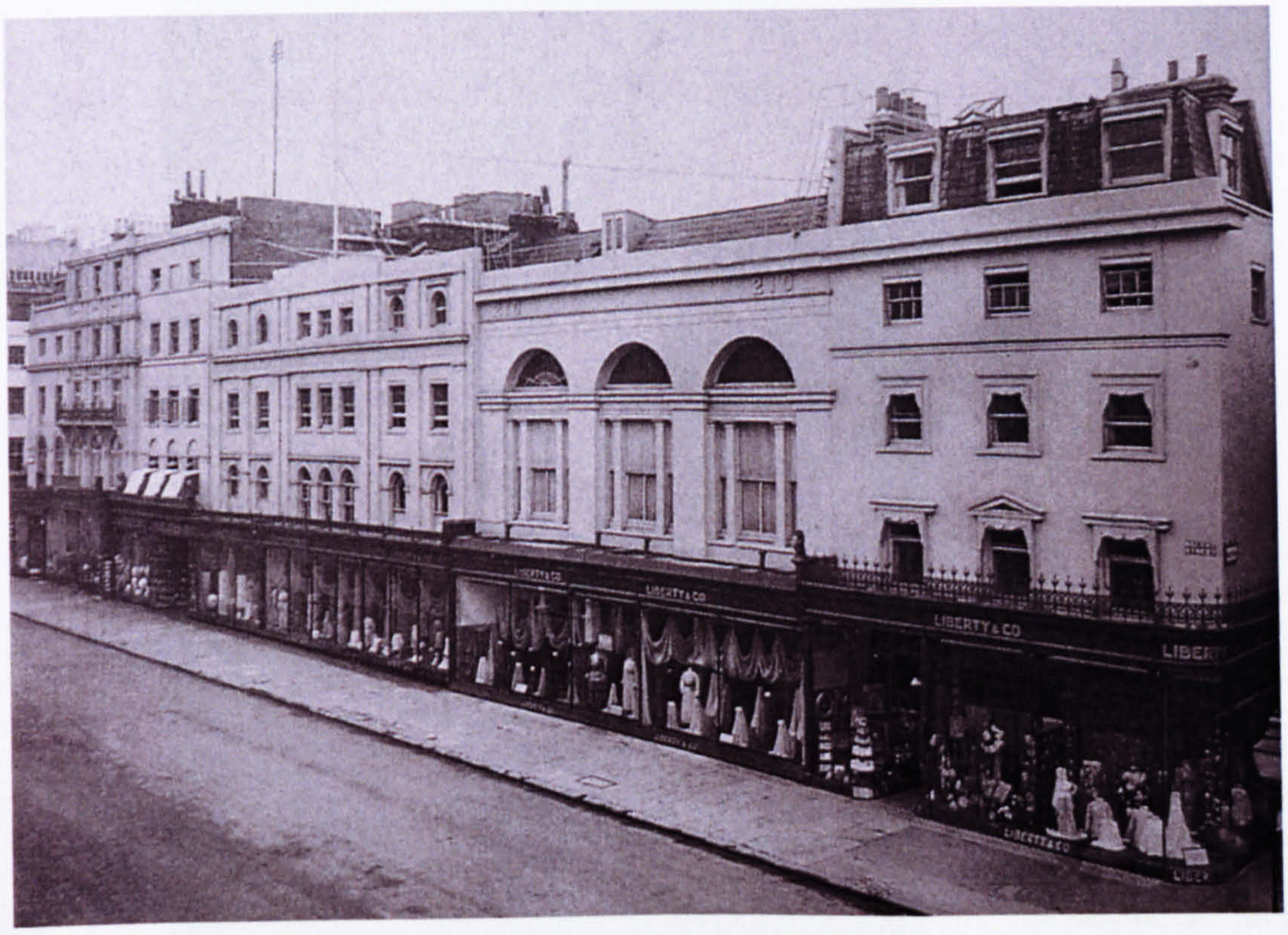


Figure 57 Liberty in Regent Street at the turn of the twentieth century (M. Baren, *How It All Began*, p. 88)

ESTABLISHED 1790.

MARSH, JONES,

PARTNERS: H. H. CRIBB.
E. J. THOMPSON
A. IRVING SWIFT.

CRIBB & CO.,

DESIGNERS AND MANUFACTURERS

OF

FURNITURE. . . . . UPHOLSTERERS AND DECORATORS.

DECORATIVE WOODWORK.

PARQUET FLOORING. . .

BILLIARD TABLES. . . .

LEEDS.

IMPORTERS OF FOREIGN RUGS AND CARPETS.

MANUFACTURERS OF SCAGLIOLA.
MODELLERS IN FIBROUS PLASTER.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

Figure 58 Presentation page in Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Home Furnishings,* trade catalogue, 1890s. It gives founding date as 1790 but the correct one is 1760

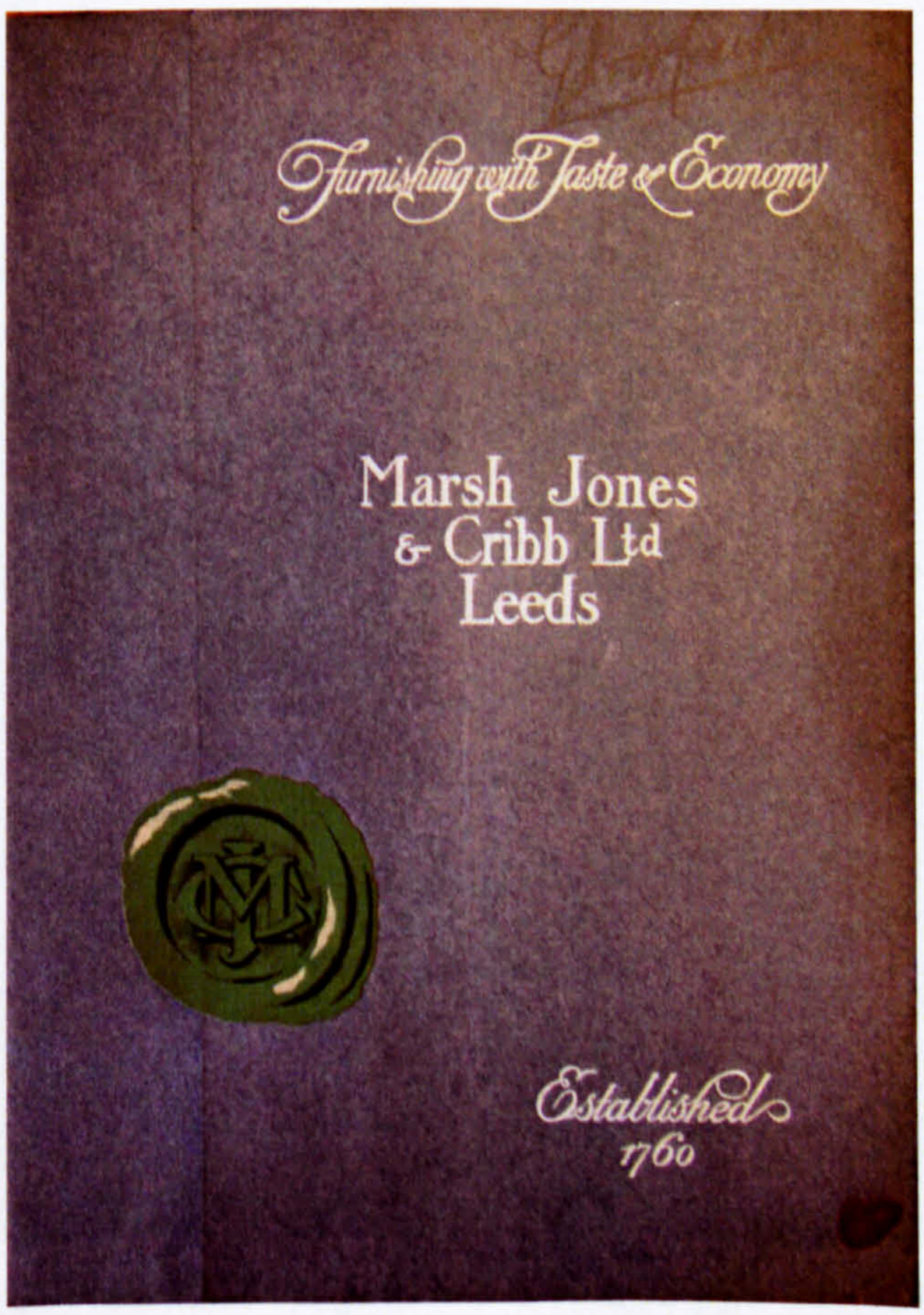


Figure 59 Cover of Marsh, Jones & Cribb Ltd., *Furnishing with Taste & Economy,* trade catalogue, ca. 1905

Figure 60 'The large "Salon" in Boar Lane [Leeds] leading to the many Suites of Furnished Rooms' (Marsh, Jones and Cribb Ltd., *Furnishing with Taste and Economy,* trade catalogue, ca. 1905)

Figure 61 Presentation page in T. B. & W. Cockayne Ltd., *A Tasteful Home,* trade catalogue, Sheffield, ca. 1900

Figure 62 Illustration of the dining room in the 'Model Furnished Home' set up in Cockayne's showrooms (T. B. & W. Cockayne Ltd., *A Tasteful Home,* trade catalogue, Sheffield, ca. 1900)

Figure 63 Cartoon illustrating a small shopkeeper being squeezed out by larger stores, 1908 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10102261, Poncet in *L'Assiette au Beurre*)

Figure 64 Suburban shop, 1857 (Mary Evans Picture Library No. 10097954)

Figure 65 Ballantyne's department store ca. 1900 (At: http://library.christchurch.org.nz/.../IMG0081.jpg)

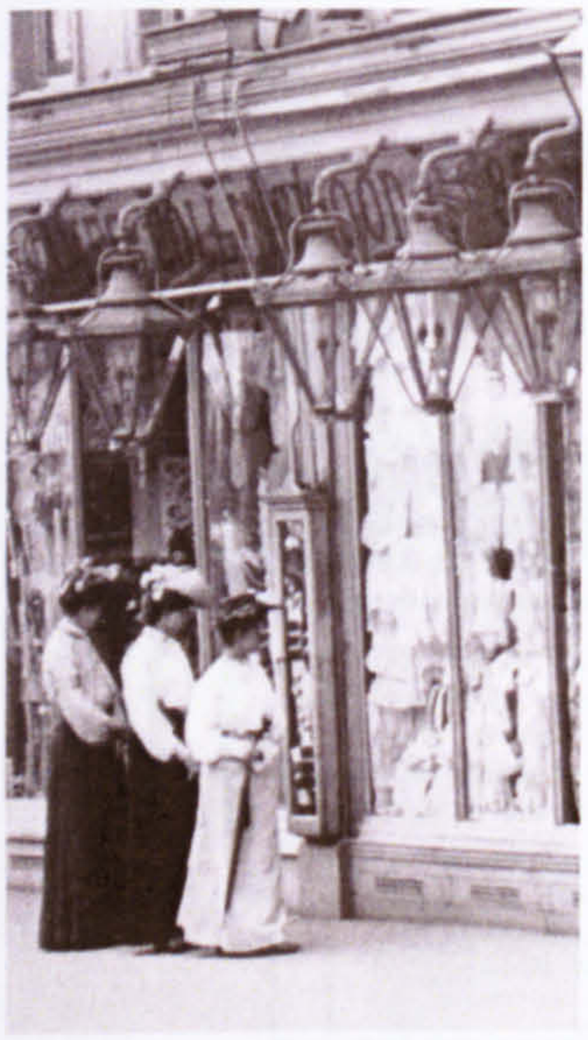


Figure 66 James Collingwood, Draper, Lewisham, ca. 1901(Suburbia in Focus, james-collingwood-01490-750)

Figure 67 Reception room at Debenhams, ca. 1900 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10065651, postcard)

Figure 68 'Big Spender', 1905-06 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10068658, Penrose Annual)

Figure 69 Christmas shopping, 1905 (Edina, he0153-001)

Figure 70 London shoppers, 1908 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10058713)

Figure 71 The Kodak Girl, 1910 (Science & Society Picture Library, 10302286, poster)

Figure 72 British Vacuum Cleaner Company Ltd., 1911 (Science & Society Picture Library, 10325998)

Figure 73 Waring & Gillow, advert detail (*The Times*, Mar 12, 1907, p. 11)

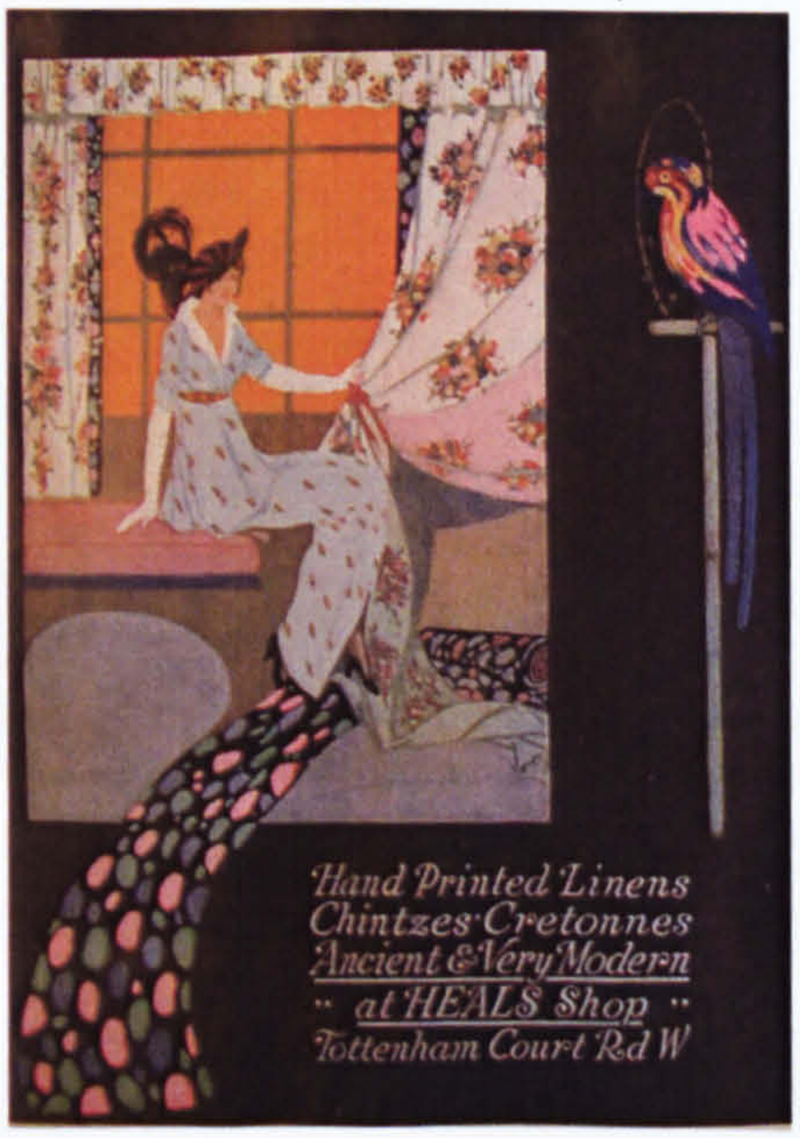


Figure 74 Heal, advert detail (AAD/1978/2/178/1910-1919, *Colour*, August, 1914)

Figure 75 Shop window, Heal, advert draft, 1916 (AAD/1994/16/2570-2579)

Figure 76 Heal, advert (AAD/1978/2/178/1910-1919, *Bystander*, 31 May, 1916, p. 405)

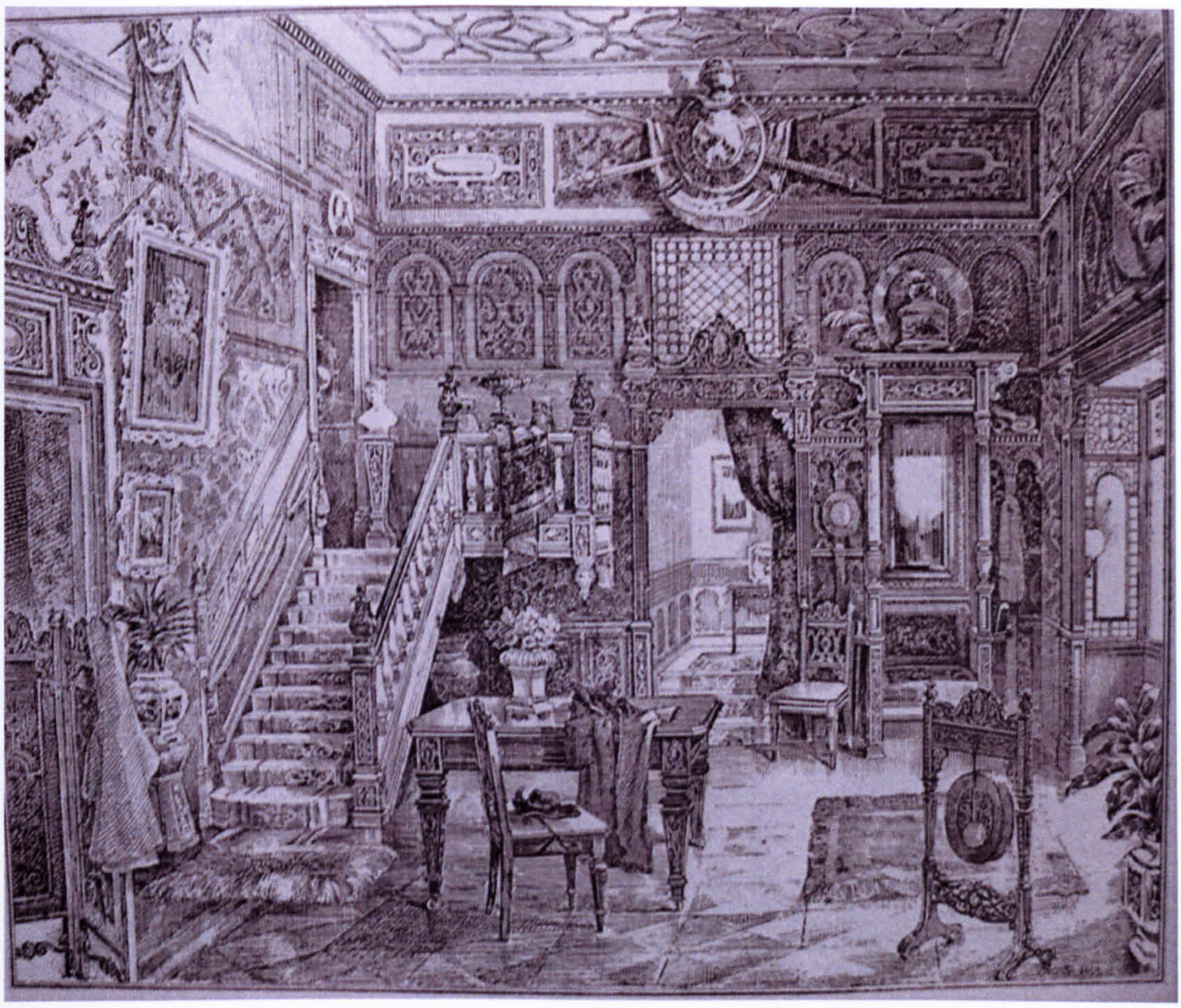


Figure 77 'A Hall in the English Renaissance Style. A page from Mr. William Whiteley's New Illustrated Furnishing Catalogue' (*The Cabinet Maker*, 1 October 1888, p. 106)

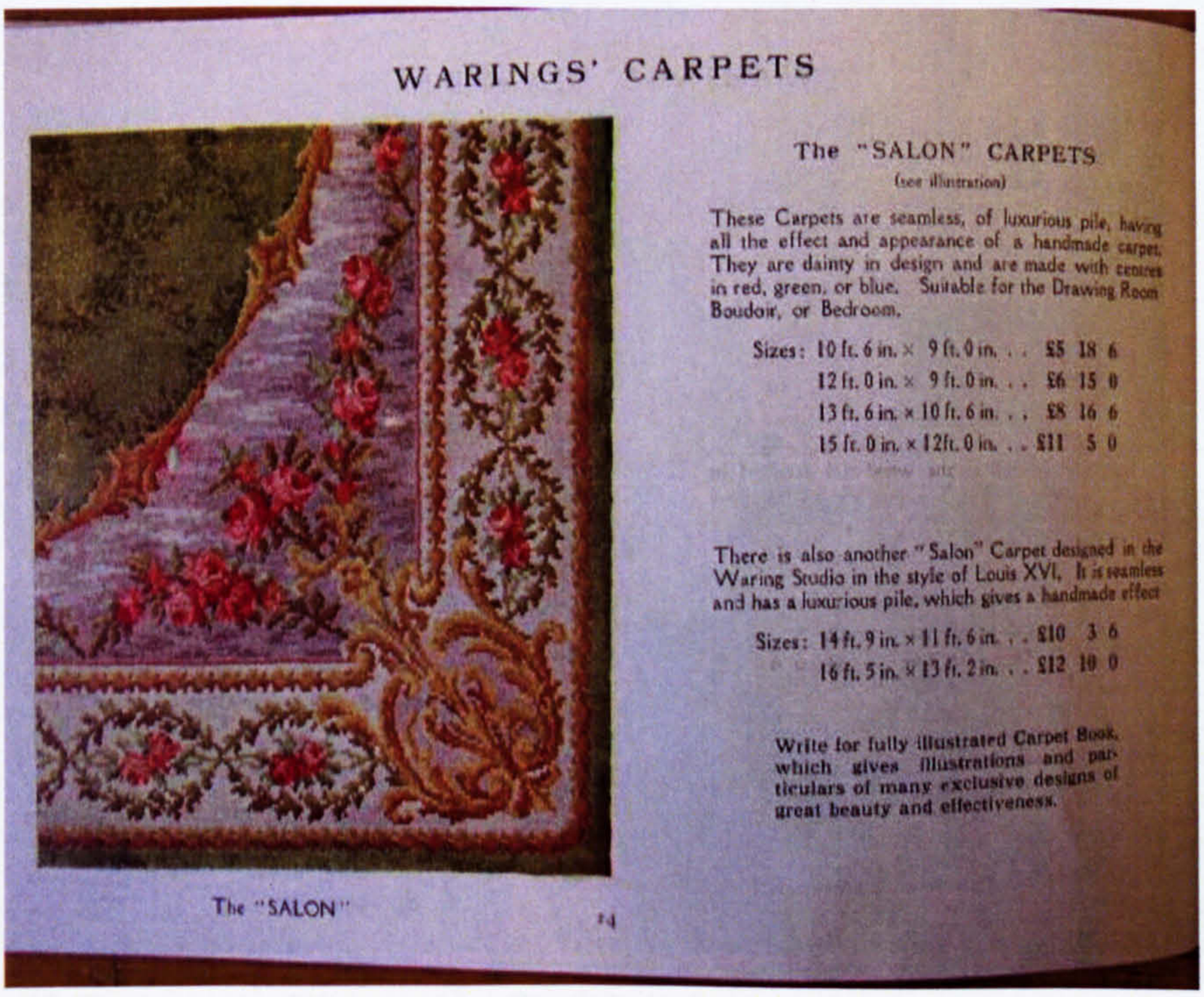
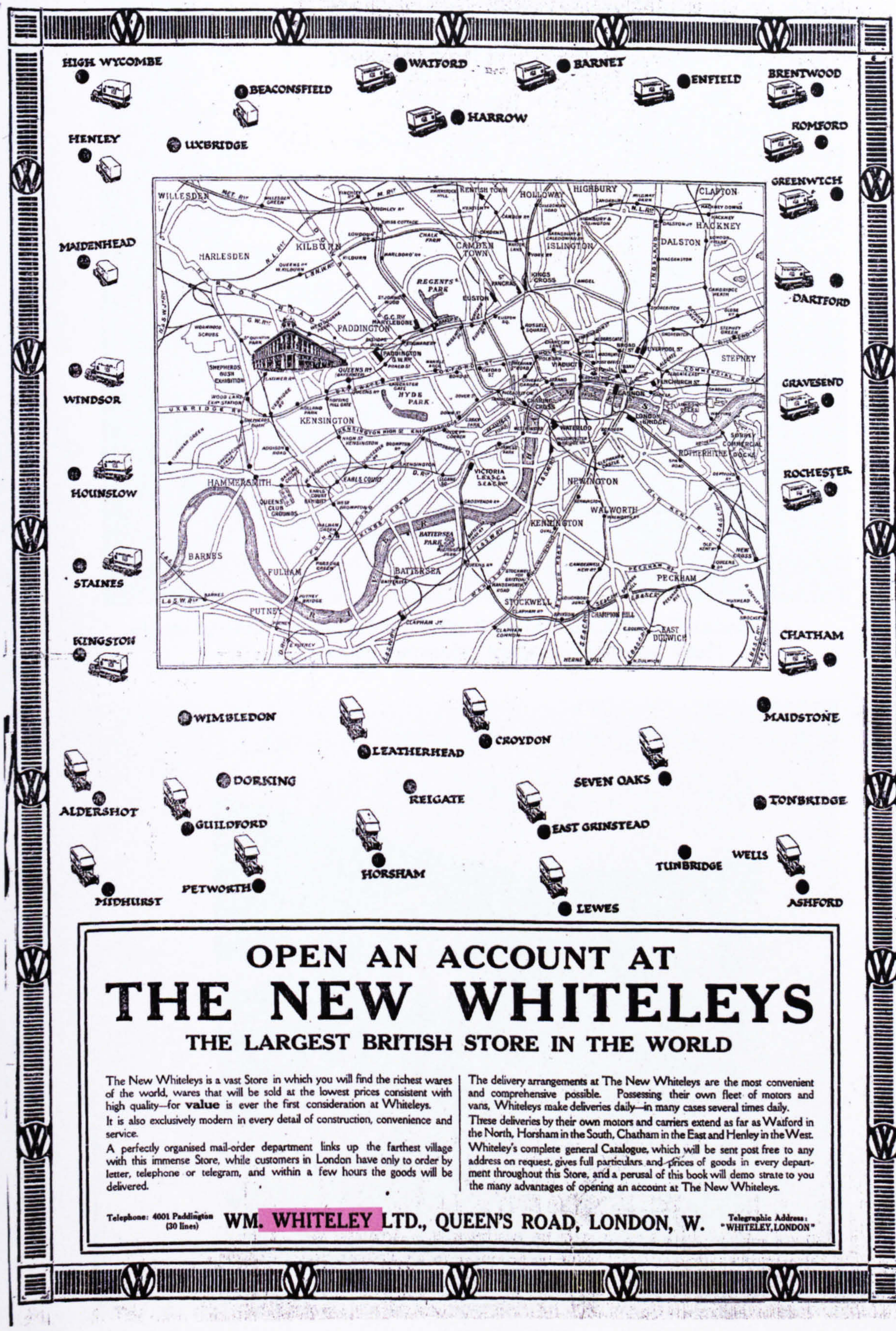


Figure 78 Detailed depiction of carpets in Waring & Gillow's trade catalogue, *The Furnishing of Our Homes,* ca. 1906, p. 14

Figure 79 Detailed depiction of easy chairs in Waring & Gillow's trade catalogue, *The Furnishing of Our Homes,* ca. 1906, p. 29

Figure 80 Clerks in the 'Shopping by Post' department at Kay's Universal Stores, Worcester, 1905 (Mary Evans Picture Library, No. 10054107, unnamed photographer)



OPEN AN ACCOUNT AT
THE NEW WHITELEYS
THE LARGEST BRITISH STORE IN THE WORLD

The New Whiteleys is a vast Store in which you will find the richest wares of the world, wares that will be sold at the lowest prices consistent with high quality—for **value** is ever the first consideration at Whiteleys.

It is also exclusively modern in every detail of construction, convenience and service.

A perfectly organised mail-order department links up the farthest village with this immense Store, while customers in London have only to order by letter, telephone or telegram, and within a few hours the goods will be delivered.

The delivery arrangements at The New Whiteleys are the most convenient and comprehensive possible. Possessing their own fleet of motors and vans, Whiteleys make deliveries daily—in many cases several times daily.

These deliveries by their own motors and carriers extend as far as Watford in the North, Horsham in the South, Chatham in the East and Henley in the West.

Whiteley's complete general Catalogue, which will be sent post free to any address on request, gives full particulars and prices of goods in every department throughout this Store, and a perusal of this book will demo strate to you the many advantages of opening an account at The New Whiteleys.

Telephone: 4001 Paddington (30 lines) **WM. WHITELEY LTD., QUEEN'S ROAD, LONDON, W.** Telegraphic Address: "WHITELEY, LONDON"

Figure 81 'A perfectly organised mail-order department links up the farthest village with this immense Store' (*The Times*, Tuesday, Nov 21, 1911, p. 4)

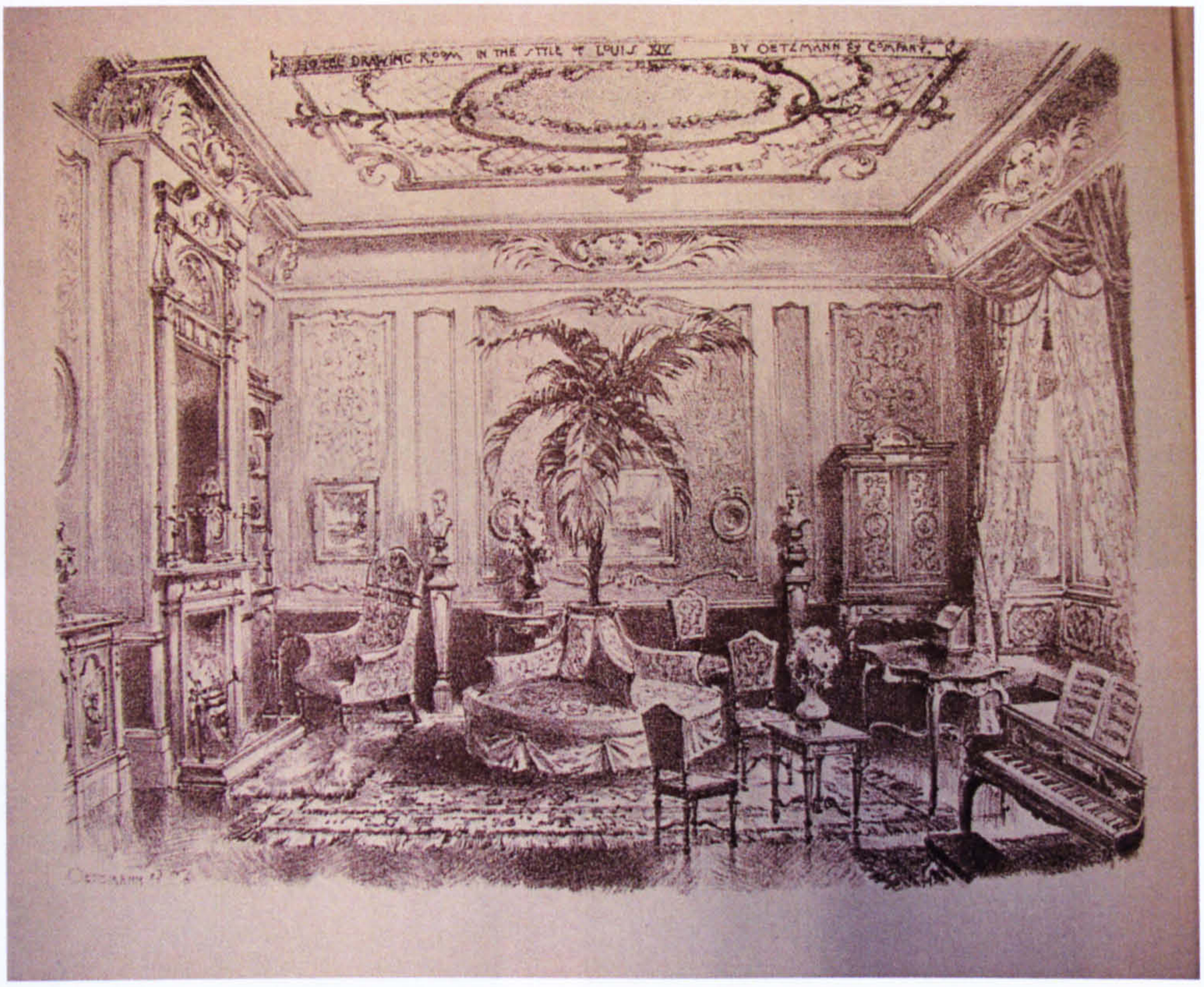
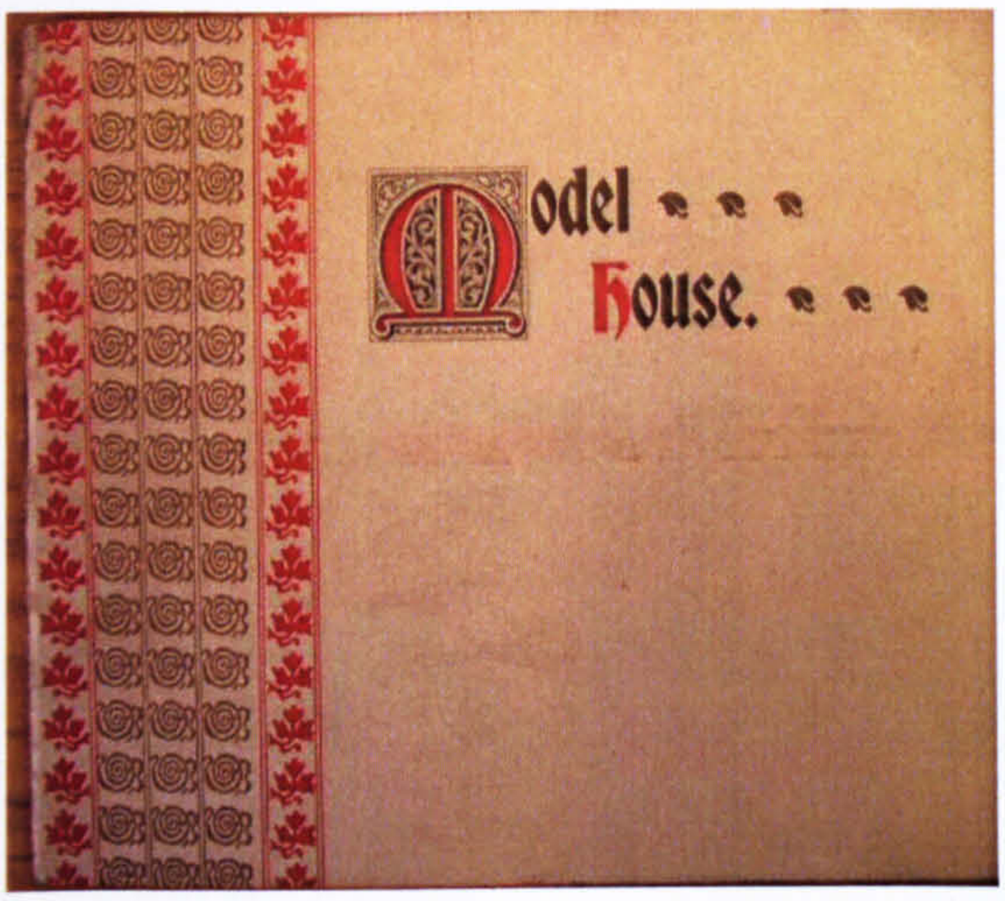


Figure 82 'Hotel Drawing Room in the Style of Louis XIV by Oetzmann & Co.' (*Guide to House Furnishing,* trade catalogue, ca. 1890)

Figure 83 Example of work carried out by firms (Taylor & Hobson Ltd., *Inexpensive Furnishings,* trade catalogue, Huddersfield, ca. 1900, p. 19)

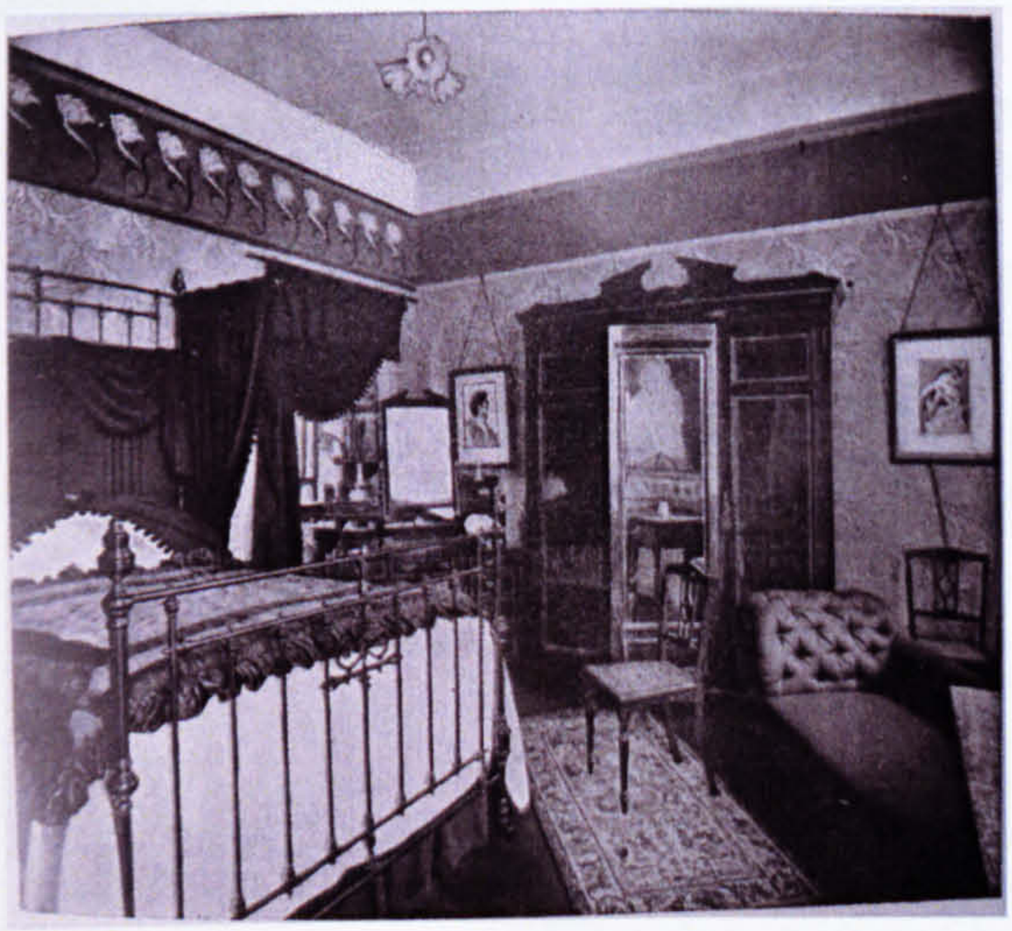


Trade catalogue cover

Entrance hall

Dining Room

Drawing Room



Bedroom

Second bedroom

Figure 84 'All who desire to furnish in good taste at a Moderate Outlay should view the MODEL HOUSE by Waring & Gillow' (*Model House,* trade catalogue, Manchester, 1897, photographs by Bedford Lemere)

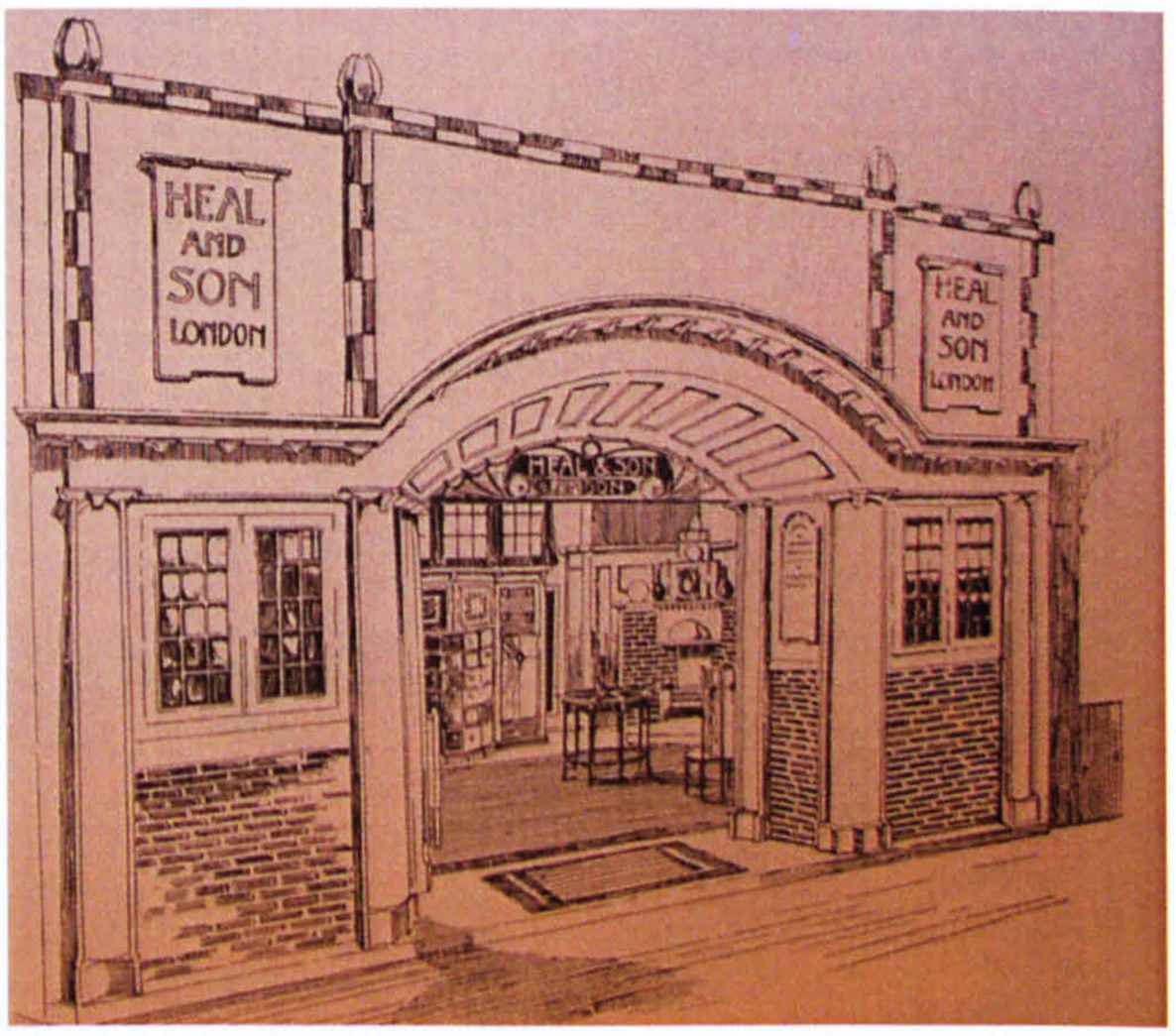


Fig. 85 'A Quaint Effect. Messrs Heal's Stand' Paris Exhibition, 1900
(*The House*, VII (1900), p. 205)

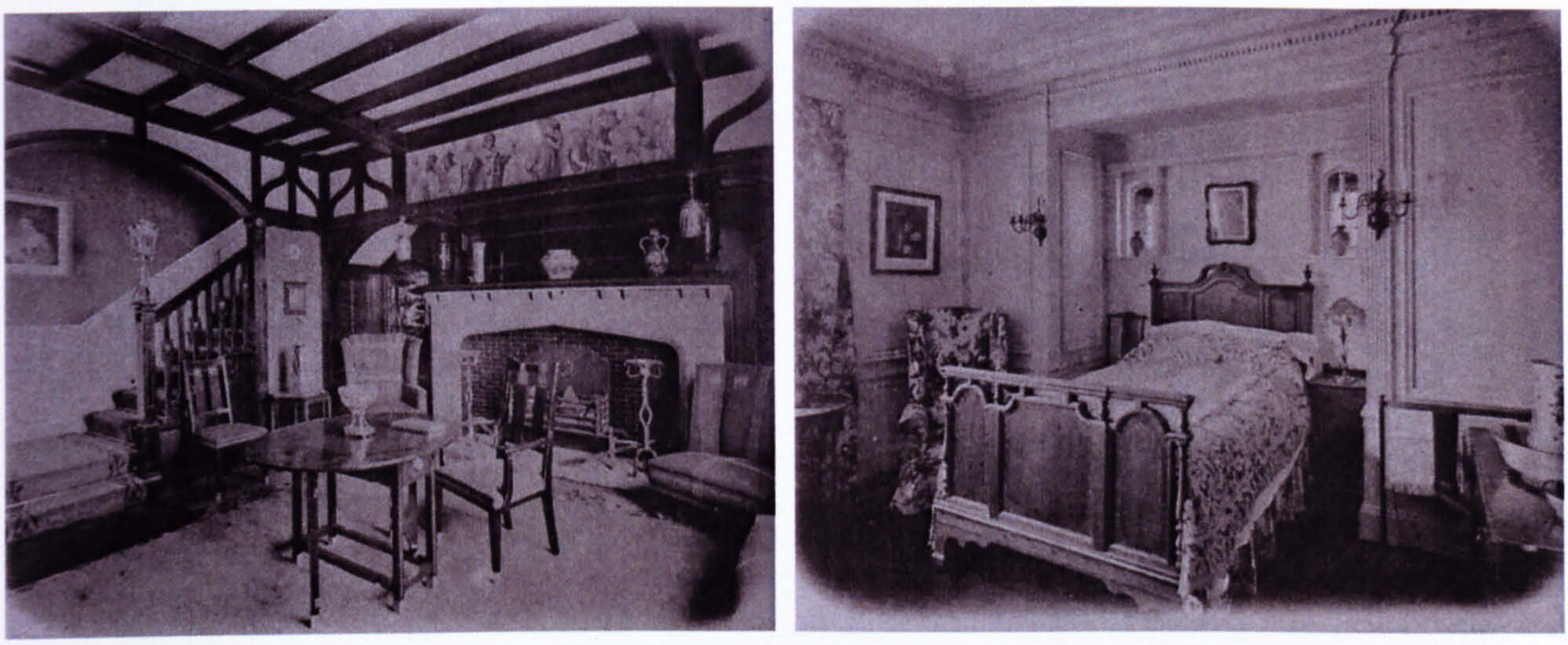


Figure 86 'Sitting Room Hall' and 'Panelled Bedroom' designed by Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Bradford Exhibition*, exhibition catalogue, 1904

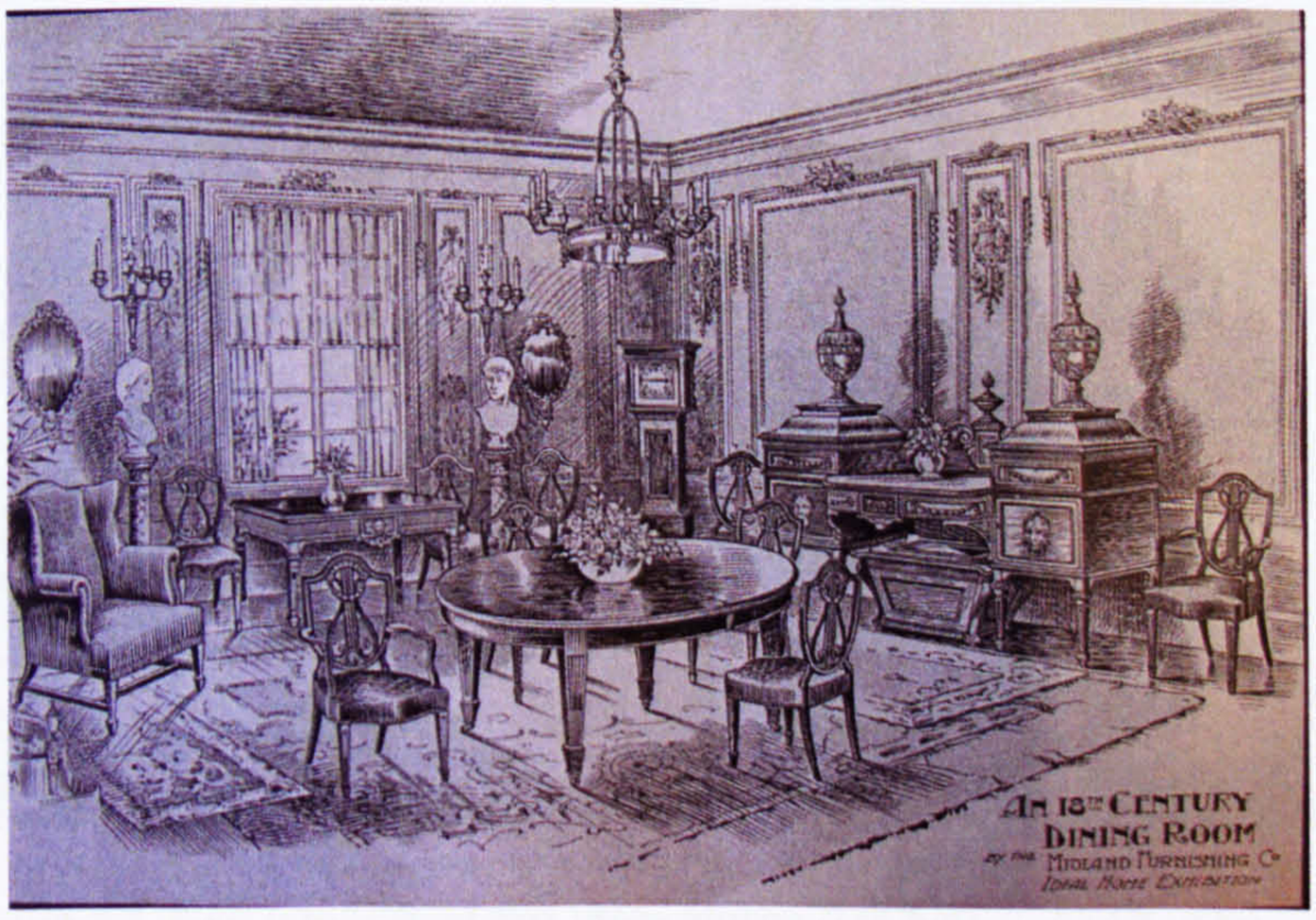
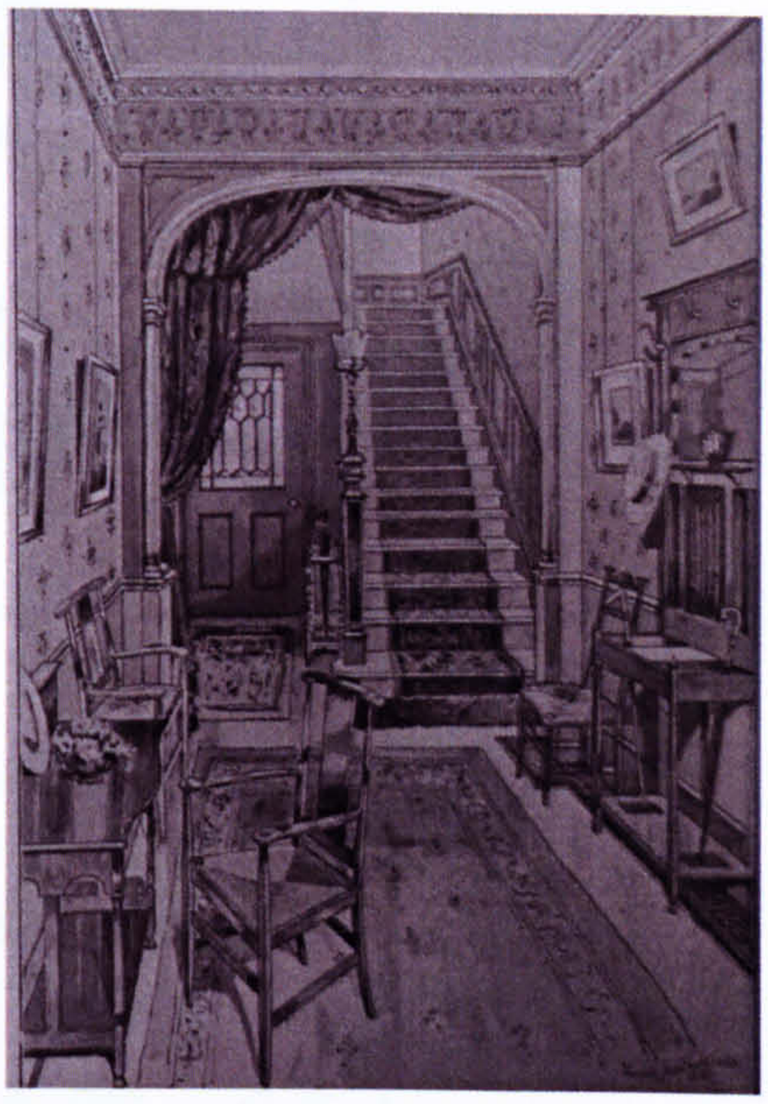


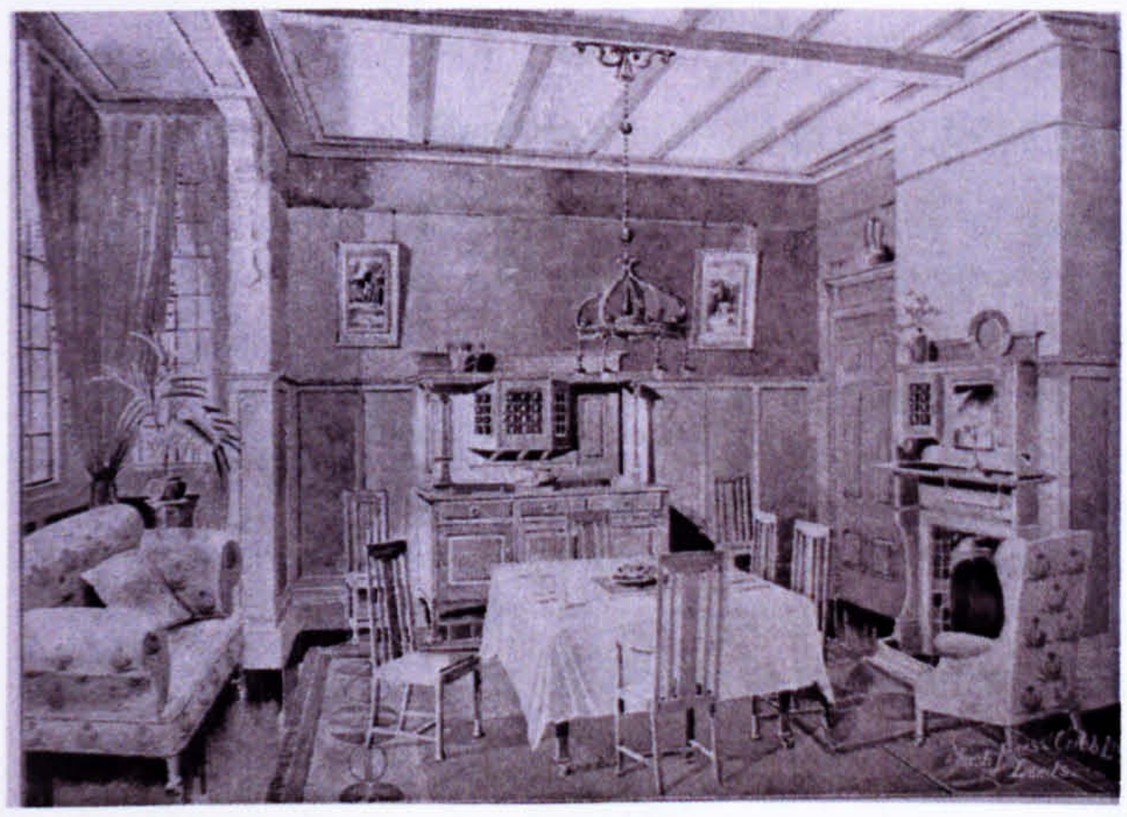
Figure 87 'An Eighteenth Century Dining Room by The Midland Furnishing Co.' Ideal Home Exhibition (*The Cabinet Maker*, 24 October, 1908, p. 111)

Figure 88 'Two Interiors at the Ideal Home Exhibition', 1910 (*The Cabinet Maker,* 16 April, 1910, p. 61)

SUMMARY of the Estimates for the Furnishing of an Eight-roomed House for £250

	£	s.	d.
HALL AND STAIRS	18	0	6
DINING ROOM	60	18	6
DRAWING ROOM	61	8	0
BEST BEDROOM	55	17	0
SPARE BEDROOM	32	0	3
SERVANT'S BEDROOM	8	17	3
BATHROOM	2	17	0
KITCHEN	10	1	6
	£250	0	0





ALTERNATIVE ESTIMATE FOR DINING ROOM In Mahogany

	£	s.	d.
Sideboard	21	0	0
Dining Table	5	13	6
Five small and One Arm Chairs, in leather	11	0	0
Settee, in tapestry	7	15	0
Easy Chair to match	5	3	0
Butler's Tray and Stand	1	12	6
Bordered Wilton Carpet, 13ft. 6in. × 9ft.	6	12	6
Axminster Hearth Rug	0	17	6
Printed Linoleum Surround	0	15	0
Black and Copper Curb, Fire-irons and Dogs	2	2	6
Black and Copper Coal Box	0	14	6
Wood Cornice Pole, with ends, rings and brackets complete	0	10	6
A pair of Tapestry Curtains, with loops and hooks	1	17	6
Curtain Blinds	0	16	0
	£66	10	0

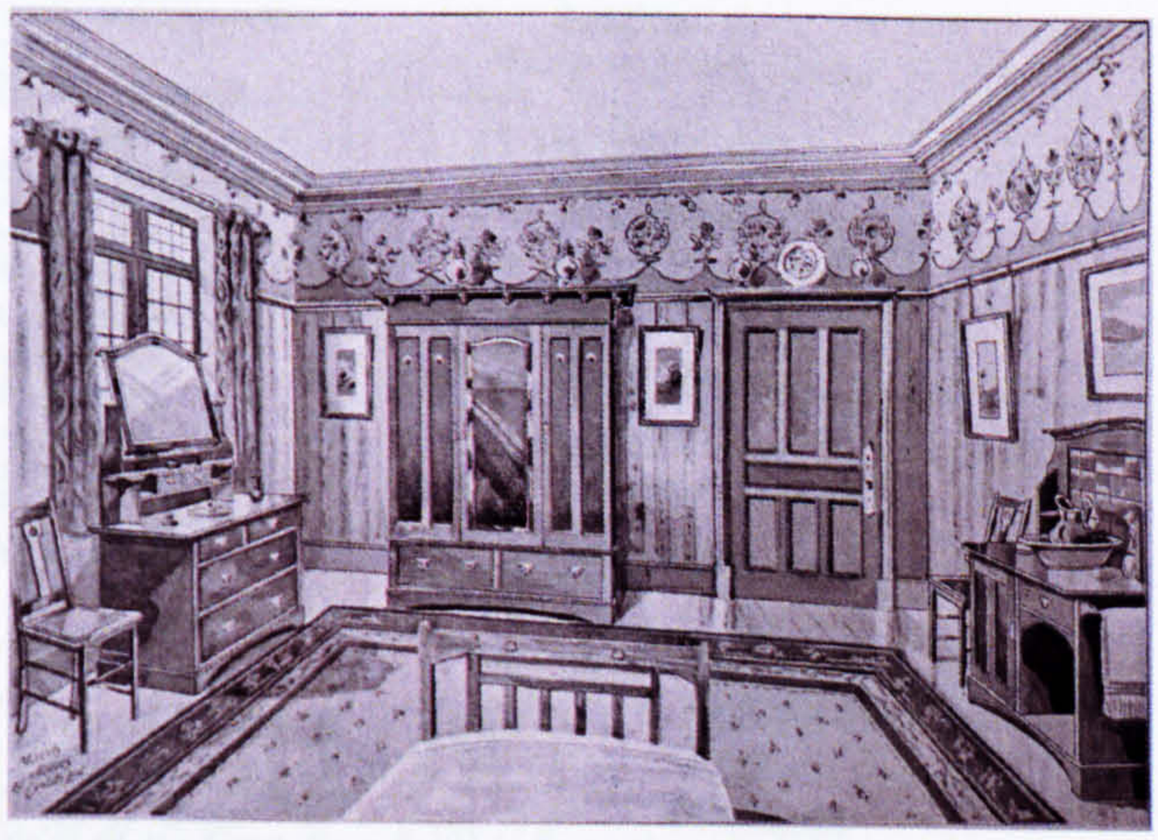


Figure 89 'The Tasteful Furnishing of an Eight-Roomed House for £250' (Marsh, Jones & Cribb Ltd., *Furnishing with Taste and Economy,* trade catalogue, ca. 1905)

WARING & GILLOW

£2,000,000 CAMPAIGN

Were you a Visitor to the Waring & Gillow Galleries yesterday?

Have you contributed to the £2,000,000 turnover which we hope to achieve in 1914?

THERE were thousands of visitors yesterday to our Galleries in London, Liverpool and Manchester, but there are thousands of bargains still left for those who will come this week and next.

¶ Until the end of our Bargain Weeks, we shall offer vast quantities of Linens, Blankets, Carpets, Bedsteads, Curtains, Glass, China, Easy Chairs, Pianos, Furniture, and every household requisite at the *lowest prices, in many cases less than the articles cost to make.* Our object is to double our business, to convert one million turnover into two, and to convince you that Waring & Gillow is the symbol of supreme taste and supreme value.

SPECIMEN ITEMS *from* THE THOUSANDS *of* BARGAINS.

CURTAINS.

750 pairs Scotch Lace Curtains, 54 in. by 3 yds. long, many different designs in Cream only.

4/11 NOW 2/11

CARPETS.

Extraordinary Fine Kirman Carpets (Persian).

11 ft. 3 in. by 8 ft. 7 in.

£55 NOW £27 15s.

13 ft. 1 in. by 9 ft. 2 in.

£69 10s. NOW £34 15s.

LINEN.

500 Block Printed Bedspreads for single bed, size 2 yds. by 3 yds.

10/- NOW 5/6

BEDSTEADS.

5 ft. Brass French Bedstead, with cast panel and ornaments in loop and all square brass tubes.

£12 10s. NOW £7 17s.

CHINA.

Toilet Service, fine Staffordshire ware, graceful groups of small pink and yellow roses, low antique shape, gilt edge. Single Service (5 pieces).

11/6 NOW 8/9

ORIENTAL.

Table Covers, on Japanese Cotton Crêpe, red, green and blue colourings, 1 yd. square.

2/11 NOW 1/- each.

GLASS.

Table Glass, full crystal etched bayleaf band, Adams festoon and crown medallion, graceful shape. Service 12 persons, 81 pieces.

£4 10s. NOW £2 7s.

Sample Glass,
1/- post free.

PICTURES.

Coloured print, Lady Louisa Manners. Framed complete.

37/6 NOW 25/-

FURNITURE.

5 ft. 6 in. Dark Oak Sideboard, with drop centre, 2 drawers and 2 cupboards in lower portion. Upper part fitted with circular mirror, with cupboard on either side.

£19 17s. 6d. NOW £16 16s.

CLOCKS.

5-wire Mahogany Chime Clock, 16 in. high.

£5 15s. NOW £4

EASY CHAIRS.

One large Lounge Easy Chair, upholstered best quality and covered in tapestry,

£9 4s. NOW £4 12s.

BLANKETS.

Heavy all-wool Yorkshire Blankets for single beds.

23/6 pair NOW 14/9 pair

164-180
OXFORD STREET
LONDON
W.

WARING & GILLOW LTD
Furnishers & Decorators to H.M. the King.

Bold Street
LIVERPOOL

Deansgate
MANCHESTER

Figure 90 Bargain Weeks at Waring & Gillow (*The Times*, Tuesday, Jan 06, 1914, p. 3)

Figure 91 Alfred Taylor & Sons' shop window, Huddersfield (Taylor & Hobson Ltd, *Inexpensive Furnishings*, trade catalogue, ca. 1900)

Figure 92 F. Jay & Co., Cardiff, 'The window is so arranged as to represent the front of a villa [...] The interior [...] a dining-room furnished complete with a walnut suite, the table fully laid out with silver, and a bright fire.' (*The Cabinet Maker*, 17 January 1914, p. 67)

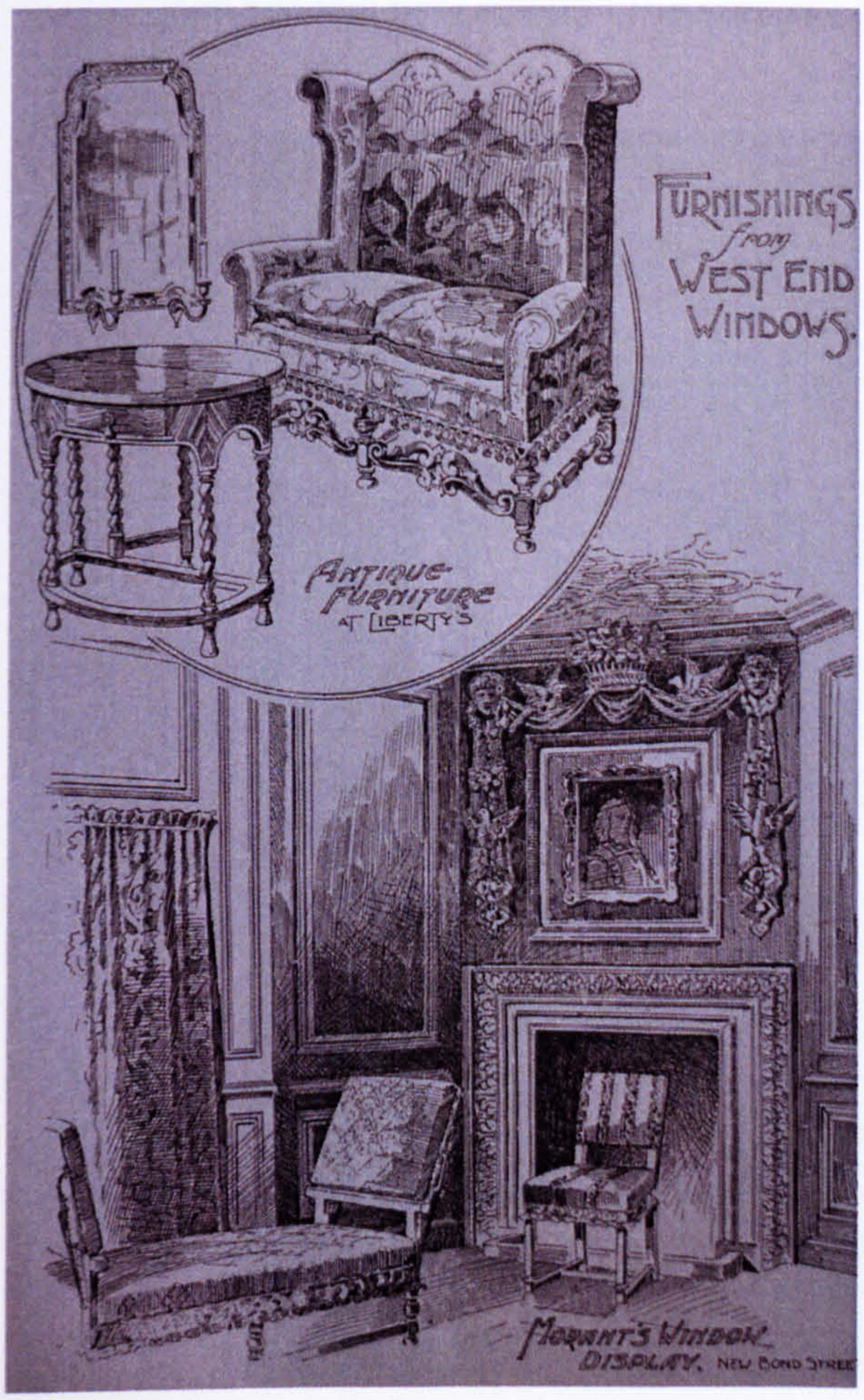


Figure 93 'West End Windows', Liberty's and Morant's (*The Cabinet Maker,* 11 January 1913, p. 32)

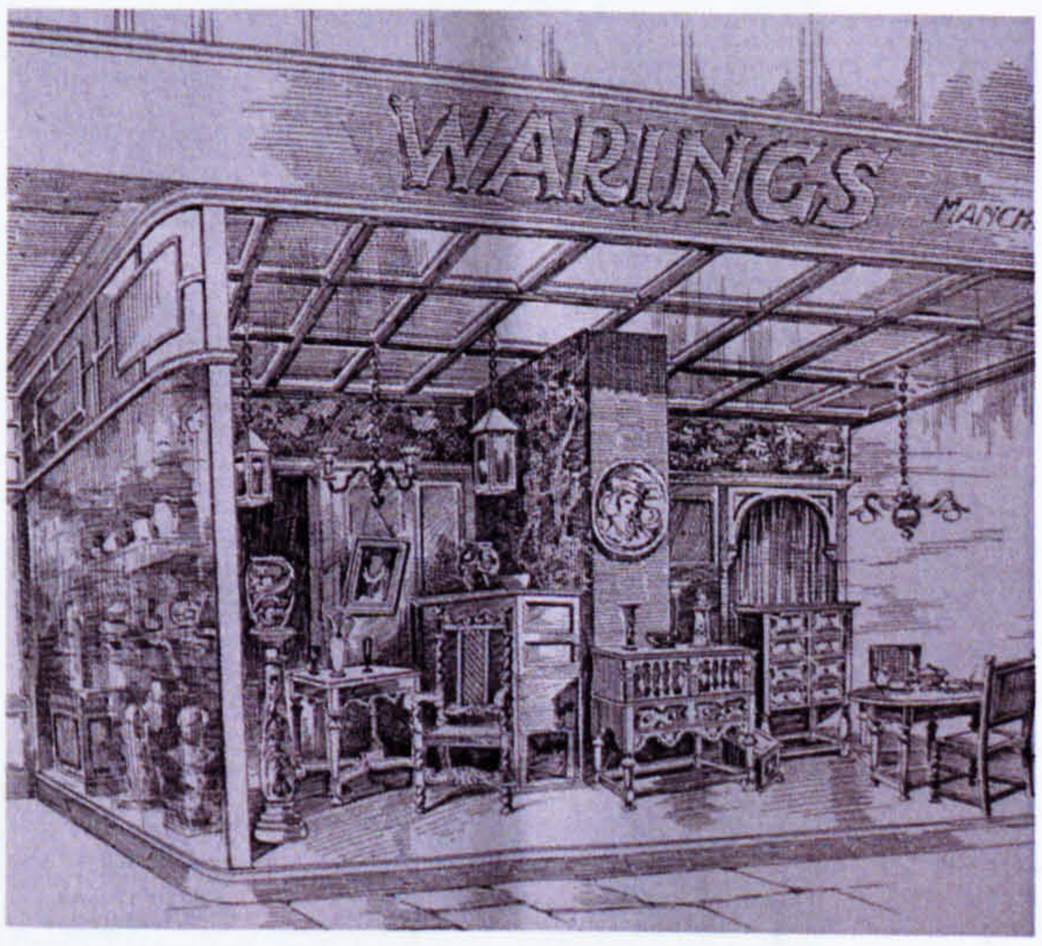


Figure 94 Waring & Gillow, Manchester, 'The Old Mitre Tavern reproduced as a window display' (*The Cabinet Maker,* 17 December 1910, p. 345)

Figure 95 Harrod's window display 'illuminated by concealed lamps in trough reflectors and pendant bowl fittings' (*The Furnishing Trades' Organiser,* October, 1920, p. 279)

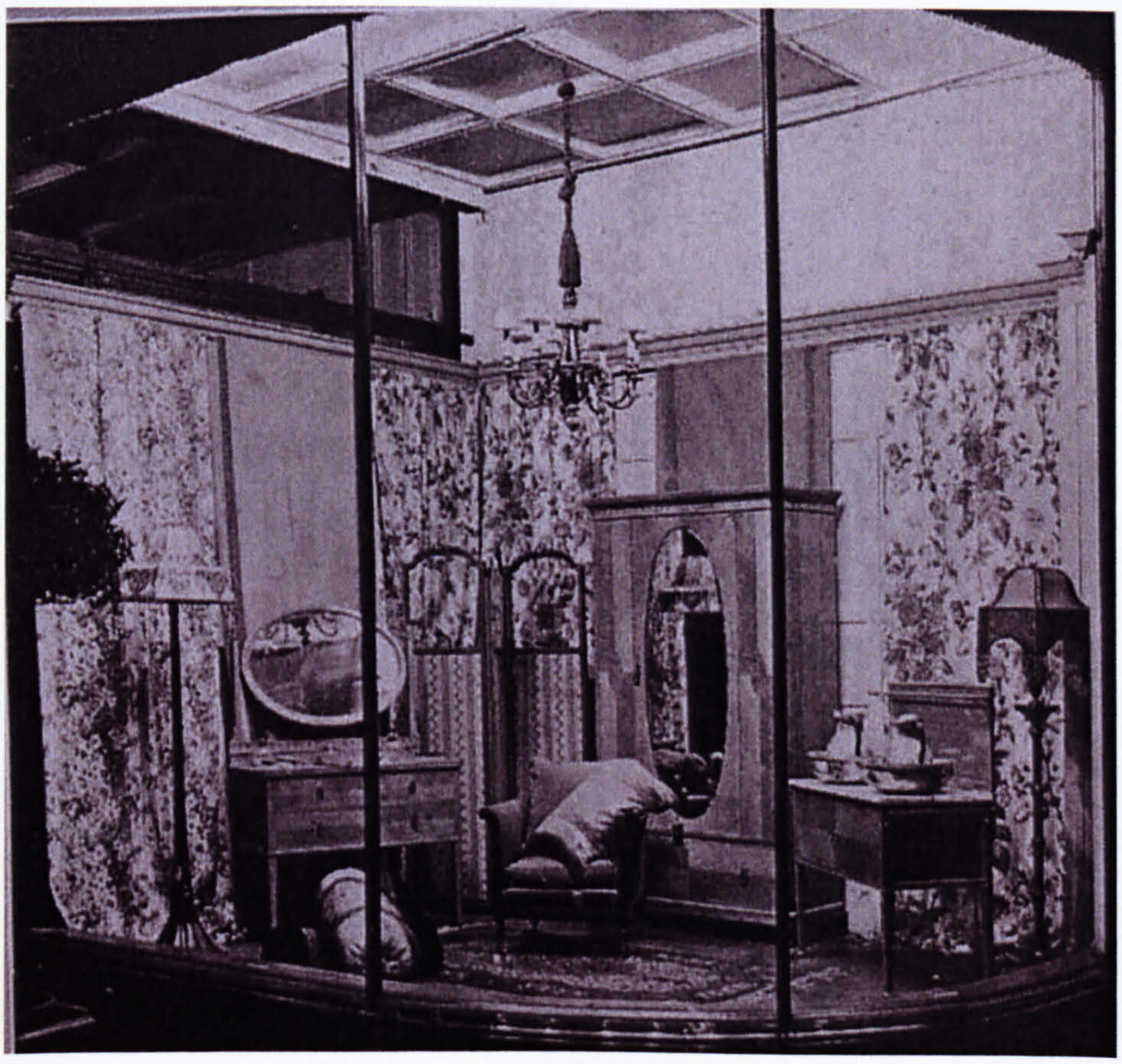


Figure 96 Waring & Gillow's shop window with lighting concealed behind the top edge of the window (*The Furnishing Trades' Organiser,* October, 1920, p. 278)

imperative, I recommend the purchase of Maple's 'Vicarage' suite of furniture at 20*l*. It is both pretty and good, I *hear*; I have not actual personal experience of it.

DRAWING-ROOM.

Bought of		£	s.	d.
Shoolbred	Two squares of carpet	3	15	0
Maple	Sofa and pillows, covered velveteen	9	2	6
Whiteley	Fenders	1	5	6
"	Fireirons	0	15	0
Smee	Walnut octagonal table	5	0	0
"	Stuffed arm-chair	5	18	0
"	Sutherland table	2	0	0
"	Low chair	0	16	6
"	Arm-chair in rush &c.	1	2	6
"	Walnut and rush easy chair	2	5	0
Whiteley	Two low basket chairs	1	0	0
"	Cushions made at home	0	12	0
Burnett	Cretonne for curtains &c.	1	10	0
Holroyd and Barker	Muslin for second curtains	0	10	6
		£35	12	6

I strongly advise in addition to this one of Messrs. Trübner's excellent revolving bookcases, of which a drawing was made in my dining-room sketch. I consider no lover of books should be without one of these invaluable bookcases.

BEST BEDROOM.

Bought of		£	s.	d.
Maple	Black and brass bedstead	3	5	0
"	Excelsior spring mattress	2	9	0
"	Hair mattress	3	10	0
"	Bolster	0	17	6
"	Four pillows (5*s*. each)	1	0	0
Smee	Washing-stand	5	5	0
"	Dressing-table and glass	5	5	0
Maple	Kidderminster square	1	14	0
Smee	Two pretty chairs (5*s*.)	0	10	0
Maple	Box ottoman	2	15	0
Smee	Chest of drawers	6	10	0
Burnett	Cretonne for curtains	0	15	0
Smee	Muslin for ditto (4½*d*.)	0	6	0
Whiteley	Fender	0	4	3
"	Fireirons	0	3	11
		£34	9	8

Ware was in the possession of the young people, but a nice set can be bought for 7*s*. 6*d*., and even a little less; glass jug and glass for 1*s*. 6*d*., at Douglas's, the artistic glass-shop in Piccadilly.

Figure 97 Furnishing estimate in Mrs Panton, *From Kitchen to Garret*, 1888. She recommended particular products and the shops where readers could get them.

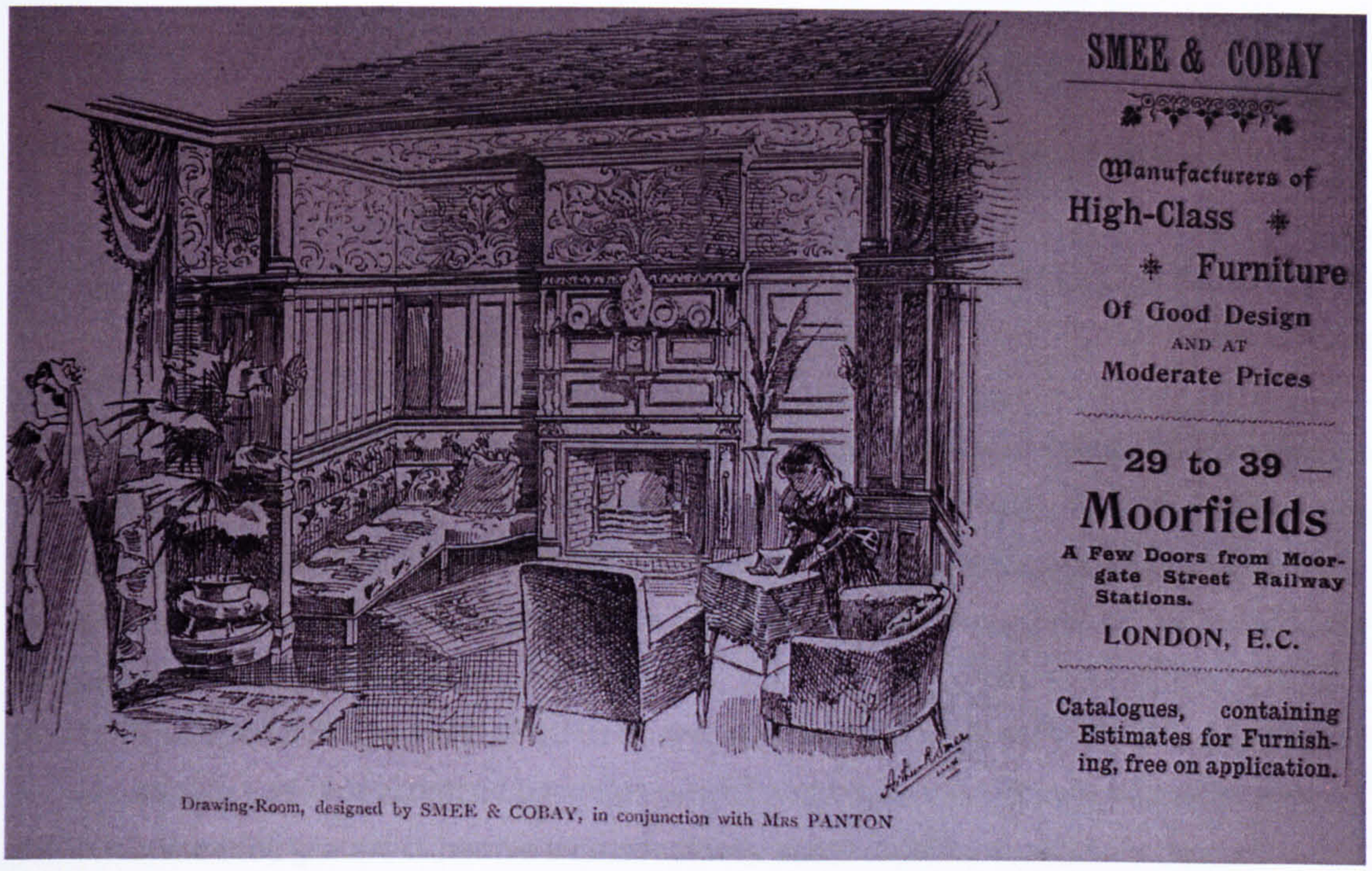


Figure 98 Smee & Cobay's advertisement (Mrs Panton, *Suburban Residences*, 1896)

Figure 99 Godfrey Giles & Co.'s advertisement (Mrs Panton, *Suburban Residences*, 1896)

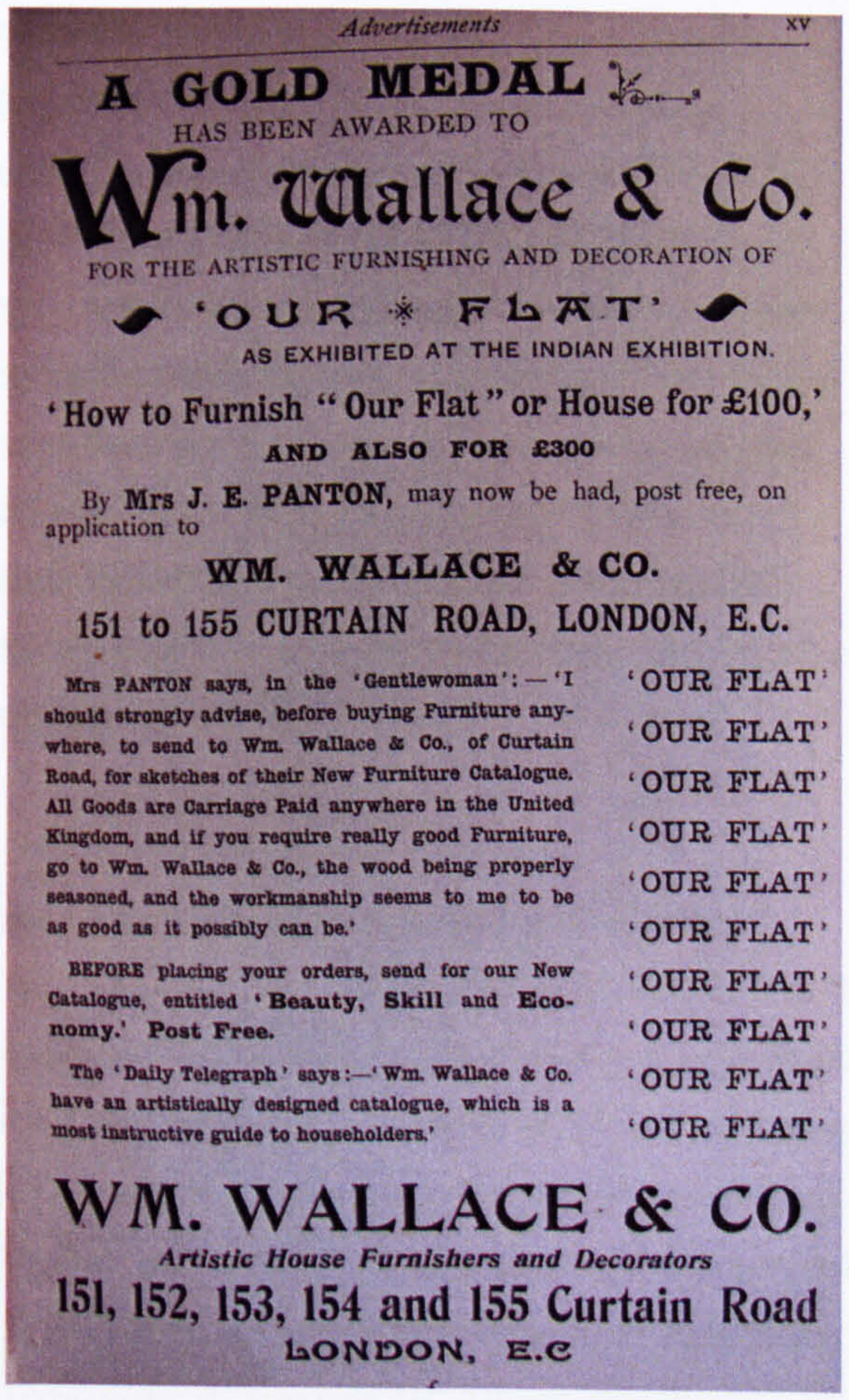


Figure 100 William Wallace & Co.'s advertisement (Mrs Panton, *Suburban Residences*, 1896)

Chapter 2

Art versus Commerce: Advice Discourse and the Commercial Sphere

The interior is the refuge of art.
Walter Benjamin[1]

The Arts and Crafts reform movement in Britain belonged to the larger group of initiatives attempting to bring aesthetic, moral and social reform to a society going through major changes in its process of industrialization and modernisation. In the nineteenth century this process provoked influential groups of people to form associations either to counteract its impact or to help actively in bringing it along:

> Throughout the period [1870-1914], and at all levels except the very poorest, British society was characterized by an immensely vigorous associational and reformist culture: by groups of people who constantly came together to improve, reform, rationalize, and revolutionize social institutions and to bring them into harmony with the perceived requirements of the modern world.[2]

Started in the 1840s, the design reform movement was one of such initiatives and since its origin it was at odds with the effects of industrialization, critical of the new goods sold by retailers and dismissive of popular taste. In the mid- to late nineteenth century the reformist discourse linked to A. W. N. Pugin, John Ruskin, William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement, worked to disseminate a new aesthetic and design principles. The reformers' ideal of reviving pre-industrial modes of production based on craftsmanship was highly influential on the decorative arts and permeated all debates and discourses regarding domestic furnishings and decoration. This chapter examines the reformers' criticism and antagonism of the commercial sphere as reflected in advice literature for the period 1890 to 1914. It places the ideas and ethos of the Arts and Crafts movement as part of a long debate started more than two centuries before, contesting the consumption and production of commodities within a commercial and industrial capitalist system.

For all its economic success the retailing revolution that took place in England during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not universally well received or appreciated. Trade and industry, although essential to a capitalist economy, had powerful detractors in the spheres of politics and arts. Those who believed industrialization should not develop on its own initiative sought government intervention and regulation. This view opposed the powerful one promoting economic Liberalism and a free trade regime. Aligned with the former, design reformers saw the excesses of industry and commerce and their divorce from art and craftsmanship at their most

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[1] Walter Benjamin, *Schriften* (Frankfurt, 1955), pp. 415-16. As cited in Mario Praz, *An Illustrted History of Interior Decoration* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), p. 22.
[2] Jose Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), p. 36.

evident during the biggest trade fair ever organised, 'The Great Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations'.[3]

The Great Exhibition of 1851 was the first international fair taking place in Britain and was partly conceived in response to a previous decade of economic uncertainty. The Royal Commission responsible for it, including Prince Albert and Henry Cole, expected the event to promote domestic industry and international trade. They also hoped the event would elevate manufacturers' and the public's taste. This didactic approach was emphasized by the four categories used to classify the exhibits, as if resembling a production sequence: raw materials, machinery, manufactures and fine art. In spite of the event's phenomenal success with over 6 million visitors and a profit of £186,000, not everybody participated in the general euphoria. An influential group of men, including the exhibition organisers, condemned many exhibits as lacking in design standards and artistic merit. Henry Cole, Owen Jones, Richard Redgrave and others interpreted variety as chaos. Their writings inaugurated a period of debates focusing on the criticism of commercial decorative art and design reflecting different attitudes towards the effects of industrialization and modernization.[4]

One of the visitors to the exhibition was William Whiteley. He was only twenty years old in 1851 but the displays, the scale of the event and the city of London made a big impression on him. Four years later Whiteley moved to London determined to continue learning the tricks of the draper's trade and save enough money to start his own business, which he did in 1863. As described in Chapter 1, by 1868 his shop had seventeen departments and in the next twenty years *Whiteley* became one of the city's largest department stores changing the course of London's retail history.[5] The shop itself and the motto of 'the universal provider' seemed to follow the scale and scope of the Great Exhibition. The store reproduced the sense of spectacle in having attractively arranged goods sourced from different parts of the world, and intending them for a massive audience which would be captivated by their ingenuity, novelty, variety, technology and art. Whiteley's mission was to run a business based in the provision of good quality goods at affordable prices for a big sector of the market population.

In contrast to Whiteley's, William Morris's reaction to the exhibition was critical and negative. Morris was seventeen at the time but what he saw appalled him. With a romantic and religious sensibility inspired by his readings on Gothic art and architecture, he felt physically ill contemplating the displays, which he judged as vulgar and 'wonderfully ugly'.[6] This lasting

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[3] Among the first to oppose the aesthetic of the new industrial products were A. W. N. Pugin, John Ruskin, and Henry Cole and his associates, Owen Jones, Matthew Digby Wyatt and Richard Redgrave.
[4] See Jeffrey A. Auerback, *The Great Exhibition of 1851: A Nation on Display* (London: Yale University Press, 1999).
[5] Gareth Shaw, 'Whiteley, William (1831-1907)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36870], pp. 1-3. Linda Stratmann, *Whiteley's Folly: The Life and Death of a Salesman* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2004), pp. 8-10.
[6] Charles Newton, *Victorian Designs for the Home* (London: V&A Publications, 1999), p. 10. Harvey and Jon Press, *William Morris: Design and Enterprise in Victorian Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), p. 9. Charlotte Gere, *Nineteenth-Century Decoration: The Art of The Interior* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), p. 278.

impression was later to impinge on his career as a designer, businessman and socialist campaigner. At odds with the modern age and opposed to industrialism, throughout his life Morris worked to disseminate what he saw as an aesthetic and ethical set of standards in the design of domestic (and religious) objects and decoration. As he put it: 'Apart from the desire to produce beautiful things, the leading passion of my life has been and is hatred of modern civilization.'[7] Inspired by Pugin's and Ruskin's ideas, and together with his friends (some of them members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood) he conceived and developed a crafts ethos that would later provide the basis of the Arts and Crafts Movement.[8] Through the movement, Morris's ideas achieved lasting national and international influence. He was an artist, an intellectual and a small-scale businessman targeting the luxury market.[9]

The lives of these two extraordinary men, William Whiteley and William Morris, exemplify the spheres of commerce and art, and the tensions between them that permeated the design, production, distribution and consumption of domestic furniture and furnishings in the period. Their lives also illustrate two different and opposed ways of relating to modernity. One of them based in developing business capitalist principles and potential to the full, using what capital, technology and modern inventions made possible with the purpose of enhancing economic and material progress. The rival vision was anchored in the rejection of capitalism and the role of the machine in a modern society. This latter view rather than considering economic imperatives as a priority, focused instead on artistic ideals and moral values and the belief that these would guide design and production for the well being of society. In promoting Art as superior to Commerce, this vision argued for the artist's role and place at the top of the hierarchy in the production cycle.

Whiteley and Morris represented two contrasting experiences of the modern world and exploited the possibilities of their age in divergent ways. Whiteley, as an exponent of modern business and trade within a capitalist system of laissez-faire, embodied the ideal of the entrepreneur whose activities underpinned the economic cycle. In contrast, Morris epitomized an artistic ideal that contested capitalist values and principles, such as the profit rationale being the driving force behind manufacture and commerce: Morris resented commercialism, the labour conditions of workers, and in particular the lack of creativity and satisfaction labourers derived from factory toil. The mission to produce artistic and moral objects, satisfying the designer, the manufacturer and the consumer, dictated his business activities. His products were necessarily expensive since, after all, making a profit was a condition of survival in a competitive market. In the last two

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[7] *The Collected Works of William Morris*, ed. by May Morris (London: Longmans Green and Company, 1910-15), p. 279.
[8] The phrase 'Arts and Crafts movement' was coined later, probably introduced by Nikilaus Pevsner with the publication of his book *Pioneers of Modern Design* in 1936.
[9] Linda Parry and Karen Livingstone, 'Introduction: International Arts and Crafts', in *International Arts and Crafts*, ed. by Karen Livingstone and Linda Parry (London: V&A Publications, 2005), pp.10-37. Fiona MacCarthy, 'Morris, William (1834–1896)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19322]. Charlote Gere, 'Morris and Company, 1861-1939', 2006, available at: http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/morris/morisco.html. Barry Katz, review of the exhibition 'Leading "The Simple Life": The Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain, 1880-1910 by Wendy Kaplan', *Design Issues*, 16 (2000), pp. 87-89.

decades of his life, Morris campaigned for and disseminated socialist ideals as a more effective way of democratising art and of denouncing the ills of capitalism. The irony of the situation was that the development and flourishing of his artistic project and of the movement he helped to set in motion was only made possible by an industrial city and society. Alan Crawford explains the paradox of a movement, critical of industrialization, developing within a capitalist system: 'The Arts and Crafts movement depended on the capital [London], on its wealth, its industry and culture, and its primacy within the nation [...] it fed healthily off the civic culture of industrialism'[10] The Arts and Crafts group was involved with the luxury trade. Just as mass retailers did, the group too was trying to satisfy the needs and demands of the middle-class, pleasing a wealthy sector that required exclusive designs to mark itself apart. Arts and Crafts artistic creations and interiors became a status symbol for those who could afford them.

Businessmen had an approach to the opportunities opened up by the modern world that appeared as fundamentally different to that of artists and design reformers. Traders and manufacturers were interested in providing consumers with goods and services as long as it was profitable to do so. Artists and design reformers stressed aesthetic concerns and believed art, as reflected in everyday objects and spaces, should be above commerce and therefore respond to artistic guidelines rather than to the imperative of making financial gain. Design reformers were shocked by the high quantities of what they saw as cheap objects produced in objectionable taste and quality. Additionally some reformers, such as Morris, became critical of the social injustices inbred in capitalism and believed the solution lay in targeting production methods and educating public taste. Reformers strove to set down and develop design standards by reverting to pre-industrial modes of production. They wanted to move the sphere of the applied arts out of the corrupting influence of ordinary commerce, 'to render all branches of art the sphere no longer of the tradesman, but of the artist'.[11] However, inevitably these two spheres influenced each other and in spite of an antagonistic discourse many worked at bringing art and industry together. Manufacturers and retailers welcomed artistic designs even if mass-produced, and artists and reformers sought the collaboration of commercial manufacturers of their choice.

From the consumers' point of view, the general picture of domestic design and decoration was blurred because in the end all products, regardless of the way they were produced, ended up in a market dominated by capitalist principles. The consumer instead of conflict and tensions, perceived a totality, even if made of disparate influences. Nevertheless, throughout the period the contradictory nature of these two visions of modernity prevailed and permeated the debates and discourses about goods in general and about the decoration and furnishing of the middle-class home.

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[10] Alan Crawford, 'The Importance of the City', in *International Arts and Crafts*, ed. by Livingstone and Parry, pp. 62-81 (p. 70).
[11] As cited in Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement: A Study of Its Sources, Ideals and Influence on Design History*, (London: Trefoil Publications, 1971), p. 117.

The debates

Foreign and domestic luxuries

The tensions between the spheres of trade and art triggered the debates about design, production and consumption in the nineteenth century in Britain. A century before, it was the consumption of luxuries and new goods coming from different parts of the world that engaged writers and thinkers. These debates illustrate the anxieties contemporaries felt in the face of changes affecting the economy of the nation and their domestic and everyday life. Large-scale international trade, which had spurred an industry developed to satisfy the demand of the domestic market, challenged and changed what defined social boundaries, attitudes towards consumption and ways of socializing in England. As industrialization unfolded, the scope of the debates widened to include not just the discussion of appropriate consumption behaviour, but matters concerning the design and production of British made goods. Understanding why the sphere of art contested industry provides clues to reveal the conflicting modernity embedded in the creation and representation of the middle class home and the modern domestic interior.

In England in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the circulation of luxuries and new consumer goods was the result of a combination of factors: growth of the economy based on overseas trade (cloth exports almost doubled between 1660 and 1700), and increase in incomes and lowering prices; 'It was the wealth engendered through economic activity that enabled the purchase of new goods to decorate the home.'[12] Soon the availability of a growing number of new products provoked discussions dwelling on the negative moral and social effects of consumption. In response to the uneasiness created by new goods a literature grew with the aim of regulating what sort of consumption was appropriate, and where and when to perform it. Since this early time, moralising on woman's role became a common way of addressing the subject.[13] Debates about luxuries dealt also with dilemmas concerning social and economic stability not only in England but also in France, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and North America. Governments feared the potential of luxury goods to upset the economy by tipping the balance between imports and exports. Too many imports were believed to drain the nation's wealth.

At first, luxury and its criticism concerned mainly the elite. The author John Sekora, in his study of the long tradition of the moral discourse on luxury, has shown how the eighteenth century debate had its roots in the writings of antiquity and how vice was always ascribed to the poor.[14] Luxury was a right for the elite but a vice for the rest of the population. Accordingly, the laws

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[12] Charles Saumarez Smith, *The Rise of Design: Design and the Domestic Interior in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Pimlico, 2000), p. 45.
[13] Paul Glennie, 'Consumption Within Historical Studies', in *Acknowledging Consumption: A Review of New Studies*, ed. by Daniel Miller (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 164-203 (p. 181).
[14] John Sekora, *Luxury: the Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett* (Baltimore, 1977). Cited in Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 15.

sanctioning who could own and wear luxuries reinforced social distinctions. Reflecting this ideology, writers, poets and novelists always condemned conspicuous consumption in those who, by law, were not entitled to it. This narrow vision of consumption was challenged in the eighteenth century when the expansion of foreign and domestic trade made its new merchandise available to wider sectors of society. The 'middling sorts' increasingly had the means, the desire and the taste to consume the new products. Critics feared then that wealth and the marks of wealth in social sectors other than the nobility would blur the demarcation of social boundaries bringing instability and disorder. A concern emerged for identifying and re-defining the principles of taste associated with social status.[15] Taste became a cultural strategy to accommodate and discipline the dangers of a widened consumption.

At this time the discussion surrounding consumption was centred on luxury goods coming from the Far East and the Americas. Indian chintzes, porcelain, japanned furniture, silk, cotton, and also tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar gradually ceased to be exclusive and its wider consumption promoted new ways of socialising and polite behaviour among the upper and middling classes, such as tea-drinking and shopping. New drinks like tea, coffee and chocolate also encouraged the invention of novel objects and sets. It was these changed habits and ways to relate to commodities that gave people a new awareness of cultural meanings attached to goods and stimulated new debates about economy, progress and society.[16]

Although mostly critical, the debates also covered endorsement of consumption.[17] Luxury could be seen at the same time as an agent of corruption or as a civilizing influence. Writing in the 1720s the essayist and social commentator, Bernard Mandeville, judged consumption of luxuries as a vice, the product of vanity and greed. But he also 'shifted the discussion of luxury to psychological motivation and a self identity through fantasy, possessions and the restless pursuit of change and novelty'.[18] Furthermore, he highlighted the positive impact of consumption on commerce growth and employment for the poor.[19] This latter approach had a lasting impact on succeeding authors.

As the eighteenth century advanced, luxuries were seen in different lights because of the varied and changing implications they acquired in terms of morality, aesthetics, economic growth and redistribution of wealth. The term became more complex in meaning.[20] An important association was the one linking luxury and femininity though initially under a negative light, seen as excess and weakness and inspired by vanity and fashion. A later implication presented luxury and femininity closely connected to representations of commerce and trade. 'In the period which

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[15] For a critical study of these debates see Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates*. Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain 1550-1960* (London: Yale University Press, 1995). Charles Saumarez Smith, *The Rise of Design*, pp. 41-58.
[16] See chapters 1 and 2 in Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 17-110.
[17] Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates*, p. 2.
[18] Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, 'The Rise and Fall of the Luxury Debates' in Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates*, p. 10.
[19] Charles Saumarez Smith, *The Rise of Design*, pp. 56-58.
[20] Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates*, pp. 7-27 (pp. 15-19).

many historians have identified with the confinement of women to private, domestic space, that most public of spheres, the market, was depicted as a woman.'[21] Writers such as David Hume and Adam Smith elaborated on the beneficial effects of commerce in the creation of a commercial and consumer culture. Their observations acknowledged the contribution of women to this culture and to the economy. In this light, female consumption of luxury became a virtue.[22] Nevertheless the perception of luxury as a female vice never died out and continued to inform subsequent debates.

Although initially luxuries were imported goods from Asia and the Americas, from mid-eighteenth century Britain became one of the biggest producers of luxury and new consumer goods. Trading with goods from all around the world developed and consolidated financial and marketing strategies and challenged domestic manufacturing to develop new products and technologies. Consequently the kind of luxuries thinkers and writers discussed were different from those criticised earlier. British made products gave rise to a strand of debates more focused on aesthetics and the problem of taste. Artists and intellectuals tried to identify what made these new goods so appealing and cited qualities ranging from ingenuity and individuality to novelty and utility. Artists and writers such as William Hogarth, Joshua Reynolds, Smith and Hume tried also to understand the pleasure people derived from goods. They expressed a genuine interest to appreciate rather than to condemn the way goods acquired meaning to consumers.[23]

Increased consumption of exotic goods encouraged imitation in domestic production to such an extent that it caused a product revolution.[24] To secure demand British manufacturers and retailers developed an awareness of the different features attributed to goods on physical, cultural and symbolic levels, and were quick to use or enrich them to make their products more attractive. Favoured attributes throughout the eighteenth century included quality, novelty and variety and these encouraged a considerable amount of new designs (design here identified with 'fine arts') and technologies.[25] Everybody seemed to agree that aesthetics was an important characteristic of consumer goods in securing demand. 'Manufacturers such as Josiah Wedgwood and Matthew Boulton used this aesthetic debate to design their products and sell them, appealing to contemporary ideas about the cultivation of masculine virtue and the superiority of women's taste.'[26] An important consequence was people's willingness to change spending patterns diverting resources from necessaries towards luxury goods such as Wedgwood's creamware and Boulton's buckles and silverware. This behaviour encouraged the development of marketing and retailing tactics with the aim of multiplying the presence of goods through advertising using text and images.

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[21] Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates*, p. 19.
[22] Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates*, p. 19.
[23] Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, pp. 88-90.
[24] Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 7.
[25] Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, pp. 85-91.
[26] Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates*, p. 19.

On a governmental level, the quality of British goods became a matter of national policy in the eighteenth century. Maxine Berg has pointed out that accounts of the British industrial revolution have been based mainly on a narrow vision of technology and have left out the role played by the arts in the design, production and distribution of consumer goods; goods which eventually replaced imports from Asia and Europe.[27] The production of national manufactures was compelled to bring art and industry together in response to the challenges of international trade, particularly the competition with France in luxury and consumer goods.[28] The government reinforced manufacturers' efforts by a protectionist policy, which placed high tariffs and prohibitions on imported goods. The competition for markets also included several initiatives in art education for those involved in industry. In comparing British products with the French, political and economic commentators (including policy-makers) concluded that the competitor's advantage resided in fashion and ornamentation, both aspects related to the arts and not to technology.[29] They believed that developing a national taste and style in goods would give England a competitive edge and commercial identity. In the late nineteenth century in the face of additional competition from German and American products, artists, designers and manufacturers applied the same strategy, aiming to develop a national English style.

Although among these commentators there was consensus on the advantages and need for the integration of arts into industry, many mid-eighteenth-century writers also acknowledged the difficulties in combining mechanical production processes with aesthetic, design and taste principles. At the end of the century the arts went through a division where architects and designers saw themselves increasingly apart from manufacturing and trade. Fine arts became distinct from useful arts. 'Writing on the arts now stressed the economic utility of ornamental and decorative skills and technologies as a part of the mechanical rather than the liberal arts.'[30] In spite of this, the production of new luxuries and consumer goods in the mid to late eighteenth century achieved national and international success and British products created and advanced their own market. The new century would bring fresh challenges in the form of short periods of economic depression, a strong liberalism pursuing free trade and renewed competition not only from France but also, as already mentioned, from Germany and the United States.

Reforming design, taste and consumption

Still thoroughly concerned with notions of art, design and consumption, the debates of the nineteenth century were different in nature. To start, they were no longer troubled with the consumption of foreign luxuries, as had been the case in the previous century, but with that of British-made goods, and they were fuelled by a strong criticism of the changes and perceived ills of industrialization. In the first half of the century consumption was contested but also accommodated. For example, the opposition towards materialism, promoted by members of the

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[27] Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 92.
[28] Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 88.
[29] Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, pp. 94-5.
[30] Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 104.

Evangelical movement, was in the end absorbed and normalized in discourses where family life, woman's role and domesticity were associated with spending.[31]

As is well known, since the 1840s the most important strand of debates was the one developed by design reformers who became critical of most commercial products, and particularly the ones intended for home consumption. Reformers always linked what they saw as badly designed products with the low criterion in taste attributed to manufacturers, retailers and the general public. They campaigned for a reform concerned with setting standards in design informed by artistic and handicraft principles. The movement also aimed at reforming taste through education, tackling in this way both the spheres of production and consumption by assuming that an educated taste would change demand and put pressure on manufacturers. A. W. Pugin, John Ruskin, Henry Cole, William Morris, the Pre-Raphaelite group, and later, members of the artistic Guilds and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society (founded in 1888) were all involved in this mission. The need to set precise aesthetic and moral standards for design and taste points at what Gillian Naylor interpreted as a 'crisis of conscience' in a group of men aware of the price to pay for material progress and industrialization.[32]

After the economic crisis of the 1830s most discussions about what could improve goods' design, although allegedly wanting to improve British competitiveness in international trade, were usually directed against fashion and popular taste, that is, against the market.[33] Jules Lubbock suspects that reformers' efforts were therefore not so much about making manufactures more commercial or fashionable but about fostering a set of design principles that they believed were morally and artistically superior.[34] He observes that although expressed in aesthetic terms, definitions of what constituted 'good design' and 'good taste' had social and economic implications. In a similar way as their eighteenth-century counterparts, reform writers felt uneasy about the fast changes in consumption behaviour permeating wider sectors of society. This might explain why in the second half of the nineteenth century, almost without exception, advice writers made class remarks when discussing domestic furnishings, criticising social aspiration as reflected in consumers' choice of articles. Nonetheless the aim was not to suppress consumption but to regulate it through disciplined notions of taste.

From the 1840s constant criticism was directed at naturalistic floral and fruit patterns widely used in the decoration of carpets, curtains, fabrics, wallpaper, ornaments and china. 'The high water mark of literalism was the Great Exhibition held in London in 1851, and in its wake a movement to reform ornament gathered strength [...] According to Richard Redgrave, one of the leaders of the reform movement, the worst principle of all was "the tendency toward the

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[31] Paul Glennie, 'Consumption Within Historical Studies', in *Acknowledging Consumption*, ed. by Daniel Miller, p. 182.
[32] Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, p. 7.
[33] Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, p. xii. The discussions on popular taste were also linked to the criticism of women and femininity.
[34] Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, pp. xi-xv, 248.

direct imitation of nature".[35] Reformers judged this preference as misguided consumer behaviour and an evident expression of bad taste and lack of education both on the part of manufacturers and the public. With government support, reformers founded schools of design and worked on private initiatives to educate the general public promoting publications such as advice articles and books, mostly directed at the ordinary householder. Other endeavours included the establishment of museums and the organisation of regular exhibitions displaying works of art and objects indicating the 'right taste'.[36] Behind the criticism of popular taste was an aspect of far reaching consequences. In the second half of the nineteenth century, reformers such as Ruskin and Morris reviled not just literalistic ornament but also modern production methods, which they considered dishonest. They believed these methods, based on the machine and factory system, imposed terrible conditions for the worker and resulted in 'cheap and nasty' products.[37] The logic of the reform discourse implied bypassing industry and trade completely, replacing it with artistic and handicraft production.

Just as their eighteenth century counterparts, writers and manufacturers in the nineteenth century valued art and focused on it as a crucial component in design. The significant difference lied in the kind of relation design reformers wanted between art and industry, not just advocating the autonomy of art and artists but the submission of industry to artistic and handcraft principles. Reformers wanted to assert the place and role of artists and architects at the top of the professional pecking order in the decorative arts. In this sense, the design reform was an artistic movement reacting to and opposing the ever-increasing power of commerce and business in a capitalist society, already examined in Chapter 1. Stefan Muthesius has argued that the design reform discourse was always about the professional status of the artist. 'The hierarchy was, of course, closely related to the social and economic order of the country [...] The story is concerned with the way certain groups newly asserted themselves as the top of the hierarchy and thereby replaced others, and our special theme is the role the anti-commerce and anti-industry stance played in this process.'[38] Linked to the struggle for professional status were the attempts of artists to denounce and counteract the monopoly of the trade on the decorative arts.[39]

Muthesius has also interpreted the emergence and development of the Antique movement as part of the anti-trade campaign and as an ingenious way to bypass the trade while asserting the realm of art in domestic furnishing. The movement was a very successful one in promoting a craze in collecting and furnishing that lasted until the mid-1920s. Although the act of collecting antiques was nothing new, it became fashionable again in the 1870s in the hands of Rossetti and other Pre-Raphaelite painters who discovered and promoted the artistic value of the

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[35] James Trilling, *The Language of Ornament* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001), p. 170. See also Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, pp. 271-73.
[36] Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, pp. xi-xv. Leora Auslander, *Taste and Power: Furnishing Modern France* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), p. 209.
[37] Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, pp. 23-29.
[38] Stefan Muthesius, "We Do Not Understand What is Meant by a "Company" Designing': Design versus Commerce in Late Nineteenth-Century English Furnishing', *Journal of Design History*, 5 (1992), 113-19 (p. 113).
[39] S. Muthesius, 'We Do Not Understand What is Meant by a "Company" Designing', pp. 116-17.

ordinary kind of old object. Soon a collecting rage took off and furnishing and decorating the home with antiques became the proper thing to do. At the same time artists and writers propounding the movement campaigned strongly against commercial manufacturers and upholsterers and blamed them for the 'intolerable ugliness of modern furniture'.[40] Closely connected to the Arts and Crafts movement, the Antique movement also spurred the new vernacular revival and with it a whole philosophy around the design and making of furniture, summed up in what Muthesius has called 'an aestheticisation of simple construction'. 'The humble, the rough and primitive can be, and is, Art.'[41] In the end the new appreciation of old furniture also discovered and included the designs and designers of the eighteenth century, who had not fallen prey to modern commercialism. Not surprisingly, the trade took advantage of these new trends and quickly made a business of them, not just selling antiques but reproducing them.

In the sphere of production, an important aspect in the design reform discourse was the standpoint towards the machine, linked to factory production and blamed for the inferior quality in designs and goods. In the 1840s and 50s John Ruskin was one of the first to denounce the excesses of modern industry. His books and preaching moulded the thinking of a generation of artists and intellectuals such as William Morris, and groups of artists linked to the pre-Raphaelite group, the Art Workers' Guild and the Arts and Crafts movement. By criticizing a *laisse-faire* economy and by formulating his opposition to an alliance between art and industry he forged a design ethos that loathed the influence of the machine. Ruskin's vision of art, inspired in nature and tradition, was devised against the values embodied in modern industry and commerce.[42]

Following Ruskin, design reformers vilified mechanical production with its consequent division of labour, making them responsible for the production of 'cheap and nasty' goods. Adrian Forty has pointed out that this argument was misconceived. If goods could be lacking in quality and taste it was not the fault of the machine but of the system in which mechanised production took place. Within a capitalist system the decisions about production methods responded to the need of reducing costs to enhance profits, including the lowering of wages that, as a result, encouraged 'scamping'.[43] William Morris was aware of the difference. 'It is not this or that tangible steel and brass machine which we want to get rid of, but the great intangible machine of commercial tyranny, which oppresses the lives of all of us.'[44] The machine became an easy scapegoat but, as discussed before, this pressure to lower costs did not come only from factory production but also from modern retailing methods. As explained in Chapter 1, the larger retailer, buying in bulk, exerted pressure on the manufacturer to lower prices. Although a low price did not necessarily imply bad quality, reformers took it for granted that this was the case, refusing to acknowledge that most mass produced and retailed goods were well made and that

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[40] Stefan Muthesius, 'Why do we Buy Old Furniture? Aspects of the Authentic Antique in Britain 1870-1910', *Art History*, 11 (1988), 231-254 (pp. 232-34).
[41] Stefan Muthesius, 'Why do we Buy Old Furniture?', p. 237.
[42] Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, pp. 23-95.
[43] Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire: Design and society since 1750* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), pp. 42-61.
[44] As cited in A. Forty, *Objects of Desire* , p. 61.

in most cases they were cheap not because of 'scamping' but due to economies of scale. Consumer goods' quality and aesthetic were therefore not determined by a system based on low wages, even if the latter was true, but rather by the scale of operations. As a consequence, it made it very difficult for the small-scale producer to compete at the same level of quality and price and by getting rid of the competence the large-scale business grew even more powerful.

Since the 1860s through to the 1900s the design reform discourse acquired a bigger audience and consolidated in the form of principles promoted by the Arts and Crafts movement and defined in opposition to those upholding modern industry. In reality many members and sympathisers of the movement participated in commercially driven enterprises, but those links were usually pushed to the background, and at discourse and rhetoric level the artistic ethic was never compromised by business demands. This discourse formulated a relentless anti commercial stance and persistently contested the designs, products and retailing tactics of large furniture and furnishing firms.

The Arts and Crafts' anti-commercial ethos

The design reform movement in the 1830s, 40s and 50s initially strove for the fusion between art and industry at institutional level, but this union never crystallised. Since the 1860s artists and reformers, who later became part of the Arts and Crafts movement, opposed such an alliance, loathed the perceived negative influence that the commercial sphere had on the decorative arts and strove for art's autonomy. The most prominent and articulate exponent of design reform ideas was Morris who continuously wrote and lectured about it. In the last decades of the century Morris and several others such as Phillip Webb, Charles Faulkner, Walter Crane, C. R. Ashbee, A. H. Mackmurdo and W. R. Lethaby joined the socialist cause. Their discourse and reform campaign were then directed not just at commercial goods and machine production but at the economic system that made them. Some, including Ashbee and his Guild of Handicraft, went further and founded communities based on an utopian notion of a pre-industrial way of life.

The work and ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement had a profound and long lasting influence on applied art and on industry. Sometimes this influence was not what members of the movement had anticipated. They were shocked, for example, to see manufacturers and retailers embracing and commercialising goods in the style of Arts and Crafts furniture, furnishings and interiors. Modern industry had always recognized the value and commercial potential of designs carried out by artists and architects, and was quick to imitate, adapt and use them as inspiration, not always acknowledging the source. Manufacturers and retailers were not used to attributing designs to their creators, a practice that was strongly criticized by Arts and Crafts artists. The issue of copyright became central to the design reform debate but was never satisfactorily resolved in this period. Copying and adapting designs was an old and widespread custom, difficult to shake off because many did not think they were doing anything wrong.

Others also argued that there was little place for copyright in a free trade market. In general, once a design was out in the public domain it was treated as common property.

An important consequence of the Arts and Crafts movement was that its members and followers, through their work and writings, defined the role of the designer as that of an artist. Although they were aware that the designer was a consequence of industry, their definition was expressed in aesthetic and ideal terms rather than within the framework of a capitalist environment. The designer/artist was conceived as sovereign and autonomous. Most Arts and Crafts practitioners including figures like Morris, who owned and ran his own firm, promoted, exhibited and sold their products more within the realm of works of art and bespoke creations than that of machine-produced consumer goods. Although a commercial enterprise, Morris' business cannot be considered in the same league as the usual furnishing firm. Morris adopted some modern retail methods such as the use of fixed price tickets and lavishly illustrated catalogues, but the conception and running of his workshops and two shops responded to his artistic agenda, where a significant part of merchandise was produced on demand, made with traditional pre-industrial techniques and, accordingly, had exclusive prices. For a long time the firm's main source of income was stained glass supplying the increasing number of new churches and the refurbishing of old ones.[45] Be it a piece of furniture, a carpet, wallpaper or a stained glass window, Morris' were exclusive, unique designs, conceived as far as possible from industrial production and mass retailing. His products and business were on the fringes rather than at the heart of modern commerce and industry. Although his art and that of his collaborators was for sale, his business was also a symbolic statement claiming autonomy from the sphere of trade. Morris believed, and managed to convince others (to this day) that his artistic project was carried out on his own terms.

Morris's ideas and practice about hands-on knowledge and respect for the material as an essential part of the design process were not new or only belonging to the Arts and Crafts movement. The movement, however, appropriated them adding the value of the handcrafted and consequently distancing the design process from machine and large-scale production. In the years from 1888 up to 1914, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society had the aim of promoting the movement's ethos and of providing an outlet to the work of its members and guests. Although Morris' ideas were at its core, he was at first critical of the Society. Having been an active campaigner for design reform most of his life, by the 1880s and until his death in 1896 he directed his efforts at propagating socialist ideals as a more realistic way of counteracting the economic system and what he saw as the tyranny of commerce. His concern with Socialism stemmed from his desire for democracy in art. He realized eventually that any socialist state required mechanized production to benefit the most and admitted that properly used the machine, rather than enslave, could become a liberating tool. Even though a good number of designers, artists and architects joined the socialist cause and acknowledged the potential of

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[45] Charles Harvey and Jon Press, *William Morris: Design and Enterprise in Victorian Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), pp. 56-57.

mechanization, for most the positive role of the machine remained as a utopia.[46] Many Arts and Crafts reformers persevered in their opposition to mechanical production.

If mainly to alienate them, trade and industry were at the heart of the Arts and Crafts movement's concerns. The long-sustained negative attitude towards the role of the machine made it difficult for its members to accept it without betraying their ideals. Trade journals and critics of the movement pointed out that if the Arts and Crafts were to achieve greater influence it had to overcome this obstacle, if only to put their designs and goods within the reach of a majority.

> Although we have the greatest sympathy for men who abhor the mechanical surfaces and stereotyped decoration which result from the abuse of machinery, we do think that certain members of the Arts and Crafts Society put themselves out of touch with their day and generation by affecting to ignore the presence and uses of machinery altogether. [...] What a triumph it would be for the Arts and Crafts Society if it could show the craftsmen of this country how to use machinery judiciously –if it could prove it to be possible, by its aid, to make really beautiful things, not only for the few but for the many.[47]

Contrary to what Morris expected, the activities of the Society were successful in disseminating a set of standards in design and craftsmanship at a national and international level. The Society was particularly effective at convincing others that only their artists achieved such high standards. It branded exclusively the phrase Arts and Crafts with excellence in quality and workmanship. Trade journals such as *The House* and *The Cabinet Maker* had an ambiguous appreciation of the work submitted to the Exhibition Society. In such work, they reckoned, there were many elements to admire but they also resented the excessive attention and praise it got compared to what they saw as other equally deserving schools of applied art. An article published in 1900 stressed the fact that the exhibition represented the work of a small minority and that it did not monopolise good and beautiful design.

> No one can possibly deny [...] that the Society has in its ranks many gifted men and women who work conscientiously and well. True! Their view of art is, for the most part, a narrow one, but within their own particular limits they have exercised a beneficial influence on some of our national industries, and credit must be accorded to them for that. Let us freely and unhesitatingly admit this, while, at the same time, recapitulating the fact that the Alfa and Omega of arts and craftsmanship are not by any manner of means bound up with them, nor with their principles.[48]

This article was not shy in its criticism, and went on to tackle what defined visually many Arts and Crafts designs: 'in regard to furniture and woodwork generally, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society advocate simplicity above all things, and the result of this is that their

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[46] Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, pp. 107-10.
[47] The Cabinet Maker, January 4, 1913, p. 2.
[48] The House, No. XXXV, Vol. VI, January, 1900, p. 161.

productions in this department are oftentimes crude and ungainly in design, though, be it understood, the craftsmanship is, in most cases, perfect.'[49] That furniture and woodwork exaggerated the simplicity and avoidance of ornament was a common remark at the time, explaining perhaps why so many people found it hard to appreciate them. The pressure of criticism must have mounted on because towards 1914 increasingly the designs shifted from a preference for vernacular and austere forms to the modern reproduction of models from the eighteenth century. Note how illustrations in Figure 1 look different from those in Figure 2. The earlier ones, from 1900, show a style easily recognized today as Arts and Crafts while the later designs from 1913 (with the exception of the top right one) reveal a clear influence from eighteenth century models.

In spite of a strong reformist discourse against industry and commerce, there were many examples of Arts and Crafts artists and trade manufacturers bridging the gap between them. Alan Crawford talks of 'a working balance' in which artists dismissed trade as a whole, but were keen on establishing a connection with firms they approved of. In the case of William Morris' firm, Morris & Co., 'the greatest demand for goods manufactured by other firms was for wall-papers, machine-made carpets and machine-woven fabrics.'[50] Among its suppliers in the 1880s were The Wilton Royal Carpet Factory, Heckmondwike Manufacturing Co., and the textile firms of Alexander Morton & Co., J. O. Nicholson & Co., H. C. McCrea & Co. and Dixons. The firm Jeffrey & Co. produced all Morris' wallpapers.[51]

> T. J. Cobden-Sanderson (1840-1922) learned to bind books in a trade workshop. C. R. Ashbee (1863-1942) expanded his metalwork shop by employing trade craftsmen. C. F. A. Voysey (1857-1941) and many others had their designs made up in trade workshops. Metford Warner (d. 1930), wallpaper manufacturer, Emery Walker (1851-1933), process engraver, and Herny Longden (d. 1920), metalworker, were all employers from the top end of the trades but were also very actively involved in the Arts and Crafts.[52]

Pugin back in the 1840s always worked with a good range of manufacturers, such as Crace & Son and Hardman's. At the end of the century C. F. A. Voysey had several contracts with Alexander Morton & Co.[53] The Century Guild, led by A. H. Mackmurdo, asked manufacturers such as Jeffrey & Co., Simpson and Godlee of Manchester, William De Morgan and James Powell & Son to carry out their designs for textiles, wallpapers, carpets, tiles, glass and pottery.[54]

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[49] The House, No. XXXV, Vol. VI, January, 1900, p. 167.
[50] Charles Harvey and Jon Press, *William Morris*, p. 142.
[51] Charles Harvey and Jon Press, *William Morris*, pp. 142-43.
[52] Alan Crawford, 'The Importance of the City', in *International Arts and Crafts*, ed. by Livingstone and Parry, pp. 62-81 (p. 62).
[53] Karen Livingstone, 'Origins and Development', in *International Arts and Crafts*, ed. by Livingstone and Parry, pp. 40-61 (p. 43).
[54] Karen Livingstone, 'Origins and Development', in *International Arts and Crafts*, ed. by Livingstone and Parry, p. 46.

Throughout the nineteenth century the trades, on the other hand, were quick to see the commercial potential in artistic designs and always welcomed an alliance. If the artist was a famous one his name was advertised on trade catalogues. Most commercial manufacturers actively engaged with designs inspired by Arts and Crafts' ones. The 1896 Anaglypta trade catalogue listed the designers' names in front of pattern designs for frieze, ceiling, filling, diaper, dado and border. This list included 'C. F. A. Voysey, Arct.; Chr. Dresser, PhD; A. Jonquet, Artist; H. Rene Rainger, Artist; J. Lamb, Artist; J. J. Kimpton, FRIBA; Owen W. Davis, Arct; R. H. Adams, Artist' (Fig. 3).[55] The firms Heal & Son and Liberty became famous examples of this type of collaboration. Heal & Son, for example, manufactured Voysey's wallpaper, carpet and furniture designs (see Fig. 4 in this chapter and Figs. 106-07 in Chapter 3). Ambrose Heal, managing director of the firm since 1913, was also a furniture designer and a committed promoter of the Arts and Crafts ethos. He designed and produced his own version of 'cottage furniture' since 1895 and had his designs displayed in several Arts and Crafts, national and international exhibitions.[56]

At every Arts and Crafts Exhibition event (particularly the first six ones) there were several known manufacturers listed as exhibitors. The designer and exhibition organiser W. A. S. Benson wrote: 'While emphasis was laid on the importance of the finished work of individual craftsmen, from the very first there were shown examples of cooperative production [...] intended for commercial manufacture.'[57] The reason for this cooperation was to encourage reform in the area of production. Among the participating commercial firms were 'Minton & Co., Doulton & Co., J. Wedgwood and Sons, Alexander Morton & Co., Coalbrookdale Co., Falkirk Iron Co., Farmer and Brindley, Turnbull and Stockdale and many others.'[58] From 1889 to 1896 Ambrose Heal and Arthur Silver (from the firm of designers *Silver Studio*) participated as exhibitors.

Besides cabinet making, home furnishing required the products of various industries, and some of these were more sympathetic and ready to follow the Arts and Crafts aesthetic and modes of production. Designs for pottery, glass, metalwork, wallpaper and textiles seemed to be equally suited to craft and machine production.[59] W. A. S. Benson ran a successful firm engaged with industrial and commercial production of domestic ware and electric lighting fittings.[60] Jeffrey and Co., Liberty, Morton and Woollams all sought Arts and Crafts designers for their wallpapers.

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[55] *Anaglypta 1896 Designs*, trade catalogue, 1896.
[56] Heal's catalogue, *Plain Oak Furniture*, was originally published in 1898 with Gleeson White's comments in the form of an essay at the end of the catalogue. White was then the editor of *The Studio*. He died in that year and the catalogue was reprinted as Gleeson White, *A Note on Simplicity of Design in Furniture for Bedrooms with Special Reference to Some Recently Produced by Messrs. Heal and Son* (London: Heal and Son, 1898). The firm showed its range of 'country cottage furniture' at the 'Garden City Cheap Cottage Exhibition' in 1905.
[57] W. A. S. Benson, 'Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society: Its History and Achievements', AAD 1/28-1980. As cited in Karen Livingstone, 'Origins and Development', in *International Arts and Crafts*, ed. by Livingstone and Parry, p. 51.
[58] Karen Livingstone, 'Origins and Development', in *International Arts and Crafts*, ed. by Livingstone and Parry, p. 55.
[59] Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, p. 147.
[60] Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, p. 160.

Jeffrey and Co., for example, worked with C. L. Eastlake, E. W. Godwin, A. H. Mackmurdo, Lewis F. Day, Owen Jones, William Burges and William Morris.[61]

The influence that Arts and Crafts ideas, designs and schemes had on furnishing firms was reflected in trade catalogues and in advice literature for the period 1890 to 1914. With the justification of giving advice on matters of decoration to the ordinary householder, advice literature was an important way of articulating and disseminating the movement's ideals. Advice authors found it convenient to use the Arts and Crafts discourse, not only because they agreed with it, but because it was a useful way of organizing and giving sense to otherwise numerous and disparate ideas regarding domestic furnishing and decoration. The challenge and contradiction in promoting the movements' reform agenda, including most of all the education of consumers' taste, was that in reality the main source of furniture, furnishings and schemes intended for the middle-class home would come from retailers selling large- scale machine-produced goods, and not from artists, craftsmen and workshops selling exclusive and bespoke designs. This explains why many illustrations displayed in advice books and magazines were taken from trade catalogues published by firms such as Oetzmann, Maple, Shoolbred, Whiteley and Waring & Gillow, all operating within a capitalist system of multiple production, retailing and consumption. Although a significant part of advice literature of the second half of the nineteenth century was and remained broadly a reform discourse, it also constituted a paradox: to interpret the Arts and Crafts aesthetic and ideals for the middle-class consumer who most likely would buy from the large furnishing shop.

The reform discourse as advice literature

Advice literature on the topic of home furnishing and decoration was prominent for the period 1850 to 1914. In particular, 'the 1870s saw the beginnings of the deluge of publications on the subject of decoration'.[62] Factors that contributed to the popularity of manuals relating to the home include the rise in urban population and number of households, a continuous expansion of the middle class, an increase in this class' earning and spending power, and as described in the previous chapter, growing numbers in literacy and significant developments in the printing and publishing industries. Many more people than ever before had access to printed material and were eager for information and instruction that would guide them through the many challenging changes taking place during this period. The expanding middle class, and mainly its women, were the target of many books, journals and magazines containing advice on how to furnish and embellish the home. Popular names in this type of literature at the time were

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[61] Middlesex Polytechnic, *The Silver Studio Collection: A London Design Studio 1880-1963* (London: Lund Humphries, 1980), p. 16.
[62] Charlotte Gere, *Nineteenth-Century Decoration: The Art of The Interior* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), p. 276.

Charles Eastlake, Rhoda and Agnes Garret, Mrs H. R. Haweis, Mrs Jane Ellen Panton, Mrs Humphry and Mrs C. S. Peel.[63]

Historians have suggested that new members of the middle class felt insecure about their recently acquired status and sought guidance and reassurance in home manuals.[64] People found that their parents' experience was not useful anymore in coping with modern demands and looked elsewhere for support. The overt purpose of this kind of literature was didactic; it sought to instruct, usually by giving examples and by making explicit the unspoken principles of artistic decoration. There was also in the general public a strong interest in the growing range of possibilities for home furnishing made available by the modern home-ware industries. It was not only a matter of securing the furnishings required for a particular way of life but also of revelling in the material and aesthetic pleasure of shopping for the home, a pleasure that for many, had not been possible before. Furthermore, and as many contemporary texts stressed, furnishing and decorating became the means of defining and expressing personality.

The thriving genre of literature on the home comprised domestic economy books including housekeeping manuals but also material dealing exclusively with decorative matters. These writings put across a wealth of information about the home, its rooms, furniture and furnishings. They specified style, colour schemes, materials, quality and price. They included references to designers, manufacturers and retailers. In their depiction of ideal homes and interiors, these manuals also portrayed aspirations and revealed anxieties. Additionally, as mentioned above, they reflected an ethos based on principles promoted by the Arts and Crafts movement, giving therefore a visual and narrative representation of ideal and modern domestic interiors.[65]

In her comprehensive bibliography of household books in Britain, Dena Attar lists 324 volumes published from 1888 to 1914, of which 172, that is, more than half, dealt mainly with housekeeping and decoration issues. Female authors wrote more than one hundred of these.[66] The genre in general showed an active participation from women. Most female writers were regular contributors to magazines and it was not unusual after some years to gather material previously published and edit it as a book. Miss Florence Mary Gardiner printed her articles first on *The Weekly Scotsman, The Housewife, Winter's Magazine and The Ludgate Illustrated*

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[63] Charles Eastlake, *Hints on Household Taste in Furniture, Upholstery and Other Details* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1872, 1st ed. 1868; Rhoda and Agnes Garret, *Suggestions for House Decoration in Painting, Woodwork and Furniture* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1876); Mrs H. R. Haweis, *The Art of Decoration* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1881); Mrs J. E. Panton, *From Kitchen to Garret: Hints for Young Householders* (London: Ward and Downey, 1888); Mrs J. E. Panton, *Suburban Residences and How to Circumvent Them* (London: Ward & Downey, 1896). Mrs Humphry, *Housekeeping: A Guide to Domestic Management*, 2nd edition (London: F. V. White & Co., 1895); and Mrs C. S. Peel, *The New Home: Treating of the Arrangement, Decoration and Furnishing of a House of Medium Size to be Maintained by a Moderate Income* (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co., 1898).

[64] Anne Massey, *Interior Design of the 20th Century* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), p. 7. Auslander, *Taste and Power*, pp. 195-97. See also Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour: A Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 217. She argues that manuals eased as much as they generated anxiety about having a perfectly decorated home.

[65] This theme is developed in Chapter 3.

[66] Dena Attar, *A Bibliography of Household Books Published in Britain 1800-1914* (London: Prospect Books, 1987), pp. 422-29.

Magazine. Mrs Humphry wrote for *Truth* under the name of Madge, Mrs Panton, contributed to *The Lady, and* Mrs Peel did the same for *Woman*.

Another source of advice literature was the one linked to specialised journals such as *The Studio, The Architectural Review, The Cabinet Maker* and *The House*. Editors or regular contributors to these publications would also write books on the subject of home decoration. J. H. Elder-Duncan, for example, was editorial secretary for *The Architectural Review* when he wrote *The House Beautiful and Useful*. And Walter Shaw Sparrow, a trained artist, had already published *The Modern Home* and *The British Home of To-Day* when he wrote *Hints on House Furnishing*. Some of these writers qualified as architects, like Joseph Crouch and Edmund Butler, authors of *The Apartments of the House*.[67] Compared to those published by female journalists, books in this category had more expensive editions, including decorated covers and many good quality illustrations -some in colour. Regarding audiences, although all writers addressed middle-class readers in general, in terms of gender they targeted mainly their own kind.

The authors of these manuals wrote from an assumed position of authority, usually presenting themselves as experts in the matter, asserting a professional capacity as architects, editors or writers to give advice on home decoration. Nevertheless, only occasionally they used the phrase 'professional decorator'. Mrs Panton, whose *From Kitchen to Garret* was based on her articles for the *Lady's Pictorial* magazine, admitted in the preface that her magazine writing was the start of her career as a professional interior decorator.[68] In general, the way advice authors treated their subject was similar. They all started by justifying the need for their particular book, stating that the aim was to provide practical advice on the subject for people of moderate incomes. That they were targeting the middle class was reiterated throughout the books. In the introduction authors normally made explicit their point of view regarding decoration thus revealing their ideological affiliation. Many quoted Morris, Ruskin or Crane, hence linking their books to the ideas of the Arts and Crafts group. The division of themes in the book replicated that of a real household where each room received a different treatment reflecting not just its function but also its character. The discussion of style was central, always linked to furniture and addressed either on its own or within each room. These topics are further developed in Chapter 3.

An anti-commercial stance

Beyond the apparent altruistic motive of assisting readers on how to decorate and furnish their homes, as said, the advice discourse had a reformist purpose in its dissemination of Arts and Crafts' aesthetic, artistic and moral ethos. In this sense the discourse belongs to the long debate

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[67] Joseph Crouch and Edmund Butler, *The Apartments of the House: Their Arrangement, Furnishing and Decoration* (London: At the Sign of the Unicorn,1900). J. H. Elder-Duncan, *The House Beautiful and Useful: Being Practical Suggestions on Furnishing and Decoration* (London: Cassell and Company, 1907). William Shaw Sparrow, *Hints on House Furnishing* (London: Eveleigh Nash Fawside House, 1909).
[68] Dena Attar, *A Bibliography of Household Books*, p. 168.

on matters of taste and consumption started back in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and continued with renewed impulse and bigger scope in the nineteenth century when, as Jules Lubbock points out, these concerns were seen as matters of public policy.

> The decoration of a person's teacup, for example, had been a matter of moral and aesthetic dispute, at most persuasion, but beneath the notice of the state or legislation. Yet, after 1835, the state took an increasing interest in such apparently private matters. It established and financed public schools to train designers. It promoted the first and grandest international trade fair, the Great Exhibition of 1851. It founded one of the finest museums of applied art in the world. All this to regulate the appearance of the humble teacup. [69]

That this was the case reveals an ongoing and modern preoccupation with the process and consequences of industrialization.

As discussed in the previous section, reformers linked to the Arts and Crafts movement, made it their aim to undermine the already strained relationship between the spheres of art and industry and believed it was their duty to better the design and production of modern wares. As this chapter shows, in their analysis of the situation advice writers reflected the reformist discourse and joined in blaming mechanical production, the commercial system, retailers and middle-class consumers (particularly women) for what they saw as the decay in the decorative arts. In consequence their reforming efforts were directed at antagonizing and disqualifying manufacturers and traders, and at educating the public. They hoped this public, once reformed, would put pressure on retailers who would start producing and selling better kinds of goods. What passed for an innocent piece of advice in domestic decoration was really the promotion of a specific set of artistic, moral and anti-commercial principles.[70]

In view of the above it appears as a contradiction that even though advice writers interpreted and applied Arts and Crafts principles to the decoration of the middle-class home, in many cases they did it with a nod to furnishing firms. Authors such as Mrs Panton, Mrs Peel, H. J. Jennings and J. H. Elder-Duncan handled the tone of the design reform discourse; but they also relied on commercial examples and their books were not shy in recommending particular brands and shops. To illustrate the ways of furnishing and decorating a modern home they used pictures of showroom schemes and mass-retailed goods. Theirs was a practical approach to the subject at hand in acknowledging that the middle class of 'moderate means' had access to commercially made goods rather than to bespoke handcrafted designs. Writers knew their audience, and in order to sell their books they had to respond to readers' expectations. In this sense advice literature provided the interface between retailers, reformers and consumers.

This pragmatic strand of advice could also be understood in some cases (e.g. Jennings, who wrote on behalf of Waring & Gillow) as a response from manufacturers and retailers to the

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[69] Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, p. 248.
[70] Penny Sparke made a thorough analysis of the design reform movement's politics in *As Long as it's Pink: The Sexual Politics of Taste* (London: Harper Collins, 1995).

relentless attacks from design reformers. Some of the bigger firms appropriated the format of the design reform and advice discourse and used it, not to condemn but to advertise and promote their goods and services. As discussed in Chapter 1 Oetzmann & Co, for example, reproduced in its catalogues Mrs Panton's previously published magazine articles where she gives advice while recommending the store.[71]

Within this practical approach, authors referred to the goods available in the marketplace and highlighted the extensive range on offer. This did not preclude criticising traders in the same texts. Penelope, a contributor of *The House*, discredited the local decorator for its 'happy-go-lucky' way, and did not trust the skills of a salesman in choosing a carpet. Yet her articles were based on room-schemes and illustrations provided by commercial firms such as Smee & Cobay, Heal & Son and Bartholomew & Fletcher. The explanation for this apparent contradiction lay in the context of the design reform discourse, which, as a matter of principle, portrayed commerce as opposed to 'good design' and 'good taste'. The way authors handled this inconsistency was to express general criticism of the trade and then proceed recommending specific firms.

In trying to persuade, advice writers usually appealed to the reader's imagined or real insecurities on taste by criticising openly consumers' behaviour and attitudes. As in the following comment by Harriette Brown: 'It is sheer folly on the part of people to imitate in their style of living those whose income is double that of their own –"keeping up appearances," it is termed'.[72] Most writers included similar class remarks. Authors discouraged social aspiration and emulation in furnishing. They judged it as the wrong kind of motivation for consumption behaviour. Reformers assumed consumers lacked discerning and therefore needed to be guided and educated. But first this public, that is, the middle class, needed convincing that their consumption preferences and decorative choices were wrong. A common strategy was to criticise the middle-class woman and her taste in domestic decoration, particularly in the drawing room. Since the 1830s reformers had identified the domestic setting and its links to fashion, novelty, display and feminine taste, as the place in need of reform par excellence. This aspect is discussed in more detail below, in the last section of this chapter.

While the censuring of consumer's taste was usually linked to class and gender criticism, the disparagement of firms, shops, decorators and builders focused on what authors saw as greed, that is, the constant search for profit at the expense of everything else. Taking both lines of criticism together, the design reform discourse, as developed in advice literature, was a general criticism of the design, production, distribution and consumption of domestic goods, and therefore an attempt to regulate them in accordance with an idealized vision of life and society, one where the artist (as most reformers were) would have a place of privilege and uncontested status. This discourse was a concerted effort to oppose the power of mass manufacture and retail within a lucrative economic sector. Reformers campaigned for design to be guided instead

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[71] Oetzmann & Co., *Guide to House Furnishing*, trade catalogue, ca. 1890.
[72] M. Harriette Brown, *To Those About to Marry: Don't! Without a Practical Guide to the Choice, Building and Furnishing of a House* (London: Alexander Gardner: Paisley, 1905), p. 10.

by artistic ideals, particularly those elaborated by the Arts and Crafts school and its anti-industrial ethos. Although utopian in its ambition to curb commerce and to educate and change public's taste regarding the decorative arts, the movement created a powerful design discourse and visual language that had significant and long-lasting repercussions. Its aesthetic language and praise of craftsmanship was echoed in several countries around the world. The stigmatisation of commerce (with its roots in the eighteenth century), as something opposed to art and culture was to permeate design discourses and practices until the present day.

The advisers' criticism of trade dealt with five main aspects, which are all discussed below. The first one portrayed commerce as the enemy of 'Art'. The second rejected modern production methods based on mechanisation. The next focused on goods, which reformers saw as designed and produced in bad quality and taste. A fourth one targeted the professional capacity of retailers (and builders) viewed in opposition to that of architects. Linked to the latter, a last aspect was the criticism of retail strategies including the use of shop-windows and advertising. These concerns were interwoven with the main narrative on prescription and principles on decoration making the criticism perhaps more effective in its mission to discredit trade without readers being too aware of it.

Art versus commerce

Following the design reform discourse, advice writers defined art, and the decorative arts, as opposed to commerce. Such a stance created a conflicting situation for those arts applied to the domestic sphere. Home furnishing depended largely on goods provided by mass retailers yet authors constantly criticised these goods as lacking in quality and taste, holding traders and the economic system responsible. In reality though, these writers realized that it was not possible to discuss the furnishing and decoration of the middle-class home without reference to commerce. It was the mission of advisers to resolve the contradictory ambition of helping readers to produce an artistic ensemble but based on goods available in the marketplace. This topic is further developed in Chapter 3.

If art was at odds with industry it was also the consumers' fault, or so reformers said. Writers assumed the public was ignorant in furnishing and decorating matters making them an easy prey of retailers. This public was generally portrayed as lacking in judgement and falling easily for traders' tactics: 'It is amazing that the client should allow himself to be taken possession of in the way he does by a merely commercial firm whose highest form of recommendation is "this article is selling exceedingly well".'[73] So whenever advisers criticised traders, they were also aiming at consumers who fuelled the market with their demand. 'If the people want Art which is not Art, and cry out for a cheapness which is dear at any price, what are tradesmen to do? When the public dictates the manufacturers must obey.'[74]

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[73] Crouch and Butler, *The Apartments of the House*, p. 156.
[74] Sparrow, *Hints on House Furnishing*, p. 19.

The architects Crouch and Butler illustrated a strong architectural and anti-commercial statement in their book, *The Apartments of The House* (1900). In the preface the authors stated their belief in decoration as an art form following John Ruskin's saying that 'there is no existing highest-order Art but is decorative'.[75] They condemned the economic drive behind the production of furniture and furnishings and stressed what they saw as an irreconcilable antagonism between the spheres of art and commerce. They believed nothing artistic or belonging to art should relate to trade. According to the authors, commercialism, that 'enemy of Art', became prominent with the Great Exhibition of 1851. In breaking the links with tradition it interfered with its beneficial influence bringing art therefore to its lowest level. W. S. Sparrow agreed with this view and described the situation as one when 'fine art degenerates, and use and beauty are no longer found in a nation's common wares'.[76]

On production

Reformers and advisers linked an excessive business drive with machine and factory production. J. H. Elder-Duncan referred to a 'vulgar and sordid commercialism' resulting from 'the development of mechanical science'.[77] Sparrow supported this position and criticised what he saw as the supremacy of trade ideals (business for profit) over art principles in home decoration. In his opinion modern industry was driven by a 'poor, ornate commercialism' geared only towards quantity: 'Many things have been done of late in the manufacture of tiles, some fearfully done; the reign of quantity over quality, the casting in moulds by the gross and printing by the thousands, may be scientific as well as commercial, but the Fictile Arts decline.'[78] Sparrow believed firms, in their effort to reduce the price of articles to expand the market, compromised the quality of materials producing wares of a low standard.

What this author and others failed to see was that a low price was not only obtained by reducing production costs (which did not necessarily affect quality) but also by retailing strategies. As discussed in the Chapter 1, retailers' policy to buy in volume granted them discounts from manufacturers, which they could then pass on to consumers allowing retailers to keep a high rate of turnover of stock. If there was a market for poorly made goods it was not in the hands of the large manufacturer and retailer although he got blamed for it. What reformers and advisers condemned most was that mechanical production could yield endless copies from one original design depriving it from any claim of being unique or exclusive. By its multiplication designs and products became cheaper, common and were therefore judged as vulgar.

The decorative arts, Crouch and Butler explained, lost their purpose during the nineteenth century:

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[75] Crouch and Butler, p. ix.
[76] Sparrow, p. 230.
[77] Elder-Duncan, *The House Beautiful and Useful*, p. 14.
[78] Sparrow, p. 165.

> The decay of English Art [...] showed itself when labour began to be organised purely for commercial purposes, with the idea of producing goods at a profit and not, as was always the case in earlier times, primarily for use.[79]

This explanation pointed at two elements. The first questioned the motivation behind commercial activity, which was the imperative to make a profit at the expense of other aspects. The other element concerned new production methods where workers (craftsmen) had lost their traditional role. The authors hinted here at one being the result of the other making alienation of labour the consequence of commodification. Crouch and Butler particularly resented the profit motive because, they thought, the designer's role was jeopardized by having to submit to something extrinsic to aesthetic considerations:

> It is the man who sells the article who decides in most cases the general form the article shall take. This naturally affects the actual designer, who is never allowed to come in personal touch with the customer. The instructions he receives are brief and to the point; he is to produce the showiest possible article at the lowest possible cost, and so he is compelled to use to the fullest extent the moulding and the carving machine.[80]

It was very seldom the designer the one running the business and therefore facing the risk of producing an unsuccessful design. In reality the only guarantee a manufacturer/retailer had of selling his wares was how well he understood his market and the ability to anticipate or direct consumers demand. The point of using moulding and carving machines was not only to reduce production costs but also to make furniture more appealing and therefore more saleable.

Ideally, Crouch and Butler expected readers to furnish their homes with hand-made creations: 'Let the fireplace be designed to the minutest detail *for the room*. Do not be led away by anything you may see in the show-rooms. [...] It lacks that which must be the primary element in the ideal room, *personality*.'[81] These authors believed mechanical production, by delivering identical wares, robbed modern goods of any character. They linked character and personality to unique hand-made articles and to original designs not submitted to multiplication. In view of this, for Crouch and Butler the Arts and Crafts movement and the figure of William Morris had been a rescuing force in domestic decoration. The authors praised their designs and the principles behind those designs, and endorsed the notion that crafts and craftsmanship were equivalent to artistic designs. They quoted Walter Crane saying that '(t)he true root and basis of all Art lies in the handicrafts'.[82] The problem was, and reformers knew it, that not many people could afford to pay for these works of art.

Probably the most systematic diatribe against trade and traders was elaborated by Sparrow who railed against industry and what he saw as the supremacy of a business for profit approach over art principles in the production of furniture and furnishings.

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[79] Crouch and Butler, p. 3.
[80] Crouch and Butler, p. 56.
[81] Crouch and Butler, p. 97.
[82] Quoting Walter Crane, in Crouch and Butler, p. 169.

> We hate the so-called industrial progress which makes shoddy wares, the cheapness of which is paid for by the lives of craftsmen and by the degradation of public taste. Why should men be turned into machines, and why should the immediate market value, the daily hunt after profits, be the chief test of artistic merit?[83]

Reformers and writers equated the handcrafted with good design and art, and machine-made goods with economic calculation, leaving no doubt as to which one they despised. As Sparrow summarized it: 'No fine work can be the servant and the slave of mechanical methods.'[84] A 'good design' was useful, fit for purpose and its ornamentation was never realistic. It abhorred of display and ostentation. It was inspired by the past and a tradition based mainly on English styles from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Bad designs in contrast were flashy, over-elaborated, had realistic decoration and imitated more expensive designs with fake materials. A proper design required good quality materials and sound and 'honest' construction showing how it was made (that is, exhibiting traditional building techniques). Overall, the main purpose in producing goods was to have useful things, not the search of a profit.

During the 1870s designers, reformers and advice authors coined the term 'art furniture' employing the adjectives 'art' and 'artistic' as their prerogative. But furnishing houses quickly adopted the reformers language and vocabulary and turned them into an effective marketing discourse and retailing tactic. Sparrow denounced these firms for selling 'false decorative art'. For him the epitome of anti-art and bad taste was having realistic ornamentation and the wrong kind of pattern on surfaces, from textile fabrics and wallpaper to tiles, pottery and china. This was an old argument that had been used by design reformers since the 1830s.

> In those days when manufacturers were very excellent craftsmen, designs were made conventional as a matter of course; but in Queen Victoria's reign, soon after 1840, traders who were not craftsmen began to issue patterned work in accordance with their own taste, and the public became unused to the traditional methods of good design. Every kind of flower was drawn in a naturalistic way and printed in trailing bouquets over textile fabrics and wallpapers. [...] Why a sofa should be upholstered with a garden of hollyhocks, and a window-curtain glare with clustered red roses.'[85]

Sparrow never ceased to rail at what he saw as the ridiculous printing of realistic fruits, plants, flowers and landscapes. He thought this kind of ornamentation was not only inappropriate but revealed the manufacturers 'comical bad taste'. 'Now what in the world has a bird's nest to do with the ornamentation of a pot?'[86] He called this 'misplaced realism' and discouraged it saying it was obtrusive and restless. 'A quiet frieze, separated from the wall-paper by a moulding or a picture rail, is necessary, but the frieze patterns often sold with wall-papers are detestable.'[87] Sparrow's comments were a re-elaboration of what design reformers had been saying since the 1830s regarding surface decoration. Pugin, Cole and Ruskin among many others, denounced naturalistic representations and advocated stylised, abstract and geometric types of

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[83] Sparrow, p. 20.
[84] Sparrow, p. 165.
[85] Sparrow, pp. 110-11.
[86] Sparrow, p. 232.
[87] Sparrow, p. 134

ornamentation. Literalism was always regarded as an inferior and somehow primitive kind of decoration.

Most advice writers would complain about what they considered to be badly designed articles. H. J. Jennings pointed out faults in the design of chairs advertised in the 'ordinary furniture maker's catalogue: 'Absurd though it may seem, a good many people -even a good many manufacturers- need reminding that the primary object of a chair is to be used as a seat.'[88] And added that 'dining room chairs, again, are too frequently designed without regard to the angle at which the body should be inclined during a meal [...] projecting carved work digging into one's back.'[89] His argument was based on function but some of his remarks also had an aesthetic implication as in the following ironic observation: 'If a drawing room be treated simply as a show place, or a stately, cold apartment for ceremonial purposes, then the fragile looking, decorative chairs are all very well.'[90] Edward W. Gregory complained about one specific piece of furniture: 'One of the poorest results of nineteenth century design and craftsmanship, as applied to furniture, is the sideboard of ordinary commerce.'[91] Although he did not explain why, it can be presumed its fault lay with its commercial provenance.

Advice writers, and particularly Sparrow, condemned jerry-building practices that they regarded as dishonest. Builders were accused of making their profit by using cheaper materials and remnants. 'In most houses and flats –at least, in houses and flats for small incomes- the ceiling is a fraud, bald, impudent, and troublesome. [...] All the joists are hidden, no part of the structural work can be tested by hand-touch and eyesight. [...] bad plaster may fall down in pieces.'[92] The widespread phenomenon of speculative building was down to many factors and not just to builders and their efforts to keep prices down. But they got the blame for work gone wrong, and in spite of a majority of well-built houses, they earned a lasting bad reputation. Since the late Victorian period and thanks to this bad press encouraged by architects the term "jerry-building" became 'a household word for scamped and dishonest workmanship.'[93]

Architects versus retailers

Within the framework of the antagonism between art and commerce, advice writers aligned artists, designers and architects with the sphere of art, and retailers, furnishers, upholsterers, decorators, salesmen and builders (which they called jerry-builders) with that of trade. In a designing and decorating capacity, reformers recommended and praised architects for their knowledge, taste and innate judgement while undermining and belittling traders' expertise. Authors portrayed architects as honest, having in mind artistic principles and working on behalf

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[88] H.J. Jennings,*Our Homes and How to Beautify Them* (London: Harrison & Sons., 1902), p. 125.
[89] Jennings, p. 126.
[90] Jennings. p. 126.
[91] Edward W. Gregory, *The Arts and Crafts of Home-Making: With an Appendix of 200 Household Recipes* (London: Thomas Murby, 1913), p. 40.
[92] Sparrow, pp. 174-75.
[93] Sparrow, p. 96.

of the client's interests. Retailers et al., in contrast, were described as mainly concerned with making money, usually based on the exploitation of consumers' ignorance. Retailers and consumers were often depicted reinforcing each other's bad taste. By suggesting the need of an architect to mediate between the public and the shops, authors drew a hierarchy granting architects a position of authority and undisputed professional status in the furnishing and decorating of interiors. In contrast traders were represented not only as unscrupulous and greedy but also as incompetent: 'The trouble is that many shopkeepers know nothing about the wares they sell, being merely distributors.'[94] Deeming architects as the only ones with proper judgement in matters of taste, writers were arguing the case for a regulating agent to prevent what they saw as the excesses resulting from traders' greediness and from consumers' ignorance and gullibility.

It was no coincidence that writers chose the architect as the archetypal figure to counterbalance that of the retailer. It was easy for an architect to extricate himself from the taint of commercial transactions than it was for anybody else involved in domestic furnishing including the craftsman. Architects' work belonged to the realm of artistic endeavours and their creations were perceived as one of a kind, bespoke, unique. This might explain why in reference to terraced houses, which came close to the notion of mass production, writers referred to them as the doing of speculative builders and not of the architect.

In parallel to the praising of the architect's higher position and connoisseurship, there was a constant attack on the authority of retailers, decorators, upholsterers, salesmen and builders. Although traders provided the goods, reformers warned the public to avoid their recommendations. Crouch and Butler questioned the salesman's expertise by pointing out they would give advice on all sorts of articles and therefore could not have specialist knowledge on any: 'The future proud possessor of the home then goes to the ironmonger's show-room, and the same tradesman who advises him in the choice of a garden roller or a rolling-pin advises him as to what is good in grates and mantelpieces.'[95] Sparrow disapproved of the public relying on traders and upholsterers for guidance and recommended architects instead, which he considered the real connoisseurs in furnishing: 'People who would rather die than drop the letter "h" in conversation buy for their homes the most vulgar trash, nor are they willing to take advice from architects and other experts.'[96] According to Crouch and Butler the problem faced by architects was the stubbornness of clients, who preferred the retailers' offers: 'the Architect [...] he soon grows tired of the struggle, and surrenders in despair as his client falls victim to first one and then another highly glazed and highly polished article which the accomplished salesman brings under his notice.'[97]

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[94] Sparrow, p. 239.
[95] Crouch and Butler, p. 56.
[96] Sparrow, p. 230.
[97] Crouch and Butler, p. 56.

To Sparrow, architects were partly to blame for this situation in allowing traders to take control and in being slow to assert their own authority by promoting themselves in the field of domestic decoration: 'Even architects fail to make it known that they are prepared to give advice on all questions relating to the equipment of houses; so that people have come to look upon them as the authors of new buildings, too busy or too proud to give advice on furnishing.'[98] He also cautioned readers: 'no reasonable man would ask a builder to design a house for him, so no one should allow an upholsterer to furnish and decorate a house except under the advice of an expert, an architect.'[99] Or as Gregory put it: 'Of course, a professional furnisher can be called in, and the result will be something between a gay and animated continuation of the jerry-builder's work [described as vulgar] and a breezy advertisement of the up-to-date methods of Messrs. So-and-so.'[100] In all these comments there was a fear of contamination that Crouch and Butler articulated well: 'If artists cease to be found among the crafts, there is great danger that they will vanish from the Arts also, and become manufacturers and salesmen instead.'[101] What no author did was to explain or justify what the alleged expertise of the artist and architect was based on.

This situation of professional competition was not new. In the eighteenth century architects, such as the brothers Adam, had enjoyed a position of power in the field of house building and decoration, but throughout the nineteenth century upholsterers, cabinet makers and later on furniture manufacturers, large shops and department stores, had taken away from them a significant part of the market. Crouch and Butler explained it as follows:

> Up to this point in its history the furniture was made for the room, and its various changes of form ran on parallel lines with the changes in its architectural surroundings. Of late years furniture has been attempting to run alone; it has refused to be subordinate to architecture, and hopeless incoherency has been the result.[102]

That the architects' expertise regarding home decoration was not as sought after as before partly helps to explain the reformists' constant attacks on traders and salesmen. Some of the authors discussed here being architects, or being linked to the area of art and architecture, were making a case for what they saw as their traditional sphere of authority and influence. Crouch and Butler's book was an attempt to redress the role and status of architects in matters of domestic decoration, which they believed furnishing firms were challenging. They complained that in recent times 'all that had to do with the inside had to be left entirely to the furnisher and decorator. We are, however, discovering the mistake that has been made, and the architects are everyday seeing the importance of resuming their old position.'[103]

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[98] Sparrow, p. 143.
[99] Sparrow, p. 143.
[100] Gregory, *The Arts and Crafts of Home-Making*, p. 38.
[101] Crouch and Butler, p. 169.
[102] Crouch and Butler, p. 132.
[103] Crouch and Butler, p. 132.

Contesting retailers

In their criticism reformers and advice writers targeted trade in general and specifically shops, shopkeepers and local dealers. As stated above, traders were held responsible for goods produced in bad quality and taste while the public, portrayed as ignorant, fell victim to retailers' tactics. Advisers took as their mission to warn consumers about their tricks.

Influence on consumers

In many examples where advice authors rail against commerce they criticize consumers as well. Although advisers believed furnishing firms had a bad influence on the public they also thought it was people's preferences and behaviour the ones encouraging retailers' malpractice since traders were keen to respond to consumers' demand. Discussing patterned papers, Sparrow asked: 'who buys such horrible trash, glaringly coloured and with large patterns that fill a room with restlessness? This work must be sold, for it is found year after year in displayed samples, and tradesmen would not produce it if they did not earn profits by so doing.'[104]

Writers always assumed the public's ignorance in decorative matters and accused traders of exploiting the situation. According to Crouch and Butler, the upholsterers' motivation in selling fabric was not in the clients' interest:

> They are [windows], accordingly smothered with draperies, in the depraved taste of the professional upholsterer. These draperies in addition to being unhealthy are very costly, but as they bring much grist to the mill of the furnishing house, they are multiplied in every conceivable form.[105]

These authors resented the considerable sway salesmen seemed to have on clients, particularly for convincing them of buying articles they did not need on the grounds of how well they were selling.[106] Sparrow warned readers: 'do not allow yourself to be "talked over" by any salesman.'[107] And Gregory added: 'remember that when you go to a shop to purchase furniture the right thing is for you to buy, not for the salesman to sell.'[108] It is clear that shopkeepers and salespersons were in much closer contact to the general public than writers, and that clients sought the retailer's advice. At this level of competition all that writers could claim was that their advice was disinterested while that of the tradesman was not. Neither was neutral of course, but at least the retailer's intentions were not hidden.

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[104] Sparrow, p. 111.
[105] Crouch and Butler, p. 94.
[106] Crouch and Butler reinforced their argument by reminding readers of a health concern. This was a hint to the hygienic campaign argument (started in the 1870s) that disapproved of curtains and fabrics in general because they gathered dust and were difficult to keep clean.
[107] Sparrow, p. 172.
[108] Gregory, p. 91.

Taste

Lack of taste discrimination in wares and decoration was a leitmotiv in advice literature. Shop windows, for Sparrow, showed what traders believed the public wanted and consequently always exhibited bad taste. Crouch and Butler personified poor taste in showrooms selling polished elaborate pieces of furniture and all kinds of 'obtrusive' articles devoid of 'personality'. The implication in both cases pointed at machine-made goods that were not only wanting in taste but identical, lacking thus the touch of the craftsman.

Elder-Duncan mocked the taste and decorative choices of the speculative builder, calling them 'vulgar and sordid'. He ridiculed the builder's interpretation of the Arts and Crafts' style:

> Recently in going over some new speculative houses, letting at about £65 per annum, I came across some weird specimens of these "New Art" mantels. Louise Quinze was no doubt the style description [...] Add to these some ugly brackets supporting shelves, with spidery columns, patches of "bevel-edged plate mirror," and tiles of amazingly crude colours, a copper hood with much "bumped-up" decoration, and you have a combination that no self-respecting person could live with.[109]

According to this author, the builder's initiative in decoration was always misguided; his notions of colour combination were rudimentary and his aesthetic efforts, primitive: 'Glazed doors are sometimes a necessity to light an entrance passage behind them [...] In such cases the speculative builder embarks on coloured glass, generally with disastrous effects.'[110]

Sparrow was also shocked by the builder's unsophisticated taste displayed in his choice of fixed decoration such as in the tiling of fireplaces. 'To-day, on the other hand, a dozen tiles and more are made to form a large landscape, to be repeated on each side of a fireplace. The effect is comically absurd, like the manufacturer's misunderstanding of what tiles should do.'[111] He went further to accuse builders and manufacturers of deceitful practices in their use of bad quality materials and construction methods shown in houses. He explained that 'the term "jerry-building" is now a household word for scamped and dishonest workmanship.'[112]

Addressing the professional furnisher, Gregory catalogued his work as one of low standard and close to the brash decorative taste of the speculative builder. But consumers fared worse: 'Even the most vulgar jerry-builder leaves his row of houses with pleasanter interiors than they become later on, when people have filled them with their heterogeneous possessions [...] Now, the ordinary occupier of a house is an amateur in the art of furnishing, and very often never even reaches the low standard of the jerry-builder's unified vulgarity and cheap smartness.'[113]

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[109] Elder-Duncan, p. 46-47.
[110] Elder-Duncan, p. 39.
[111] Sparrow, p. 110
[112] Sparrow, pp. 96-97
[113] Gregory, p. 38

Retailing strategies

In their efforts to undermine the power of retailers and shops, advice writers highlighted what they saw as unscrupulous behaviour driven by the aim to secure business and profits. Reformers condemned many aspects of retailing, such as product differentiation and advertising, not seeing it as a service to consumers but as a canny way to trick them into buying. Authors commented on the difficulties new householders faced when furnishing: 'to complete the disorder you need a large supply of pattern-books, giving samples of the latest achievements in wall-papers, in textile fabrics, in table linen [...] Rival manufacturers send you these things partly by request, and partly because your house agent has a kind interest in your welfare and wants a commission from certain firms.'[114]

Portrayed as only interested in making money traders were seen as caring little for quality or taste. Sparrow was convinced that, in their effort to reduce the price of articles to tempt buyers, furnishing firms compromised the quality of materials and hence produced goods of a low standard. He also accused the public of seeking fakes and of wanting cheap articles where appearance was the decisive criteria:

> There is, for example, a soft wood known as bass wood, which is easy to stain to any requisite shade; hence it is used to imitate other woods in modern furniture of the cheaper kinds. But it has no wear in it, and is therefore worthless in furniture. Why then, is it employed? Just because people with little incomes prefer shams to serviceable woods like ash, deal, and foreign oaks.[115]

Staining wood was popular because it was believed a dark colour spoke better the language of respectability (and not many people could afford natural dark wood). Advice writers always disapproved of consumers' preferences motivated by social aspiration and condemned shops for encouraging and exploiting this weakness. Miss Gardiner, for example, admonished readers: 'A curb must be put upon all vain desires for the expensive carpets of foreign and British looms, and even homely Brussels, though appropriate in many respects for a dining-room, is beyond the means of those with slender purses.'[116]

Several authors attacked well-established business practices such as selling 'suites',' things that match' and offering credit by paying monthly instalments. Elder-Duncan questioned the need to have suites, especially in the drawing-room: 'It has become customary to manufacture suites for dining-rooms, drawing-rooms, and bedrooms, and custom has become a little arbitrary. For drawing-rooms suites are undesirable, especially the cheap and spidery Louis Quinze concoctions, comprising a couch, two arm, and six ordinary chairs.'[117] Sparrow expressed his disapproval referring to consumers' habits, rather than to retailers':

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[114] Sparrow, p. 39
[115] Sparrow, pp. 22-23.
[116] Gardiner, p. 32.
[117] Elder-Duncan, p. 135

> If you decide that four ordinary chairs are enough for your dining-room, do not buy six or eight, a clever salesman charming you with the word "suite," a word which some men and many ladies find irresistible, not understanding that it means a set of no definite number. [...] Small tables are bought in pairs not because they are needed, but because "they match," another phrase that tricks the unwary into spendthrift habits.[118]

Gregory disapproved of suites of furniture because in following this commercial formula most people ended having the same kind of furnishing. He thought this method was more appropriate for hotels than for homes. These authors also warned the public about the false economy of paying by instalments and Elder-Duncan criticised furnishing firms using credit to sell shoddy goods: "My chief complaint against the big credit furnishing firms is, however, not only that they stock some of the most meretricious trash ever sold under the guise of furniture, but they charge three or four times its market value.'[119] In criticizing suites, matching items and the credit system these authors were campaigning for the need to curb and regulate retailing and consumption. Commerce was seen as prone to excesses that needed curtailing.

Sparrow thought firms deceived the public through irresponsible advertising: 'Artificial needs are manufactured by advertisements, and then glutted with cheap commodities and pleasures, from patent medicines to seaside trips.'[120] As a remedy to this situation the author suggested some kind of state control in which all kinds of advertising efforts, including shop-windows and trade catalogues, would have to submit to the examination of a Board of Trade.[121] The author's discourse was a call for government surveillance and quality control over products, services and marketing activities. Meanwhile, a measure of guarantee when shopping for an article, he suggested, was requiring the designer's name. His criticism as a whole aimed at keeping consumption under control by targeting manufacturers, retailers and the public. The contest between the arenas of art and commerce is represented between the name of the designer versus the name of the shop. To advisers a named designer offered a credible guarantee of quality.

Perceived as the retailing tactic par excellence, Sparrow denounced the fashion system. He understood the trend of having 'seasons' as the traders' excuse to bring out an excessive number of 'new' patterns and pattern books. He saw fashion and 'seasons' as arbitrary and only convenient for the firms' goal to boost sales. Accordingly he sermonized readers: 'there is no reason why this year's patterns should be better than those of the last decade. [...] Householders ought really to put a stop to "seasons" in wallpapers and textile fabrics, since good work does not grow old; it is temporary fashions that die out.'[122] In his view 'good design', as art, was timeless and therefore above and independent of fashion.

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[118] Sparrow, p. 32
[119] Elder-Duncan, p. 222.
[120] Sparrow, p. 30.
[121] Sparrow, p. 301.
[122] Sparrow, p. 121

An interesting and contradictory example related to fashion was Sparrow's and Gregory's criticism of the trend for decorating with modern reproductions of old designs, which was widespread and to a significant extent inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement (see Chapter 3). Sparrow thought the fad was a commercial initiative from 'manufacturers, who try to adapt for our ordinary houses much work that belongs in style and character to a vanished type of society, so different from ours.'[123] Sparrow and Gregory disapproved of firms promoting furnishing schemes reproducing period styles. Gregory underplayed the importance of past models in modern furnishing by calling them anachronic: 'A really interesting drawing-room is very rarely perfect in style. Notwithstanding this, it is the effort of many professional furnishers to bring out schemes in certain well-defined periods, in which every detail is [...] painfully proper.'[124] By ruling out fashion and specific historical styles, these two authors were asking for an ageless kind of decoration, and one that did not require the contribution from commercial firms.

Contesting consumers: Middle-class women's taste

An important element in the reformist discourse in advice literature was the criticism directed at the middle-class woman, and particularly at her judgement in matters of taste. In her role as homemaker and consumer she was repeatedly mocked and accused of committing sins against 'good taste'. As discussed before, since the 1840s and 50s many architects, artists and critics involved in the design reform movement such as Pugin, Cole, R. Redgrave and Ruskin, and later on in the 1860s and 70s Eastlake, C. Dresser and Morris, targeted many of their critical remarks at domestic furnishings and decoration. For this group of men, the middle-class home represented everything that was in need of reform. The reformers' efforts to educate consumers worked on the assumption that the public needed to be taught the principles of 'good design'. In doing this they adopted a professional attitude granting themselves the right to define what constituted 'good taste' and to judge everybody else, especially middle-class women, as amateurs.[125]

Throughout the nineteenth century as the middle-class grew in size and importance, women's role in society was continually discussed, questioned and moralised upon. The debates intensified whenever women challenged traditional roles. It seemed many felt threatened by the growing influence middle-class women gained as consumers, including design reformers who criticized women's shopping habits, consumption behaviour and decorative choices for the home. Patricia Branca explains what this new woman represented:

> The changes in behaviour and outlook that did occur in this transitional period [Victorian] were both marked and confused by the constant carping from contemporary publicists [...] Contemporary observers found the middle-class woman a convenient vehicle for criticism of modernity generally. They sensed her desire for new things and

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[123] Sparrow, p. 208
[124] Gregory, p. 33.
[125] See the chapter 'Those Extravagant Draperies' in Penny Sparke, *As Long as it's Pink: The Sexual Politics of Taste* (London: Harper Collins, 1995), pp. 50-69. Sparke carries out a critical examination of the design reform discourse in the nineteenth century and explains the attacks on women's taste in this context.

> therefore exaggerated her indulgence in luxuries. Many critics, some of the strongest of which came from among the religious spokesmen, found an audience among middle-class women themselves.[126]

Although started back in the 1830s, the censure directed at women by those involved in the art and design reform movement intensified by the end of the century and in the 1900s. Reformers targeted and tried to undermine women's increasing power as consumers and, linked to it, their strong alliance to retailers and manufacturers. As Penny Sparke demonstrates, the reason for reformers' attack lay in a gendered design reform discourse. The male dominated reformist cause focused on the sphere of production, that is, on notions of design, function, materials and manufacturing procedures. This approach implied the disregard of social and symbolic uses and consumption relative to family life and the private sphere of home. There were at work two different and opposed sets of standards with which to appreciate domestic furnishings and decoration.[127] Consequently, reformers believed women followed 'false' criteria when decorating the household.

Male professional architects, designers and artists regarded themselves as the unquestionable arbiters of taste. Their position was reinforced by a society which had traditionally placed authority and knowledge in men's hands and which deemed most women uneducated, inferior and in need of guidance. Men's gendered criticism was also partly provoked by recent developments in the public arena. The campaign for women's vote and the debate about 'The Women's Question'[128] together with the more active role some women played in the public sphere through their work and writings challenged established notions of sex roles.[129] When 'The New Woman' became an icon of the 1890s not just advice literature but many other publications, such as Punch, satirized and stereotyped her.

Another sphere some women were daring to challenge was that of the intellectual and literary world. More woman than ever before started writing and publishing articles and books on varied matters, including home management and decoration. A common reaction from male authors was to put the writing down as inferior and inappropriate.

> Most male writers of the Victorian period considered themselves professionals; it was the women who were amateurs, filling up their leisure hours by writing novels, or verses, or letters to their friends. Victorian sneers about 'lady novelists', that 'singular anomaly' as W.S. Gilbert was to put it, arose from the fact that either they were considered frivolous amateurs, in which case they couldn't be taken seriously, or professionals, in which case they were improper.[130]

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[126] Patricia Branca, *Middle Class Women in the Victorian Home* (London: Croom Helm, 1975), pp. 151-52.
[127] Penny Sparke, *As Long as it's Pink*, pp. 50-69.
[128] The most common issues were: woman's nature, her status and role, differences according to class, and her relationship to men and education.
[129] By 1891, 264,000 middle-class women had entered the professions: out of a total female work force of 4,500,000. As cited in Angelique Richardson, *Women Who Did, Stories by Men and Women, 1890-1914* (London: Penguin Books, 2002), p. xxxvii.
[130] Jenny Calder, *The Victorian Home* (London: Book Club Associates, 1977), p. 25.

Female writings on home decoration attracted a constant string of attacks. Male authors denied women writers a professional voice questioning women's authority on a matter which, at least on an intellectual level they considered their preserve. In this light it is then not surprising to see female advice writers joining in the design reform discourse and criticising middle-class taste. Sparke explains it as an effect of women entering a workplace ruled by masculine values, and notes that this fact did not change the gendered terms of the debate.[131]

From the 1870s, many female authors adopted the agenda and tone of the design reform discourse. But compared to that of men their criticism was milder. Their arguments were of a practical nature and more related to class issues, as when they criticised people for aspiring to things they could not afford. Overall these writers dismissed early Victorian taste and disapproved of pretentious furniture by reminding readers of the need for economy and common sense. They also insisted on avoiding excessive items of furniture and ornaments. Their tone was not derogatory and they did not seem interested in imparting blame. They spoke as a matter of fact. Nonetheless unwittingly they endorsed the reformist principles.

The generation of male and female advice writers publishing in the 1890s and 1900s, continued and reinforced a gendered attitude towards matters of taste and consumption. Jennings, for example, was not keen on: 'the great number of pamphlets, treatises and brochures written on the subject of "Art in the Home," in which ladies with a pretty taste dogmatise in the nicest afternoon-tea manner on how to make artistic lamp-shades, paint door-panels, and beautify a drawing room with "aesthetic" remnants.'[132] He was referring to the 'Art at Home' series published by Macmillan two decades before when the Aesthetic movement was at its height of popularity. Penelope, writing for *The House* also referred to the series: 'Without unkindly criticising writers –especially of my feminine sort- who deal out aphorisms on household taste [...] It is true that there is plenty of idealism, and scores of pretty furnishing platitudes to be had, for a shilling or two, in various art-at-home manuals.'[133] The writers in question were Rhoda and Agnes Garret, Mrs Orrinsmith, Mrs Loftie and Lady Barker who had published their books in the late 1870s. They were either professional interior decorators, artists or writers on domestic matters for women's magazines. The Garret cousins ran a house-decorating business and Mrs Orrinsmith (as Miss Lucy Faulkner) had worked for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. as a craftswoman. Their books not only reflected their professional expertise but also engaged with the reform of middle-class taste, a point which most of their critics failed to see. As Emma Ferry points out, these authors used Charles Eastlake's *Hints on Household Taste* as a model but parodied his advice giving an interesting twist to his reform discourse. The Garret cousins for example, instead of referring to the *materfamilias* as suffering from poor judgement in taste (as

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[131] Penny Sparke, *As Long as it's Pink*, p. 67.
[132] Jennings, p. 17.
[133] Penelope, 'How to Furnish Tastefully for Five Hundred', *The House*, 5 (1899), 52-55 (p. 52).

Eastlake did), replaced it with the *paterfamilias.*[134] So, although these writers still condemned middle-class taste, they did not personify it as feminine.

Sparrow criticised both male and female authors for writing as if 'the other sex had no place at all in the equipment of houses', and alluding to women added that, '(s)ome ladies [...] fail to write even with care and tact, preferring to run wild in bad recipes of vulgar taste.'[135] This author was not alone in his criticisms and went on to add that architects (all being male, presumably) complained about the 'nonsense' published by 'ladies journalists' in women's weekly magazines. He spoke with contempt of "women decorators" and accused female writers of being more interested in getting a commission out of traders than in learning 'the decorative art.'[136] His point is evidence of the close link that existed between many women journalists and commercial furnishing firms. With or without commission, practical advice intended for the middle-class reader usually included reference to specific consumer goods and to the shops selling them. Design reformers preaching the Arts and Crafts ideology despised this kind of collaboration because of its commercially vested interest.

Male advice authors and architects regarded 'ladies with a pretty taste', 'ladies journalists' and 'women decorators' as amateurs and thus scoffed at their literary and decorative endeavours. These men were speaking from a professional position and in not acknowledging women the same capacity they disqualified their publications and their advice on decoration. This did not deter women, who kept writing, publishing and advising convinced nevertheless that the middle-class home needed reform in taste.

During the 1890s and 1900s a common criticism from male advice authors was the one aimed at the drawing room, traditionally considered a feminine space. In deriding its furniture, furnishings and decorative arrangement authors attacked what it represented: female sociability and taste and a gendered type of decoration. Elder-Duncan complained that,

> The drawing-room is rather the licensed place for useless furniture-china cabinets for which specimens have to be bought; revolving bookcases to hold the hundred best books one never reads, but from which the hostess can select a volume to peruse, upside down, at the entrance of the first guest on "at home" days, and so preserve a reputation for aplomb and distinguished hauteur.[137]

The author mocked social aspiration as represented by the furniture and the hostess' behaviour. The middle-class woman portrayed here copied the external signs of a more refined social demeanour. She is criticised for her concern with appearances and presumably her lack of honesty in pretending to be something she was not. The author's reproach contained a moralising attitude towards social mobility, which many authors believed motivated the wrong kind of consumption.

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[134] Emma Ferry, 'Advice, Authorship and the Domestic Interior: An inter-disciplinary study of Macmillan's 'Art at Home Series' 1876-1883' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Kingston University, 2004).
[135] Sparrow, p. 48.
[136] Sparrow, pp. 48-49.
[137] Elder-Duncan, p. 161.

Crouch and Butler also found fault in the average drawing room. They explained that its defect partly lay in its function. Being the place for ladies' social meetings, which, according to the authors consisted mainly of gossip, its furnishing reflected it: 'The Drawing-Room thus, almost as a matter of course, takes its form from the use to which it is largely devoted. Its Decoration and Furniture are often of a trivial and incongruous description. Visitors do not stay long enough to feel the full discomfort of the "art chair".'[138] Again the criticism included both the furnishings and the behaviour underlining it. In using gossip as a metaphor for the drawing room, the author implied that women, their activities and their taste were superficial. The claim was not new. A long-repeated complaint from the design reform movement portrayed middle-class women as being more concerned with appearance and outward show than with substance.[139]

Most male authors, when discussing the principles of decoration, spoke against clutter and excessive ornamentation, blaming the housewife for it. According to Elder-Duncan some women's domestic arrangements and decorative initiatives spoilt the work carried out by experts:

> In regard to ornaments the ladies are, I regret to say, great offenders ... one can only marvel at the instinct which prompts them to crowd every available shelf and table to its full capacity with nick-nacks and trifles. [...] How many times, I wonder, have the efforts and schemes of the most competent architects and decorative artists been brought to naught by the mistaken energies of their clients' wives and daughters?[140]

Gregory illustrated this situation by showing in a cartoon a fictitious architect shedding tears as he imagined how his client would ruin his creation (Fig. 5). Most male authors represented the home and its rooms not as a place belonging to the family and its domestic affairs but as a space submitted to architectural rules and aesthetic concerns. In contrast to this approach Miss Gardiner described the much criticised 'nick-nacks and trifles' as women's 'pet possessions', granting them an importance proper of the private, feminine and domestic sphere; a sphere and terms that male authors did not deem important.[141]

Sparrow thought it was women's ignorance that prevented them from appreciating professional advice: 'When hints on room decoration are offered to householders, and to ladies in particular, experts find that, their practical knowledge is rebuffed [...] There is no confidence in the world equal to that of a person who does not know.'[142] Repeatedly men, invested in their professional capacity, put down women's taste calling it at best amateur. Taken to an extreme, such views contested the woman's role in home decoration where her homemaking and decorative skills and taste were persistently disregarded. She could not be the architect, she was a bad decorator, and could not even be trusted as a client.

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[138] Crouch and Butler, pp. 93-94.
[139] Penny Sparke, *As Long as It's Pink*, pp. 55, 57.
[140] Elder-Duncan, pp. 21-22.
[141] Gardiner, pp. 88-89.
[142] Sparrow, p. 87.

Female advice writers also criticised clutter but the tone used was not derogatory. Mrs Peel, for example, explained that to 'add to the work of the housemaid by crowding the rooms with unnecessary furniture and knickknacks, is simply laying up trouble for oneself.'[143] And Harriette Brown recommended her readers to avoid 'all superfluous draperies and ornaments'.[144] Their remarks seemed to address more the problem of domestic service that was becoming noticeably scarce in the 1900s, rather than a fault in decorative taste.[145] Gardiner, after condemning an excess of 'vases, pictures, brackets' and 'bric-a-brac' in the furnishing of the drawing-room, explained that for women having things on display was a soothing pleasure, and that because its value was personal an outsider could not understand it.[146] In a more apologetic tone Brown revealed how '(m)ost of our sex have a pardonable weakness for a pretty set of china.'[147] It seems these last two authors could not decide between the conventions of the reformist discourse, which loathed knick-knacks, and their own feminine and personal preferences that cherished them.

In spite of Sparrow's criticisms, he is one of the few authors addressing in some detail the issue of taste according to gender. He admitted there was antagonism between women and men and that gendered taste was 'the most important difficulty in the art of home-making.'[148] Nevertheless his discourse was biased against women. He appeared to resent that, in his view, some married women regarded their taste as better than their husband's and tried to reform them[149]. Sparrow could not hide his real thinking. He believed the greatness of women lay in their motherhood and beauty and that apart from these virtues there was little ground for admiration. He endorsed the words of 'a connoisseur' who stated that:

> A woman's views on art are without value [...] Put her into a well-furnished room, give her a free hand, and in a few hours all its character will be gone; for she has no idea of orchestration, but enjoys separated things and effects quite by themselves even when they are in complete opposition to a general scheme.[150]

Sparrow added that these were views held and shared by fellow writers. He then proceeded to give examples of women's obtuseness and ignorance in decorative and craftwork matters:

> Who does not know the *repousse* metalwork in copper that many daughters turn out with enthusiasm, and that parents try to like, though it gleams at them from a dozen places in a room and annoys the eye? The girl amateur is common everywhere, and her work in the arts and handicrafts has only one exhibition open to it, the home, which in many places becomes crowded with useless things.[151]

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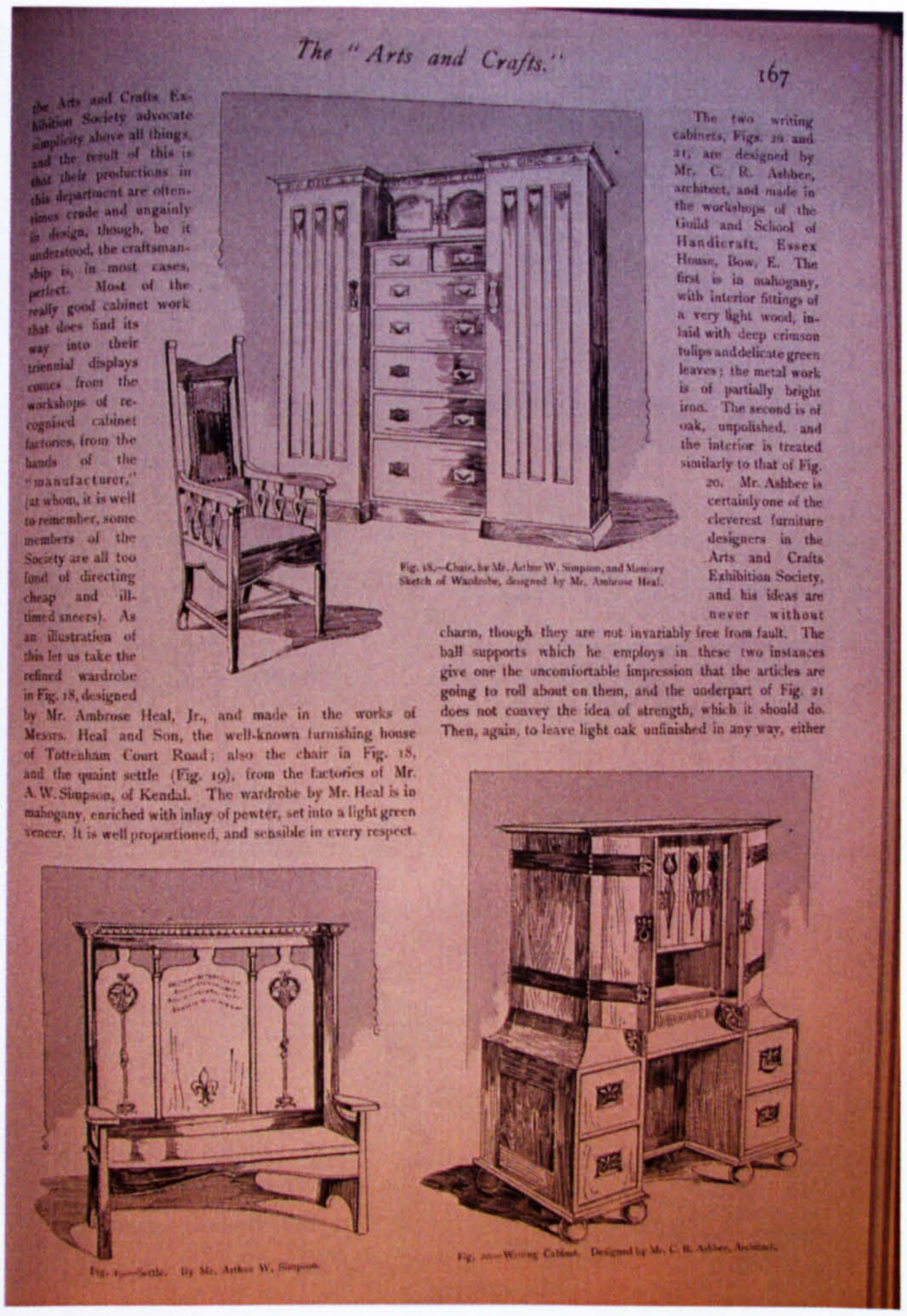
[143] Mrs C. S. Peel, *The New Home* (London: Archibald Constable, 1898), p. 13.
[144] M. Harriette Brown, *To Those About to Marry*, pp. 16-17.
[145] This also points at labour efficiency relevant to the householder carrying out house chores herself. A large number of middle-class women had limited domestic help usually performed by a young charwoman coming during the day.
[146] Gardiner, p. 88.
[147] Harriette Brown, p. 38.
[148] Sparrow, p. 41. Chapter IV addresses gender differences in taste.
[149] Sparrow, p. 40.
[150] Sparrow, p. 42.
[151] Sparrow, p. 49.

This critical image of the inability of the middle-class woman to carry out a tasteful scheme of domestic decoration could be seen as a writing tactic. The subtle mission of any piece of advice writing was to undermine the readers' confidence making them doubt their abilities and agency in matters of shopping, furnishing and decorating. After that the only road open was submission to the dictates of 'the professional' creating thus a dependency on their criteria and advice.

In over two centuries commercial and industrial capitalism had transformed the world beyond recognition. Opting out of progress was not an option. And yet many embarked on projects which attempted precisely that, to escape the whirlwind of change and re-set old parameters by which to live and work. Some thought an alternative path was Art, and specifically, the decorative arts. This is where design reformers and Arts and Crafts artists stood, part of the new world but refusing to accept the terms of industrial progress and development. By insisting in recovering medieval values, aesthetic and crafts, and by developing a new take on the vernacular visual and material culture, design reformers and particularly the Arts and Crafts movement created novel domestic goods and a novel concept in domestic decoration. The movement's ethos was based on handcraft and craftsmanship and therefore, in principle, could not yield to machine or factory production and to mass retailing. The creations of these artists and reformers were for sale but placed in the arena of art, not commerce. Reformers were at odds with industry not only in criticising the negative impact of modernisation on working standards but also in avoiding understanding how the world of industry and commerce actually worked. The fear of contamination fuelled their ignorance of modern business, hindering not only their efforts to compete with it but to use industry for their own benefit. The reformers definition of the designer's professional role was limiting, conceived only in terms of the workshop or the studio. The movement's contradictory modernity sprung from the amount of thought and discussion that went into design as a creative process. It revelled in the level of awareness and analysis intended to inform the role of goods in the modern world and the role of the designer in shaping those goods. But it did this avoiding modern industry and consumption rather than embracing it.

Reformers opposed consumption patterns and consumers in the belief that if they could influence public taste, they could also guide demand and have therefore indirect control over the products of industry. In refusing to accept and understand popular taste they missed the opportunity to relate to an important element in the design process, the consumer needs, not presumed but real ones. In consequence design reformers also refused to acknowledge the growing importance of women's role as homemakers, home furnishers, shoppers and consumers. In criticising their taste and choice of decoration they disregarded the parameters on which that taste was based and arbitrarily replaced it with a set of principles that had little to do with the domestic world and with female and family needs. By emphasizing art and beauty they turned the home and its rooms into an artist's canvass to be designed and composed following a narrow aesthetic and moral criteria. There was an insistence on having art at the expense of everything else.

As pointed out before, in spite of their reformist discourse advice writers had to refer to the market for their recommendations. Crouch and Butler, Sparrow and Gregory did it sparingly and reluctantly. Gardiner, Mrs Peel, Penelope, Jennings and J. H. Elder-Duncan did it openly, relishing the availability of a huge and varied range of merchandise designed, produced and retailed with the middle-class consumer firmly in mind. These ideas are developed in the next chapter.



The "Arts and Crafts." 167

the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society advocate simplicity above all things, and the result of this is that their productions in this department are oftentimes crude and ungainly in design, though, be it understood, the craftsmanship is, in most cases, perfect. Most of the really good cabinet work that does find its way into their triennial displays comes from the workshops of recognised cabinet factories, from the hands of the "manufacturer," (at whom, it is well to remember, some members of the Society are all too fond of directing cheap and ill-timed sneers). As an illustration of this let us take the refined wardrobe in Fig. 18, designed by Mr. Ambrose Heal, Jr., and made in the works of Messrs. Heal and Son, the well-known furnishing house of Tottenham Court Road; also the chair in Fig. 18, and the quaint settle (Fig. 19), from the factories of Mr. A. W. Simpson, of Kendal. The wardrobe by Mr. Heal is in mahogany, enriched with inlay of pewter, set into a light green veneer. It is well proportioned, and sensible in every respect.

Fig. 18.—Chair, by Mr. Arthur W. Simpson, and Memory Sketch of Wardrobe, designed by Mr. Ambrose Heal.

The two writing cabinets, Figs. 20 and 21, are designed by Mr. C. R. Ashbee, architect, and made in the workshops of the Guild and School of Handicraft, Essex House, Bow, E. The first is in mahogany, with interior fittings of a very light wood, inlaid with deep crimson tulips and delicate green leaves; the metal work is of partially bright iron. The second is of oak, unpolished, and the interior is treated similarly to that of Fig. 20. Mr. Ashbee is certainly one of the cleverest furniture designers in the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, and his ideas are never without charm, though they are not invariably free from fault. The ball supports which he employs in these two instances give one the uncomfortable impression that the articles are going to roll about on them, and the underpart of Fig. 21 does not convey the idea of strength, which it should do. Then, again, to leave light oak unfinished in any way, either

Fig. 19.—Settle. By Mr. Arthur W. Simpson.

Fig. 20.—Writing Cabinet. Designed by Mr. C. R. Ashbee, Architect.

Figure 1 Furniture shown at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition (*The House*, January 1900, p. 167)

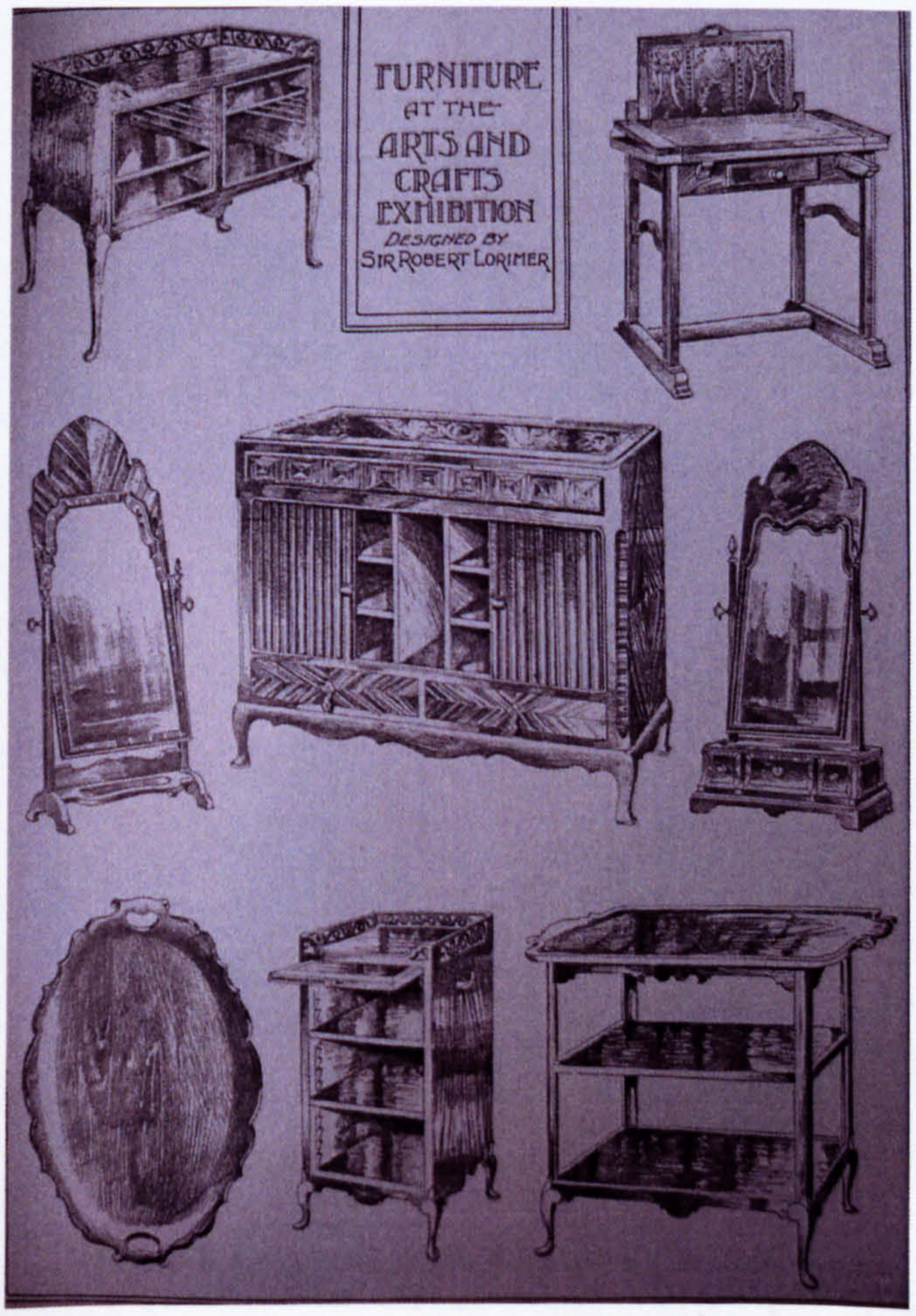


Figure 2 Furniture shown at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition (*The Cabinet Maker*, 4 January, 1913, p. 3)

PRICE LIST—*continued.*

1896 DESIGNS.

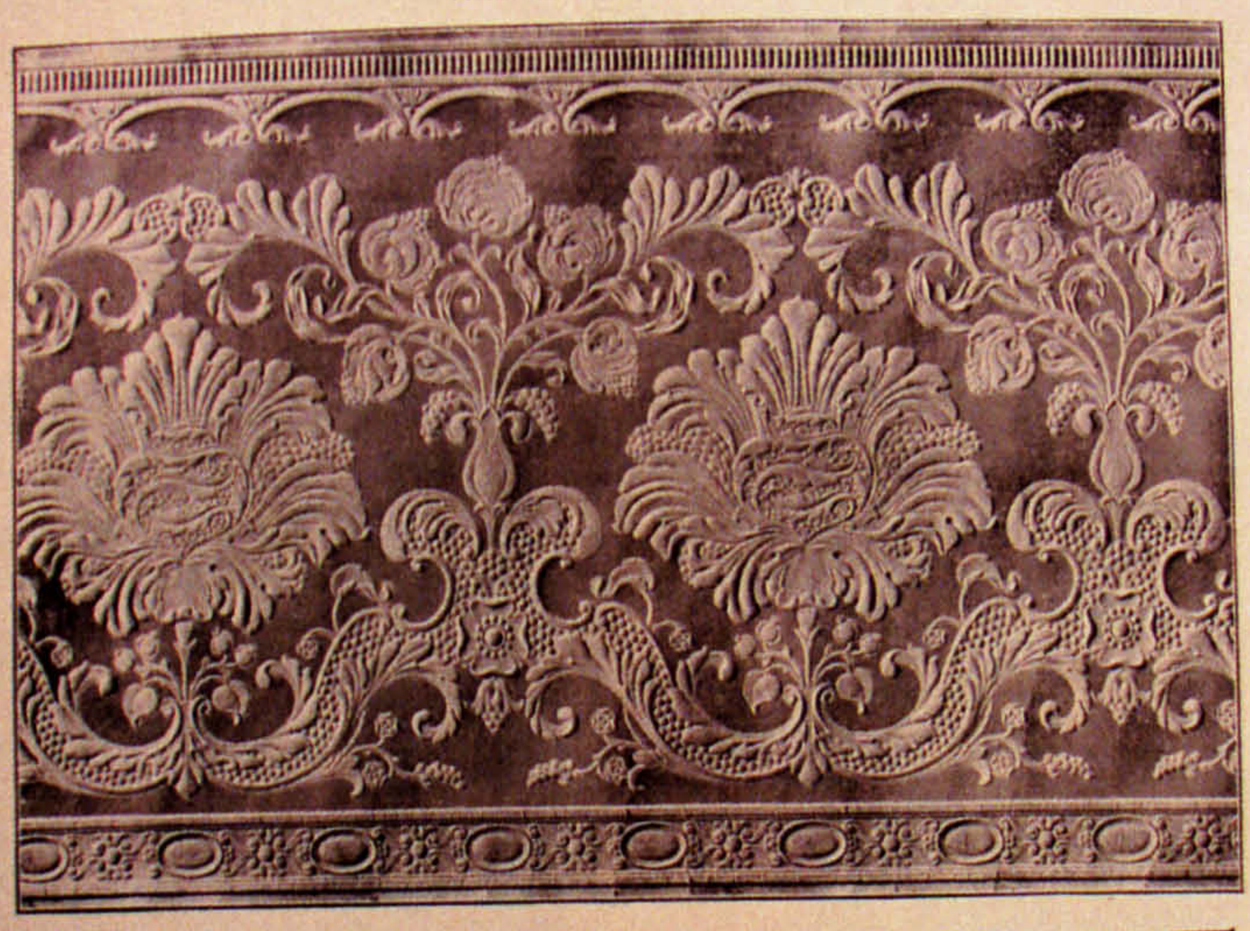
Approximate Width.	No. of Pattern.	Use of Pattern.	Approximate Width.	No. of Pattern.	Use of Pattern.	Style of Pattern.	Designed by
Inches.			Inches.				
26	251	**Frieze** ... ... "	26	251	**Frieze**	Italian Renaissance...	Incog.
27	252	" ... ... "	27	252	"	Modern Floral	C. F. A. Voysey, Arct.
21	253	**Filling** ... ... "	21	253	**Filling**	Italian Renaissance...	Incog.
24	254	**Ceiling** ... ... "	24	254	**Ceiling**	Moresque	Chr. Dresser, Ph.D., &c.
21	255	" ... ... "	21	255	"	"	" " "
21	256	" ... ... "	21	256	"	Elizabethan Strapwork	A. Jonquet, Artist.
21	257	" ... ... "	21	257	"	" "	H. René Rainger, Artist.
21	258	" ... ... "	21	258	"	Old English	J. Lamb, Artist.
21	259	" ... ... "	21	259	"	Elizabethan	H. J. Kimpton, F.R.I.B.A.
21	260	" ... ... "	21	260	"	Modern Ribbon	A. Jonquet, Artist.
24	261	" ... ... "	24	261	"	Old English	J. Lamb, Artist.
21	262	**Diaper** ... ... "	21	262	**Diaper**	Modern	Owen W. Davis, Arct.
21	263	" ... ... "	21	263	"	"	Chr. Dresser, Ph.D., &c.
27	264	**Dado** ... ... "	27	264	**Dado**	Arabian	" " "
22½	265	**Diaper** ... ... "	22½	265	**Diaper**	Modern	R. H. Adams, Artist.
2½	266	**Border for 263**	2½	266	**Border for 263**	"	Chr. Dresser, Ph.D., &c.
1½	267	" "	1½	267	" "	"	" " "
6¾	268	" ... ... "	6¾	268	"	Arabian	" " "

DESIGNS REGISTERED.

1896 DESIGNS.

Friezes

ITALIAN RENAISSANCE.



No. 251.

Width 26 inches.

1/9 per yd.

Scale—2½ inches to a foot.

No. 252.

Width 27 inches.

1/9 per yd.

MODERN, FLORAL.

Figure 3 *Anaglypta 1896 Designs,* trade catalogue, 1896. Notice C. F. A. Voysey's design as No. 252, bottom.

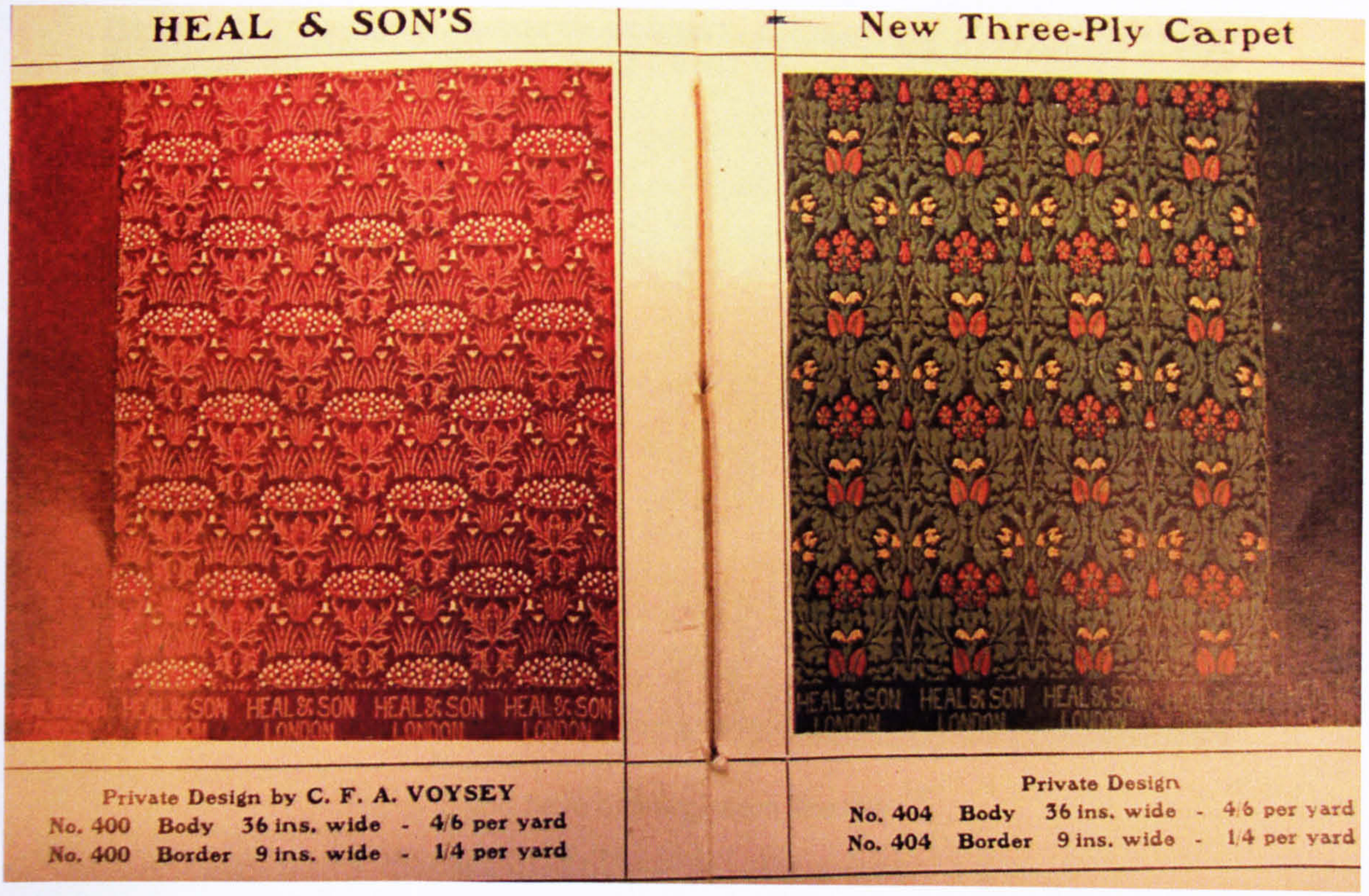
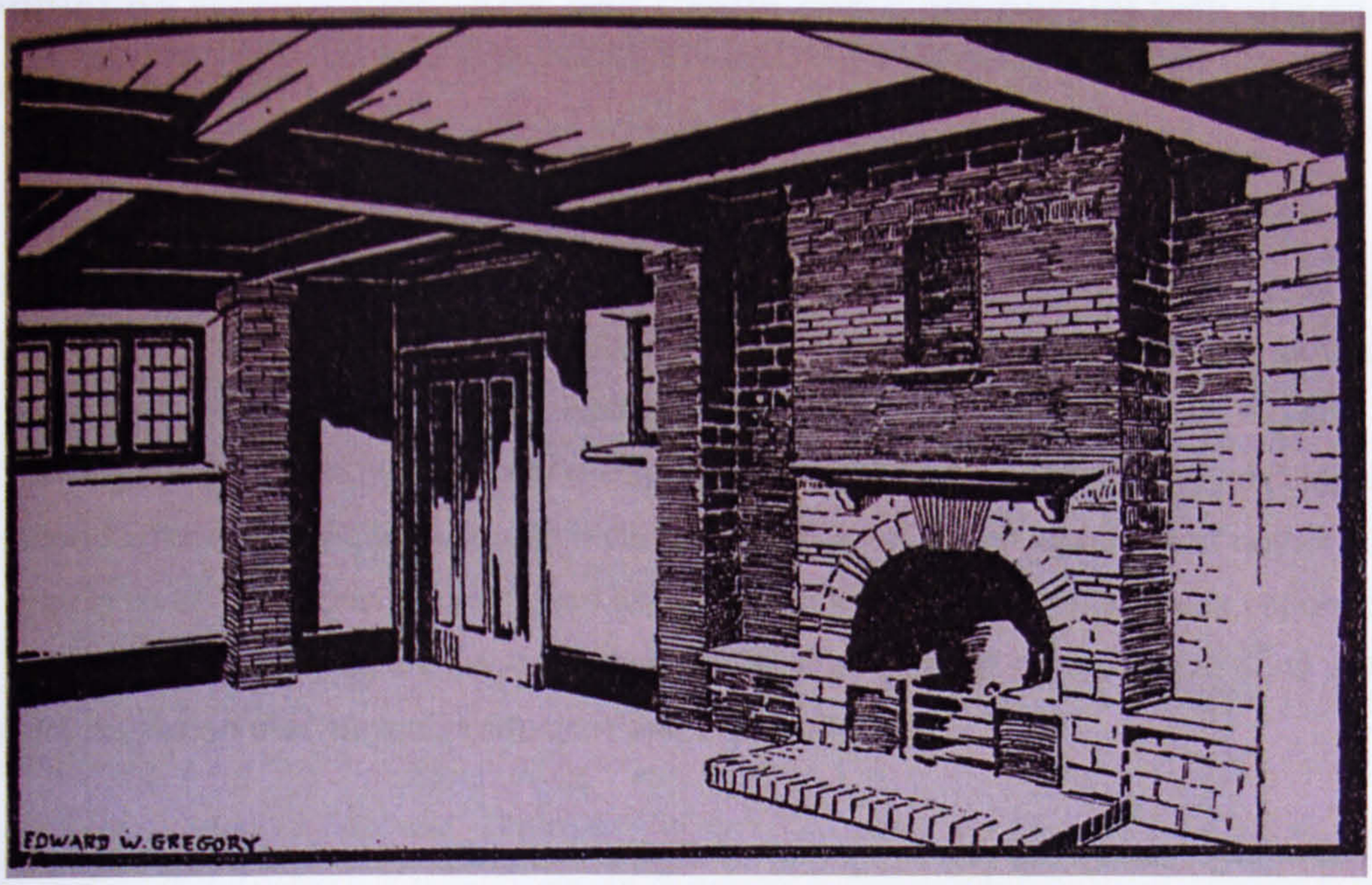
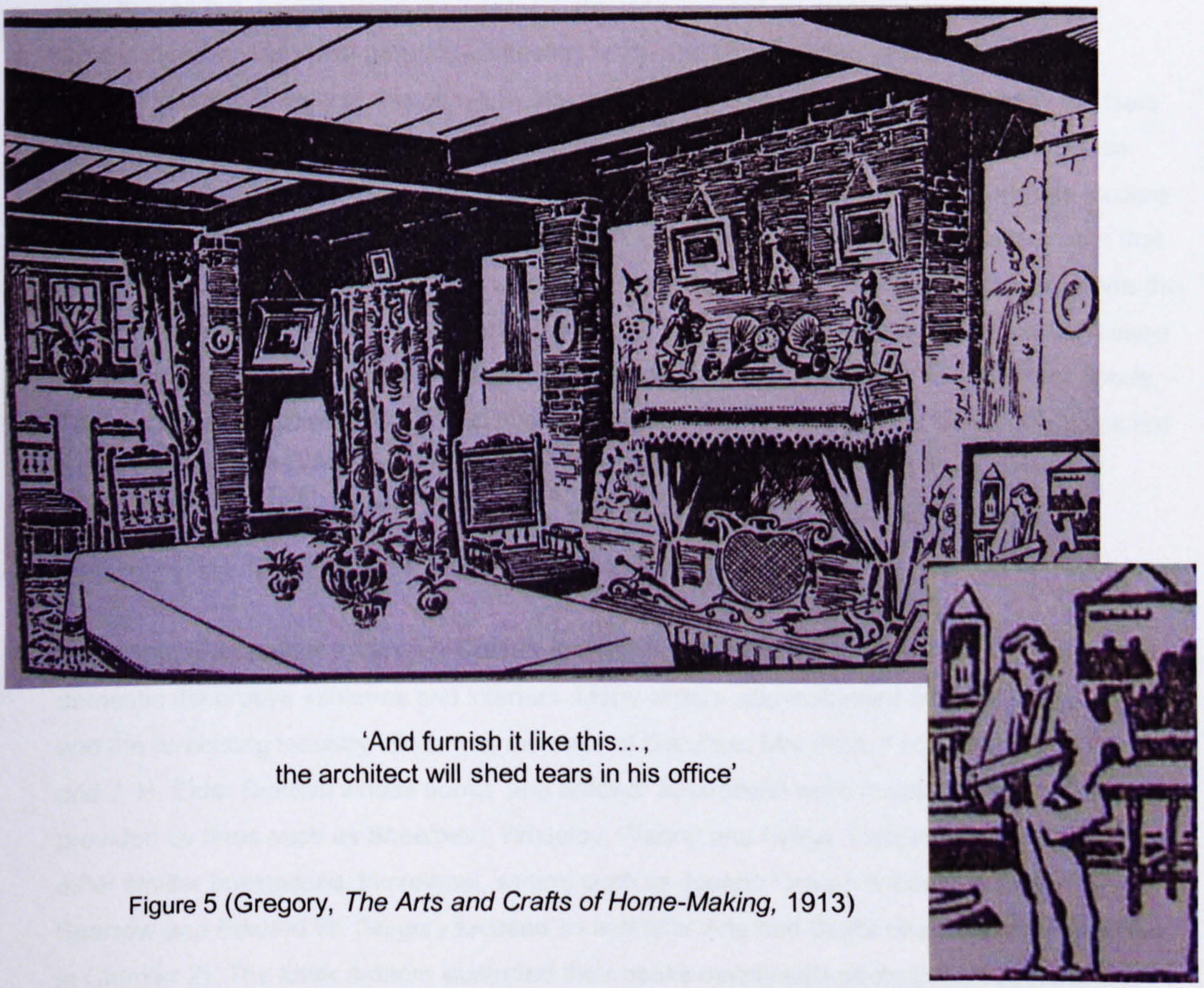


Figure 4 Carpet designs by C. F. A. Voysey in Heal & Son,
The New Three-Ply Carpet, trade catalogue, 1902



'If you have a dining room like this…'



'And furnish it like this…,
the architect will shed tears in his office'

Figure 5 (Gregory, *The Arts and Crafts of Home-Making,* 1913)

Chapter 3

Conflicting Modernities: Arts and Crafts and Commercial Influences in Home Decoration

Chapter 2 engaged with the discussion of consumption and design reform discourses focusing on the anti-commercial stance and criticism of middle-class taste as elaborated in advice literature for the period 1890 to 1914. Reformist efforts were directed at influencing and disciplining consumption by means of discrediting the commercial sphere and advising a presumed ignorant public to trust architects and artists instead, as arbiters and authorities on the principles of 'good design' and 'good taste'. Notions of art and craftsmanship sponsored by the Arts and Crafts movement informed these principles, and were therefore at odds with an industry based on mechanical production and mass retailing.

The design reform and advice discourses were an important way of articulating concerns with the role of art in an industrial age in reference to furnishing and decorating. Advice literature in particular is key in understanding how a sector of society portrayed and represented the domestic interior. Its alleged mission was to guide readers who needed to furnish and decorate their homes but, as discussed in Chapter 2, the task was not an innocent one since these writers stood on reformist grounds contesting trade and consumption with the purpose of educating taste. In view of this aim, it is interesting and paradoxical to note that many advisers relied on commercial examples to illustrate their ideas, suggestions and prescription. These authors understood that giving advice to middle-class readers who lived on a moderate income implied discussing what shops and large furnishing firms had on offer. Writers were aware that few people had the means to furnish using mainly antiques or handcrafted objects, or to hire the services of an architect to act as interior decorator. The result was an ambivalent advice based prominently on the Arts and Crafts ethos but also on the expanding range of consumer goods. This discourse articulated ideal notions of decoration informed by Arts and Crafts principles but with reference to machine-produced and mass-retailed goods. In meeting the commercial sphere it becomes possible to ask whether the advice discourse and its reformist agenda unsuspectingly subscribed to a popular taste it was supposed to reform.

This chapter examines in detail the different ways in which advice authors portrayed modern domestic decorative schemes and interiors. Many writers acknowledged the influence of traders and the furnishing industry. Such was the case of Gardiner, Mrs Peel, Penelope, H. J. Jennings and J. H. Elder Duncan whose books' and articles' illustrations were mostly based on examples provided by firms such as Shoolbred, Whiteley, Waring and Gillow, Oetzmann, Heal & Son and other similar businesses. In contrast, writers such as Joseph Crouch & Edmund Butler, W. S. Sparrow and Edward W. Gregory focused on a stricter Arts and Crafts ethos (already examined in Chapter 2). The latter authors illustrated their books mainly with photographs of designers' and architects' work but also with examples provided by exclusive firms and shops such as

Jeffrey & Co. and Story & Co. Nevertheless, regardless of the authors' leaning either pro-traders or pro-architects, they all tried to resolve the conflicting modernity embedded in their decorative schemes by harmonizing ideal artistic demands with the realities of society and the market place.

The representation of the modern domestic interior, as articulated by the advice discourse, reveals a lack of consensus about what to call modern and about its meaning. Advisers and retailers tried to resolve the uncertainty through notions of art, design, taste, style and technology. The Arts and Crafts movement and the discourses it generated used the terms taste, art and design assigning them positive connotations. The best modern decorative schemes were described as 'artistic', were achieved through 'good design' and displayed 'good taste'.[1] The reformist discourse also used the notion of style but mostly to refer to historical models and revivals and less to depict Arts and Crafts schemes. Instead of style, they preferred the word design. Crouch & Butler and Sparrow, for example, used style in a secondary way. 'It is now [1900] generally allowed that "Style" is of little importance compared with "Design". One may be as eclectic as one likes so long as the result is harmonious [...] it is the actual result that is judged, not the source from which it is inspired.'[2] Sparrow added a few years later in 1909: 'three things in furniture determine both its value and its beauty: fine wood, quiet and good design, and thorough craftsmanship;'[3] and complained that: 'there is no style in modern work, but a superabundance of styles, nearly all at variance with each other.'[4] In consequence those advice writers closest to the ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement always used the word design when addressing the work of artists, architects and designers. The notion of technology appeared in many advisers' discourse although very seldom using that term. New goods and new production methods and materials were usually referred to in a positive sense implying innovation and progress. In their advertising, large manufacturers and retailers flaunted any technological development be it in their factories, shops, products or business methods, as seen in Chapter 1.

Retailers learnt quickly to make the best of this modern related vocabulary developed by reformers, employing it throughout their various advertising means and promoting decorative schemes that resembled those of artists and architects. As displayed in trade catalogues' illustrations, it was retailers who constructed and commercialised a style out of the original Arts and Crafts and New Art (Art Nouveau) designs.[5] In reality there was a big difference between the interiors designed by architects and those carried out by furnishing firms. The former were produced and described as a bespoke and unique type of work backed with artistic credentials while the latter were designed and promoted as consumer goods even if described as artistic. But on the printed page many schemes, regardless of an artistic or commercial provenance,

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[1] Advice authors used regularly the phrases 'artistic', 'good design' and 'good taste'.
[2] Joseph Crouch and Edmund Butler, *The Apartments of the House: Their Arrangement, Furnishing and Decoration* (London: At the Sign of the Unicorn, 1900), p. 67.
[3] Walter Shaw Sparrow, *Hints on House Furnishing* (London: Eveleigh Nash, 1909), p. 34.
[4] Sparrow, p. 112.
[5] See Figs. 4-18 and Figs. 50, 60-63.

looked similar (compare for example Walter Cave's hall in fig. 101 with Waring & Gillow's hall for a country house in fig. 95). By contemplating an image few could read the implication behind an Arts and Crafts design and understand the difference compared to the schemes produced by the large furnishing shop. Both types looked modern, asserting thus a predominance of the visual dimension, that is style, over others.

Although most decorative schemes were described in terms of their design, art, style and technology, there was yet another element associated with the conflicting modernity in the representation of the domestic interior. This element was history, a feature closely related to the notions of style and design. In spite of original Arts and Crafts and New Art models, a significant number of depictions of modern rooms and interiors emphasized the past as a main point of reference. Even novel Arts and Crafts designs had their inspiration in medieval times and vernacular models. Reformers and artists deemed the national past and its material culture as an ideal guide in artistic and decorative matters.

The historical dimension in modern domestic decoration was also linked to art's antagonism of trade. As Stefan Muthesius pointed out, in promoting a cult of the past and the old ordinary object since the 1870s the Antique movement, related to the Arts and Crafts group, had tried to bypass the trade and its commercially produced modern furniture.[6] Retailers reacted quickly by becoming dealers in antiques themselves and by kick-starting a new industry; that of reproducing old models and promoting what they called 'the modern period room'. Although inspired by the past, these rooms were seen as modern. As a result, historical styles remained not only as an important source of inspiration for designers but also as a very popular way of furnishing the modern home in the 1890s and 1900s.

The strong grip of history on modern decoration is partly explained by the anxiety many people felt towards change and modernization making them look back to the past for reassurance. It seemed that the stronger the wave of modernity and transformation, the bigger the appeal of history and tradition. Another reason is class related. Given historical styles' association with aristocratic homes, to a significant number of middle-class consumers these styles seemed to express better their social claims and aspirations. In any case, throughout the nineteenth century people's simultaneous fascination with novelties and with historical models fed the paradox of taking these models as modern products, and an attitude that although seeking new things could not totally accept things looking new.[7]

Throughout the period, the paradox of expressing modernity using antiques and traditional models was reinforced both by the spheres of art and commerce. This tension acted as a driving force and determined the look and atmosphere of many interior decorative schemes. In

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[6] Stefan Muthesius, 'Why do we Buy Old Furniture? Aspects of the Authentic Antique in Britain 1870-1910', *Art History*, 11 (1988), 231-254 (pp. 233-36).
[7] This attitude echoed Ruskin's criticism of 'the fatal newness' of furniture and furnishings in William Holman Hunt's painting *The Awakening Conscience*. Quoted in S. Muthesius, 'Why do we Buy Old Furniture?', p. 233. Ruskin's comments were published as a letter to *The Times*, 24 May 1854.

their advice, writers tried to ease out the tension by the combination of old and new elements, by integrating and framing the new within the context of tradition. A good number of the schemes they recommended consisted of old designs reproduced with modern methods, colours and materials, and arranged to evoke period rooms. This apparently harmonious result was in turn compromised by the different meanings people ascribed to history and to those styles representing it. At this level the conception of design as an aesthetic matter becomes less important and the one with social and symbolic meaning, responding to notions of class and gender, becomes prominent. Design reformers and the Arts and Crafts movement tried to rule out this type of symbolic associations in their designs of furniture and furnishings. Reformers had aimed for an artistic and moral language in the decorative arts responding mainly to aesthetic and production concerns. They refused to acknowledge that for most middle-class people the task of furnishing and decorating the home was driven more by social and family values than by a particular vision of art and architecture. For most people the latter was important only if aligned with the former.

Retailers on the other hand, understood this fact better encouraging consumption motivated by the rich world of meanings belonging to the spheres of gender, class, family and nation. In their desire to gain consumers' favour they were more sensitive and non-judgemental of consumers' beliefs, expectations and habits. Furnishing firms understood, for example, the anxiety related to class. An increasing number of people were in the process of acquiring and consolidating their middle-class status. Many were eager to show it and many were haunted by the possibility of slipping back. Displaying the right taste in domestic decoration was a way of reassuring their social standing; and historical styles, even when newly reproduced, seemed to answer this need better than others. Attentive and sensitive to consumers' needs and aspirations, retailers supplied and advertised a wide and affordable range of period furniture, furnishings and interiors. Even at the height of Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau appeal, there were numerous images and references to historical styles in trade catalogues and advice literature.

Modern notions of gender, family and nation also looked to the past for means of expression. The ambitions were modern but articulated through history. Gender roles and family values were strongly linked to notions of respectability and therefore to class but, within those confines, it was the diversity of historical styles that allowed for the expression of gender differences and gender particular sensibilities. The notion of nation was exacerbated by external economic competitive factors in the international industrial and commercial arena. Again, in their expression of national allegiance people resorted to history rediscovering and recreating English historical styles in furniture and furnishings.

Advice in context

Precisely because advice literature proved itself suitable to carry the design reform discourse, it is a rich source for the study of ideal notions of home furnishing and decoration for the period 1890 to 1914.[8] It offers a challenging combination of prose and images where the text is at the same time description, prescription and critique, and where images illustrate an ideal even when showing real interiors. Compared to previous periods, advice literature of these decades contains an abundance of photographs and illustrations. Text and images come together to convey a complex and conflicting modernity in the representation of the middle-class home.

Although a rich historical source, advice literature can also be problematic. It is not uncommon for accounts of the Victorian period to treat these manuals as direct evidence of practice, and its discourse as testimony.

> Social historians have turned to [...] domestic manuals, for information about domestic life before 1914 but of course we need to remember that although they are useful sources and can reveal much about social aspirations and changing fashions, they prescribed rather than portrayed styles of living. [...] images, frequently highly idealised and with elements of nostalgia and social snobbery.[9]

Manuals were 'weaving tapestries of longing' reflecting cultural concerns like social mobility, but not the realities of the domestic interior.[10] There has been little recognition of its prescriptive nature and scant reference to its drawbacks as a primary source. Emma Ferry shows in her doctoral study on Victorian advice literature how to deal with this material: 'it should never be treated as straightforward evidence of how people furnished their homes at that time.'[11]

The prescriptive character of advice places its information in the sphere of the ideal, not providing enough clues on how to assess the impact of ideals in real homes. As Asa Briggs puts it, 'there seems to be a [...] considerable distance between what Mrs Beeton and Eastlake had to say and what actually happened in practice in Victorian Homes.'[12] In general, it is almost impossible to know with certainty how the reader of advice understood, interpreted and used it, let alone how many people actually read it.[13] As with any other historical source, advice needs to be studied in the context that produced it and to be contrasted with other type of sources.[14] Some researchers, such as Ferry, rely on textual and biographical analysis in an attempt to

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[8] Beside books and articles dealing exclusively with decorative matters, advice literature also comprised domestic economy books such as housekeeping manuals.
[9] Dena Attar, *A Bibliography of Household Books Published in Britain 1800-1914* (London: Prospect Books, 1987), pp. 18-19.
[10] Janna Jones, 'The Distance from Home: The *Domestication* of Desire in Interior Design Manuals', *Journal of Social History*, 31 (Winter, 1997), pp. 307-26 (p. 307).
[11] Emma Ferry, 'Advice, Authorship and the Domestic Interior: An Inter-disciplinary Study of Macmillan's "Art at Home Series", 1876-1883' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Kingston University, 2004), p. 12.
[12] Asa Briggs, *Victorian Things* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 215.
[13] Grace Lees-Maffei, 'Studying Advice: Historiography, Methodology, Commentary, Bibliography', *Journal of Design History*, (special issue: Domestic Design Advice), 16 (1), (2003), pp. 1-14.
[14] These would include sources such as letters, diaries, inventories, autobiographies, photographs, paintings, journals, magazines and trade catalogues. See for example Charlotte Gere and Lesley Hoskins, *The House Beautiful: Oscar Wilde and the Aesthetic Interior* (London: Lund Humphries and The Geffrye Museum, 2000), p. 114. And Asa Briggs, p. 216.

reveal a hidden discourse about author's intentions and assumptions.[15] The present study, while targeting individual discourses for the period, has also tried to unveil the vested interests and motivations behind advice discourse in general, and to identify the main ideas purported by these interests.

Even if advice literature deals mainly with ideals, these ideals reveal real aspirations, not only from the group of people who sponsored and wrote about them but also from those they were trying to instruct. And because advice itself changed, by comparing earlier and later material it is possible to provide a chronology of ideals in taste and styles. It would be revealing to understand why, as Briggs pointed out: 'There seemed to be far less reason to change the recipes in *Mrs Beeton* [...] than there was to change advice on furniture, wallpapers and carpets.'[16]

Throughout the nineteenth century the demand grew for domestic literature targeting an audience of middle-class housewives and householders. This alone is evidence of the social importance given to the role of homemaking and decoration. Already in the first half of the century there was a significant rise in the number of advice books available, and in the second half an increasing flow of published material not only in the form of books but also as magazines and journals.[17] In particular, the literature on house furnishing and decoration was a thriving one for the period 1880 to 1914. H. J. Jennings admitted there was 'a large number of books which have been printed about furniture and the decoration of the house' including 'Histories of Furniture [...] "Books of Designs", and 'the great number of pamphlets, treatises and brochures written on the subject of "Art in the Home."'[18]

In the second half of the century many writers were women. The press business grew stronger in the last twenty years giving way to what was called 'The New Journalism'. The press was by then a true mass media based on a growing and more democratic readership where women were a decisive element to the commercial interests of the biggest publishing houses such as Pearsons, Harmsworth and Newnes. All women's magazines had an advice column and the most important newspapers included a "woman's page". London was the undisputed centre for newspaper production and more so for the proliferating women's magazines.[19] In 1894 Mrs Haweis, a writer on matters of decoration, dress and women's politics, acknowledged the new kind of journalism: 'its importance is growing for political, educative and decorative purposes [...] women are getting into journalistic posts all the time.'[20] Between 1880 and 1900 forty-eight new

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[15] See Emma Ferry, 'Advice, Authorship and the Domestic Interior'.
[16] Briggs, p. 217.
[17] Margaret Ponsonby, 'Ideals, Reality and Meaning: Homemaking in England in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Design History*, 16 (2003), 201-214 (p. 203).
[18] H. J. Jennings, *Our Homes and How to Beautify Them* (London: Harrison & Sons, 1902), p. 17.
[19] Margareth Beetham, 'The Reinvention of the English Domestic Woman: Class and "Race" in the 1890s' Woman's Magazine', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 21 (3), (1998), 223-233 (p. 224).
[20] Mrs Mary Eliza Haweis, 'Women as Writers', in *Words to Women: Addresses and Essays*, ed. by Hugh Reginald Haweis (Burnet and Isbister, 1900), pp. 69-70. As quoted in *Women Who Did: Stories by Men and Women, 1890-1914*, ed. by Angelique Richardson (London: Penguin, 2002), p. xlv.

publications for women entered the market and this growth rate continued in the next decade.[21] Some of these authors such as Mrs Panton and Mrs Peel also worked professionally in the field of domestic decoration. In the second edition of her book *The New Home,* published in 1903, Mrs Peel pointed out that in recent years, 'I have rebuilt and redecorated a house of my own, in addition to advising on the decoration of various dwellings in town and country.'[22]

As mentioned in the previous chapter, another source of advice literature was the one linked to specialised journals and magazines such as *The Studio, The Architectural Review, The Cabinet Maker* and *The House*. Contributors to these publications -and others of a similar kind- included Joseph Crouch & Edmund Butler, J. H. Elder-Duncan, W. S. Sparrow and E. Gregory. Compared to books published by female journalists, those in this category tended to have more expensive editions. They had decorated covers and many good quality black and white and colour illustrations. Regarding audiences, although writers addressed middle-class readers in general, in terms of gender men wrote for their own kind and women did the same.

Overall, the way these various writers treated their subject was similar. They all started by justifying the need for their particular book while stating the aim to provide practical advice on the subject for people of moderate incomes. H. J. Jennings said he wanted 'to indicate in a popular way the principles upon which decorative art is based, and to teach [...] its alphabet and its grammar'.[23] In the introduction authors normally expressed their point of view regarding decoration. It was here where most revealed their explicit allegiance to the Arts and Crafts' reform ideas. For example, many acknowledged William Morris as an important figure in the development of modern applied arts. Mrs Peel said, for example, that 'the fact that nearly every lady's paper contains its column of Furniture Correspondence is [...] indirect testimony to the value of his work [William Morris's], and proof that the number of people interested in "The house Beautiful" is very large'.[24] In 1907 Elder-Duncan added: 'his advocacy and practical example in the use of good materials and colour, allied with sound workmanship, started modern decoration on the right road.'[25]

Notions of modern decoration

An important trait in the literature about the home published between 1890 and 1914 is the extent to which it made reference to changes, novelties and new things. Change was a notion people had used increasingly to describe their world and circumstances and it was employed not only to address economic issues such as the impact of industrialization, but also to refer to a

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[21] Cynthia White, *Women's Magazines 1693-1968* (London: Michael Joseph, 1970), p.58.
[22] Mrs C. S. Peel, *The New Home. Treating of the Arrangement, Decoration and Furnishing of a House of Medium Size to be Maintained by a Moderate Income*, revised edition (London: Archibald Constable, 1903), p. 11.
[23] H. J. Jennings, p. 18.
[24] Mrs Peel, *The New Home*, illustrated by Agnes Walker (London: Archibald Constable, 1898), p. x.
[25] J. H. Elder-Duncan, *The House Beautiful and Useful: Being Practical Suggestions on Furnishing and Decoration* (London: Cassell and Company, 1907), p. 12.

range of matters including life in the suburbs or women's status. Throughout the nineteenth century there was a growing awareness not just of change itself but also of its meaning and effect, which therefore implied comparison and judgement with earlier times. The scale of change brought about a perception of time in which the present, in its meaning of modern, acquired new value. Modern usually meant 'of the times', contemporary, but also something new, desirable, a value in itself, as in Gardiner's comparison of old-fashioned decoration with the modern one in 1894: 'We *now* surround ourselves with useful and beautiful furniture of simple construction and artistic design.'[26] Similarly Jennings' criticism in 1902 of early Victorian taste, reflected a sense of superiority of the present in its meaning of modern: 'there is certainly a great gap between the artistic spirit of horsehair sofas and "crimson and blue" wall-papers, and the artistic spirit that is among us *to-day*.'[27] The word new in Mrs Peel's book title, *The New Home* (1898), emphasized that she referred to modern domestic furnishing and decoration. In the following quote by Elder-Duncan (1907) he uses the term to describe a significant trait in modern design: p.47 'the artistic person knows [...] that the modern tendency is all towards simplicity of treatment, with chimney-pieces and grates as with all else. And this is as it ought to be.'[28] Since the 1870s the term modern became more common and was usually employed in a positive sense, in contrast to what went on before the nineteenth century when most uses of the word were negative.[29] This change did not rule out usage of the word in a negative sense, like many reformers did in their criticism. Jennings complained, for example, about the decorative chair: 'I protest with heart and voice against the slender and comfortless examples sanctioned by modern usage.'[30]

Although far from reaching a consensus about what they called modern, writers of advice literature conveyed their ideas about decoration using a range of words with positive and negative associations. Adjectives such as artistic, original, simple, tasteful, restful and restrained had favourable connotations. The terms new, novel and fashion usually meant something good but could mean otherwise depending on the author and the context. Sparrow, for example, was dismissive of the latter: 'the study of good old work [...] is essential [...] because you learn from it *why* it is good, and what you must shun in our modern fashions if your home is to be a lasting joy to you.'[31] While discussing the work of modern designers Elder-Duncan linked their original work with an element of anxiety: 'the *originality* that has been most in evidence in the modern arts and crafts movement has been a *desperate endeavour* to clothe old articles in new forms.'[32]

To describe designs and decorative schemes authors disapproved of, they employed words such as commonplace, tasteless, pretentious, cheap, vulgar, cluttered and restless. In any case the picture of modern domestic decoration was not clear-cut. Although authors could be using the same vocabulary it was not necessarily applied to mean the same thing.

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[26] Miss Florence Mary Gardiner, *Furnishing and Fittings for Every Home* (London: The Record Press, 1894), p. 84. My italics.
[27] H. J. Jennings, p. 20. My italics.
[28] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 47.
[29] Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana Press, 1983), p. 174.
[30] H. J. Jennings, p. 126.
[31] Sparrow, p. 214.
[32] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 134. My italics.

Two things complicate the picture. The first refers to the rivalry and tensions, already discussed, between the spheres of art and commerce each pursuing its own version of modernity. The other one relates to the changing meaning of many of the words listed above. The term 'artistic', for example, was used during the 1870s and 80s to describe objects and schemes typical of the Aesthetic movement. It remained a popular adjective in the following decades referring to completely different types of design and decorative plans. In the 1900s 'artistic' came to reflect an approach or effect signifying quality rather than a specific style, and the adjective could be applied to interiors exhibiting either antiques, modern reproduction of old models, original Arts and Crafts furniture or a combination of the above. Retailers appropriated artistic notions originally developed by artists and reformers, and applied them to the production and marketing of their own goods and schemes displayed in shops, showrooms, catalogues and exhibitions. In the hands of retailers the 'artistic' epithet also acquired and reinforced notions of status. Advice literature reflected both sources and many authors blended them. As this chapter shows, most advisers considered modern those schemes inspired by Arts and Crafts ideas and aesthetic revealing 'good design' and 'good taste', yet they did not see a problem in including in this category those that were machine-produced and mass-retailed.

Changes in the meaning of vocabulary also reveal that the picture of modern decoration was not static. The fashion system driven by commercial firms was strong and, in spite of the anti-fashion stance promoted by Arts and Crafts designers not even them escaped from it. One important reason for fluxes in fashion and styles was that it was a good commercial strategy to keep sales up. Commercial firms were quick to respond to whatever they sensed the public wanted and always promoted fashion. Among the constant change in decorative ideas and styles, it is possible to identify two major drives both in their artistic and commercial versions: Arts and Crafts ideas, designs and schemes, including Art Nouveau elements, and the influence of historical styles in the form of antiques and modern reproductions of past models. The popularity of the latter was also partly the result of the Arts and Crafts movement in its cult of the national past, initially of the medieval period and later including as well the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For the years 1890 to 1914 change is noticeable in the way advice books, trade catalogues and trade journals represented styles and the domestic interiors displaying them.

Although Arts and Crafts principles remained the same, the type of work produced offered different versions. Trade journals, magazines and the journal *The Studio* all reported on the Arts and Crafts exhibitions. Based on the examination of articles' images, and focusing on furniture, it is possible to identify three periods: Before and around 1900 a good part of the furniture shared an austere vernacular aesthetic in the form of oak chunky furniture and big hinges. Also around 1900 and until ca. 1905 there was a noticeable influence from the New Art (Art Nouveau) style, quite evident, for example, in the elongated back of chairs (Fig. 1). After 1905 and until 1914 the influence from English historical designs, mainly from the eighteenth century,

predominated. This third period is the clearest in that it shows a strong proposition of modern reproductions of old designs. As historical styles, particularly English, increased in popularity, the furniture seen at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition reflected this general trend (Figs. 2-3). After 1910, when it became evident that the Arts and Crafts movement was losing its appeal, it tried to compete emphasizing even more the virtues of the handcrafted, but mostly seen in the reproduction of antique models. In the designs exhibited in 1913 (with the exception of the top right one), there was a preference for eighteenth century models (see fig. 87). Elder-Duncan and Sparrow also showed that throughout the period, and regarding furniture, some artists focused on completely original designs while others preferred to be inspired by vernacular and historical pieces.

In spite of changes and fashion some elements remained popular in the representation of domestic interiors, such as the Tudor/Jacobean type of architecture and furniture (and its preference for oak), the influence of the pre-industrial cottage and vernacular designs, panelled walls, deep friezes, many historically inspired wallpaper designs and patterns for fabrics (especially curtain designs for casement windows), and the taste for antiques. The design reform movement also influenced the new decoration gospel as reflected in advice literature and discussed in detail below. It prescribed no clutter, few and selected pieces of furniture and ornaments, hygienic concerns expressed in less fabric and in ruling out fitted carpets (to avoid dust-traps), and the belief that everything in a room, starting with its architectural features, should be the result of careful design and a judicious selection to achieve a coherent effect. This explicit unity of the interior was a modern ideal sponsored by all Arts and Crafts artists and by advice writers. It is perhaps the most modern feature of the Arts and Crafts philosophy and one that mainly Arts and Crafts designers could explore to its full consequences given their connections to architecture.

The middle-class interiors represented in trade catalogues reflected the influence of the Arts & Crafts movement, the New Art style linked to it and a strong historicism seen in the modern reproduction of historical styles and in the popularity of 'the modern period room'. Large furnishing firms also encouraged the antique craze with their constant commercialisation of historical models. It seems history was treated as an inexhaustible source for designs but reproduced with modern methods and materials to answer contemporary needs: 'to meet the demand for grates in harmony with Georgian schemes of decoration, many of the old patterns have been copied, and the Carron Company have now reproduced a number of the fine old patterns they were manufacturing more than a hundred years ago. These grates are being made, however in bright steel and brass, which does not easily tarnish or get dirty.'[33]

Examining trade catalogues it is possible to identify, again, three different moments in decorative trends. Each period exhibited particular ideas of how styles should look, favouring certain styles over others. The first period coincides with the last decade in the nineteenth

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[33] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 48.

century and marks a departure from the most prominent elements of the Aesthetic movement. The habit of dividing the wall area in three was left behind. Walls were panelled or wall papered and friezes became deeper. Squares and rugs replaced fitted carpets, and drapery arrangements became lighter. Bamboo furniture, elaborate overmantels, oriental influences and general eclecticism of styles died away. Instead, arch fitments, fitted bedrooms -usually painted white, ingle-nooks and cosy corners became popular. The styles promoted included Italian and Flemish Renaissance, Elizabethan, Francois 1er, Queen Anne, Chippendale, Adams and the French styles of the 18th century.[34]

The second period coincides with the time of the Paris Exhibition in 1900 when the style Art Nouveau was very popular in the Continent. In England the New Art won more detractors than enthusiasts yet most large furnishing firms ventured schemes in this style combining it with elements from the Arts and Crafts. Sometimes this style was called 'quaint'. The biggest output and range focused on the design of wallpapers, friezes, fabrics, carpets, metal work, stained windows, and on that of smaller objects like screens, trays, tiles, lamps, occasional tables and bookshelves. (Figs. 4-18; see also figs. 75-83)

A new trend at the turn of the twentieth century was that of renting cottages, and later bungalows, for the week-end. 'The fashion of taking a cottage in the country for the summer holidays and for week-ends is one which is steadily increasing in popular favour.'[35] The Arts and Crafts with its enthusiasm for the vernacular had stimulated the commercial production of cottage furniture and furnishings. Heal & Son, for example, developed a range that was in production throughout the period from 1890 to 1914, continuing after the War. This vernacular approach, inspired by the pre-industrial country cottage and Tudor heritage, introduced a new atmosphere for domestic interiors. Low beamed ceilings, half timbered friezes, big fireplaces with ingle-nooks and casement windows created an ambiance of informality and cosiness speaking the language of a rural past.

The third period started around 1907 when the ever-popular historical styles for the furnishing and decoration of the home took over. The fad for antiques, started back in the 1870s, stimulated the vogue for modern reproductions of historical models with trade catalogues displaying the 'Modern Period Room' as the epitome of good taste. The period room implied furnishing and decorating following a particular historical style. Ideally it would contain genuine antiques but mostly it was achieved through modern reproductions of historical models with the ambition of recreating an interior of the past. Hundreds of images and representations of these interiors could be seen, studied and enjoyed in many publications such as in magazines, journals, books, and seen directly in places such as shops, museums and exhibitions. People gradually became more knowledgeable about style authenticity and furnishing firms would strive to reproduce it. Customers expected faithfulness to the original but accepted changes in design

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[34] For example, these are styles cited in trade catalogues by Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Home Furnishing*, 1890s and Hampton & Sons, *Complete House Furnishing*, 1894.
[35] Hampton & Sons, *My Week-End Cottage and How I Furnished it for £100',*, trade catalogue, ca. 1903.

and construction that suited modern requirements of comfort. Historicist interiors existed since the 1840s and more widely since the 1860s. The difference with the years 1890 to 1914 was the degree of conscious fidelity to original models and to recreations of period rooms promoted by commercial firms.

Large furnishing firms offered a wide range of historical styles people could choose from. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' styles, that is, Elizabethan and Jacobean, were popular for the hall, study and dining room. All three were deemed dignified and their look and decoration spoke masculine values. Colours were dark, furniture was heavy and it was common for walls to show hunt trophies and armour. In contrast, eighteenth century styles, French and English, seemed to agree with a feminine sensibility and therefore were promoted as suitable for the drawing room and best bedroom. These styles were known as Georgian, Chippendale, Adam, Hepplewhite and Sheraton. The popularity of historical styles for domestic interiors throughout the period can obscure the fact that these styles were constantly changing and adapting to modern requirements. The name of the styles did not change but the ways of representing them kept varying.

So far this section has given a profile of ideas related to modernity in furniture and decoration as expressed by advice writers, Arts and Crafts artists and commercial furnishing firms. For all of them, notions of art, design and style were prominent. Besides this important aesthetic and stylistic dimension there was another, as crucial, driven by novelty and by technological development. It referred to modern things exhibiting the latest in designs, materials, inventions and methods of production. The modernity of a drawing room was enhanced, for example, by having washable lightweight curtains or by the provision of electricity for lamps. With a pragmatic approach all authors referred to novelties and modern things and were quick to point out their advantages and disadvantages.[36] About white enamelled furniture, for example, one author commented: 'it looks very dainty and fresh when new, but quickly soils [...] Its principal recommendation is cheapness; but fumed oak runs it very close.'[37] Not all views on technology were positive and, as seen in Chapter 2, there was an aspect that reformers and some advisers contended strongly. The factory method of production employing machines was blamed for the making of thousands of identical cheap articles in bad taste. Since mechanical production was a major key of business success, manufacturers and retailers, in their advertising, constantly praised the modernity and efficiency of their factories and production methods that allowed them to offer customers moderate prices.

A common justification for the publishing of articles and books on the subject of home furnishing was that of giving advice to recently married couples in the process of founding a new home. Mrs Peel's book title, *The New Home*, referred to the dwelling not only as a recently established place for the young couple, but also to everything that was new and modern concerning its

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[36] See the section 'Modern things and trends' below.
[37] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 177.

architecture, decoration and furnishing reflecting the latest in terms of 'comfort, beauty and fitness'.[38] Targeting newly founded homes also highlighted the need to consider, in most cases, a limited budget.

Advice writers addressed mainly readers living on a fixed and moderate income. Furnishing retailers shared this concern by catering for a range of budgets emphasizing in their adverts the word 'moderate' next to prices. Gardiner was specific about it: 'an annual expenditure of £200 (...) is the smallest sum compatible with any degree of comfort, upon which two people of ordinary education, refined tastes, and accustomed to certain luxuries can launch the matrimonial bark.'[39] Authors and retailers seemed to agree that the latest in home furnishing was not just intended for the wealthy. In principle, the modern home was presented as within the reach of everybody in the middle class. This factor is perhaps the most modern and important of all, in its far-reaching consequences, relating to the representation of the middle-class home and its interiors.

Advice authors

Within the increasing number of advice writers publishing books and articles during this period, the ones selected here are a representative sample in the sense that it includes authors of both sexes and exemplifies the ideas and tensions within the advice discourse. One group of authors showed the strongest reformist tone and perspective. It was the one advocated by Joseph Crouch & Edmund Butler, W. S. Sparrow and E. Gregory. As examined in Chapter 2, these authors preached a strict Arts and Crafts ethos and consequently contested modern trade and traders while privileging exclusive workshop production, handcrafted objects, and decoration schemes carried out by architects, artists and firms of their choice (mainly those specializing in bespoke creations for a wealthy clientele). The other group of authors equally subscribed to the reform agenda in its principles and efforts to educate readers' taste but had a more pragmatic approach. Gardiner, Mrs Peel, Penelope, H. J. Jennings and J. H. Elder-Duncan translated Arts and Crafts ideals into advice, guidelines and schemes based on and adapted to what the wider market place had to offer. These latter authors worked with an awareness of what a majority of readers had access to.

The section on home decoration, below, shows the various ways in which the reform agenda met the commercial sphere in an attempt to appease the inherent tensions between them. It analyses the way in which both groups of advice writers portrayed the modern home, its furnishing and decoration, imbued with Arts and Crafts ideas intended for the middle-class

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[38] Peel, p. x. The text and illustrations were published before between 1895 and 1897 as magazine articles in *Woman.*

[39] Gardiner, *Furnishing and Fittings for Every Home*, p. 11. Her book was based on a series of articles she had written since 1890 for *The Weekly Scotsman, The Housewife, Winter's Magazine and The Ludgate Illustrated Magazine.*

householder living on a moderate income. Through text and illustrations the varied representations of domestic interiors reveal Arts and Crafts original designs and schemes, commercial versions of these, and a strong revival of historical styles and models (mainly from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) in the form of antiques and modern reproductions of old models. As discussed above, since the 1870s advocates of Arts and Crafts ideals were the force behind the Antique movement promoting the use of antiques and the cult of the ordinary old object.[40] Soon after, large furnishing firms exploited the trend commercially becoming antique dealers and carrying out modern reproductions of historical models and period rooms. In summary, the representation of the modern home and interior in advice literature embraced the ideals and designs of the Arts and Crafts movement and, at the same time, an Arts and Crafts style and modern period styles as developed by the large furnishing firm.

Below are brief presentations of the books and a summary of the authors' views on domestic decoration with particular reference to their take on Arts and Crafts ideas. Chapter 2 already examined in detail the standpoint of three of these authors. The books of Crouch & Butler, Sparrow and Gregory reflected and illustrated a crucial aspect of the reform agenda, its ideological opposition to the industrial and commercial sphere. This section goes further to examine how these and other authors represented a conception of modern decoration intended for the middle-class reader.

Gardiner, writing in the early 1890s, expressed modern ideas regarding the home and its furnishing mainly in terms of practical items such as sanitary washable papers, washable bed draperies, tiled walls and appliances for the kitchen. She also advocated the use of electricity and having strong and simple furniture without ornament. An experienced speaker, Gardiner belonged to The Writers' Club based in London, and since early in 1890 she delivered by appointment to institutions and societies, a course of six lectures on domestic economy and furniture called *House and Home*.[41] According to press extracts included in her book *Furnishing and Fittings for Every Home* (Fig. 19), the lectures dealt with the decoration of a modern house and gave prominence to artistic furniture and to 'recently invented labour-saving appliances' for the kitchen.[42] The phrase 'every home' employed in the book's title reflected the author's intention to address a wide readership. Gardiner included in particular, families living on a limited income where women, in spite of having some kind of domestic help, had to carry out many household chores themselves. The author acknowledged that, in spite of moderate means, householders were keen on having a well decorated home. 'Unfortunately, the large majority have only a very limited amount to spend on their lares et penates (sic), though they are quite as anxious as their richer neighbours that their homes should be models of refinement

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[40] For a discussion of the movement see Stefan Muthesius, 'Why do we Buy Old Furniture? Aspects of the Authentic Antique in Britain 1870-1910', *Art History*, 11 (1988), 231-254.
[41] Gardiner, unpaginated end pages. For her lectures the author used limelight lantern illustrations. *The Queen*, *The Scotsman*, *Edinburgh Evening News*, *The Weekly Scotsman* and *Lady's Pictorial* published reviews on these lectures.
[42] Gardiner, unpaginated end pages.

and good taste.'[43] Her aim was 'to show that taste, forethought, and judgement serve sometimes in lieu of money.'[44] She dismissed expensive things if they were not suited for their purpose. Her motto was that it was possible to live comfortably on a moderate expense and acknowledged that to have a 'cosy and well arranged home' cost much less than it had to the previous generation.

Gardiner's approach was both practical and moralizing, as when she asked her readers to favour common sense above fashion and conventionality: 'with limited means it is advisable to choose strong, well made furniture, devoid of ornament, in preference to that which is more showy but less substantial.'[45] There was a clear influence from the Arts and Crafts reform agenda in Gardiner's advice to avoid ostentation, reduce the number of items of furniture and ornaments in every room, and in her disapproval of using one material to resemble another, which she qualified as dishonest and in bad taste. When discussing the best treatment for the walls in the hall, Gardiner praised the sanitary washable papers that had replaced 'the hard varnished atrocities of our youth, supposed to resemble oak and marble'.[46]

Paraphrasing Arts and Crafts ideas Gardiner summed up her take on modern decoration by saying: 'We now surround ourselves with useful and beautiful furniture of *simple construction and artistic design*. By wall papers which are "things of beauty"; by softly flowing draperies [...] by fireplaces [...] giving gleams of brass and tiles.'[47] These sentences defined modern furnishing as a sensorial experience and expressed it by relating its aesthetic to notions of simplicity. Among the novelties of the decade her book portrayed fitted bedrooms (mostly enamelled white), ingle nooks and cosy corners –the last two inspired by the revival of quaint and vernacular domestic architecture promoted by the Arts and Crafts movement. In the 1880s the vogue for fitted furniture had also been inspired by Arts and Crafts designs. Other advice writers recommended fittings (see H. J. Jennings below) and they were well illustrated in trade catalogues. It was a short-lived fashion, probably because most people at the time lived in rented accommodation and could not carry the fitments with them if they moved therefore making it an expensive option.

In her book Mrs Constance Peel, a regular contributor to the magazine *Woman*, addressed the whole range of the middle class. *The New Home*, published in 1898, was meant for everybody because it included town residences, flats and suburban households and because the same kind of decoration was available from a high to a modest cost (Fig. 20). The book's subtitle referred to 'a house of medium size to be maintained by a moderate income'. In general Mrs Peel made a point of giving advice on how to decorate inexpensively, as in the case of the boudoir bedroom (see fig. 132). As said before, *The New Home* was new in two senses, as the home of the recently married and as a place displaying the latest in decorative trends and

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[43] Gardiner, pp.13-14.
[44] Gardiner, p. 14.
[45] Gardiner, p. 30.
[46] Gardiner, p. 24.
[47] Gardiner, p. 84. My italics.

technological developments. The author also attended to a modern concern regarding gender differences in decoration and illustrated the furnishing possibilities of a woman's and a man's bedroom. Only Sparrow would also refer explicitly to the particular ways of the sexes. Mrs Peel's image of the curved bookcase in the library (Fig. 21) showed, for example, a feminine approach to a room that was traditionally considered a man's space.

When a new edition of the book was published five years later in 1903, the author left the contents mostly unchanged. In the preface she summarized her updated thoughts on the subject: 'the chief points to aim at when building, taking, decorating and furnishing a house should be to make it light, airy, comfortable, attractive and easy to keep clean.' She complained (as had done in the first edition) about architects and decorators whose designs worked against simplifying domestic chores, and criticized householders for crowding rooms with unnecessary furniture and ornaments. A new departure was her recommendation of un-patterned fabrics, carpets and wallpapers in making restful rooms. In the following years the word 'restful' would become a popular adjective used by advice writers to describe modern rooms.[48]

In Mrs Peel's book, Agnes Walker drew the illustrations following closely the author's decorative ideas. Rather than showing whole interiors, most of the book's drawings focused on sections of a room. This reflected a common approach to decoration at the time: that of dividing a room in discrete areas such as window, corner, fireplace, door, etc. and giving each a specific treatment. Rather than displaying all the pieces of furniture that should go in a room (as trade catalogues did) the author was more interested in showing how to achieve a decorative effect. Some of her images revealed lingering influences from the Aesthetic period, such as elements of Moorish decoration, overdoors (decoration of doorframe tops) and plenty of drapery; but there were no overmantels, and this was a significant departure from the Aesthetic imprint.

Mrs Peel's book was about spelling out 'the *principles* which underlie the art of surrounding one's self with a beautiful environment' as when stating that in regards of colouring, dark tones should be in the carpet and go pale towards the ceiling.[49] Overall, as a sign of a modern attitude towards home decoration, she believed and wanted to show readers how furniture, furnishings and their arrangement could have an influence on people's lives and well-being; an idea fostered originally by William Morris and followers since the 1860s. She explained that, 'even twenty years ago, few people bestowed any thought upon the principles which underlie the art of surrounding one's self with a beautiful environment [...] the idea that chairs and tables and wall-papers, overmantels and cupboards, could have an influence upon his life and happiness never occurred to him [the householder].'[50] The author referred in particular to the positive effect the work of William Morris had in creating 'The House Beautiful', finding evidence of it in the

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[48] Peel, *The New Home,* revised edition, 1903, pp. 11-15. See footnote 4.
[49] Peel, pp. ix, 153.
[50] Peel, p. ix.

popularity of magazine columns discussing furniture and furnishing. She regarded Morris as the figure responsible for arousing considerable interest on the art of decorating the home.[51]

At the same time as Mrs Peel, an author signing as Penelope for the journal *The House,* published in 1899 a series of articles on 'How to Furnish Tastefully for Five Hundred'[52]. A specialised journal in home decoration, *The House* was an offshoot of *The Cabinet Maker* that resembled it in size, layout and type of articles (Fig. 22).[53] Unlike *The Cabinet Maker* that targeted traders, *The House* was intended for a feminine audience and aimed to assist those considering setting up a home or refurbishing one. When the journal issued its first number in March 1897 it claimed there was not a publication dealing 'exclusively or specially with the dressing of the house'[54]. Penelope's series of articles discussed the decoration of an ideal middle-class home and although she explicitly addressed those on a modest income, in reality most middle-class people probably could not afford to spend the five hundred pounds required to furnish this house in one go.

The series was in fact an advertising exercise delivered as a journalistic piece with furnishing firms providing the drawings and cost estimates. The articles give a good indication of how firms interpreted and commercialised Arts and Crafts ideas and designs in the furnishing of domestic interiors. Even though all schemes were inspired by the work of Arts and Crafts artists, each room in the house received a different treatment: original and following medieval and vernacular designs for the hall, medieval and Jacobean influences for the dining room, cottage type of furniture and C. F. A. Voysey's designs for the bedroom and various Georgian models for the drawing room. The schemes were shown as evidence of the professional capacity of manufacturers and firms to deliver modern artistic rooms. They emphasized their technical ability to create and transform rooms completely by means of woodwork, soft furnishing and furniture.

As in the case of Gardiner and Mrs Peel, the author's intention was to reform readers' taste by introducing and enticing them to new ways and items in the decoration of the home. The message underscoring all schemes in the series was that decoration required careful thought so as to achieve a coherent and harmonious result. It could not be improvised or reached in a 'happy go lucky' way. The author targeted readers about to set up a home or in need of refurbishing. This situation implied that ideally all furniture and furnishings would be bought and assembled at the same time guaranteeing the best conditions to get things properly coordinated. This idea of unity and coherence in the design and furnishing of a room reflected an important element in the Arts and Crafts philosophy regarding interior design, but for

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[51] Peel, p. x.
[52] Penelope, 'How to Furnish Tastefully for Five Hundred', *The House*, 5 (1899), 52-55, 133-35, 182-83, 213-15. *The House*, 6 (1899), 28-9, 138-40; (1900), 175.
[53] *The House: An Artistic Monthly for those who Manage and Beautify the Home* (1897-1903).
[54] *The House*, 1 (1897), 1 (p. 1). Although since the 1880s there was a good amount of published material related to domestic furnishing and decoration in the form of women's magazines and books, the journals on the subject were aimed mainly at artists and architects, or traders and builders.

furnishing firms it also made perfect business sense. It was more profitable if consumers bought a whole decorative scheme rather than individual separate items.

H. J. Jennings wrote his book, *Our Homes and How to Beautify Them* (1902), to promote a particular commercial furnishing firm, that of Messrs. Waring and Gillow. On behalf of this firm Jennings appropriated the form and tone of the design reform discourse, not to dismiss commerce and business but to promote it on equal terms with the Arts and Crafts movement. Faithful to its advertising purpose Jennings praised the firm for the positive influence it had had on public taste through 'fostering the principles of artistic simplicity and refinement.'[55] Jennings believed the past was full of lessons and that the essence of the modern style lay in its simplicity and in keeping ornamentation and the desire for novelty under control. In this he had a similar interpretation of decorative art to the one put forward by Crouch and Butler. Although the modern schemes were clearly influenced by Arts and Crafts designs and the New Art style, the author referred to them as the 'New Renaissance' style. The illustrations were mostly photographs of reproductions of historical textiles, pieces of furniture and of rooms representing schemes of decoration in 'the modern style'.

In his purpose to instruct readers on how to 'beautify' the home Jennings discussed the 'grammar of decoration' based on elements of form, colour and style. He preached, for example, that 'nothing in the furnishing of a room is more disastrous than incongruity'[56] or that the guiding principle in all decoration should be either the fixed features of the room or the character of its furniture.[57] In his survey of the history of furniture and furnishing styles the author was very critical of the trends in the 1870s and 80s but admitted that in spite of the many faults in the Aesthetic movement it 'sowed precious seed [...] William Morris, Walter Crane, and other great designers devoted their skill to the improvement of decorative art [and] The Century Guild led the way in an appreciation of the best examples of the 18th Century English Furniture.'[58] Jennings acknowledged a debt towards 'the late William Morris and his co-workers [...] for the stimulus they gave to artistic manufacture generally'. In his opinion it was Morris who had completely transformed wallpaper designs.[59]

In 1907, five years after the appearance of Jennings' book, J. H. Elder-Duncan published his, *The House Beautiful and Useful* (Fig. 23). He was the editorial secretary for *The Architectural Review*, and had already published *Country Cottages and Week-end Homes.* Contrary to expectations given his professional affiliation with the field of architecture, his work acknowledged the force and significance of commerce and mechanical production and praised the partnership between art and trade initiated, in his opinion, by William Morris in the previous century. Many of the book's illustrations had been obtained from well-known furnishing firms

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[55] H. J. Jennings, p. 7.
[56] H. J. Jennings, p. 67.
[57] H. J. Jennings, p. 69.
[58] H. J. Jennings, p. 56.
[59] H. J. Jennings, p. 106.

such as Gill & Reigate, Heal & Son, Jeffrey & Co., Morris & Co., Oetzmann & Co. Waring & Gillow and Doulton & Co. among others.[60]

The author believed that '[t]he ideal method of furnishing a home is to employ the services of a talented Architect and Craftsman, so that every piece of furniture and every scheme of decoration is an individual production [...] expressing the owner's taste and individuality.'[61] In spite of this clearly inspired Arts and Crafts ideal, he was also aware that such ambition was only possible for people of wealth. For his target reader, mostly the ordinary householder, the author was convinced that 'a model of artistic fitness' was attainable given the possibilities opened by the coming together of art and commerce in a collaborative effort. Hence the book concentrated on illustrating the range of these possibilities offered by the author's selection of firms.

In a similar way to Jennings, Elder-Duncan traced the history of the decorative arts, or applied arts as he preferred to call them, but focusing mainly on the nineteenth century. His reforming discourse was disapproving of the commercialism initiated in the mid-Victorian years blaming it for destroying any sense of art in the goods produced. In this context the author presented William Morris as a saviour for paving the way through the successful marriage of artistic designs with a business spirit. The author called Morris the father of modern English decoration because of his ideas about workmanship and his endeavours in reviving the crafts and medieval values associated with them. According to the author, Morris created a great decorative industry, which served as example to others. Elder-Duncan subscribed to Morris's definition of modern decoration: one that distinguished between good and bad materials and asserted the values of sound workmanship on a basis of eclecticism. This definition also placed on equal terms, at least in theory, the trained craftsman and the professional designer. Sharing the view of Arts and Crafts artists, Elder-Duncan was also critical of Art Nouveau as practiced on the Continent: 'The chaos in design has spread all over France, Germany, Austria and Italy.'[62] He believed the designers in these countries, in a desire to free themselves from past conventions, showed no respect for the nature of materials or the laws of proportion.

The architects Joseph Crouch and Edmund Butler published their book, *The Apartments of the House,* at the turn of the century in 1900. They openly promoted Arts and Crafts ideas and designs, but unlike all previous authors considered here, they avoided commercial sources for furniture and furnishings (Fig. 24). The emphasis of the book went into portraying room schemes designed by architects including examples of their own work. The authors said explicitly they excluded very expensive designs but in reality their schemes were beyond the reach of most people 'of moderate means'.

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[60] See illustrations from these firms under the section 'Home Decoration' below.
[61] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. v.
[62] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 13.

In their aim to teach readers the notions of modern decoration Crouch & Butler reminded them of the bad taste people exhibited in the 1870s:

> One remembers with a shudder the Sitting-Room of our grandfathers, the crude colouring of the carpet, the wool mats and antimacassars, the horsehair and mahogany, with the highly prized steel engravings hanging against the hideously obtrusive wall-paper; the whole forming a picture which would be simply unbearable.[63]

The authors explained that it had been partly due to the influence of the South Kensington museum that English taste had improved. Nevertheless, as shown in Chapter 2, they disparaged the way most of their contemporaries arranged and decorated their homes and the way middle-class householders allowed professional furnishers, decorators and salesmen to influence their choices. While Gardiner, Mrs Peel, Penelope, Jennings and Elder-Duncan aimed to teach the principles of modern decoration by embracing the range of goods and services that modern shops offered, Crouch & Butler's book did it by inculcating distrust of traders and reliance on the work of artists, artisans and architects.

Crouch and Butler were critical of the average householder's taste. They believed incoherence and confusion had been the result of too much individualism reflected in home decoration and that the remedy lay in learning the lessons from the past:

> Perhaps at no period in the world's history has more been said and attempted in the cause of personal liberty than in the century in which we live [...] as far as the art of the nineteenth century is concerned the results up to a definite point have tended to incoherency and what one might call a kind of topsy-turvydom in design. The spirit of the century affirms [...] the absolute right of every individual to settle for himself all questions affecting his own affairs. And he has done it with a vengeance in regard to the decorating and plenishing of his home.[64]

In spite of their disapproval of individualism the authors also identified good modern decoration with what was personal and individual. 'Every home should in some way express the personality of the owner'.[65] In their view, the impersonal machine-made goods promoted by salesmen and exhibited in showrooms represented the opposite. Decoration was a matter of self-expression but in order to achieve coherence furniture design had to submit to architecture and look up to the past for guidance.

Crouch and Butler's images were mostly photographs of houses and interiors they designed and built but also included historical interiors (from big country houses) and examples of old models. The illustrations were not an exact depiction of the text but complemented it in showing particular representations of Arts and Crafts houses, interiors and decorative schemes. The photos give emphasis to architectural features such as ceilings, floors, walls, recesses,

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[63] Joseph Crouch and Edmund Butler, *The Apartments of the House*, p. 4.
[64] Crouch and Butler, pp. 88-89.
[65] Crouch and Butler, p. 77.

openings and fireplaces (see figs. 94 and 122). These elements stressed the role and language of architecture in shaping an interior rather than those of the professional upholsterer.

W. S. Sparrow, a trained artist, exhibited a more argumentative approach to the subject in his book of over 300 pages. Before publishing *Hints on House Furnishing* in 1909 he was already known as author of *The English House* and editor of *The Modern Home* and *The British Home of To-Day* (Fig. 25). *Hints* was, more than anything, a compendium of the reasons why in his opinion bad furnishing had become prevalent: 'It is the rarest thing in everyday life to come upon a well-furnished home.'[66] The decorative art principles the book endorsed were closely based on the design reform discourse and the Arts and Crafts ethos. Throughout the book there are quotes and references to Pugin, Ruskin, Eastlake, Morris and other well-known Arts and Crafts designers. In his drive to reform taste and educate readers Sparrow criticised traders, advertisers, speculative builders and ordinary householders, particularly women, for failing to live up to the reform principles and for bringing modern decoration into disrepute. Overall Sparrow criticised people's social aspiring behaviour as represented in their furnishings, and thus those traders supporting it. He blamed advertising for stirring up people's desires making them believe costly things were essential. In his view, this pointless aspiration made people want shams; that is, things made of materials imitating more expensive ones. This was an explicit reference to the design principle of 'honesty' and 'integrity' sponsored by Arts and Crafts advocates. Sparrow stressed that being rich was no guarantee of furnishing a home successfully since many rich people lacked knowledge and judgement. He trusted that learning the principles of decoration would allow people to exercise personal choice and good taste. Failing this, the author said, people should ask for the architect's advice, and warned that they should never go to the local tradesman.

Throughout the book Sparrow emphasized repeatedly the same kind of principles: that things should be fit for purpose and that ornamentation should not be realistic, as discussed already in Chapter 2.[67] He believed that too many people in their desire for having artistic things forgot about the need for these same things to be useful. Regarding walls (recalling Owen Jones' ideas in *The Grammar of Ornament* and Charles Eastlake's gospel) the author stated two principles: that decoration on a flat surface should not be realistic and that patterns should have a conventional treatment. The same principles should be applied to carpets, ceilings and in fact to any surface. 'Believe me, the less realism you have in applied ornament, that is, in ornament placed on useful things, the happier you will be in your rooms. Realism is full of life and restlessness, while conventional patterns are silent, reposeful, unobtrusive.'[68] Together with Oriental artistic objects, in general, he praised the English tradition and English styles that sprang from medieval times. 'Remember always that the nearer you get to the great epochs of

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[66] Sparrow, *Hints on House Furnishing*, p. 7.
[67] In Chapter 2 see pages 21, 22 and 28).
[68] Sparrow, p. 114.

art, which lie between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, the closer you come to the main principles of decorative design and colour'.[69]

An ideal course of action was to look for names of good designers and architects. Sparrow gave a list of professionals including artist-craftsman and well-known architects such as Mervyn Macartney, Walter Cave, Charles Spooner, M. H. Baillie Scott, C. F. A. Voysey, E. L. Lutyens, Robert Christie, J. P. White and R. S. Lorimer; and workshop owners such as C. R. Ashbee, Sidney H. Barnsley, Ernest W. Gimson, and A. J. Penty; and the painter Frank Brangwyn, all linked to the Arts and Crafts movement. One chapter in the book was about the furniture and interiors by M. H. Baillie Scott, which the author described as modern and at the same time recalling medieval times. A main characteristic of Scott's furniture, he said, was that it formed a unity with the house for which it was carried out. Scott's answer to modern furnishing were fitments built structurally in the walls avoiding the need to buy separate pieces of furniture such as wardrobes, chests of drawers or sideboards.[70] For 'light' and 'heat furniture' Sparrow recommended the business owner W. A. S. Benson, and artist-craftsmen such as Starkie Gardner, Nelson Dawson and Alexander Fisher. He also mentioned the Home Arts and Industries Association and as a source of inspiration commended *The Studio* magazine and the journal *The Builder.* To top it all, the author asked British housewives to visit the South Kensington and the British Museums; places where they would learn important lessons in the principles of decorative art. Sparrow's was a seriously committed book sponsoring the cause of the Arts and Crafts movement.

The last book examined here is Gregory's *The Art and Craft of Home-Making* published in 1913 (Fig. 26).[71] The author had close links with the field of architecture and his book was in some ways a continuation of Sparrow's, with similar decorative examples and names of architects and designers. Gregory also disapproved of people trying to imitate more expensive furnishings than the ones they could afford: 'This is one of the sins of Suburbia –the attempt to make of every little villa a mansion in miniature.'[72] But he was hopeful and believed that in his own time snobbery was being replaced by common sense: 'People in moderate circumstances whose income is derived from work are finding out that it is neither comfortable nor dignified to attempt to reproduce in their own homes the domestic environment of the leisured wealthy.'[73] Probably this was more wishful thinking than a reflection of what was actually going on.

The whole of Gregory's book was dedicated to further the reform cause of the Arts and Crafts group, as the title implied. Its text and images reflected the movement's ethos and influence. Gregory summarized the trends in modern decoration as expressing simplicity and individuality in furnishing. He advocated the principles of design reform: having plain, useful things fit for

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[69] Sparrow, p. 214.
[70] Sparrow, pp. 147, 262-64.
[71] Edward W. Gregory, *The Art and Craft of Home-Making: With an Appendix of 200 Household Recipes* (London: Thomas Murby, 1913).
[72] Gregory, p. v.
[73] Gregory, p. vi.

purpose. The resulting modern decorative effect was bare with 'unobtrusive' patterns and pale colours on the background. He was not keen on curtains and fabrics, only addressing them in the last pages. He admitted that textiles contributed to the comfort of the home but that people tended to use them in excess making the rooms 'gross and vulgar'.[74] The main drawback of fabrics, in his eyes, was that there was little to link them to architecture making it difficult to combine comfort and beauty. Curtains were hardly visible on illustrations and the whole atmosphere of his interiors breathed restraint. The formula to achieve simplicity in furnishing consisted in 'avoiding the inclusion of anything which has merely a decorative value'.[75] Gregory's emphasis was on function and purpose and his illustrations are a literal translation of an austere Arts and Crafts aesthetic produced by architects such as A. Gustave Agate, M. H. Baillie Scott, William Swindell, Fair & Myer, W. Rupert Davison, Frederick Rowntree, W. H. Ansell, C. H. B. Quennell, Horace White, R. Barry Parker, Walter H. Brierley, C. F. A. Voysey, P. Morley Horder and Stanley Barrett & Driver.

Modern things and trends

As already stated, the modernity of the home and of domestic decoration was not only expressed aesthetically in terms of styles or designs. It was equally shown in new developments, trends, new habits, fashions and ways of shopping and furnishing. The expression of modernity also included the impact of applied technology such as the use of electricity, having running water, a bathroom and a w. c., new appliances for the kitchen, alternative ways of heating, new materials and products (easy to keep clean), traditional materials treated in a novel way and new production methods. All authors were keen in pointing at significant changes and at the range of novelties, innovation and improvements available in furnishing the domestic space.

In Gardiner's book probably the most modern of all rooms in the house was the kitchen. This was also the topic of her third lecture illustrated with models and diagrams, where she demonstrated in detail all the practical and novel appliances, including gas stoves and 'a table for cooking, with all sorts of cooking requisites to hand'.[76] (Fig. 27) The 'model kitchen' was intended not so much for the domestic servant but for the housewife. Most lower middle-class women had to do part of the house chores themselves, including cooking, so the kitchen was an important consideration. Another useful invention affecting cleaning duties was the carpet-sweeper:

> I doubt if there is any species of domestic labour, so wearing as carpet-sweeping, and when we consider what a back-breaking process it is; to say nothing of the suffocating dust, and lively microbes of various sorts [...] a patent carpet sweeper is an indispensable possession. They take up every particle of dust, by being simply pushed

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[74] Gregory, p. 108.
[75] Gregory, p. vi.
[76] Gardiner, unnumbered pages at the end of the book, 'Extracts from some of the Press Notices'.

over the carpet; the sweepings being collected in two pans, from which they are discharged by pressing down a thumb lever.'[77]

The images of the kitchen and the servant's bedroom (which no other writers mentioned) (Fig. 28) revealed a concern with the availability of domestic service. Illustrating a pretty servant's room was evidence of the interest householders had in securing this kind of service. Wages and living conditions improved for domestic servants when their numbers dwindled. Sparrow commented in 1909: 'it is impossible for us to enjoy that old snobbishness that put servants underground, and treated them [...] badly.'[78]

A prominent feature in Gardiner's book was the popularity of 'cosy corners':

> A marked feature of modern furnishing is the utilisation of corners, which in former times were allowed to remain untouched [...] With the exception of the corner cupboard [...] and the ingle nook (of which a few examples still remain in quaint farmhouses [...] which is the prototype of the modern cosy corner).[79]

Although Gardiner treated it as a novelty, the fashion of the cosy corner had started over two decades before and was still going strong. Another innovation the author considered was the arrangement and fitting of flats. Flats in England were a relatively recent development and gradually became an acceptable option for bachelors and young couples without children. While endorsing flats and fitments as a new and alternative housing option the author recommended them on the grounds of economy, convenience and utility: 'Other things being equal, perhaps a flat is the most economical, and requires less furniture.'[80] (Fig. 29)

Mrs Peel agreed with Gardiner in saying that flats were a good possibility for young couples because the rents (which included rates and taxes) were lower than that of houses. In general flats and suburban houses were newly built compared to town houses (an advantage the author did not mention), and therefore more likely to offer modern conveniences such as hot and cold running water, an indoor toilet, a bathroom and a kitchen range. In any case 'the new home' could be in town, where people could enjoy the pleasures and amusements of the city (music, theatres, libraries and lectures), or in the suburbs, where 'the pleasures of the country' prevailed, such as playing golf, bicycling, boating or gardening. Among the advantages of the modern suburban dwelling, the author noticed that they were planned with regard for family requirements, were spacious and had a small garden.[81]

A town house, said Mrs Peel, could and should be altered and adapted to the family needs. She recommended for example, building a service lift between the kitchen and dining room (or a hatch if they were on the same floor) and opening arches between the hall and adjacent rooms to have an open approach (Fig. 30). For the kitchen walls she thought white glazed tiles were ideal because they were easy to wash down with a hose and were therefore hygienic. For outer

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[77] Gardiner, pp. 60-61.
[78] Sparrow, p. 285.
[79] Gardiner, p. 115.
[80] Gardiner, p. 15.
[81] Peel, pp. 15-16.

halls she advocated tiled floors, and cork or linoleum for nurseries, lavatories, back passages and servant's quarters. The point was always to have the most fit for purpose and decorative material or paint and Mrs Peel did not hesitate to recommend commercial products and designs such as Wapicti (paint) and Anaglypta (wallpaper).[82]

The modern residence portrayed in Penelope's series of articles was neither a flat, nor a town house but a suburban dwelling resembling 'a little country house'. 'Messrs. Boulton and Paul, the eminent contractors of Norwich' designed it on vernacular and Tudor lines with a strong cottage feeling including thatched sloping roofs and half-timbered walls (Fig. 31). [83] But its rural appearance concealed a novel layout: two storeys, no basement, and a square hall in the centre instead of the conventional passage. The social rooms of the house were on the ground floor together with 'the offices' (kitchen, scullery, etc.) and a w. c. (Fig. 32). The bathroom and bedrooms were upstairs. This plan made a good contrast with the traditional Georgian and Victorian three to four storey houses with kitchen in the basement and servants' bedroom at the top. Although this plan and style of domestic architecture had been adopted for some years among the wealthier middle class, it was only starting to spread into the smaller type of house. Inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement it tried to resemble a pre-industrial cottage with elements of medieval vernacular architecture. This novel type of house was shown as an ideal. Surrounded by a garden, it could hardly be considered the type of house owned or rented by people living on a moderate range of income (that is, between £200 and £400 a year).

In Crouch and Butler's book, the house plans also revealed modern facilities such as a bathroom, two w. c., and scullery and larder next to the kitchen (Fig. 33 right). Although the authors did not refer to these in the text, these new rooms had clear advantages over houses that had no running water and no lavatories. On a different level, Crouch & Butler also disguised the modernity of the home and its decoration. The architecture, façade and interior decoration were modern in conception even if following Tudor and vernacular designs (Fig. 33 left). An example of this was the medieval-style lanterns hiding electricity bulbs (Fig. 34). The way the authors represented the home aimed to conceal the visual references to modern elements while enhancing notions and designs inspired in the past. This attitude read as if what was modern needed the clothing of tradition to make it visually acceptable. Even the cover, title and content pages of the book were flavoured with medieval allusions, in spite of the modern colour combination and 'New Art' graphic design (Fig. 24).

In his book Jennings encouraged householders to make use of the wide range of good designs, which Waring & Gillow had made available to any person with a modest income: 'Chintzes, cretonnes, brocades, damasks, tapestries and velvets are now designed in almost every style and are obtainable in every shade of colour.'[84] (Fig. 35) Jennings explained that '(m)echanical production has made such strides that designs in hangings and upholstery, which were formerly

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[82] Wapicti was an industrial paint and Anaglypta was a brand for wall and ceiling papers.
[83] Penelope, *The House*, 5 (1899), 52-55 (p. 52).
[84] H. J. Jennings, p. 96.

only obtainable by the wealthy, are now within reach of the householder of very moderate means'.[85] A common practice throughout the period was that of reproducing 'old' designs in fabrics, furniture and ornaments using the latest in methods of production, technology and materials (Figs. 36-7).

Many of the book's illustrations were photographs of the shop's showrooms featuring completely furnished interiors. Particularly in the 1890s and 1900s showrooms were popular and announced a modern way of making business while improving the way people shopped. They demonstrated the capacity of the furnishing firm to create and transform interiors without the recourse to architectural structures. The message was that with quality materials and modern techniques of production Waring & Gillow (or in fact any large furnishing firm) could create or reproduce any sort of interior, of any period, to a high standard of workmanship. The kind of rooms depicted on the images show an emphasis on wood-work and what could be achieved with it on panelled walls, doors, floors, ceilings, fireplaces, ingle nooks and fitted bedrooms.

Elder-Duncan criticized the incongruity in middle-class' housing preferences: 'Is it not a fact that many of our newer and "cottagey" dwellings are more or less shams, and that what on one hand appears to be the simplest of houses, suitable for a farm labourer [...] often contains a drawing-room, dining-room, billiard-room, study, and servants hall?'[86] Surprisingly, the author disapproved of the ambition of the wealthier kind of middle-class householder to adopt the kind of taste promoted by the Arts and Crafts movement. Those with modest incomes, he compared, were doing the reverse: furnishing their homes in a pretentious way in an effort to increase their social standing. According to the author the new trend was for the rich middle class to affect modesty while those with more limited means wanted to appear as being better off.

Regarding furnishing Elder-Duncan had a practical approach, always addressing the whole range on offer at the shops for every type of article and discussing advantages and disadvantages. Discussing paints he informed that 'ordinary distemper has been practically discarded since the washable distempers were introduced. Hall's washable distemper is made in over seventy tints [...] "Duresco" is another well-known distemper paint [...] they give the "flat" effect upon which many decorators are insistent.'[87] Of all authors he was the most aware of convenient and labour-saving inventions. Elder-Duncan recognized the changes taking place in domestic service and recommended avoiding any form of decoration likely to increase housework. He would say for example, that a common and popular treatment for woodwork was white enamel but that, he warned, it would easily show dirty marks. Among various innovations he mentioned the use of modern glazed doors to allow light in: 'The best is that fitted for small panes, or with a circular panel for glass in the top part of the door.'[88] Other changes included the employment of casement instead of sash windows for long and low openings (as Crouch

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[85] H. J. Jennings, p. 114.
[86] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 19.
[87] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 98.
[88] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 39.

and Butler pointed out before), and the simplicity of treatment in chimney-pieces and grates. The author reckoned that for the fireplace there were many patterns available (only the marble kind had gone out of fashion). But he recognised that when carrying out historical schemes, people preferred reproducing old designs in new materials. For the average kind of fireplace the grate in the shape of a basin was growing in popularity because of its more efficient design in giving heat and in fuel consumption. In regards of other forms of heating, he was not keen on the gas stove but praised the electric radiator as being handy and hygienic in bedrooms (Fig. 38).

In reference to modern furniture in general, Elder-Duncan noticed that architects and decorative artists could be classified in three different groups according to their preferred type of work: some of them privileged austerity; some did the opposite by having elaborate effects, while others combined the two. These same designers could also be grouped by the inspiration they sought: one group concentrated in the production of completely original work such as The Guild of Handicraft Ltd. (Figs. 39-42); another group chose the past as a model but adapting old designs to modern needs such as H. C. Cleaver, Heal & Son and again The Guild of Handicraft Ltd. (Figs. 43-5); and the third group was happy to reproduce truthfully historic designs such as Gill & Reigate Ltd., Waring & Gillow Ltd. and Thornton Smith W. & E. (Figs. 46-9). Modern furnishing and decoration, the author explained, was functioning on an eclectic basis.

Similarly, amid modern developments Sparrow distinguished several methods of furnishing. He discouraged readers from using the hire-purchasing system in which people paid by instalments but, in the end, a higher price than if paying by cash. The author criticised it because in his view the system enticed customers to acquire things they could not really afford. The best furnishing methods in his opinion were the 'craftsman's system' and the 'reproduction system'. The former involved artist-craftsmen designing and manufacturing original furniture by commission. As in Elder-Duncan's case, Sparrow defined the professional designer as a trained craftsman and artist. In this, both authors were echoing closely the Arts and Crafts discourse. Famous names included the architects Walter Cave (see figs. 101, 113, 127 and 164), Baillie Scott, C. F. A. Voysey (see figs. 100 and 154); those with their own workshops such as C.R. Ashbee and Ernest W. Gimson; and artists such as Frank Brangwyn (see fig. 126). The disadvantage was that this furnishing method reflected the taste of a small minority and few people could afford it: 'they do not compete against the manufacturers, nor pretend to do work at popular prices.'[89] The 'reproduction system', as the name implied, included designers and furnishing firms reproducing furniture by commission based on old English models and styles. Customers could specify the kind of wood, machine or hand-cut moulding, the polishing, styles, etc. 'Perhaps you may choose Sheraton for your bedrooms [and] Chippendale for the dining-room.'[90] Sparrow did not even consider the commercial type of furniture sold for cash, which in reality was the only option open to a majority of people.

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[89] Sparrow, pp. 33-34.
[90] Sparrow, p. 35.

One novelty in Sparrow's book was the importance he gave to the hobbies-room thinking of activities such as carpentry, metal-craft, collecting books or having a billiard table (all male oriented hobbies). Another significant change was also the consideration he gave to 'the offices' (kitchen, scullery, etc.) and to servants' comfort, in face of the growing scarcity in domestic service. The average house he described had a provision of cold and hot running water.

Regarding windows, Sparrow approved of the modern trend of painting the woodwork white but added that for jerry-built houses a dark colour for window frames was better.[91] Although he despised curtains he was aware most householders liked them and admitted that most windows would look bare without them (Fig. 50). His compromise was the blind, made of an opaque and not too thick fabric (Fig. 51). The author devised eighteen hints to guide people in using curtains as decoration. For example, he suggested that fabrics should be light, like Nun's Cloth, that curtains should hang at the sides of the window and not cover it, that the best patterns were the unassertive kind, and that colours should contrast harmoniously with those of walls and floors.

Gregory constantly made reference to changes he observed in the way people used domestic spaces and how that affected domestic furnishing. He noticed how the dining room and drawing room, in losing their previous formality, had acquired the character of informal living rooms. Numerous and varied changes also took place in the furnishing of bedrooms where the author gave extensive consideration to the growing range of designs and possibilities (see p. 154 below). Among new trends and compared to previous writers, Gregory gave more importance to picture hanging, spending ten pages discussing it. Gregory saw the possibilities opened by the progress made in photographic reproduction, which allowed the general public to have access to colour reproductions of original pictures at low prices. He also recommended the merits of prints issued with many weekly magazines. He advised readers to adopt and follow a method in selecting the topics, the frames and the arrangement of pictures, rather than improvising. He disapproved of covering the whole wall with pictures, of hanging pictures over doors, of framing and hanging photographs of friends, certificates, illustrated texts, etc. and of having matching pictures by pairs. He particularly disliked the latter: 'Surely this notion of having pictures to match one another is the shoppiest ever conceived in the mind of a dealer!'[92]

Commercial influence: firms, shops and brands

An important trait in the advice discourse was the way in which it handled the contradiction of endorsing the Arts and Crafts ethos while sponsoring a more realistic source of furniture and furnishing for the middle-class household. Even the most committed Arts and Crafts promoters among the advice writers examined here, such as Crouch & Butler, Sparrow and Gregory had

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[91] The trend for white woodwork in architecture started in the 1870s with the revival of the so-called Queen Anne style.
[92] Gregory, p. 71.

to, at one point, make reference to the wide commercial world and the extensive range of possibilities it offered in domestic wares. Although focused on the work of the craftsman-artist and architect, they could not avoid endorsing particular brands and firms. Some books went further and included advertising pages, highlighting the connection between the books' topic and purpose, and the shops supplying the required goods. Writers such as Gardiner, Mrs Peel and Penelope had a professional relationship with the magazines they contributed to, and therefore a link to the commercial firms supporting these publications. Jennings had a deliberate interest in promoting the firm Waring & Gillow, while Elder-Duncan based most of his examples on products and services provided by the large furnishing firm. They all peppered their reformist discourses with specific recommendations of products, brands and shops making their books a celebratory account of the spheres of Art **and** Commerce.

Gardiner illustrated her book with drawings and information borrowed from various commercial firms which she acknowledged in the preface: 'Messrs. Barnard, Bishop and Barnard; Mappin and Webb; Graham and Biddle; Gregory and Co.; Drew; Benoist; Billington and Co.; Radclyffe; Shoolbred; Oetzmann; Whiteley; Keeling and Teale; Godfrey Giles; Herbert Hanks; The Standard Folding Bed Co; The Wilson Engineering Co.; and many others.'[93] She referred early on to the close link between her views on modern domestic decoration and furnishing firms. The products and items of furniture she listed and discussed in the book were easily accessible and within economic reach of most householders.

Gardiner would mention brands and specific goods when discussing, for example, the different and latest treatments available for floors (parquetry, tiles, carpets), walls and ceilings. She quoted, for example, various brands of papers such as Cordelova, Tynecastle Tapestry and Anaglypta for the ceiling.[94] 'One of the most useful floor coverings' the author reckoned, 'is the Kidderminster or Scotch carpet, which is woven in bordered squares, or can be bought by the yard' with the added 'advantage of being reversible, are moderate in price, and present a good appearance'.[95] The author also recommended Brussels, Axminster and Wilton carpets for the drawing room.[96]

Mrs Peel also endorsed different brands throughout the book, mainly considering floor and wall coverings and treatment. She would say, for example, that '[t]he floor and dado of the vestibule shall be tiled, and the walls painted with Wapicti [...] which resembles distemper, but which can be washed'.[97] For inexpensive treatments the author gave detailed advice including the kind of products needed: 'If parquet floors cannot be afforded the cracks between all the boards should be "slipped", which means that strips of wood are hammered in and planed level. The boards can be stained with Jackson's Varnish Stain' and 'Camphorated Wax Polish will keep them in

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[93] Gardiner, p. 12.
[94] Gardiner, p. 85.
[95] Gardiner, p. 121
[96] Gardiner, p. 85.
[97] Peel, p. 79.

order afterwards'.[98] To cover the floors she recommended the well-known Brussels and Axminster carpets. For ceilings and dados the author repeatedly suggested Anaglypta and Lincrusta[99] and regarding furniture she mentioned the Austrian bentwood variety, and 'the marvellously cheap and nice suites of stained green furniture which can be bought at Shoolbred's'.[100]

Confirming a strong link between magazines and advertising, Penelope's series of articles from 1899 illustrated new and 'artistic' furnishing schemes put together by five London firms: Smee and Cobay (hall, landing and drawing room, see figs. 91-93 and 119-20), Bartholomew & Fletcher (dining room, see figs. 106-07), Druce & Co. (spare bedroom), Heal & Son (bedroom, see figs. 141-42), and Graham & Banks (study). It was advice given in the form of an impartial piece of journalistic writing but clearly conceived to promote the goods and designs from well-known London firms. This advertising exercise followed an established practice for newspapers and journals, which relied on the revenue from varied forms of commercial advertising.

The authors Crouch & Butler deliberately never mentioned specific brands or shops in their book. Nevertheless when addressing innovations regarding bedroom furniture and bedsteads they admitted that 'certain well-known firms are making articles of excellent design and workmanship which fulfil all the requirements of the most up-to-date professors of hygiene'.[101]

Jennings promoted Waring & Gillow so it is understandable he would not mention any competitors. He would then stress modern production methods and constantly emphasise the range of goods available at the shop. For example, about wall coverings the many options included 'plain canvas backgrounds', 'paper fillings', 'decorative wall covering' such as tapestries, 'wood panelling', 'designed wall papers' and 'imitation leather papers'. An equally wide range was available for 'decorative textile fabrics' used for draperies and upholstery including 'silks, brocades, tapestry, velvets, chintzes and cretonnes, appliqué work and lace.'[102] Jennings mentioned particular brands, mainly of carpets and other floor and wall coverings, which almost any large shop would distribute. That was the case for the Brussels, Axminster, Wilton and Kidderminster carpets, all of which came from English factories reproducing Oriental, French and English designs. The author mentioned as well imitation leather papers for walls and ceilings such as Tynecastle and Cordelova, both from English manufacturers.

With a similar emphasis, Elder-Duncan also found a wide range and variety in decorative treatment for ceiling papers, wallpapers, fabrics, carpets, linoleum, furniture and lighting appliances. His many illustrations show not only examples of all these articles but also its provenance. In his discussion of carpets the author noticed, for example, that they 'have become specialised by registered names. The "Roman" and "Daknel" carpets [...the] art

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[98] Peel, pp. 24-25.
[99] Peel, pp. 26, 87-88.
[100] Peel, p. 181
[101] Crouch and Butler, p. 123.
[102] H. J. Jennings, p. 110.

squares of Messrs. Oetzmann, [and] the exclusive pattern three ply carpets of Messrs. Heal & Son.'[103] The author included the list of manufacturers who provided illustrations for the book and among the firms most cited were Heal & Son, Morris & Co. Decorators Ltd., Oetzmann & Co. and Waring & Gillow Ltd.[104] The book's contents resembled an inventory of domestic goods accompanied by useful remarks. Most of the standard articles, the author said, had been improved by becoming either more efficient or cheaper. It was easier than ever to reproduce historical designs and models while adapting them to modern needs. 'Cretonnes and chintzes are always with us. Of late years there has been a notable return to the old simple floral patterns of our grandfathers; the moss rose pattern is a particular favourite. Such materials are, of course, specially suited to bedrooms.'[105] (Figs. 52-55) The old forms of lighting being reproduced with electric fittings were another example (Figs. 56-57). The author considered wallpapers in detail, which he reckoned exhibited 'infinite variety and pattern'.[106] He classified them in three classes: the wallpapers proper, the wall fabrics, and relief decorations together with leather papers. Any of these could be either machine or hand printed (Fig. 58). The latter, according to the author, offered the best in decorative qualities. Among relief decorations alone, the author mentioned several brands: Anaglypta, Lincrusta, Walton, Salamander, Lignomur, Cordelova and Tynecastle. The high relief ones were applied to ceilings and friezes while the low relief kind were meant as wall coverings. In both cases they could additionally be treated with colour or gilt. Within the same topic of walls-treatment the author's comments pointed at the fading out of the three-part division and it being replaced by a deep frieze and a filling that could be panelled. In 1900 Crouch and Butler had praised panelled walls although admitting they were too expensive for most people. Seven years on Elder-Duncan devoted three pages to examining the different possibilities found in the market, including much cheaper options such as oak and mahogany panelling, Tudor panelling and 'the Tudoresk' which was a very economic alternative (Figs. 59-60). For the floors he recommended Indian teak parquetry at a reasonable price by Messrs. Howard & Sons of Berkers Street.[107] When considering dining tables Elder-Duncan advocated the Cottage type produced by Heal and Son (see figs. 110-11) and 'the "Sesame" table of Messrs. Wolfe & Hollander, Limited [...] an extending table [...] made in various styles –Elizabethan, Jacobean, Georgian, etc.'[108]

In his discussion of floors and how to decorate them, Sparrow suggested Oriental carpets and English brands such as Kidderminster, Wilton and Hammersmith (the latter only by Morris & Co.). Overall, he insisted, handcrafted was better than those produced by mechanical means. The author endorsed the moral approach in Morris's words when considering the differences between good and bad carpets, that is, 'between the handiwork of the free craftsman doing as

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[103] Elder-Duncan, p. 196.
[104] Elder-Duncan, 'List of Manufacturers Whose Designs are Illustrated in this Volume', initial pages. The rest of the list included: The Art Pavements & Decorations Ltd., Colbran Bratt & Co., John Broadwood & Sons Ltd., H. C. Cleaver Ltd., Doulton & Co. Ltd., Etherington & Son, Gill & Reigate Ltd., The Guild of Handicraft Ltd., Howard & Sons Ltd., Jeffrey & Co., Prowse Keith & Co. Ltd., C. Knowles & Co. Ltd., F. & C. Osler Ltd., Roger Dawson Ltd., W. & E. Thornton-Smith, Cardinal & Harford, The Well Fire Co. Ltd., John P. White, George Wragge Ltd.
[105] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 207.
[106] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 79.
[107] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 33.
[108] J. H. Elder-Duncan, pp. 158-59.

he *pleased* with his work, and the drudgery of the 'operative' set to his task by a tradesman competing for the custom of a frivolous public.'[109] But this view did not prevent him from appreciating other types of machine-made products. Sparrow commended linoleum because it was inexpensive, durable, easy to clean and was ideal for flats and for areas like corridors. In spite of the hygienic movement which criticized carpets and curtains for harbouring dust, the author said most wooden floors needed carpets to reduce noise, and explained how dust could be removed with the 'modern and inexpensive' carpet sweepers: 'special reference may be made here to the pneumatic sweeper, a thing so light and simple [...] The weight is only 4 ½ lbs., and the cost 39s. 6. Oiling is not required [...] and no dust is raised.'[110] When referring to the different types of floor coverings the author advised readers to go to 'Messrs. Treloar And Sons, Ludgate Hill [...] Messrs. Maple and Co., Tottenham Court Road [...] Messrs. Morris and Co., 449 Oxford Street, [...] Messrs. Heal and Son, Tottenham Court Road [...] Messrs. Hampton and Co., Pall Mall [...] Messrs. Story and Co., Kensington High St.' and 'Messrs. Cardinal and Harford, 108-110 High Holborn'.[111]

Sparrow also recommended ceiling papers (Figs. 61-62), admitting that for the less important rooms in the house 'there are ready-made, mechanically-produced expedients which are useful [...] Embossed papers, anaglypta, lignamur, and many other low-relief products are obtainable'.[112] When examining wallpapers he endorsed those produced by specific firms such as Jeffrey & Co. (Figs. 63-64), Sanderson and Sons, Essex & Co. and Morris & Co. About 'artificial heat and light' he welcomed new technical improvements. He chose what in his opinion were the best four grates: the Devon Fire, the Castle Baynard Hearth Fires, the Burkone Patent Barless Fire and "The Heaped Fire". He praised them for their efficiency in providing heat with less fuel and in reducing smoke. For 'furniture for light and heat' Sparrow recommended, among others, W. A. S. Benson & Co.'s catalogues.

Sparrow and many other sympathizers of the Arts and Crafts movement seemed to have a contradictory attitude towards industrial goods. They disapproved when mechanical and factory means were applied to the production of the type of goods that had a long handcraft tradition, such as wooden furniture, carpets and fabrics. But they seemed to have no major objection if the objects involved had little or no tradition behind them, such as the industrially processed linoleum, carpet sweepers or modern grates. Sparrow did not mind either about the copying of old models if carried out by firms he approved of. He praised, for example, Heal & Son for making reproductions of late eighteenth century designs and for reviving the old Wedgwood toilet ware. Other firms and shops he mentioned included Liberty & Co., Story & Co., James Powell & Sons and Doulton & Co.

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[109] Sparrow, p. 159.
[110] Sparrow, p. 170.
[111] Sparrow, pp. 170-71
[112] Sparrow, p. 186.

Gregory deliberately avoided naming specific brands or firms, but commercial products were implicit throughout his descriptions and he constantly made reference to types of products which were widely available such as Windsor chairs, enamelled iron baths, old-fashioned Victorian armchairs, linoleum, cocoanut mats, ordinary carpet squares, cork carpets, etc. It was particularly in the discussion of bedroom furnishing that the author found a significant variety in items, designs and materials; a variety that could only be supplied by large furnishing businesses. 'The wire-woven mattress in itself was a revelation when it was first introduced, and it has now, of course, practically superseded everything else. It is cheap, clean, and springy.'[113] In beds, for example, Gregory listed all the possibilities that consumers could choose from: 'To-day we have a more extended variety of beds to choose from than ever before. There is the four-poster, old and new; the metal bedstead from Birmingham, the black and brass, the modern wooden bedstead, the white enamelled kind, the French bed in various styles, twin bedsteads, camp bedsteads, single and double widths, not forgetting that extraordinary creation, the chair-bedstead.'[114] This quote alone tells of the strength and importance not so much of the artist-craftsman and his workshop but of the factory and retailing system.

The book ended with a group of advertising pages from various furnishing firms such as Heal & Son, 'Rayswi Furniture' from Raymond Swift Ltd., 'The Home Artistic' by Norman & Stacey Ltd., wallpapers from John Line & Sons Ltd., 'The Home Beautiful' by Williamson & Cole Ltd. and pianos by J. B. Cramer & Co., Ltd. In spite of the author's reticence to name brands and shops, the advertising page from Heal & Son discloses his connection to the firm. Heal's advert promoted a booklet entitled 'The Evolution of Four Acres' written and illustrated by Gregory. The booklet was sent free on application to the readers of *The Art and Craft of Home-Making.* It tells the 'story of an old-world cottage in Kent; a story of its renovation in *the right manner*; a story of the little difficulties of two ordinary people who furnished it as a cottage home, and satisfied respectively an artist and a Philistine'.[115] If the renovation pleased a philistine, this is proof that Gregory was not as opposed to the commercial sphere as his Arts and Crafts credentials seemed to indicate.

Home Decoration

Naming styles

Early in the 1880s naming styles was not a precise science.

> ... Only the other day I was shown a French mirror (Louis XIV) by some really cultivated folks as 'Queen Anne -"Empire," you know- genuine Chippendale!'[116]

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[113] Gregory, p. 86.
[114] Gregory, p. 82.
[115] Gregory, unpaginated end pages.
[116] Mrs Haweis, *The Art of Decoration* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1881), p. 42.

This ironic quote by Mrs Haweis highlights how difficult it must have been at the time for ordinary people to recognize and name furnishing and furniture styles. Different looking pieces of furniture were often given the same style name. Compare for example the Queen Anne style fitted library with the Queen Anne morning room shown by Hampton and Sons in their 1894 catalogue (Figs. 65-66). To complicate matters, there were also types of furniture and decorative schemes, which were inspired by historical models but did not convey a specific style. These were sometimes called 'modern', 'inexpensive' or were given special names by manufacturers, such as 'The Marlborough Pollard Oak' and 'The Warwick' for dining room suites as printed in Tarn & Co.'s catalogue ca. 1900 or the 'inexpensive dining room in Waring's magazine advert (Figs. 67-68). Additionally, each generation had its own perception and interpretation of past styles so the way in which they were reproduced kept changing. In the 1870s and 1880s an interior in the 'old English style' was reflecting the imperatives of the 'artistic' i.e. Aesthetic fashion. Twenty to thirty years later it was permeated by the influence from the Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau (Figs. 69-70).

Throughout the Victorian period what had predominated among manufacturers, retailers and decorators was an eclecticism based on English, European and exotic historical styles. To a large extent the commercial designing of furniture and furnishings was based on a flexible interpretation of past and exotic models. This was a widespread practice allowing manufacturers to introduce variations on basic models to give a wider range of possibilities for customers to choose from.[117] As photographs and images of antiques and historical aristocratic rooms became widely available, the public gradually became more aware and knowledgeable about the different historical styles and what they should look like. Since the 1880s museums such as South Kensington, and firms participating at national and international exhibitions all made a point of displaying the best of historical examples in furniture and furnishing and of recreating historical rooms such as 'The Long Gallery at Knole, as exhibited at Paris' (Figs. 71-72).[118]

The concern with style as related to furniture and the decorative arts, including the design of interiors, was widespread. Many advice writers described furniture and decorative schemes, either new or historical, in terms of styles. As part of their effort to educate readers all authors made reference to history, and Gardiner (in her lectures), Jennings and Elder Duncan engaged with a discussion of the history of furniture styles. Circa 1900 *The House* published a 'monthly index of the applied arts' from contemporary magazines (including those in German, French and Spanish) many of which featured historical examples (Fig. 73), and around 1905 the journal *The Cabinet Maker* started to include special articles on the study of historical styles (Fig. 74). Never before had so many volumes been published on the subject as testified by book catalogues of the period. 'The number of publications which included detailed illustrations of old furniture grew steadily [...] It was about 1902 that the continuous production of books on

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[117] Frances Collard, 'Historical Revivals, Commercial enterprise and Public Confusion: Negotiating Taste, 1860-1890', *Journal of Design History*, 16 (2003), 35-48, (p. 40).
[118] Waring & Gillow Ltd., *Souvenir of the Opening of Waring & Gillow's New Building Oxford St., W,* trade catalogue, June 11th to 16th 1906, p. 5.

furniture began.'[119] These were specialized books but furnishing firms such as Heal & Son and Waring & Gillow published their own historical accounts portraying them as important contributors to the history of furniture styles. In 1902, on behalf of Waring & Gillow, Jennings' book addressed the history of styles giving the firm a place of honour and positioning it as an authority in the area. In 1909 the company issued a special booklet titled 'Adaptations of Antique Furnishings Suitable for Modern Requirements' where it traced the history of styles and furniture from Tudor times to the late eighteenth century, placing the firm (the Gillow side) as originator and 'natural' heir of this tradition.[120] Similarly, all furnishing firms with a long history publicized this fact in their trade catalogues as a claim to authenticity and authority.

Contemporary accounts of the history of furniture ignored the nineteenth century and only made reference to the Victorian period to criticise it or to praise William Morris et al's positive influence in the midst of a decadent state in the decorative arts.[121] Early and mid Victorian taste, style and designs were seen as 'hideous', and something to be ashamed of. This assessment was in part a result of the campaign from design reformers against mechanical production and mass retailing, but it was also endorsed by the fashion system that has it in its nature to disqualify what has been fashionable before. The criticism coming from the design reform discourse was repeated and perpetuated by advice writers in the second half of the nineteenth century up to 1914. It is possible to consider that the impact from the reform discourse was such that the writing of historical accounts on furnishing and decorative styles legitimised the role of the Arts and Crafts movement within art history while condemning as anti-artistic the products of commercial firms. In this sense reformers were literally interpreting and rewriting history.

In the period 1890 to 1914 the craze for modern reproductions of past models had a big impact on domestic decoration. Compared to the decades before the 1890s, these years saw a reduction in the eclecticism and free interpretation of historical features. Firms would strive increasingly to produce coherent ensembles more respectful of historical accuracy. The room-schemes portrayed and displayed tended to leave behind the profusion and richness characteristic of the Victorian era (1840 to 1880s) and in comparison aimed at giving a paired down and restrained effect. A more precise following of a style, therefore, became an ordering

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[119] Stefan Muthesius, 'Why do we Buy Old Furniture? Aspects of the Authentic Antique in Britain 1870-1910', *Art History*, 11 (1988), 231-254 (p. 241).
[120] Waring & Gillow, 'Adaptations of Antique Furnishings Suitable for Modern Requirements', trade catalogue, 1909. In 1912 Heal & Son published a similar type of booklets, 'The Evolution of Four Acres' and 'Eighteenth Century Reproductions', where they highlighted the firm's role in replicating historical styles.
[121] Mrs Haweis, Miss Gardiner, Crouch and Butler, H. J. Jennings and J. H. Elder Duncan all engaged in a discussion of style and furniture history. See also Edwin Foley, *The Book of Decorative Furniture: Its Form, Colour and History*, 2 vols. (London: T. C. & E. Jack, 1910). Stefan Muthesius discusses other contemporary historical accounts in his article 'Why do we Buy Old Furniture?', 231-254 (pp. 241-44). He cites, among others, A. Jacquemart, *A History of Furniture*, 1878; J. Lewis Andre, *Chests, Chairs, Cabinets and Old English Woodwork*, Horsham, 1879; W. Sharp Ogden, *Antique Furniture, ... Chiefly 17th Century English Carved Oak* (1888); M. B. Adams, *Examples of Old English Houses and Furniture*, 1888; J. A. Heaton, *Furniture and Decoration in England during the 18th Century*, 2 vols., 1892; F. Litchfield, *Illustrated History of Furniture*, 1892; W. H. Hackett, *Decorative Furniture, 16th, 17th, 18th Centuries*, 1902; P. Macquoid, *A History of English Furniture*, 4 vols., 1904; Constance Simon, *English Furniture Designers of the 18th Century*, 1905; R. S. Clouston, *English Furniture and Furniture Makers of the 18th Century*, 1906; F. Lenygon, *The Decoration and Furniture of English Mansions During the 17th and 18th Centuries*, 1909; and A. McClure, *The Practical Book of Period Furniture*, 1914.

principle. It reduced the risk for incongruence and guaranteed an accord between fixed decoration, furniture, and fabrics. Advice literature reflected this. Authors and artists supported the idea that furniture, woodwork, ornaments and fabrics needed to be coordinated and, in an aesthetic sense, to express consistency. They encouraged readers to follow a style as a way of achieving coherence. It was believed, for example, that there was a natural harmony in a room having beamed ceilings, panelled walls, Turkey carpets on wooden floors, brocaded fabrics, and Jacobean furniture.

The search for stylistic coherence did not mean that rooms would look the same. If copying a specific old model could be straightforward, deciding on the arrangement of a room and its colour schemes and patterns was more demanding since there were no exact examples to follow. Nobody knew for sure how rooms from the Elizabethan or early Georgian period looked. This fact allowed for a range of combination possibilities in terms of materials, fabrics, colours and designs, and in terms of arrangement. This meant that in spite of striving for accuracy, styles and the portrayal of styles gave scope for interpretation and kept changing in a constant reinvention of the past.

The revival of past models was a fruitful source of inspiration and firms, by necessity, were inventive in the way they adapted designs and schemes to contemporary needs and expectations. Commercial designers also developed pieces of furniture and models that did not have precedent, like massive sideboards, billiard tables, reclining chairs and fitted furniture. Differentiation in design, as Adrian Forty explained, was a business strategy.[122] It also responded to a demand for choice reflecting social, gender and personal preferences. Variety was expressed not just in form and style but also in material, decorative treatment and colour. All major furnishers would have on offer many different styles and designs for customers to choose from. There was also a price range for the same type of article, pointing at social differences. The modern commercial approach included tending to different tastes and different budgets rather than specializing on one type of market as Arts and Crafts designers did. Attentive to consumers' needs and expectations, manufacturers practiced differentiation as an effective way to stimulate fashion and increase sales. Because furnishing firms were concerned with running a successful business their criteria for producing and selling goods was based on demand (or the potential for that demand) rather than on the promotion of a specific style on grounds of its beauty or morality, as the Arts and Crafts movement proposed. For the commercial manufacturer, as long as people wanted them, all styles and designs were equally valid and appropriate.

It is important to consider the range of clients that the larger furnishing firms addressed. In their work and representation of interiors firms reflected an image of the different sectors and classes in society that in turn reinforced those differences. As discussed in Chapter 1, for large businesses such as Maple, Shoolbred or Waring & Gillow, it was common to cater for most

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[122] Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society since 1750* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1986, pp. 87-93.

sectors of the market: Royalty, big country houses, clubs, hotels, small country houses, and town and suburban houses. The whole series was important to them. During this period it was usual for firms to give furnishing estimates in trade catalogues where they offered the same fashionable styles at different prices. In his examination of such estimates Clive Edwards demonstrates that there was a consistency of style throughout the range of estimates, from £27 to £675. The difference was one of quality and quantity rather than of style. [123] Commissioned work for wealthy clients usually meant impressive looking interiors due to the bigger size of the room(s) and quality of materials. Most of these clients had a preference for historical styles.[124] Firms used photographs of this type of work in their trade catalogues to highlight the firm's capability and important social and artistic connections. It was on the interest of business that, for customers, these interiors acted as ideals to aspire to.

The concept of style was fundamental to furnishing firms. Exploiting styles was an important commercial strategy, not only due to differentiation but also because styles tapped on values and meanings that people associated with them. Values such as respectability were at the heart of class concerns and gender identity. Ideal schemes of decoration were embedded with the meaning ascribed to styles, a meaning that was also linked to types of wood and wood treatment (painted, stained, fumed, inlaid). Oak, for example, became strongly associated with the Arts and Crafts' aesthetic and with the hall and dining room, acquiring and reinforcing a masculine ambience in both. Mahogany on the other hand was a wood related to the eighteenth century both in France and in England, and it had developed feminine connotations. These values influenced and sometimes determined what middle-class interiors, ideal and real, looked like.

In contrast to furnishing firms, at least in theory the term style was not as significant to Arts and Crafts designers who, in their most original work, never strove to achieve a style that reflected the movement. Inevitably though, they developed an aesthetic and visual language and the type of furniture and interiors they put together acquired a stylistic effect that furnishing firms were quick to adopt and commercialise. Furthermore, the Arts and Crafts movement in its promotion of the medieval world, its cult of the antique and vernacular, and in its artistic appreciation of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' designs contributed greatly to the dissemination of historical styles and to the meaning attached to those.

From the firms point of view, style was an ideal medium for conveying meaning and giving appeal to their decorative schemes. The range of connotations attached to historical and modern styles was varied and reflected the tensions between the spheres of art and industry. Back in the mid-Victorian period adjectives such as 'gothic' and 'artistic' gave the most meaning to the description of interiors. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries 'artistic',

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[123] Clive Edwards, 'Furnishing a Home at the Turn of the Century: The Use of Furnishing Estimates from 1875 to 1910', *Journal of Design History*, 4 No. 4 (1991), 233-239.
[124] J. Mordaunt Crook, *The Rise of the Nouveaux Riches: Style and Status in Victorian and Edwardian Architecture* (London: John Murray, 1999). Crook shows that the styles of preference of the nouveaux riches were the Neo-classical, Italianate and Beaux Arts following on the steps of the London houses of the old nobility.

'tasteful' and 'inexpensive' were the words people wanted to hear regarding their domestic furnishings. Although these words could be applied to any style regardless of their provenance, only goods produced by the large furnishing firm could claim to be affordable.

Firms engaged with notions of style by naming the furniture and furnishings displayed in trade catalogues and shops, both as individual pieces and as room schemes. In the midst of a plethora of competing designs, a way to diminish confusion was to name and classify things. Goods were grouped according to type such as 'occasional tables' and also according to the rooms they belonged to. Giving names to suites of furniture, to schemes of decoration, to wallpapers or to designs was also an important way of ordering an otherwise overwhelming world of goods and possibilities. Names allowed firms and clients to communicate and designate what they wanted. Labelling things also allowed traders to assign meaning to their goods. There was a difference between the word 'table' and the description of a 'delicately inlaid mahogany Sheraton table'. The way shops and trade catalogues were organized exhibited a taxonomic approach to goods. In a trade catalogue for example, all the myriad of things and articles that a household required was presented in a 'logical' and ordered way using narrative, images and specialized information. Through their trade catalogues firms disseminated a language that allowed them to communicate better with their clients, and the notion of style was essential to this language. Naming styles became an effective way of identifying furniture, designs and room schemes.

While trade catalogues and journals usually specified historical styles, it seems they had not yet agreed what name to give to those designs inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement and by Art Nouveau. Commercial firms developed their own interpretation of Arts and Crafts work (that sometimes was plain copying) creating a style of it. Manufacturers and retailers not only interpreted and adapted these designs to suit commercial production, but also developed ranges of goods and devised room-schemes based on them (Figs. 75-83 and figs. 4-18).[125] These designs were sometimes referred to as 'modern', 'quaint' and 'inexpensive' and were also described as 'original', 'simple', 'artistic', 'latest', 'novel' and 'plain'; some of these adjectives being a clear reference to the reformist vocabulary.

An alternative way of naming was to specify the type of wood employed, usually ash or oak, and any treatment given: 'stained green', 'white enamelled' or 'fumed'. Not only when referring to Arts and Crafts designs, but also in other cases, the type of wood or material used became a sort of shorthand for a specific style. While inlaid mahogany would imply 'Sheraton', fumed oak meant 'the new style'. Messrs. T. B. & W. Cockayne's catalogue published in the 1900s presented 'model furnished homes' to demonstrate that they could carry out 'the most complete schemes of artistic furnishing and decorating in pure classic or quaint modern style, at exceptionally low prices.'[126] The 'pure classic' scheme, in oak, was based on a Jacobean model

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[125] For example, see the discussion below on Penelope's series of articles.
[126] Messrs. T. B. & W. Cockayne, *A Tasteful Home*, Sheffield, ca. 1900

(Fig. 84) and the 'quaint modern', in fumed oak, followed the cue of original Arts and Crafts designs (Fig. 85). Waring and Gillow's catalogue circa 1902 displayed fumed oak furniture and furnishing schemes for the whole house, at £200. All schemes were inspired by Arts and Crafts examples (Fig. 86).

In avoiding the phrase 'Arts and Crafts' to identify their designs, firms were probably trying to avoid being accused of plagiarism. Houses, interiors, furniture and furnishings produced by the Arts and Crafts movement were identified mostly in reference to the guild or the designer (be it an architect or an artist). More than how things looked, what mattered was the way they were made, who made them and the set of principles and ideas underpinning them. Although the movement never intended to create a style, many designers developed their own personal style. Famous examples were Baillie Scott, Voysey and Gimson who were thus very critical of unauthorized commercial versions of their designs. Notwithstanding this, in the 1910s several Arts and Crafts designers increasingly engaged with the reproduction of historical styles and with creations based on seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' styles (Fig. 87 and figs. 2-3).

For the home the notion of style applied equally to furniture, furnishings and surface decoration (including architectural features). Bearing that in mind, there were two main trends in the decorative schemes advice writers presented as ideal: those influenced by Arts and Crafts designs and those following historical styles, the popularity of which was partly due to the Arts and Crafts movement. In their books several authors referred to the history of furniture in England as part of their mission to educate readers and also as a way of asserting their own authority on the matter. To this history the notion of style was fundamental. Thus advice writers used style mainly to describe historical models and rooms based on those models. Authors supporting a stricter Arts and Crafts' approach, rather than on style focused on design and designers. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, in addition to style, design was a key and related term in the description of room schemes, furniture and objects; and, although not exclusively, most authors repeatedly used the words 'design' and 'designers' throughout their books. Authors such as Crouch & Butler avoided using the word style: 'we have added a few illustrations of rooms, furniture and decoration carried out quite recently *on the lines* we have tried to suggest [... excluding] almost entirely very costly designs.'[127] All books had illustrations and these were essential in complementing notions of style and design that words alone could not convey.

Room schemes

Advice writers discussed decoration by room and by surface areas (walls, ceilings, etc). The ordinary middle-class household they portrayed consisted of the hall, dining room, drawing room and bedrooms, sometimes including the study, bathroom and kitchen. For the wealthier kind of home authors also addressed the morning room, boudoir, library and billiard room. This discrete

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[127] Crouch and Butler, p. xii. My italics.

view of decoration and living spaces mirrored a real division of activities based on family needs, and gender and class roles in everyday life. The clear differentiation of spaces in the modern home identified rooms not only by their function but also their gender. The drawing room, boudoir and main bedroom had been traditionally regarded as feminine territory while the hall, dining room, library/study and billiard room (this a recent arrival in the domestic world) were seen as masculine. The division of space also reflected a hierarchy. While the servant's bedroom is not mentioned at all (except for Gardiner) the drawing room and dining room stressed their importance in exhibiting the most expensive furniture and décor. The decorative treatment of surface areas on the other hand reveals a deep-rooted practice. It is taken for granted that floors, ceilings and walls required decoration and most authors included extensive discussions of the various kinds of floor coverings (such as parquet, wooden boards, linoleum, china matting, cork, tiles, carpets and rugs), ceiling papers, wallpapers (for walls and friezes), wall panelling, tapestries, curtains and pictures.

Besides differences in function and corresponding furniture and furnishings, it was important for each room in the house to look different in terms of colour, patterns and style, and thus to express a distinct character. Authors took it for granted that the various rooms in the home should be decorated each in a different way, usually based on historical styles. This fragmentary approach is well illustrated by the treatment given to doors in Penelope's schemes. The hall doors had a novel two panelled Arts and Crafts design on one side. These doors opened into the study and drawing room where they had three panels. Another door also opened into the dining room, and in this instance it displayed six panels. Each door (and side) had its corresponding doorframe moulding and colour, and for the drawing room it also had a decorative overdoor. Although this was a hypothetical house, and in real life doors had the same number of panels and mouldings on both sides, what it reveals is that each room aimed to express a distinctive atmosphere in terms of function, comfort and taste reflected in specific furnishing styles, designs, materials, etc. At least in theory, each room was a self-contained world with its own conventions.

Since the 1870s colour schemes became a central and much discussed feature. The artistic spirit underpinning both the Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts movements encouraged a concern with the appropriate combination and display of colour as a significant element in the discourse about domestic decoration. As reflected in advice literature, around the 1900s colours tended to be bright and strong (due also to the influence of Art Nouveau) and gradually became milder and paler up to 1914. After the War vivid colours were emphasized again. Although most illustrations do not show colour, authors described them. This is, for example, how Mrs Peel depicted the decoration in a smoking room: 'Bright yellow paper. Stencilled frieze, or frieze of gold and copper leather paper. Copper-coloured hangings. Loose covers of copper and blue conventional design cretonne. Stained floor. Blue carpet. Copper-red tiles.'[128] Colours together with textile pattern and furniture style were important in achieving unity and coherence in a

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[128] Peel, p. 135.

decorative scheme, a trait which authors promoted as a defining element of modern domestic decoration.

Hall

Most authors highlighted the revival of the hall in recent years as an important trait of the modern home. The importance given to this area was a result of the Gothic revival and the Arts and Crafts endorsement of all things medieval. The hall, originally a feature of old castles, when adopted into domestic architecture acquired the function of a first reception room. Together with the staircase, it became a show place in many middle-class houses developing its own decorative conventions. The hall became important for decorative purposes because in giving a first impression it was supposed to announce the rest of the house. It was implicit that householders should have visitors in mind when decorating, thus revealing the important aim of communicating the host's 'good taste'. Authors recommended that the hall took the character of a small sitting room. In wealthier households it became a room in its own right. The situation was different for the smaller kind of dwelling where the hall was a narrow passage. The passage-hall's traditional function had been to provide a place for umbrellas, hats, etc., so in acquiring a more ornamental purpose these articles tended to be concealed in a hall-wardrobe or cupboard.

What follows are the various authors' descriptions of modern schemes of decoration. Most show the influence of Arts and Crafts ideas and designs both in original and historical format. From Gardiner in 1894 to Gregory in 1913 the hall that advisers portrayed, changed. It gradually lost the dado, arches and portieres inherited from the Aesthetic period. The frieze turned deeper (a fashion based on Jacobean models) and became more important as a decorative surface. Some writers stressed a minimum of ornaments, implying that a good number of people over-furnished the hall and other rooms in the house. Although writers considered the economic type of schemes as well as the more expensive one, illustrations focused on the latter.

Gardiner addressed both the hall and the bathroom in the same chapter stressing a practical approach in both. She only considered the passage kind of hall and advised covering walls and ceilings with sanitary washable papers. The furniture included a wardrobe, a pine table with drawer, two rush chairs, a mirror, a brass bowl, plants, doormats and linoleum as a floor cover.[129] Even in this functional way it is evident that the author also thought to achieve a decorative effect (Fig. 88). On purpose Gardiner did not include a discussion of styles in her book but her series of lectures on 'domestic economy', delivered a few years earlier, did mention various 'schemes of decoration, including the Early English, Greek, Elizabethan, Jacobean and modern styles of furnishing the hall'.[130] Her recommendation of these styles

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[129] Gardiner, p. 27.
[130] Gardiner, unnumbered pages at the end of the book. These pages include an advert for the lectures and extracts from the press giving reviews on them. Unfortunately the book did not make reference or include illustrations of the styles recommended in her lectures.

responded to expectations belonging to the Aesthetic movement. In contrast, in her book she was enthusiastic about the type of furniture inspired in Arts and Crafts designs such as the artistic stained suite.

Of all rooms, Mrs Peel considered the hall first because it was 'an introduction to the brightness and beauty of the whole house'.[131] Her illustrations showed a square-room type of hall (Fig. 89 and 30). She proposed several schemes, from the cheap to the expensive. For the economic ones the author suggested oak or green stained furniture (the type Gardiner saw for the first time in 1887), in contrast to Sheraton, Chippendale or Adams styles for the expensive ones. The latter were more ornamental and had better quality materials. Other differences included:

Inexpensive scheme	**Expensive scheme**
Stained floor, cork, carpet or linoleum	Parquet floor
Cast-iron mantelpiece	Mantelpiece made of 'good wood'
Distempered walls in the vestibule	'Walls hung with ingrain paper in shades of turquoise and Gobelin blue'[132]

Having green stained furniture was a giveaway for Arts and Crafts influence but this was also noticeable in Mrs Peel recreation of a hall in the 'old English' style recalling the seventeenth century (Fig. 89). In any case the right look for this room required enamelled ivory woodwork and doors with soft-green leaded-glass at the top and large copper or brass finger plates and handles 'of artistic design', that is, an Arts and Crafts or New Art design. The room also required old prints or engravings for the walls, old blue china on tables and shelves, portieres of old-fashioned material in new designs, an eastern carpet and a copper or brass pot with an aspidistra or big palm. The walls were covered with a Lincrusta, Anaglypta or an arras dado and orange-yellow, blue or red wallpaper. On the utilitarian side it was necessary to have a wrought-iron umbrella stand and mats of cocoa fibre.[133] The schemes as a whole showed a mixture of new and old elements. For example, the brocaded rep for the portiere was 'an old-fashioned material which has now been reproduced in good colours and designs, and which is of a smooth dust-resisting surface.'[134] The appearance of the portiere was old, but its modern reproduction answered contemporary aesthetic and practical needs (Fig. 90).

Penelope's example of hall and landing was a scheme designed and produced by Messrs. Smee and Cobay from New Bond Street.[135] The room was square shaped and had a central position in the house to underline its importance. In the author's opinion Victorian old-fashioned halls exhibited a 'hideous' hallstand for coats, hats and umbrellas, but in the modern one there was a cloakroom hiding its contents from sight. According to the house plan, this area was

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[131] Peel, p. 67.
[132] Peel, p. 87-88.
[133] Peel, p. 80-88.
[134] Peel, p. 81.
[135] Penelope, *The House*, 5 (1899), 52-55.

divided in two: the porch and the hall proper or inner hall. For the porch the author recommended a dado of raised material painted 'self-colour' (instead of the wood grained effect she forbade), and for the walls a distempered paper in pale yellow. The secret was to have either contrasting or related colours.

The scheme for the inner hall and landing reflected an Arts and Crafts inspiration seen on its fretwork, quaint looking furniture in fumigated oak with splayed legs and copper mounts, and on the designs for the portiere, frieze and wallpaper (Figs. 91-93). All the woodwork was painted 'subtle myrtle green' in contrast to the pale yellow wallpaper. The stencilled frieze had 'browns and orange-reds on a dull yellow ground'. The curtains were in plain serge of orange and red, and the carpet showed the same green as the woodwork. All these were colour combinations associated with Arts and Crafts and New Art designs for furniture, wallpapers and fabrics.[136] Penelope explained that colour schemes were essential to guarantee a harmonious whole. Other Arts and Crafts features included the deep frieze and the novelty of having no central pattern on the square carpet.

Summarizing up till here, Gardiner had overall a utilitarian approach with some decorative considerations while Mrs Peel treated the hall as a room of ornamental character where historical styles for furniture predominated for the more expensive schemes and where the furnishings all demonstrated the influence of Arts and Crafts designs. Compared to Mrs Peel's, Penelope's example exhibited a stricter adherence to Arts and Crafts original designs. These latter authors both engaged in a detailed discussion of the right colours and colour combinations to achieve unity and the best decorative effect.

Crouch and Butler criticised the trend of turning the hall and staircase into a show place and insisted they were 'writing for the man of moderate means, who has no money to waste on the ostentatious'.[137] Nevertheless the couple thought that the hall 'must not be a mere passage', and added 'it must be an ante-room to the more important apartments of the house, and must itself be an apartment which can take, at ordinary times, the place of the more formal Drawing-Room, and on state occasions become a useful adjunct to it. [...] A fireplace of fair size is indispensable, and a cosy ingle-nook is very desirable'[138] (Figs. 94, 34). Regarding its decoration, and alluding to the Aesthetic fashion, the authors advised against the 'jarring exotic which the professional decorator will give us in common with a thousand other clients'.[139] They thus encouraged each householder to develop a personal taste even if it was not to the liking of visitors. The illustrations show two Jacobean and vernacular inspired interiors with a predominance of wood and very little soft furnishing. In figures 94 and 34 furniture is kept to a minimum. The ceiling beams and panels make a sharp contrast with the white painted walls and

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[136] Penelope, p. 54.
[137] Crouch and Butler, p. 19.
[138] Crouch and Butler, p. 19.
[139] Crouch and Butler, p. 27.

divide the space in very marked rectangles. These photographs stress the importance of architectural features in defining an interior.

Jennings acknowledged the importance of the hall in causing a big first impression to visitors (Fig. 95). Accordingly for the passage-type of hall he suggested enclosing the staircase by an arched headway to conceal the landing and therefore give a more room-like appearance (Fig. 96). As a minimum scheme he suggested a narrow table, a couple of oak chairs, and a hat and umbrella stand to match. He recommended having a log fire instead of hot water coils or steam pipes which could not be made artistic. Jennings' favourite furnishing style was Elizabethan, for its 'rich dignity'. An ideal Elizabethan hall (not within reach of most people, the author reckoned) would have oak panelled walls, a big carved fireplace and a ceiling in high relief (Fig. 97). 'The panelling [...] may be supplemented with old armour in niches, or pieces of tapestry, or choice old prints, or antlers and other trophies of the chase.'[140] In using hunt trophies as decoration this room revealed a masculine accent. For the smaller kind of house and flat Jennings placed the emphasis on having a deep frieze with a bold design, a tiled chimney, dark woodwork and fumed oak furniture in any English period style (Fig. 98). An Arts and Crafts influence is evident in his recommendation of fumed oak, English styles and Elizabethan interiors.

Elder-Duncan used a double approach in his discussion of specific plans of decoration. He suggested an ideal scheme for the large kind of house but also delivered practical recommendations for the smaller type with an emphasis on what to avoid. In any case the hall, according to the author, should be bright and cheerful (Fig. 99). A good sized hall (the type found in a large house) should be treated and furnished as a small sitting-room and should have oak furniture such as a small bureau table, a gate-leg table, a grandfather clock, a couple of rush-seated ladder-back chairs, one or two grandfather chairs if there is a fireplace or a high-back settle. Other necessary items include a stand for coats, hats and umbrellas, a small and plain wardrobe, a simple oak mirror for the ladies and a card tray for visitors. Regarding style the author noted: 'oak furniture usually preferred of 17th and 18th century patterns'.[141] For the passage hall he admitted 'it is not what one would, but what one can do' and accordingly suggested a seat, a small umbrella stand and a stand where the rows of pegs for coats and hats alternated. Contravening Jennings' recommendation, he advised householders against 'antlers, spears, assegais, shields, and all the other miscellaneous animal relics and weapons of warfare'.[142]

Sparrow did not discuss the hall although he included illustrations showing two examples designed by C. F. A. Voysey and Walter Cave (Figs. 100-01). Gregory did something similar, providing images of architect's work (Figs. 102-03) and only addressing briefly the ordinary type of hall towards the end of the book. Both authors thought this space, as a proper room, was only found in the wealthier household. 'It may be that the word "hall" is merely a complimentary

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[140] H. J. Jennings, p. 142.
[141] J. H. Elder-Duncan, pp. 139, 140, 151.
[142] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 140.

title used in reference to what is after all merely a passage-way. If such is the case, the necessary furniture is reduced to a hat-rack and an umbrella-stand.' Gregory also suggested some cocoanut mats at each door and a bright wallpaper to make it cheerful. The photographs of the architect-designed halls emphasized the woodwork and architectural features, with Gregory's examples showing very few pieces of furniture and ornaments. In these four illustrations the presence of textiles and patterns, and therefore their colours, are reduced to a minimum. These interiors clearly stress more the language of architecture to define the space visually.

Dining room

According to advice authors, in earlier Victorian years dining rooms used to be decorated in dark colours and furnished with heavy, bulky and ugly furniture. Decoration and ambiance were sombre. Several authors criticised this and stressed that a dining room should be cheerful, with light and bright colours. Among the changes taking place in these years, the dados gradually gave way to panelling up to the frieze and to deep friezes. In general the furniture and furnishing recommended went along the lines of 'old English' styles such as Elizabethan and Jacobean. Mrs Peel, Jennings and Elder-Duncan also included late eighteenth century English models. It is interesting to note that advisers did not consider French styles suitable for the dining room or for any room regarded as a masculine preserve. Of the schemes depicted overall there were two favoured models. The expensive one would have oak panelled walls, decorated frieze, oak beams, oak floors, Turkey carpets, Tudor or Jacobean table (such as the gate-leg variety) and leather seat chairs. In contrast the vernacular 'quaint' scheme would express rustic 'simplicity' with exposed wood beams, a dresser, a refectory type of table, rush seat chairs, rugs on wooden floor and old-fashioned cottage curtains.

Regarding the smaller kind of house most authors criticised the habit of reserving the larger room just for formal calls while setting aside the smaller one as a combined dining and living room. This comment implied that many families actually used the dining room also as a living room. Authors considered different possibilities of decoration according to the means of the householder urging readers to use 'common sense' and to avoid expensive and showy articles (such as substantial dining tables). The most criticised objects were the ordinary sideboard and dining table for being ugly, bulky and badly carved. Instead authors recommended the old cottage dresser and the Jacobean leg-table as examples of elegance and simplicity.

For the average type of household Gardiner believed the dining room should have more than one function and be treated also as a drawing room and morning room requiring therefore something different to the usual suite. She suggested strong and well-built furniture, a dado or frieze depending on the height of the room, and Scotch or Kidderminster 'squares' (carpets) rather than the costly Brussels, to go on top of Chinese matting. If money was not an object then polished wood was preferable although it required waxing with elbow-grewe every day.

The furniture could include a mahogany dining table, a buffet, a pine Pembroke table and a pine writing table; a couch, two basket chairs with cushions, six rush chairs, two footstools, a Cheviot carpet, a pair of tapestry curtains and a clock. This scheme clearly combined the functions of dining and general everyday use reflecting the fact that many people lived in small houses with just one or two living rooms.[143]

With a less modest household in mind, Mrs Peel enticed readers to abandon old ways and embrace new ones. 'I say shun dark tones and the conventional dining-room designs, and have warm brilliant reds, clear bright yellows, or soft turquoise-blue'.[144] 'Shun convention' the author kept repeating. She invited readers, for example, to move the dining table from its central position and towards the window to avoid the problem of sitting too close to the fire or being exposed to draughts. She also advised against buying a good quality polished table since it was going to be covered with a cloth anyway and its delicate surface was at risk of being spoilt by hot dishes and spilt liquids. Regarding furniture there were, as in the hall, two main choices: the Arts and Crafts inspired stained green furniture with copper mountings (although the author never used the phrase Arts and Crafts) (Fig. 104), and modern reproductions of Sheraton, Chippendale and Adams in mahogany (Fig. 105). To go with any of these, ideally the walls should be panelled - an expensive option Mrs Peel admitted - or covered in wallpaper of a large pattern. Her most expensive scheme specified 'oak panelled walls and oak floor; deep frieze of poppy-red paper; Turkey carpet; red leather chair seats; bright red velvet hangings [and] Spanish leather screen'.[145] Mrs Peel emphasized the importance of having the right colouring for walls. She complained about conventional papers and particularly about dark colours such as 'dark maroon or sage green picked out with gold' (this was an allusion to colours used during the Aesthetic years). She argued the same for the drawing room inviting householders to have strong colouring on walls, carpets and curtains. She was particular about the best colour combinations and specified different possibilities. She regarded the dining room as a place exclusively for taking meals. For other needs she pointed at the advantages of having a morning or smoking room. 'It is very necessary for the comfort of the household, that the new home should contain a room in which the master and mistress can read, write, work, or rest free from interruption.'[146] This other room was to be informal and furnished inexpensively.

Disagreeing with Mrs Peel, Penelope said: 'I deprecate the idea that the dining-room should be regarded as an apartment merely for feeding purposes'. She also remarked that the scheme should be 'a complete idea bound together from floor to ceiling' and therefore opposed to the usual over-furnished room where 'the lady of the house' would display 'furnishing vanities, or shams which may be classified as "lies"'.[147] The firm Messrs. Bartholomew and Fletcher designed the scheme illustrated. According to the author the firm was known for promoting the revival of English oak furniture. The whole room was panelled with 'wainscot' and the ceiling

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[143] Gardiner, pp. 30-39.
[144] Peel, p. 100.
[145] Peel, p. 110.
[146] Peel, p. 112.
[147] Penelope, 5 (1899), 133-135 (p. 133).

was decorated with oak beams forming squares.[148] The dining table, sideboard and window seat followed vernacular and Jacobean Arts and Crafts lines, and together with the chairs, lantern and ornaments (including Della Robbia, De Morgan or Delft ware) they gave the place a seventeenth century semblance (Figs. 106-07). Penelope assured readers of 'the artistic and substantial effect' of wainscot by associating it to panelled rooms found in old halls, castles and farmhouses. She explained that the oak beams were 'added to the ceiling –*i.e.*, if it does not already possess them'.[149] In spite of the author's scolding of 'the lady of the house' for furnishing with shams, this detail reveals her contradiction and compromise. There was a significant difference between the work of Arts and Crafts designers and that of imitators. For the former, having real structural beams on display was a proof of 'honesty' in construction, while furnishing firms (and consumers) did not have qualms about decorative fake beams.

The character of this room was different from the one in the hall, but both had been equally inspired by Arts and Crafts ideas and designs. To complement the furniture the upholstery was carried out in tapestry of 'old design' with colouring based on greens and reds in harmonious contrast to the dark stained oak and to the Turkey carpet in 'Indian red, old gold, and dull peacock blue'.[150] Even the grandfather's chair (based on an early eighteenth century design) helped in giving the decoration the effect of 'quaintness'. The room had therefore a mixed character of modernized vernacular Arts and Crafts and historical styles. While the scheme for the hall and landing was unprecedented and original, the one in the dining room combined old and new elements to evoke a romanticized image of the English past. This was also the case with the study designed by Messrs. Graham & Banks, which was carried out on Jacobean lines resembling the masculine atmosphere of the dining room.[151] Similar schemes would appear in most trade catalogues at the time.

Crouch and Butler acknowledged that the dining room in most cases was also used as the family sitting-room. Regarding its furnishing, and having in mind the householder of moderate means, the authors were very much in favour of the quaint and vernacular scheme. They described the room as homely and very much inspired in a peasant's cottage where 'the beams and joists should be left exposed'. It would have 'a boarded floor and a few rich rugs'. As the most suitable pieces of furniture the authors recommended the old-fashioned oak dresser (instead of the usual sideboard) displaying old china, an oval gate-legged table and chairs of the type found in old farmhouse kitchens. This was their definition of simplicity; a scheme as far as could be found from the 'highly polished elaborate pieces of furniture displayed in modern show-rooms'.[152] A similar but more expensive 'homely dining-room' had oak panelled walls up to window level contrasting with a plain frieze (Fig. 108). The main attraction was the combination of ingle-nook and fireplace made of stone and red bricks. The windows were of the casement type, and instead of the conventional heavy curtains they had the old-fashioned cottage curtains

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[148] Wainscot was a system of wood panelling devised to reduce costs by simplifying the assemblage of panels.
[149] Penelope, p. 134.
[150] Penelope, p. 134.
[151] Penelope, 6 (1899-1900), 28-29.
[152] Crouch and Butler, p. 49.

made of modern washable materials. As so many architects at the time, the authors were against the use of heavy drapery because they believed it harboured dust and insects and was therefore unhealthy. The furniture, together with old china and items of polished copper, brass or pewter ware added to the 'quaintness and simplicity' of the room. Because not everybody could afford a room like this -the oak panelling being expensive, the authors suggested deal panelling painted in cream as an alternative. And an even cheaper method was that of using plain distemper or a 'well-chosen' wallpaper.[153]

In tune with Mrs Peel, Jennings explained that until recent times the dining room was the most solemn and gloomy room in the house where dark colours and massive furniture predominated. By contrast the tone and atmosphere, although still manly, should be cheerful and inviting. 'My contention is that the Dining Room should be the man's Paradise, as the Drawing Room is the woman's.'[154] In terms of style he suggested: 'you may have it in Italian Renaissance, Francois Premier, Elizabethan, Jacobean (Fig. 109), Eighteenth Century English, or Modern English Renaissance.'[155] His favourite was the latter complemented with a Turkey carpet, old plated candelabra and curtains in old designs. He also commended electric lighting (because gas tarnished metallic surfaces and coal gas consumed the oxygen in the room), but conceded that the best for artistic effect were the shaded candles. As mentioned already, Modern English Renaissance was the name Jennings gave to Waring & Gillow's commercial interpretation of Arts and Crafts ideas and designs, and defined it as the 'modernized application of the earlier English styles'.[156] The author acknowledged that the merit of the English models was that 'they are expressive of a certain national sentiment which finds its strongest note in the family circle.'[157] Jennings also addressed the breakfast/morning room describing it as a family room furnished with simple furniture, not too lively wallpaper, few nice drawings and few bookshelves.[158]

Elder-Duncan referred to the Victorians as something from the past. He criticised their depressing dining room schemes of decoration achieved by dark green and dark red colours and gilt framed oil paintings. The modern thing was to create a cheerful room and have engravings of 'old or modern pictures'.[159] He advocated wood panelling for walls, door, fireplace and window.[160] To go with the panelling he recommended oak furniture, plain finished or fumed, as in the Cottage range based on Jacobean models produced by Heal & Son (Figs. 110-11). Other styles mentioned were Elizabethan, Jacobean and even Georgian, either as old furniture or modern reproductions (Fig. 112).[161] Regarding suites the author subscribed to the idea that all chairs should match but that carving or turning was unnecessary on the table and

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[153] Crouch and Butler, pp. 49-69 (pp. 49-51, 67).
[154] H. J. Jennings, p. 75.
[155] H. J. Jennings, p. 73.
[156] H. J. Jennings, p. 158.
[157] H. J. Jennings, p. 157.
[158] H. J. Jennings, p. 74.
[159] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 152.
[160] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 64.
[161] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 158.

sideboard.[162] He decried the ugliness of the common dining table saying that it was badly proportioned and designed: 'the square frame with its crude mouldings resting on four bulbous legs can never be made to appear beautiful.'[163] Instead it was preferable to have a gate-leg table, a Cromwellian table or the cottage set kind. He expressed a similar criticism of the average sideboard with unnecessary bulbous spindles and bevel-edged mirror. In his opinion, it was better and cheaper to have 'the old dressers, which, happily, have come back to favour, and are to be had as cheap, new and old'.[164] Another good option was to buy modern reproductions of late eighteenth century sideboards (Sheraton or Adam), which were cheaper than the ordinary sideboard. If the household had a breakfast-room the author suggested that the furnishing should be similar to that of the dining room.

Sparrow addressed what he called 'the average house for the Middle Classes'. This house ideally had three day-rooms: one for meals, another for family life and the third one for recreation. Sparrow avoided the terms dining room and drawing room. He said that it was 'absurd to give in a small house a plan which is nothing more than a pocket edition of a large mansion', and added 'small houses need two good sitting-rooms, and that one should be a comfortable dining-hall, built expressly for the general day-life of a family.'[165] He criticized suburban homes for providing rooms of a very small size noting that 'there are a great many homes that cannot afford to keep a room exclusively for the table hours, and this fact receives no attention at all from the builders of suburban streets and houses, who cram into their plans too many rooms of a diminutive size.'[166] A good way of improving these, the author thought, was to oblige speculative builders, by law, to provide fitments such as sideboards.[167] In any case the necessary furniture for the dining room included a table with chairs at each end, a fireplace, a sideboard with drawers and cupboards, and a cabinet to keep tea and coffee sets and glass. He refused to prescribe a specific scheme of decoration. Sparrow believed readers should learn the principles on decoration and then apply them exercising personal choices. He pointed out that schemes also depended on every room's particular needs such as size, shape, amount of light, the preferences of householders and income (Fig. 113). Additionally, he agreed with Mrs Peel in suggesting that 'a dining-room should communicate with the kitchen, either by a serving-hatch or by a serving-passage, or, again, by a lift from a basement'.[168]

Gregory testified that in the years leading to 1913 the dining room had less of a formal character and had become more a second living room. He believed formality was out of place both in the drawing and dining rooms. His observation pointed at a home atmosphere based more on family life than on socializing and entertaining, implying perhaps that formal socializing at home was the privilege of wealthier people. In general Gregory viewed the ordinary way of furnishing

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[162] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 136.
[163] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 157.
[164] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 159.
[165] Sparrow, p. 292.
[166] Sparrow, p. 292.
[167] Sparrow, p. 264.
[168] Sparrow, p. 296.

the dining room as conventional and common-place, because 'the shopman' supplied the same things to 'nine out of every ten houses lived in by the highly respectable middle-class British Public'.[169] Echoing previous authors he suggested getting rid of the poorly designed ordinary sideboard and replacing it with the traditional dresser from the seventeenth century (Fig. 114) and a side-table from the eighteenth century, which some manufacturers were reproducing to a high standard. The same applied to the dining table and Gregory suggested having an oak gate-leg table instead. The dresser had two merits in his eyes; compared to the Victorian sideboard it did not suggest the idea of excessive eating, and compared to some examples of modern furniture it did not 'give the impression of plain living and high thinking inspired by some of the furniture of twentieth-century craftsmen'. The latter part of Gregory's remark was a criticism toward the kind of austere aesthetic promoted by craftsmen linked to the Arts and Crafts movement producing original furniture. He obviously preferred designs inspired by past and vernacular models (Fig. 115).

Drawing room

It seemed most authors were in a campaign to change the character of the drawing room in the ordinary household from being a place of formal entertaining towards becoming a family sitting room. Authors referred to and criticised the habit of reserving one room mainly for ceremonial occasions when homelike meant the opposite, lived in and used often. Some said that people pretended to have many sitting rooms when in fact most ordinary houses only had two, one of which had to be used as the dining room. Advisers suggested abandoning the idea (and term) of the drawing room and the pretence of formal entertaining which most people in any case could not afford. Instead, they thought, people should adopt the concept of the living room defined by family life and informality. Thus the furniture and furnishing for this room depended on the function it adopted: that of a drawing room or of a sitting room.

Traditionally this room had a feminine character and, as seen in Chapter 2, of all the rooms in the house it was the most criticized. As the epitome of middle-class women's taste, authors such as Crouch & Butler, Sparrow and Gregory targeted the drawing room for the many faults found in commercial design and decoration. In the last decades of the nineteenth century there was a strong trend for the display of knick-knacks and ornaments in the drawing room. Reacting to that authors criticised the tendency to overcrowd spaces with ornaments and furniture.

Regarding styles, advice writers agreed that the modern ones were not appropriate for the drawing room (meaning Arts and Crafts' and New Art's) suggesting instead eighteenth century styles, both French and English. About colour schemes authors said they should be light, bright, cheerful and rich, while also promoting painting wood panelling and mouldings in white or ivory. Rugs and square carpets were preferable to fitted carpets although Gregory recommended the latter thanks to the invention of a vacuum-cleaning machine.

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[169] Gregory, p. 35.

Gardiner remembered with disgust the drawing rooms of the past: 'Those whitened sepulchres, smelling of must and damp, which were reserved for grand receptions, or for spending a few hours in on Sunday afternoon'.[170]As with the dining room, for the author the drawing room was to perform more than one function, being not just the place for entertaining but also the family sitting room. It should be in constant use, for work and for recreation, otherwise 'it soon puts on an air of funereal solemnity which oppresses us and our friends'.[171] Regarding the room decoration, if there was enough money readers could choose between Tynecastle Tapestry or Anaglypta to adorn the ceiling. Likewise the carpets could be Brussels, Axminster or Wilton, with a surround of linoleum or Chinese matting. Bay windows were suitable for having 'a cosy summer nook' together with a small table for plants, books or a work-basket (for mending or darning). If the room had recesses Gardiner suggested displaying a writing table with a bookcase in one of them and the piano in the other. To complement the furnishing she listed more small tables, four occasional chairs, several easy chairs, and a Chesterfield couch with down cushions covered in frilled silk. The windows could be dressed with fine lace or frilled muslin curtains, having thicker ones on top made of plushette or silk brocade. The room ought to have plenty of flowers and plants, such as ferns and palms displayed in 'art pottery', and framed etchings rather than 'heterogeneous collections of penny fans, plush frames and other dust traps'. [172] Figure 116 illustrates a drawing room in a flat. Notice how the newspaper on the floor points at an informal atmosphere. Nevertheless it is clear from Gardiner's description that more money and effort were spent in the furnishing and decoration of this room than in the dining room or in any other room in the home.

Much of what Mrs Peel said regarding the hall and the dining room also applied to the drawing room: similar treatment for floors, walls, ceiling, windows and doors. The main difference lay on the furniture and ornaments. Of all the rooms in the home this was the one where a most decorative, ornamental character predominated and in consequence it tended to concentrate the most expensive items, designs and materials (Fig. 117). To avoid confusion Mrs Peel stated clearly the kind of drawing room that should be avoided:

> Cover the walls with a paper of feeble tint and design, dress the chairs in an unobtrusive striped brocade or a timidly designed chintz, scatter unmeaning little nick-nacks and mediocre water-colour drawings all over the walls and shelves, strew photographs about with a liberal hand and the thing is done.[173]

The author's formula to achieve a good effect was to have 'simplicity of adornment, combined with richness and originality of colouring'. Considering the adjectives used in her description of a commonplace drawing room –'feeble', 'unobtrusive', 'timid', 'unmeaning'- the author's idea of novelty was expressed in having bright greens or reds on walls, fabrics, carpets and curtains as the background for few and selected furniture and ornaments. She also stressed the importance

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[170] Gardiner, pp. 80-81.
[171] Gardiner, p. 80.
[172] Gardiner, p. 86.
[173] Peel, pp. 136-37.

of buying strong furniture rather than the 'rickety little tables and palm stands', this being a comment against features that had been popular with the Aesthetic schemes.

The styles to have were, once again, mahogany Chippendale, Adams and Sheraton, as real antiques if possible. There was no place in this room for the green stained wood variety. The only concessions to the Arts and Crafts style were to be found in large doorplates 'in a beautiful design' made of beaten metal, and on the tiled hearth and grate. If there was enough money, readers should consider French styles (Fig. 118). In any case the fireplace and overmantel, the screen, and the design in lamps and candelabra had to harmonize with the style of furniture. An additional recommendation was having varnished or enamelled ivory paint on all woodwork (including panelling) which, Mrs Peel alleged, was not difficult to keep clean (Fig. 90). Finally, as with any other room in the house, plants and flowers provided that extra decorative touch.[174]

The drawing room in Penelope's article, designed by Messrs. Smee and Cobay, had as source of inspiration the Georgian period in its display of various style features from the eighteenth century (Figs. 119-20). As the author pointed out, it was one of the most important rooms in the house and the cost of furniture and furnishings reflected it; a total of £149/14/6, that is, only £10 less than the cost of the dining room which included the expensive oak panelling of the walls. This sums are more impressive if compared with the total cost for the hall and landing at £30, the spare (guest) bedroom at £31 6s, the study at £23 and the best bedroom at £85. The most expensive items for the drawing room were the china cabinet at £19 10s, the corner seat for the bay window with screens and curtains at £18 and the chimney piece at £16 10s. The colour scheme for the room was based on the combination of grey, pink, lemony-yellow and white (mainly on woodwork) displayed on fabrics, carpet, wallpaper, frieze and ceiling. The furniture style, although evoking models of the English eighteenth century, was not consistent. The china cabinet was Adam, the seat by the window Hepplewhite, the settee Sheraton and the occasional tables in figure 119, were Queen Anne inspired. This room heralded the popularity of Georgian styles throughout the Edwardian years.[175]

Complaining about the architecture of the ordinary household, for Crouch and Butler the windows in most drawing rooms were too big and out of proportion, and the walls bare and lacking in design. They explained that to counteract this state of affairs householders reacted by covering the room with excessive draperies, furniture, ornaments and pictures. 'The ideal window is long and low, of the casement variety, with quarried panes of the old-fashioned crown sheet, in leaded frames'.[176] To go with this type of window, the best type of curtain was the old-fashioned cottage curtain, which was a combination of blind and curtain made of muslin, cretonne, or 'Liberty silk', among other materials, and it hung from a thin brass rod (Fig. 121). This ideal window would also have a broad board to hold 'old-fashioned plants'.[177] The central

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[174] Peel, pp. 136-63.
[175] Penelope, 6 (1899), 138-40.
[176] Crouch and Butler, p. 96.
[177] Crouch and Butler, p. 97

feature of the drawing room was the fireplace and the authors suggested designing it specifically for the room and avoiding anything found in show rooms (Figs. 121-22). Regarding furniture appropriate styles would be any based on the English tradition giving notes of daintiness such as Chippendale, Hepplewhite and Sheraton, but, if 'an air of distinction' was wanted the authors then recommended French styles.[178] They reckoned quaintness was appropriate for the hall and dining room but not for the drawing room. Nonetheless, the room in figure121 included two country type wheel-back chairs. This room mixes chairs from different centuries, the one on the left, probably an antique, belongs to the mid to late seventeenth century and the Hepplewhite type to the late eighteenth century. A very modern element is the New Art grate. Figure 122 also shows influence from the New Art in its frieze and in the chair set against the window. In contrast to the previous room, this one emphasizes pattern and soft furnishings.

For Jennings the drawing room was

> 'essentially and pre-eminently the ladies' room; as sacred to their influence and rule as the smoking room is to the regnancy of the men. It is there that the ladies of the house "receive"; there that they preside and enthrone themselves. The whole atmosphere of the apartment is charged with the gracious refinement of woman's subtle spell. It is thither that you adjourn from the dinner-table to listen to music, or to play cards, or to indulge in the lighter intellectual *causeries* to which all can contribute their share. [...] You are in a room which expresses a quality *sui generis* -a quality of rest, sociability, and comfort in an artistic framework.

The character of this room ruled its decoration. Necessary pieces of furniture were easy chairs, occasional chairs, settees, occasional tables, tea tables, the pianoforte and cabinets, all displayed on a carefully chosen central carpet. As most suitable styles the author recommended French styles such as Louis XV and XVI (Fig. 123) and all eighteenth century English styles such as Chippendale, Adam, Hepplewhite and Sheraton (Fig. 124). Ruling principles behind the arrangement of the drawing room were to shun showy display, to avoid symmetrical arrangements and not to overload surfaces with ornaments. Nevertheless the author considered this room as the ideal space for the judicious display of old china,

> such as Sevres cups and saucers with medallion pictures *a la* Watteau, Dresden groups from the old Meissen pottery, examples of old Chelsea, the original Crown Derby, richly-coloured Spode or Minton tea sets, and perhaps, a goblet or two of Capo di Monte. Nothing very rare or costly -only "every-day" bits [...] possessing that relatively antique interest which so greatly enhances their prettiness.[179]

The same as other authors, Jennings disapproved of the room's ceremonial role because it prevented it from developing a 'lived-in' atmosphere.

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[178] Crouch and Butler, p. 93.
[179] H. J. Jennings, p. 199.

Elder-Duncan's description of the drawing room dealt mainly with criticism and particularly with the tendency of many householders to over-furnish and over-crowd, which he considered impractical given that most rooms were bound to be small. 'A multitude of small tables, chairs, palm-stands, and other articles [...] the use of meaningless and unnecessary mouldings, the introduction of "cosy corners" and "nooks," the use of too many plants or flowers, and a surfeit of pictures and ornaments are also frequent evils.'[180] He observed that in the small house the drawing room had more than one function: it was the space for receptions, the music-room and also the main sitting room. He asked readers to be careful when bringing pianos, phonographs or gramophones into the room because their wood could jar with the wood of other furniture: '"Sheraton" furniture and a piano with an ebonised case make a peculiarly uncomfortable ensemble in a drawing-room, and yet how often is this error perpetrated?'[181] Regarding style the author endorsed the words of 'one of the principals of a well-known furnishing house', who said that 'the public preference was for light and elegant furniture' on the lines of Sheraton, Heppelwhite and also French styles of the late eighteenth century, all in mahogany' (Fig. 125).[182] He also discussed briefly the furnishing and decoration of other spaces such as the morning room, boudoir and sitting-hall but pointing out that neither of these were likely to be found in the smaller type of house.

As other authors before him, Sparrow also remarked that many people preferred not to use the drawing room except on Sundays and on special occasions. He criticized the excessive tidiness that turned the room into a formal and uncomfortable space. 'All the coverings are immaculately neat, unwrinkled; the chairs, put methodically in allotted positions, look new and over-polished; and as to that fender in burnished steel, the maid-servant hates it fiercely, for it gives her two hours' work after a fire has burned during the whole day.'[183] The best drawing room, according to the author, was the one used regularly and he preferred to call it the family-room or evening-room. 'Small houses need nothing more [...] Let it have a polished floor covered only with rugs; let the furniture be light and easy to move; and then, if friends come after dinner, a little dance can be arranged in a few minutes.'[184] Sparrow also discussed the morning room, saying it could serve the purposes of a library or a sitting room and should be plainly furnished, made more into a lounge where children could play.[185] The book's illustrations though, only inlcuded drawing room schemes designed and produced by architects for the wealthier householder (Figs. 126-27).

In 1913 Gregory testified to the gradual transformation of the formal drawing room which, he reckoned, was slowly becoming more a living room or sitting-hall in spite of the entrenched belief that regarded it as a space for special occasions. As most of previous authors, Gregory campaigned against overcrowding with what he saw as unnecessary and trivial articles. But

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[180] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 21.
[181] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 25.
[182] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 160.
[183] Sparrow, p. 297.
[184] Sparrow, p. 298.
[185] Sparrow, p. 299.

contrary to a current trend, he favoured the return of the fitted carpet to cover the whole room thanks to the invention of vacuum cleaners. He said fitted carpets helped to reduce noise and served a better aesthetic purpose by providing a bigger visual area. He also upset conventions when recommending that drawing-rooms should not be perfect in style, against the efforts of furnishing firms to bring out schemes following specific periods such as Jacobean or Adam. He called these schemes an anachronism and although he approved of old furniture and modern reproductions of old designs, he favoured a flexible approach rather than aiming to reproduce the rooms of the past. Figures 128 and 129 exemplify, in the hands of architects, the vernacular cottage manner of furnishing with low ceilings, 'old' furniture and country type chairs. Figures 130 and 131, also by architects, offer a sharp contrast in atmosphere. Although the furniture in these rooms followed English and French eighteenth century styles, the deliberate predominance of white and pale colours gave them a contemporary look.

Bedrooms

Most authors discussed bedrooms extensively but each one focusing on different aspects. What they had in common though were the adjectives used to describe ideal bedrooms: fresh, bright, airy, light, cheerful, dainty, etc. In consequence the recommended colours were cream, pink, green and blue, all in pale shades. The bedroom was probably the room in the house undergoing the biggest number of changes in terms of furniture, range of designs and decorative possibilities. This was in part because most houses had several bedrooms and also due to the expectation to have each room in the house furnished in a different style, a trend greatly encouraged by retailers. Some authors mentioned the fact that the bigger type of house usually had a boudoir, or a sitting room next to the bedroom or a bed sitting-room (Figs. 132-34). Gardiner said the boudoir bedroom was important for women because it answered a need to 'enshrine pet possessions'. In terms of house architecture bigger spaces were common in older dwellings and some spacious bedrooms offered a recess for the bed at one end of the room. This remained an ideal and it was often portrayed in trade catalogues (Figs. 134). Elder-Duncan observed that better-class houses tended to have dressing rooms next to bedrooms and proposed joining them through an opening.

Several authors criticized the habit of making the best bedroom into the guest chamber (or spare bedroom). This practice together with the one of reserving the drawing room for special occasions reveals the importance people gave to visitors and to appearances. Again, this was the kind of behaviour, constantly criticised in advice books, that responded to the need of communicating and maintaining class status as reflected in the taste displayed through the household and domestic possessions.

At the turn of the century it was mainly bedrooms showing the full range of fitted furniture. Fitted rooms were recommended on the grounds of space and decorative possibilities. For example, ingle-nooks and cosy corners became very popular in bedrooms (see figs. 145-47) due to the

cheapening of wood panelling and improved machinery. Nonetheless they were still expensive and people were not likely to have them if living in rented houses. Whole fitted bedrooms seemed to go out of fashion after 1905.

Most authors suggested decorating each bedroom in a different style if expense was no object. The economy option was to have stained green ash (losing popularity in the early 1900s), brown walnut or light ash furniture. The most common were the ash or walnut suites. It was usual to describe some suites by the kind of wood used, which usually implied a particular style such as oak for Jacobean and mahogany for Sheraton. Men and women had different preferences and in general householders chose different furniture and furnishings depending on the type of bedroom: best, girl, spare or bachelor. Some authors associated feminine taste with draperies, frills, furbelows and knick-knacks. In contrast they portrayed masculine taste as linked to few and strong pieces of furniture in a room with little ornamentation.

Jennings explained that in general people favoured the uniformity of the suite. The suite was the most common way of furnishing and it usually consisted of bedstead, wardrobe, washstand, dressing table and chest of drawers. To complement it there were one or two rush seat chairs, easy chairs, couch or sofa, writing table, square carpets or rugs, wallpaper, and washable curtains and bedspreads. For suites, there was a variety of woods and colours. Besides oak, authors mentioned ash, deal, walnut, mahogany and pine, which could be treated in several ways: stained, fumed, varnished, polished or enamelled. Hard woods tended to be polished and soft woods painted or enamelled. Enamelled pine was a very popular wood for bedroom furniture. Painted woodwork was also popular and a favourite colour for it was enamelled white or ivory.

Since the 1860s brass and iron bedsteads were considered healthier but ugly, especially without curtains. From around 1902 wooden bedsteads became more popular and their design had a big influence on the design of the metal kind making them less bulky. By 1907 there was a big demand of wooden bedsteads in straight and simple lines. Furniture became lighter and there was less need to use casters to move them. Stained green furniture although not popular anymore, remained cheap. There was a hierarchy in bedrooms based on the cost of furniture: the boudoir was the most expensive to furnish followed by the best bedroom, and the bachelor or girl's bedroom the least. Women authors mentioned more pieces of furniture, like bookshelves, sofa and tables. It seemed, particularly for women, having a writing table in the bedroom was important and an alternative place for it was the drawing room.

Homemade furnishings for the bedroom included needlework, curtains, cushions and bedspreads. Crouch & Butler observed that too much embroidery was wasted on just cushions and antimacassars. Compared to other rooms, bedrooms tended to display more soft furnishings and patterned fabrics. A persistent concern with health issues had an impact on how curtains and carpets were regarded. Square carpets and rugs replaced the fitted kind because

they were easier to keep clean. Acknowledging the need for hygiene most authors advised against heavy curtains but some also admitted that curtains were indispensable anyway for a cheerful and comfortable effect. Jennings recommended chintz patterns for curtains, bedspreads and wallpapers. A good number of people thought undressed beds had an unfinished appearance so instead of giving draperies up they replaced them with washable and lighter fabrics. Bed draperies came back in vogue with the revival of the four-post bed, around 1910.

Gardiner wrote a chapter on bedrooms and another one on the boudoir bedroom. She noted that modern houses tended to be much smaller than those enjoyed by previous generations and therefore their rooms sometimes lacked the necessary space. But, she added, 'we have the solid advantage of being able to set up a cosy and well arranged home for a tithe of the sum it cost our fathers and mothers to do so.'[186] Ideally, for the author, any bedroom should also be used as a sitting room. Polished woods, such as ash, walnut or mahogany were preferable to enamelled pine but the latter was more popular due to its lower cost. She recommended bed curtains to reduce the bare appearance that some furniture had, especially the metal type (Fig. 135). This could be achieved with side wings or three poles attached to the wall (Fig. 136). The character of the boudoir bedroom was feminine; it contained women's treasures and its function was to provide a retreat whenever required. Its furnishing should not be costly and could have fitments made in a range of styles and woods (Figs. 133, 29). To complement the arrangement she suggested a box ottoman-coach and a writing table. Gardiner pointed out that firms produced wallpapers of beautiful designs in cheaper quality materials. The low prices in wallpapers also allowed householders to decorate the servant's bedroom (Fig. 28).

One interesting aspect in Mrs Peel's discussion of bedroom arrangement and decoration was the difference she drew between men and women. 'The average man does not appreciate a be-frilled and be-furlowed room', favouring few plain and strong furniture and no nick-nacks.[187] The image in Figure 137 show a predominance of square shapes and straight lines and less fabric and pattern compared to a woman's bedroom where it was likely to be abundant drapery, round shapes and curved lines together with more ornaments and accessories (Fig. 138). These illustrations suggest an affinity between French and English eighteenth century styles and feminine taste, and also suggest a masculine preference for simplicity in the form of Arts and Crafts oak furniture.

The author invited readers to change the usual suites of ash or walnut furniture in bedrooms and go for variety having, for example, French style furniture in one room, stained wood in another, a third with Sheraton or Chippendale and so on. Overall Mrs Peel expressed her enthusiasm for the 'marvellously cheap and nice suites of stained green furniture which can be

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[186] Gardiner, p. 41.
[187] Peel, p. 178.

bought at Shoolbred's'.[188] To go with any of these styles, she recommended painted and enamelled woodwork in ivory. The average suite would include a bed, dressing table, wardrobe, wash-hand stand, chest of drawers and two or three chairs. Modern suites would include a dressing-chest, which was a combination of dressing table and chest of drawers. A bed sitting-room or a boudoir would also include an easy chair, sofa, writing table, screen and book shelves (Figs. 132, 139). Mrs Peel did not make as much reference to fitted furniture, ingle-nooks or cosy corners in the bedroom, as Gardiner had done, but her illustrations included examples of window fitments and seats (Fig. 140).

In Penelope's series of articles Heal & Son arranged the best bedroom, considered as the 'sleeping apartment of the lady of the house' (Figs. 141-42).[189] At a cost of £85 the scheme aimed to illustrate the very opposite of the 'heavily ornamented or so-called "luxurious" furniture which, alas, forms the ideal of many young wives'. The room represented an Arts and Crafts concept. In praising Heal & Son, the author said the firm was 'intimately connected to the art movement with which the Art Workers' Guild is identified'. F. A. Voysey designed the frieze (named 'The Squire's Garden'), and also the tongs, shovel and grate for the fireplace. Heal & Son also supplied the furniture and furnishings for the dressing room next to the bedroom (not shown in the article). The room was a 'plea for plainness' designed to eradicate 'French modes' and the usual 'huge metal bedstead with great unmeaning blotches of "pebble and splash" in cast brass, and the necessarily florid accompaniments of garish furniture'. The fumed oak 'Chelsea' and the 'St Ives' suites of furniture (for the bedroom and dressing room respectively) were set against a background colour scheme combining greens and blues. 'The whole room has been designed with the greatest care to blend into one harmonious whole.' A common adjective used to describe the Arts and Crafts style of decoration was 'restful', and a repeated noun was 'simplicity'. 'Simplicity has fortunately become a badge of quality'.[190]

Crouch and Butler described first an ideal group of rooms composed by the bedroom itself, a boudoir or small sitting room, a dressing room and the bathroom. In reality it was not uncommon for a bedroom to include a sitting area, usually close to the fireplace. The illustrations (Figs. 143-44) provide an interesting contrast with those of the hall and dining room. Here there are fitments painted white, wallpaper and wicker chairs of New Art design and feminine draperies. The portrait of a woman on the overdoor serves as a gentle reminder that this is (together with the drawing room that also has a woman's portrait) female territory. The authors preferred wooden bedsteads over metal ones as better suited to artistic designs: 'the wood may be either of oak or ash, and either stained green or fumed to a rich brown'.[191] The line of the design, they said, should express simplicity which, they clarified, did not mean poverty of design but rather

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[188] Peel, p. 181.
[189] Penelope, 5 (1899), 213-215. This reference includes all the quotes in this paragraph.
[190] Penelope, p. 213.
[191] Crouch and Butler, pp. 123-24.

'severe self-restraint'.[192] This description was their way of defining an Arts and Crafts design. Additionally they recommended avoiding heavy curtains and fitted carpets on hygienic grounds.

In general Jennings acknowledged that in bedroom furniture most people still preferred 'the uniformity of the suite'.[193] The author suggested the same approach as Mrs Peel's, having each bedroom decorated in a different style and paying attention to the harmonious colouring between fabrics, wallpaper and carpet. Good options were eighteenth century English or French and twentieth century styles in a variety of colour schemes. A big change had taken place in bedsteads with metal ones gradually lightening their design and with wood bedsteads making a come back. The green stained type of furniture though, Jennings explained, had lost its popularity due to the 'harshness of colouring'. The fitted bedroom and fitted furniture, in contrast, were doing well. Better manufacturing machines and lower costs in panelling made them more accessible (Figs. 145-47). More than any other room the bedroom exhibited features of 'New Art' combined with Arts and Crafts giving it a pronounced decorative feel (Figs. 145-46). Together with the drawing room, bedrooms displayed a wide variety in patterns for wallpapers, upholstery, drapery and carpets.

According to Elder-Duncan still a popular way of furnishing the bedroom was buying suites in a variety of woods consisting of wardrobe, washstand, dressing-table (or dressing-chest) and one or two chairs (Figs. 148-51). 'Most modern washstands are fitted with a cupboard'[194] and they also had rails on the side, making the towel-horse redundant. About beds, the author explained that the big demand in wooden bedsteads had influenced the designs of the metal kind making the modern iron and brass ones more desirable with plain round and square section bars (Figs. 152-53). Of all the rooms in the house the bedroom showed the most versatility. It exhibited original Arts and Crafts/'New Art' designs, vernacular designs, a big range in bedsteads and historical models including 'Colonial Adam', with most schemes displaying patterns on wallpapers, drapery and carpets.

About bedrooms and their furnishing, Gregory recorded an increasing range in beds, including the revival of the 18th century four-poster (based on Heppelwhite and Sheraton designs and not on the Elizabethan model), the new black and brass variety, the modern wooden bedstead designed by architects (Figs. 154-55), the iron white enamelled variety, the French bed, and the emergence of the twin bedsteads together with the chair bedstead for bed-sitting rooms. Regarding bedroom architecture the author noticed how in new homes rooms were becoming smaller, and the use of sloping roofs with gable ends and dormer windows had an impact in the size and number of items of furniture, making it difficult sometimes to take in a wardrobe. He also noticed that fitted lavatory basins were replacing the traditional washstand. Gregory recommended suites, but also buying separate items which would allow for example, to include

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[192] Crouch and Butler, p. 124.
[193] H. J. Jennings, p. 226.
[194] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 177.

a chest on a stand. He made a note of the ubiquity of the wire-woven mattress that he considered cheap, hygienic and comfortable.

Odd room

Edward Gregory included in his book a chapter on the decoration of the 'odd room'. Apart from the references made by Sparrow about the need to have a space dedicated to hobbies, this was new territory in advice literature. Gregory noticed that usually there was a room in the house which people did not furnish completely (such as an extra bedroom) and whose function was never clearly decided and thus ended up as a storage room for old things and bits and pieces. The remedy in his opinion was to give this room a specific function that would dictate the kind of furnishing required. Among the list of possibilities he mentioned 'a nursery, smoking-room, games-room, music-room, home gymnasium, sewing-room, garden-room (if the position is right), library or study, photographic-room (water-supply a necessity, and litter inevitable), or general workroom'.[195] He also called attention to the possibilities of making useful the space underneath the roof of the house where people usually kept the water-tank, and suggested turning it into a habitable room (Fig. 156). That the author dedicated a whole chapter to the discussion of a room with no set function was probably reflecting that homes and families were becoming more varied in their habits, that home entertainment was changing, and that advice literature was trying to catch up with changes in life styles.

Kitchen

Most authors considered the kitchen important and relevant enough to include it in a discussion of domestic furnishing. They portrayed it as a working space and this function was reflected in the straightforward and practical type of furniture needed. Gardiner and Mrs Peel cared to include some decorative touches. Besides the kitchen some authors also mentioned the adjoining scullery, pantry, larder and coal cellar. Many emphasized improvements granted by technology such as access to cold and hot running water, kitchen ranges, electricity and glazed tiling for floors and walls. These innovations seemed to be connected with a growing scarcity in domestic service. The furnishing and equipment of the kitchen in the modern home had to appeal both to servants (in the case of wealthier households), and, perhaps more important, to the housewife who could not afford domestic help and had to do the cooking and house chores herself. The integration of innovations and technology made the kitchen one of the most modern rooms in the home with no attempt at disguising its modernity.

In 'The Kitchen up to date', the third lecture in her *House and Home* series, Gardiner illustrated 'recently invented labour-saving appliances of a simple and practical character'.[196] In her book she illustrated 'a model kitchen' (Fig. 27) displaying wallpaper, curtains, a rug with pattern in

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[195] Gregory, p. 60.
[196] Gardiner, unpaginated pages at the end of the book.

front of the range, a wicker chair and a dresser with decorative hinges on the doors. As discussed before, Gardiner expressed the modernity of the home through modern practical things such as 'the cooking table [...] a novelty, with its boards of various sizes for pastry and chopping vegetables'[197]. Technology played a central part in recent innovations: 'a convertible range is so superior to the old-fashioned open grate, that the latter are gradually becoming extinct'.[198]

Mrs Peel called attention to the term used to refer to this part of the house. 'The "offices" [...] they contemptuously term the kitchen, scullery, pantry, larders and coal cellars.'[199] With a practical mind, she thought the walls in this area should have white glazed tiles making them easy to wash with a hose.[200] As mentioned before, she was not shy in encouraging architectural alterations to make domestic chores easier. She suggested either a lift between kitchen and dining room or a hatch connecting both rooms if on the same floor[201]. Regarding decoration the author insisted all windows in the house, including the kitchen, should have 'curtains of cream-coloured muslin edged with narrow ball fringe', and that the kitchen windowsill should have 'a trio of green flower-pots filled with white daisies.'[202] About doors, the ones giving access to the kitchen stairs should have green leaded glass at the top and large copper door-plates.[203] The rest of doors in this part of the house should be painted and varnished 'to match the hall door and window sashes'.[204] Through decoration Mrs Peel integrated 'the offices' into the rest of the house.

Elder-Duncan discussed briefly the furnishing a kitchen required noting that most new houses included 'a dresser, some shelving, a cupboard or two, and a rack for dish-covers.'[205] Such basic fitments were to be complemented with at least one table, a couple of chairs and fireplace accessories such as fender, fire-irons, coal box, etc.

In his description of the household offices Sparrow included 'a bedroom, a kitchen, a scullery, a pantry, a closet, and a bath, this to be put in the scullery'.[206] As if following Mrs Peel's advice he also recommended a serving-hatch or a lift between kitchen and dining room.[207] He took it for granted that the kitchen had a supply of hot water and even suggested a separate one for the nursery so as to avoid quarrels between the nurse and the cook.

For Gregory the kitchen was an important room in the house and he wrote a whole section about it. 'In most houses the kitchen is not only a work-room but a sitting-room as well, and it

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[197] Gardiner, p. 51.
[198] Gardiner, p. 48.
[199] Peel, p. 47.
[200] Peel, p. 30.
[201] Peel, p. 18.
[202] Peel, p. 33.
[203] Peel, p. 85.
[204] Peel, p. 30.
[205] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 180.
[206] Sparrow, p. 284.
[207] Sparrow, p. 296.

should be so regarded when the furniture is bought.'[208] He explained that the builder usually provided basic fittings to this space such as the range and a dresser fitted into one of the recesses.[209] On top of that the kitchen only required a table with drawers 'bought as large as can be accommodated', a couple of chairs and a thick rug to be placed on the tiled floor in front of the fire.[210] Gregory recommended Windsor chairs, one of them with arms.[211] The illustration in the book (Fig. 157) shows a kitchen designed by the architect Mr. Walter H. Brierley, F.R.I.B.A. It has an electric roof lamp and a sink (on the left). Next to the kitchen, instead of a scullery there was a small sitting room for servants' use. This architect argued that it was not necessary anymore for a household to have both kitchen and scullery because modern trade did most of the work that was previously carried out at home, providing meat and groceries in a state ready for cooking. Shops also offered a wide range of pre-cooked food. 'Consider the number of soups, canned meats, prepared cereals, jams, jellies, cakes, and so on, which only require heating to be ready for the table, and often not even that.'[212] This fact also meant that less space was needed at home for storage.

The meaning of styles

As noted before, Gardiner did not include in her book a discussion of styles because she did not consider it relevant to her lower middle-class audience, but her series of lectures of the early 1890s addressed them. The series started with the history of British furniture from Anglo-Saxon times to the end of the eighteenth century, providing limelight-lantern illustrations. When she referred to the hall in her second lecture she showed different schemes and styles such as Early English, Elizabethan, Jacobean and Modern. For the drawing room she suggested artistically furnished schemes following Gothic, Elizabethan and Adam styles. Reflecting the influence of the Aesthetic movement and its appreciation of exotic cultures, she also recommended Greek style for the hall, and Japanese and Moorish schemes for the drawing room. Gardiner's lectures belonged to the transitional time from the Aesthetic influence to a period where the distinct ideas and designs of the Arts and Crafts movement became more prominent.[213] By the time she published her book in 1894 she had moved into new territory recommending furniture inspired in Arts and Crafts designs. She identified it mostly with the new green stained variety she had seen for the first time at the Manchester Jubilee Exhibition in 1887 (probably based on original designs by Ford Madox Brown).[214] Gardiner sourced many of her book's drawings from furnishing firm's trade catalogues, and although they were not a direct representation of the text descriptions and recommendations, they helped in communicating the author's decorative ideas. The book's images still showed traces of Japanese and Moorish décor but, as said, it

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[208] Gregory, p. 95.
[209] Gardiner, p. 98.
[210] Gregory, pp. 100-01.
[211] Gregory, pp. 101-02.
[212] Gregory, pp. 95-6.
[213] Gardiner, advert for 'House and Home' lectures, unpaginated pages at the end of the book.
[214] At the Manchester Jubilee Exhibition in 1887 Ford Madox Brown (a member of the Arts and Crafts movement) designed the furniture for 'an ideal working man's cottage'. He used chromium oxides to get the green stained effect.

made no explicit reference to historical styles. The schemes emphasized the decorative potential of arches, fitments and drapery, mainly when applied to windows and recesses next to fireplaces (Figs. 158-59, 133, 29).[215] As said, the author did not consider the discussion of styles necessary for the lower section of the middle class she was targeting in her book. 'Though the rich may indulge their furniture fancies, for the modest household utility will be the first consideration.'[216] Gardiner pointed out class associations in this opposition between historical style and utility, and related style, identified with past models, to a wealthier social standing.

Mrs Peel's was in favour of all styles, old and new. Although there was a link between historical styles and the more expensive schemes, she does not relate them to class, as Gardiner did. Her 'new home' illustrated many Arts and Crafts inspired schemes for the dining room and vernacular ones for the man's bedroom, complemented with wallpapers of 'New Art' design (Figs. 104, 137). In contrast and for the feminine rooms in the house she showed predilection for English and French eighteenth century styles as seen in the drawing room and best bedroom (Figs. 117-18, 138-40). The furniture in these rooms had a strong ornamental character seen on painted screens, carved wood and marquetry (Figs. 30, 90, 105). Images showed abundant soft furnishing in upholstered armchairs and sofas, cushions (each one in a different fabric), drapery, curtain arrangements and carpets (Figs. 160, 21).[217] The overall impression in most schemes was one of cosiness and comfort. To complement and integrate all schemes there were plants (palm types mainly) and flowers, and a wide range of ornaments, old and new: vases, pots, old ware, metal plates and china.

In Penelope's model house furnished by various commercial firms all schemes were inspired by modern Arts and Crafts ideas and designs. The most original pieces were in the hall and best bedroom (including some by Voysey), but all rooms displayed modernized versions of past models. The hall paid tribute to the medieval period (Figs. 91-93), while the dining room (Figs. 106-07), best bedroom (Figs. 141-42) and study expressed a leaning towards a combination of medieval, vernacular and Jacobean designs. In sharp contrast, the drawing room (Figs. 119-20) showed preference for a mixture of English styles from the eighteenth century. What bound the whole place together was that all styles and designs were English suggesting perhaps an affirmation of national identity.

Crouch & Butler were strongly influenced by the Arts and Crafts ethos. The modern schemes they praised were historically inspired on grounds of their coherence. Overall they recommended the work of the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, both 'full of

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[215] Gardiner acknowledged that several firms assisted her with her book and illustrations. She cited 'Messrs. Barnard, Bishop and Barnard; Mappin and Webb; Graham and Biddle; Gregory and Co.; Drew; Benoist; Billington and Co.; Radclyffe; Shoolbred; Oetzmann; Whiteley; Keeling and Teale; Godfrey Giles; Herbert Hanks; The Standard Folding Bed Co; The Wilson Engineering Co.; and many others.' Gardiner, p. 12.
[216] Gardiner, p. 30.
[217] By the early 1910s most of these elements had been drastically reduced in advisers' representations of domestic interiors.

simplicity, of refinement and of grace'.[218] This reference to the past was not meant as copying of styles but as inspiration obtained, for example, from the study of furniture-making principles and methods. The book images show a contrast between two pairs of rooms, hall and dining room (Figs. 34, 94, 108), and drawing room and bedroom (Figs. 121-22, 143-44). In the first pair the emphasis went on woodwork and hard surfaces, following closely Tudor and Jacobean influences. In the latter, ornamentation, patterns and soft furnishings played a bigger role, and regarding style there was a combination of Arts and Crafts/New Art elements with eighteenth century inspired furniture. What mattered was not so much how things looked but how they were made. The authors' view on style was clear: 'In our days the fierce tumult which raged round what was known as the "Battle of the Styles" is ended. It is now generally allowed that "Style" is of little importance compared with "Design". One may be as eclectic as one likes so long as the result is harmonious.'[219] Nevertheless, Crouch & Butler's eclecticism was based on historical styles.

Jennings included a section on the history of furniture styles, as already mentioned, with the purpose of highlighting Waring and Gillow's contribution to it and of setting in historical context the modern style that the firm wanted to be identified with. The author traced back the beginnings of the modern home to Elizabethan times when the phrase 'English home' originated. That was also the era of the ingle nook, oak panelling and beamed ceilings (a trio of features that fascinated Arts and Crafts designers). Trying to define what was truly English and therefore authentic, Jennings pointed out that both Elizabethan and Jacobean were the first and only genuinely English styles. After the Tudors, foreign influence prevailed in architecture and furniture. Regarding the eighteenth century Jennings also paid tribute to famous designers such as Chippendale, Sheraton and Adam. In contrast, he had nothing positive to say about the nineteenth century, which he interpreted as a period of decadence in art. Up to here his historical assessment repeated the design reformers' discourse. Even his concern with national styles was influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement and its reverence for 'old English' styles. But he differed about the Gothic Revival disqualifying it by saying that the style was never suited to modern requirements. Jennings also rejected the need for a 'modernized medievalism'. In spite of all the connections and overlapping between Arts and Crafts ideas and the Aesthetic movement, the author was critical of what he called 'the Aesthetic Craze' of the 1880s. Rescuing the figures of William Morris and Walter Crane, among others, for their significant contributions to the decorative arts, he rejected the Aesthetic movement as a 'pseudo-aesthetic school [...] effeminate, invertebrate, sensuous, and mawkish'. He was equally dismissive of 'L'Art Nouveau' for what he qualified as extravagances and exaggerations in form, proportion and colour, blaming mainly Continental and Scottish designers for these faults.[220]

It was in this context that Jennings placed the claim for Waring and Gillow to have developed a modern style: 'the new English Renaissance [...] the art-gospel of refinement and simplicity'

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[218] Crouch and Butler, p. 89.
[219] Crouch and Butler, p .67.
[220] H. J. Jennings, pp. 54-56

expressed in its original and artistic treatment of historical styles with an emphasis on Elizabethan and Jacobean features. Jennings explained that in 1897 the firm Waring & Sons had acquired the old firm of Gillow (trading since 1695) and the firm of Collinson & Lock, successors of Jackson & Graham (see Chapter 1). These credentials pointed at a genuine stock of antique furniture and a reputation built on a long and distinguished history of furniture manufacturing. The firm could therefore claim to be an authority on historical styles.[221] The book was obviously an advertising tool, but more important, it showed how Jennings, on behalf of Waring & Gillow, appropriated the design reform discourse, not to dismiss trade but to promote it as a leader of taste and craftsmanship.

Most illustrations in the book were examples of the firm's work and the style it claimed to lead. They included the room schemes put together for the Paris Exhibition in 1900 (Fig. 36), and the interiors displayed in the shops' showrooms such as 'the model house' or flat. These were strongly influenced by a combination of Arts and Crafts and New Art designs (Fig. 161). The rooms most closely associated with 'the New English Renaissance' style were the hall, dining room, library and billiard room where the furniture and decoration were Tudor-inspired and where patterned fabrics and soft furnishing were kept to a minimum (Figs. 97, 109). There was an emphasis on wood and rectangular shapes. In contrast, the style for the drawing room, that Jennings described as 'essentially and pre-eminently the ladies' room', was usually French or Adam exhibiting plenty of curvilinear shaped furniture, patterns and soft furnishings (Figs. 123-24). Bedrooms and drawing rooms shared some similarities in their preference for patterns and fabrics, but it was mainly bedrooms that included New Art designs (Figs. 145-46).

Elder-Duncan asserted that his time was 'the age of old furniture' and distinguished two general types: the 'cottage' style oak furniture, and the more refined furniture made of walnut and mahogany (and other precious woods) following styles of the late seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As a consequence of this love for old models, the author explained, people developed a desire to carry out their home furnishing following particular styles and having different rooms in different styles: for example one Sheraton, another Adam and another Queen Anne (Fig. 162). There was a big market for reproductions and, the author warned, even for forgeries, since by necessity the number of genuine 'old' pieces available was limited. Overall Elder-Duncan valued English styles and rejected the French (describing them as too formal and anachronistic), and any other with no tradition in England: 'we have so many beautiful styles of our own that it is sheer perversity that prompts us to adopt styles of foreign importation, for which we have no continuing tradition.'[222] There is again an assertion of national identity based on native designs, in common with Penelope and Crouch and Butler.

Throughout the book Elder-Duncan also highlighted the Arts and Crafts influence. The room showing most versatility was the bedroom. It exhibited original and commercial Arts and

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[221] H. J. Jennings, p. 62.
[222] J. H. Elder-Duncan, p. 27.

Crafts/'New Art' designs and schemes (Fig. 152), a big range of designs in bedsteads and traditional models including 'Colonial Adam' (Fig. 153). The dining room by this time (1907) was also exploring new possibilities rather than sticking to the usual Jacobean, cottage and panelled schemes. There were, for example, dining rooms in the style of Queen Anne and Sheraton (Fig. 112).

Regarding furniture styles Sparrow also recommended English ones: 'be national in your taste and you cannot then be wrong'[223] (Fig. 163). The ever-popular Oriental carpets and ornaments complemented the schemes. 'The experienced choose Oriental rugs, put self-coloured papers on their walls, and look out for textile fabrics copied or adapted from old designs.' The book included a whole section of 'examples of simple furniture' and 'richer furniture'. The 'simple furniture' was mainly based on the vernacular Arts and Crafts aesthetic: rush seated chairs and cottage models. The 'richer furniture' looked refined and more elaborate including Arts and Crafts original designs, reproductions of old models and creations inspired on historical examples, all handcrafted. Many of Sparrow 's illustrations emphasized an architectural perspective where space, materials, construction and main architectural features were prominent (Fig. 164). Most examples in rooms were from Voysey, Walter Cave and M. H. Baillie Scott. Those from Morris & Co. showed mainly drawings of panelled walls and fitments.

Gregory's book and illustrations could be read as a continuation of Sparrow's with a marked emphasis on the Arts and Crafts movement's work, as the title indicated. Most were illustrations of real interiors and in these rooms ornaments and pictures were few and small; soft furnishings were reduced to a minimum allowing only for short, thin and pale-coloured curtains, few cushions and few upholstered chairs (Figs. 165-66, and also 102-03, 114-15, 128-30, 154-55). Instead, in many of these rooms, wood, hard surfaces and angular shapes predominated. As photographs show, the architectural features of the house and rooms tended to dominate the interiors. Regarding furniture style, it faithfully reflected the Arts and Crafts aesthetic, including the cottage/ type, antiques and modern reproductions of English seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' models. In spite of this, there were no period rooms because the author considered them an anachronism.

Although the modernity of the furnishing and decoration of the middle-class home was expressed in other ways besides a stylistic one, the notion of style was essential to it and to the discourse informing it. Style provided a way not only to give structure and unity to the domestic interior but to make it meaningful. The modern and historical styles that advisers portrayed here offered a convenient way to express artistic, class, gender and national affiliations. Furthermore, domestic decoration and the styles linked to it, in embracing the wide range of commercial and non-commercial goods available, expressed a particular vision and take on modernity, a conflicting one but modern nevertheless.

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[223] Sparrow, p. 66.

Harmonizing the old and the new

There were several and interconnected elements defining the modernity of domestic decoration. There was the aesthetic one propounded by the Arts and Crafts school that was adopted and appropriated commercially by furnishing firms. A second dimension was the one derived from the above concerning production methods where the sphere of art, with its moral ethos embedded in the handcrafted, antagonized industry for its capitalist multiple production and mass retailing system. A third element concerned style and design and its dependence on history, rich in symbolic meaning and associations. A fourth factor highlighted innovation and technology as responsible for inexpensive wares, labour-saving products and a very wide range of goods, materials, treatments and designs produced to match a variety of styles. This last factor concerned developments in industry and business methods that allowed for economies of scale both in production and retailing, bringing prices down in most articles thus democratising the act of furnishing and decorating the home. Authors and their advice navigated among all these elements and dimensions trying to bring them together into a harmonious whole.

The advice authors examined here dealt with the challenging assignment of disseminating Arts and Crafts principles to an audience necessarily dependent on commercial products. They interpreted the movement's ethos and designs for the furnishing and decoration of the ordinary household and in carrying out such a task tried to resolve the inherent tension between artistic demands against those set by the market place. Overall authors struck a bigger or lesser compromise in trying to harmonize two opposing expressions of modernity each struggling to bring together the old with the new.

Both Gardiner and Mrs Peel projected an image of practicality aimed at simplifying domestic work. Both were in favour, for example, of reducing the number of items of furniture and ornaments in the home, and advocated labour saving appliances and the use of electric light (Mrs Peel even gave practical advice on how to get the service). Both welcomed Arts and Crafts' designs based on commercial supply but unlike Gardiner, who precluded historical styles in her book, for Mrs Peel it was equally modern to have the green stained furniture with copper mountings, or modern reproductions of eighteenth century models, making her decorative schemes a combination of new and old features (Fig. 167). While Gardiner focused on the lower income bracket, Mrs Peel offered different versions of the new home according to different budget possibilities with a light emphasis on householders of moderate means. For both the modern home was within reach of everybody.

Penelope's series of articles identified modern decoration with Arts and Crafts ideas and designs as interpreted by large commercial furnishing firms. She stressed overall, the view of modern decoration as the expression of coherence and unity, and the idea that everything in a room should relate to artistic principles reflected in its architecture, designs, type of furniture,

materials and colour schemes. Although inspired by English vernacular and historical models the house and its rooms expressed novelty and originality.

Crouch and Butler embraced the Arts and Crafts aesthetic while concealing an important aspect of the modernity of the home. The authors disguised any visual references to technological features while enhancing ideas and designs inspired in the past. The lighting, for example, hid electric bulbs in medieval-style lanterns (Fig. 34) while the bathroom, WC, kitchen, scullery, etc., seen in the house plan, got no mention in the text (Fig. 33). Regarding furnishing and decoration, simplicity, quaintness and self-restraint were their defining terms, mainly in the case of the hall and dining room showing a mixture of old and modern work inspired by the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. The drawing room and bedroom, portrayed as feminine spaces, were different in character, but again welcoming a combination of old and new seen in New Art and eighteenth century designs.

Jennings approach to the modernity of domestic decoration was openly commercial and at the same time subscribed to the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. He promoted Waring & Gillow as a modern and reliable firm producing an extensive range of artistic designs and schemes at affordable prices, linking in this way the modernity of the middle-class home with that of the firm. The author presented Waring & Gillow as the creators of a new style: 'the New English Renaissance' and although he defined it as the 'original and artistic treatment of historical styles', it also embraced New Art designs (see for example fig. 161). Jennings portrayed a home that welcomed modern (and mechanical) reproductions of past models and production of novel designs.

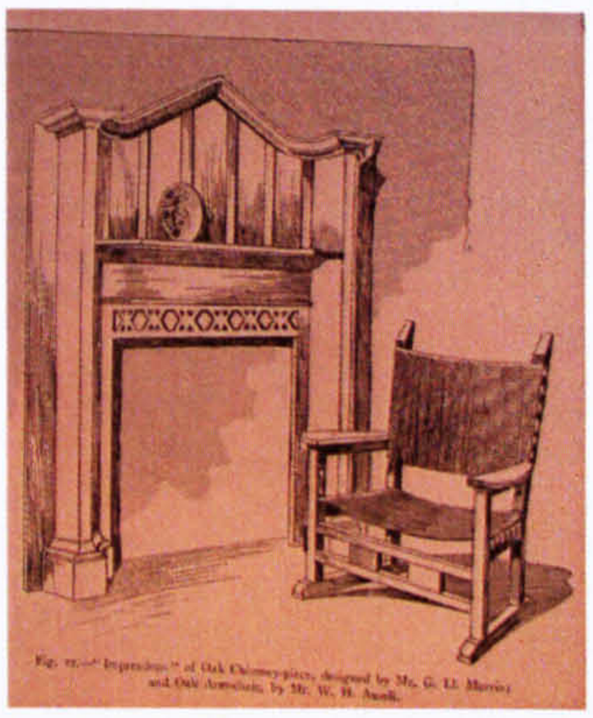
Not tied to just one commercial firm, Elder-Duncan shared with Jennings the notion of what constituted modern decoration. He based it on several factors: the preference for old furniture and designs, the possibility of having reproductions of these although adapted to modern needs, and the huge range of machine-made articles on offer such as fire grates, wallpapers and fabrics produced to match a variety of historical styles. Regarding style almost anything was acceptable: designs and pieces of furniture from any century (except the early to mid Victorian period) including completely original austere looking work with no historic precedent. But, as the author pointed out, the most popular and accessible options in terms of cost were modern reproductions of past models.

The modernity of the house and furnishings depicted by Sparrow and Gregory, lay in people choosing things for their design qualities such as strength, good workmanship, being fit for purpose and having conventional (that is, stylized) decoration. Ideally, a modern home should be the product of a good architect such as Baillie Scott, W. Cave or C. F. A. Voysey, who should also design its furniture and furnishings. In terms of style the rooms showed two trends: an austere Arts and Crafts approach, or a combination of old and reproduction furniture within an Arts and Crafts scheme requiring little pattern and few and small ornaments against a

background of white painted or dark panelled walls. These interiors enjoyed modern conveniences such as electric lighting, efficient fire grates, sanitary appliances and modern building materials and methods of manufacture.

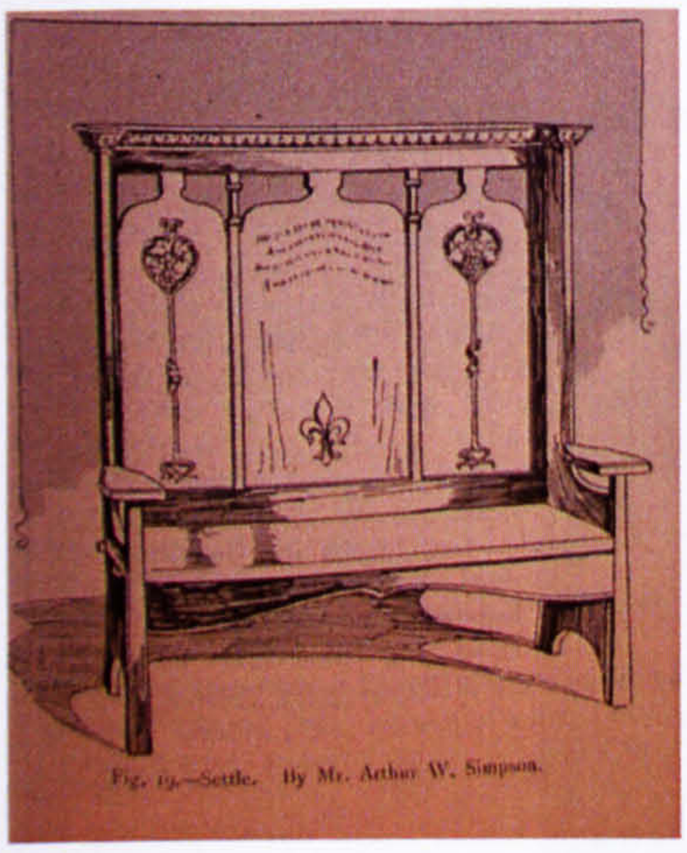
In the examination of the advice authors considered here it is clear that the influence of Arts and Crafts ideas and designs, either as authentic or commercialised examples, was constant and pervasive. Although the principles of the Arts and Crafts movement and its reform campaign involved the conditions of production as well as an ideal aesthetic, in the end it was the resulting visual style that prevailed and disseminated since commercial firms could not subscribe to a guild type of manufacture. For example, inspired by Arts and Crafts designs firms would produce strong and simple furniture just as the reform principles advocated, but through mechanical means to keep costs down, reach more people and make a better profit. Stemming also from the Arts and Crafts movement, the regard for 'old' furniture and furnishings resulted in the development and popularity of modern reproduction of old designs and historical styles, again, highly commercialised in the hands of the furnishing firm. With the exception of totally original schemes (both in the hands of Arts and Crafts and New Art designers), in most illustrations, descriptions and writers' recommendations the domestic interior exhibited a blend of old and new elements usually in the form of designs from previous centuries (bar the nineteenth) reproduced with modern methods, machines and materials. There was a craving for the old and for the new as long as it appeared old.

Chair by Mr. Arthur W. Simpson and wardrobe by Mr. Ambrose Heal

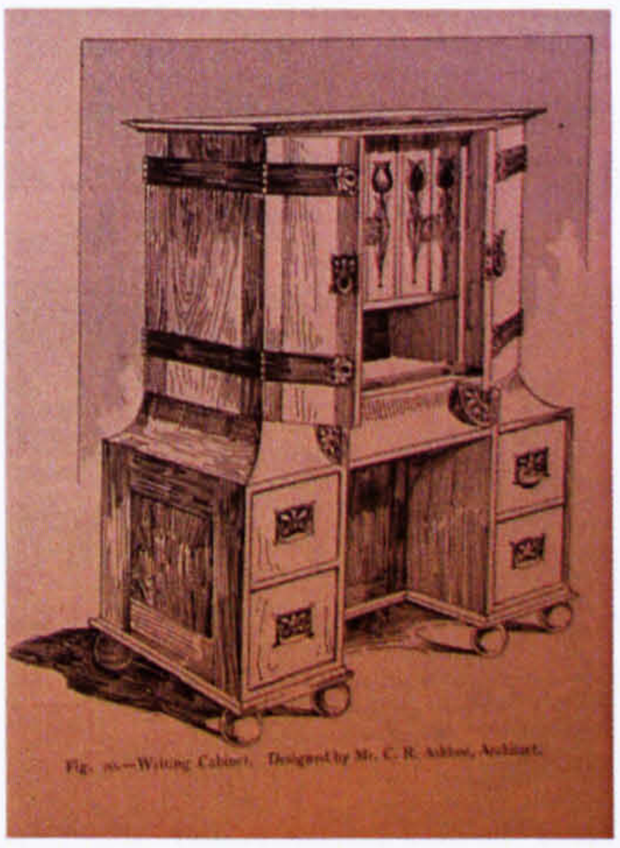


Oak chimney-piece by Mr. G. Ll. Morris; Oak arm-chair by W. H. Ansell

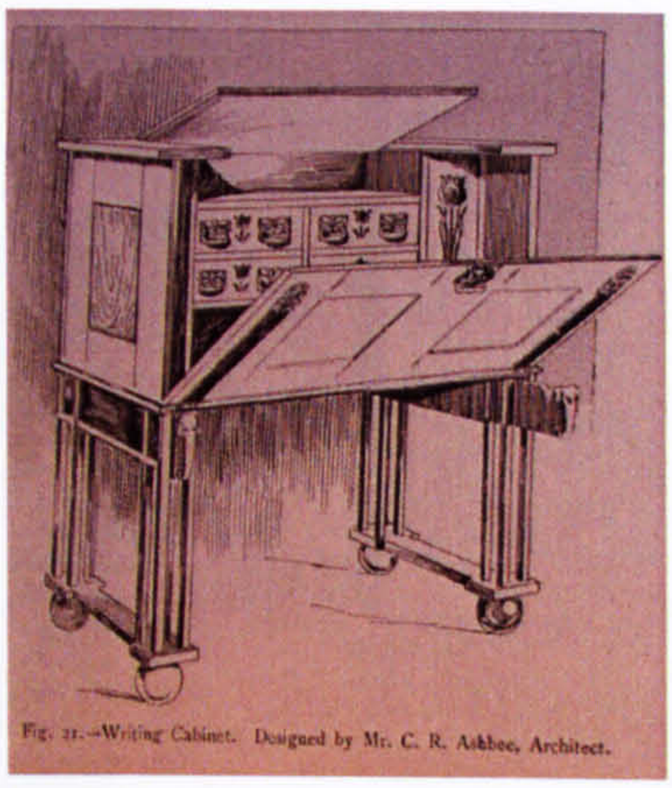
Oak Arm-chair by C. R. Mackintosh



Settle by Mr. W. Simpson



Writing cabinet by Mr. C. R. Ashbee



Writing cabinet by Mr. C. R. Ashbee

Figure 1 Sketches at the 'Arts and Crafts' Exhibition (*The House*, VI, January 1900, pp. 167-68)

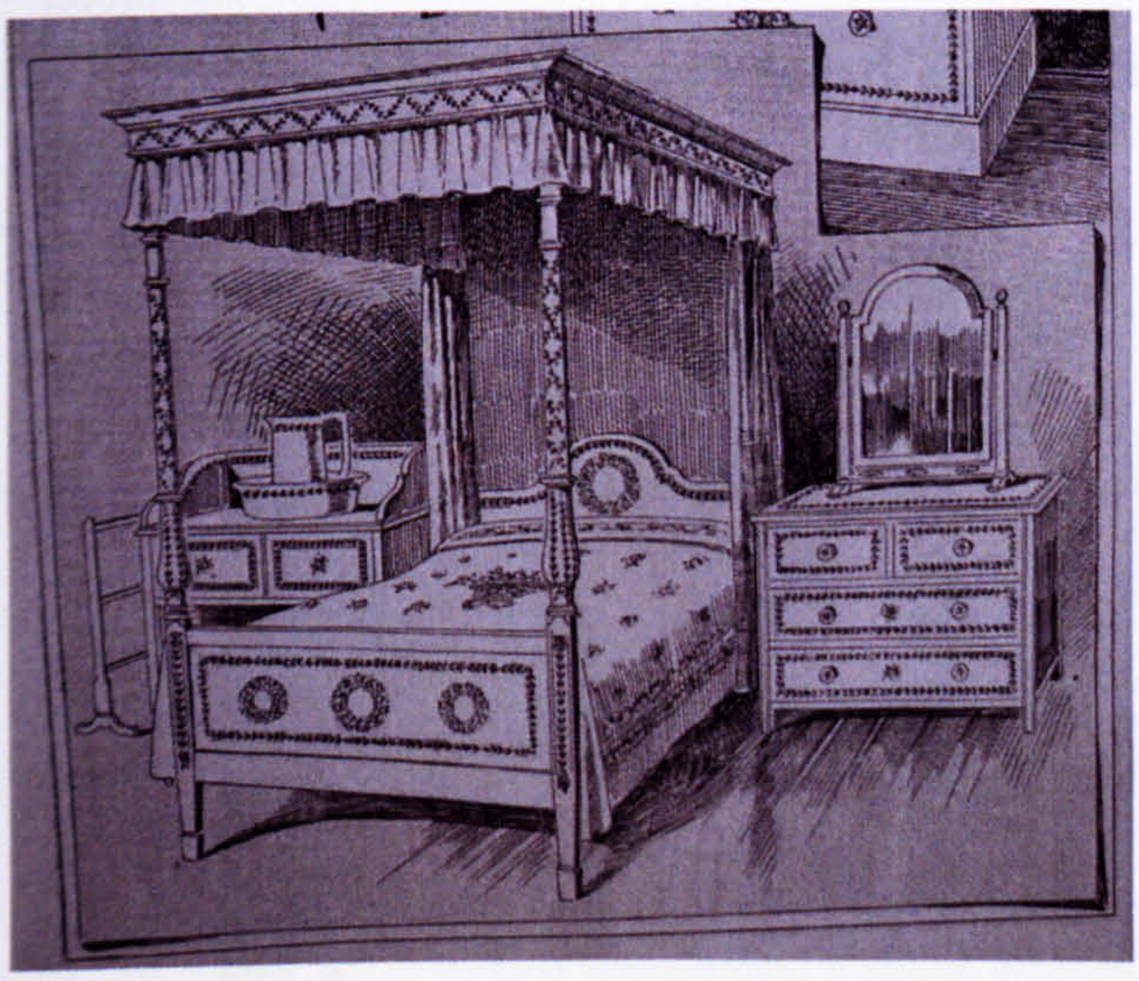


Figure 2 'Painted Bedroom Furniture from the Arts & Crafts Exhibition, by Ambrose Heal' (*The Cabinet Maker,* January 29, 1910)

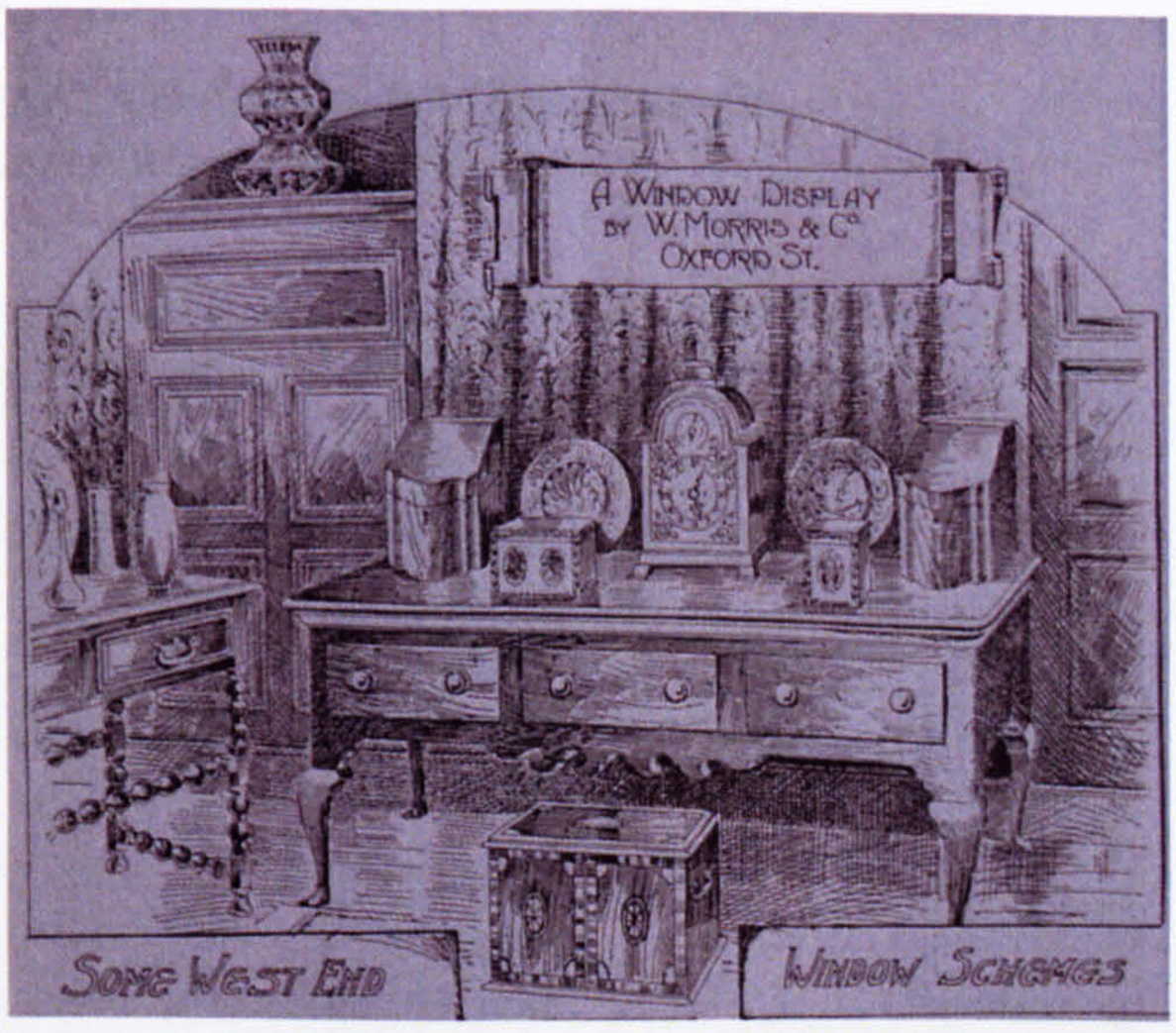


Figure 3 'A Window Display by W. Morris & Co.' (*The Cabinet Maker,* January 11, 1913)

Figure 4 Advert, 'J. S. Henry, Designer of Quaint & Artistic Furniture' (*The Cabinet Maker*, June 1896)

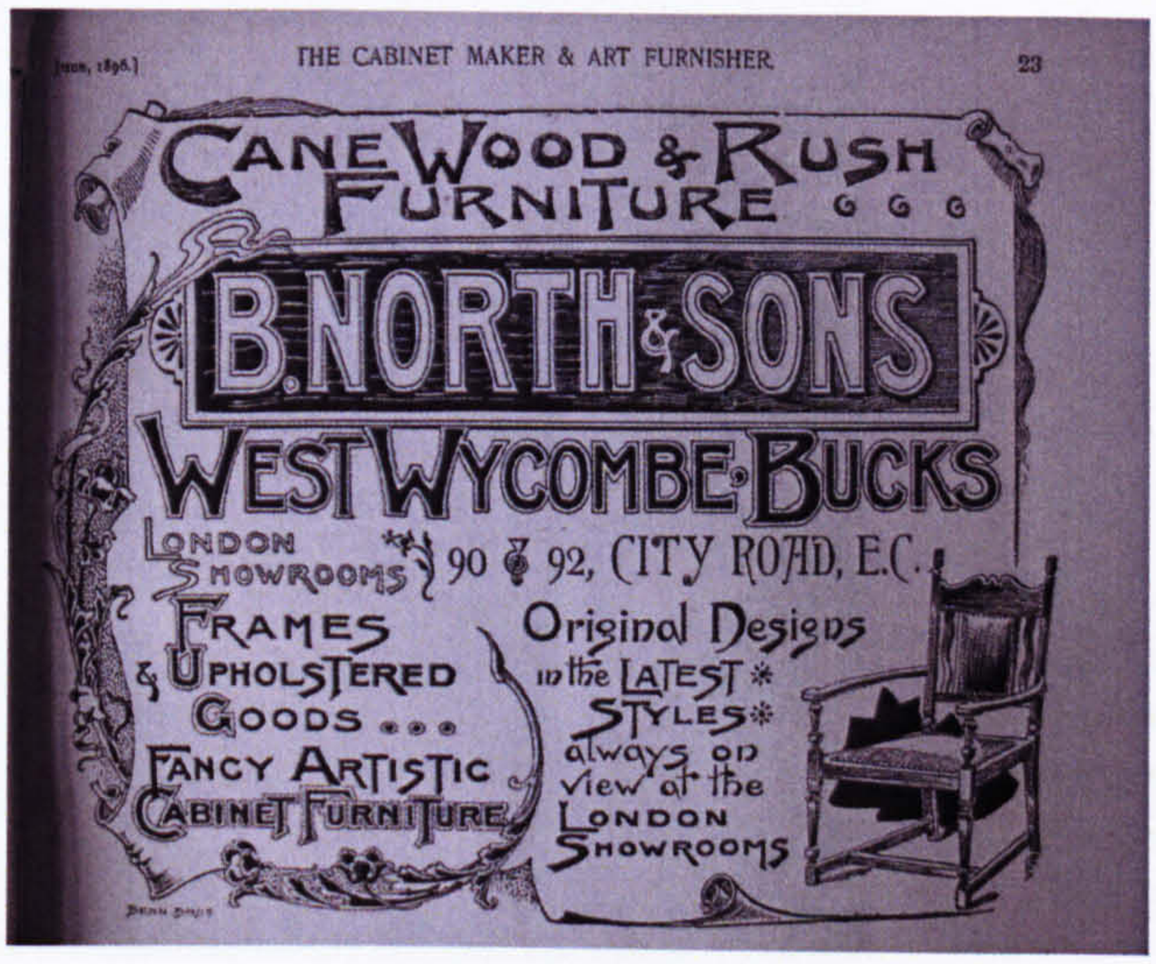


Figure 5 Advert, 'B. North & Sons, Original Designs in the Latest Styles, *The Cabinet Maker*, June 1896

Figure 6 Advert, 'Longstaff & Pitcher, Stained Suites in Quaint Designs' (*The Cabinet Maker*, June 1896)

Figure 7 'Corner of a Drawing Room'. Taylor & Hobson Ltd. (*Inexpensive Furnishings,* trade catalogue, ca. 1900)

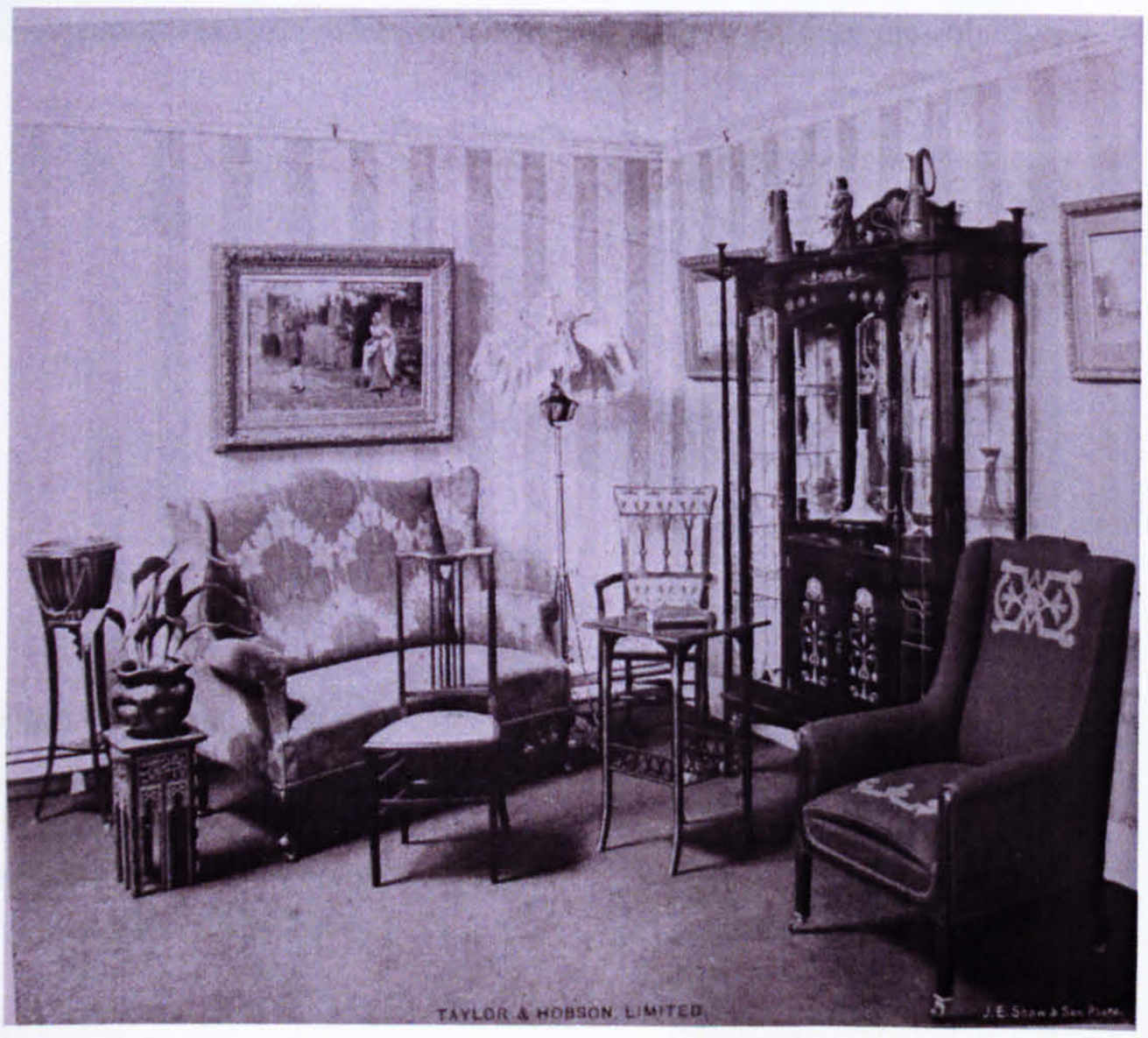


Figure 8 'Corner of a Fitted Bedroom in Wainscot Oak Inlaid, designed and manufactured by us' (Taylor & Hobson Ltd., *Inexpensive Furnishings,* trade catalogue, ca. 1900)

Figure 9 'Drawing-Room Furnishings From Our Showrooms' (Taylor & Hobson Ltd., *Inexpensive Furnishings,* trade catalogue, ca. 1900)

Figure 10 Drawing room by Messrs Wylie and Lochhead, Glasgow Exhibition of Decorative and Industrial Art, 1901 (Getty Images, ref. 2644120)

Figure 11 Dining room by Messrs Wylie and Lochhead, Glasgow Exhibition of Decorative and Industrial Art, 1901 (Getty Images, ref. 3306205)

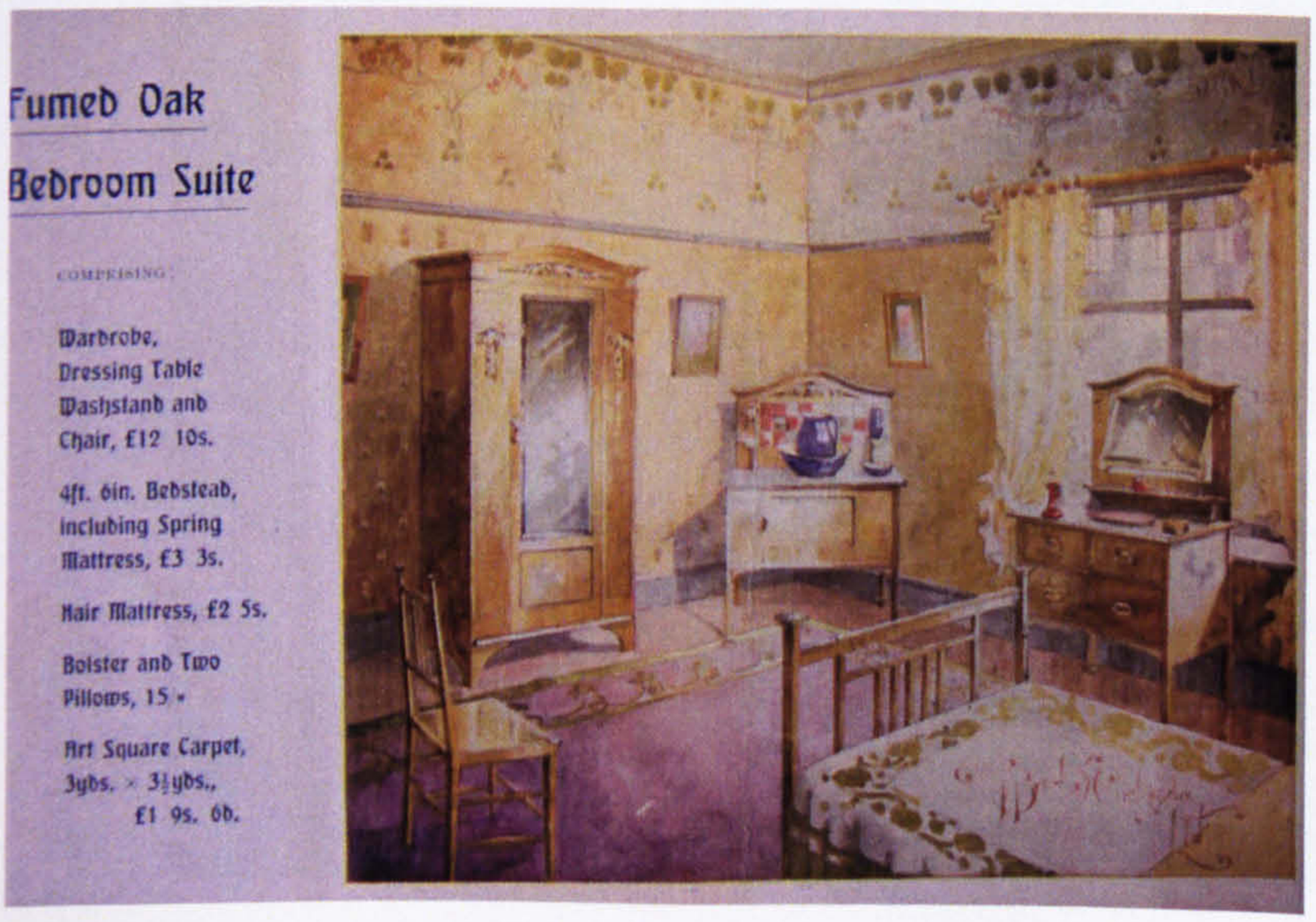


Figure 12 'Fumed Oak Bedroom Suite' (Messrs T. B. & W. Cockayne Ltd., *A Tasteful Home*, trade catalogue, 1900s)

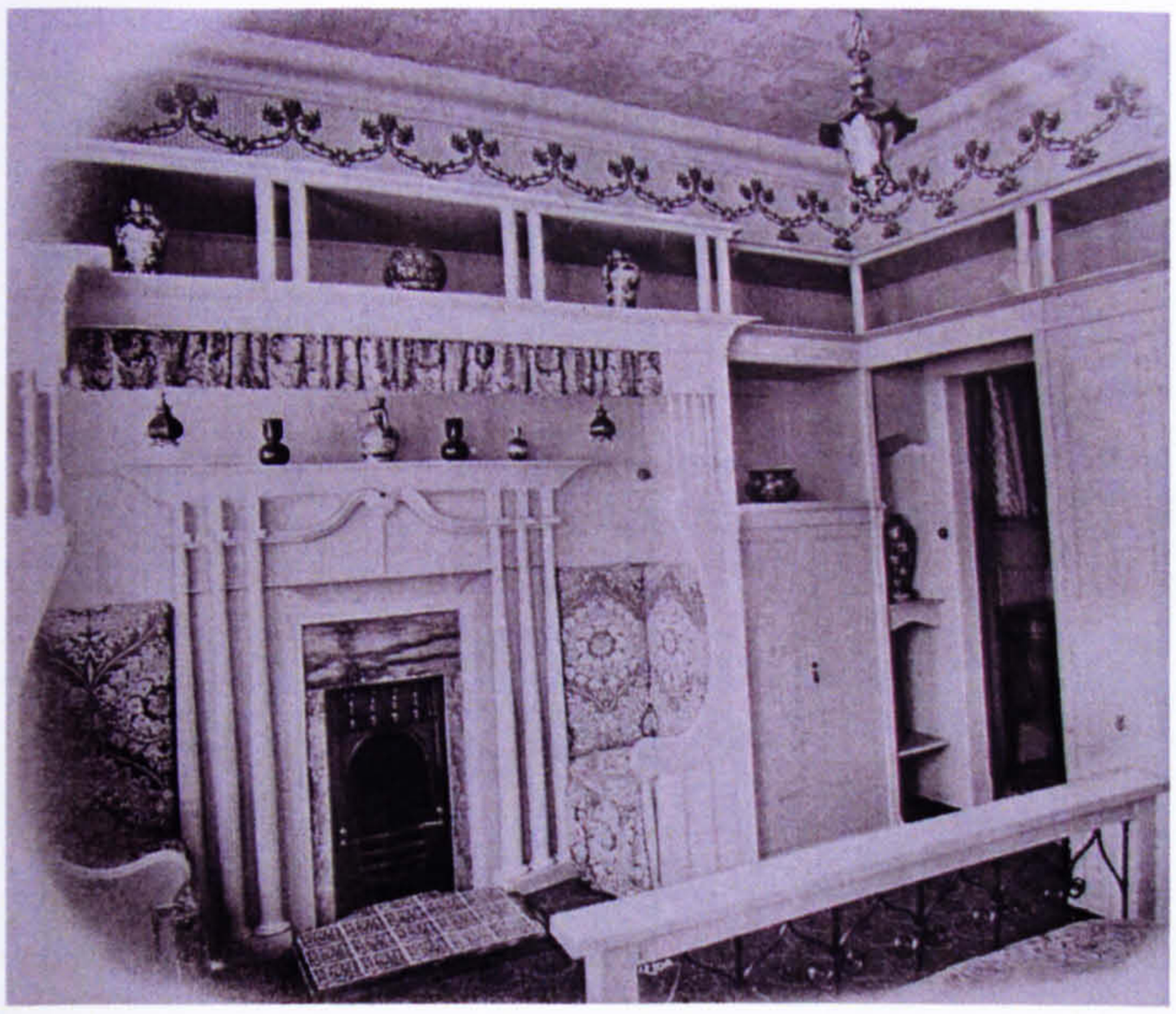


Figure 13 'Part of Fitted Bedroom in Enamelled White' by Waring & Gillow (H. J. Jennings, *Our Homes,* 1902, p. 231)

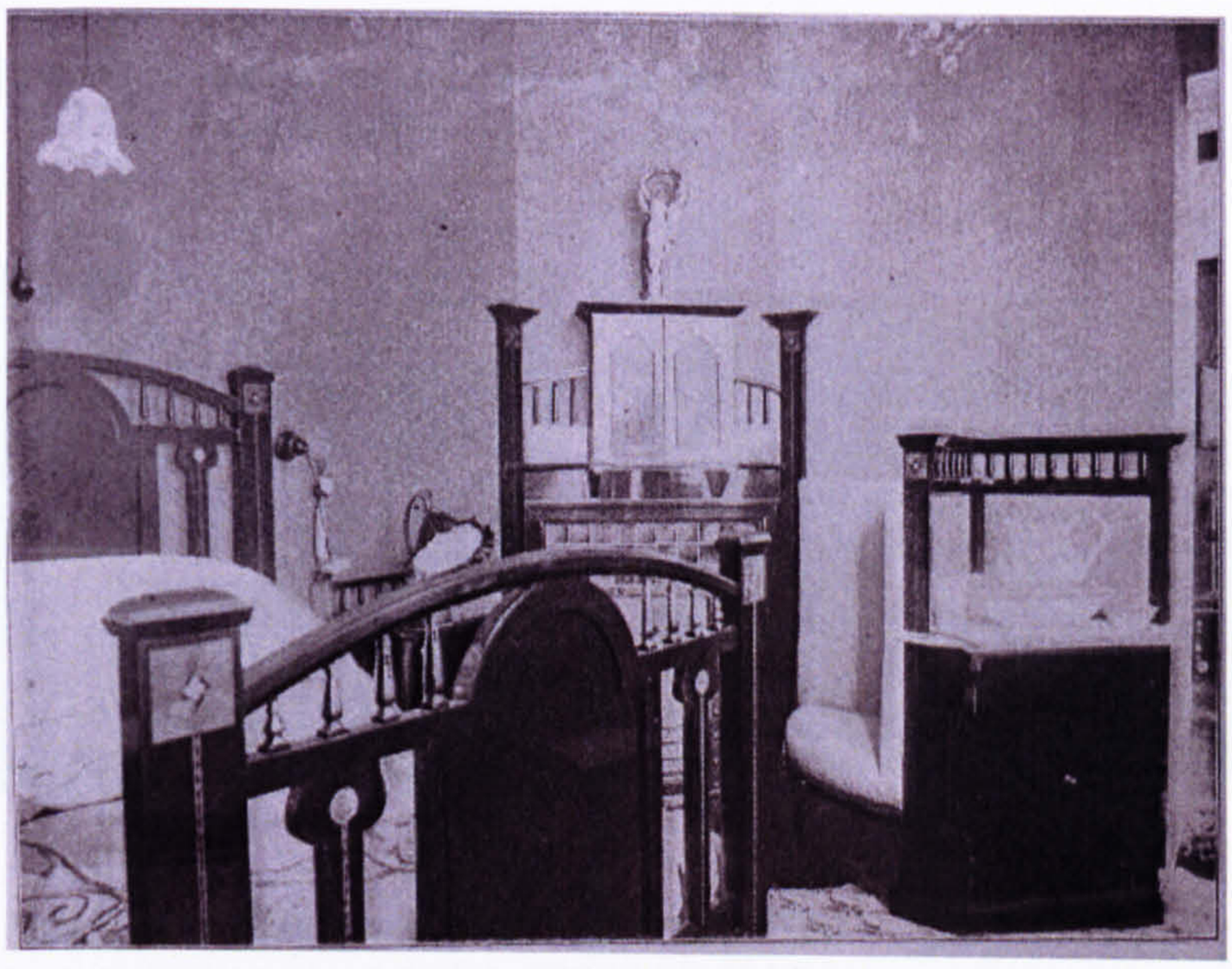


Figure 14 'Views in Bedroom' (Christr. Pratt & Sons, *Souvenir of the Carwright Exhibition,* Bradford, 1904)

Figure 15 'Sitting Room Hall' (Marsh, Jones, Cribb & Co., *Bradford Exhibition*, exhibition catalogue, 1904)

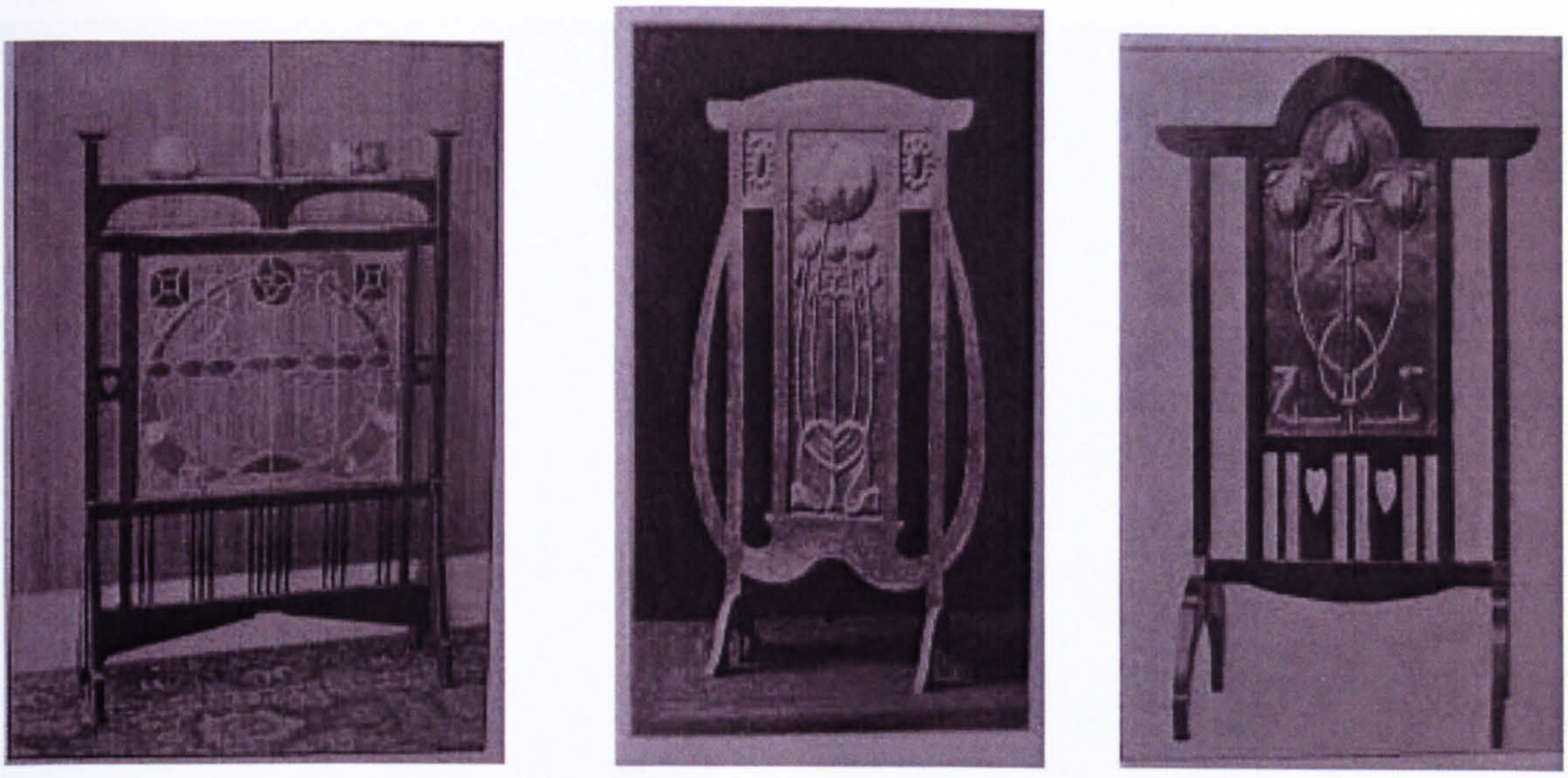


Figure 16 *Fire Screens*, trade catalogue, 1900s, models 2049, 2047 and 2045

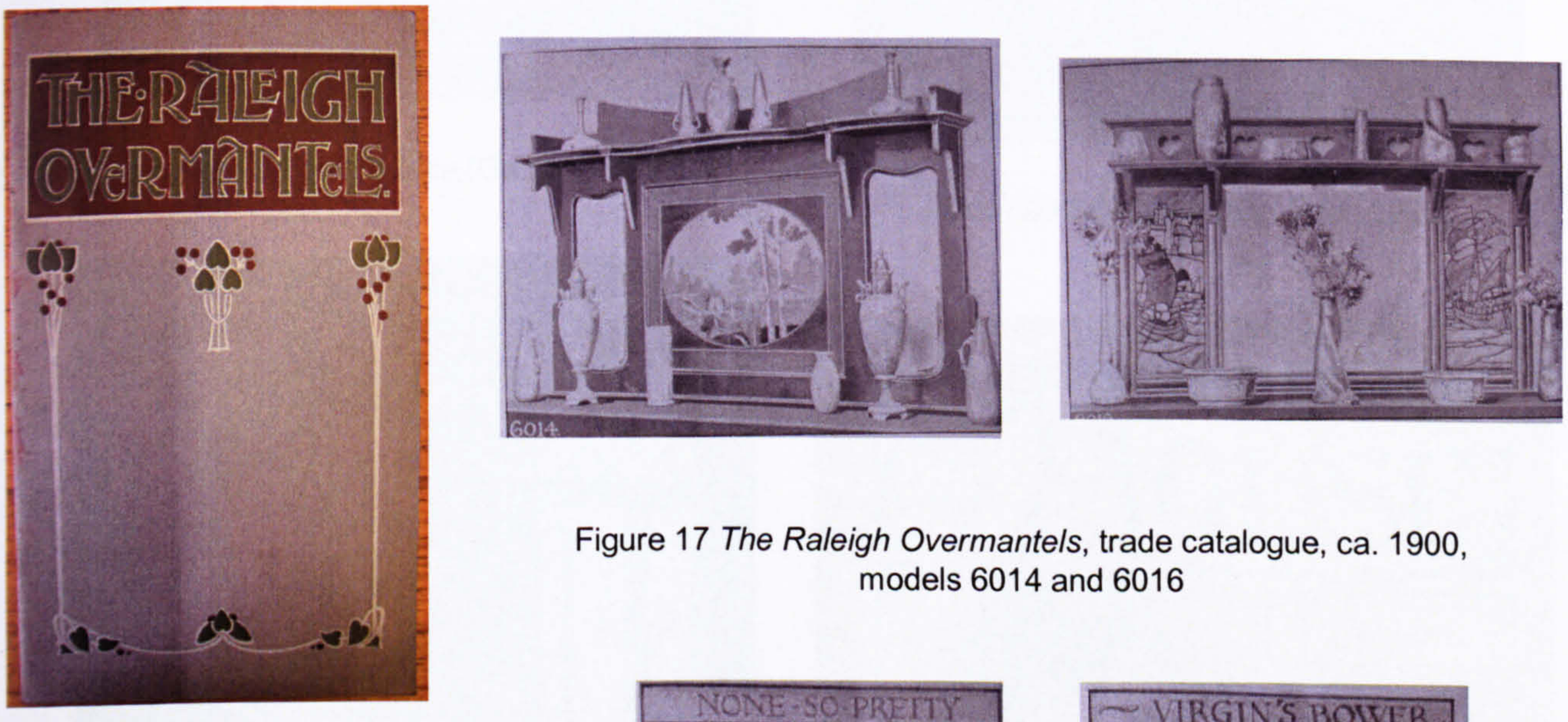


Figure 17 *The Raleigh Overmantels*, trade catalogue, ca. 1900, models 6014 and 6016

Figure 18 Dryad Cane Furniture, *A New Artistic Furniture for the Home,* trade catalogue, 1910

Figure 19 Frontispiece (Gardiner, 1894)

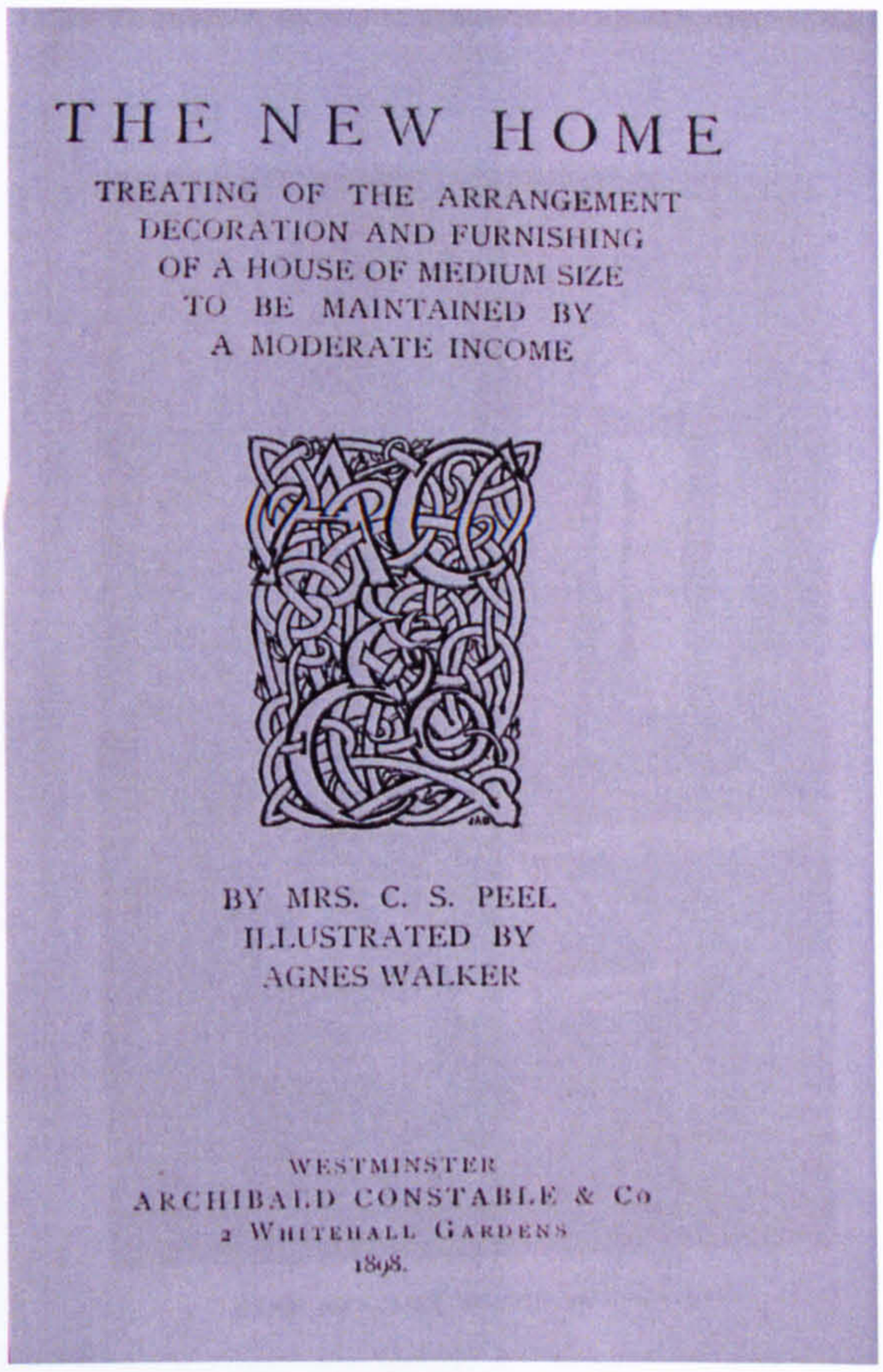


Figure 20 Title page (Mrs Peel, 1898)

Figure 21 'Curved Bookcases, Window Seats and Dais' (Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 113)

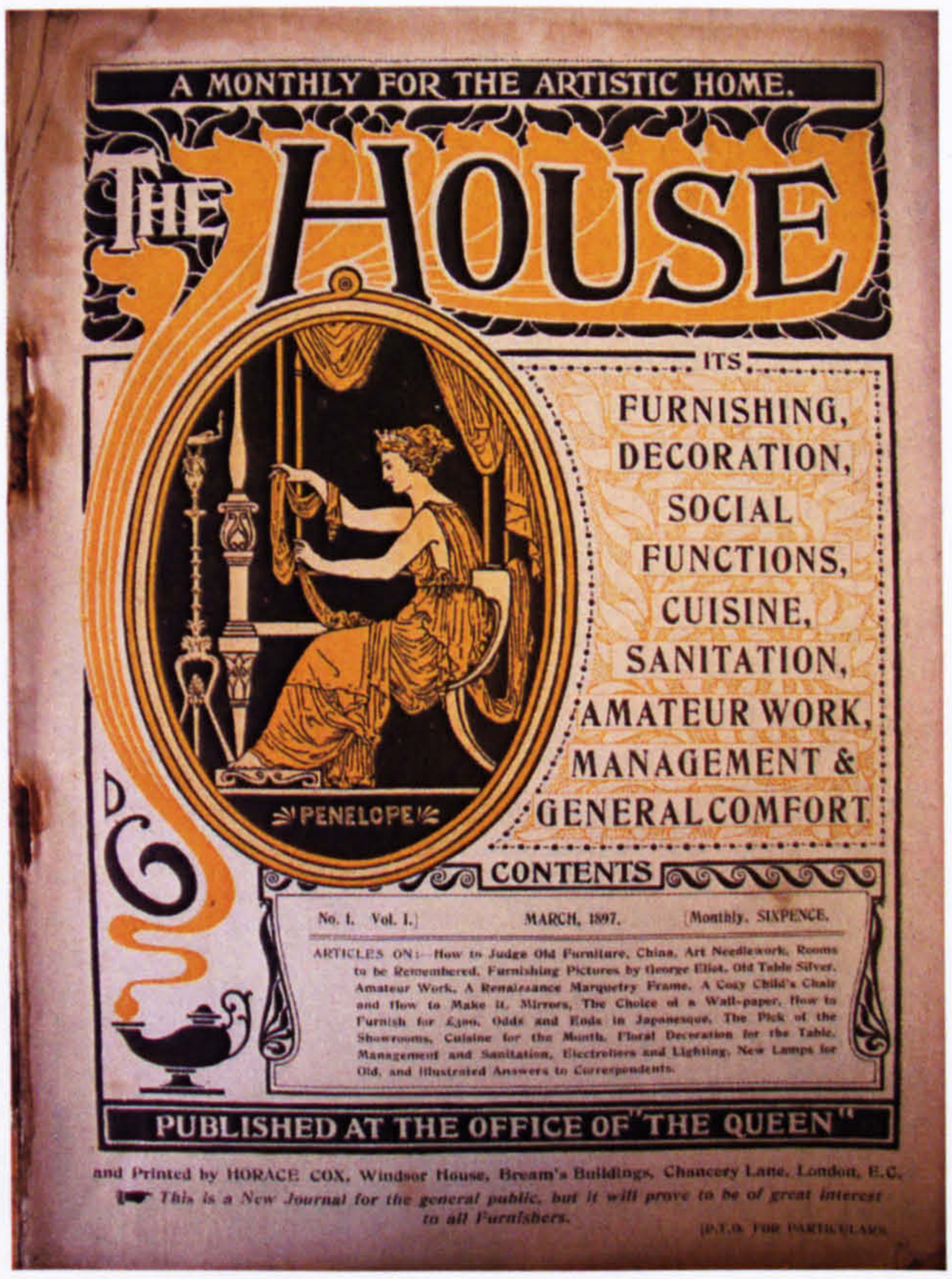


Figure 22 First issue of the magazine *The House*, March 1897

THE

HOUSE BEAUTIFUL AND USEFUL

BEING PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS
ON FURNISHING AND DECORATION

BY

J. H. ELDER-DUNCAN
EDITORIAL SECRETARY, "THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW"
Author of "Country Cottages and Week-end Homes"

"Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful."—WILLIAM MORRIS

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Figure 23 Title page (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907)

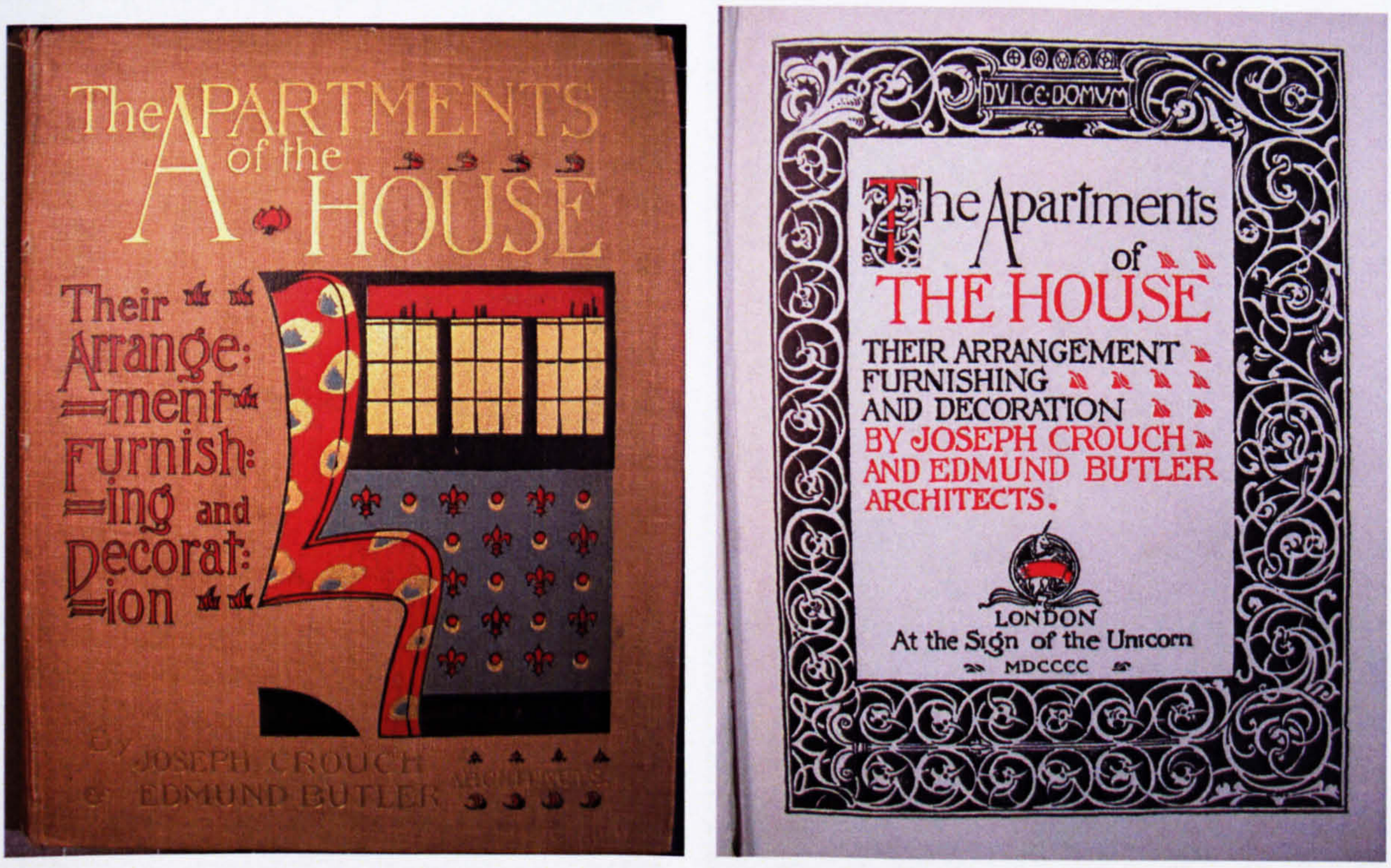
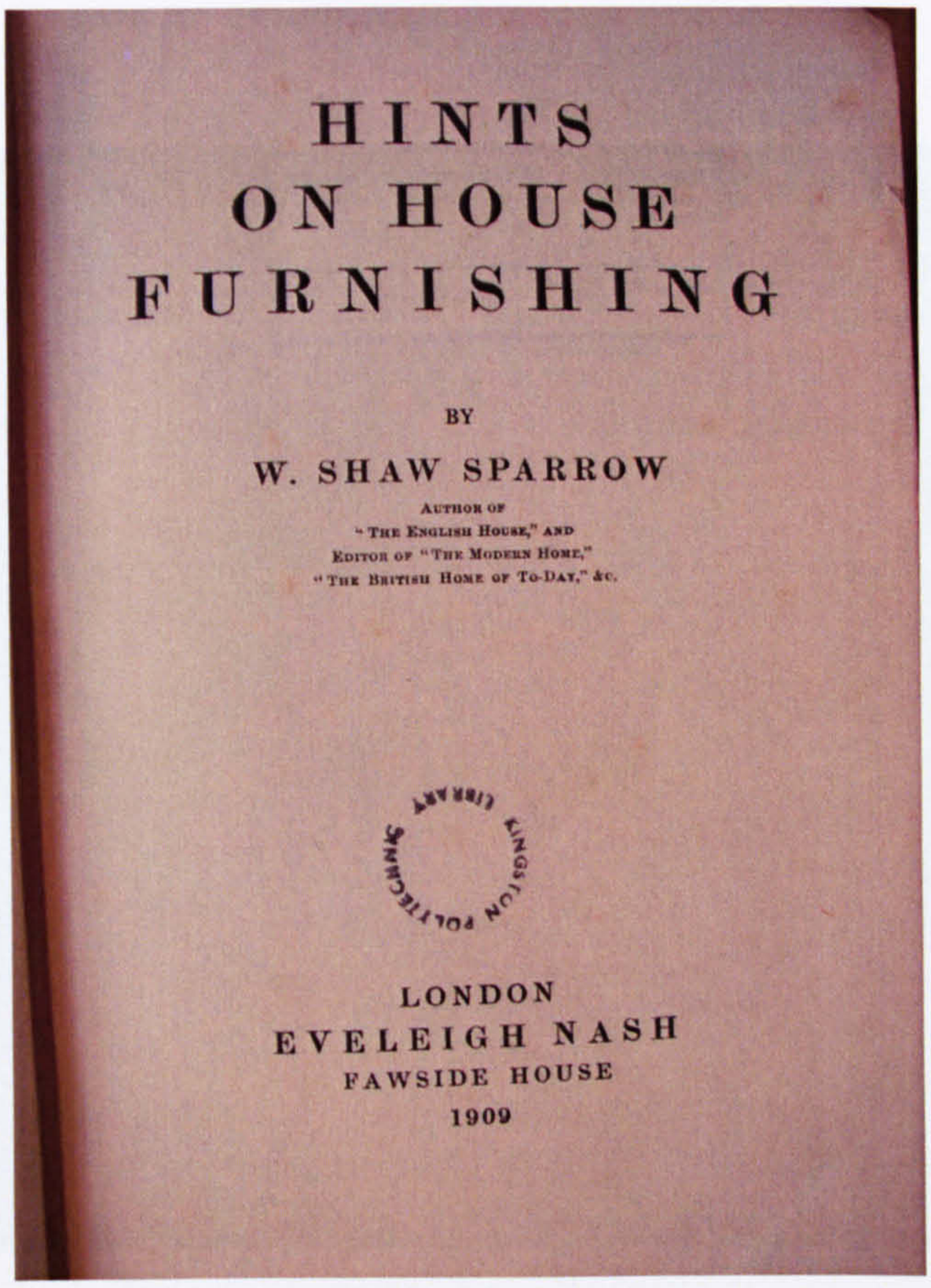


Figure 24 Cover and presentation page
(J. Crouch and E. Butler, 1900)



HINTS
ON HOUSE
FURNISHING

BY

W. SHAW SPARROW

AUTHOR OF
"THE ENGLISH HOUSE," AND
EDITOR OF "THE MODERN HOME,"
"THE BRITISH HOME OF TO-DAY," &c.

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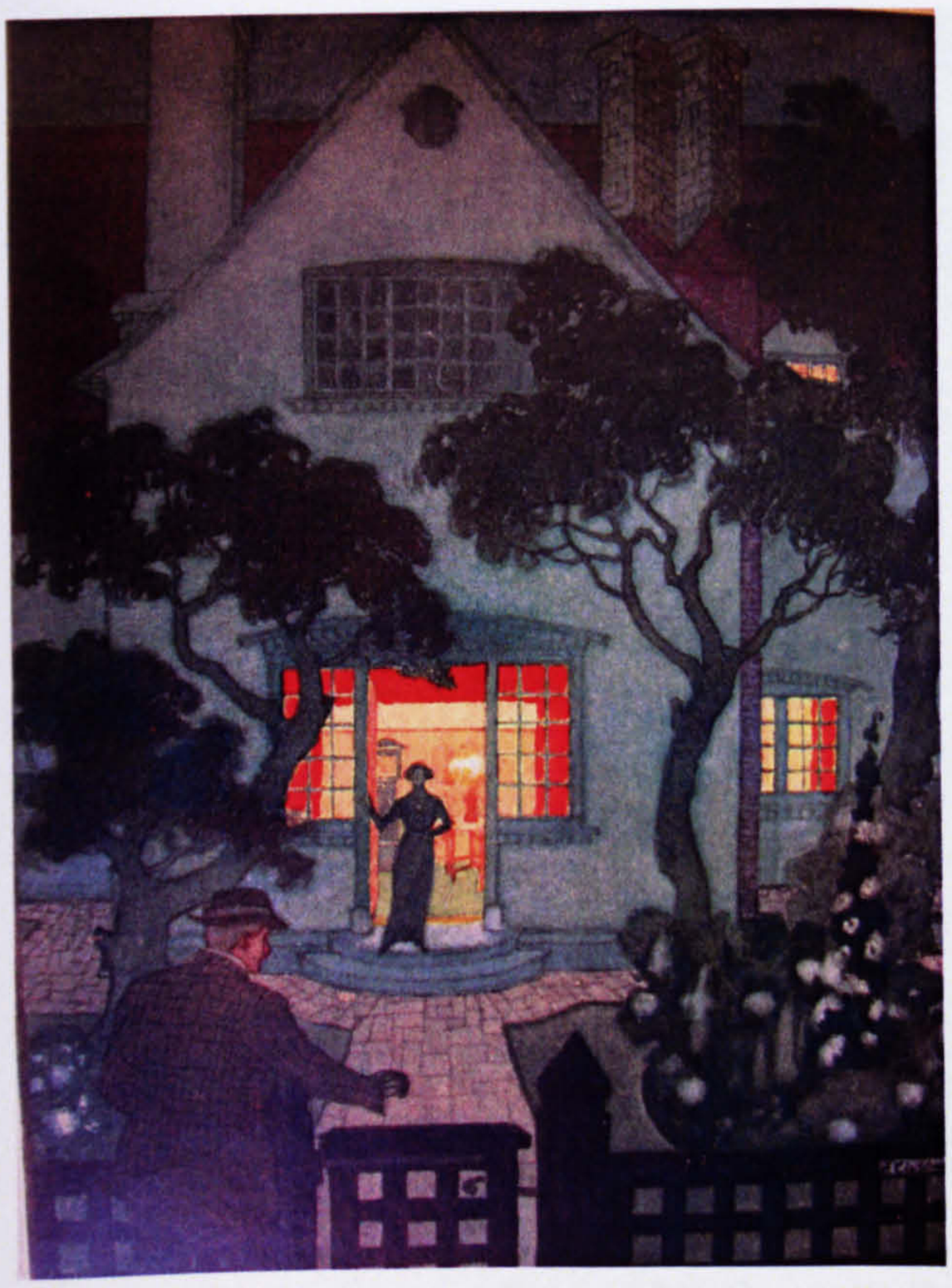
FAWSIDE HOUSE
1909

Figure 25 Title page (W. S. Sparrow, 1909)



THE ART AND CRAFT OF
HOME-MAKING

WITH AN APPENDIX OF 200 HOUSEHOLD RECIPES

BY

EDWARD W. GREGORY

ILLUSTRATED BY A HUNDRED
PEN-AND-INK DRAWINGS BY THE
AUTHOR & THIRTY PHOTOGRAPHS

LONDON: THOMAS MURBY & CO.
6 BOUVERIE STREET, E.C.

Figure 26 Frontispiece and title page. Frontispiece from a water-colour drawing by F. C. Witney (E. Gregory, 1913)

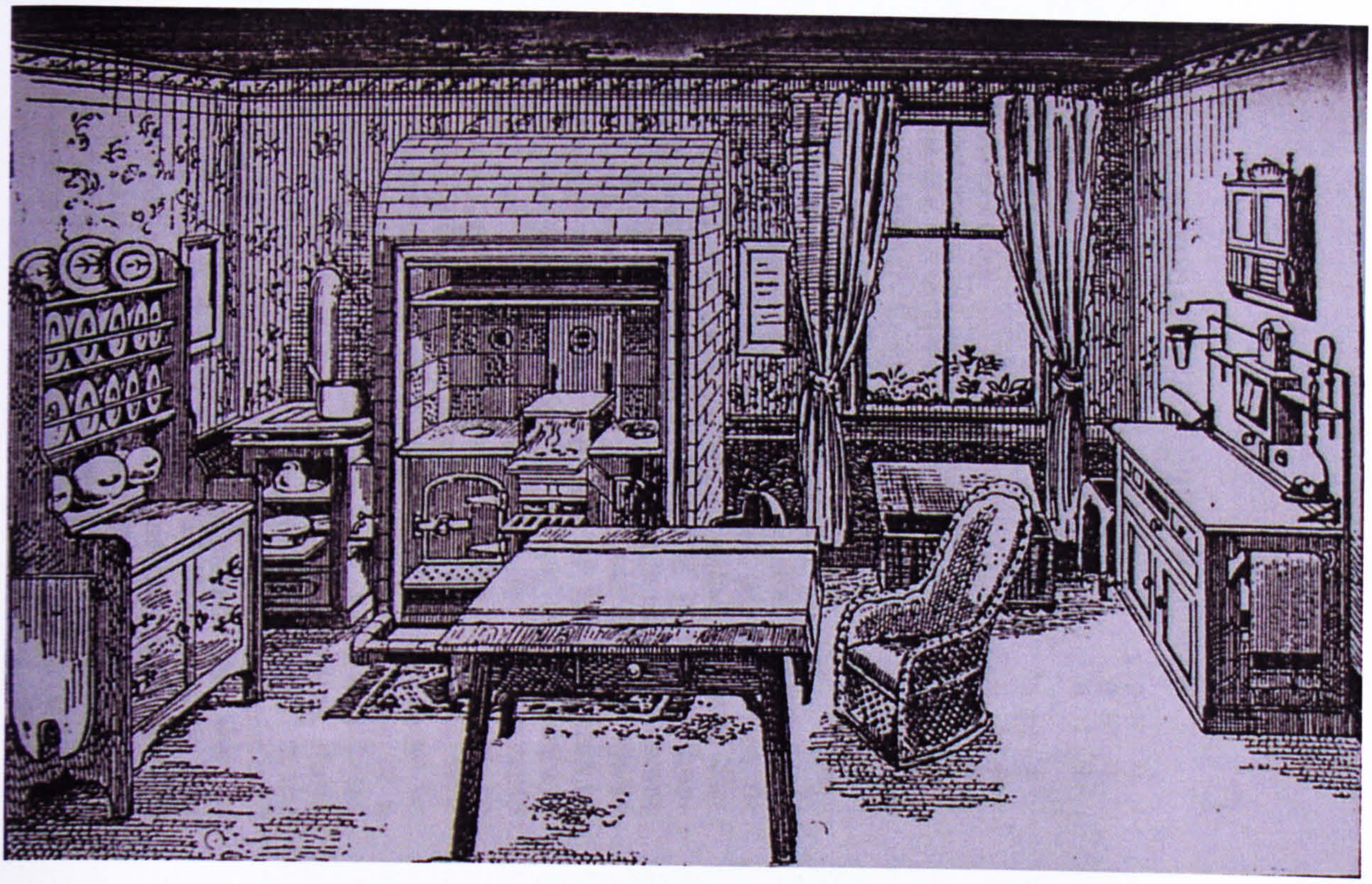


Figure 27 ‘A Model Kitchen’ (Gardiner, 1894, p. 49)

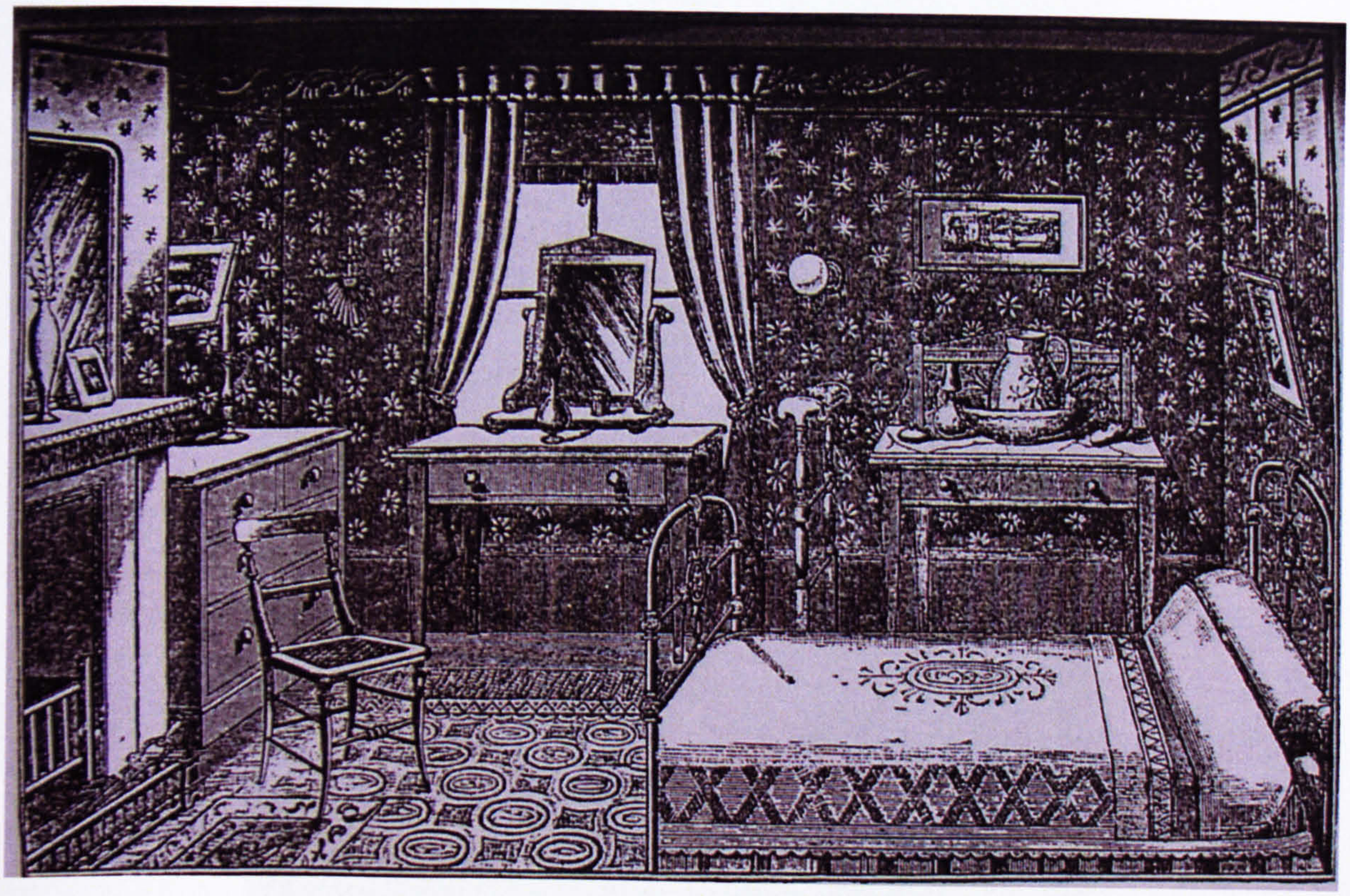


Figure 28 ‘A Servant’s Bedroom’ (Gardiner, 1894, p. 45)

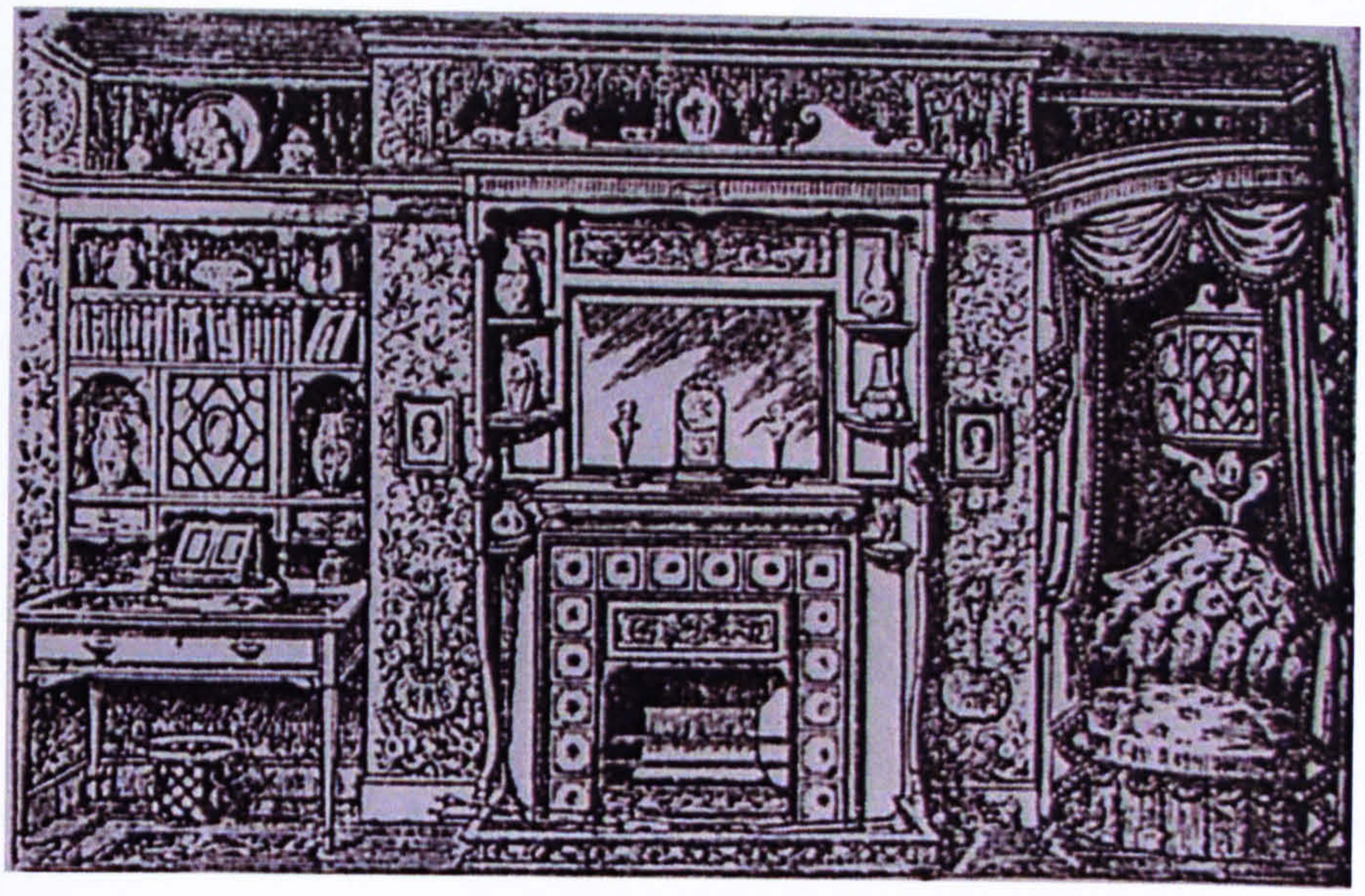
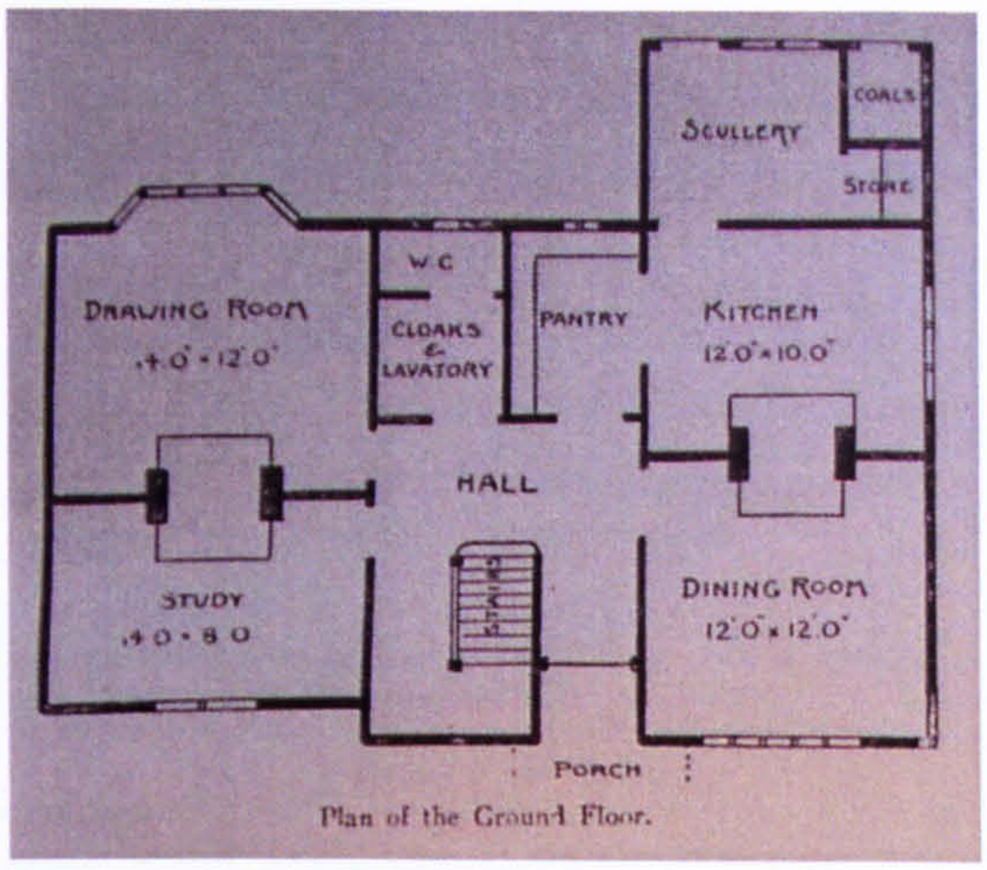


Figure 29 ‘A Bed-Room In A Fitted Flat’ (Gardiner, 1894, p. 110)

Figure 30 ‘A Hall Made in a Small Town House (Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 69)

Figure 31 'The House to which this Scheme of Furniture is Fitted' (Penelope, *The House,* V, 1899, p. 52)



Plan of the Ground Floor.

Figure 32 'Plan of the Ground Floor' (Penelope, *The House,* V, 1899, p. 52)

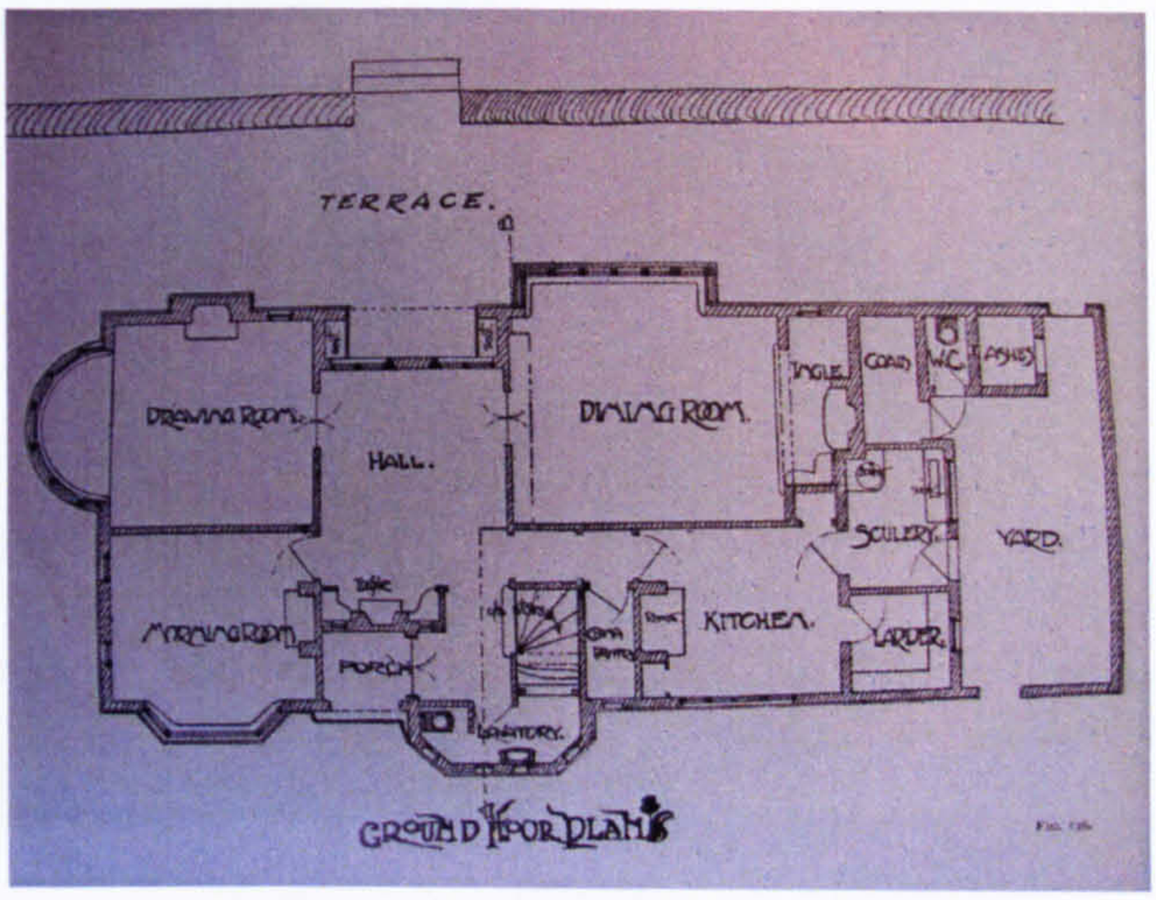


Figure 33 House and ground floor plan (J. Crouch and E. Butler, 1900, figs. 137 and 136)

Figure 34 'Interior of a hall showing ingle nook'
Note the electric medieval-looking lantern (J. Crouch and E. Butler, 1900, fig. 20)

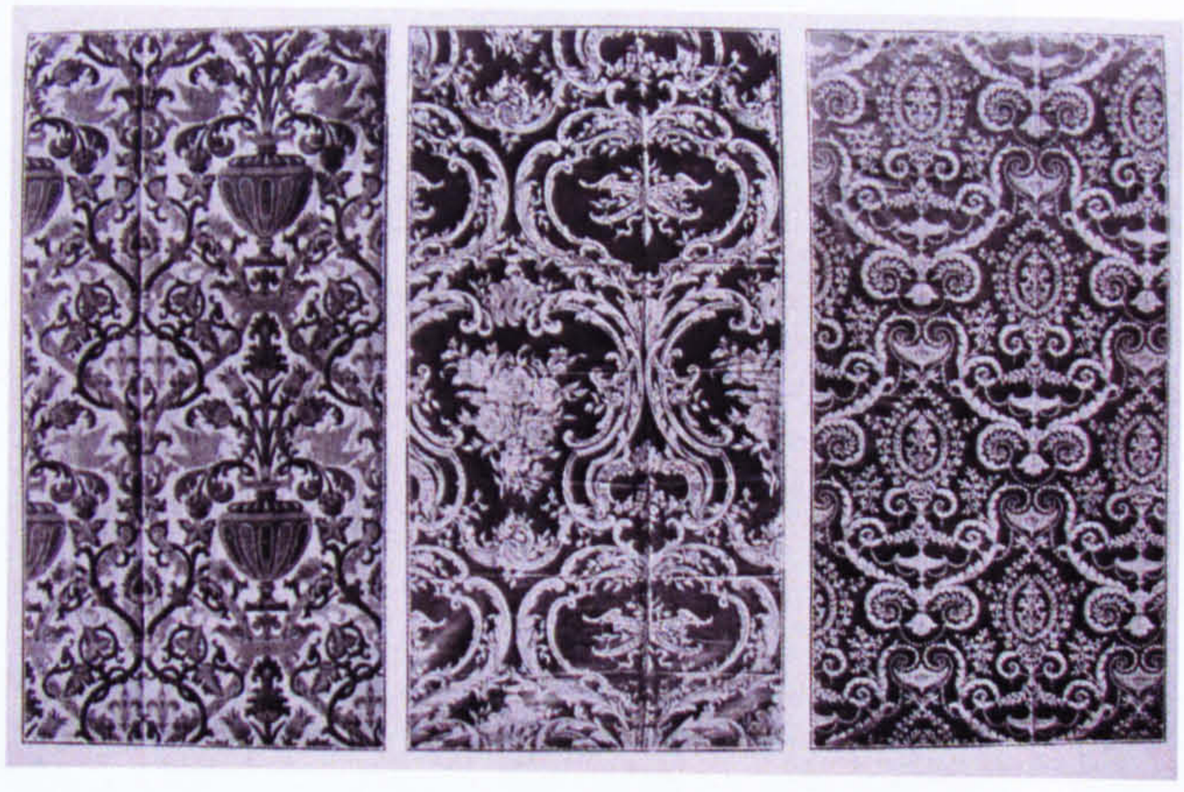


Figure 35 'Examples of Brocades:
Venetian, Louis XV, Adams' (H. J. Jennings, 1902, plate XI)

Figure 36 'Drawing Room Exhibited by Waring & Gillow at Paris', 1900 (H. J. Jennings, 1902, plate XXXI)

Figure 37 'Adapted from a late 18th Century Dresser
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, fig. 66)

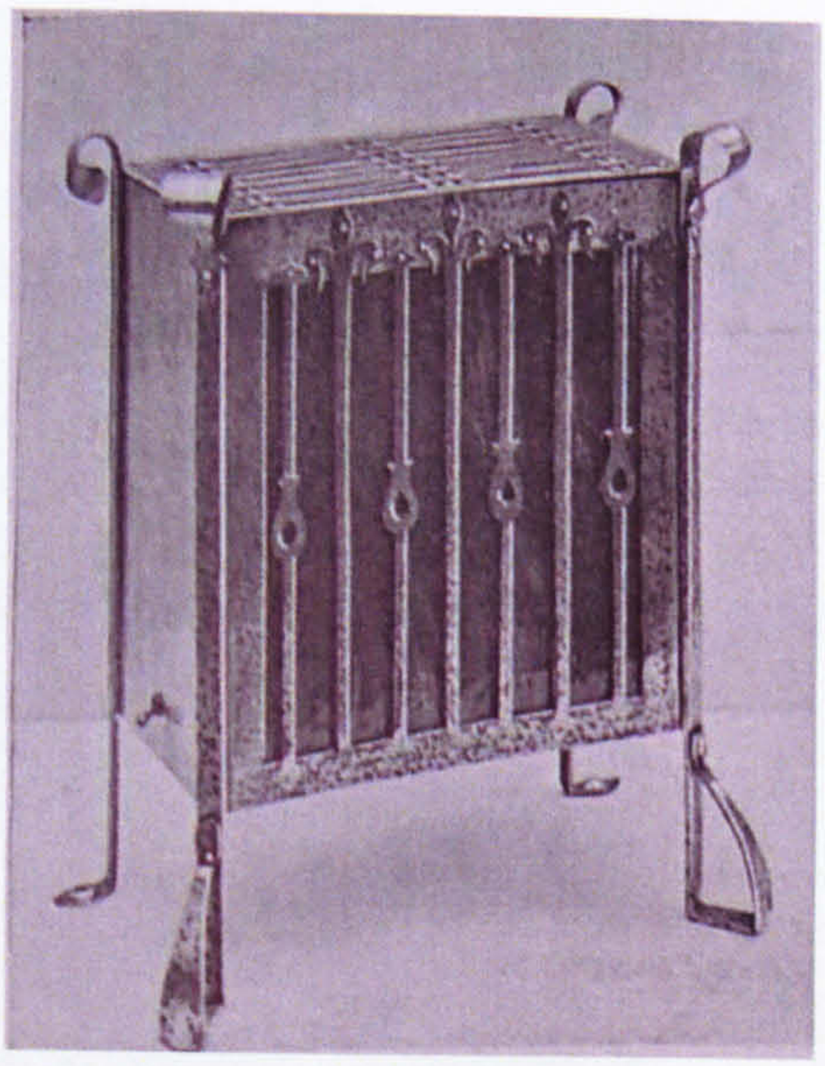


Figure 38 'The "Orleans" electric stove.
Hand-hammered armour bright iron
with "Art" glass, £6.' By Roger Dawson Ltd.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 55)

Figure 39 'Bookcase 4 ft. 6 in., in mahogany, fitted with adjustable shelves, £8 8s' by The Guild of Handicraft, Ltd. (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 145)

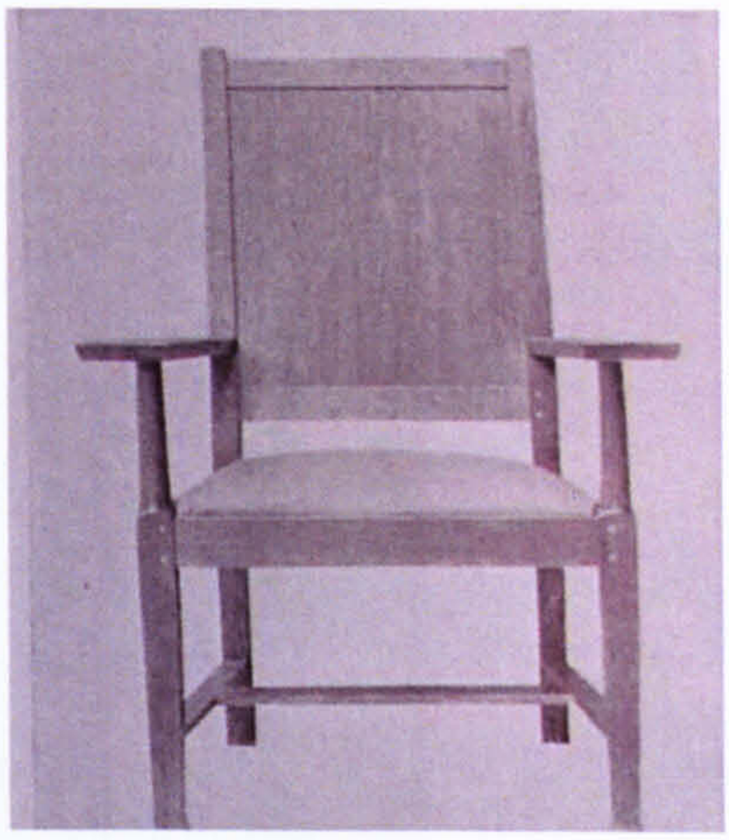


Figure 40 'Armchair, in oak, leather seat' by The Guild of Handicraft, Ltd. (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 145)

Figure 41 'Sideboard, 5ft., 6 in., oak, with steel fittings, £25' by The Guild of Handicraft, Ltd. (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 145)

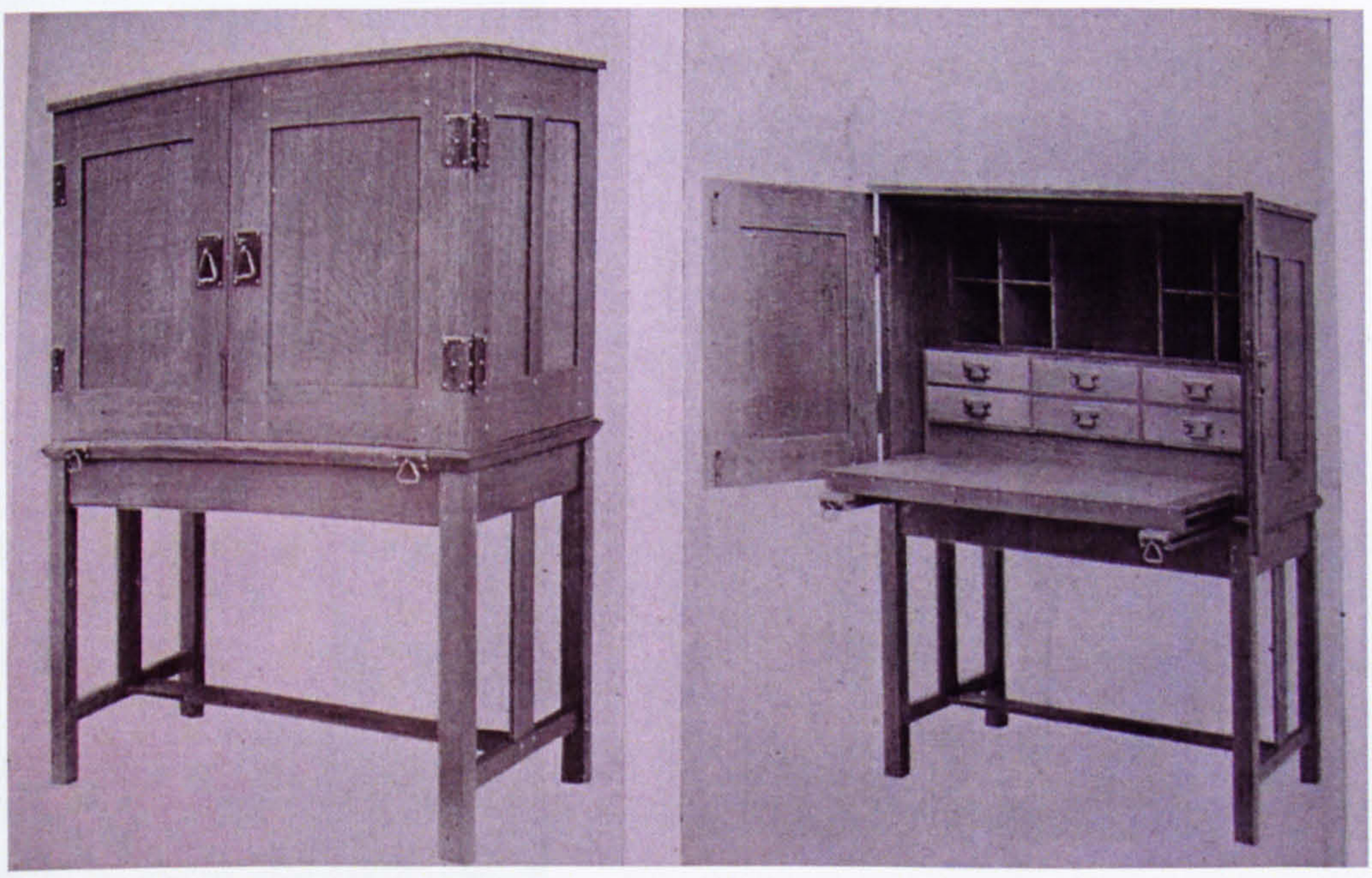


Figure 42 'Writing cabinet in oak, with bright iron fittings' by The Guild of Handicraft, Ltd. (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 147)

Figure 43 'Dresser, with 4 ft. gate-leg, extending to 6 ft.; oak, fumed and waxed. £11 6s 8d' by H. C. Cleaver, Ltd. (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 125)

Figure 44 'Wardrobe, in oak, £17 10s
Designed by Gilbert Ogilby'
The Guild of Handicraft Ltd.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 155)

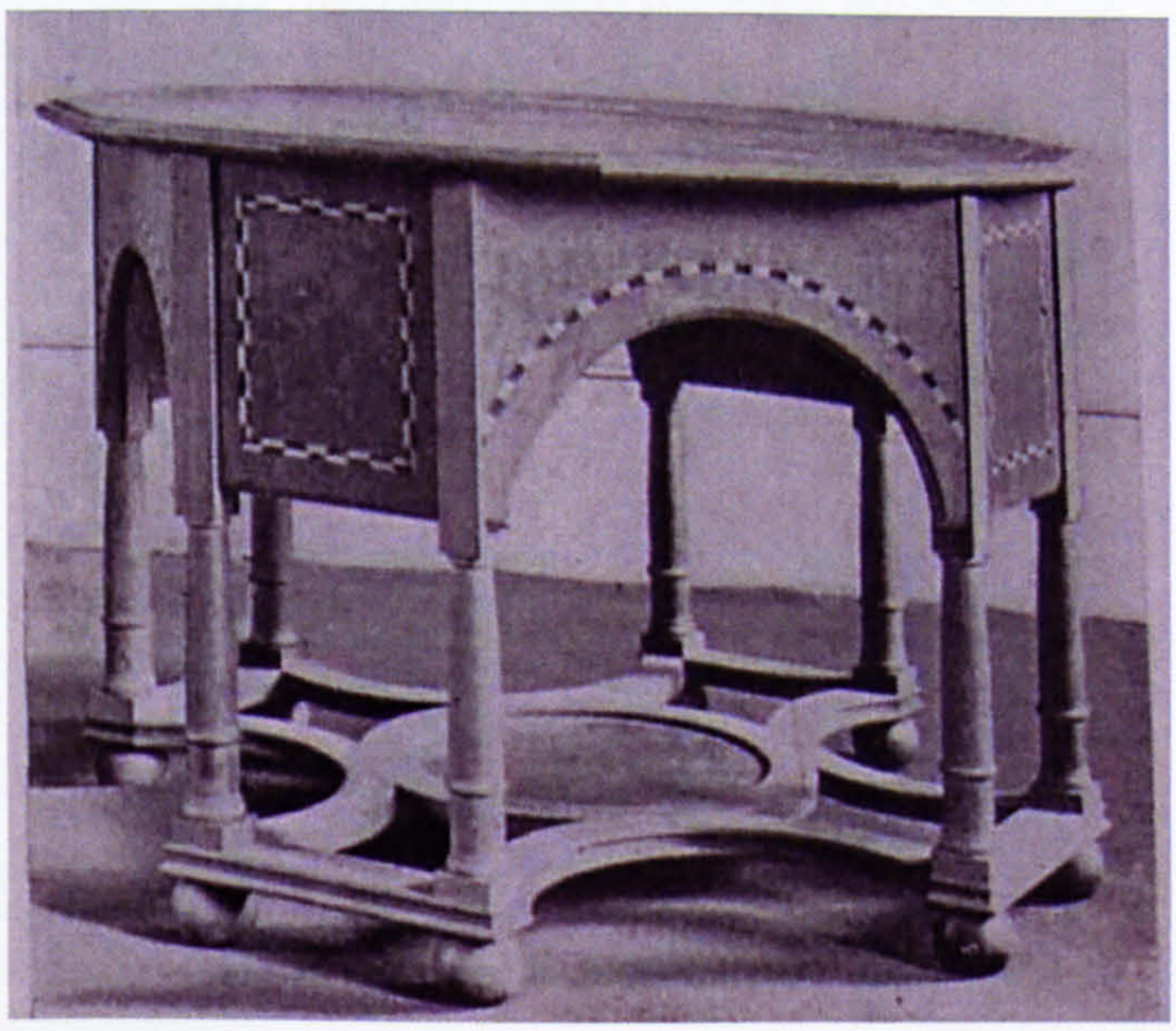


Figure 45 'Twelve-sided table. 3ft. 6 in.
Oak, inlaid with holly and ebony' by Heal & Son
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 129)

Figure 46 'Late Queen Anne suite, in figured English walnut, copied from old example at Victoria and Albert Museum. Cost, to order, about £35.' By Gill & Reigate Ltd.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 127)

Figure 47 'The "Bedford" sideboard, in mahogany, with satin wood banding, 6 ft. long. £10 10s.'
By Waring and Gillow Ltd.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 126)

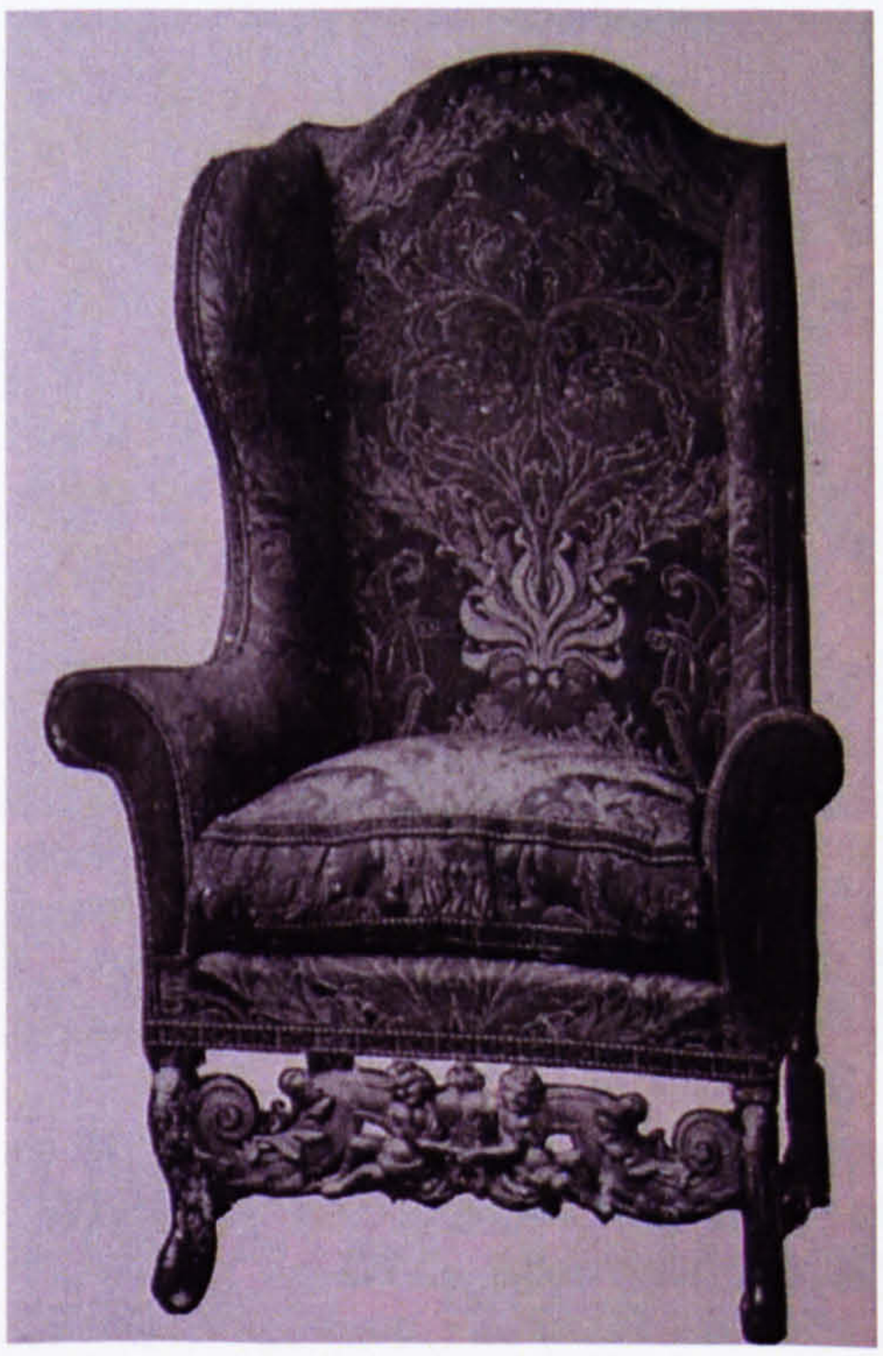


Figure 48 'Armchair'
By Gill & Reigate Ltd.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 128)

Figure 49 'Reproduction of late 18th century brocade. 52 in. wide. 8s. 6d. per yard.'
Thornton-Smith W. & E.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 191)

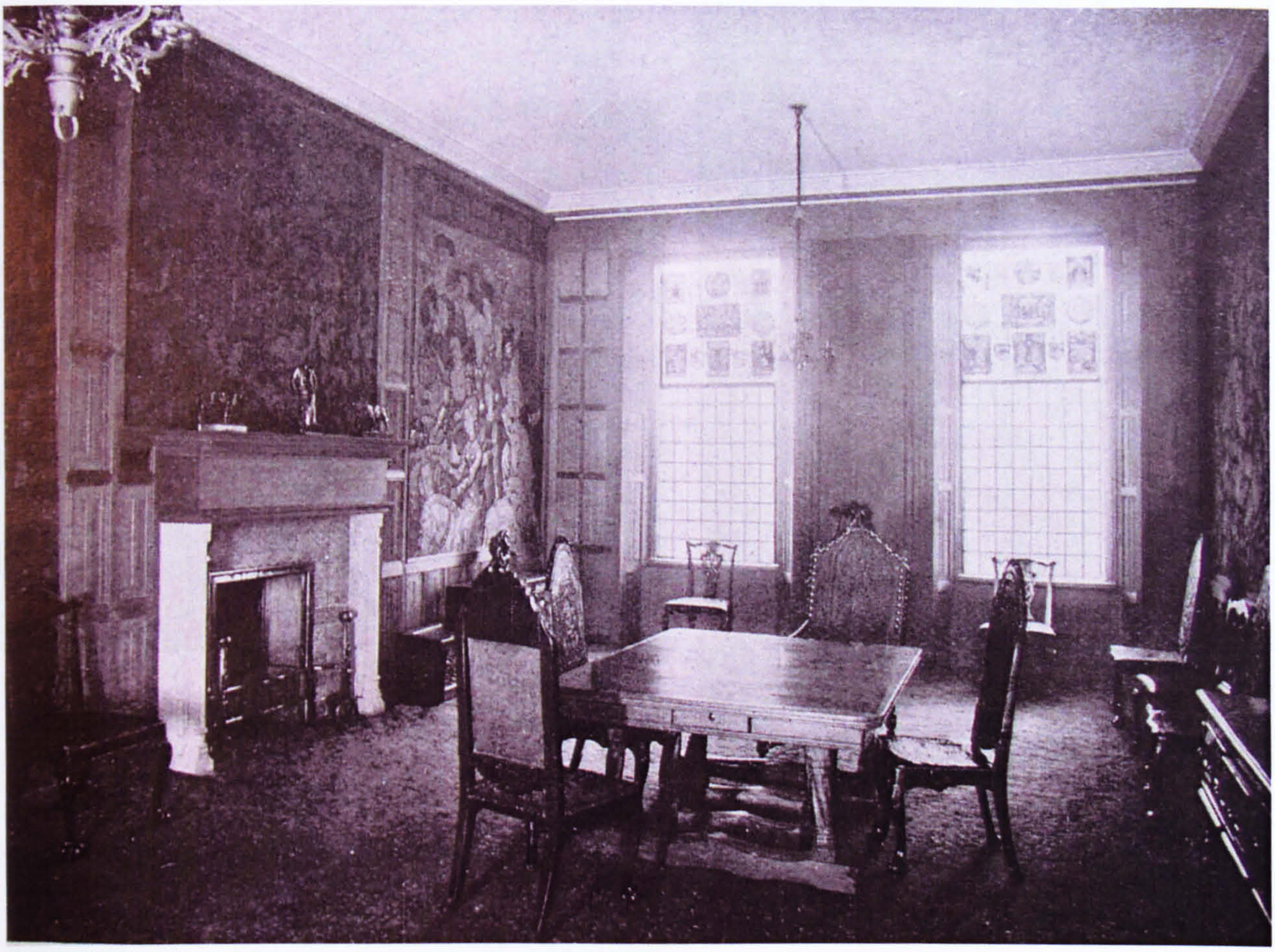


Figure 50 'Dining room in a Scotch house. The walls hung with tapestry, and the windows treated architecturally, without curtains. R. S. Lorimer, A.R.S.A., *Architect*, Edinburgh'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 293)

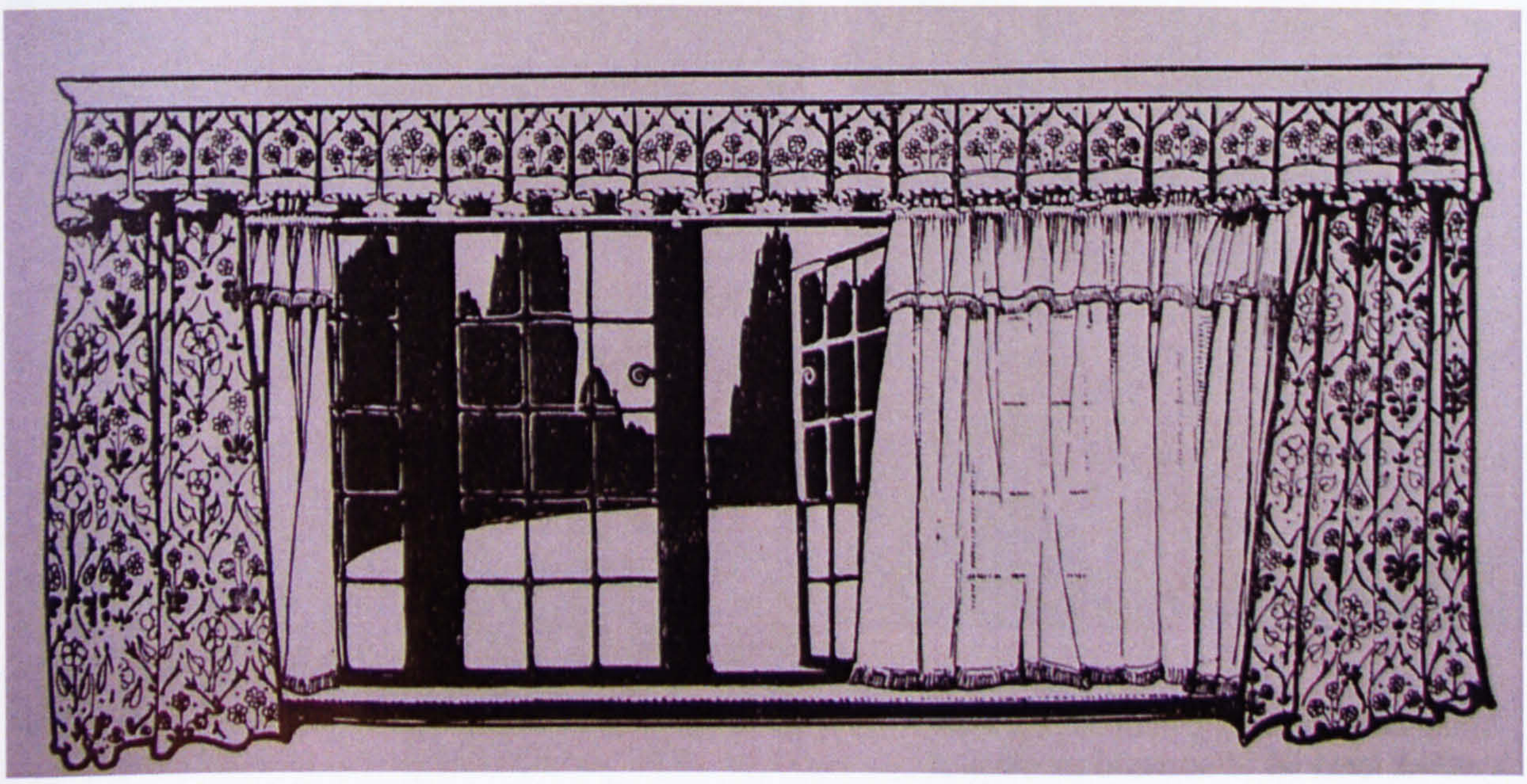


Figure 51 'Inner casement blinds made of Heal & Son's casement flax
Which may be bought in many tints, both plain and figured'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 192)

Figure 52 'The "Rose" Cretonne. Designed by William Morris.' By Morris & Co., Decorators Ltd. (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 189)

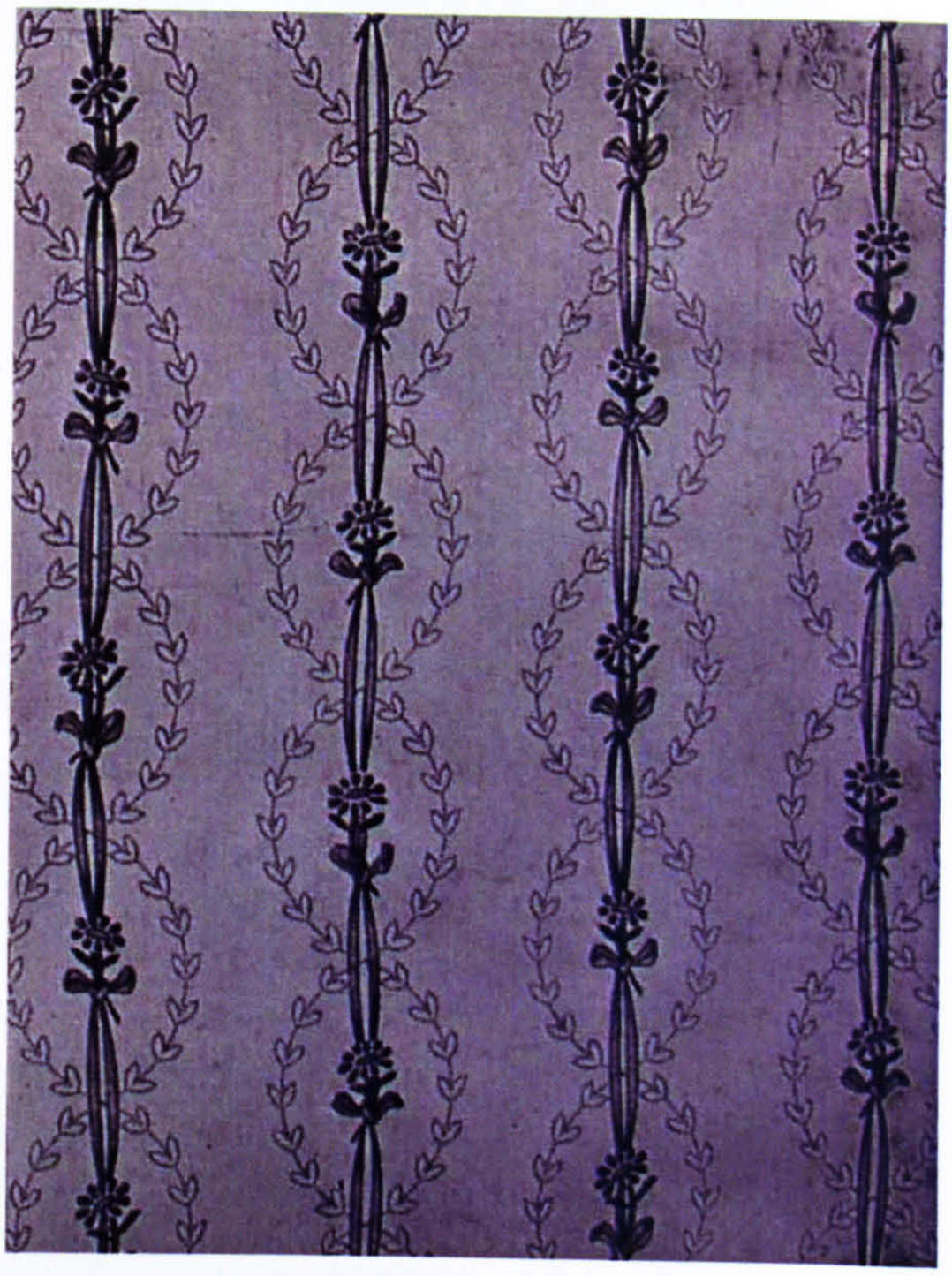


Figure 53 'Moss Rose Trellis". In pink, green and blue.' By Heal & Son (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 189)

Figure 54 'Sheraton stripe, with either mauve, green or dark blue ribbons.' By Heal & Son (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 189)

Figure 55 'Old fashioned patterned fabric suitable for bedrooms.' By Heal & Son (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 189)

Figure 56 '5-light electrolier. Oxydized silver. (Candle lamps extra.) £11 0s 6d.'
Osler F. & C., Ltd.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 69)

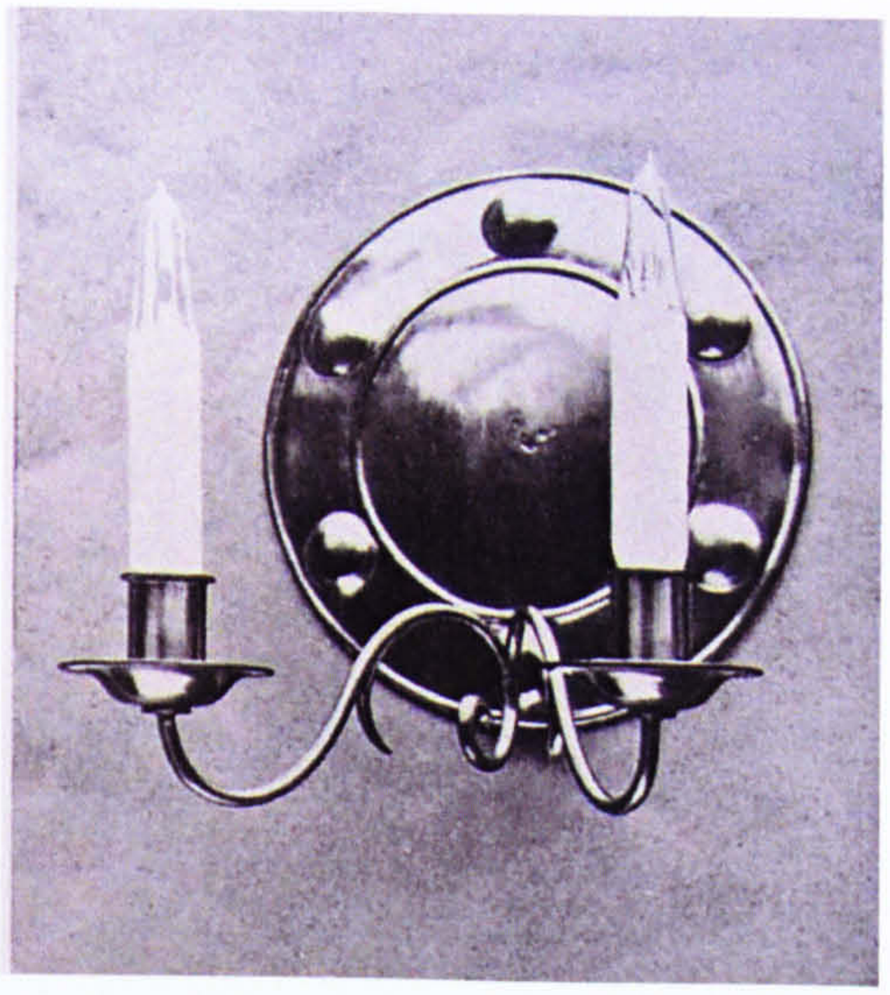


Figure 57 '2-light bracket. Old candle brass. (Candle lamps extra.) £2 15s.'
Osler F. & C., Ltd.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 69)

Figure 58 'The "Standard" rose decoration. This decoration with frieze and filling combined, is printed in pieces of 12 yards. It is sold for separate use as a frieze or dado, or as a complete decoration for 12s to 21s per piece.' By Jeffrey & Co.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 81)

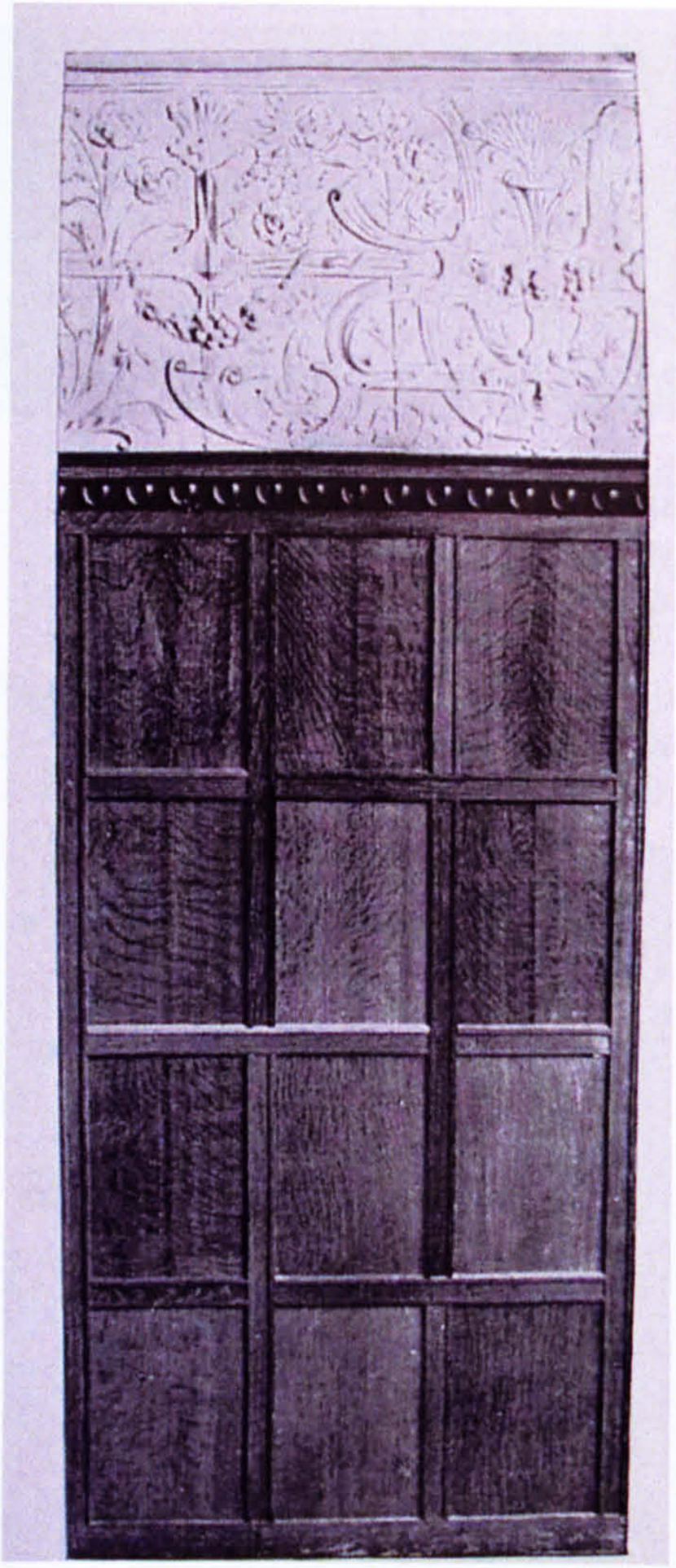


Figure 59 '"Tudoresk" oak panelling. Plain oak for 1s. 6d. per square foot fixed complete. Cornice, 2s. per foot run.' By H. C. Cleaver Ltd. (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 59)

Figure 60 'Panelling in Crown wainscot oak. 2s. 3d. per foot super.' By Howard & Sons Ltd. (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 59)

Figure 61 'The "Boss" ceiling. Jeffrey & Co., Mortimer Street, Regent Street, W.' (W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 186)

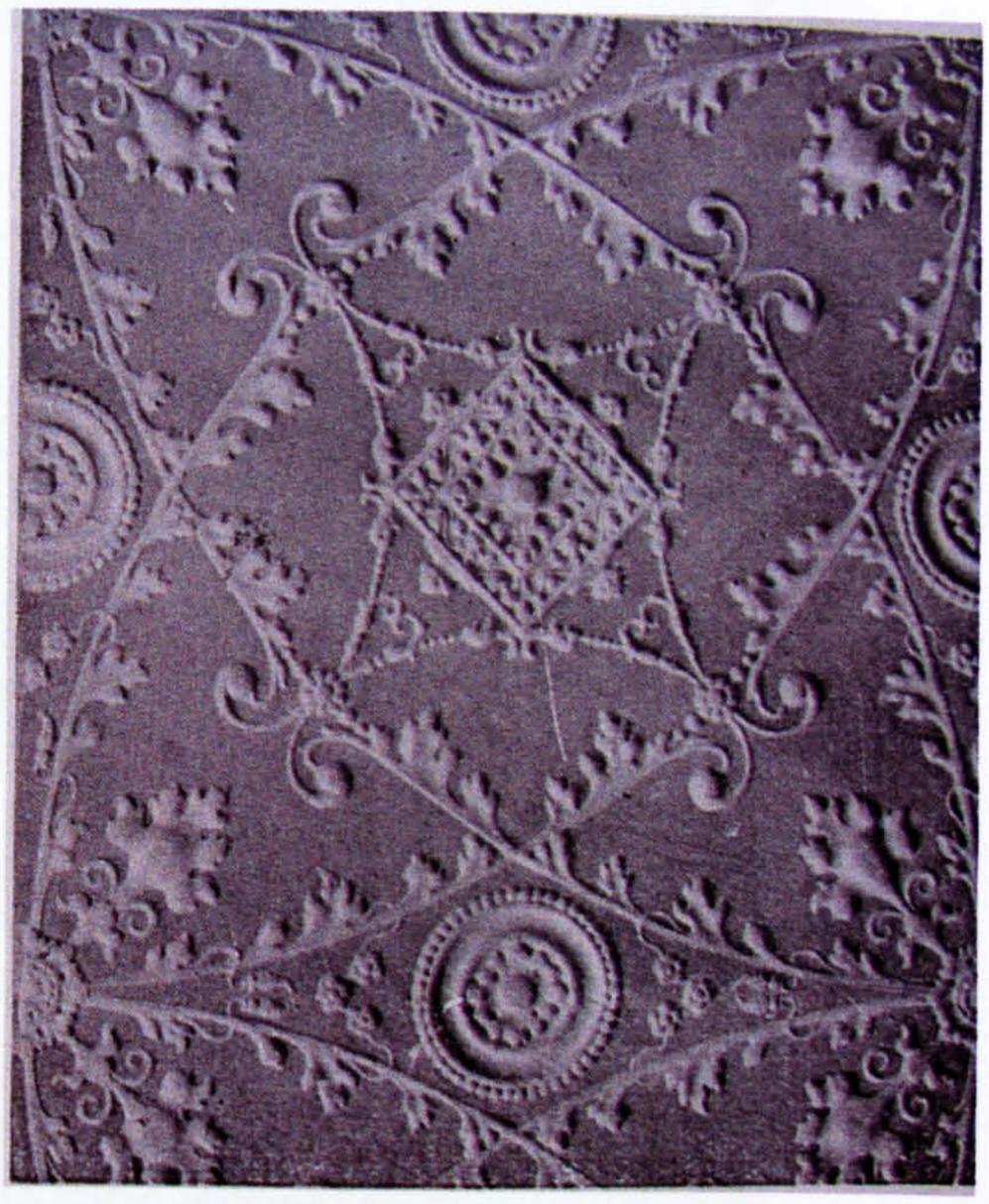


Figure 62 'The "Florentine" ceiling. Jeffrey & Co., Mortimer Street, Regent Street, W.' (W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 186)

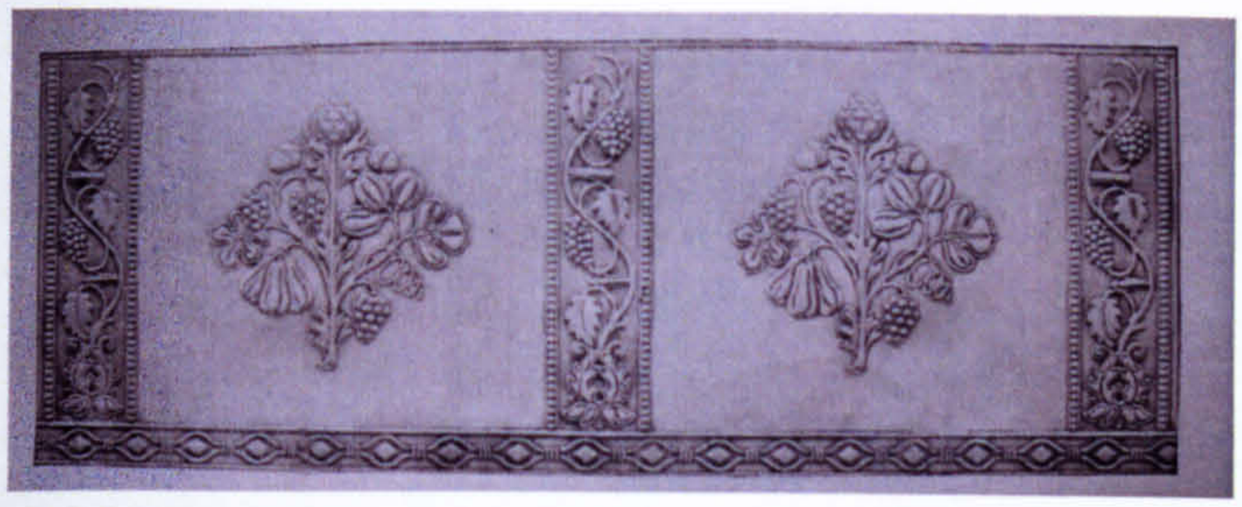


Figure 63 'The "Fig and Vine" frieze (embossed).
Designed by Frank Murray: Jeffrey & Co., London'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 109)

Figure 64 'Wallpaper: Springtime (To be used without pictures)
Designed by Heywood Sumner, Jeffrey & Co., London'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 112)

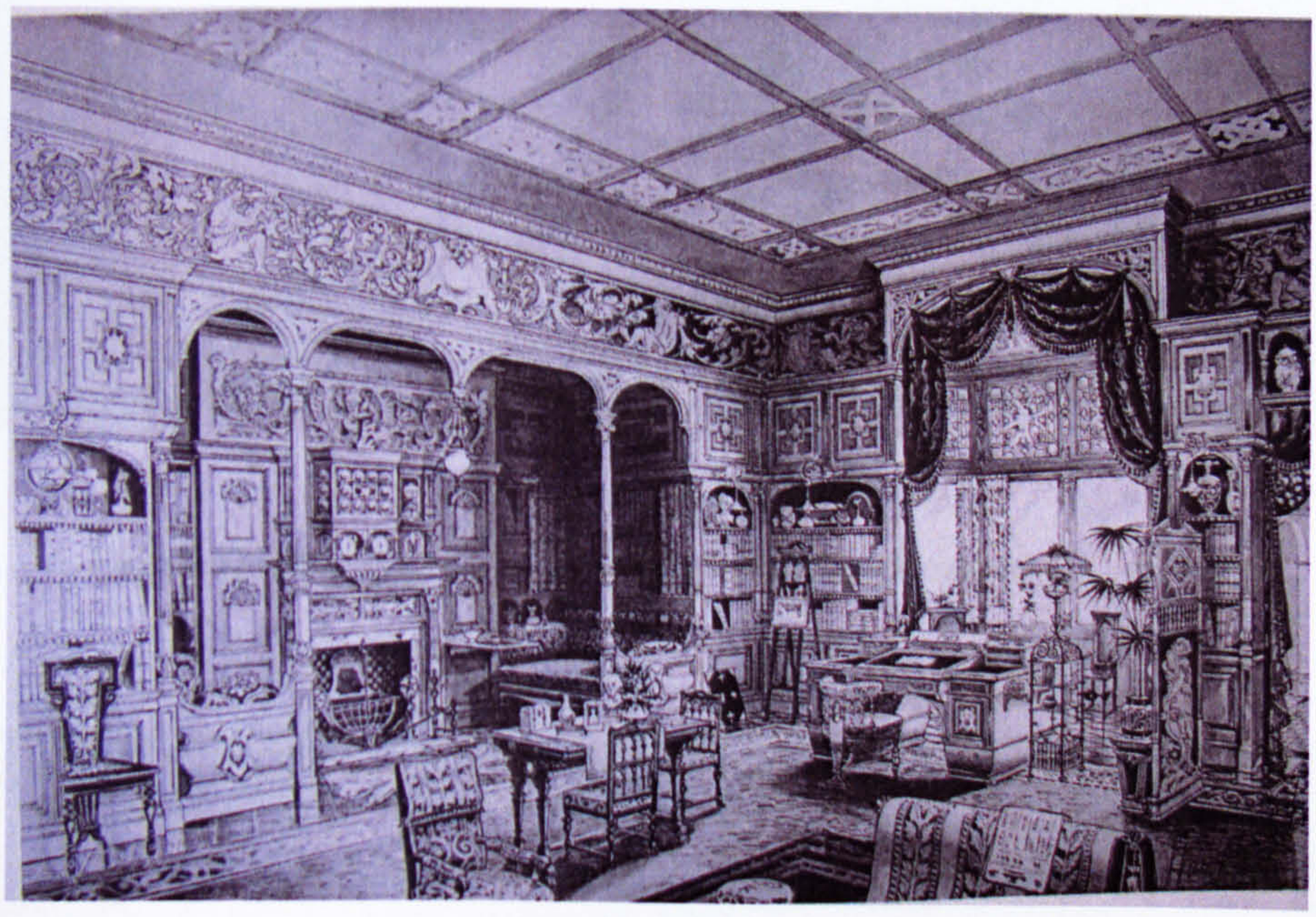


Figure 65 'A Fitted Library in the Queen Anne Style'
(Hampton & Sons, trade catalogue, 1894)

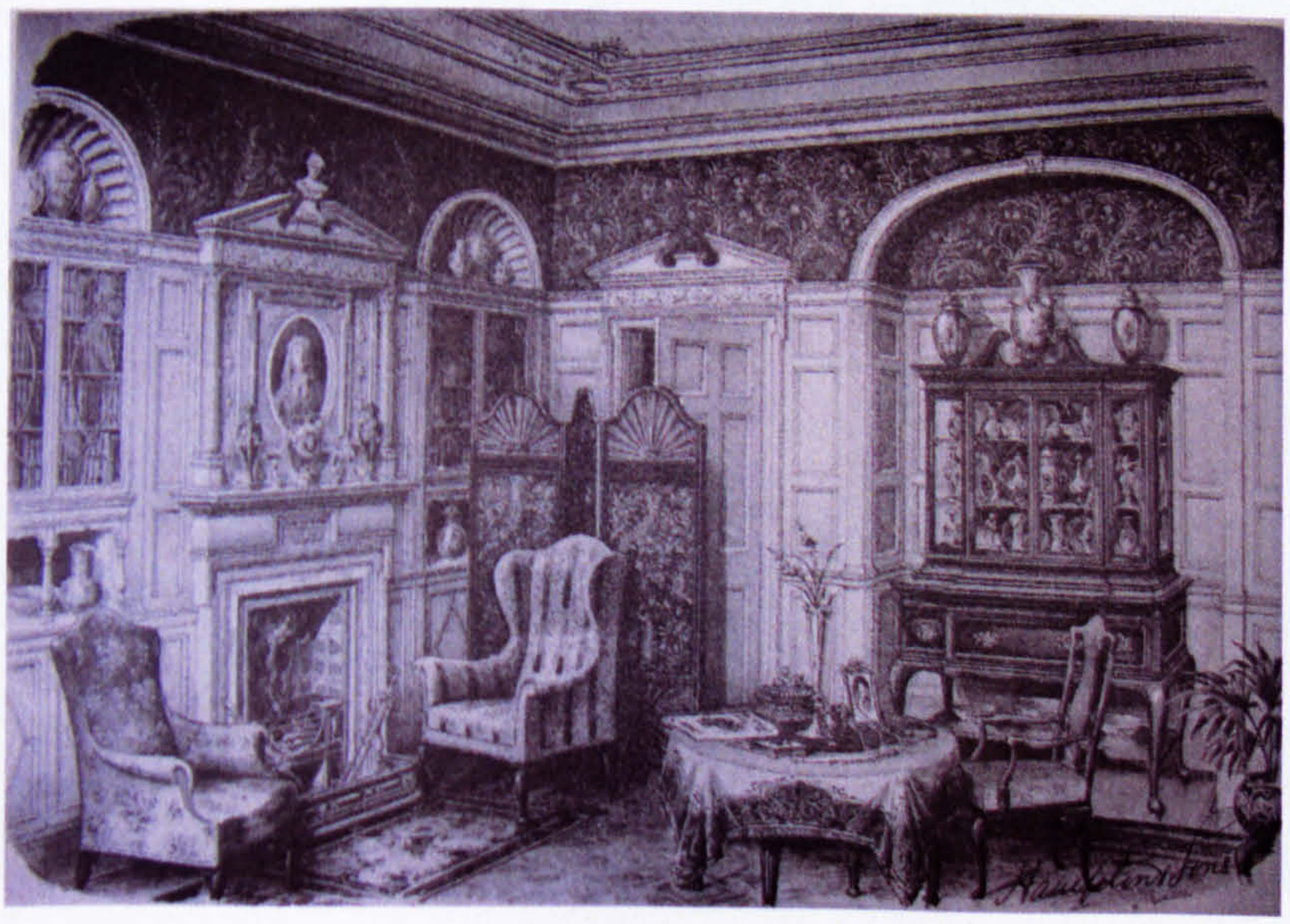


Figure 66 'A Queen Anne Morning Room'
(Hampton & Sons, trade catalogue, 1894)

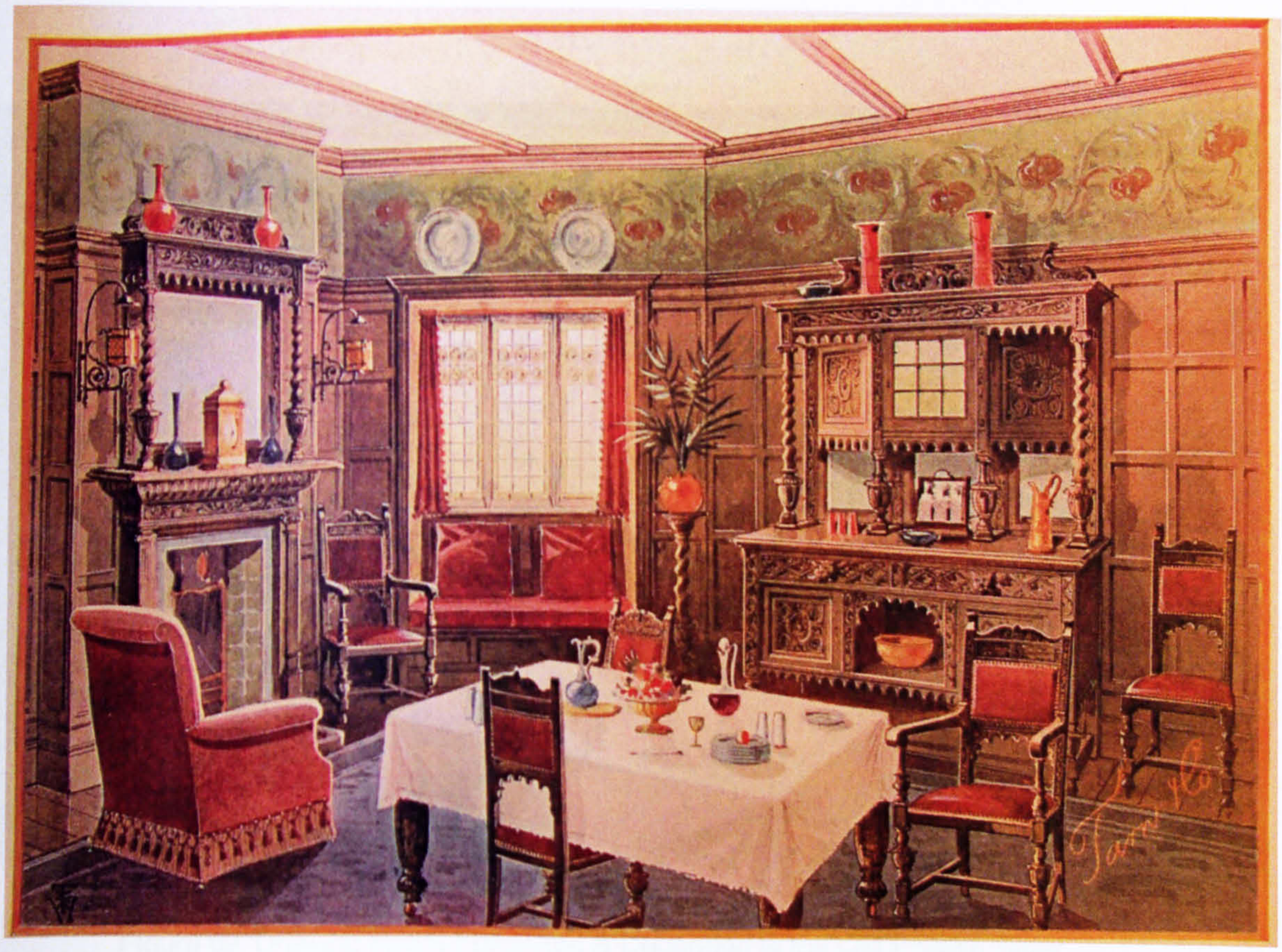


Figure 67 'The "Warwick" Suite' (Tarn & Co. trade catalogue, ca. 1900)

Figure 68 'Inexpensive Dining Room for Flat, Furnished in Fumed Oak by Warings' (*The House*, supplement, May 1899)

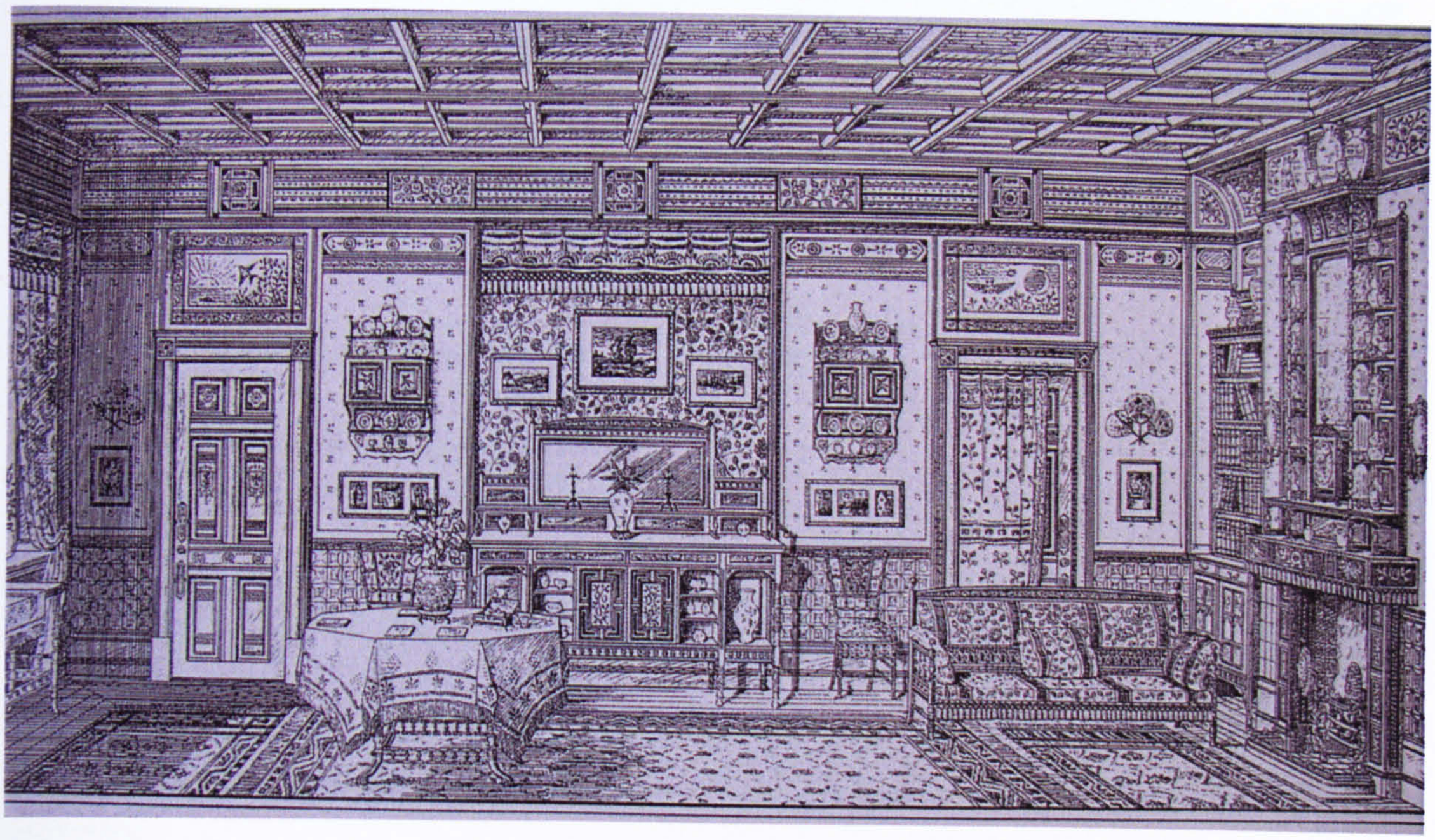


Figure 69 'Drawing Room Furnished & Decorated in the Old English Style' by J. Shoolbred & Co., 1876 (P. Thornton, *Authentic Décor,* p. 336)

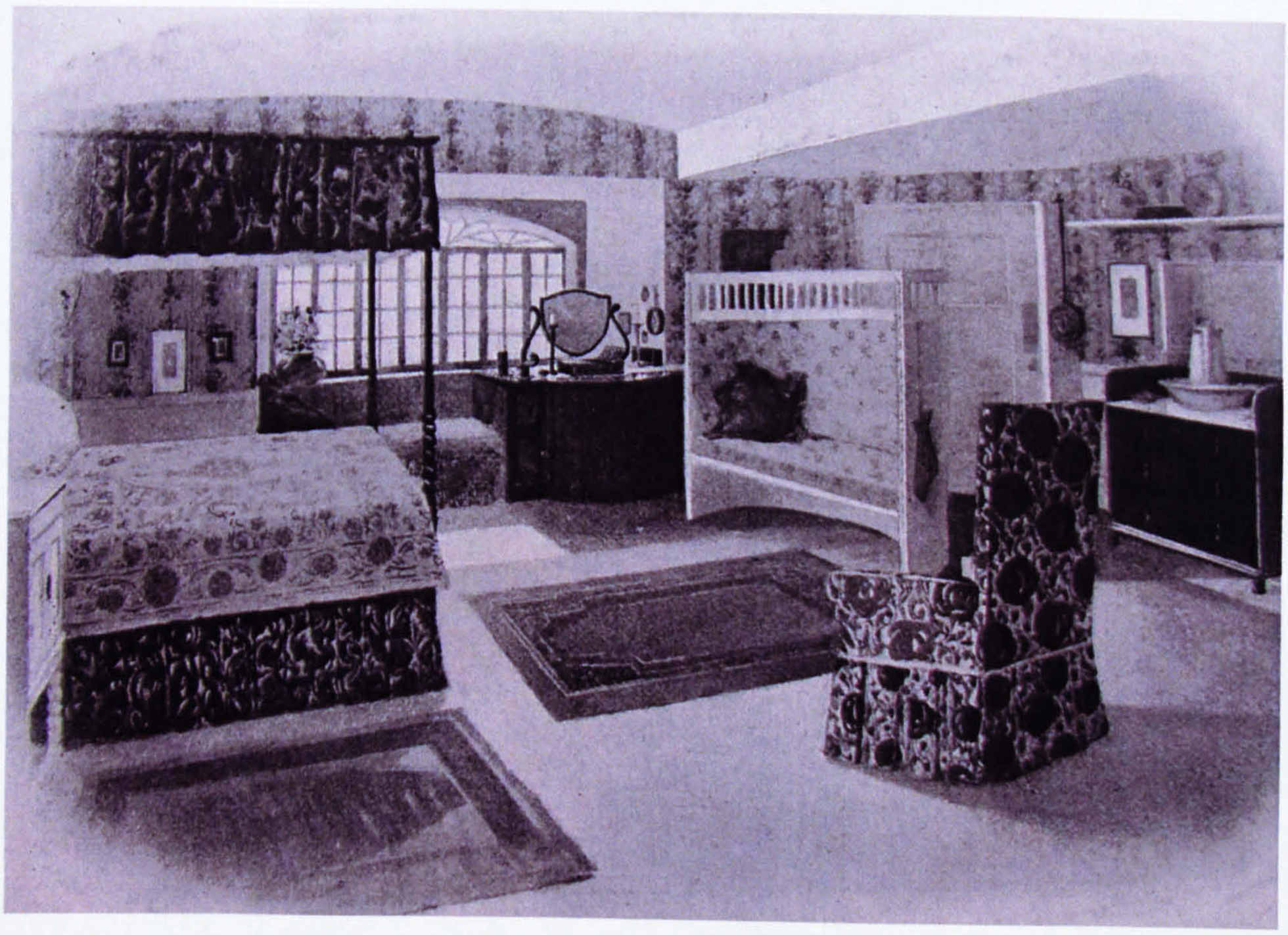


Figure 70 'An "Old English" Chintz Bedroom' by Waring & Gillow (H. J. Jennings, *Our Homes,* plate XXXVIII)

Figure 71 'The Long Gallery at Knole, as exhibited at Paris', 1900
(Waring & Gillow, trade catalogue, 1906, p. 5)

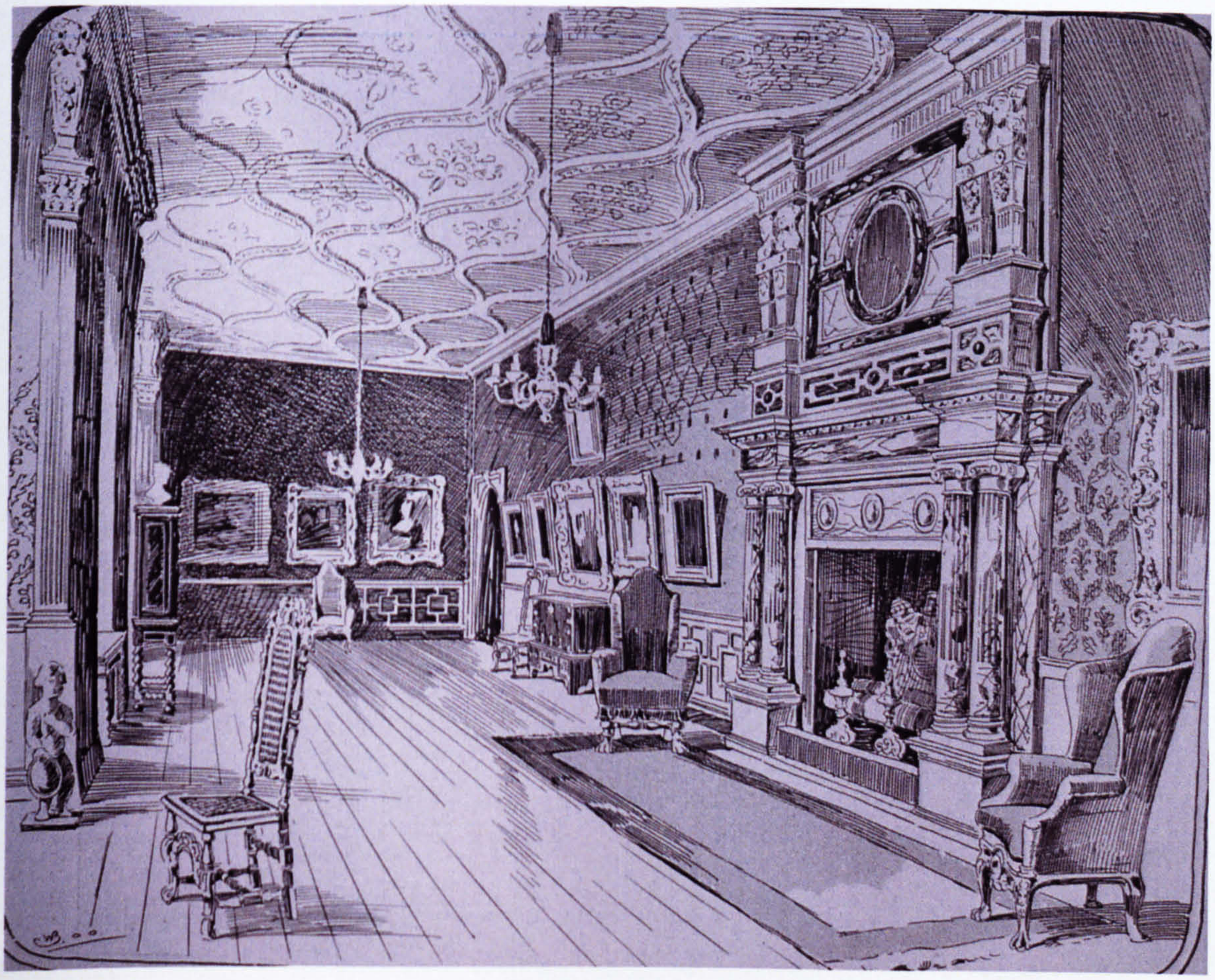


Figure 72 'Room in the British Pavillion, by Messrs. Waring' (*The House*, October 1900, p. 45)

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Figure 73 *The House*, June 1898

THE CABINET MAKER & COMPLETE HOUSE FURNISHER
EST. 1880
UPHOLSTERY • DECORATING • FURNISHING HARDWARE • ART METAL WORK • POTTERY
CARPETS • FABRICS • FLOOR COVERINGS • TIMBER • TOOLS & WOOD-WORKING MACHINERY
MONTHLY
EDITED BY J. WILLIAMS BENN.
SIXPENCE

No. 299. Vol. XXV.] Proprietors: BENN BROTHERS, Ltd., 8, Finsbury Square, E.C. [May, 1905.

THE REVIVAL OF "QUEEN ANNE."

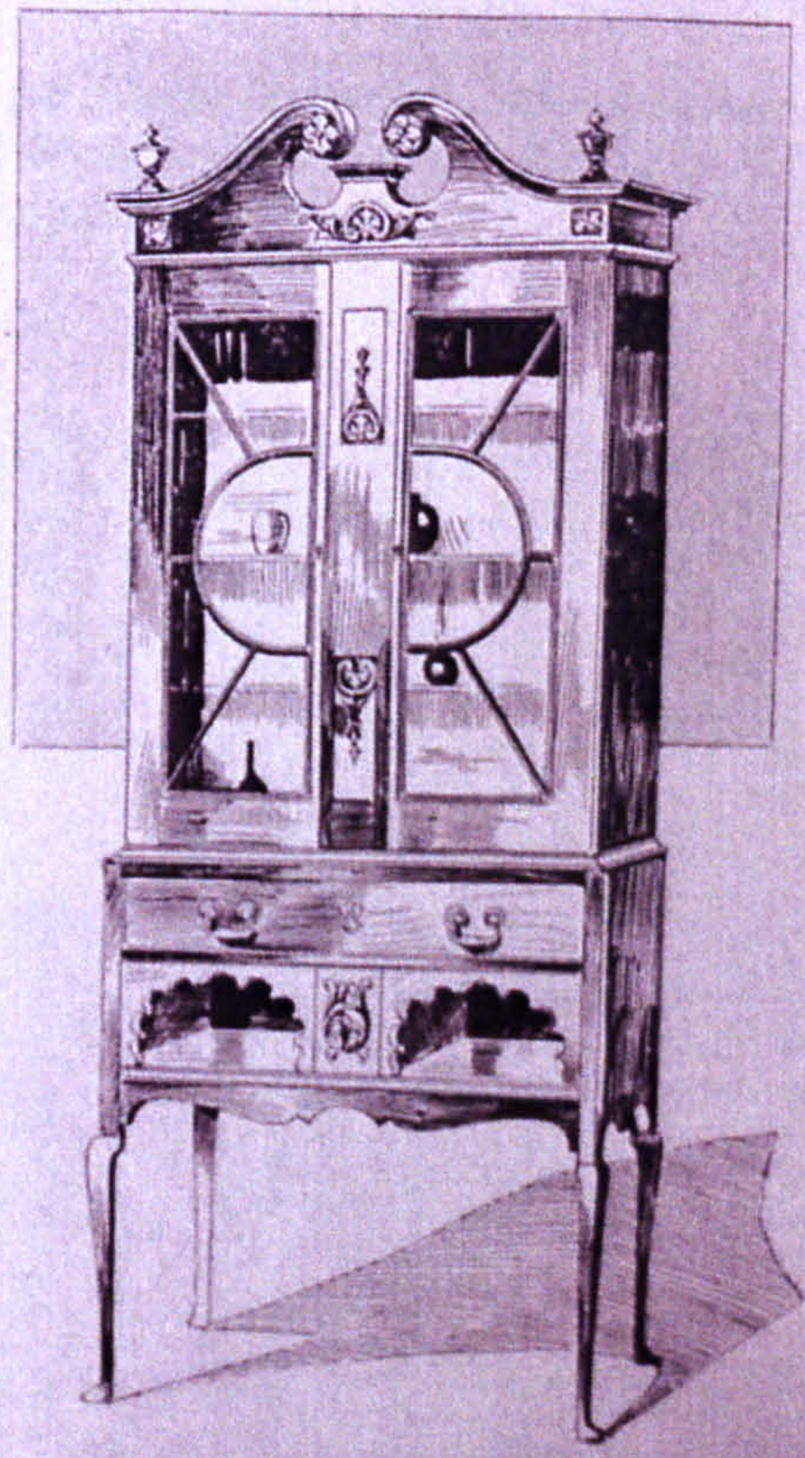
(FIRST ARTICLE.

We are, all of us, familiar with the peevish and exacting child who, never content with the good things placed before him at table, cries for some dish which he has never tasted, and who, when his persistent demands have been acceded to, finds after all that the greatly desired novelty is not by any means acceptable. As we are all children of an older growth, we suppose it is only natural that similar experiences should occur in after life and in other walks than those associated with gastronomy, though their occurrence is not calculated to foster equability of temper. Many applications of our homely simile will immediately suggest themselves to manufacturers who are at their wits' end to cope with the ever-increasing demand for novelty, and to make their constant endeavours to do so pay. Their task, indeed, is far from being an easy one.

* * * *

What frequently occurs? A manufacturer welcomes a buyer to his showrooms and pilots him round them with pride, in the hope of a good order being placed. But, unfortunately, the visitor does not appear to be very favourably impressed. He has seen the goods before, and wants something fresh—something, well, he does not quite know what—that is not his business. Anyway, he must have "something different." Disappointed, but by no means daunted, our manufacturer bids his visitor "Good-bye," and then sets to work with the determination that, when he does call again, he shall have no cause for complaint on the score of lack of novelty. The result is that an extensive range of really fresh patterns is prepared and, when next he puts in an appearance the buyer is greeted with confidence by the man who has been racking his brains to fulfil his requirements. The new lines are examined, but success seems as far off as ever. No look of approval comes over the face of that buyer, strenuously as the manufacturer has worked to woo it there. This time the goods are *too* novel, and the buyer is "really afraid to touch them." Is it to be wondered at, then, that the manufacturer sometimes becomes disgusted with his "daily round," and feels very greatly inclined to give up altogether in despair?

Nevertheless, the difficulty has to be met and overcome by some means, and it has always been the aim of The Cabinet Maker to aid its readers in gauging



A China Cabinet on "Queen Anne" Lines

prevailing tastes and to suggest to them ideas which may reasonably be counted upon to find favour in the eyes of the majority of their customers. So, admitting that, under existing circumstances, it is exceedingly difficult

Figure 74 The Revival of "Queen Anne"' (*The Cabinet Maker*, May 1905)

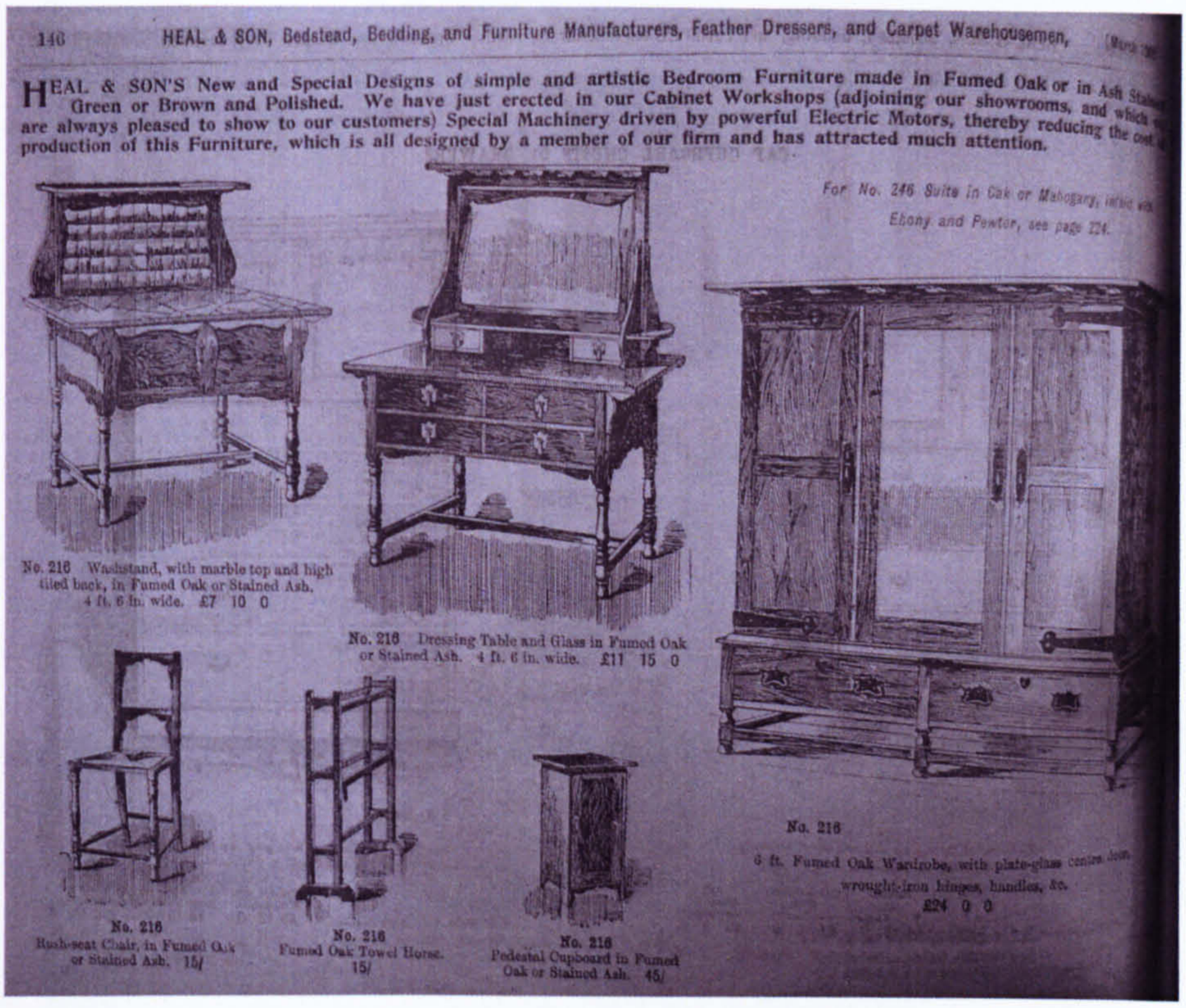


Figure 75 'Heal & Son's New and Special Designs of simple and artistic Bedroom Furniture made in Fumed Oak or in Ash Stained Green or Brown and Polished'
(Heal & Son, trade catalogue, 1902)

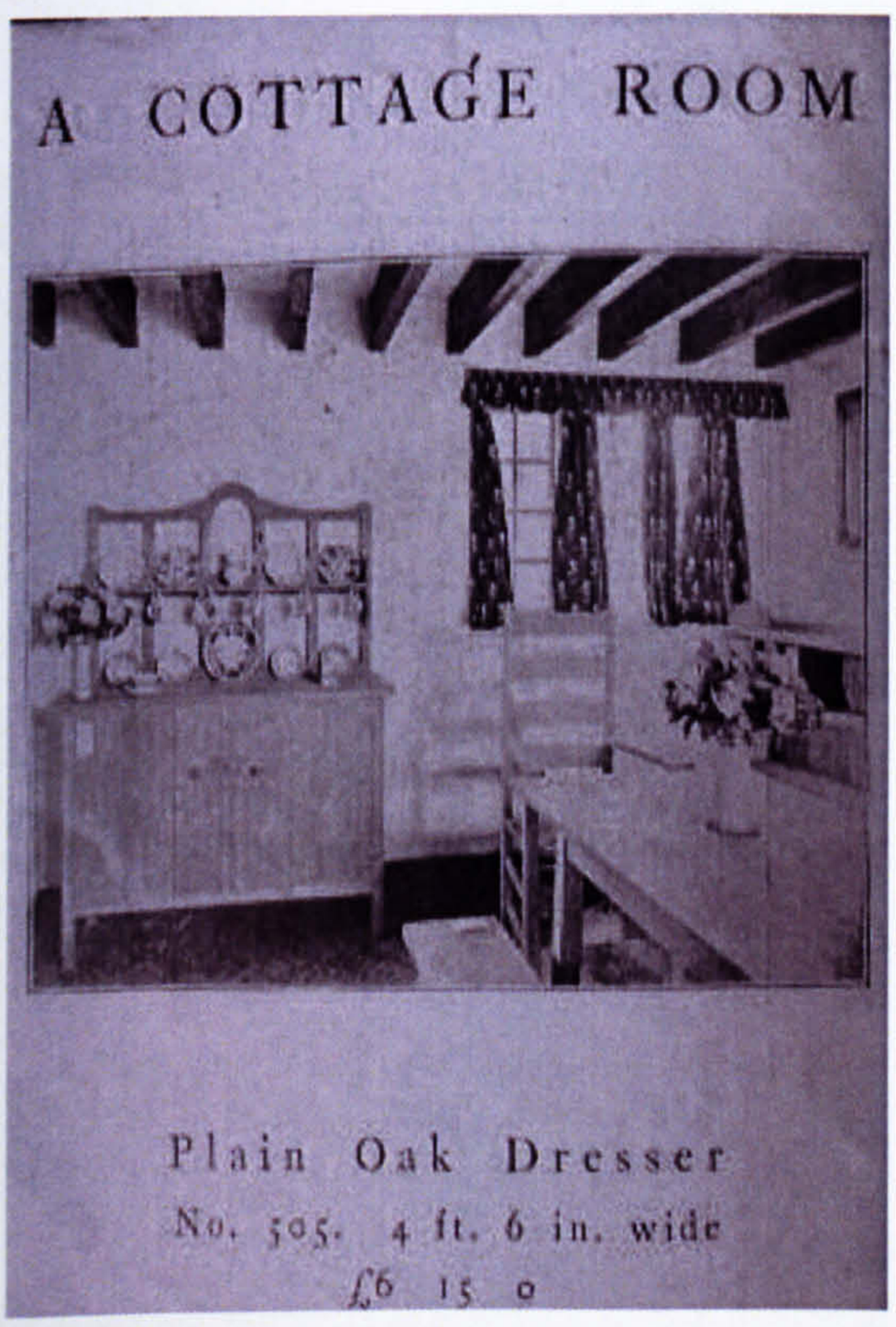


Figure 76 Heal & Son, *Country Cottage Furniture,* trade catalogue, ca.1905

Figure 77 Fire Screen 'with Bronzed Leaded Glass Panel in centre and Oxidized Copper Panels and Square Spindles at sides', model No. 1894
(*Fire Screens,* trade catalogue, ca. 1900)

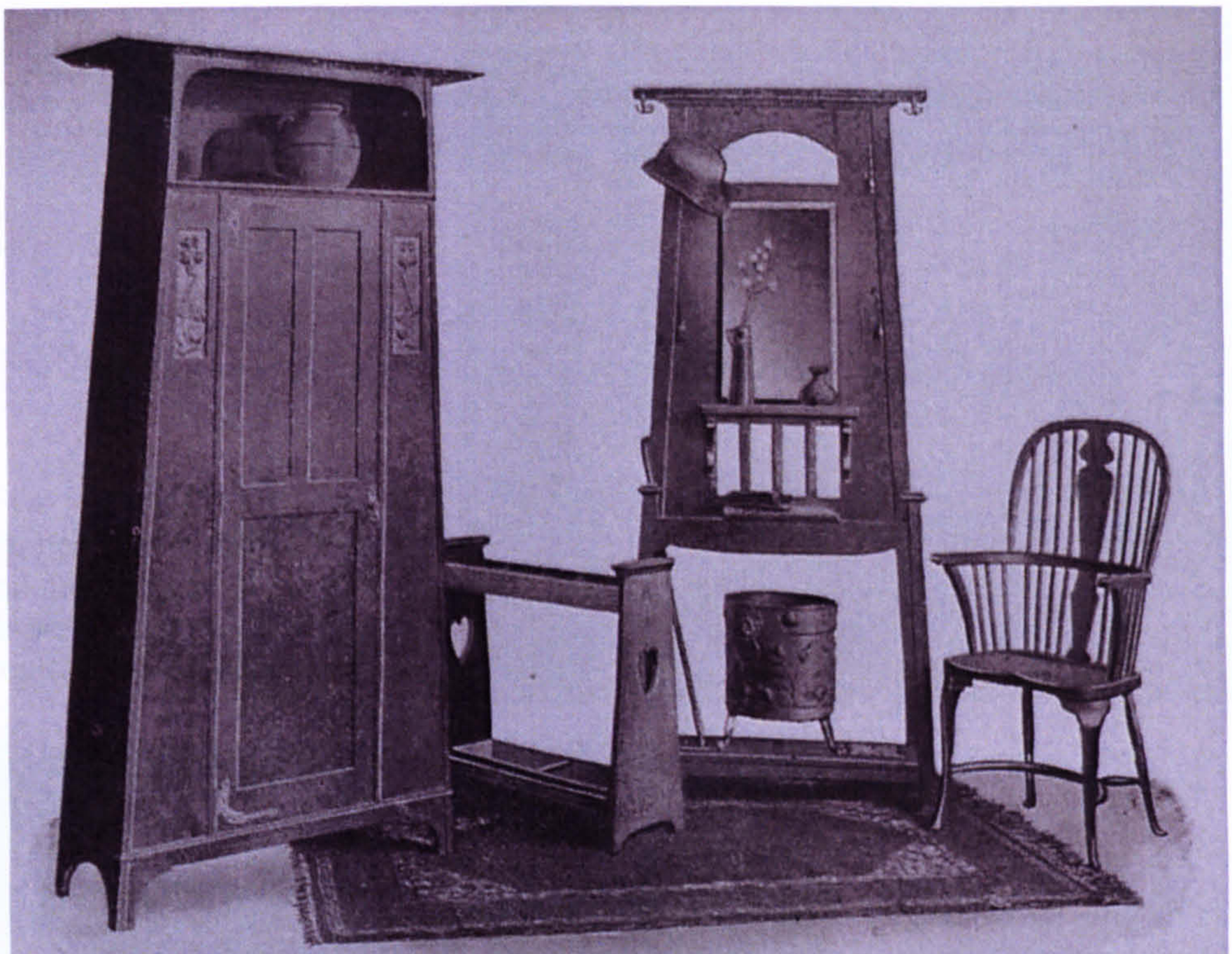


Figure 78 Hall furniture in fumed oak for the £200 Model House
(Waring & Gillow, trade catalogue, ca. 1902)

Figure 79 'A most comfortable and Artistic Chair', (Williamson & Cole, trade catalogue, ca.1906)

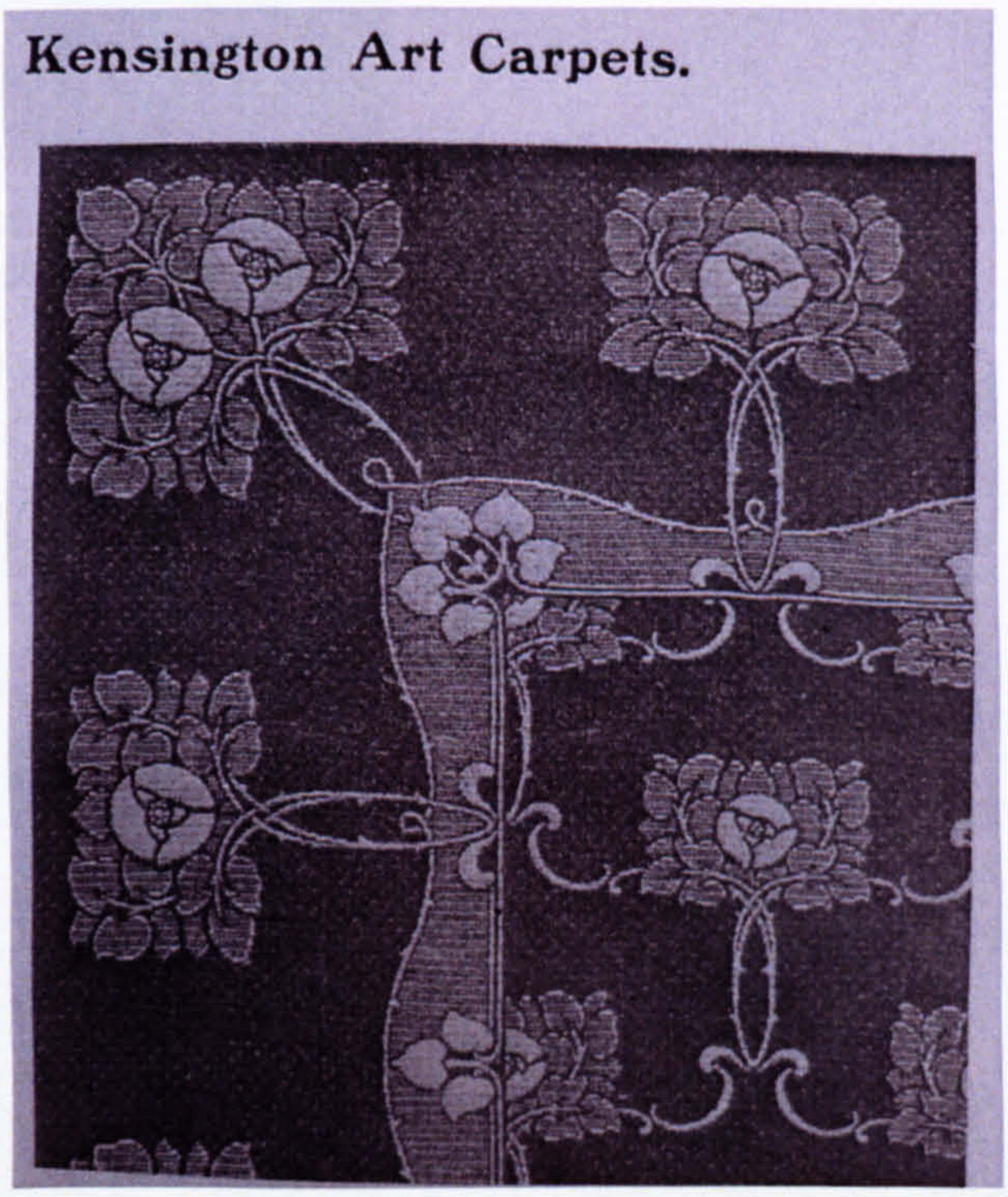


Figure 80 'Kensington Art Carpets' for bedrooms, servant's rooms and nurseries
(John Barker & Co. Ltd, trade catalogue, 1907)

Figure 81 'Entrance or reception hall […] founded upon the later Renaissance' (Maple & Co. Ltd., trade catalogue, ca.1910)

Figure 82 'The furniture in this room is of fine Austrian Oak, fumed to a rich brown colour and wax polished' (Christr. Pratt & Sons, trade catalogue, 1904)

Figure 83 'Second bedroom' I n the £250 model house (Waring & Gillow, t rade catalogue, 1897)

T. B. & W.

Cockayne Ltd.

beg to draw attention to some of their latest Specialities, by means of which the cost of an Oak Interior as shown in this Design is reduced to a very low figure.

Oak Panelling fixed and polished complete, from 1/6 per foot.

Parquetry Flooring laid and polished, from 1/3 per foot.

Half Timber Freizes and Ceilings at an equally cheap rate.

Further Details furnished upon application.

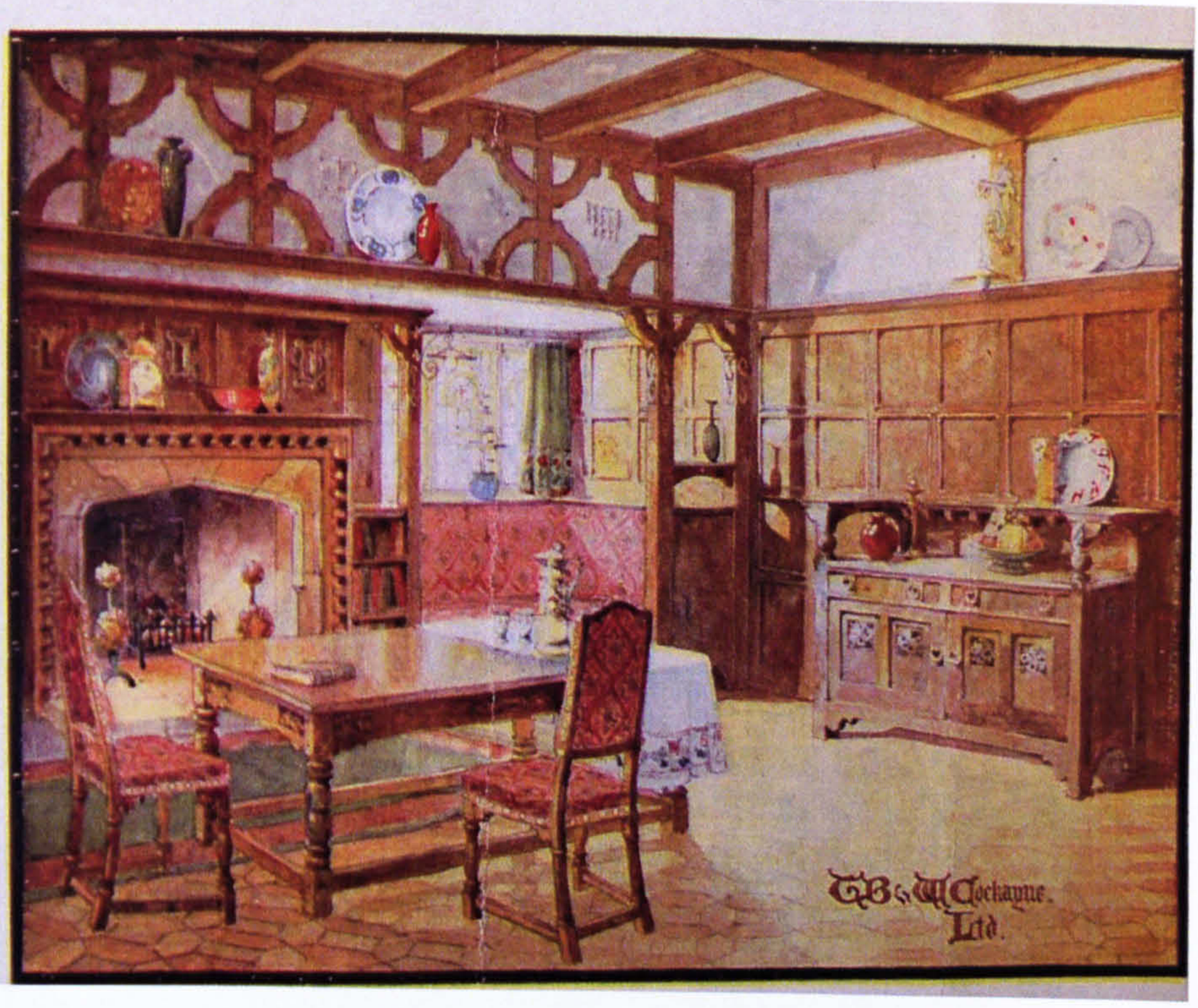


Figure 84 Messrs. T. B. & W. Cockayne, trade catalogue, 1900s

Substantial

Dining Room

in Fumed Oak.

Sideboard, £10 18s.

Overmantel, £3 15s.

Dinner Waggon, £3 8s. 6d.

Four Small Chairs and Two Carving Chairs, £7 10s.

Dining Table, £4 10s.

Figure 85 Messrs. T. B. & W. Cockayne, trade catalogue, 1900s

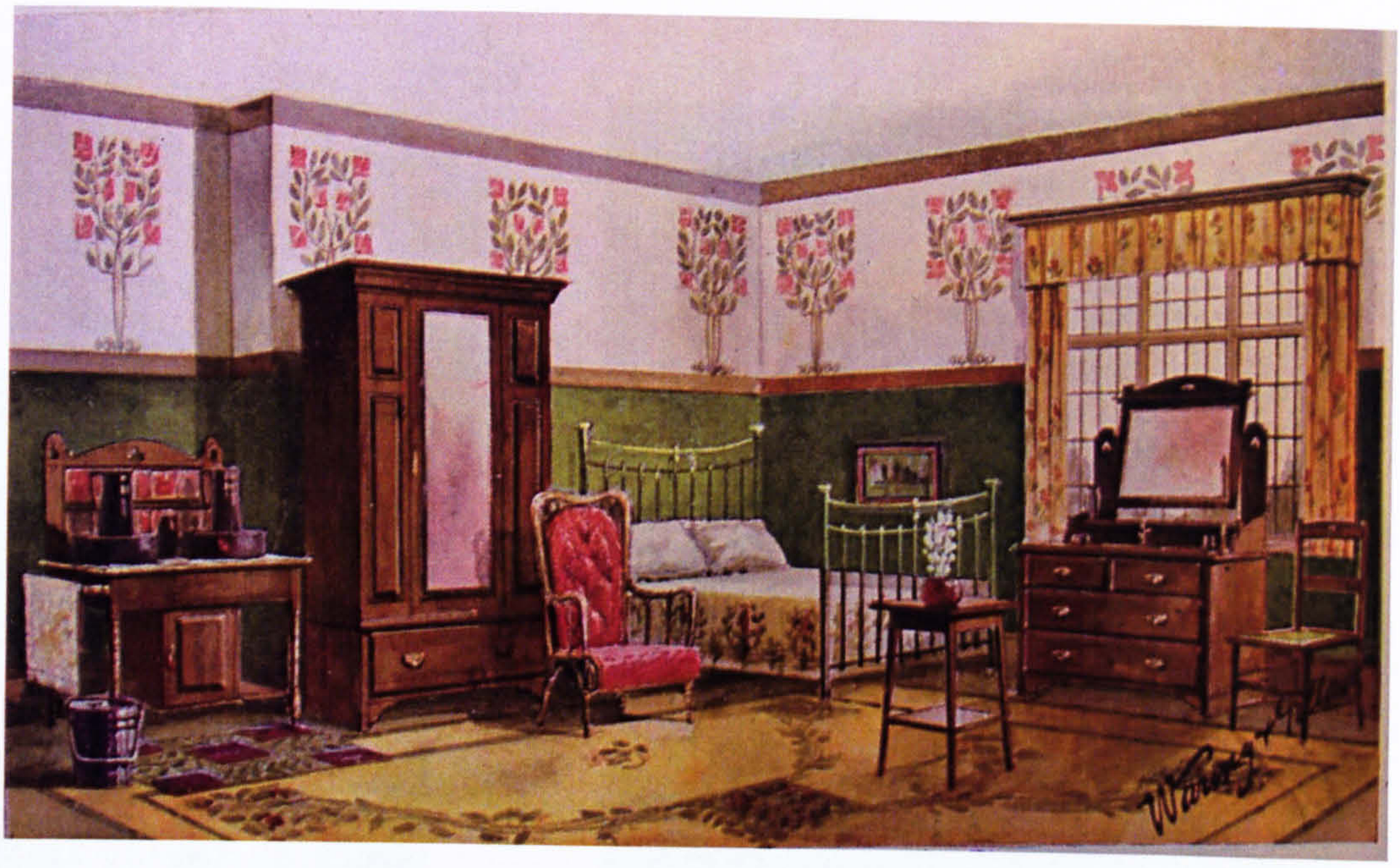


Figure 86 'Guests Bedroom Completely Furnished for £27:2:0
(Waring & Gillow, trade catalogue, ca. 1902)

Figure 87 'Furniture at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition designed by Sir Robert Lorimer'
(*The Cabinet Maker*, 4 January, 1913, p. 3)

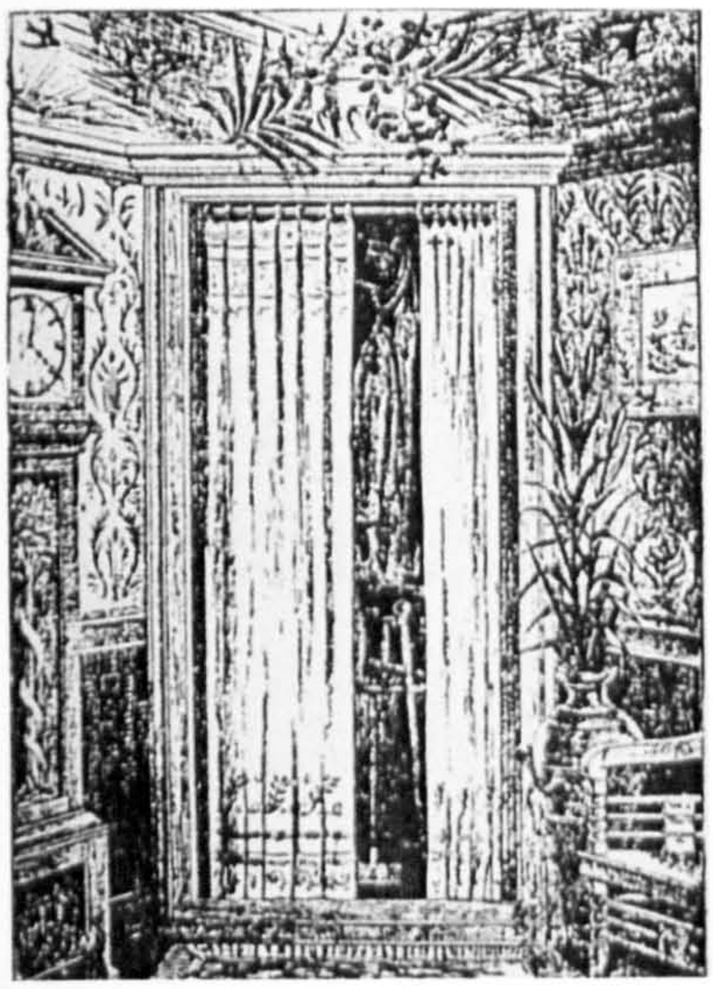


Figure 88 ‘A Hall Wardrobe’
(Gardiner, 1894, p. 25)

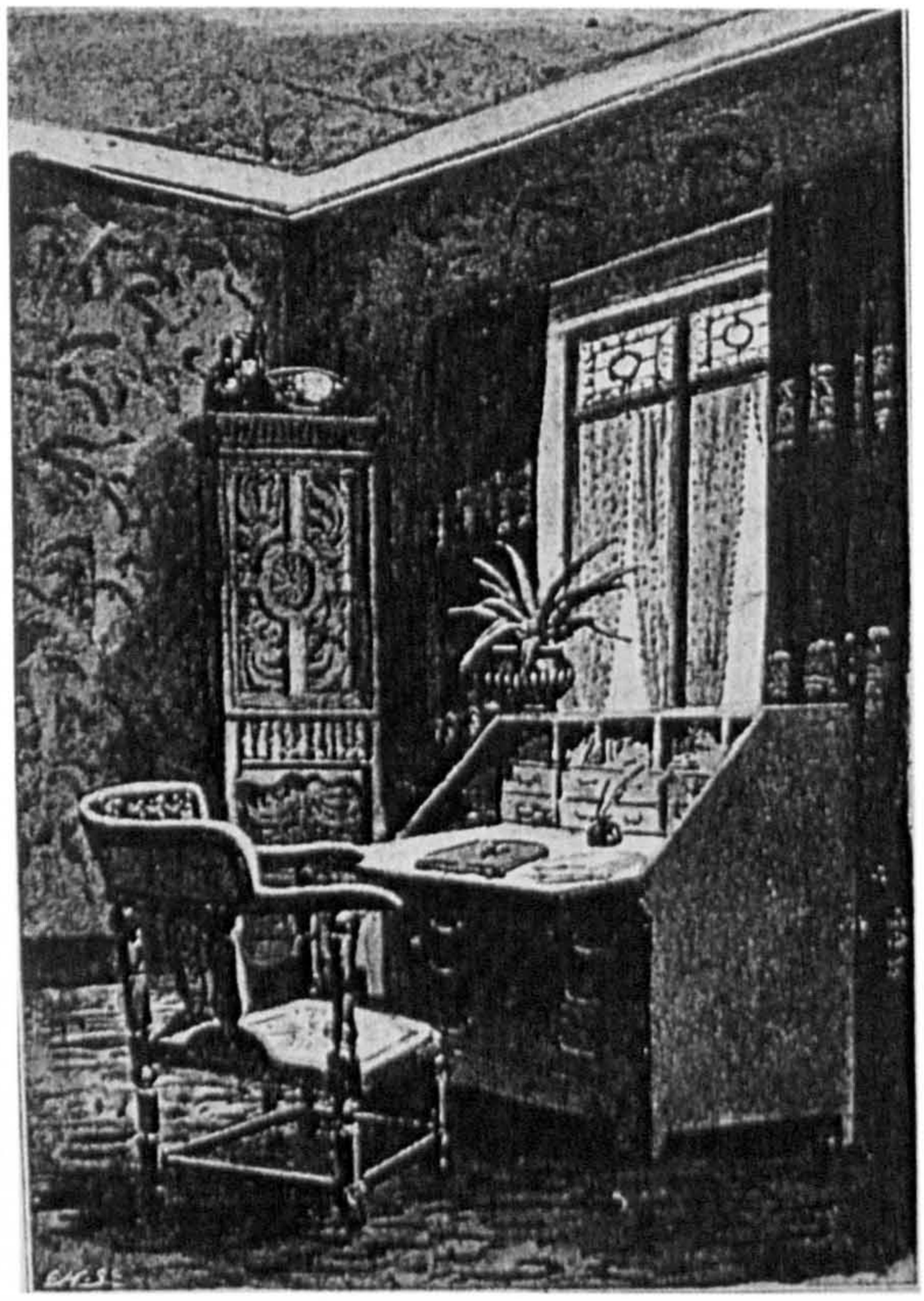


Figure 89 ‘A Corner in a Hall Furnished in Old Oak’
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 83)

Figure 90 The portiere in ‘A Corner by a Door in a Drawing Room’
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 151)

Figure 91 'Interior View of Hall'
Note the difference with portiere in Fig. 60
(*The House*, V, 1899, p. 53)

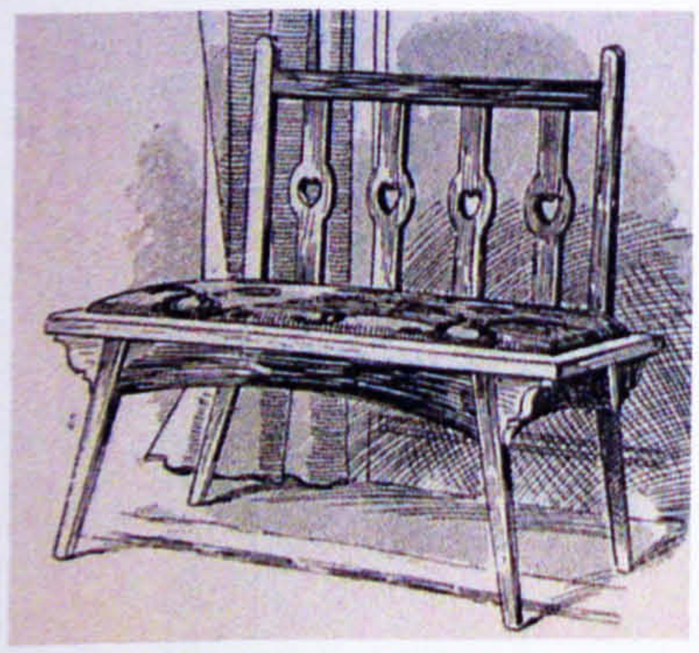


Figure 92 Landing
(*The House*, V, 1899, p. 54)

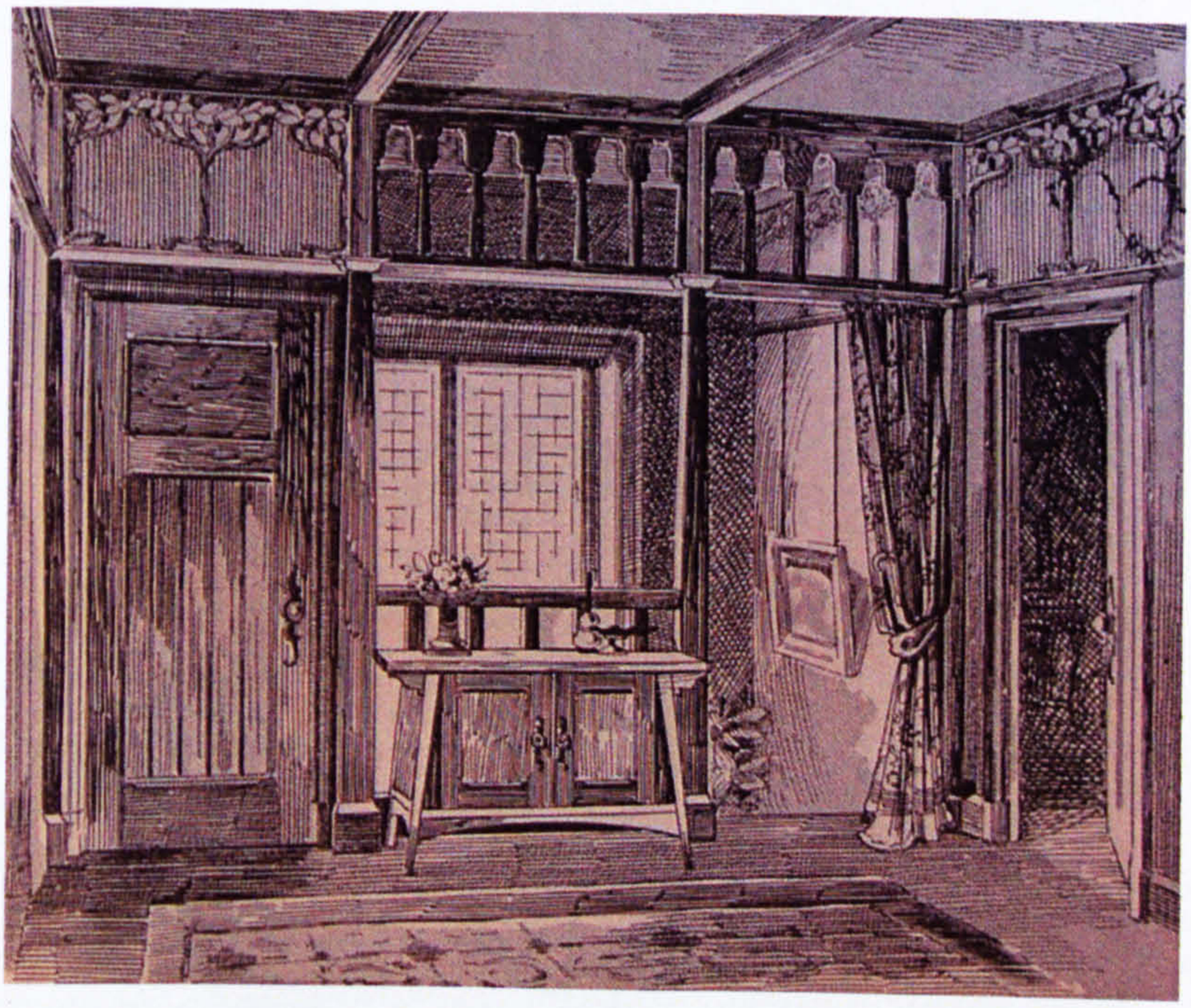


Figure 93 'Chair for Hall'
(*The House*, V, 1899, p. 55)

Figure 94 'A hall in oak and plaster'
(J. Crouch and E. Butler, 1900, fig. 26)

Figure 95 'Hall for Country House'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, plate XVII)

Figure 96 'Simple Hall Treatment'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, fig. 61, p. 146)

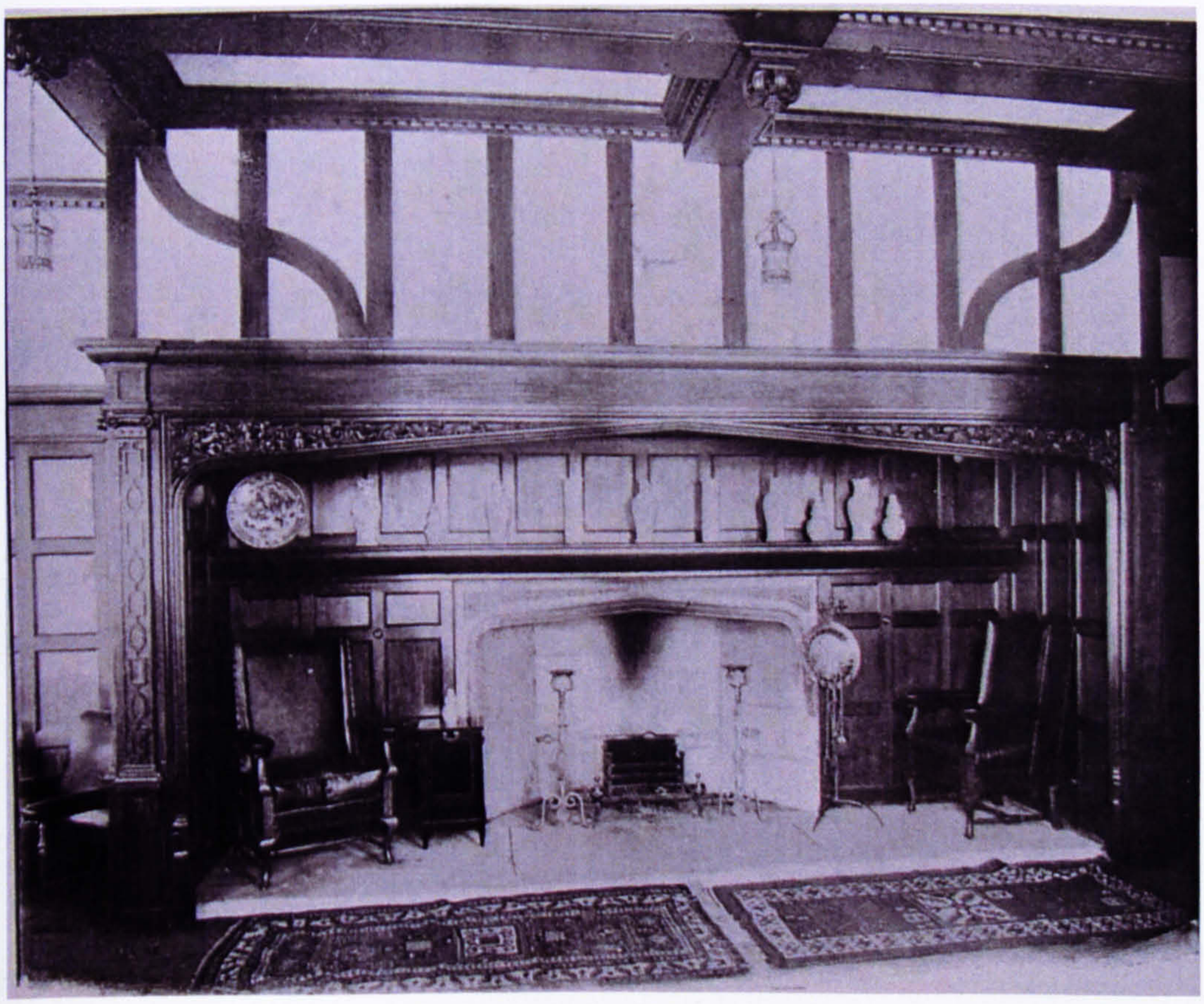


Figure 97 'Elizabethan treatment for Hall of Dining Room'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, plate VI)

Figure 98 'The flat hall'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, plate XLII)

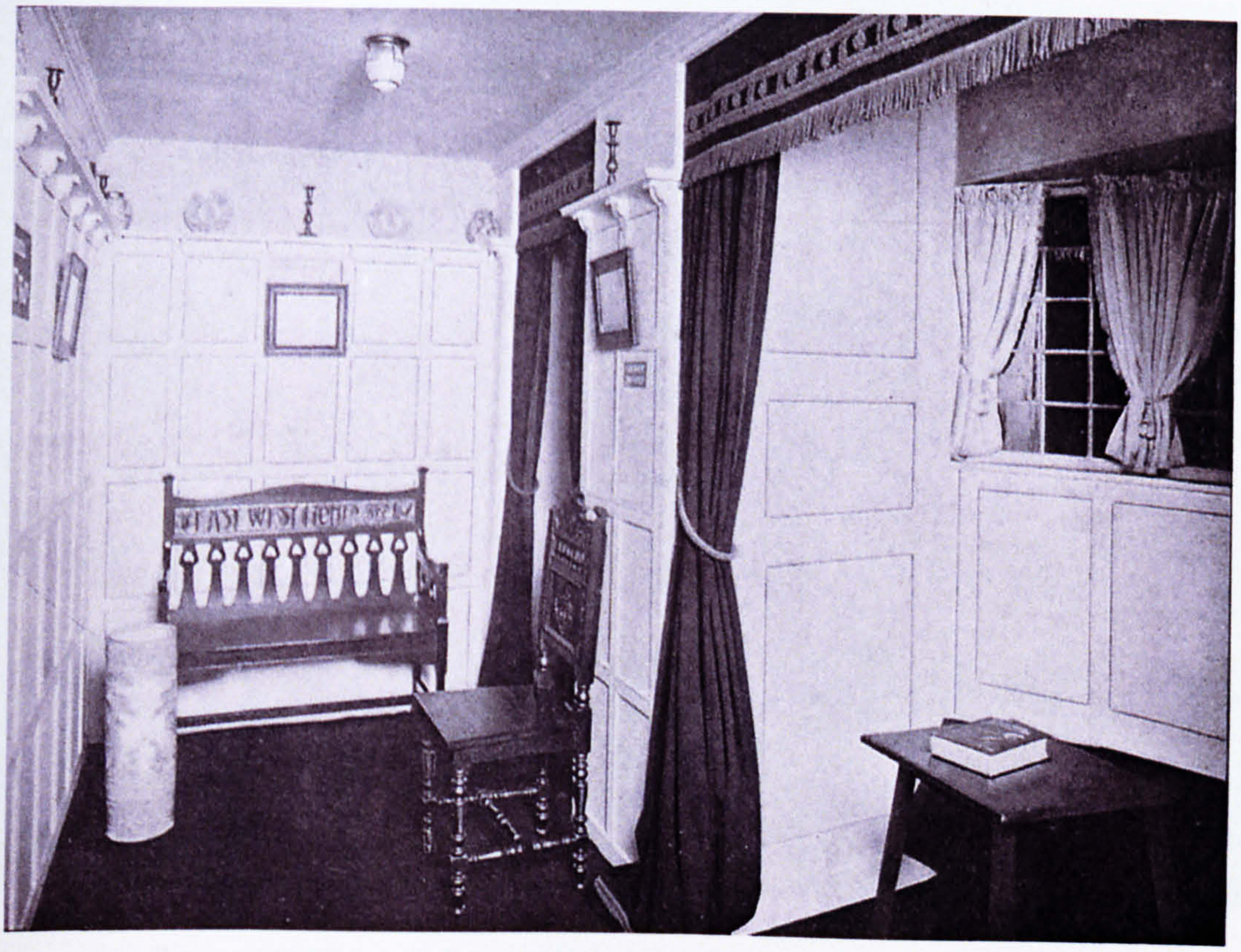


Figure 99 'Entrance hall of a £300 model house.' By Waring & Gillow Ltd.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 220)

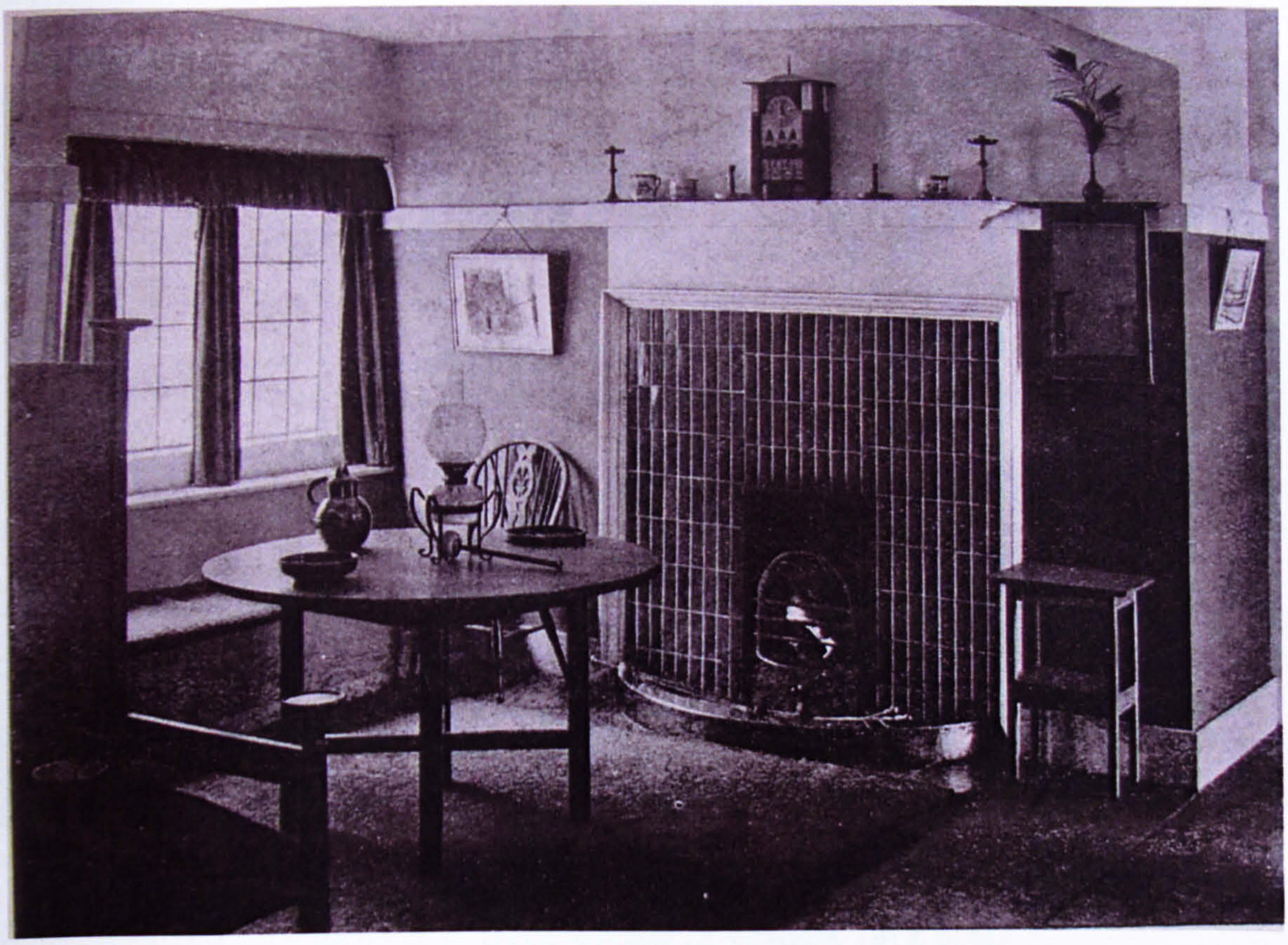


Figure 100 'The Hall, "The Orchard," Chorley Wood, C.F.A. Voysey, *Architect,* London
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 6)

Figure 101 'The hall, Bengeo House' Walter Cave, *Architect*, London'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 7)

Figure 102 'Staircase and entrance hall with folding glazed doors. Architect, A. Gustave Agate' (E. Gregory, 1913, p. 1)

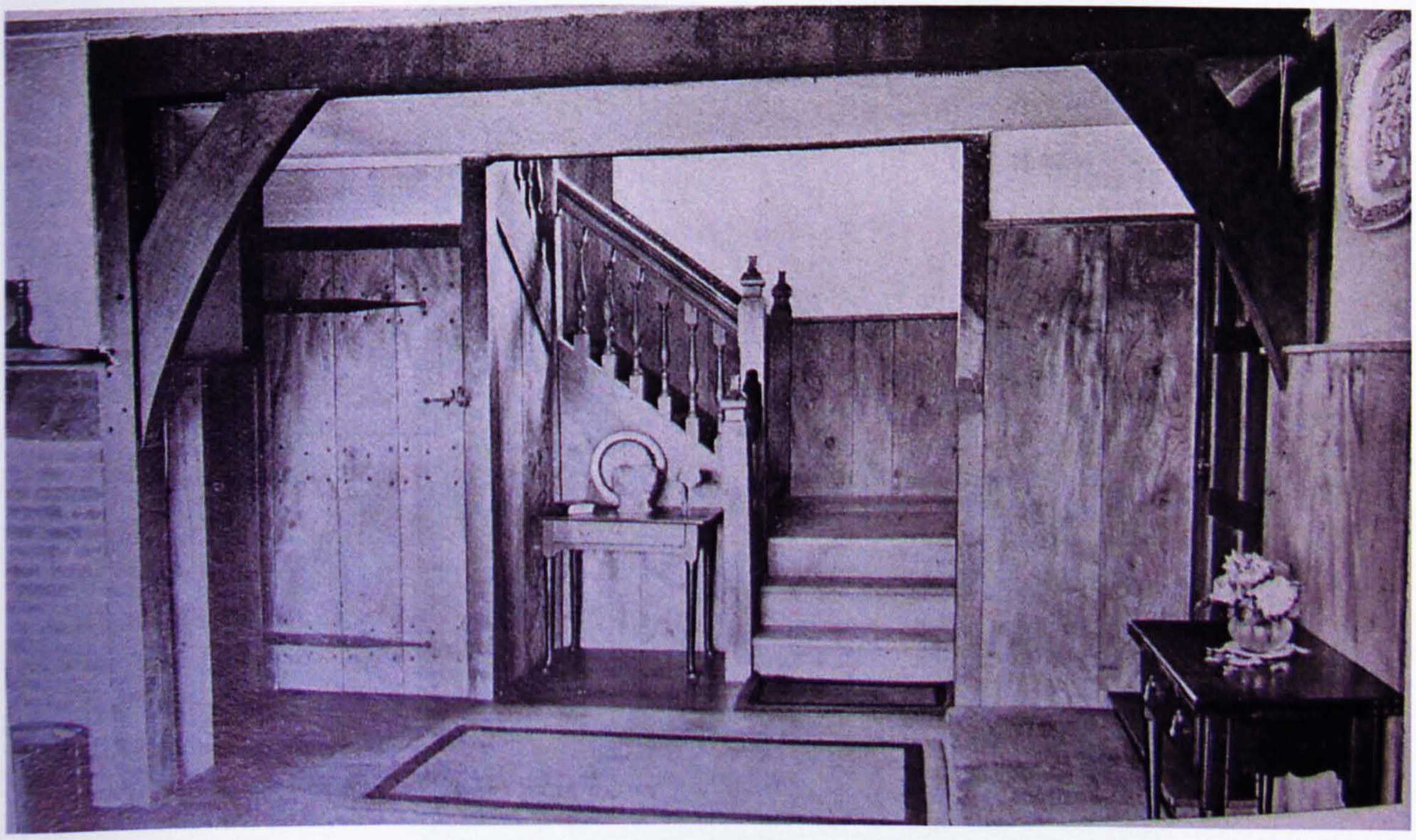


Figure 103 'Hall and staircase with plain wood panelling. Architect, M. H. Baillie Scott' (E. Gregory, 1913, p. 1)

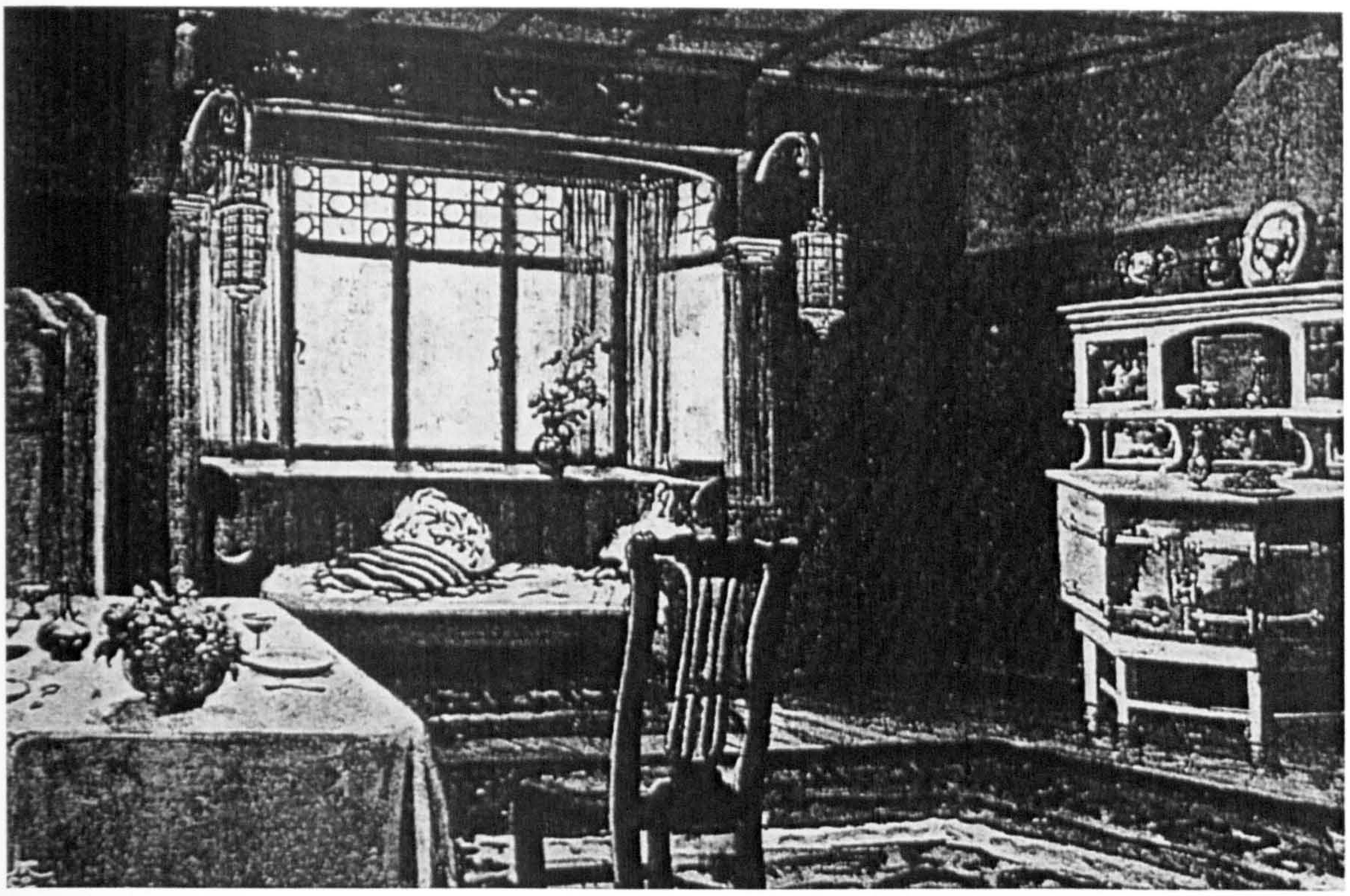


Figure 104 'A Panelled Dining Room. Designed by Messrs. Wood, Altrincham'
Notice the panelled walls, hinges on sideboard, beamed ceiling,
window seat and Chippendale style chair (Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 107)

Figure 105 'An Effective but Inexpensively Furnished Dining-Room'
As in Fig. 72, dining table is covered with cloth (Mrs Peel, 1898, p. vi)

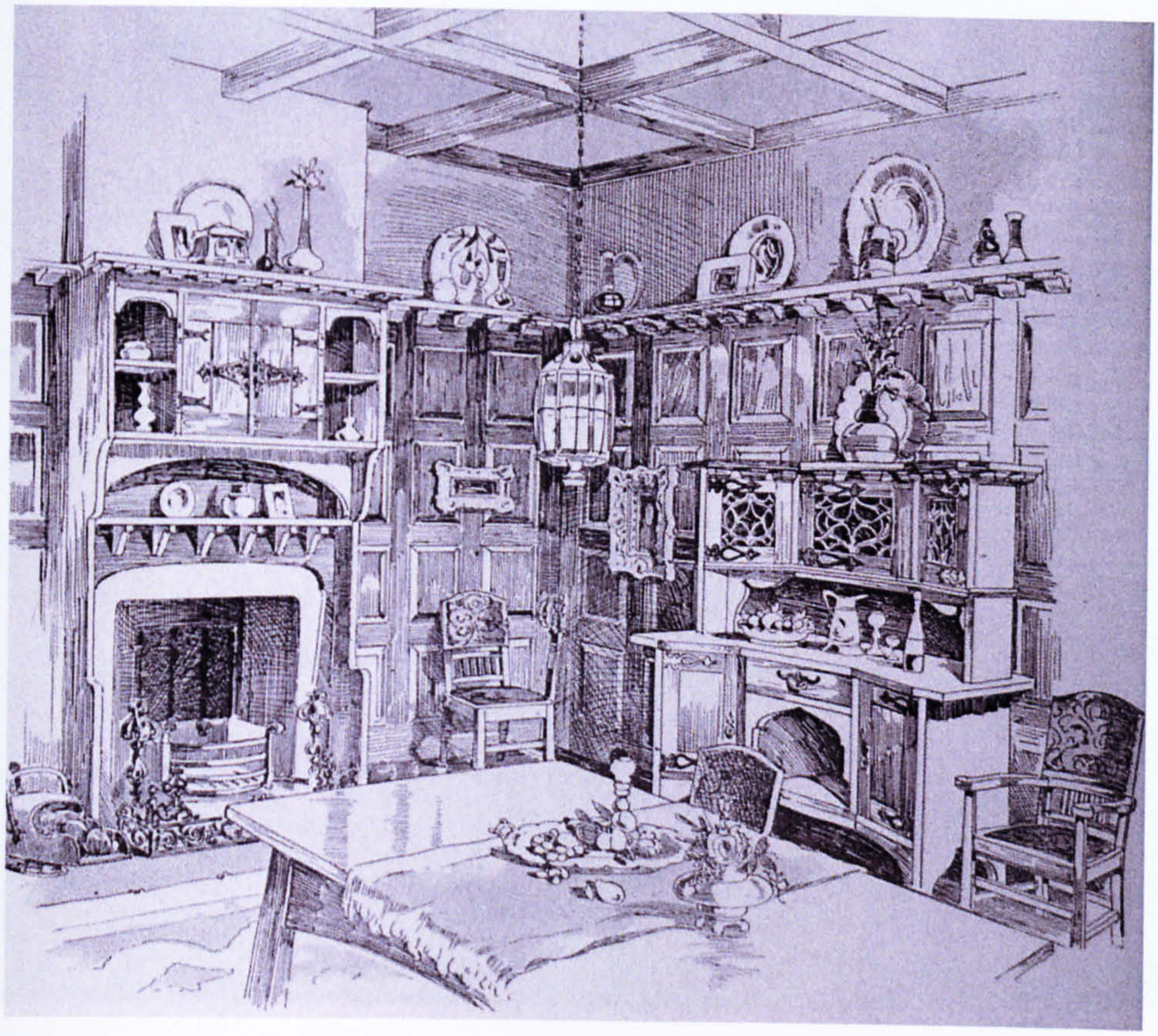


Figure 106 'The Oak Wainscoted Dining Room'
(*The House,* V, 1899, p. 134)

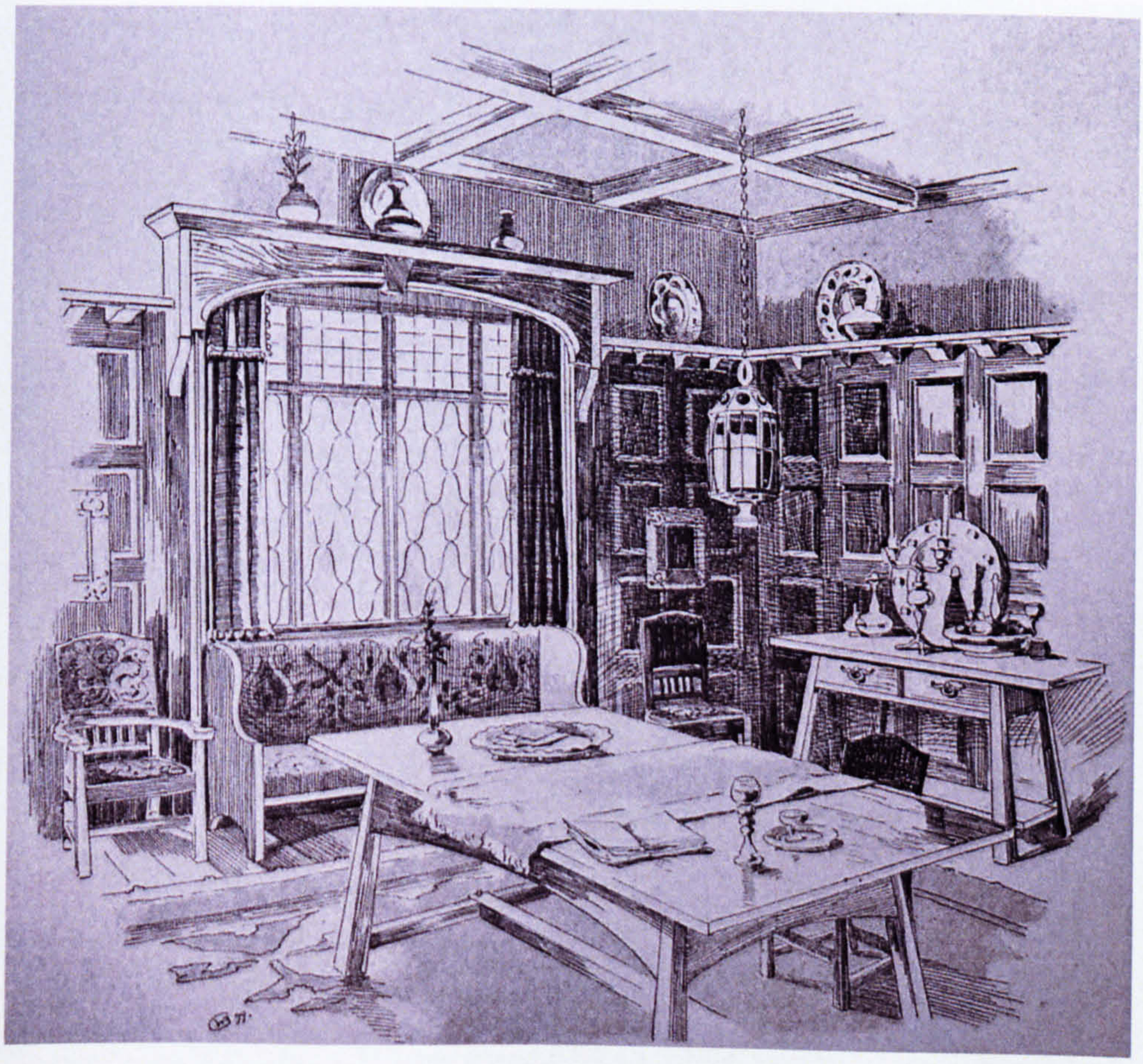


Figure 107 'The Wainscoted Oak Dining Room [...] showing the Window Fitments'
(*The House,* V, 1899, p. 135)

Figure 108 'A Dining Room'
(J. Crouch and E. Butler, 1900, fig. 42)

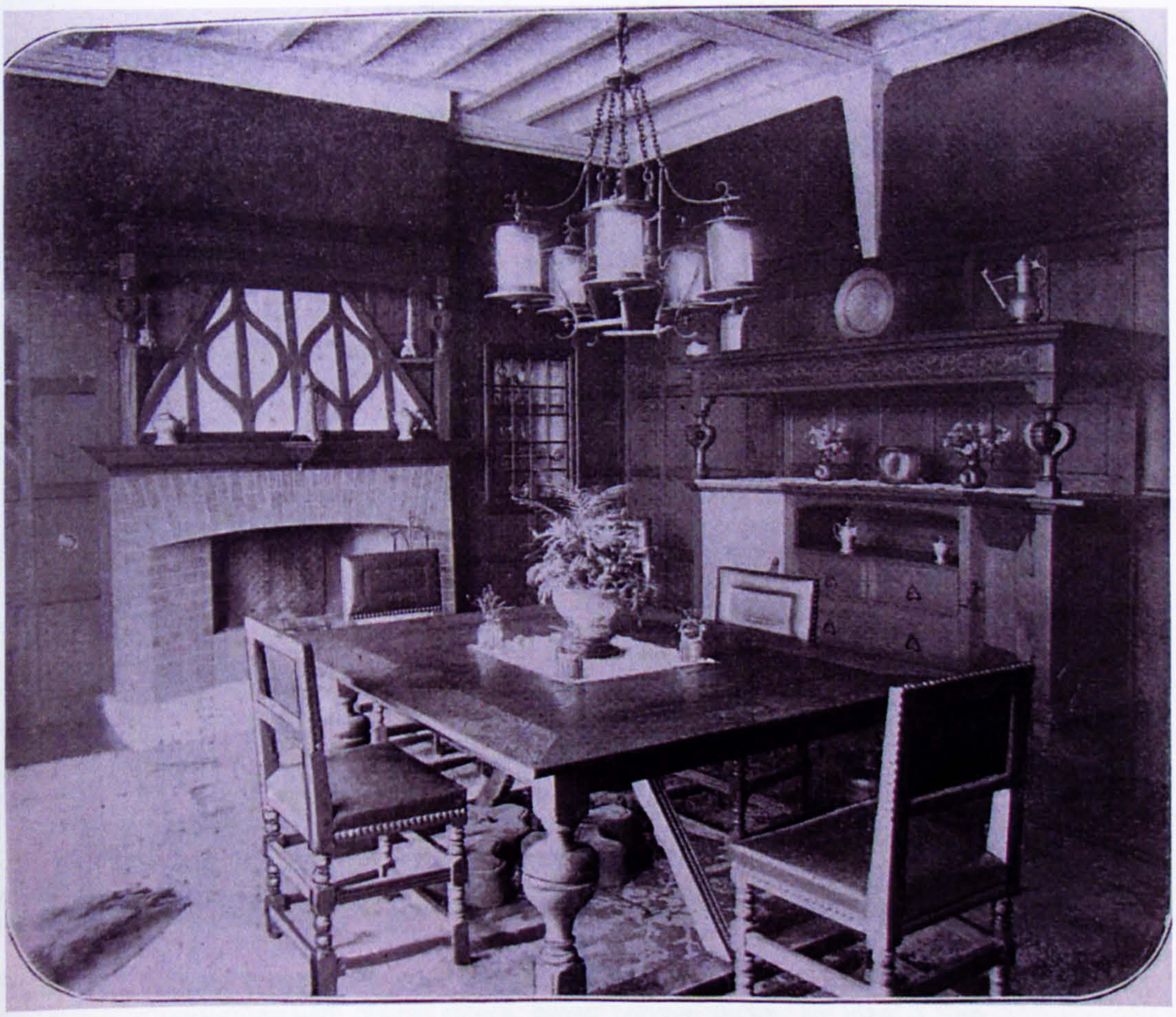


Figure 109 Modernized 'Jacobean Dining Room'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, plate XXI)

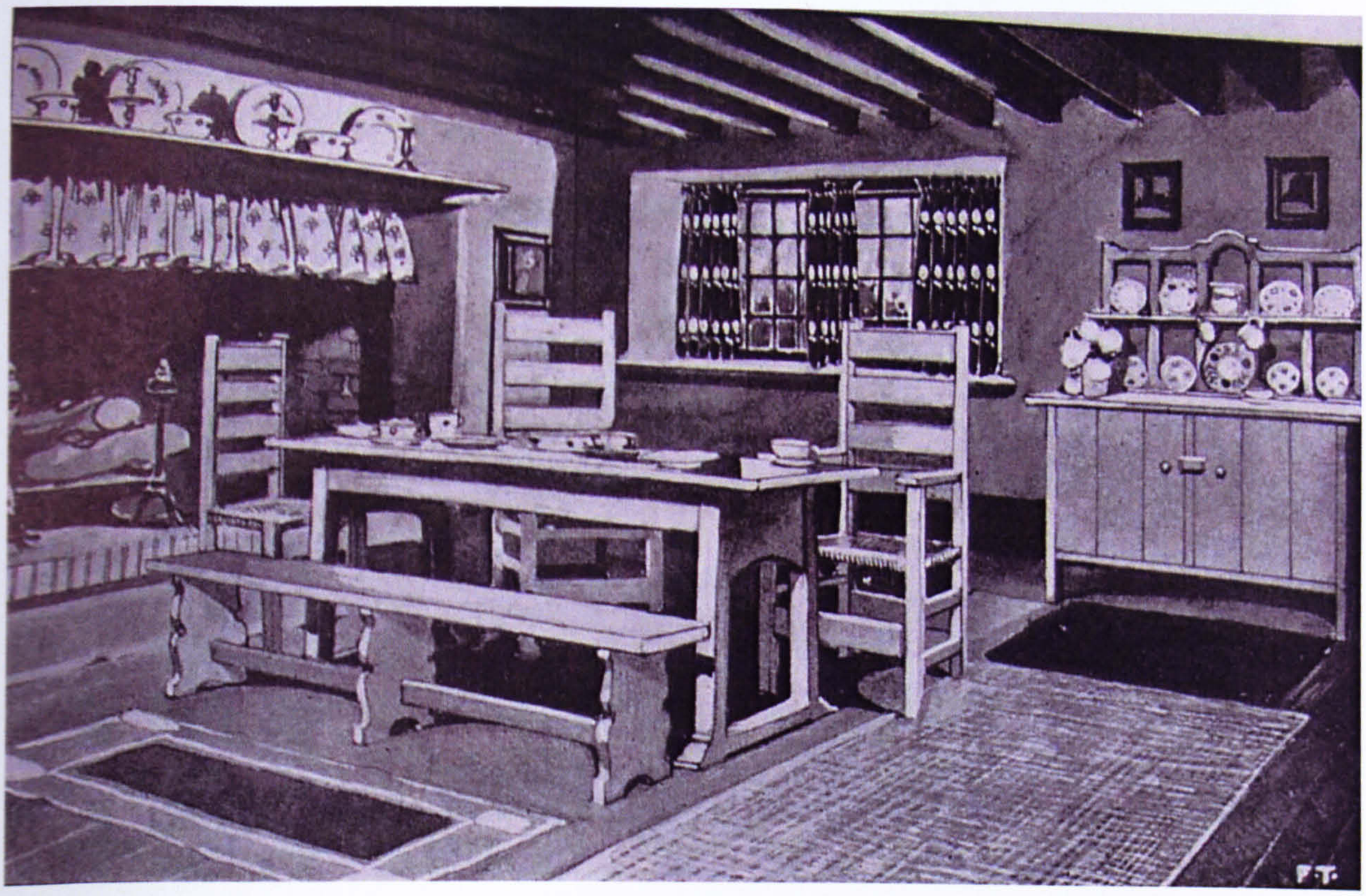


Figure 110 'Simple cottage furniture in oak.' Dining table, rush bottomed chairs, armchairs, oak bench, dresser.' By Heal & Son
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 209)

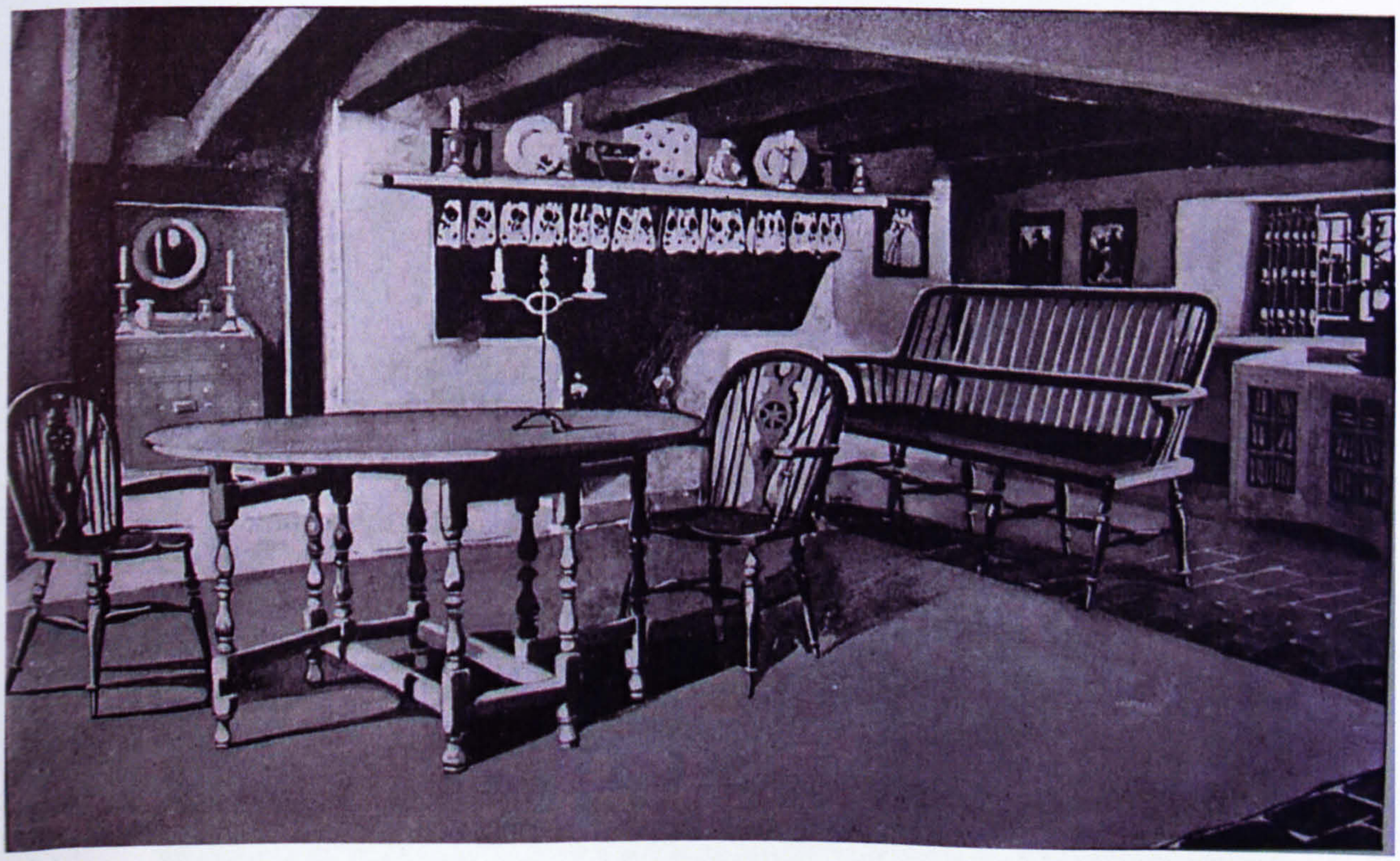


Figure 111 'Simple cottage furniture in oak.' Settee, windsor chair, armchair, gate-leg table, bookcase with glazed doors, brass candle-sticks.' By Heal & Son
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 209)

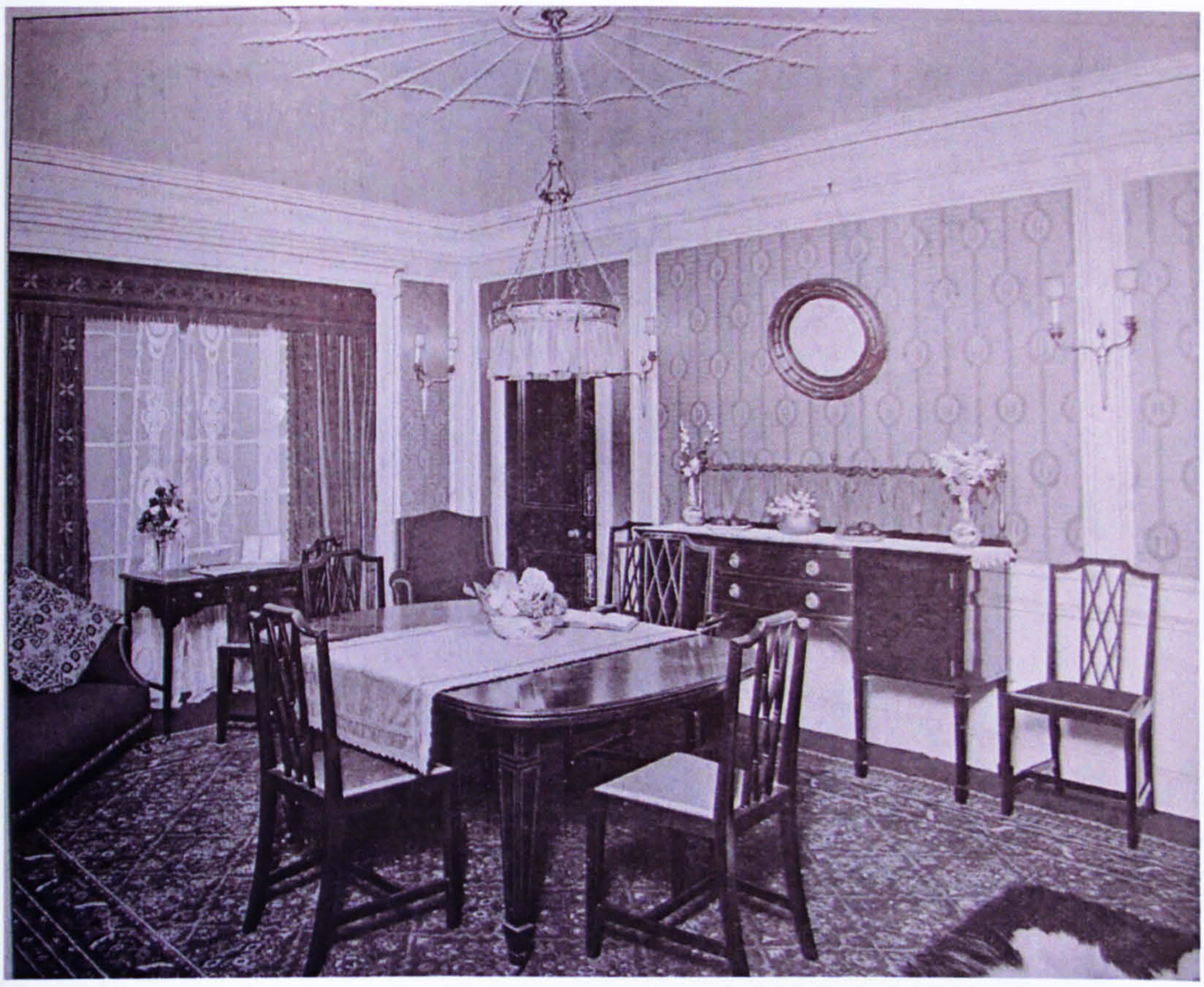


Figure 112 'Corner of dining room furnished with inlaid mahogany, after the "Sheraton" period.' By Waring & Gillow
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 218)

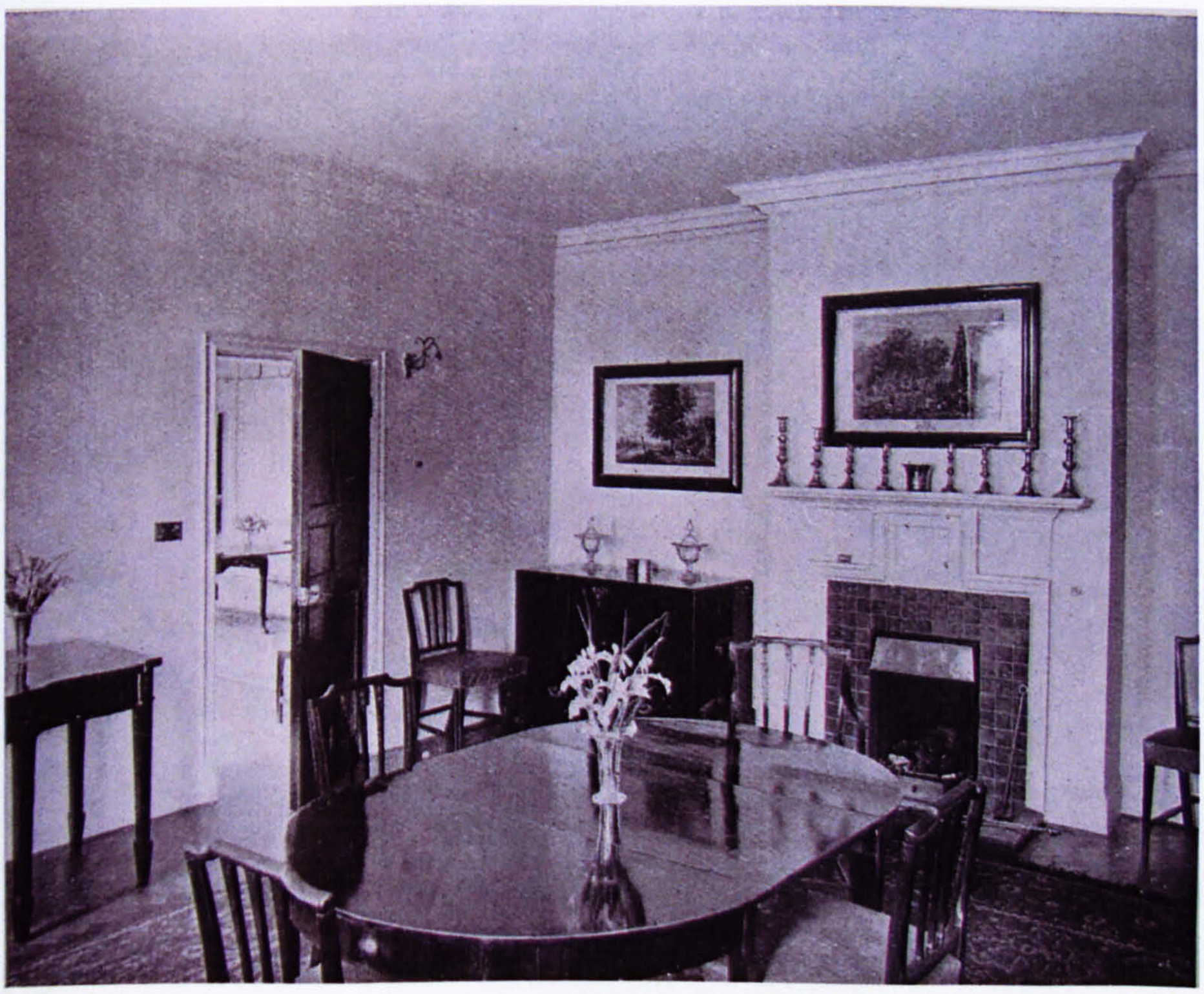


Figure 113 'Dining room, Bengeo House. Herts. Walter Cave, *Architect,* London'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 292)

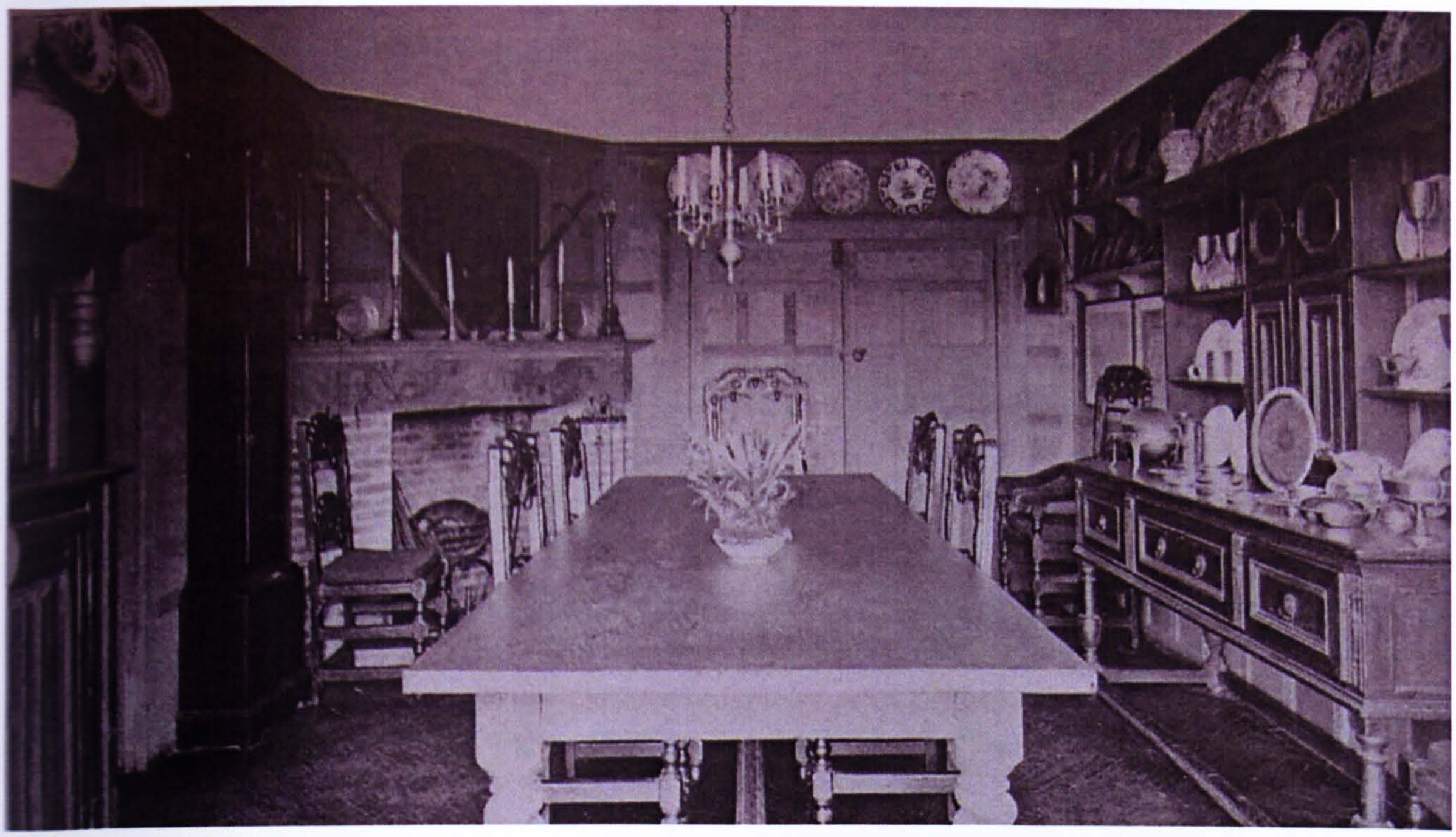


Figure 114 'A dining-room containing many examples of old furniture and reproductions. Architect, W. Rupert Davison' Notice dresser on the right.
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 40)

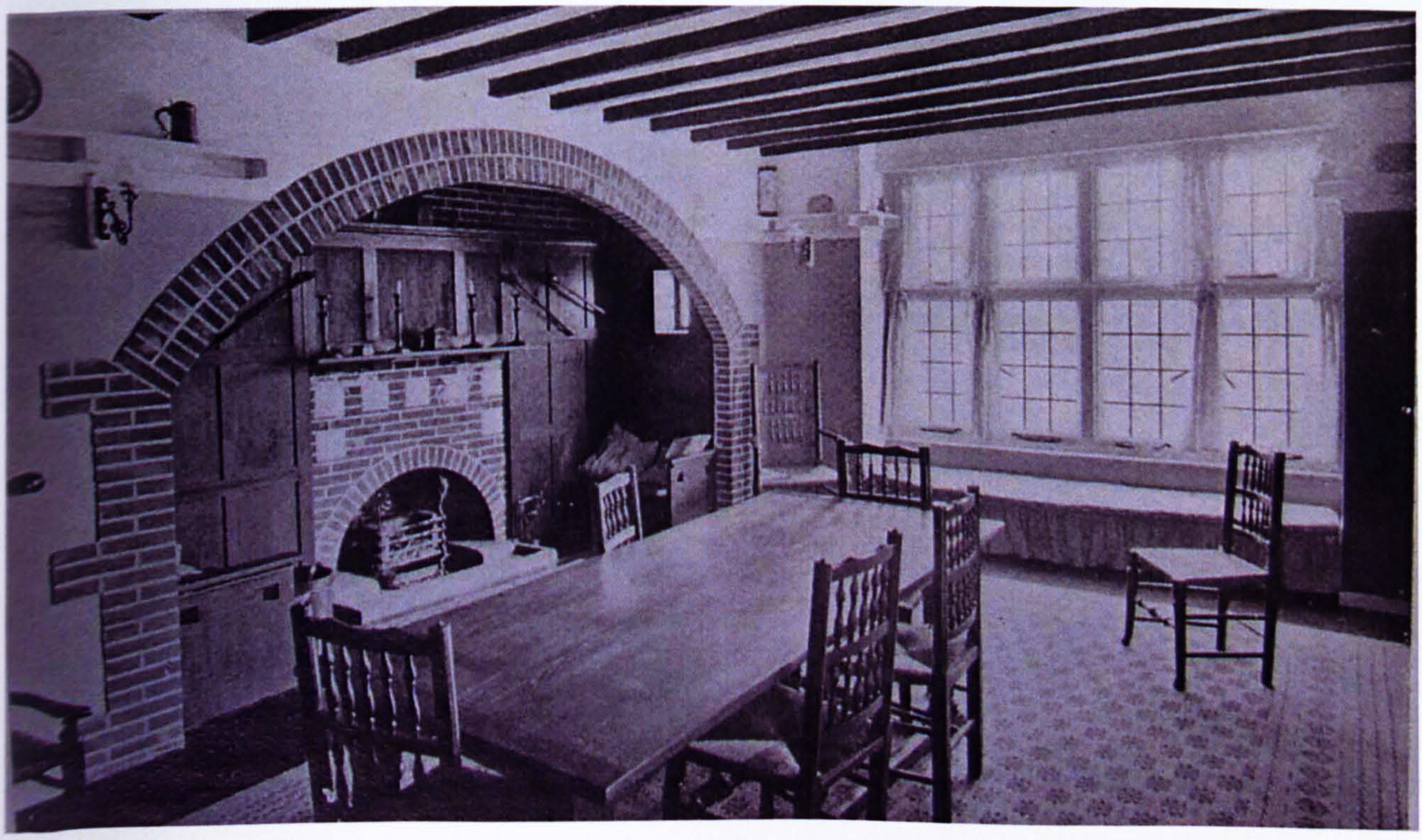


Figure 115 'Constructional brickwork as decoration in a dining-room fireplace recess. Architects, Messrs. Fair and Myer'
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 40)

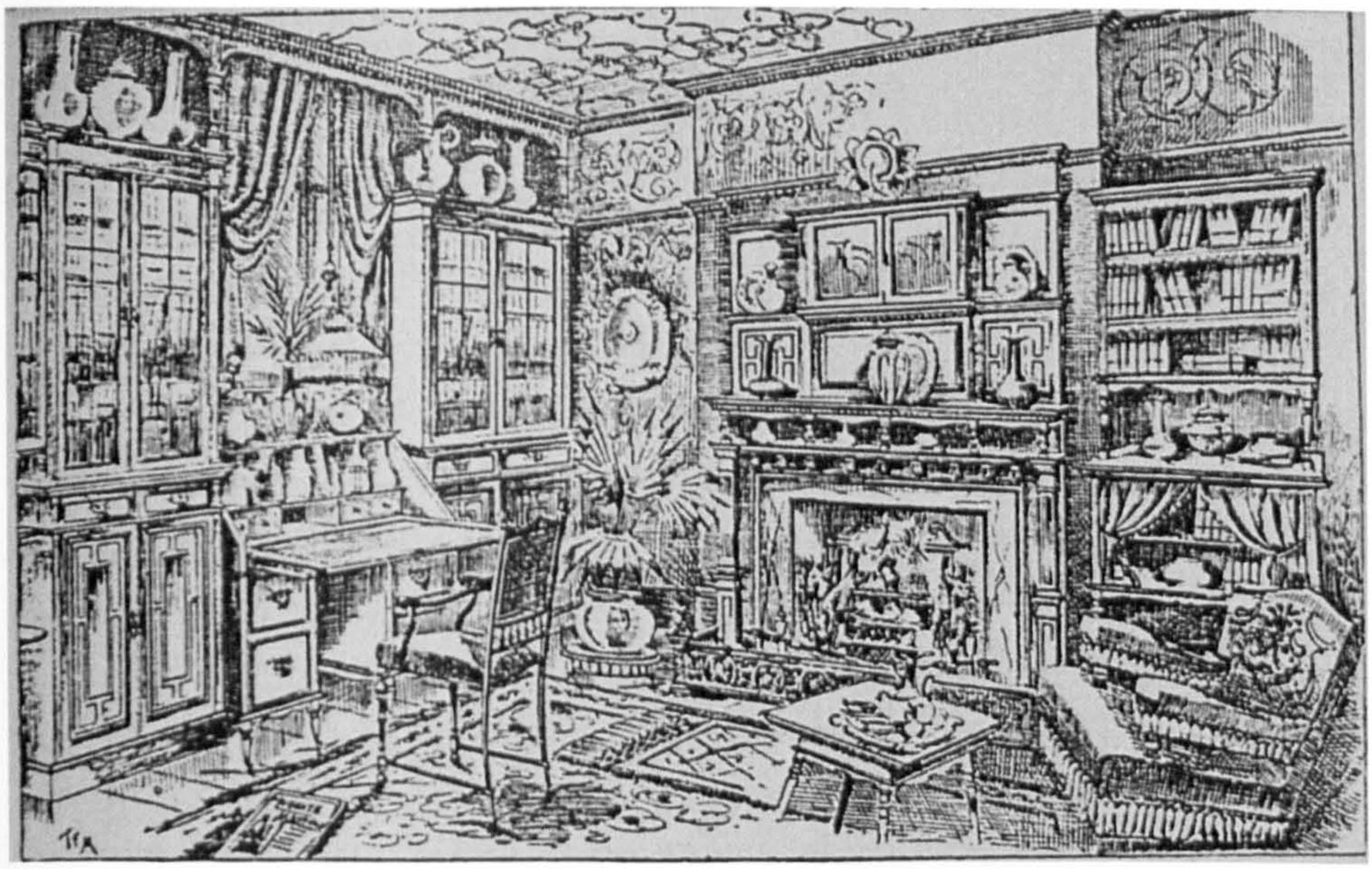


Figure 116 'The Drawing room of a Flat'
(Gardiner, 1894, p. 111)

Figure 117 'A Panelled Drawing Room with Marqueterie Furniture'
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 143)

Figure 118 'A Drawing-Room Decorated and Furnished in French Style'
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 157)

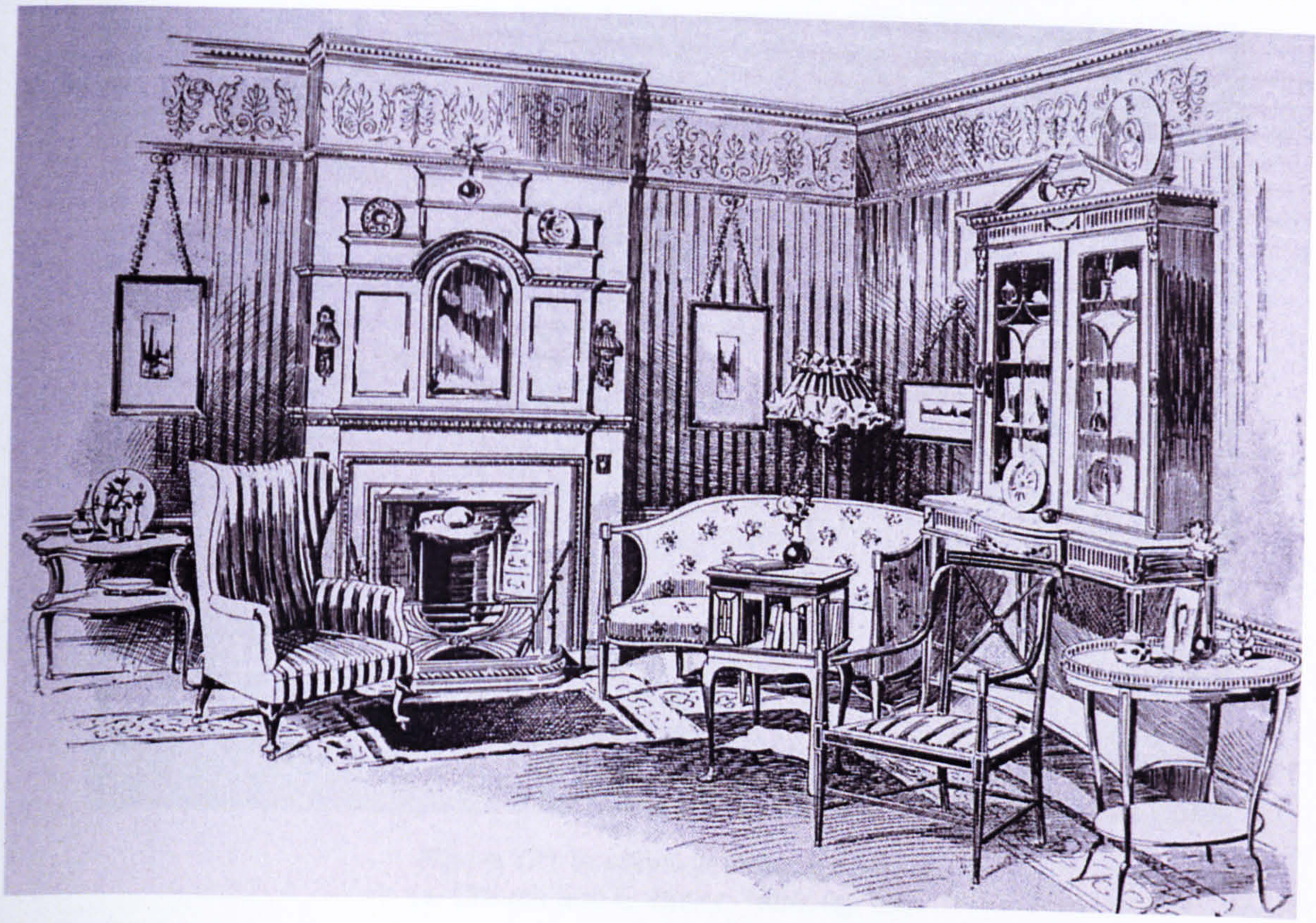


Figure 119 'View of Drawing Room from Piano'
(*The House*, VI, 1899, p. 139)

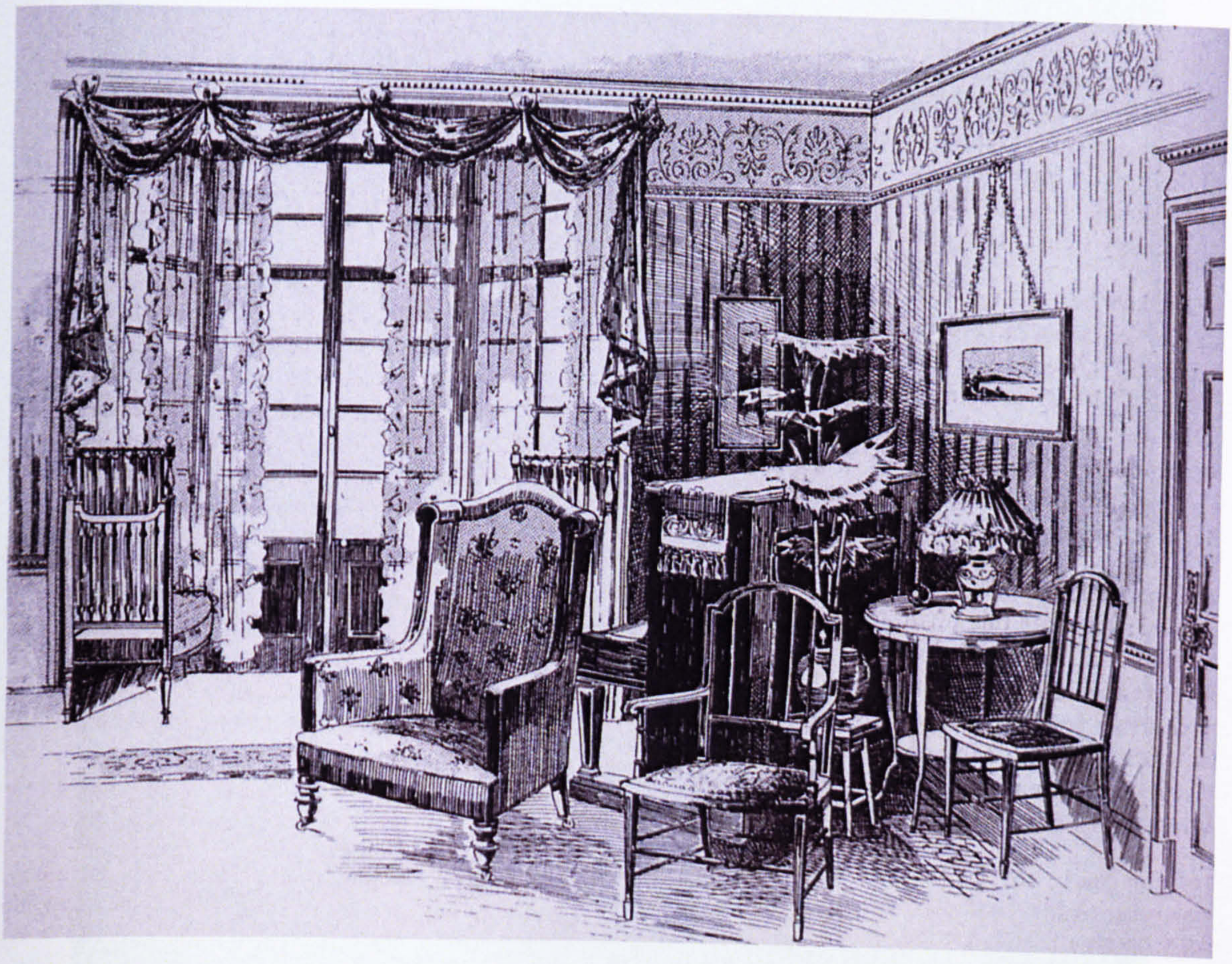


Figure 120 'View of Drawing Room looking towards Window'
(*The House*, VI, 1899, p. 138)

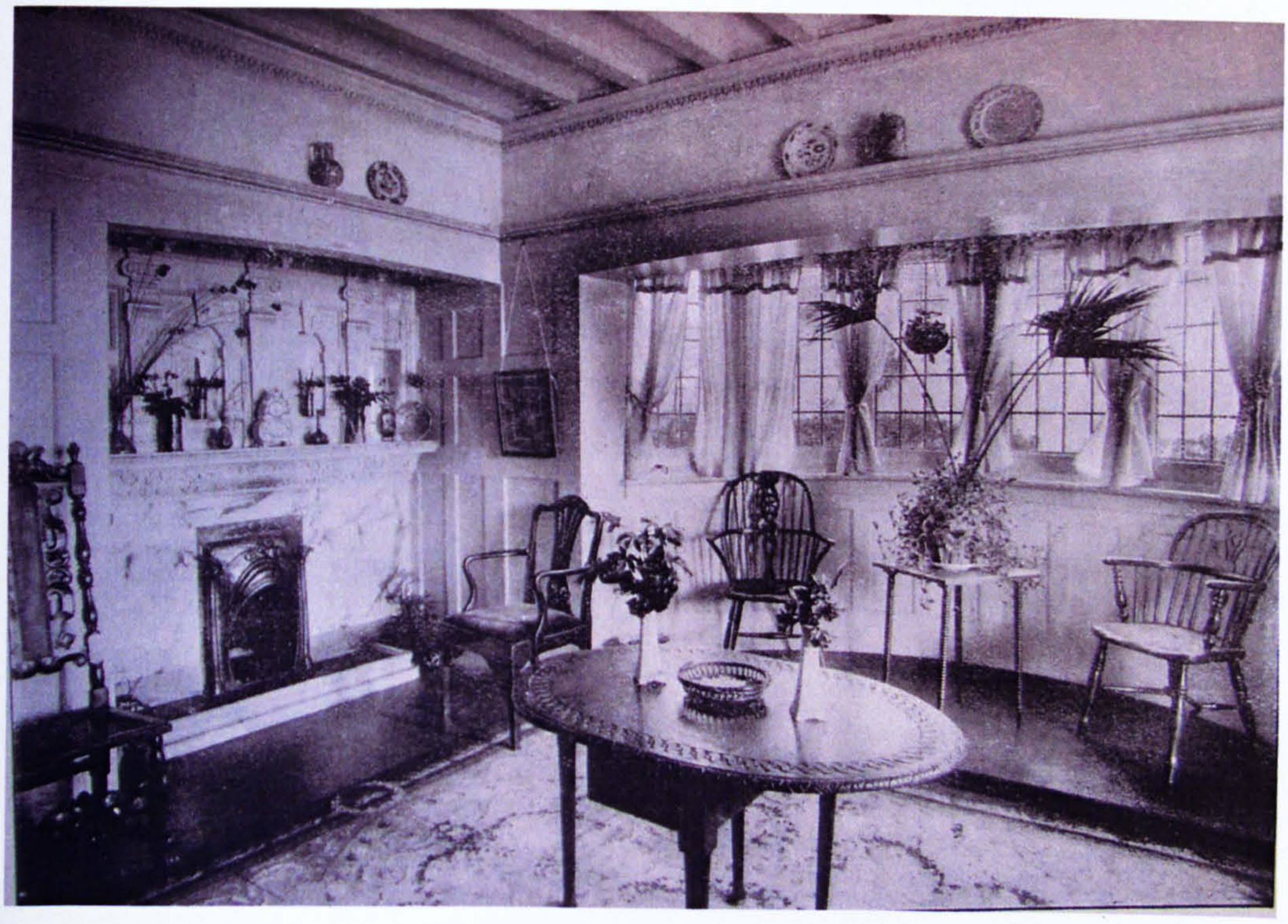


Figure 121 'A panelled drawing room'
(J. Crouch and E. Butler, 1900, fig. 60)

Figure 122 'A drawing room'
(J. Crouch and E. Butler, 1900, fig. 62)

Figure 123 'Louis XV Boudoir in Town House'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, plate XXIX)

Figure 124 'Adams Drawing Room'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, fig. 81)

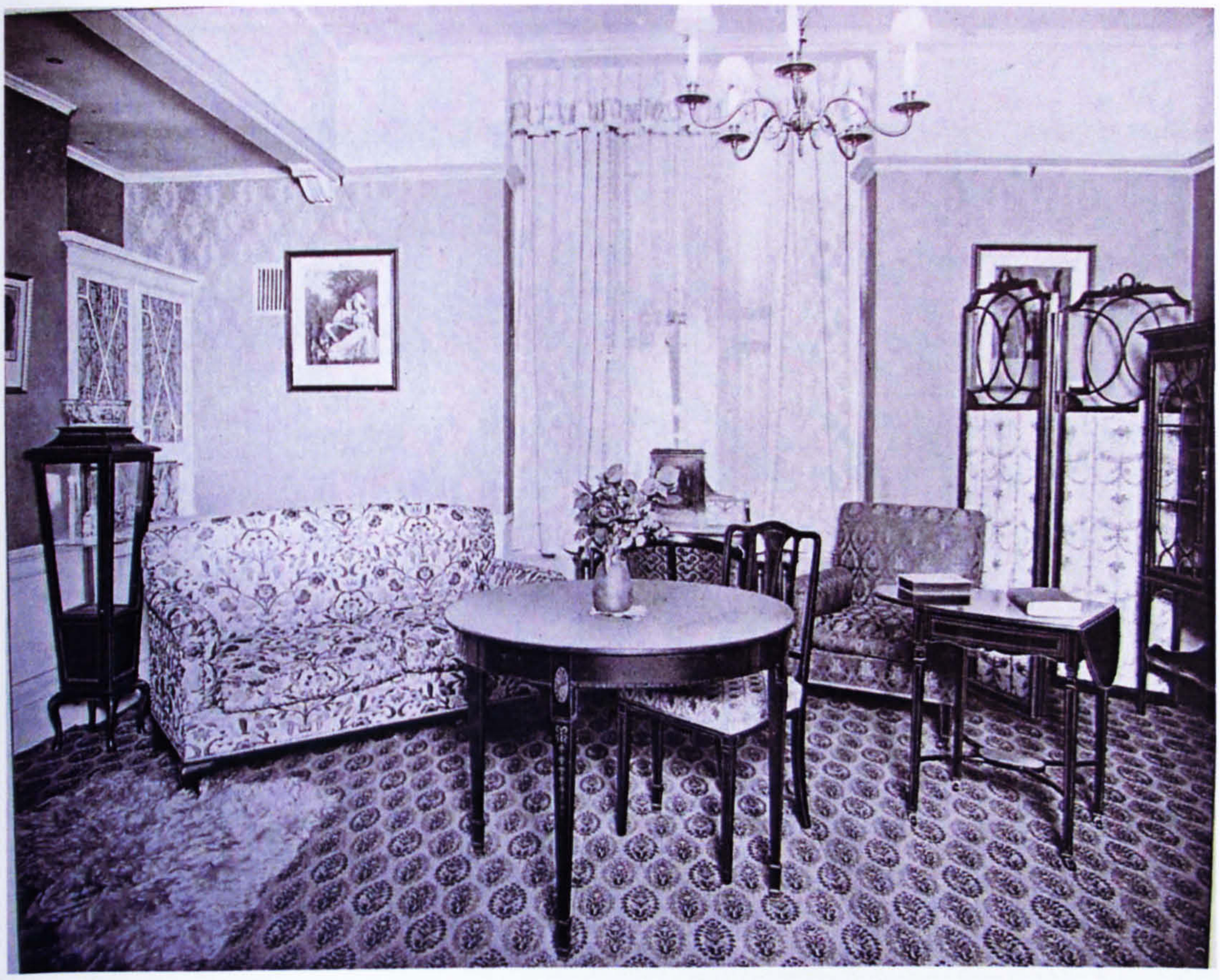


Figure 125 'Corner of a drawing room with inlaid mahogany furniture and Wilton pile carpet.' By Waring & Gillow
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907)

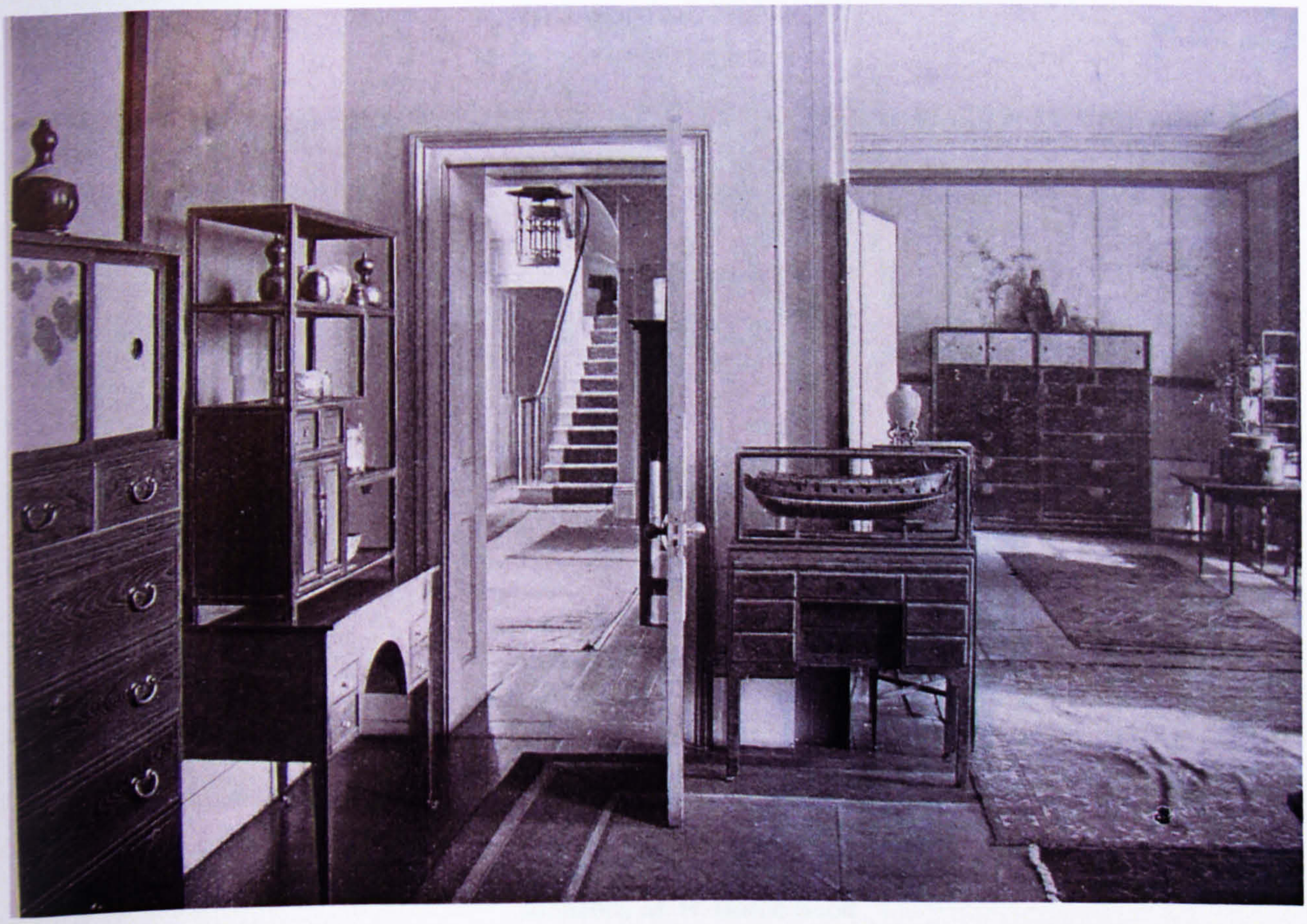


Figure 126 'Drawing-Room in a London House. With a view of the hall and staircase.By permission of Frank Brangwyn A.R.A.'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 296)

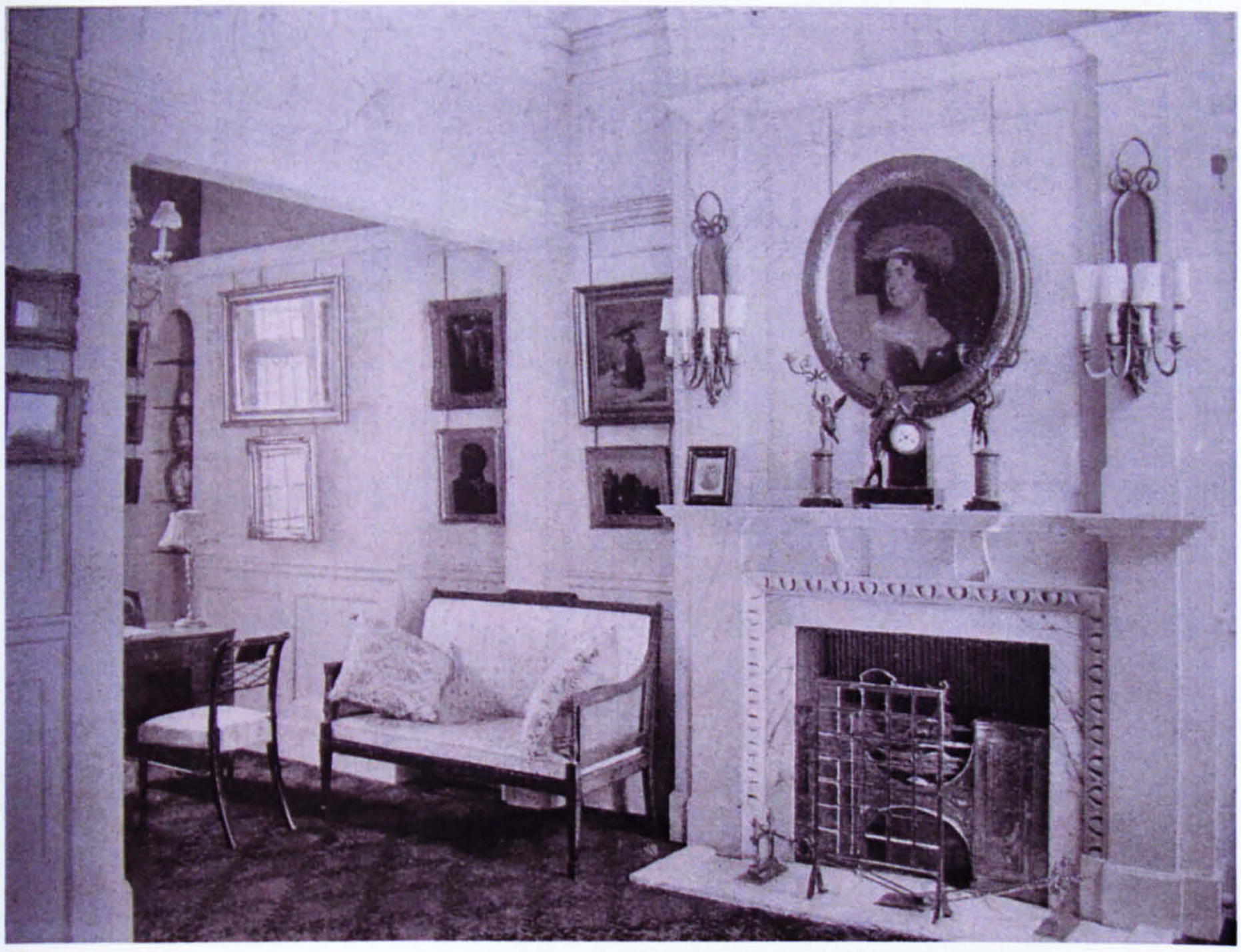


Figure 127 'Drawing room in a London house with white panelled walls. Note the simple fireplace and the fireguard. Walter Cave, *Architect,* London'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 298)

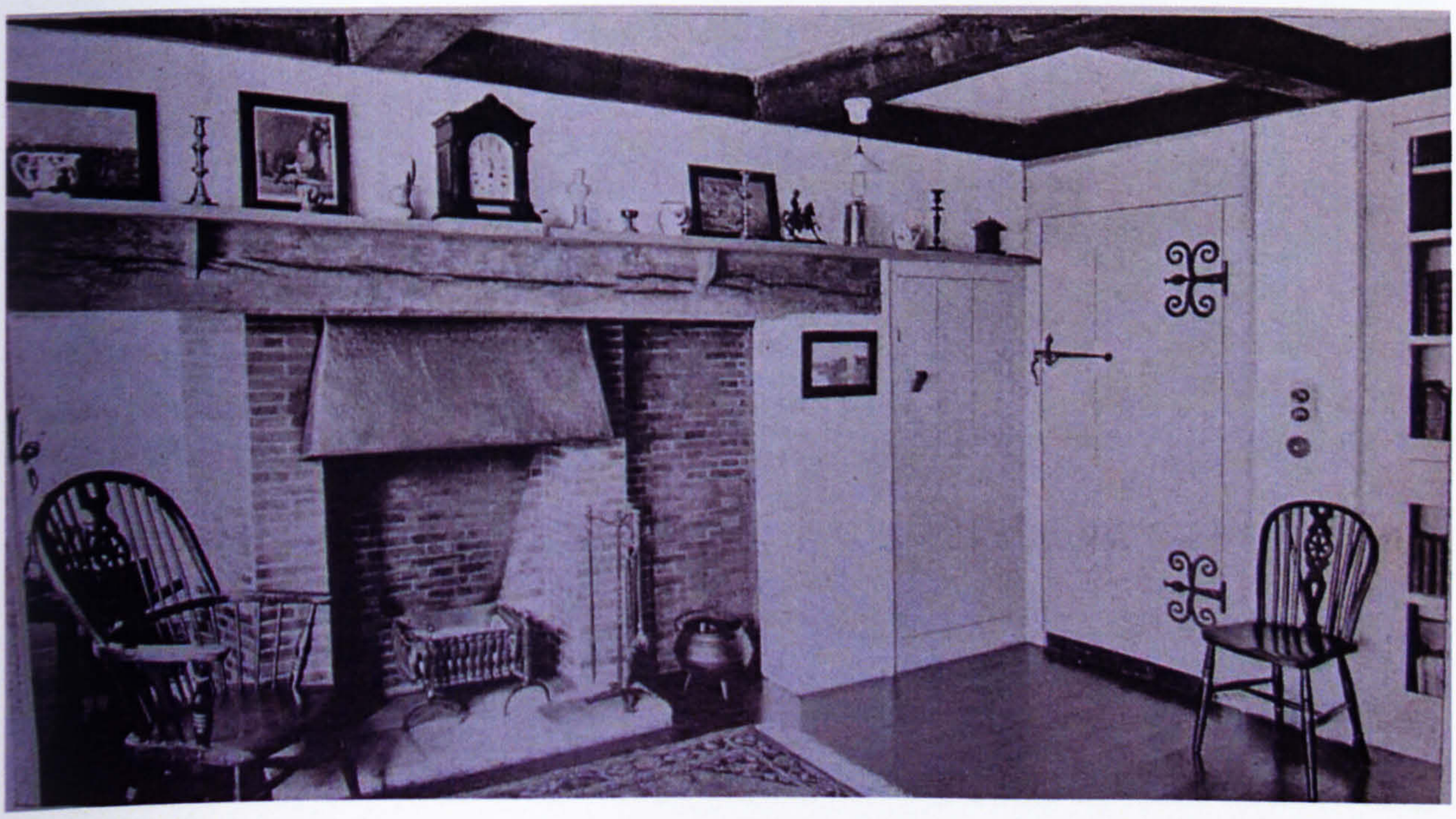
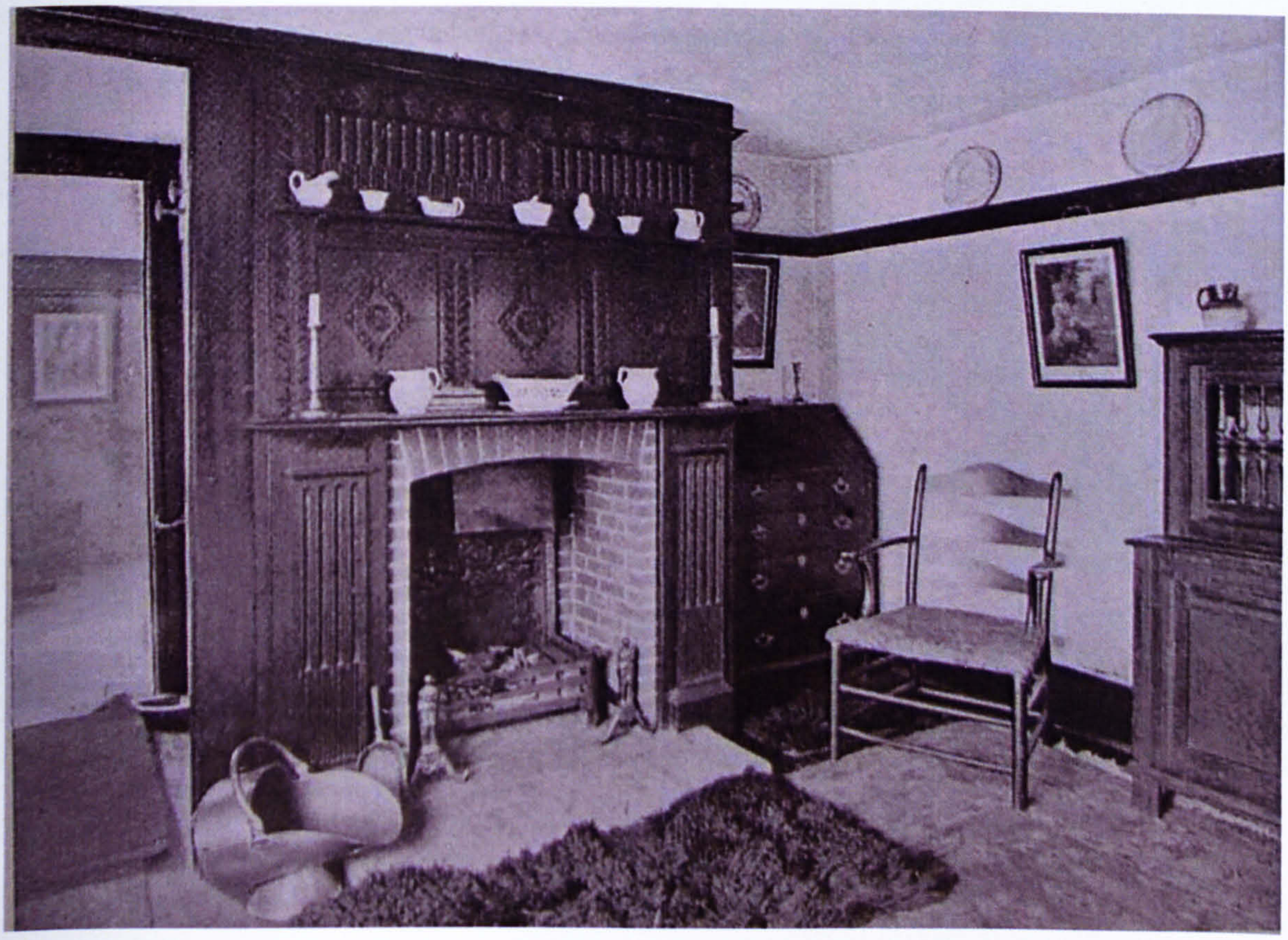


Figure 128 'A quaint sitting-room suggestive of an old country cottage.'
Architect, M. H. Baillie Scott'
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 65)



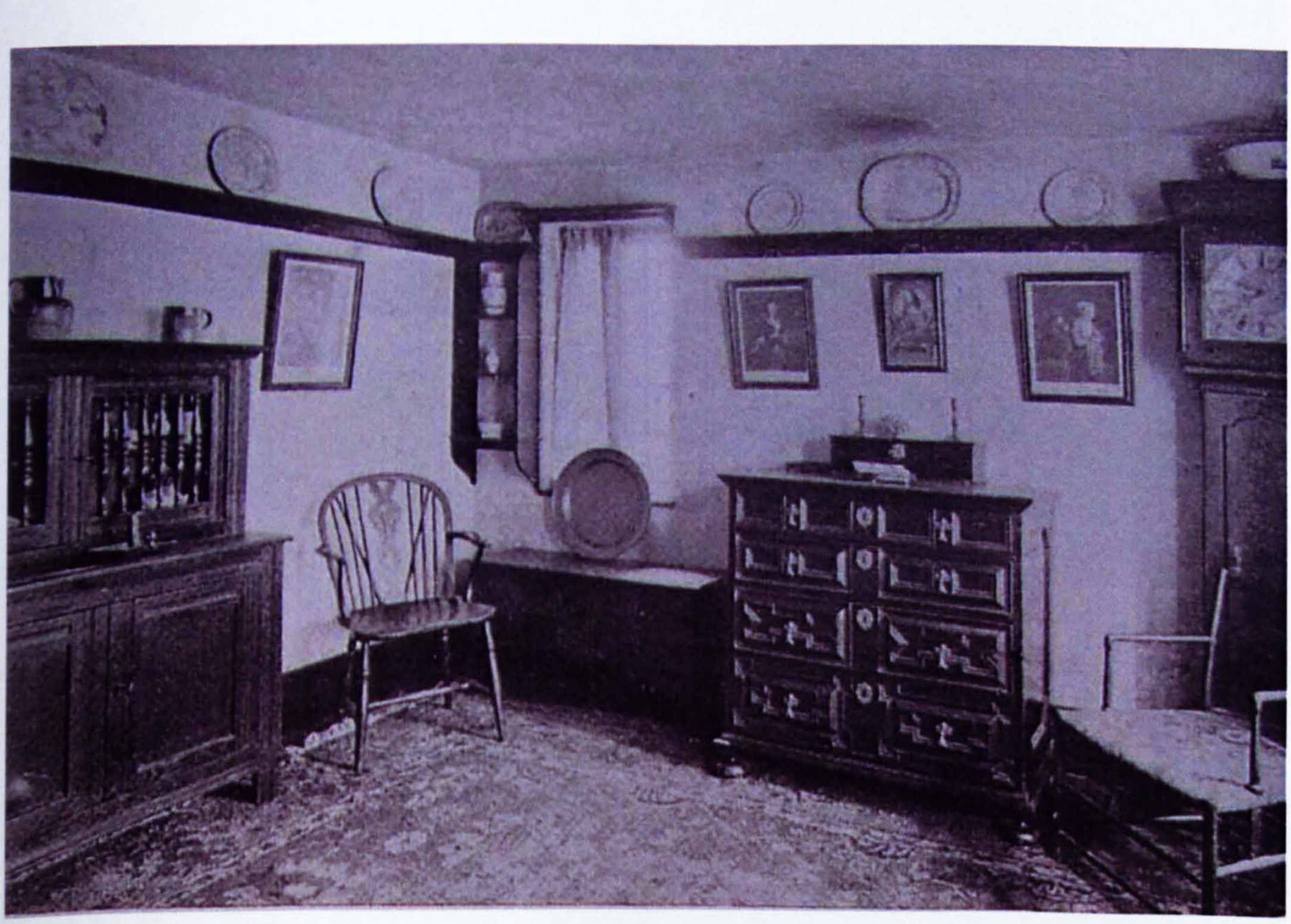


Figure 129 'Two views of the sitting-room in a reconstructed country cottage. The furniture is old and the prints are old black-framed prints. Architect, Horace White F.R.I.B.A.'
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 72)

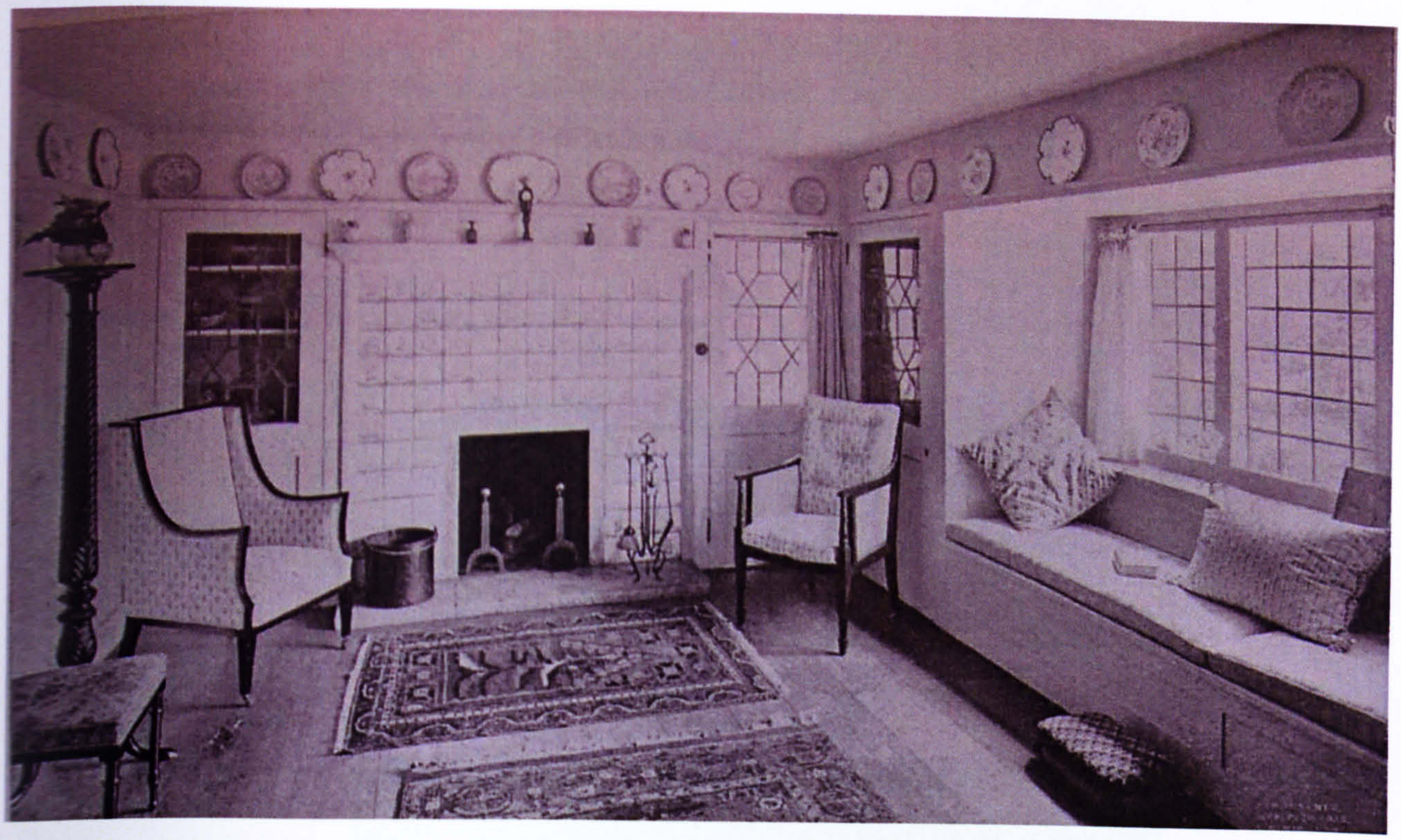


Figure 130 'A sitting-room in a country house. Architect, M. H. Baillie Scott'
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 104)

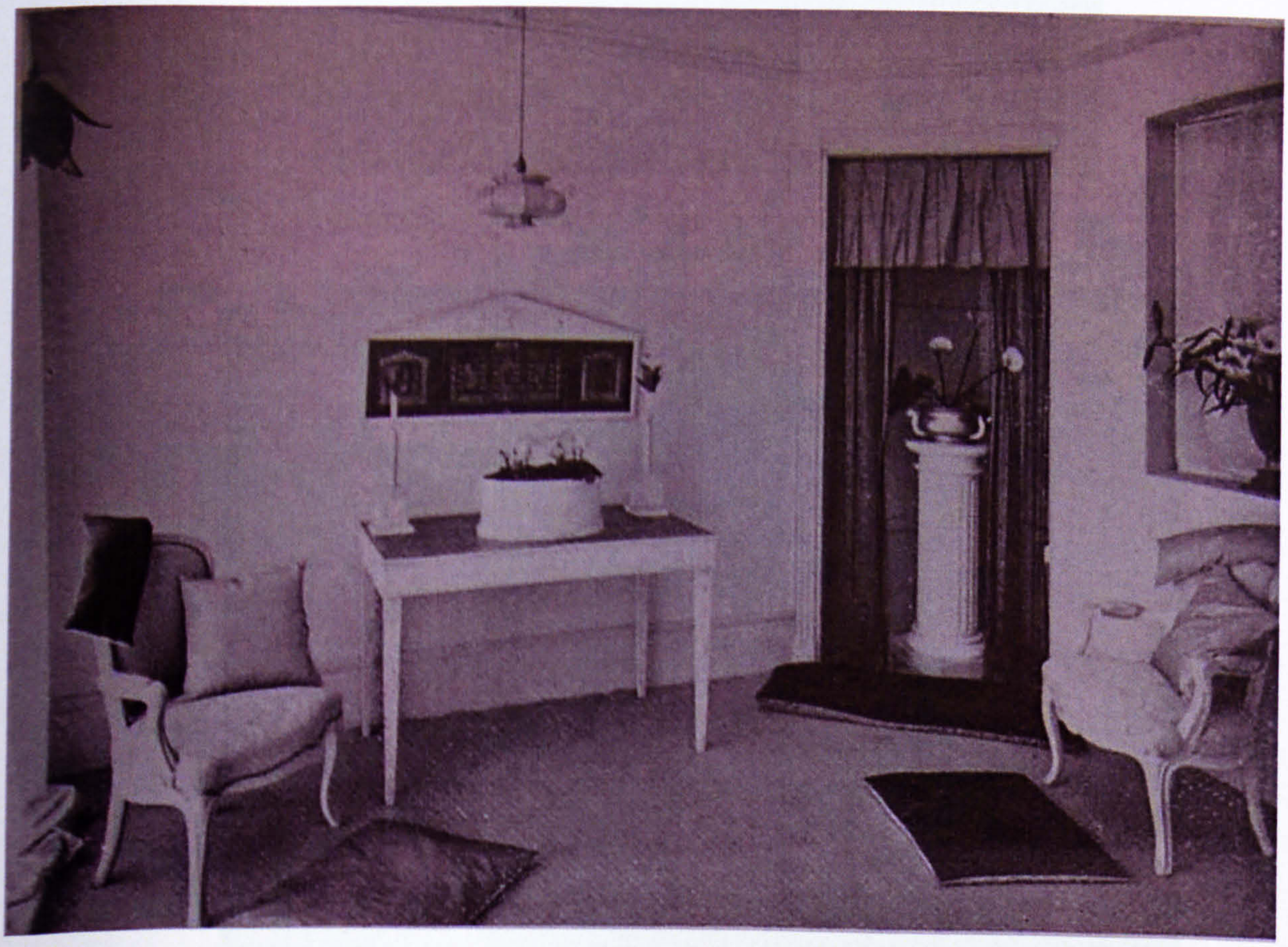


Figure 131 'A room carried out in white and accentuated by colours suggested by the opal. Designer, H. K. Prosser'
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 144)

Figure 132 'A Cheaply Furnished Boudoir Bedroom'
(Gardiner, 1894, p. 191)

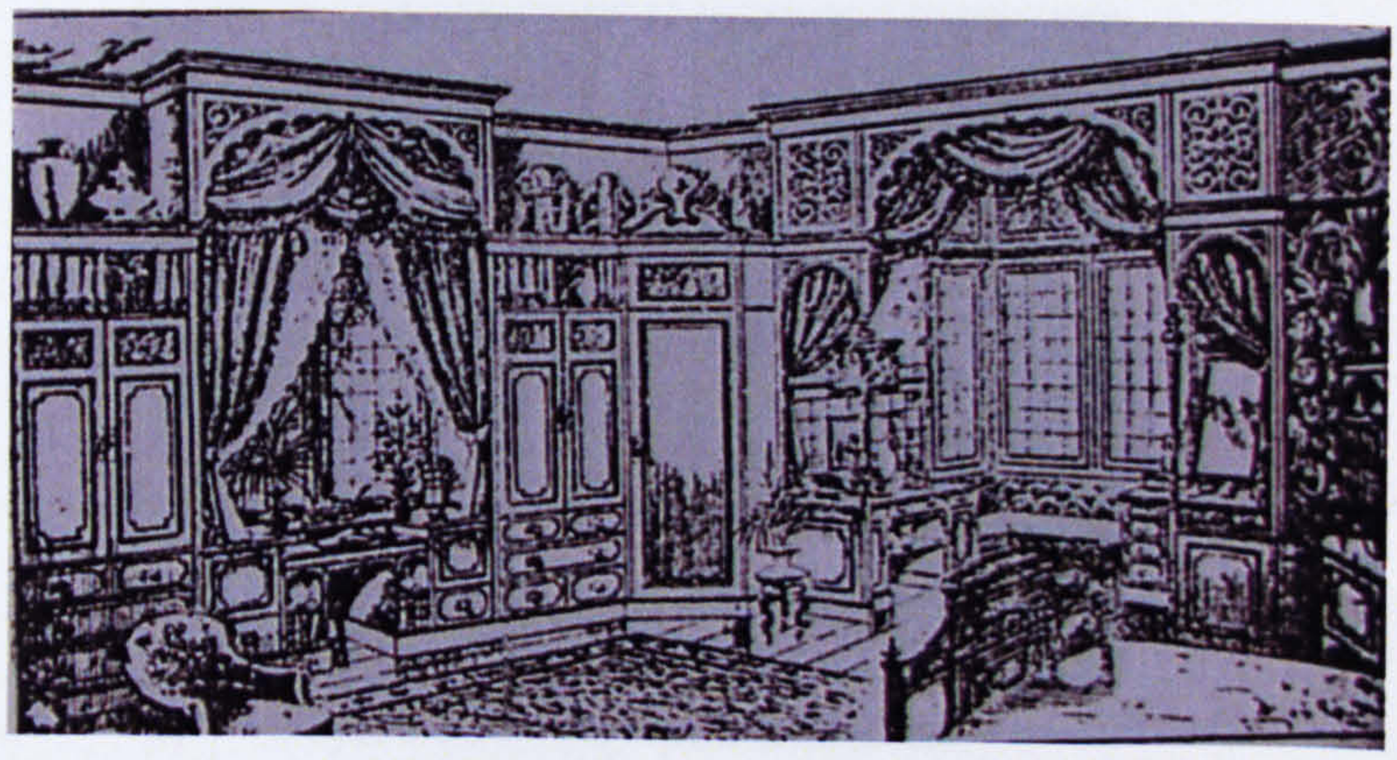


Figure 133 'A Boudoir Bedroom' as an example of fitted furniture
(Gardiner, 1894, p. 88)

Figure 134 'Bed Sitting Room'
(Heal & Son, trade catalogue, 1902)

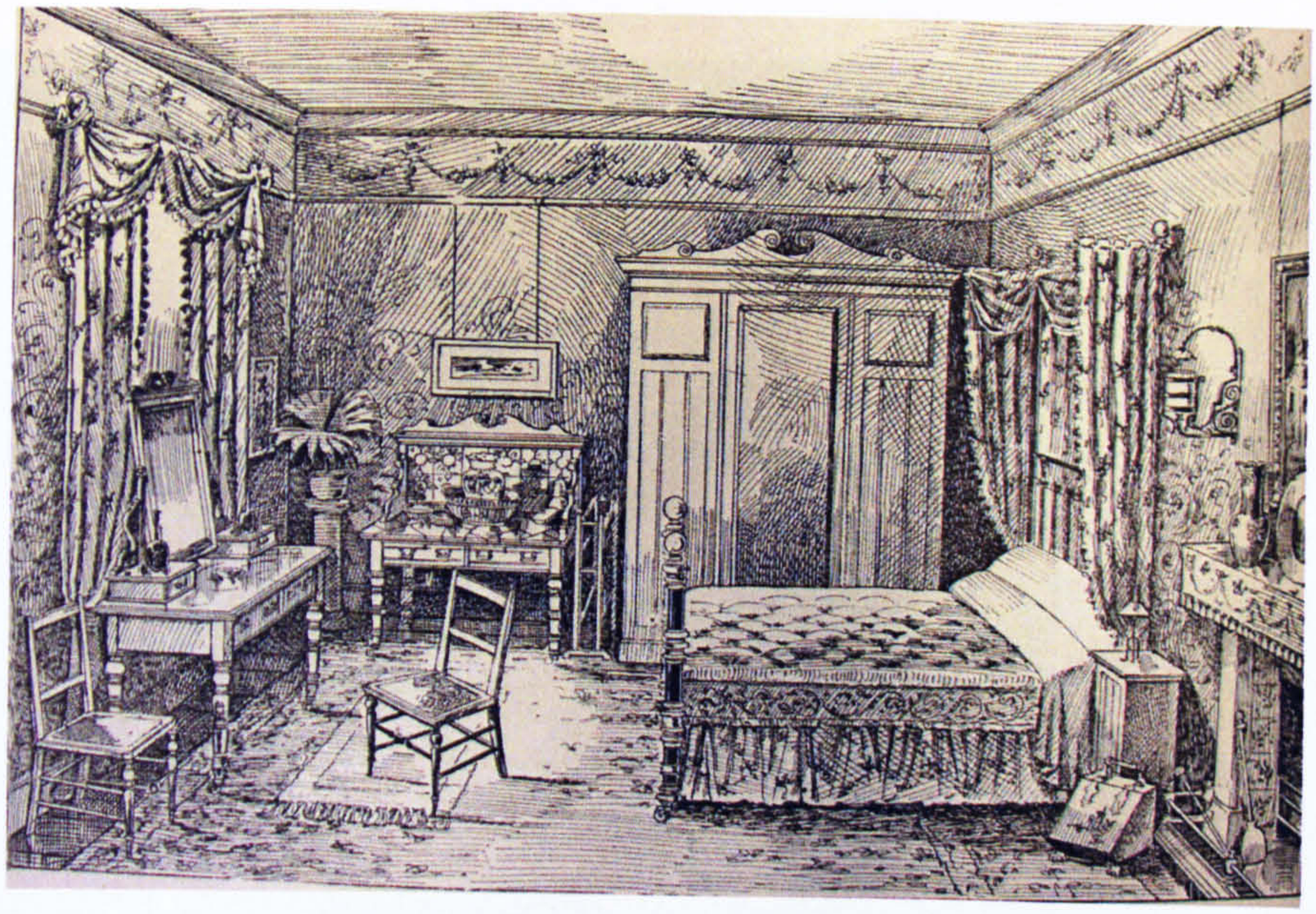


Figure 135 'The Best Bedroom'
(Gardiner, 1894, p. 41)

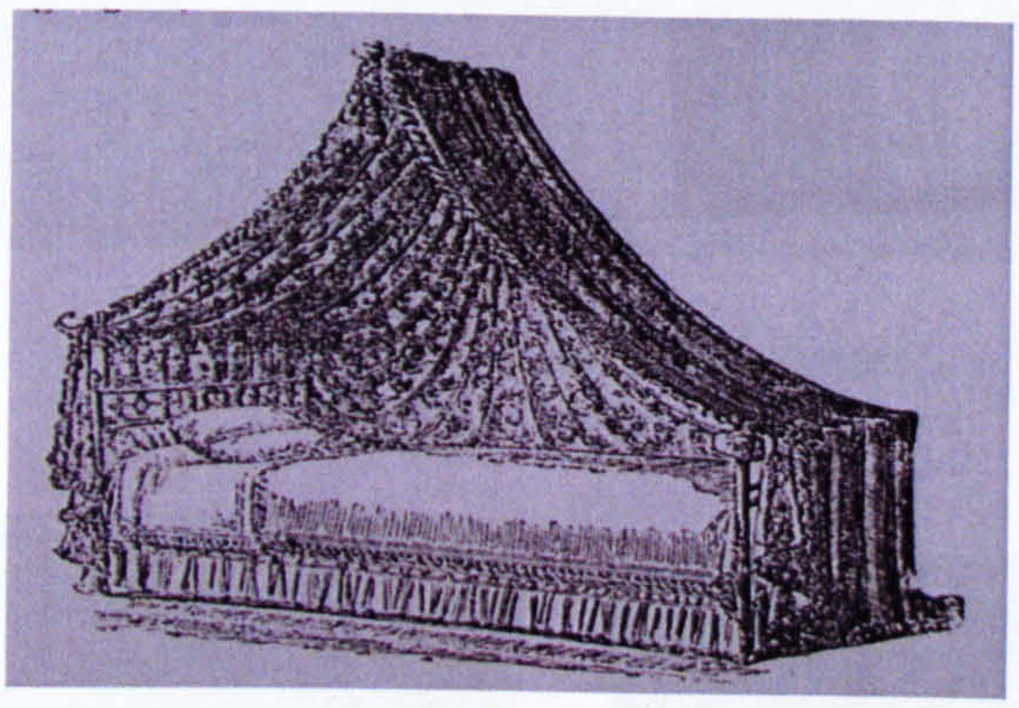


Figure 136 'A Draped Bedstead'
(Gardiner, 1894, p. 123)

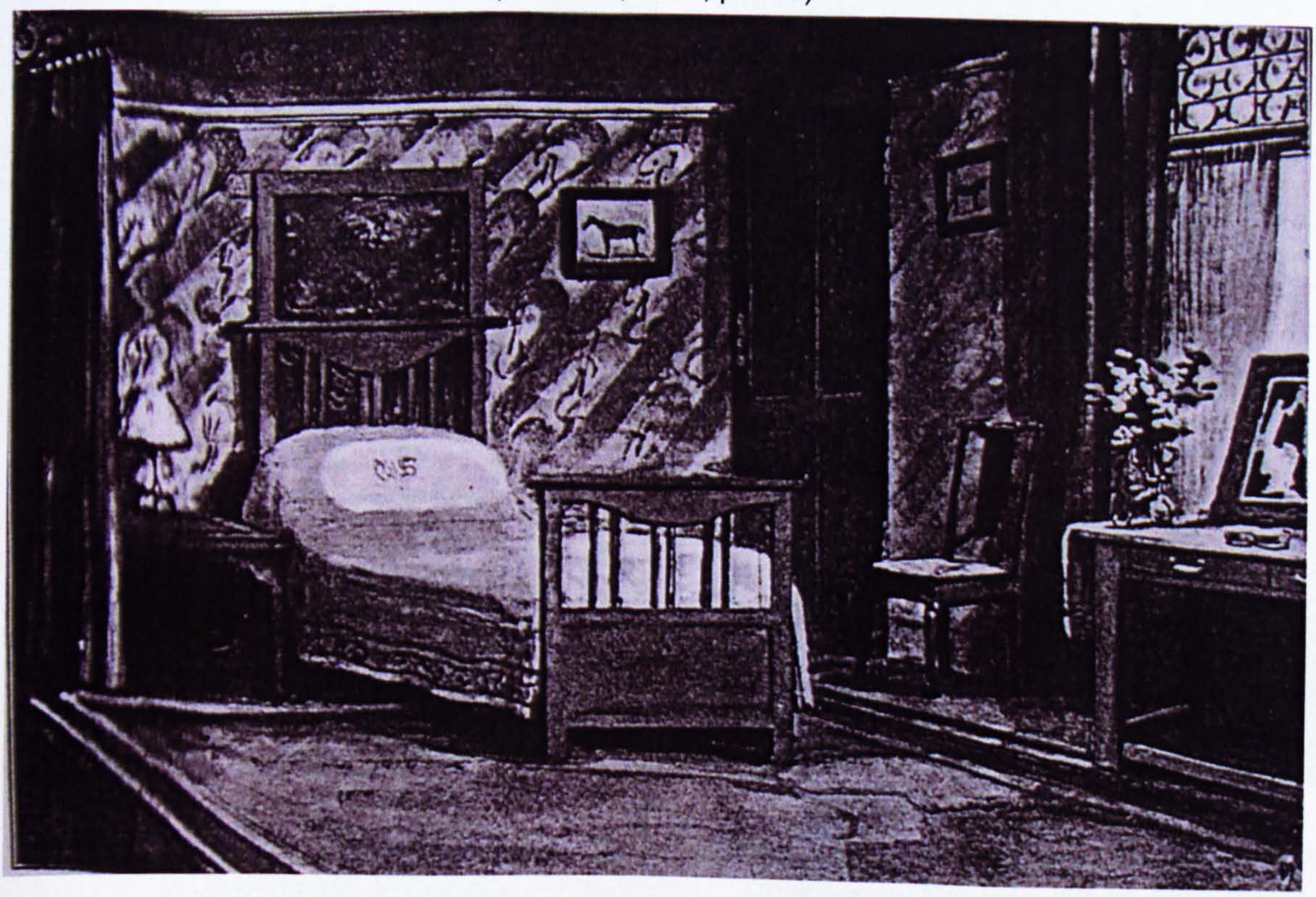


Figure 137 'A Man's Bedroom'
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 183)

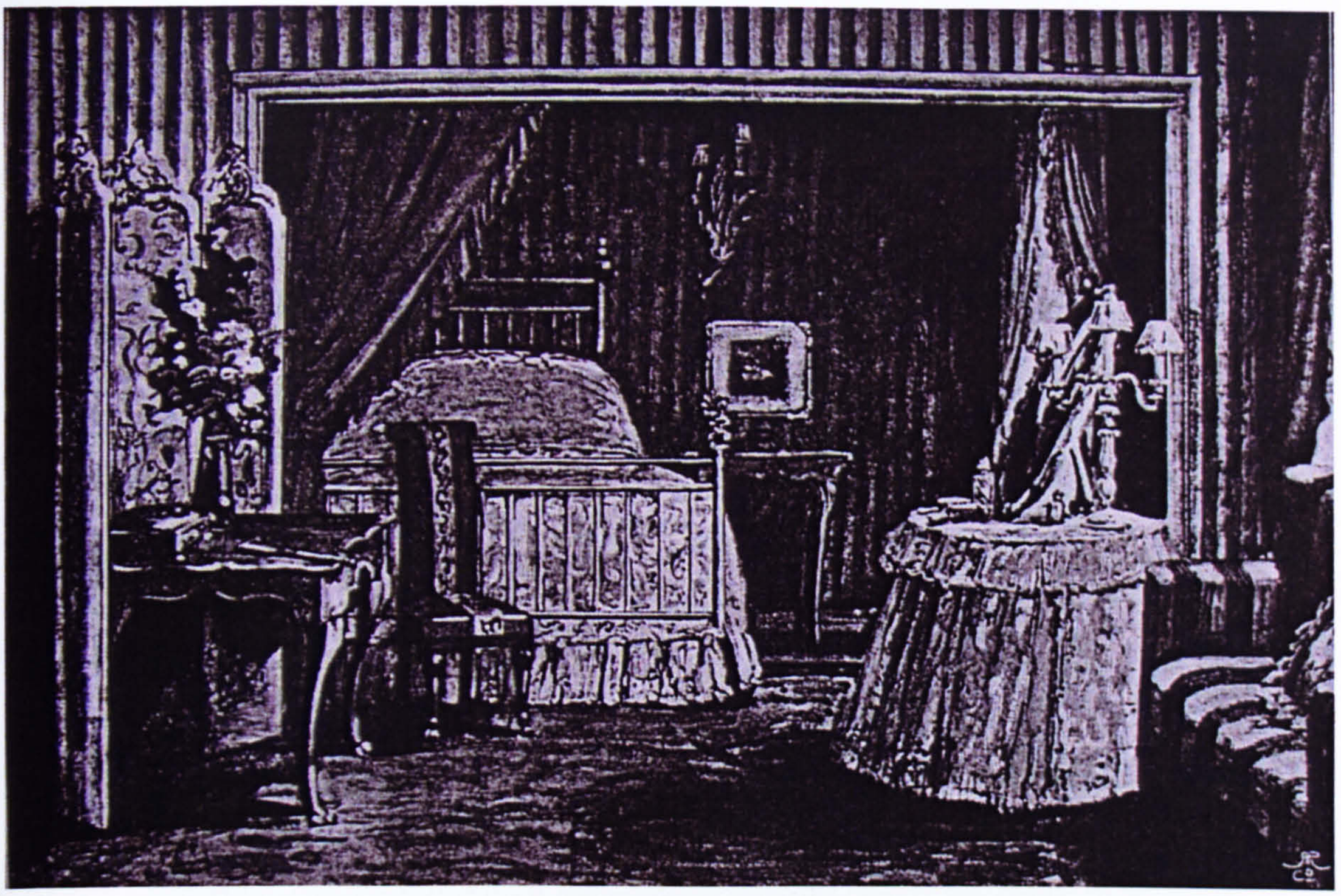


Figure 138 'An Idea for a Bedroom'
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 173)

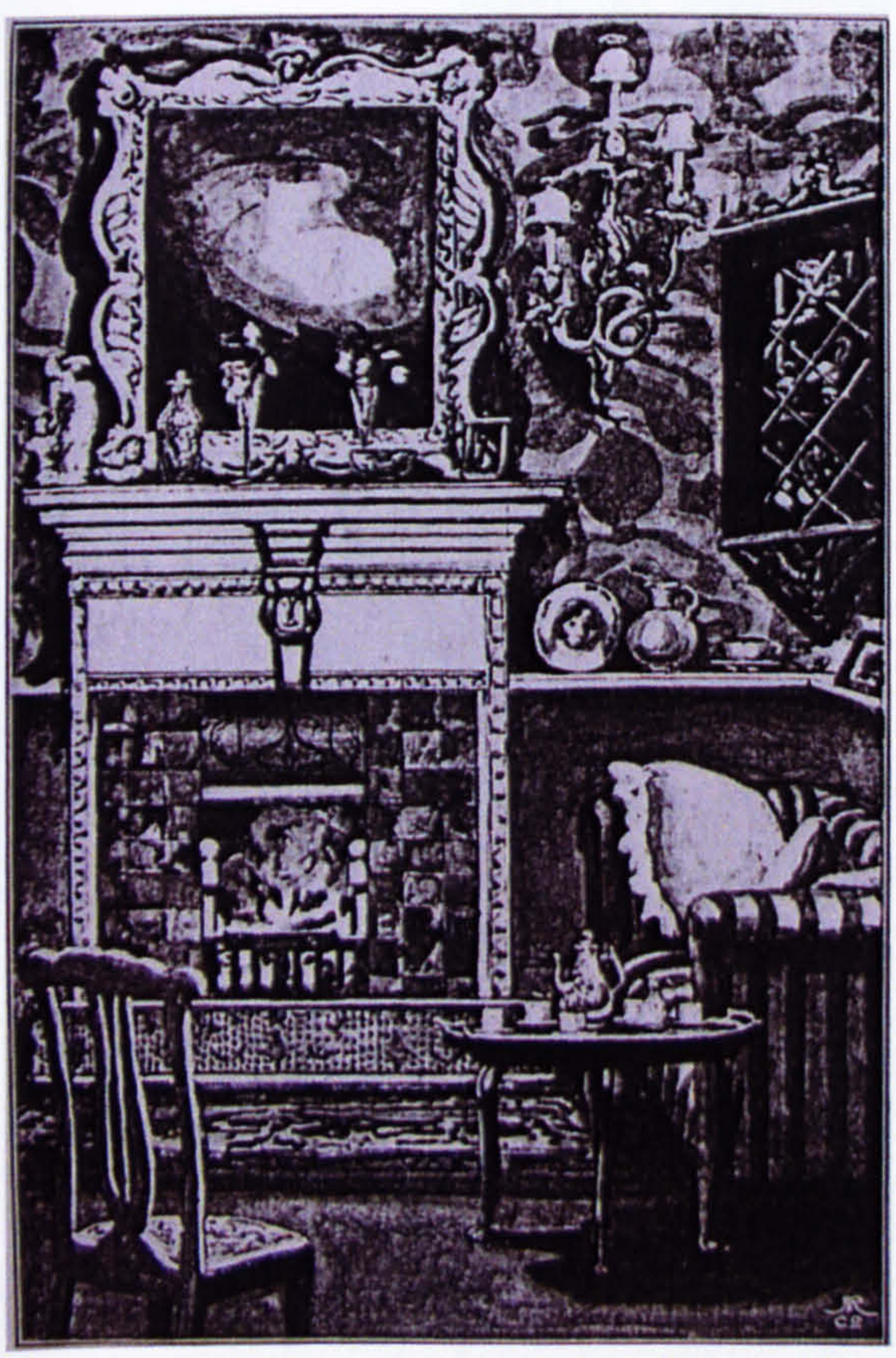


Figure 139' A Boudoir-Bedroom Furnished
in Chippendale Mahogany'
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 195)

Figure 140 'Arrangement for a Bow Window'
Designed by Messrsa. Wood, Altrincham
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 139)

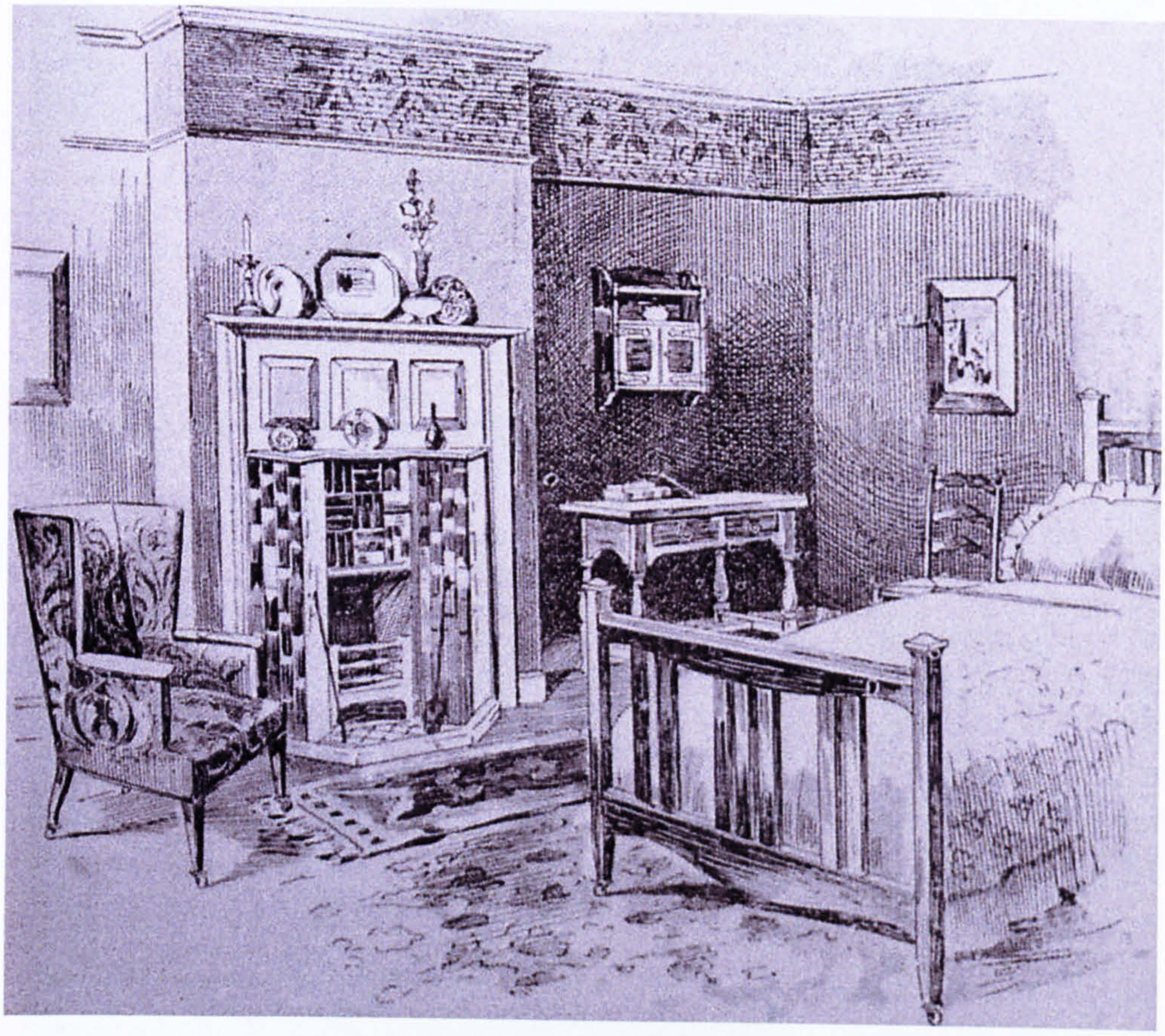


Figure 141 'View of the best Bedroom' The Fireplace
(*The House*, V, 1899, p. 213)

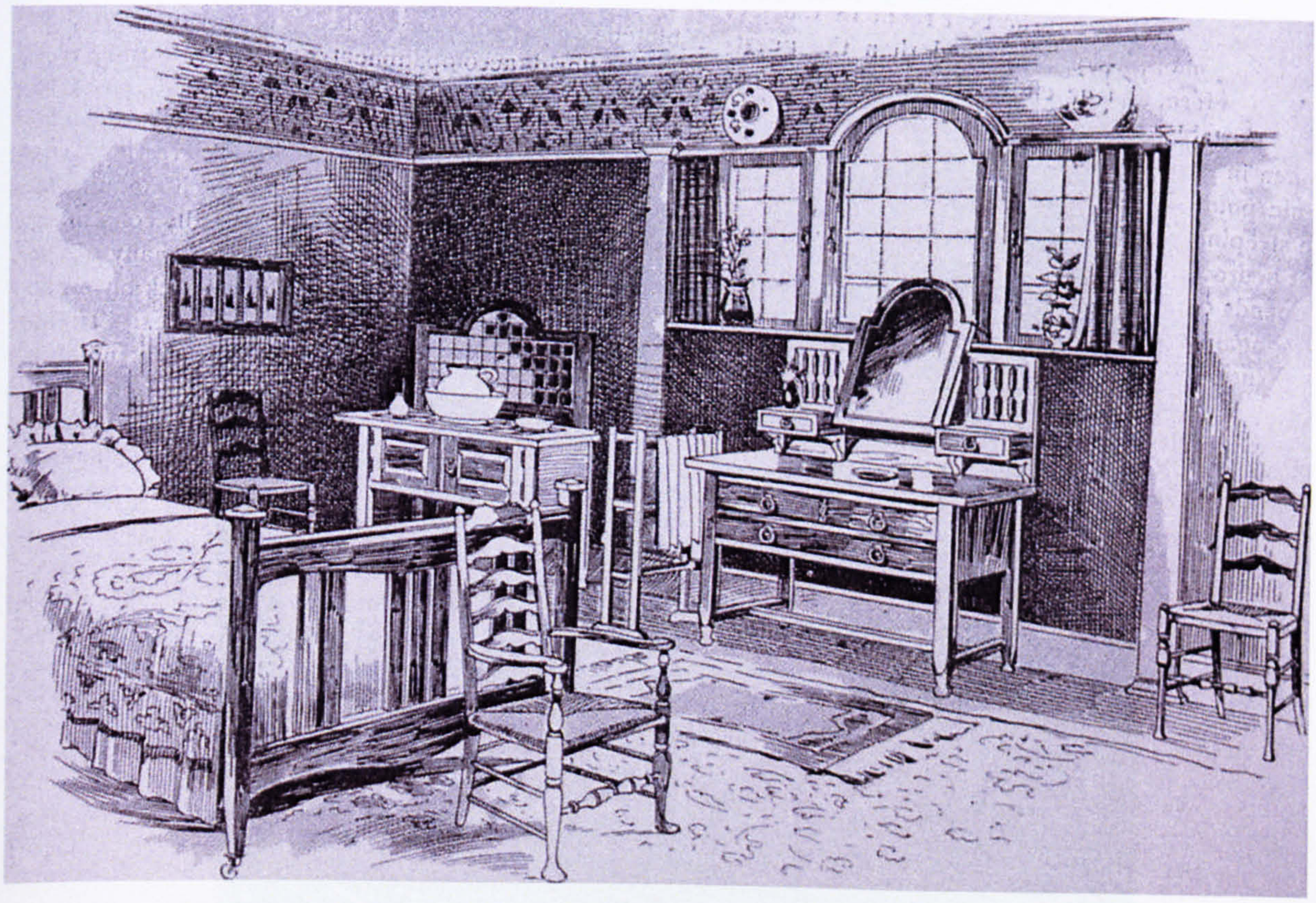


Figure 142 'View of the best Bedroom' The Window
(*The House*, V, 1899, p. 214)

Figure 143 Fireplace in a bedroom'
(J. Crouch and E. Butler, 1900, fig. 69)

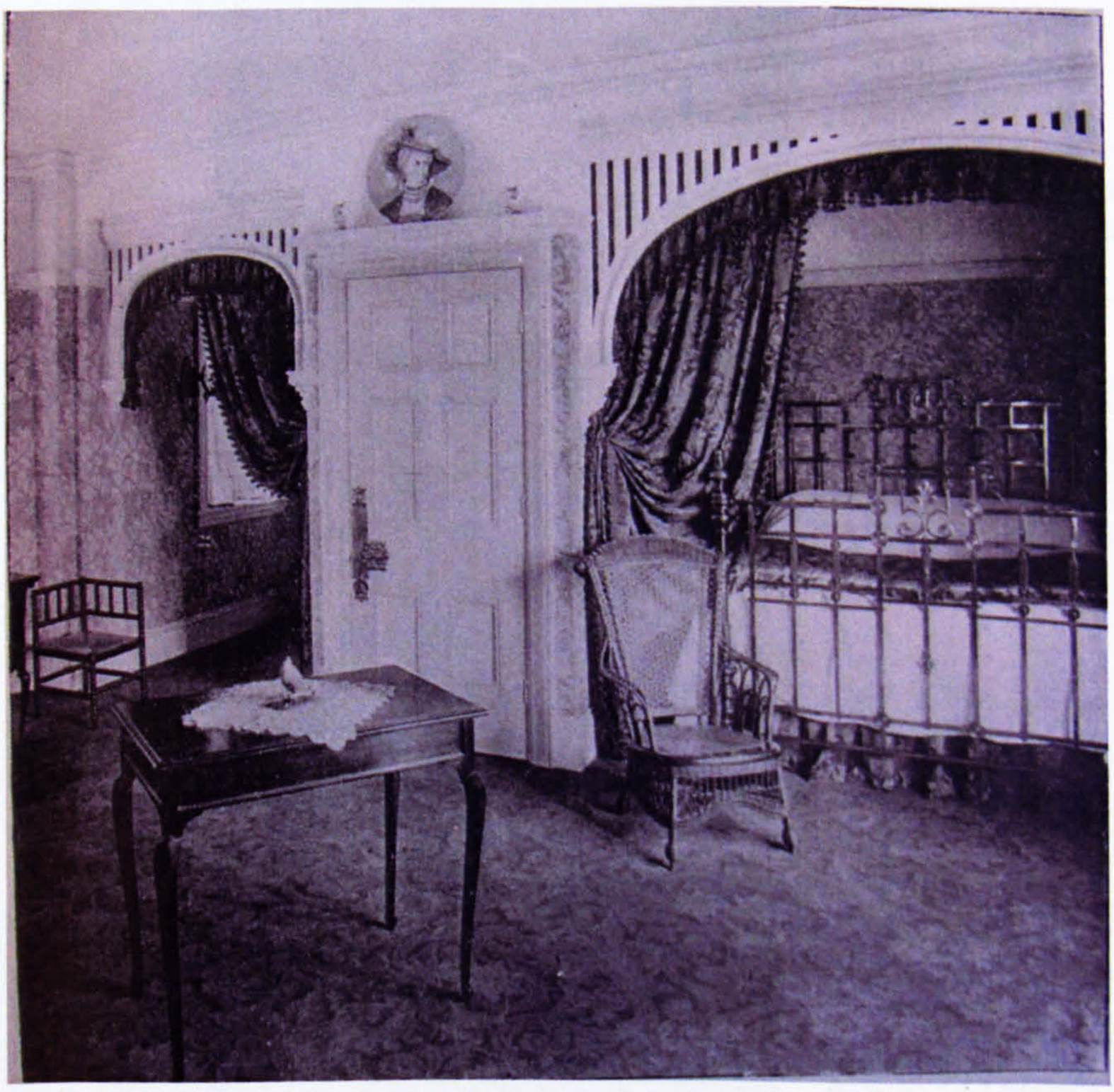


Figure 144 'A bedroom'
(J. Crouch and E. Butler, 1900, fig. 68)

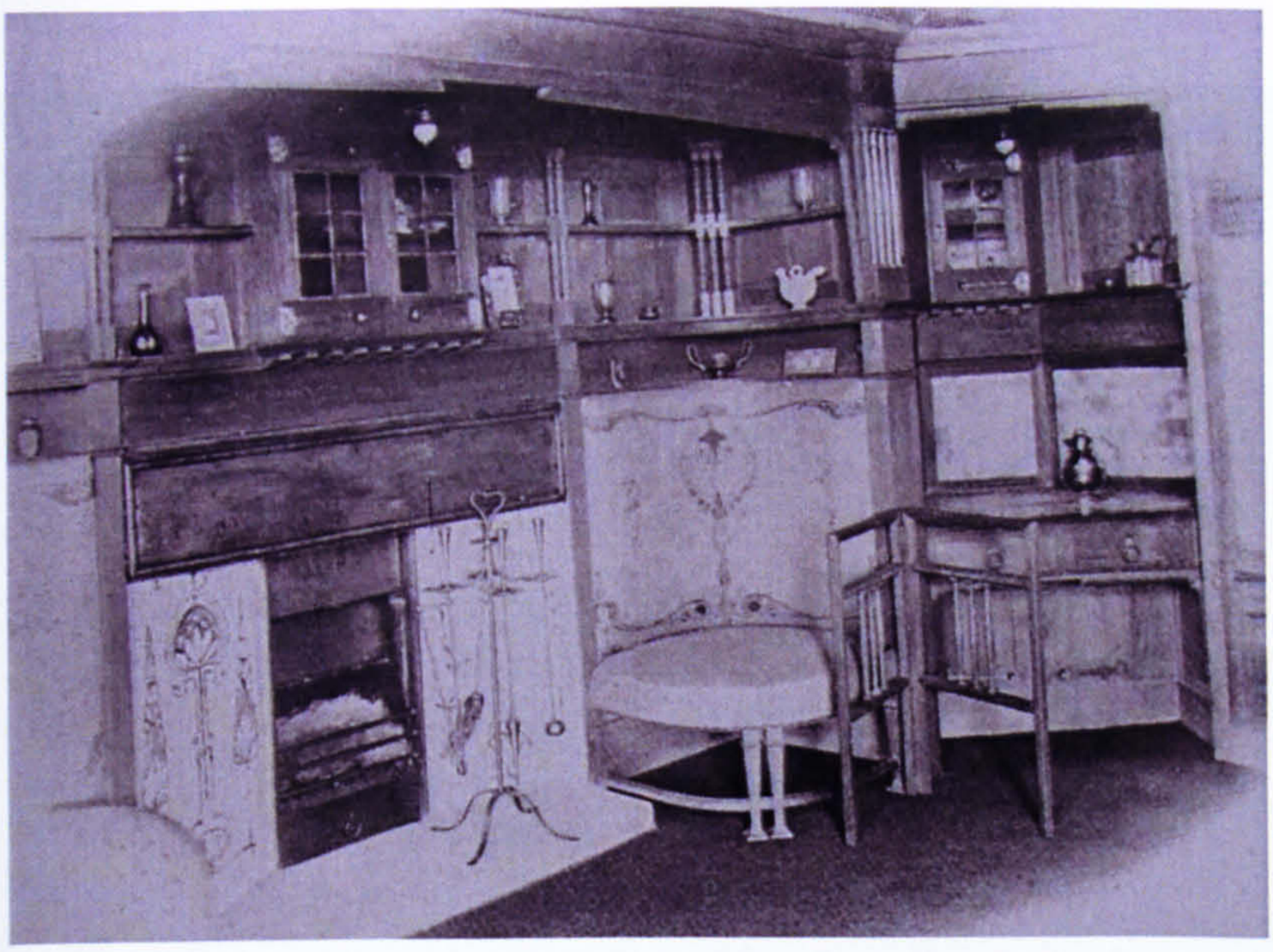


Figure 145 'Ingle Nook
of Fitted Bedroom
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, fig. 92)

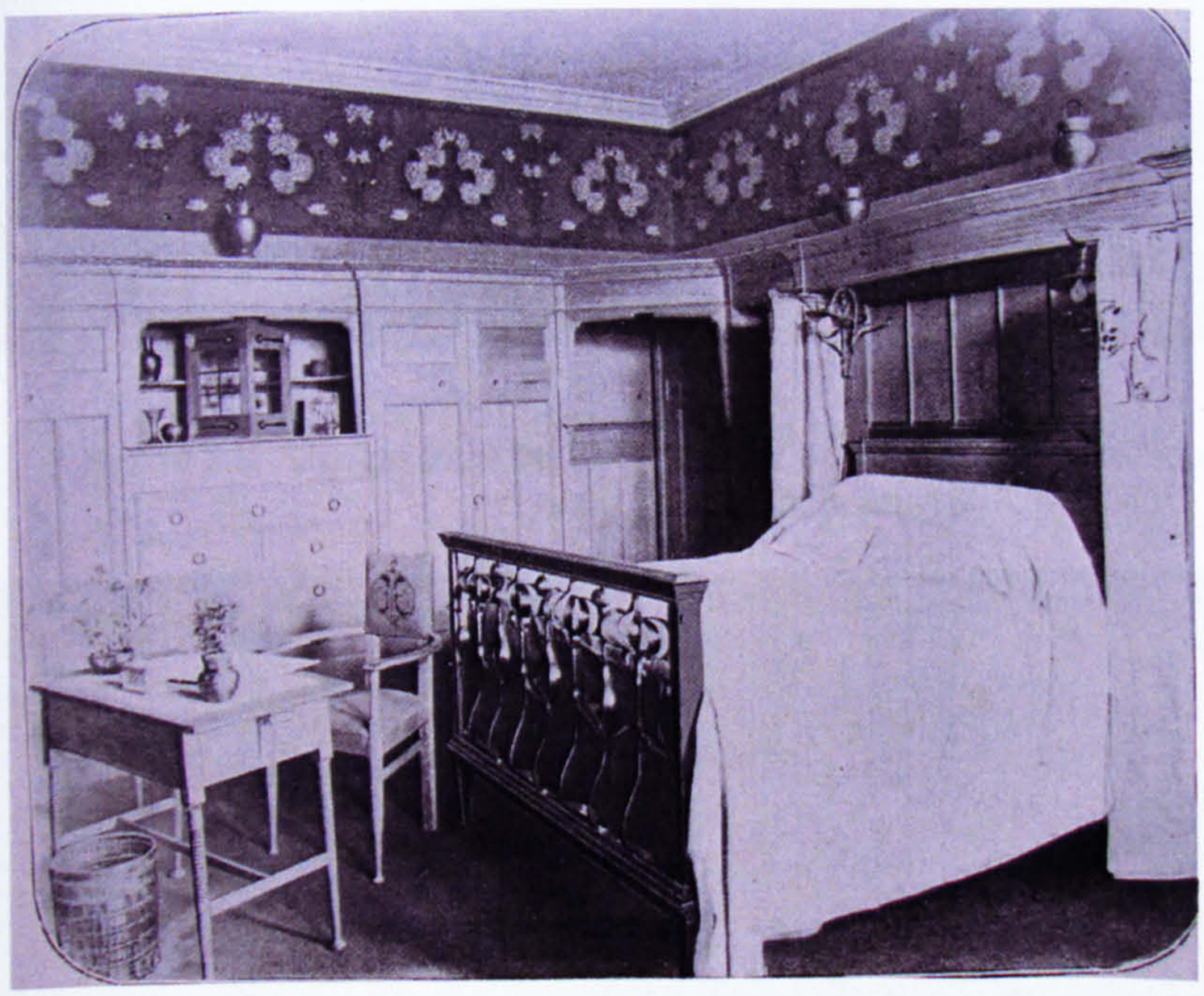


Figure 146 'Fitted Bedroom'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, plate XXXIX)

Figure 147 'White Fitted Bedroom'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, fig. 94, p. 232)

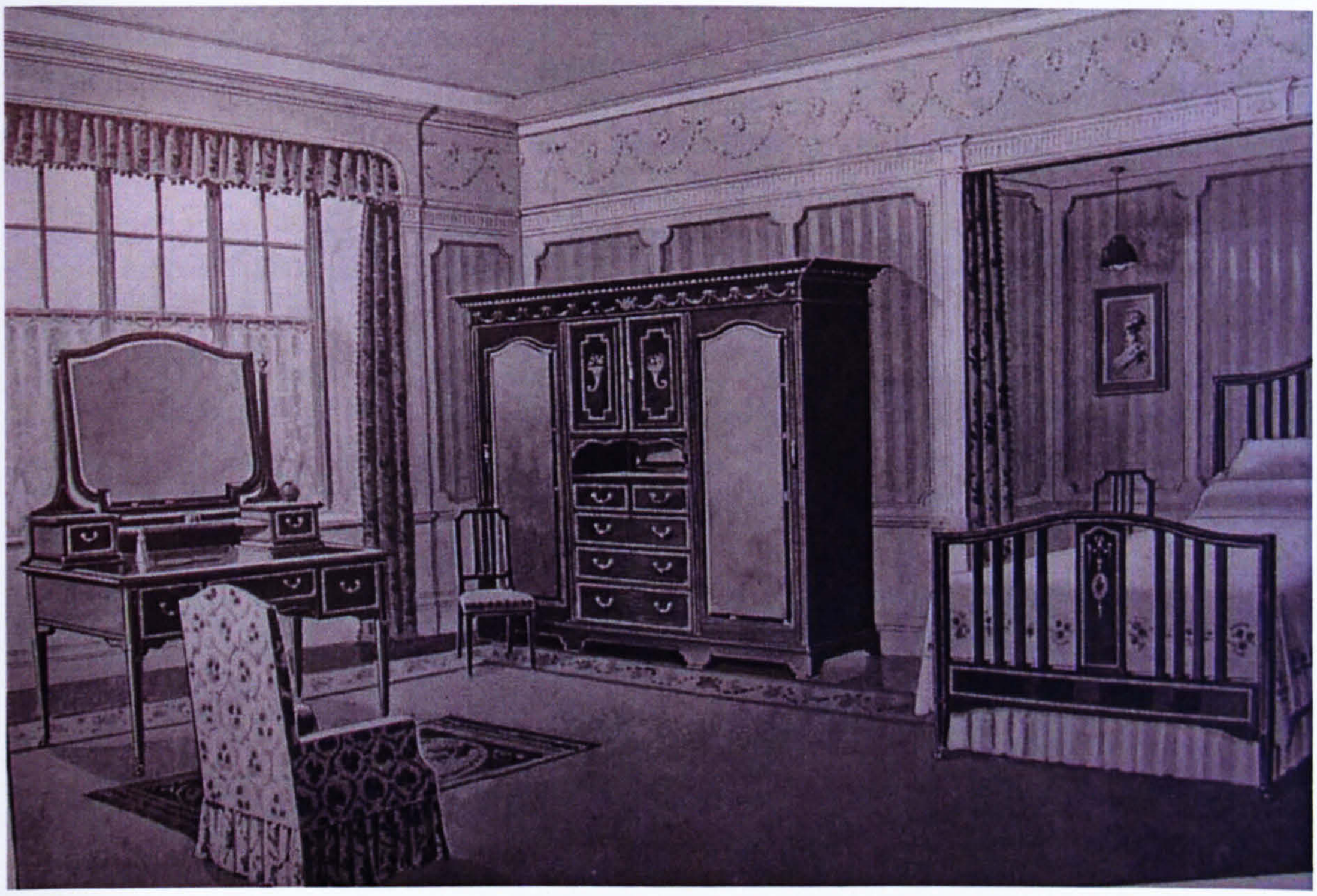


Figure 148 'Design for a bedroom furnished with a "Sheraton" suite.' By Oetzmann & Co.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 204)

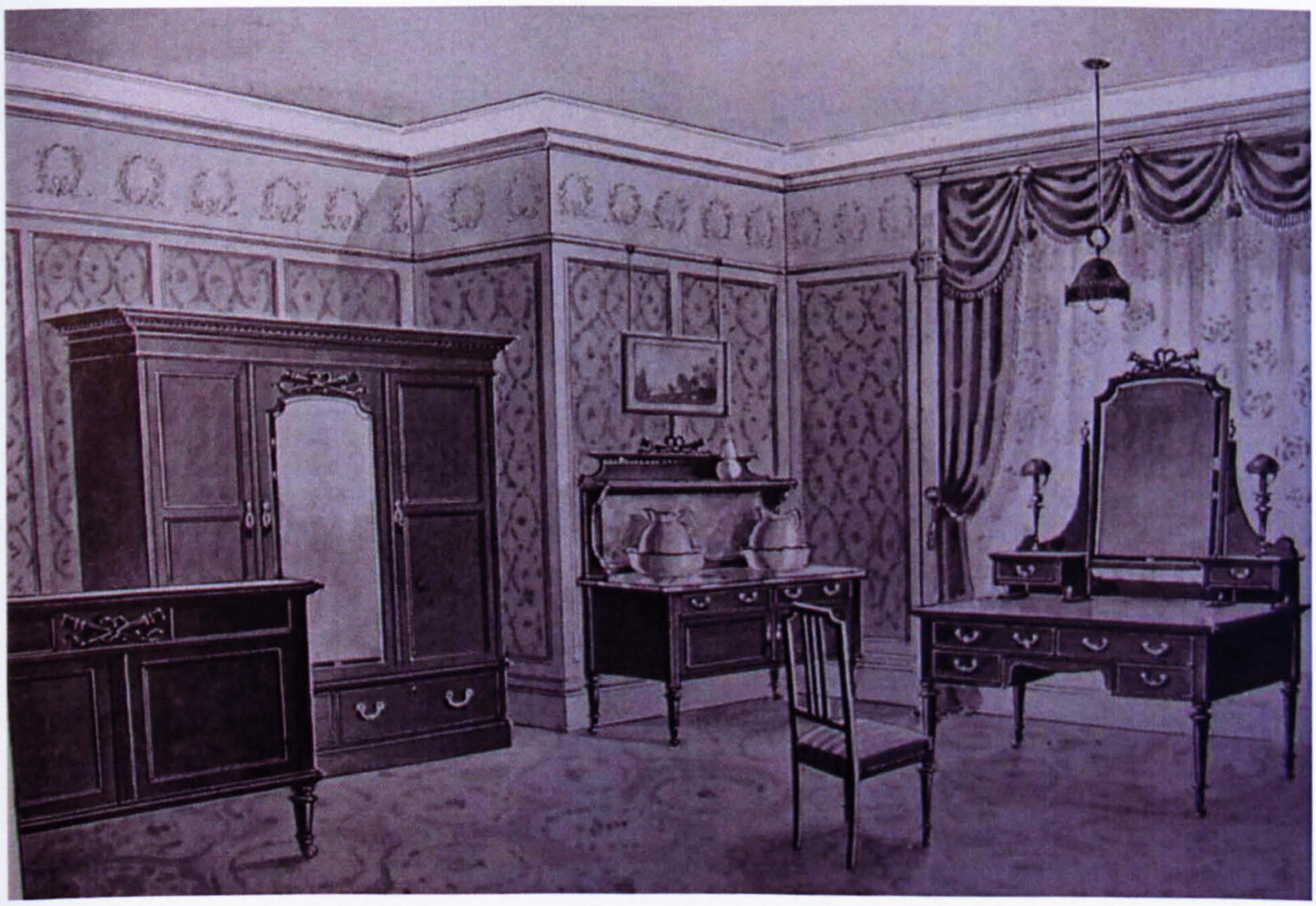


Figure 149 'Bedroom Suite in fine Mahogany' By Oetzmann & Co.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 210)

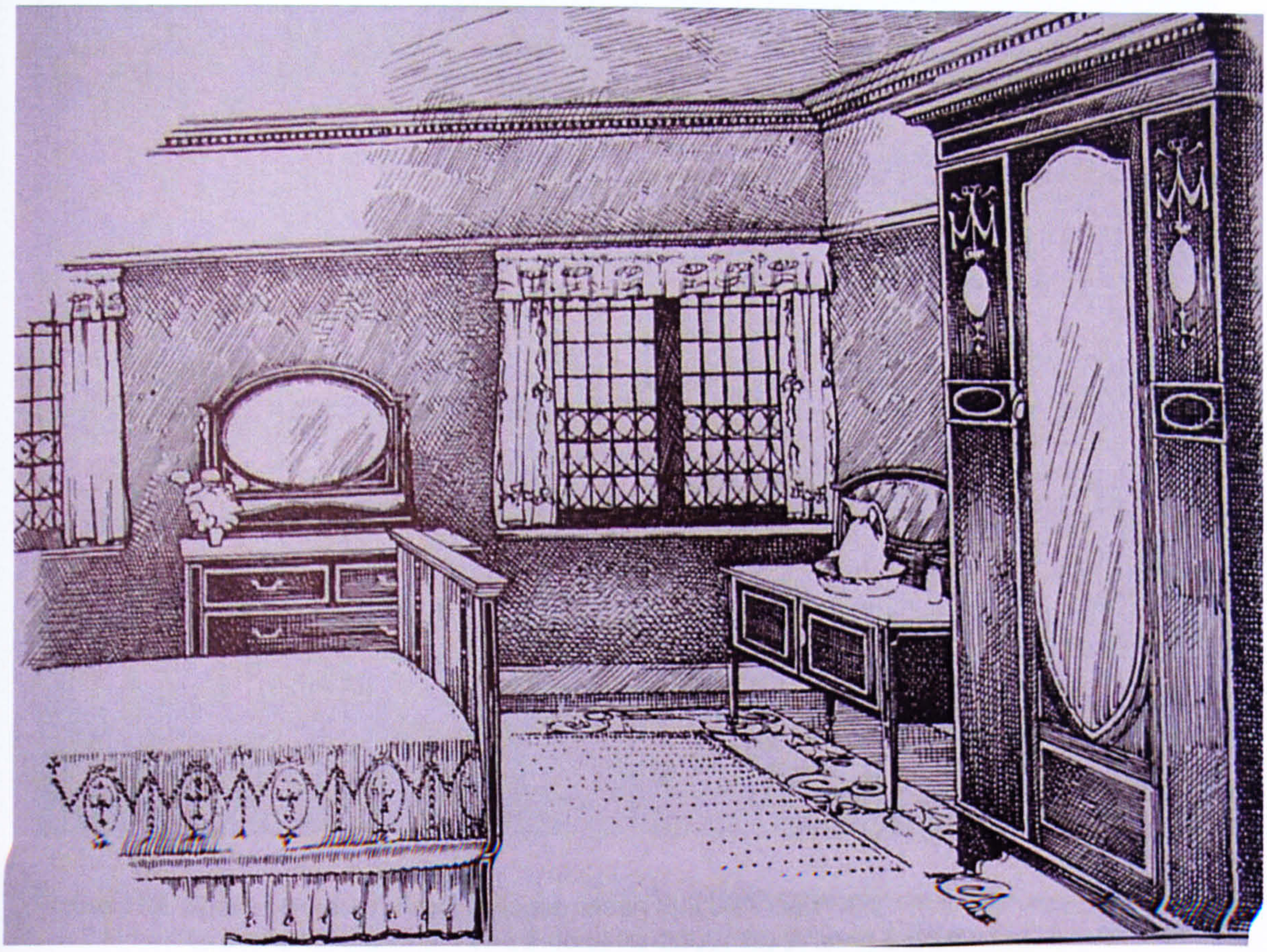


Figure 150 'Furniture for country cottages, bungalows or flats' By Oetzmann & Co.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 204)

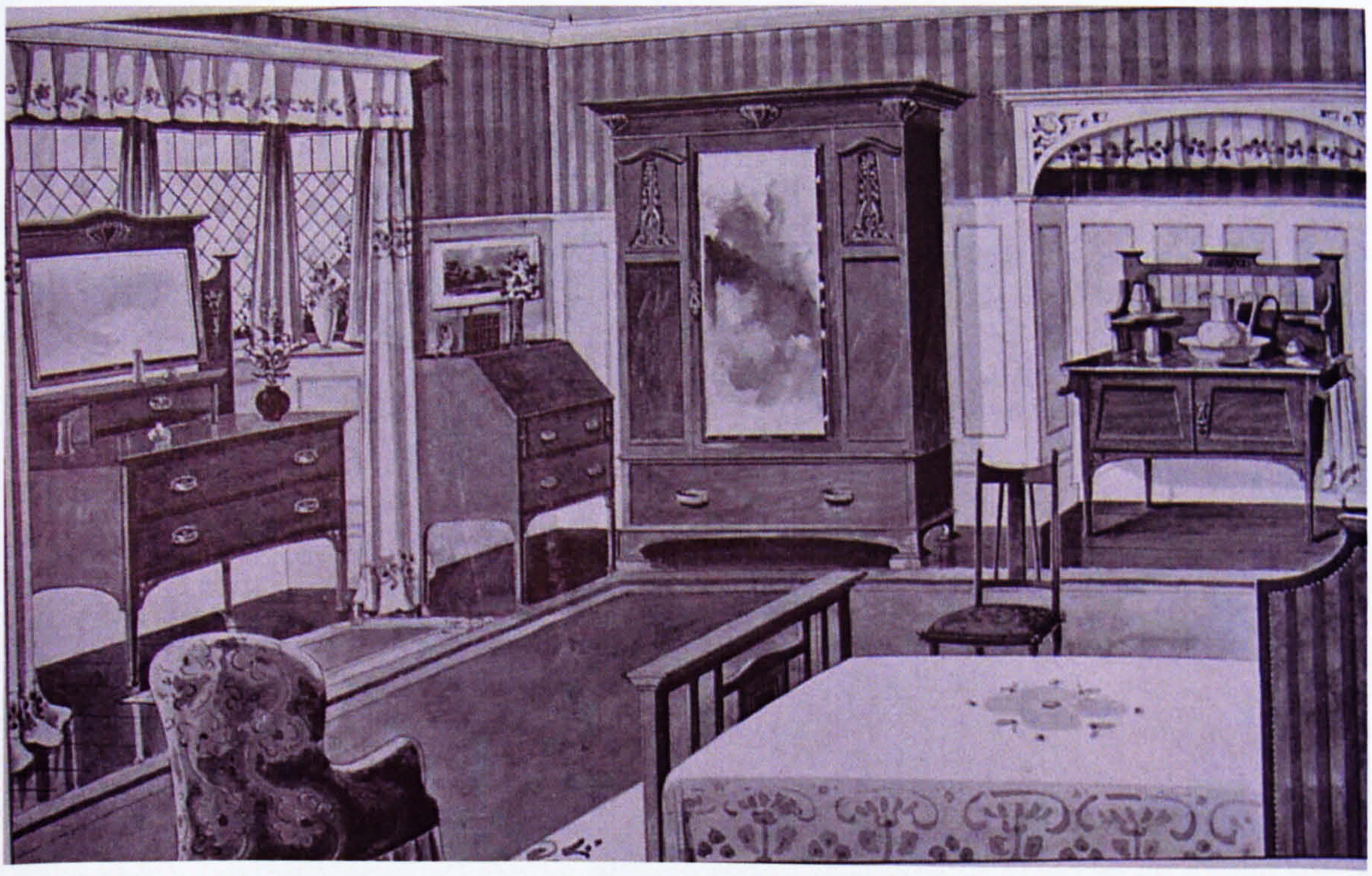


Figure 151 'Bedroom in carved oak. Price of suite £16 10s.; bedstead (additional) £2 18s. 6d.; bureau (additional) £2 12s 6d.' By Oetzmann & Co.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 210)

Figure 152 'Spare bedroom. From a house which has been specially designed and furnished to demonstrate what can be done for £500.' By Waring & Gillow Ltd.
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 212)

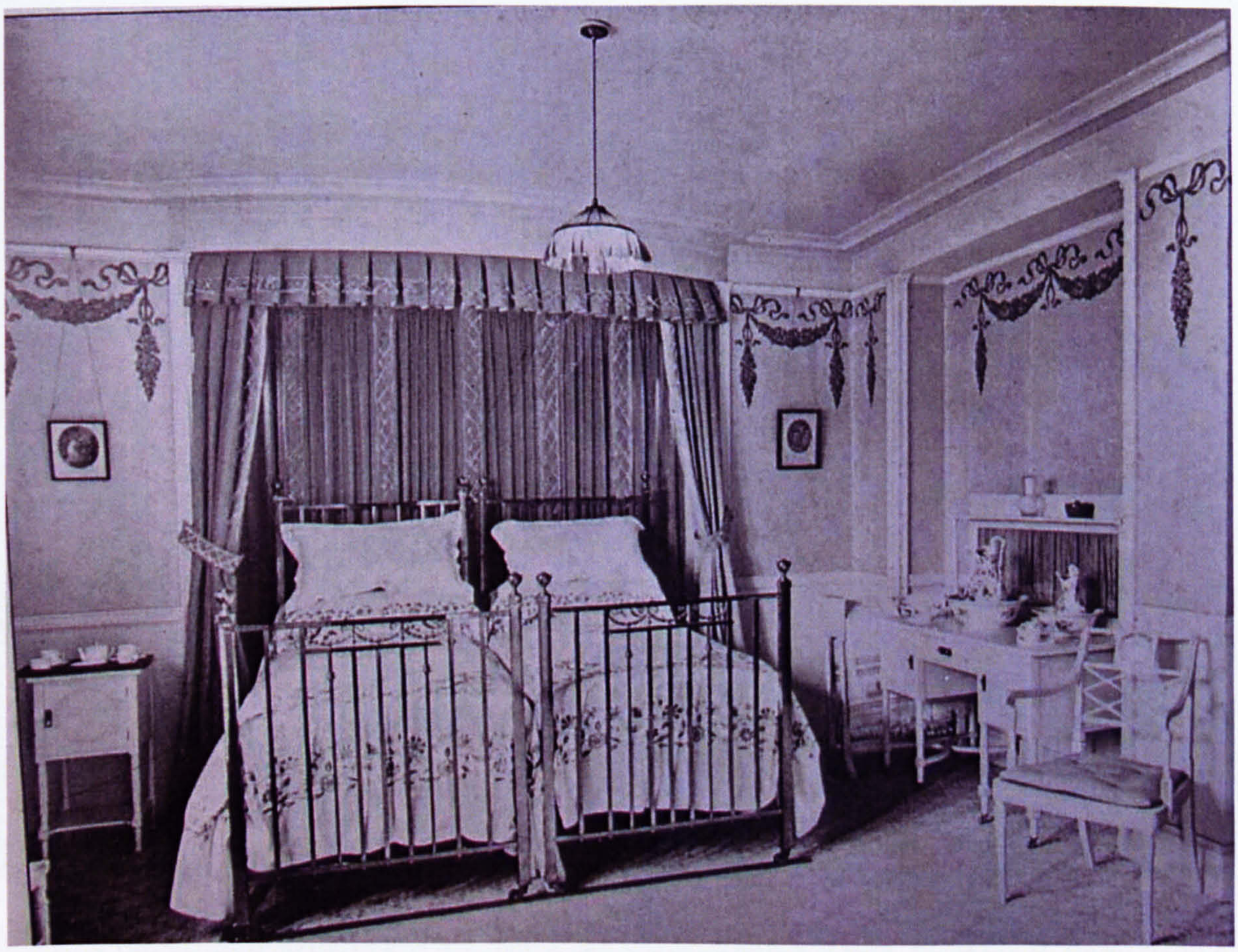


Figure 153 'Bedroom furnished in "Colonial Adam" style.' By Heal & Son
(J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1907, p. 211)

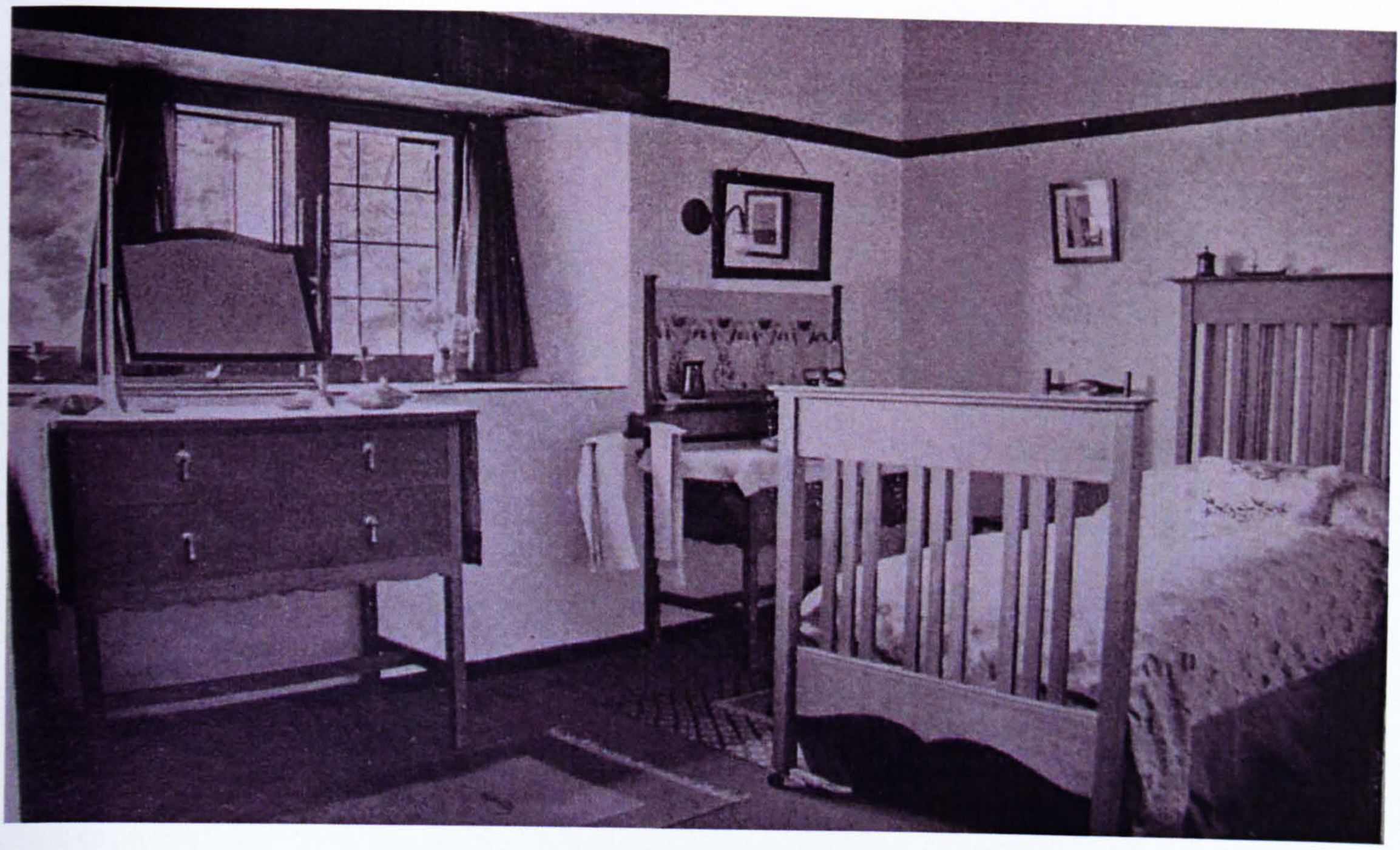


Figure 154 'The furniture in this room was designed for its position by the occupier of the house Arthur W. Simpson. Architect, C. F. A. Voysey'
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 104)

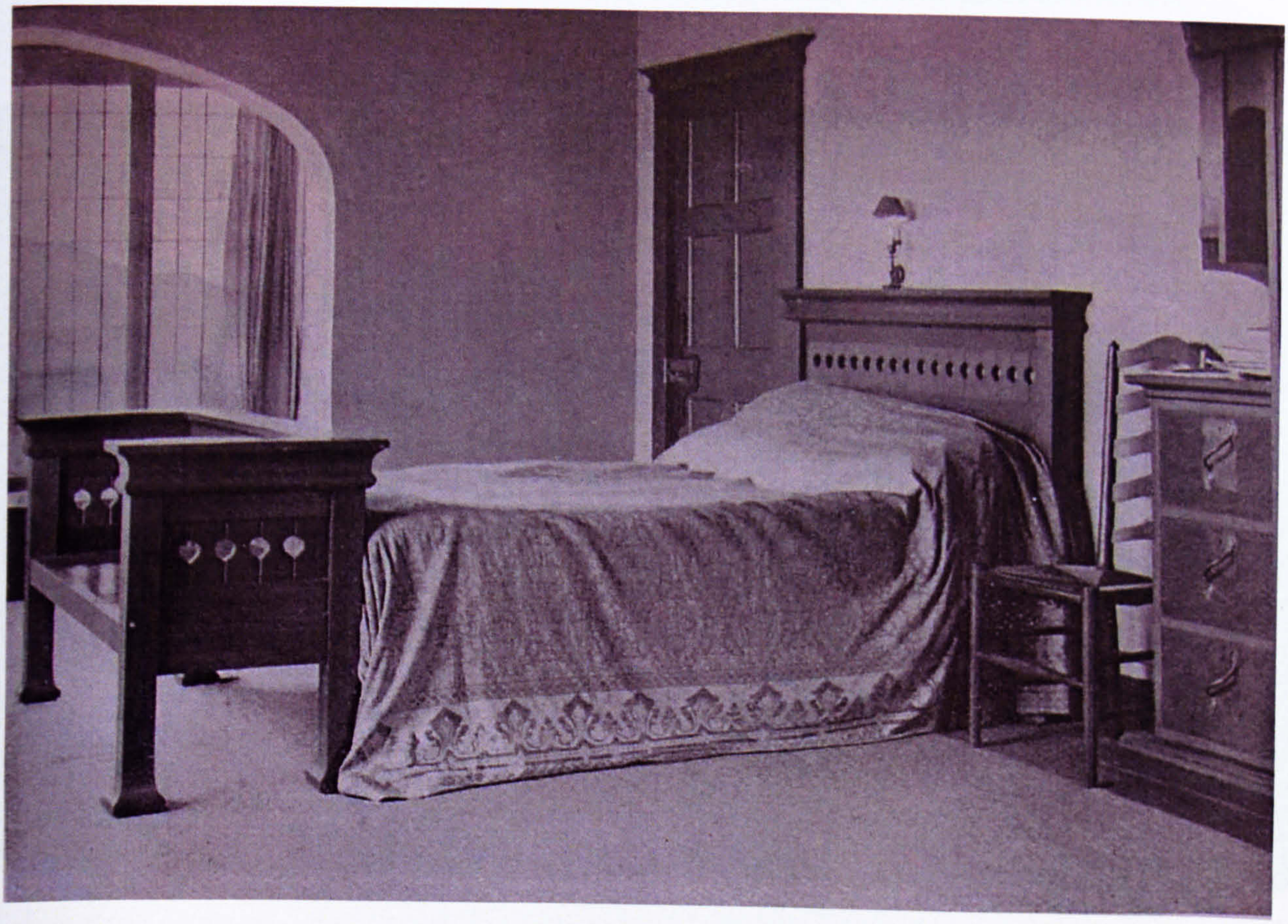


Figure 155 'An original bedstead, the foot of which is formed into a seat. Architect, R. Barry Parker'
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 80)

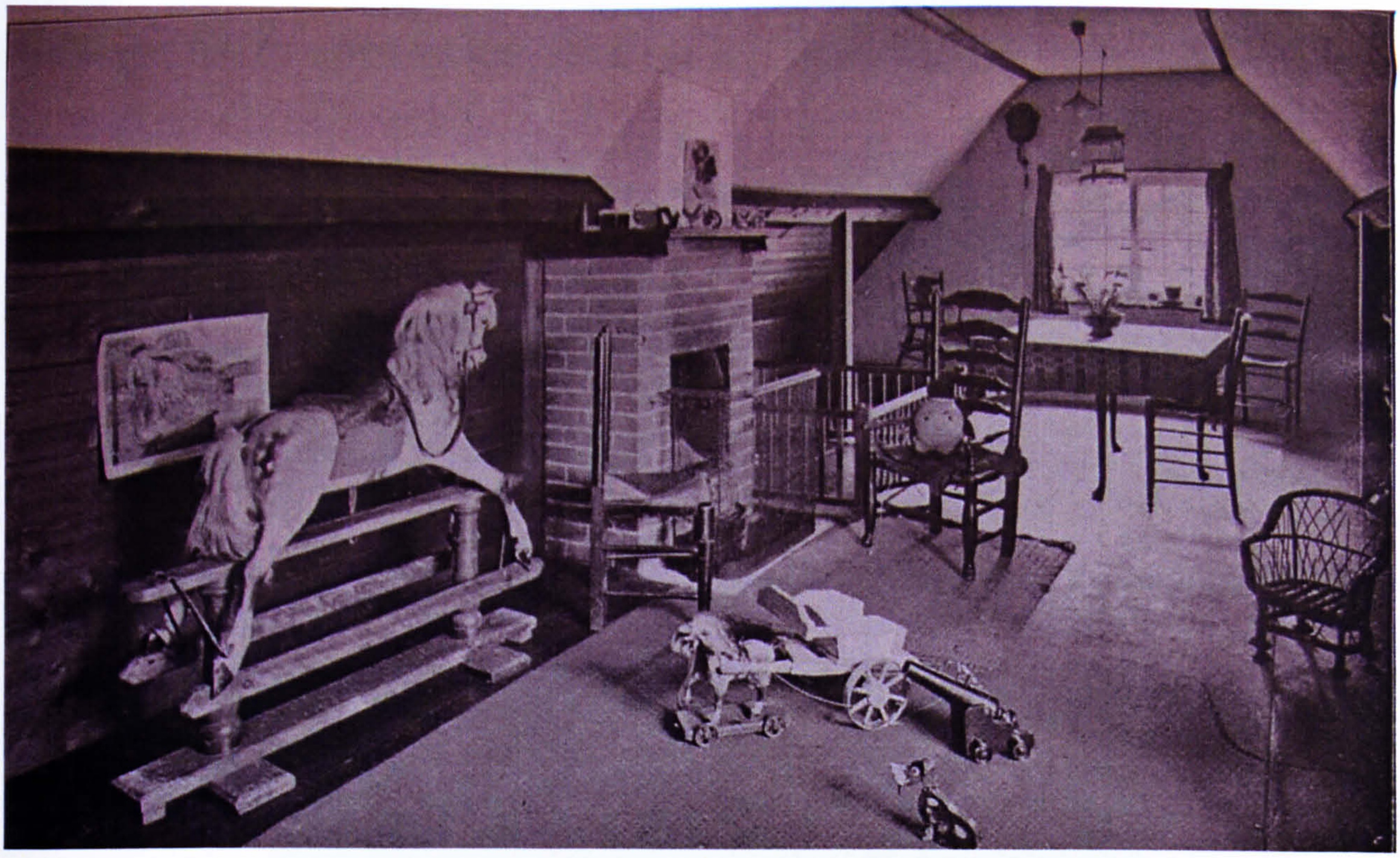


Figure 156 'Nursery formed in the roof of a house. Architect, C. H. B. Quennell F.R.I.B.A.'
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 57)

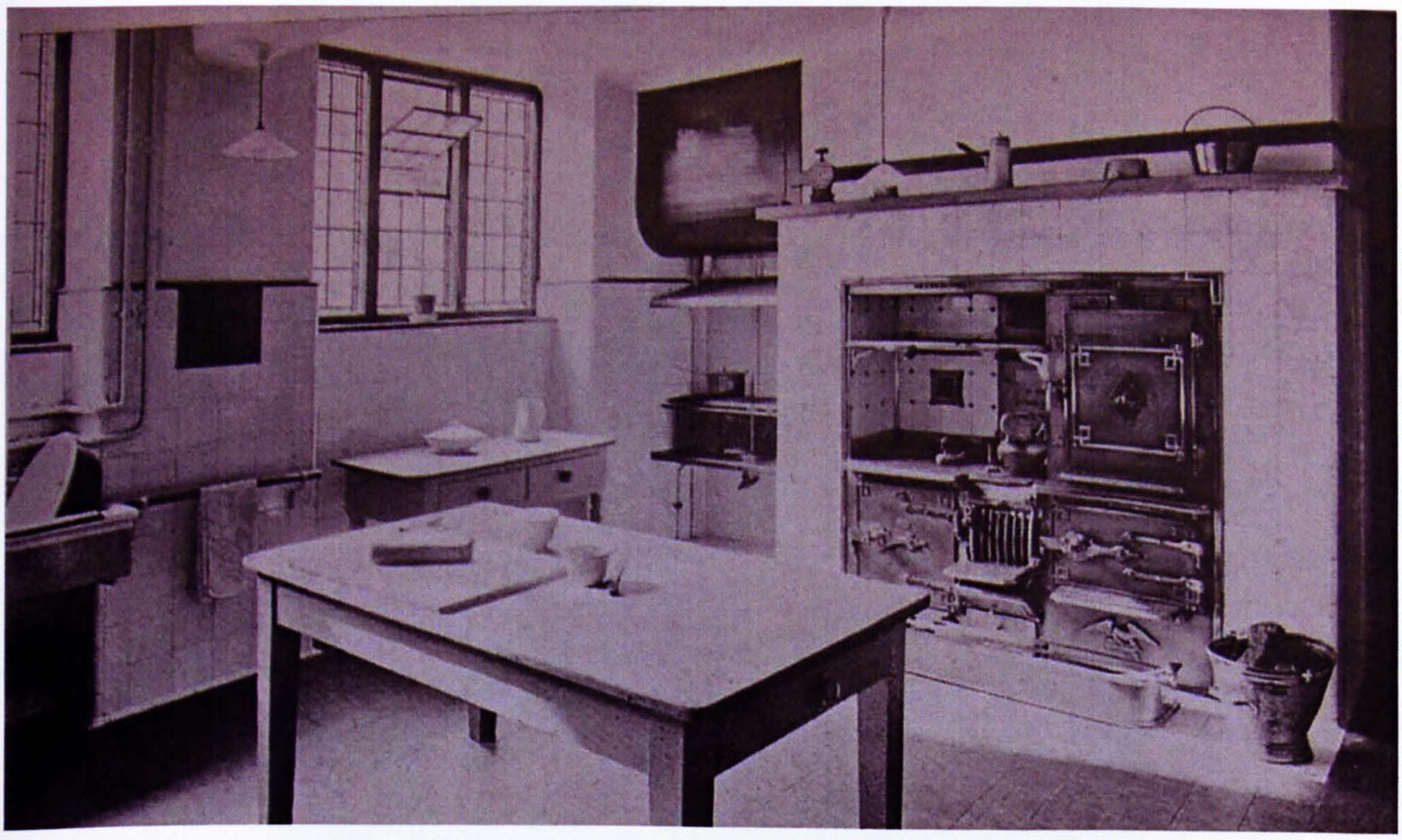


Figure 157 'A well-equipped kitchen. Architect, Walter H. Brierley F.R.I.B.A.'
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 97)

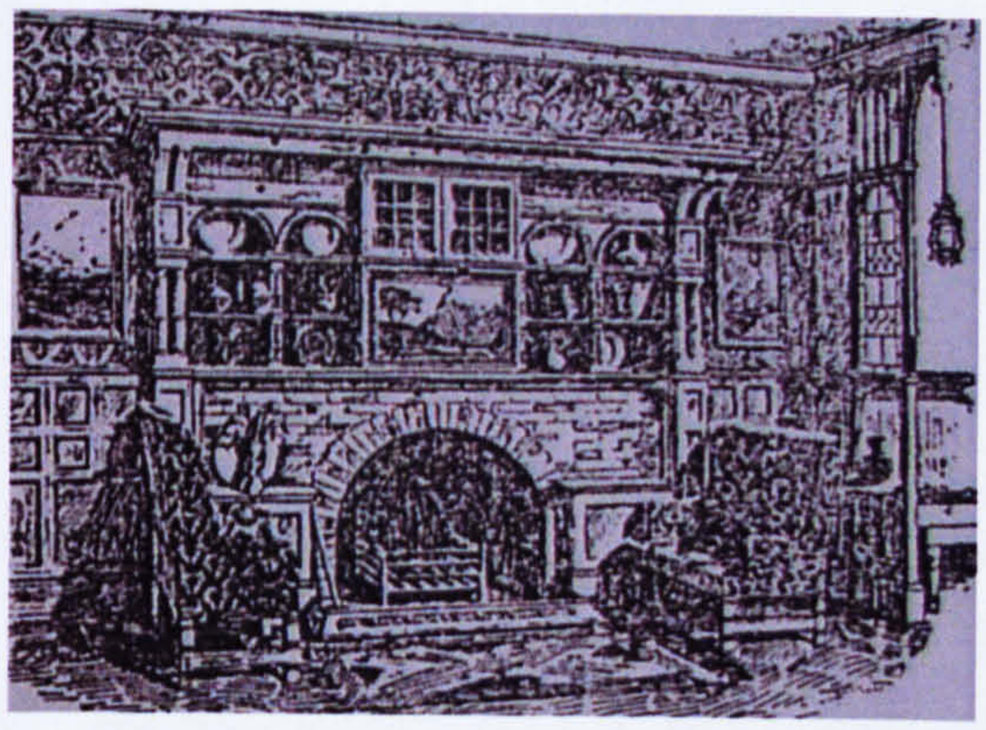


Figure 158 'A Modern Ingle Nook'
(Gardiner, 1894, p. 118)

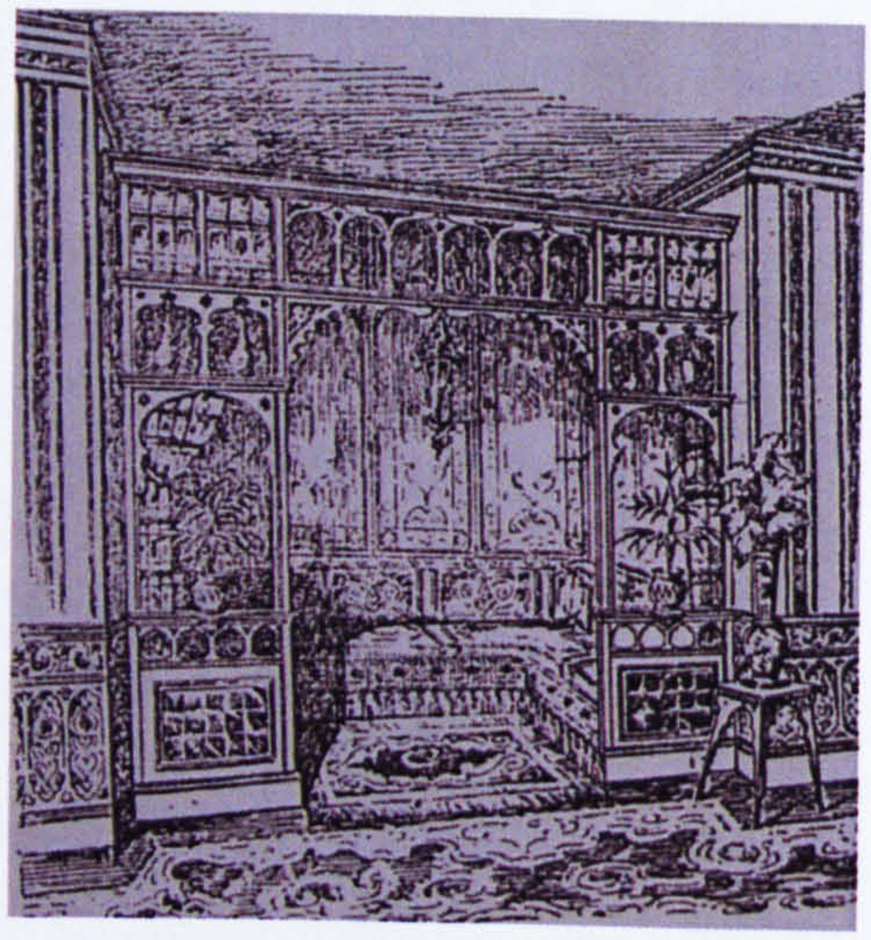


Figure 159 'Treatment for Drawing-Room Window'
(Gardiner, 1894, p. 81)

Figure 160 'A Renovation of an Ugly Mirror in an Inexpensively Furnished Drawing-Room'
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 147)

Figure 161 'The Flat Drawing Room'
(H. J. Jennings, 1902, plate XLV)

Figure 162 'Example of bedroom furnished after the "Queen Anne" period.'
By Waring & Gillow Ltd. (J. H. Elder-Duncan, 1909, p. 214)

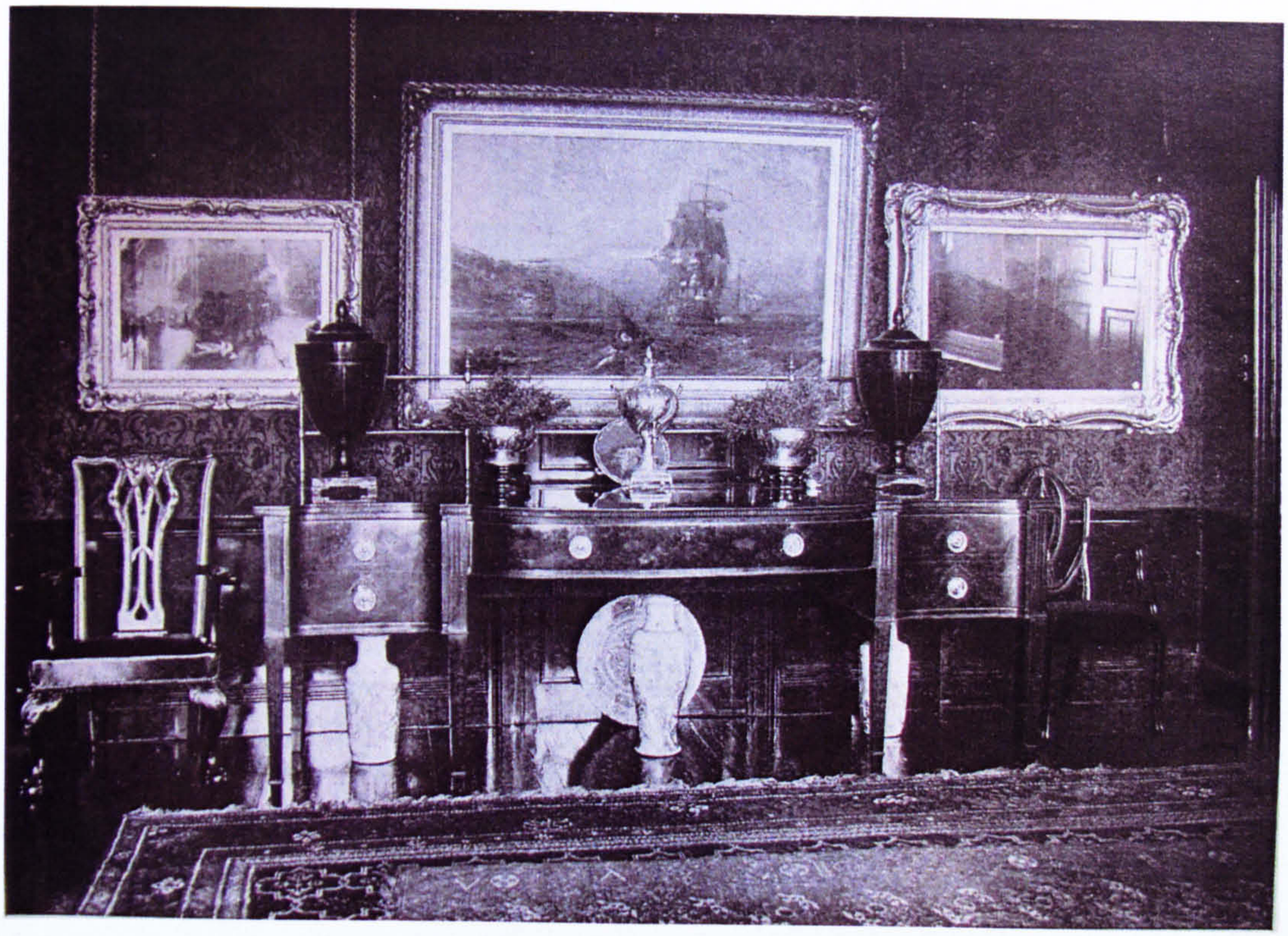


Figure 163 'Dining-room in a London house. With English furniture of the eighteenth century
From a photograph lent by James Orrock, R.I.'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 296)

Figure 164 'Entrance to Music Room, Littlecourt,
Walter Cave, Architect, London'
(W. S. Sparrow, 1909, p. 297)

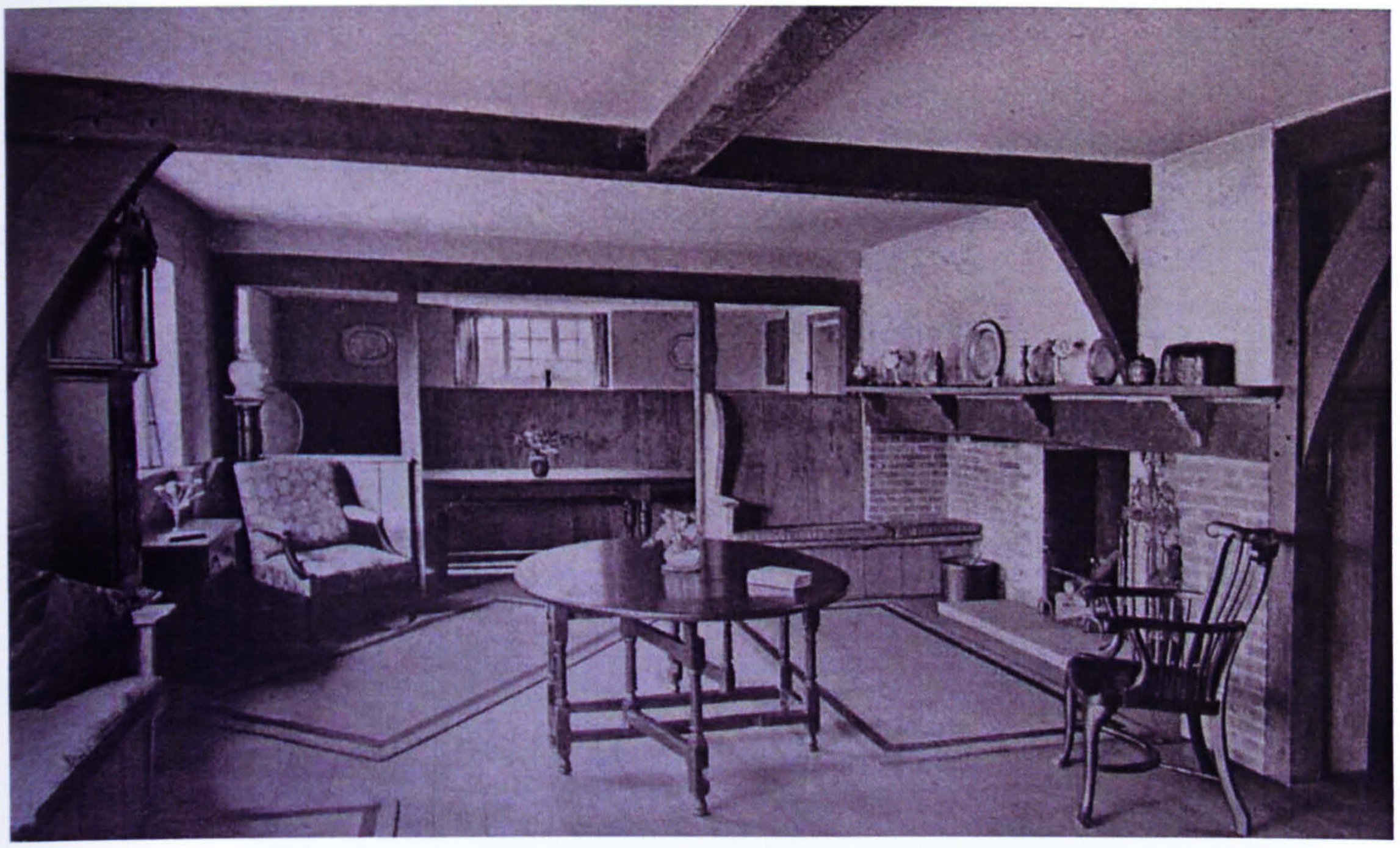


Figure 165 'A Living-Room with Dining Recess' by the architect M. H. Baillie Scott
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 97)

Figure 166 'The odd-room as a small and well-equipped library or study',
Architect, Frederick Rowntree, F.R.I.B.A.
(E. Gregory, 1913, p. 65)

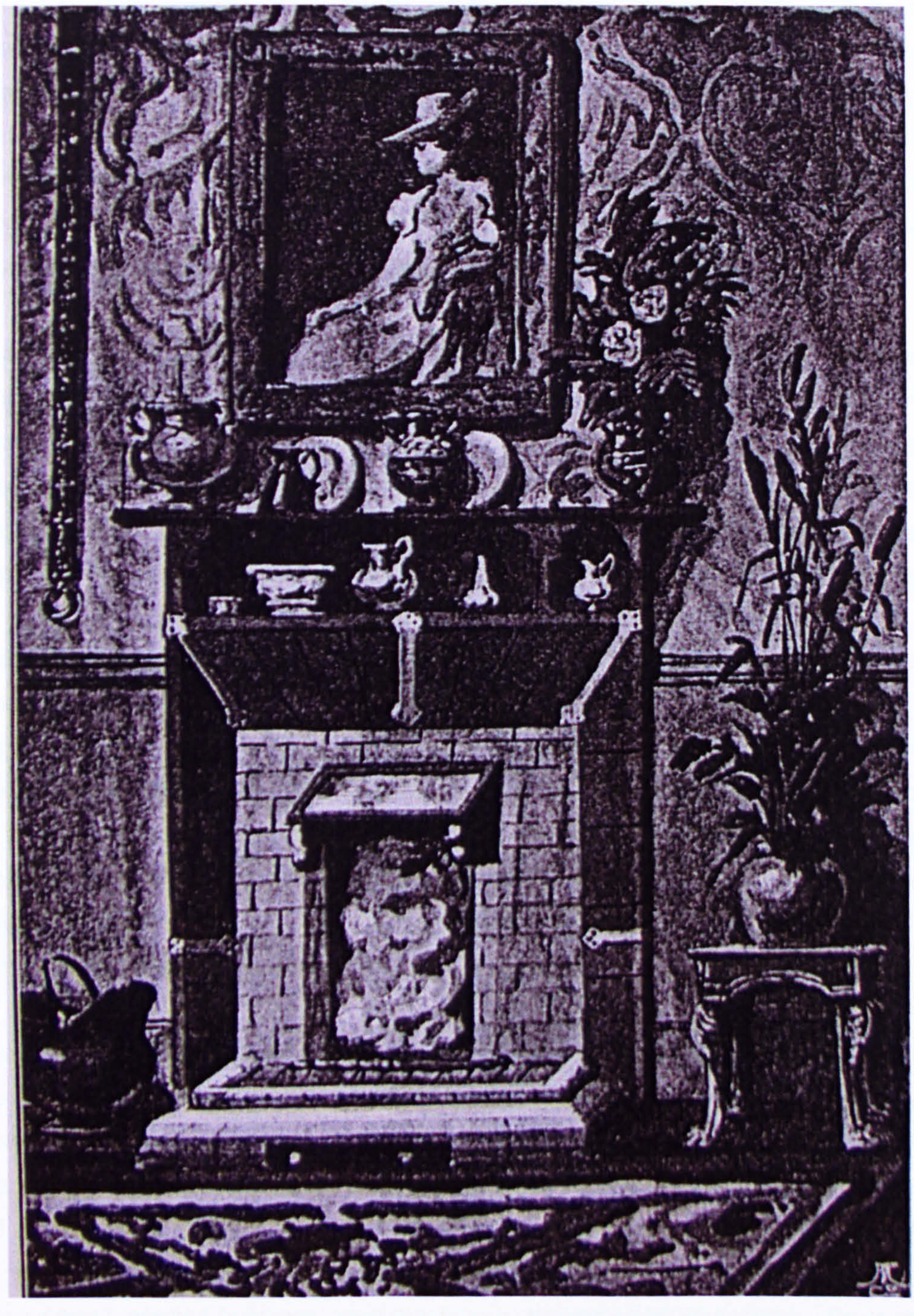


Figure 167 'A "Well" Grate'
(Mrs Peel, 1898, p. 73)

Conclusions

Within the quest for a history of the modern home, this project focused on the short but dynamic two and a half decades before 1914. Based on the examination of abundant and diverse representations of the home and domestic interiors, it has revealed the furnishing ideals embedded in such images –visual and written- of those who produced and consumed them. In response to the overall aim this study of the modern interior has explored and explained the tensions between the spheres of Art and Commerce and their impact on the creation and representation of modern schemes of domestic furnishing and decoration.

In seeking to understand the modernity of the middle-class home, this study has dealt with the various ways in which the domestic space was depicted in drawings and photographs of interiors, showrooms and exhibition sets that were published in books, journals, magazines, newspapers and different forms of advertising. Grounded on the analysis of trade catalogues and advice literature, the study has elucidated the motivations behind the creation of these sources, which were endorsing and promoting particular depictions of the modern home.

Chapter one of this project has endeavoured to reconstruct the furniture and furnishing retail scene of the period from 1850 to 1914, with emphasis on the years from 1890 onwards, highlighting the growth, development and scope of the furniture and furnishing industries within a capitalist environment. It has assessed the importance of the large furnishing businesses in order to understand what was behind the abundant commercial representation of domestic schemes of decoration seen in trade catalogues and other forms of advertising. Accordingly, it has highlighted their role in the creation of a consumer culture centred on the home, its equipment and decoration.

This project has shown how firms such as Maple, Shoolbred, Waring & Gillow, etc. grew, based on the adoption and development of modern business methods. As a result firms increased the number and size of their shops, factories and depositories and the number and range of their goods, departments and services. The first chapter has illustrated the modernity of the idealised visual and material culture of the middle-class home as a consequence and reflection of how firms, shops and workshops put into practice modern business methods and ways of financing and investment; erected buildings, used machinery, and exploited advertising. The goods and interiors these firms designed, produced, retailed and represented are testimony of the advances in commerce and industry responding to the possibilities and potential offered by a capitalist economic system spurred by the dramatic growth in population and number of houses. This project has illustrated the expanding power of the retailing side of business and how, in meeting the demands of the growing middle-class market, it came to control production and manufacture based on the large-scale of operations in buying, stocking and selling.

Chapter 1 has also shown the crucial role of advertising for business expansion, as seen in adverts, trade catalogues, showrooms, shops and in exhibitions; reaching with goods and a rich imagery, an audience of millions. The chapter has highlighted as well the close connection between furnishing firms and the middle-class woman by making her the target of a significant part of the advertising efforts in catalogues, shop-windows, and articles in magazines, journals and books. Central to this alliance was the expansion and professionalization of the publishing industry that, to a large extent, also depended on women's patronage.

In trying to understand the criticism that trade and commercial goods attracted at the time, Chapter 2 has addressed the nature of the attack and opposition carried out by design reformers. The analysis of the anti-industrial stance in the Arts and Crafts movement's reform discourse, and its reflection in advice literature, revealed reformers' vested interests in discrediting trade. This reform discourse emerged as a reaction to the perceived negative consequences of industrialization, particularly those affecting the decorative arts and the domestic sphere. In view of the increasing power and perceived threat from large retailing firms, reformers, through their work and campaigning, intended to regulate commerce and curb consumption. Ultimately they wished to assert their own status as artists/designers at the top of the professional and cultural hierarchy within the decorative arts. They expressed a vision of civilization, and a take on modernity where not industry but Art had the right and the responsibility to produce the architecture and material culture that society needed, based and inspired on medieval notions of beauty and vernacular methods of production. In order to promote their own aesthetic language those involved with the reform movement used a potent discourse voiced from the alleged superior sphere of Art.

Rather than seeing it as a noble effort carried out by a group of like-minded individuals, this chapter has placed the design reform discourse in a long-term perspective, studying it as part of a repeated historical reaction (started in the late seventeenth century) to a considerable increase in commercial activity, consumption and industry. The critics' and reformers' moralist reaction was triggered particularly when novel consumption behaviour was practised by a wider sector of society, other than the elite and the wealthy, revealing an element of class anxiety. Additionally, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, design reformers focused on contesting mass-produced and mass-retailed products. This chapter identified the different strategies used by reformers to discredit and bypass trade altogether, for example, by promoting art instead, in the form of the handcrafted, the old object and the antique, all of which could neither be factory-produced nor mass-retailed.

Advice literature, for example, in its mission to educate the general public (always presumed ignorant), reflected principles of the Arts and Crafts reform agenda by criticizing trade while promoting the artist/architect/designer. In targeting traders for their alleged low-quality merchandise, they associated the manufacturer's bad taste with that of middle-class consumers personified as feminine. This last trait revealed as well gender anxieties in view of a changing

woman's role linked to her recently acquired power in the public arena of consumption. This section has examined, as well, the response from the commercial and retailing sphere to reformers' attacks by appropriating the vocabulary, ideas and strategies reformers used to promote their notions of good design and good taste.

Chapter 3 has taken the theme of conflicting modernities further by discussing the diverse notions of the modern home that advice authors promoted and represented, in their aim to communicate the Arts and Crafts ethos to a middle-class readership dependent on commercial supply. It has identified two main groups of authors more or less compromised by the commercial sphere. It has shown how authors tried to resolve the inherent tensions between the different aspects of modernity embodied in the middle-class home by bringing together old and new features. Many advice authors integrated in their discourse commercial decorative schemes and goods. In this sense the domestic objects and interiors, produced, advertised and represented as commodities, challenged those created and represented as unique works of art, subverting their hidden hierarchy.

In discussing what advice authors understood as modern furnishing and decoration, this chapter has drawn a series of different features pertaining to modernity including aesthetics, style, method of production, technology and affordability. The stylistic component of modernity, for example, provided a chronology of changes and diversity in the way the modern interior was represented. In spite of the variety in the depiction of schemes of decoration, many designers and retailers represented the modern interior as a revival of period furniture and furnishings. Styles were linked to meanings related to class, gender and nation all based in the symbolic importance of historical models. The Arts and Crafts movement was partially responsible for this trend, in the cult of the old object and the antique it promoted. The image of the pre-industrial cottage with sloping roofs, casement windows, beamed ceilings and half-timbered walls embodied an ideal of modern living. The chapter has also highlighted the influence of Arts and Crafts ideas and designs in two ways: as an aesthetic language and as a mode of production.

Even in the short period considered here, the stylistic expression in the work of the Arts and Crafts movement kept changing and consequently the influence it exerted on commercial production also changed. Something similar happened to the revival of historical styles from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although the public became more knowledgeable about the different furniture and furnishing models, the way in which these were portrayed was not fixed. Rooms in the Jacobean style in the 1890s were different from the ones promoted in the early 1910s. History was aestheticised and thus also became part of fashion producing a modernizing historicism.

The modernity of the home also found its expression in technical improvements: from lavatories, kitchen ranges, more efficient fireplaces, electricity and running water to a wide range of new materials, articles and designs to choose from. But perhaps the most significant aspect was that

many of these improvements and new products were within financial reach of a majority of people in the middle class. Regarding decoration, very similar room-schemes could be obtained in the same shop from £25 up to £250 or more. There was a difference in the quality of goods and materials but the rooms would look stylistically alike, and overall, modern. While some authors saw the democratisation of domestic goods as a sign of modernity others condemned and blamed it for the many identical things allegedly produced in bad quality and taste.

In the end, the middle-class home, as portrayed in advice literature, expressed its modernity, by embracing rather than by separating the diverse influences from the spheres of art and commerce. Advice literature acted as an interface between shops, artists/designers and consumers. As books published to be sold, all authors were aware of and skilful in presenting a discourse that they knew their readers wanted to hear. As professional writers, they responded to their readers' expectations by building the bridge between a seemingly chaotic world of goods and the need to shop and decorate to reflect the appropriate kind of taste.

Ultimately the answer to the question put forward d in the title, *Conflicting Modernities?* has to be both yes and no. This project has examined and emphasized the conflicting modernities found at discourse level. However, in reality rather than being in contradiction with each other, these modernities coexisted and overlapped. To satisfy a big middle-class market that kept expanding, the spheres of art and commerce were both welcomed each performing different roles and fulfilling different expectations. It was the growth of the middle class, the continuous subdivisions within it, and thus its moving definition and instability, which allowed these spheres to co-exist. The sense of class was particularly dynamic at this moment and furnishing was key to the ongoing process of shifting and re-defining boundaries. This class-formation process explains and justifies the existence of different agendas (the commercial, the artistic, the one giving advice) and thus the disparities, overlapping, intersecting and coming together.

As an image, the domestic interior was a powerful one. This study has dealt with a range of its representations. By studying the conditions in which they were created, it became possible to see them not only as evidence for the ideals they embodied but also for the significance these ideals suggested. As representations of something else, depictions of interiors made reference to a rich world of meanings and values that the creators of images tapped into in appealing to their intended audience. The need to deliver a message connected creators to their public, since these meanings had to be shared, or at least understood in order for communication to take place.

In identifying ideals and what they mean, it was possible to infer some general traits about the kind of influences at play that could potentially affect the creation and decoration of any real interior. The hope is that this could be the basis for a necessary dialogue between representations and real practices and see to what extent one informs the other. This project

therefore sheds light on the real middle-class home and interiors by showing what was available and the kind of expectations that informed them.

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