In Some Way Southern: The Newcomb College Pottery, William Lycett's Studio, and Design in the New South, 1883-1910

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Abstract

The H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College and Pottery of New Orleans, Louisiana and William Lycett's china painting studio in Atlanta, Georgia provided white, affluent consumers in the American South at the turn of the twentieth century with several ways of achieving cultural legitimacy. These institutions' lessons in ceramics decoration offered students a means of attaining knowledge of design movements, as well as a potential source of respectable employment for women. As firms that produced artistic wares, Newcomb and Lycett's demonstrated the viability of industry in the region, and the capability of southerners to produce and appreciate art. These activities correspond with a contemporary rise in rhetoric about a "New South," one that proposed a reconciliation of the region with the remainder of the United States by abandoning large-scale monoculture in favor of industrial development and diversified agriculture. Despite its proponents' vocal enthusiasm for this progressive prescription of modernity, many simultaneously worked to reinforce white supremacist hierarchies and romanticized conceptions of the region's antebellum history, or the mythos of a "Lost Cause," in their efforts to harness power. Emulating examples in the northeastern United States and beyond, Newcomb and Lycett's design choices reflect these dualities, underscoring attunement to national and international expressions of modernity on one hand, while reinforcing fantasies about a premodern, plantation-based past on the other. The firms' selections of models for emulation reveal the aspirations of a white business class in the region and the firm grip of mythologies about the South in the national imagination.

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And to my daughter, Livia Rey Gerstenecker-Justice: It's finally done, kid. Let's go see what the world has in store for us.

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Introduction

In the late nineteenth century, two ceramics schools in the American South offered an increasingly powerful white business class a solution to several of its problems: a perceived lack of culture, slow economic development after the Civil War and Reconstruction, and respectable employment for affluent wives and daughters. Through their production of artistic wares, the Newcomb College Pottery in New Orleans, Louisiana and William Lycett's china decorating works in Atlanta, Georgia demonstrated the possibilities, however small in scale, for industrial manufacturing, and the feasibility of a professional pursuit thought perhaps better suited to women and their "delicate sensibilities."[1] Using different aesthetic and material solutions, each also answered the culture problem, proving that southerners were capable of producing and appreciating art. The Newcomb College Pottery created its products from regional clays, and it adhered to new standards in industrial design that called for simplified, naturally-derived ornament in limited hues. Lycett's studio decorated European porcelain with detailed, colorful renditions of botanical subjects, typically paired with gilding and other flourishes, in an endeavor that applied fine arts sensibilities to domestic objects. Responding to similar general concerns, the two firms looked to particular audiences and their preferred models to determine the direction of their designs.[2]

Following the work of design theoretician Tony Fry, this dissertation argues for an understanding of the specificity of the meaning of design to its geographic and temporal contexts, in this case the postbellum American South. Drawing on poststructuralist theory, Fry contended that

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[1] Edwin AtLee Barber, "The Pioneer of China Painting in America," *New England Magazine*, 1895, facsimile, Edward Lycett Collection, MSS 214f, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center.

[2] The Newcomb College Pottery has historically been referred to as both the Newcomb Pottery and the Newcomb College Pottery. I have chosen to use the latter, with Newcomb in short, and "the Pottery" to distinguish from Newcomb College where necessary. The Lycett enterprise was advertised and discussed under several different names, sometimes concurrently, and over the course of this period of study. For the sake of simplicity, I refer to it as William Lycett's studio, or Lycett's in short.

objects operate as cultural signs, constitutive of the ideologies held by groups within structures of power. His approach turns away from paradigms which claim a singular designer's control over the meaning of an autonomous object, and toward the multitude of agents and factors involved in the production, consumption, and reception of objects, which often result in their carrying multiple meanings.[3] By accounting for the Newcomb College Pottery and Lycett's studio's attunement to particular consumer audiences, their relevance within New South ideology, and their roles within constructions of white womanhood in the postbellum South, this dissertation resituates their selection of design idioms as indicative of the efforts of an ascendant white business class to gain cultural legitimacy. Rather than argue for their originality, I acknowledge that these firms' designs were highly emulative and contend that this emulation bears deep significance, relative to the aspirations and concerns of the audiences for which they were intended. No matter how nebulous, these objects were likewise able to appear in some way southern, revealing the power of regional identity both within the South and in the remainder of the United States during this period. In the case of Newcomb, its products communicated a definition of the South to the region and nation at large; Lycett's, on the other hand, sold a mode of being southern largely to those within the region.

The Newcomb College Pottery emerged in 1895 from the Art Department at the all-women's H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Pottery was presented as a means for the students to apply their education in contemporary design principles to objects in a professional capacity, primarily because few such opportunities were available in the South at the time, let alone open to women. Raw clays, sourced from throughout the region, were

[3] Tony Fry, *Design History Australia* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1988), 64-65; 70-79. Fry's discernment of meaning based on a reconstitution of historical evidence and attention to cultural milieu has parallels in material culture studies, but differs in its emphasis on the visual over material and level of attachment to marketplace and economic factors. See Jules David Prown and Kenneth Haltman, eds., *American Artifacts: Essays in Material Culture* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2000). Fry's focus on Australia's context, as a location outside design centers in Europe and the United States, but with its own internal history of marginalization of indigenous people, has provided a helpful framework for considering the relationship of design in the American South with that of the remainder of the United States.

shipped to the Pottery and mixed on-site for the fabrication of earthenware bodies. Despite many of Newcomb's students being thoroughly trained in ceramic techniques and design, men, primarily Joseph Fortune Meyer during this dissertation's period of study, threw most of the Pottery's vases and other decorative wares. After an initial firing to their biscuit stage, women decorators, from advanced students at Newcomb College to graduates of the program and instructors in the art department, decorated the objects' surfaces with abstracted designs of flora and fauna in enamels before finishing them with glazes, typical of underglaze ceramic painting of the period. The pieces were then completed with a second firing.[4] Henrietta Davidson Bailey's 1905 vase typifies the Pottery's output by the first decade of the twentieth century (fig. I.1). Tall and ovoid in shape, with a short, round mouth, the vase is wrapped with a wide band of ornament, primarily occupied by a series of elongated pine trees. The trees' clusters of needles are all positioned at the vase's shoulders, emphasizing the object's overall shape. Executed mostly in shades of blue, Bailey's incised delineation of the trees, their foliage, and bands helps distinguish one element of the ornament from another. The Newcomb College Pottery produced hundreds of objects each year, which were at first only sold at its own gallery and another store in New Orleans, but were eventually distributed through a variety of retail establishments throughout the United States, including jewelry stores, dedicated "Arts and Crafts" shops, and department stores like Marshall Field's in Chicago. Although

[4] "Pottery at Newcomb," *New Orleans Times-Democrat,* November 22, 1896; Mary Given Sheerer, "Newcomb Pottery," *Keramic Studio*, November 1899, 151; Mary Given Sheerer, "Newcomb Workers – An Appreciation," Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University; *Bulletin of the Tulane University of Louisiana* (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1907), 48, University Archives, Tulane University; Notebook of Maude Robinson, Doc. 1002, Joseph Downs Manuscript & Ephemera Collection, Winterthur Library; Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, Martin Eidelberg, and Adrienne Spinozzi, *American Art Pottery: The Robert A. Ellison Jr. Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018), 224. Bulletins for Newcomb College began listing students in "Pottery Design" in the 1906-1907 year, and Newcomb student Maude Robinson's extensive and thorough notes on clays and firing make apparent the extent to which these women were educated in their subject. The early article in *The Times-Democrat* implies that both the potter and the students were working according to furnished designs.

the Pottery continued in operation until 1939, this dissertation's period of study ends in 1910, when the Pottery's increasing turn to matte glazes began to significantly shift its products' aesthetics.[5]

William and Francis Lycett founded their art school and china painting works in Atlanta, Georgia in 1883. The art school offered lessons in a variety of media, but china painting was its main emphasis. Customers could view the Lycetts' work, as well as other ceramics, in accompanying "art rooms." The china painting works offered numerous services, from gilding and firing pieces for china painters without home kilns, to completing hand-painted china customized to buyers' requests. Undecorated porcelain objects and tableware were imported from Europe, largely the manufacturing hub of Limoges, France, at first through New York wholesale firms and then through the company's direct trade with European companies. These "blanks" were then decorated at Lycett's through the application of enamels and gilding in multiple layers and firings, typical of overglaze ceramic painting of the period.[6] The firm most frequently employed naturalistic designs, also of flora and fauna, and were renowned for their "white and gold" tableware, or white porcelain pieces completed with gilt monograms and stippled rims. A platter produced by Limoges manufacturer Pouyat and decorated at Lycett's around the turn of the century incorporates many of the firm's characteristic elements (fig. I.2). Roses molded in the platter's rim are picked up through heavy gilding, but many of the platter's other features are obscured with its myriad decorations. The

[5] Sally Main, "Conscious Freedom: The Newcomb Pottery Enterprise," in *The Arts & Crafts of Newcomb Pottery*, David Conradsen et al (New Orleans: Tulane University, 2013), 57; Jessie Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery: An Enterprise for Southern Women, 1895-1940* (Exton, PA: Schiffer, 1984), 61-64. In current scholarship, Paul Cox, who became chief potter at the Pottery in 1910, is usually credited with the invention of matte glazes at the firm and subsequent interventions in approaches to ornament. Some objects registered for sale in the years prior to Cox's arrival are completed with similar glazes, suggesting that the transition was already underway.

[6] Advertisement, *Atlanta Constitution*, October 7, 1883; Advertisement, *Art Amateur*, January 1884; "Personal," *Crockery & Glass Journal*, July 28, 1898; "At the Lycett Art Rooms," *Atlanta Constitution*, November 9, 1890; Camille Piton, *A Practical Treatise on China Painting in America* (New York: J. Wiley & Sons, 1878), 20-24, Rare Books, Winterthur Library; Florence Lewis, *China Painting* (London: Cassell & Company, Ltd., 1883), 5-6, Rare Books, Winterthur Library; Marion Kemble, *How to Learn to Paint with Oil and Water Colors* (Boston: S. W. Tilton and Company, 1888), 130, Winterthur Library; Louise Vance-Phillips, *Book of the China Painter* (New York: Montague Marks, 1896), 47, 223, Winterthur Library.

rim is covered in a marbled, deep blue finish, separated from the peach roses, dark pink buds, and blue-green leaves that wind around the center with a thin, gilt border of scrollwork. With its details, foreground highlights, and misty green center, this illustrative center almost appears as a mysterious window into a rose garden. Retail sales of Lycett's china largely occurred in-house in Atlanta, but society columns in newspapers throughout the South noted the presentation of its products as prizes at social gatherings and gifts to newlyweds. As with the Newcomb College Pottery, this dissertation's terminus in 1910 marks a sea change at Lycett's – after William's death the previous year, several of the firm's china painters departed to start their own businesses, and Lycett's subsequently divided between his second wife and his son.[7]

Both the Newcomb College Pottery and Lycett's studio present regional microcosms of greater national developments in the ceramics trade and design in the United States in the last half of the nineteenth century and can be viewed as responses to these attempts to foster large-scale ceramics manufacturing in the country. In the mid-nineteenth century, centers of pottery production emerged in Brooklyn, New York; Trenton, New Jersey; and East Liverpool, Ohio; and these city's factories benefited from increased demand for various table, bar, and sanitary wares to serve the needs of the growing numbers of hotels, restaurants, and other businesses in America's growing cities. Tariffs passed during the Civil War raised duties on English, Continental European, and Asian ceramics to such a degree that these companies began to make inroads into the American market, especially in various grades of white wares. English immigrants who had trained in the Staffordshire potteries flocked to these factories, while others found employment in new china decorating houses that were established in coastal urban centers, like New York City and Boston, to serve the luxury

[7] Michelle Miller, "Painted Porcelain of the Lycett Studios of Atlanta," in *Homecoming: The Sixth Henry D. Green Symposium of the Decorative Arts*, ed. Dale Couch (Athens: Georgia Museum of Art, 2013), 114; Barbara Veith, "Edward Lycett (1833-1910): An Anglo-American Potter," (master's thesis, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum and Parsons School of Design, 1999), 463-465; see also Carlyn Crannell Romeyn, *The Lycetts* (International Art Porcelain Teachers, 1983).

goods side of the trade.[8] All of these efforts came to the fore at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, where Americans were able to view and compare their country's efforts with those of more established centers abroad.

Most critics expressed their dismay at the poor design of American offerings at the Centennial Exposition, but a few companies attempted to compete with European manufacturers by displaying highly elaborate, decorative objects that portended the new attention to artwares that would become critical at many American porcelain firms for the next several decades. Best known among them is the Century Vase, designed by Karl H. L. Mueller and executed at the Union Porcelain Works of Greenpoint, Brooklyn (fig. I.3). The base is divided into panels of cameo-like raised figures, separated by gilt bands, that depict various scenes from the myths surrounding the settlement of the American West; each band is topped by the molded head of a western animal, painted in vivid detail. In the large central register, painted decorations are organized around white cameo busts of George Washington and two handles formed and painted as bison heads. Trapezoidal panels feature exactingly illustrated scenes of Americans at work with various innovations, such as a woman at her sewing machine or linemen stringing telegraph cables. These illustrations are separated with stylized vines and flowers, all in black on a stippled ground. Around the vase's neck, zagging gilt arrows emanate from eagles with outstretched wings, all against a blue ground. This eclecticism and elaborate ornamentation became frequent elements of American decorative porcelain in the late nineteenth century, a means of demonstrating manufacturers' ability to keep pace with the artistry of their Continental counterparts. American manufacturers' efforts did not negate the impression of English and Continental ceramics' superiority, however, and tableware

[8] Regina Blaszczyk, *Imagining Consumers: Design and Innovation from Wedgwood to Corning* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 55-59; Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, *American Porcelain 1770-1920* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), 21; Ellen Paul Denker, *Lenox: Celebrating a Century of Quality 1889-1989* (Trenton: New Jersey State Museum, 1989), 9-11.

and decorative objects from the likes of Royal Worcester and Minton in England, Sèvres and the various Limoges factories in France, and Dresden in Germany retained their elevated status for American consumers. Changes in tariffs, especially in the wake of the Panic of 1893, significantly decreased duties on imported ceramics, making the desirable European ceramics all the more available and necessitating continued novelty from American manufacturers.[9]

The preponderance of types of ornament on the Century Vase, from flat or stylized repeating patterns to detailed illustrations to low-relief sculpted surfaces, reflects the popularity of juxtaposing a multitude of design sources in a single object or interior during the late nineteenth-century Aesthetic Movement. This constellation of activities at the end of the nineteenth century resulted in a general increased interest among affluent consumers in assembling beautiful, finely-crafted objects and furnishings within the home and arranging them in harmonious compositions. Ascribing a specific set of attributes to the American Aesthetic Movement is difficult, due to the broad categories of artistry that its proponents often embraced, but a general love of repeating patterns stands out as one major characteristic. Influenced by British Aesthetes, this tendency toward flattened renditions of botanical subjects traces its roots to British design reform writers and designers of the mid-nineteenth century. Voicing their displeasure with the country's domestic products after its showing at the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London in 1851, numerous authors advocated for a national intervention in design. Owen Jones, Christopher Dresser, and Lewis Foreman Day, among others, advocated for the application of stylized, symbolic ornament based on natural subjects to industrially produced objects as a palliative for the imitations of historic, handcrafted elements that were replicated on any number of articles at the time. They

[9] Blaszczyk, 61-64; Frelinghuysen, *American Porcelain*, 52-55; Frelinghuysen, "Aesthetic Forms in Ceramics and Glass," in *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement*, Doreen Bolger Burke et al (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), 199, 205-208; Charles Venable et al, *China and Glass in America, 1880-1890: From Table Top to TV Tray* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2000), 122-124; 326-328; Marvin D. Schwarz and Richard Wolfe, *A History of American Art Porcelain* (New York: Renaissance Editions, 1967), 47.

saw solutions in Asian and Middle Eastern approaches to form and ornament and encouraged their readers to use similar principles in purchasing furnishing and creating designs. In addition to myriad publications on the subject, from Charles Locke Eastlake's *Hints on Household Taste* to articles in contemporary periodicals, many Americans were educated in British design reform principles via pedagogy in newly-established art institutions and museums.[10]

Spurring greater investment in artistic wares at large ceramics manufacturers, the Centennial Exposition likewise served as a catalyst for the establishment of "art potteries," or small producers solely dedicated to the creation of artistic ceramic wares, throughout the United States. Part of the impetus lay in French porcelain manufacturer Haviland's alluring displays of *barbotine*, an underglaze decorating technique using colorful clay slips, which tempted several American artists to replicate it in their own studios. Another significant factor was the display of overglaze painted china presented by a group of women from Cincinnati, Ohio who had taken lessons at the city's McMicken School of Design. Enthusiastically received, their exhibit further popularized china painting as a hobby for women throughout the country, encouraged with Aesthetic Movement calls for beautifying the home. Their success also directly contributed to the establishment of several firms dedicated to the

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[10] Margaret Laster and Lee Glazer, "Introduction," in *Palaces of Art: Whistler and the Art Worlds of Aestheticism*, ed. Margaret Laster and Lee Glazer (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2013), 7; Jason Edwards and Imogene Hart, "Introduction," in *Rethinking the Interior, c. 1867-1896* (London: Ashgate, 2010), 8; Stacey Sloboda, "The Grammar of Ornament': Cosmopolitanism and Reform in British Design," *Journal of Design History* 21, no. 3 (Autumn 2008): 225-231; Roger B. Stein, "Artifact as Ideology: The Aesthetic Movement in its American Cultural Context," in Burke et al, 25-27; Catherine Lynn, "Decorating Surfaces: Aesthetic Delight, Theoretical Dilemma," in Burke et al, 54-55; Elizabeth Aslin, *The Aesthetic Movement: Prelude to Art Nouveau* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), 15-33; Charlotte Gere, *Artistic Circles: Design & Decoration in the Aesthetic Movement* (London: V&A Publishing, 2010), 16-17, 64-65; Wendy Kaplan, "Spreading the Crafts: The Role of the Schools," in *"The Art that is Life": The Arts & Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920*, ed. Wendy Kaplan (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1987), 302-305; Robin Spencer, *The Aesthetic Movement: Theory and Practice* (London: Studio Vista, 1972), 10, 87-91; Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1983): 1-26; Mary Ann Apicella, "The Art in Manufacture: English Painted Tiles of the Nineteenth Century," in *The Tile Club and the Aesthetic Movement in America*, Ronald G. Pisano (Stony Brook, NY: Museums of Stony Brook, 1999), 70; *Lectures on the Results of the Exhibition, Delivered Before the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce*, vols. 1-2 (London: David Bogue, 1853), HathiTrust; Peter Trippi, "Industrial Arts and the Exhibition Ideal," in *A Grand Design: the Art of the Victoria & Albert Museum*, ed. Malcolm Baker and Brenda Richardson (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 79-88. Following Margaret Laster and Lee Glazer's example, I use the term "Aesthetic Movement" as a loose descriptor for this activity; they reserve "Aestheticism" for artists and theorists during that period who were revisiting Kantian ideals of artistic autonomy.

production of art ceramics in Cincinnati, most important among them the Rookwood Pottery. Formed in 1880 by artist Maria Longworth Nichols (later Storer), whose substantial familial wealth could support the financial upheavals of a fledgling pottery company, the firm became a dedicated art pottery business when Nichols brought on William Watts Taylor as manager in 1883. Under Taylor's direction, the firm focused entirely on the production of earthenware vases and other decorative objects made from regional clays, rather than striving to make tableware and other utilitarian objects. Rookwood eventually grew to create numerous product lines with different styles of decorative finishes, but they often involved renditions of natural subjects and figures, highly influenced by Japanese ceramics (fig. I.4). The plethora of art potteries that were founded after Rookwood tended to focus more on glazes and forms after the 1890s, when the Grueby Faience Company in Boston perfected a matte green glaze that became exceedingly popular (fig. I.5).[11]

These art potteries benefited from the growing interest in possessing artistic goods during this period, but their rise also corresponds with that of the Arts & Crafts Movement in the United States. Like the Aesthetic Movement, the Arts & Crafts Movement had trans-Atlantic origins in Great Britain that were connected to increasing industrialization. Figures like John Ruskin and

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[11] Frelinghuysen, Eidelberg, and Spinozzi, *American Art Pottery*, 34-38, 43-44; Martin Eidelberg, "Art Pottery," in *The Arts and Crafts Movement in America 1876-1916* (1972, reprint; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 151-152; Kirsten Hoving Keen, *American Art Pottery* (Wilmington: Delaware Art Museum, 1978), 4-10, 16; Garth Clark, *A Century of Ceramics in the United States, 1878-1978: A History of Its Development* (Syracuse, NY: Everson Museum of Art, 1979), 5; Kenneth Trapp, "Introduction," *American Art Pottery* (New York: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 1987), 9-11, 22-24; Elaine Levin, "Ceramics: Seeking a Personal Style," in *The Ideal Home, 1900-1920: The History of Twentieth-Century American Craft*, ed. Janet Kardon (New York: American Craft Museum, 1993), 77-91; Isabelle Anscombe, *A Woman's Touch: Women in Design from 1860 to the Present Day* (New York: Viking, 1984), 43-44; Nancy E. Owen, *Rookwood and the Industry of Art: Women, Culture, and Commerce, 1880-1913* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001), 40-51; Carol Sue Boram-Hays, *Bringing Modernism Home: Ohio Decorative Arts, 1890-1960* (Columbus, OH: Columbus Museum of Art, 2005), 19-22. For additional surveys of American art pottery in private and museum collections, see Ulysses G. Dietz, *The Newark Museum Collection of American Art Pottery* (Newark, NJ: The Newark Museum, 1984); Barbara A. Perry, *American Art Pottery from the Collection of the Everson Museum of Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997); David Rago, *American Art Pottery* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 2001). For more on the women and activities surrounding ceramics in Cincinnati, see Robert C. Vitz, "Cincinnati and the Decorative Arts: The Foundations," in *Cincinnati Art-Carved Furniture and Interiors*, ed. Jennifer L. Howe (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Museum of Art, 2003), 14-18; and Carol Macht, "Introduction," in *The Ladies, God Bless 'Em: The Women's Art Movement in Cincinnati in the Nineteenth Century* (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Art Museum, 1976), 7-13. For a period source on the development of ceramics, see Edwin Atlee Barber, *The Pottery and Porcelain of the United States* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1893).

William Morris protested the increasing mechanization employed in the production of cheap domestic goods and the resulting devaluing of labor, calling for a return to handcraftsmanship. Their stylistic resolutions to these problems ranged from Ruskin's preference for accurate representations of natural subjects to Morris and others' embrace of the kinds of flattened, repeating patterns that British design reform leaders wished to see employed in industrial manufacture. These individuals also often advocated for increased attention to the placement and relationship between form and ornament, not dissimilarly from design reformers, as well as the use of materials or subject matter from local environments. In the United States, Arts & Crafts Movement ideals influenced arenas from architecture to handicraft revivals to small industries, including art potteries. Some cities, beginning with Boston in 1897, saw the formation of Arts & Crafts Societies, where those interested in these ideas and their potential outcomes could hear lectures, take classes, or view juried exhibits. Much of the Arts & Crafts Movement's impact in the United States was felt in domestic interiors of the middle classes, where homeowners used the advice dispensed from periodicals like *House Beautiful* and *Ladies' Home Journal* to furnish spaces according to the dictums of simplicity and truth to materials. Mechanized production was not entirely vilified, and some divisions of labor and industrial interventions were permitted in order to achieve the goal of a "democratic," or more affordable, end product. This was especially true of art potteries, where objects were often formed in molds or wheel-turned by a group of individuals, then decorated by another, sometimes according to the wishes of the firm's manager.[12]

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[12] Keen, 53; Perry, 8-9, 18; Levin, 83; Richard Guy Wilson, "Introduction," in *From Architecture to Object: Masterworks of the American Arts & Crafts Movement*, (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 1989), 11-21; Elizabeth Cumming and Wendy Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 13-15, 73-74, and 143-178; Monica Penick, "Selling the Arts and Crafts Idea in America," in *The Rise of Everyday Design: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain and America*, ed. Monica Penick and Christopher Long (Austin: Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin, 2019), 93-95. For more on the Arts & Crafts Movement in the United States, see Eileen Boris, *Art and Labor: Ruskin, Morris, and the Craftsman Ideal in America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Robert Judson Clark, ed. *The Arts and Crafts Movement in America 1876-1916* (1972, reprint; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Wendy Kaplan, ed., *"The Art that is Life": The Arts & Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1987); Janet Kardon, ed., *The Ideal Home 1900-1920: The History of Twentieth-Century*

Newcomb and Lycett's were founded within this maelstrom of ceramics development and design discourse, and they do not fit neatly into single categories. Newcomb followed Rookwood's example as an art pottery, especially visible in its use of regional clays and wheel-thrown manufacture. While its dedication to representing regional flora and fauna in its ornament follows Arts & Crafts ideas about subject matter, the simplified and semi-abstracted renditions that the Newcomb College Pottery produced, as seen in Henrietta Davidson's pine trees, readily conform to British design reform ideas about appropriate forms of decoration for industrially-manufactured goods. In this respect, Newcomb appears markedly modern. In many ways, Lycett's adhered to the nineteenth-century status quo. The studio predominantly continued the practice of importing European porcelain, thereby affirming its superiority, and, as seen with the misty roses on the Lycett' platter, its designs adhered to the conservative, representational approaches to botanical subjects that many British design reform theorists urged consumers to abandon. Despite its traditional appearances, Lycett's, like Newcomb, also spoke to concerns about constructing appearances of modernity through cosmopolitanism, based on examples set by wealthy industrial capitalists who fashioned themselves after European aristocrats. Both of these approaches correlate with ascendant ideas about achieving modernity in the region during this period.

The foundation of Newcomb College and the opening of the Lycetts' studio coincide with the rise to national prominence of an idea of a "New South." Championed by landowners, entrepreneurs, and newspaper editors in the region, the New South centered on restructuring the economy in the wake of the abolition of slavery, away from monoculture and toward more diversified agricultural practices and industrial capitalism. Albeit small, the Newcomb College Pottery and Lycett's studio exemplify new industries begun during this period, especially valuable

American Craft (New York: American Craft Museum, 1993); Bert Denker, ed., *The Substance of Style: Perspectives on the American Arts and Crafts Movement* (Winterthur, DE: The Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum, 1996).

because of their production of consumer goods. One of the key elements in accomplishing the vision of a New South was the establishment of industrial processing and manufacturing using the region's natural resources. The most vocal champion of the New South, Atlanta *Constitution* editor Henry W. Grady, demonstrated the historic neglect of the region's raw materials and their correlation to consumer goods in his narration of a Georgia funeral in a speech to the Bay State Club in Boston in 1889:

> They buried him in the midst of a marble quarry; they cut through solid marble to make his grave, and yet a little tombstone they put above him was from Vermont. They buried him in the heart of a pine forest, and yet the pine coffin was imported from Cincinnati. They buried him within touch of an iron mine, and yet the nails in his coffin and the iron in the shovel that dug his grave were imported from Pittsburgh. They buried him by the best sheep-grazing country on the earth, and yet the wool in the coffin bands and the coffin bands themselves were brought from the North. The South didn't furnish a thing on earth for that funeral but the corpse and the hole in the ground. There they put him away and the clods rattled down on his coffin, and they buried him in a New York coat, and a Boston pair of shoes, and a pair of breeches from Chicago, and a shirt from Cincinnati, leaving him nothing to carry into the next world to remind him of the country in which he lived and which he fought for four years but the chill of blood in his veins and the marrow in his bones.[13]

As seen in many of his speeches, Grady's words were intended to generate interest in investing capital in the region; thus, he enumerated the variety and availability of resources for manufacture (marble, lumber, iron, etc.), couched in terms of romantic attachment to "country."

Henry Grady's addresses also often contained a tacit admission of the South's backwardness, when compared to the economic superiority of the Northeast. For example, he explained the difference between antebellum and postbellum regional approaches to the economy to the New England Society in New York City in 1886:

> The Old South rested everything on slavery and agriculture, unconscious that these could neither give nor maintain healthy growth. The new South presents a perfect Democracy, the oligarchs leading in the popular movement – a social system compact and closely knitted, less splendid on the surface but stronger at the core; a hundred farms for every plantation, fifty homes for every palace, and a diversified industry that meets the complex needs of this complex age.[14]

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[13] *Life and Labors of Henry W. Grady, His Speeches, Writings, Etc.* (Richmond, VA: Franklin Publishing, 1890), 284.

[14] *Life and Labors*, 113.

New South proponents repeated claims that this industrialization, a means of catching up with the remainder of the country, would provide the key to reconciliation. As historian Paul Gaston wrote, this ideology "embodied a fervent gospel of union and brotherhood, to facilitate full acceptance into the union, and tailored its notions of both individual and collective success to the dominant American pattern."[15] New South champions embraced an unfettered capitalism alongside value shifts that strongly emphasized individual achievement and its visualization through the accumulation of material goods. Enthusiasts boasted of the South's having been "Yankeeized."[16] This rhetoric represents an acceptance of a particular prescription of modernity, for which antebellum practices of large-scale land ownership and chattel slavery were reframed as a feudalistic past for white men, and industrial capitalism upheld as their redemptive future.[17] This external definition was to be met with a decidedly internal solution, as opposed to the federal government's interventions during the failed Reconstruction effort.[18]

Although New South proponents' efforts were not necessarily as successful as their rhetoric would have one believe, the economic changes that occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the region engendered shifts in social hierarchies, especially in an increase of power for an affluent, white business class prevalent in towns and cities.[19] Participants in a new

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[15] Paul Gaston, *The New South Creed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), 84.

[16] C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South 1877-1913*, rev. ed. (1971, repr.; Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 148-151; Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 87.

[17] Frederic Jameson, *A Singular Modernity* (2002, repr., London: Verso, 2012), 39-40. Jameson's discussion of modernity as a narrative category is helpful to understanding the operations of New South rhetoric.

[18] Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*, updated ed. (1988; New York: Harper & Row, 2014).

[19] Woodward, 150-151, 291-320; Gaston, 203-204; Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 64-65; Gavin Wright, *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy Since the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 11-16, 125-197; Don H. Doyle, *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860-1910* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 3-10, 17-19; Barbara Jeanne Fields, "The Advent of Capitalist Agriculture: The New South in a Bourgeois World," in *Essays on the Postbellum Southern Economy*, ed. Thavolia Glymph and John J. Kushma (Arlington: The

movement toward urbanization, these individuals influenced, or in some cases entirely reshaped, social structures to better suit their economic pursuits and associated value systems. They imposed similar changes on their landscapes. Just as northeastern industrial capitalists' economic models were upheld as the standard for progress, so were their aesthetic preferences and cultural activities. In new suburban neighborhoods and rebuilding projects throughout the region, developers and patrons constructed domiciles and business buildings that conformed to northeastern visions of metropolitan cosmopolitanism; namely, a conglomeration of styles derived from European sources.[20]

As Reiko Hillyer has argued, this desire for "northern approval" was most prominent and active in Atlanta, Henry Grady's home city and thus a center for New South rhetoric. Much of this was practical – Atlanta emerged as a new central distribution center for major national railroads in

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University of Texas at Arlington, 1985), 73-94; David L. Carlton and Peter A. Coclanis, "Capital Mobilization and Southern Industry, 1880-1905," in *The South, The Nation, and the World: Perspectives on Southern Economic Development*, Carlton and Coclanis (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), 99-114; Martin Ruef, "The Human and Financial Capital of the Southern Middle Class, 1850-1900," in *The Southern Middle Class in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Jonathan Daniel Wells and Jennifer R. Green (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 203-224; Martin Ruef and David Reinecke, "Does Capitalism Produce an Entrepreneurial Class?" *Research in Organizational Behavior* 31 (2011): 237-240. As many historians have argued, the dependence of the region on external financial capital, in addition to the struggle to compete with more established manufacturing centers in the Northeast and West, resulted in an extractive form of industrialization. Rather than being processed internally into consumer goods, the raw materials that Grady and others cited as integral to the region's economic future were often solely extracted or minimally processed (i.e. cotton into yarn) before being shipped northward. Consolidated corporations, especially railroads, that operated in the region were headed by northeastern industrial capitalists. Although Woodward and others claimed that the middle classes grew during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth, Ruef and Reinecke have demonstrated that an entrepreneurial class actually shrunk from its antebellum size in the years following the Civil War and did not recover to the extent that New South proponents and historians have implied. In consideration of Ruef and Reinecke's definition of the entrepreneurial class, I have elected to use Don H. Doyle's broader "business class" terminology, which includes the bureaucratic class that lay outside of Ruef and Reinecke's study. My reference to power acknowledges the pertinence of Ruef and Reinecke's argument that New South proponents' visibility and power, especially in the control they exercised over newspaper publication, outsized the business class's actual size and growth.

[20] Doyle, 89-93, 100; Ayers, 65-75; Reiko Hillyer, *Designing Dixie: Tourism, Memory, and Urban Space in the New South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014), 1-12; Richard Gray, "Inventing Communities, Imagining Places: Some Thoughts on Southern Self-Fashioning," in *South to a New Place: Region, Literature, and Culture*, ed. Suzanne W. Jones and Sharon Monteith (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), xiii-xviii. Influenced by postcolonial theory, Richard Gray describes the construction of regionalisms, and southern identity in particular, as a product of centralizing cultural dominance, wherein the region is defined against the center, and vice versa. While Gray's assertions more clearly illuminate the narration of distinctions between the South and other regions, it also serves to help explicate the attempts by some southerners to imitate other regions in order to achieve the standing associated with a cultural center.

the wake of Reconstruction, saw a proliferation of new businesses as a result, and, due to its infamous burning during the war, required large amounts of new construction. The second-largest city in the South during this dissertation's period of study, it also saw a massive rate of population growth, from 37,409 occupants in 1880 to 154,839 inhabitants in 1910. Unlike New South counterparts in historic port cities like Charleston, South Carolina, the new Atlantans did not have to challenge the weight of entrenched social structures dominated by a landholding class, or their attendant architectural fabric.[21] William Lycett's enterprise's location in Atlanta, therefore, places it in the capital of New South activity, including its consistent, evident obeisance to northeastern economic and cultural standards. As will be seen, members of the Lycett family seem to have fully comprehended the changes underway in their adopted home and placed themselves and their business in the role of artistic arbiters to a New South business class hoping to gain legitimacy among northeastern peers.

The Newcomb College Pottery's geographic situation in New Orleans, one of the region's oldest cities, by far the largest, and with its own highly distinct culture, may seem to place it outside the reach of this New South activity, but the firm's foundation and core goals evince the power and breadth of this rhetoric in the region during the period. As seen in the discourse surrounding the mounting of the city's World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in 1884, the city's newspaper editors and business class also proclaimed the reunifying power of industrial capitalism. More significantly, the Newcomb College Pottery, as an enterprise, spoke directly to many of the chief concerns of New South rhetoric. It transformed clay, one of the southern raw materials most frequently cited for its potential, into a consumer product. Those products also conformed to

[21] Hillyer, 135-158; Doyle 15, 37-44, and 111-134; James Michael Russell, *Atlanta 1847-1890: City Building in the Old South and New* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988); Bruce G. Harvey, *World's Fairs in a Southern Accent: Atlanta, Nashville and Charleston, 1895-1902* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2014), 41.

northeastern standards for industrial design, participating in a different type of metropolitan aesthetic than that exhibited in Lycett's products. In so doing, it appeared to achieve both economic and cultural legitimacy precisely along New South lines.

For all of this enthusiasm for the modernity of industrial capitalism, New South proponents found the Old South difficult to leave behind. To some extent, the rhetoric of the New South encouraged the simultaneous ascendancy of Lost Cause narratives, which recast secession as a battle over states' rights, Confederate generals as glorious and honorable champions, and the Confederacy as a tragically failed nation. Some of the values embedded in Lost Cause language, such as duty and sacrifice to a greater community or cause, were enacted as social countermeasures to the emphases on individual success and material acquisition prevalent in New South rhetoric. Yet, New South proponents often used the Old South construction as a tool of cultural legitimacy, establishing themselves as the descendants of the antebellum planter class in order to secure their authority and claim over the region's future.[22] The formation of the two ideologies is intertwined, and the glorification of a fictional antebellum life thoroughly informed the construction of social and political structures in the region at the turn of the twentieth century. Thus, the objects produced at the Newcomb College Pottery and William Lycett's studio should not be interpreted solely as material manifestations of New South rhetoric, but also as indicators of the duality present in the business class's attempts to achieve cultural legitimacy according to northeastern standards while also legitimizing themselves using the imagery of their antebellum forebears.

Because this dissertation is concerned with a powerful white business class's formulation and manipulation of regional identities through design, it must also consider the impact of this class's

[22] Foster, 87, 113-114, and 120-121; Jonathan Daniel Wells, "Reconstructing the Southern Middle Class: Professional and Commercial Southerners After the Civil War," in Wells and Green, ed., 225-243; Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (New York: Vintage, 1998), 53; James Cobb, *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 85.

solidification of an antebellum social structure on the designs and social fabric of these two firms. The most apparent Old South value carried into the New was white supremacy. Henry Grady's speeches often focused on two points: economic rehabilitation through industrialization, and the security of social and political power among white southerners.[23] At their best, white leaders' visions for Black lives in the South during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries promoted the co-existence of completely separate societies, distinguished by race, but all answerable to white men in power; the more cruel reality held Black southerners in a subservient, politically disenfranchised, and constantly precarious position. Newcomb College expressly restricted its admission to white women, most of whom were from affluent families in New Orleans and its environs.[24] Examining Atlanta city directories, in which non-white individuals are ambiguously designated with a "c," William Lycett's studio appears to have primarily employed white men and women as bookkeepers, sales clerks, and artists, and non-white men for tasks such as packing.[25] Though not directly stated, as at Newcomb, the firm's lessons in china painting were also likely limited to white women. Moreover, both firms' consumers were likely presumed to be white. Therefore, the activities and designs of these two firms contributed to ideologies of "Southernness" that were implicitly exclusionary, as well as constructions of white femininity.

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[23] See Grady's other major speech in Boston, to the Boston Merchants' Association, December 12, 1889 on "The Race Problem in the South," *Life and Labors of Henry W. Grady*, 243-281.

[24] See *Tulane University Bulletins*, University Archives, Tulane University; Trent Watts, "What Makes a 'Newcomb Girl'? Student Culture in the Progressive Era," *Newcomb College, 1886-2006: Higher Education for Women in New Orleans*, ed. Susan Tucker and Beth Willinger (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 90. Newcomb's bulletins clearly indicate that its education was only intended for white women, therefore, I have assumed that the Newcomb College art students and designers were all white. However, some scholars have lately begun to question this homogenous racial identification. Exhaustive biographies of the individual designers must be completed in order to draw new conclusions, which is not the intent of this study of the Pottery. Additionally, I believe that some of the clarifications made in its advertising were intended to signal the decorators' whiteness to consumers; this is discussed further in the first chapter.

[25] *Atlanta City Directory for 1895* (Atlanta: Franklin Printing and Publishing, 1895), 1096; *Atlanta City Directory for 1899* (Atlanta: V.V. Bullock and Mrs. F. A. Saunders, 1899), 1281; *Atlanta City Directory for 1901* (Atlanta: Foote and Davis, 1901), 964; *Atlanta City Directory for 1902* (Atlanta: Mutual Publishing Company, 1902), 1508; *Atlanta City Directory for 1903* (Atlanta: Foote and Davis, 1903), 855. The distinctions between these positions are further elucidated in the second chapter.

Enormously popular throughout the United States in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, china painting offered white affluent women in the South a pastime associated with refinement and aristocracy. As Cynthia Brandimarte has observed, china painting carried connotations of eighteenth-century European nobility, for whom it served as a hobby. For their late nineteenth-century American followers, the pursuit of china painting required sufficient dispensable income to purchase a multitude of materials, including mineral pigments and binders, gold and other trims, brushes, palettes, and the porcelain objects themselves, not to mention pay a professional for lessons and firing services, or even acquire a home kiln or two (fig. I.6). All of this activity necessitated considerable leisure time to undertake lessons, read the plethora of materials published on the subject, from books to periodicals such as *China Decorator* and *Keramic Studio*, and execute projects, which required multiple applications and firings.[26] Because these women mostly painted objects for the home, such as tableware and decorative pieces, they also remained within the parameters of a traditional domestic role, building "temples of refinement."[27] The leisured domesticity associated with hobbyist china painting perfectly suited a construction of white womanhood that positioned those in the business class as the genteel, passive descendants of antebellum plantation mistresses, afforded through the relegation of much physical domestic labor and child rearing to hired Black women.[28] Thus, many of the women who took "Special Art" classes

[26] Brandimarte, "Somebody's Aunt," 208-211; Lewis, 7-13; Susan Frackelton, *Tried by Fire* (New York: D. Appleton & Co, 1886), 1-13, Rare Books, Winterthur Library; A. B. Cobden, *Practical Hints on China Decorating,* c. 1900, Rare Books, Winterthur Library. These china painting manuals insist on the importance of lessons, and they also include lengthy lists of necessary materials for the amateur's practice. A. B. Cobden, a porcelain importing company that catered to china painters and offered firing services, indicated in its catalogues that it would not assume responsibility for breakages during firing or shipping, adding another risk or expense to the china painter's list.

[27] Henry Grady to the Bay State Club, Boston, MA, 1889, in *Life and Labors*, 283.

[28] Hale, 105-106.

at Newcomb College or china painting lessons at Lycett's studio most likely belonged to an affluent class and were participants in this reification of a white supremacist social stratigraphy.[29]

China painting also provided some women with a means of earning an income, especially critical for those white southern women desirous of obtaining financial security while retaining their social status and respectability. The loss of male life due to the Civil War made the realities of widowhood or the prospect of remaining unmarried more visible; shifting attitudes toward marriage also contributed to a growth of interest in securing financial independence. Many white southern women turned to teaching, which adhered to gender prescriptions that associated women with raising children. Similarly, most women china painters who attempted to earn an income from their craft became teachers in the subject. Like music and other "ornamental arts," china painting lessons contributed to a white affluent woman's sense of refinement while also potentially providing an appropriate means of self-sufficiency.[30] One of the most famous southern china painting instructors of this turn-of-the-century period may be William Faulkner's fictional Emily Grierson, a single, vaguely aristocratic woman to whose lessons "the daughters and granddaughters" of Confederate veterans in Jefferson, Mississippi "were sent…with the same regularity and in the same spirit that they were sent to church on Sundays with a twenty-five-cent piece for the collection plate."[31]

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[29] Susan Tucker and Beth Willinger, "Beginnings," in Tucker and Willinger, eds., 12-13. Tucker and Willinger make clear that participants in special courses in literature and art far outnumbered students enrolled in the regular academic program, and that the tuition Newcomb received for those special courses helped the school survive for several decades. Special courses were limited to particular subjects and did not require students to meet academic qualifications. Tucker and Willinger's assessments are matched by the lengthy lists of "Special Art" students in Newcomb college catalogues.

[30] Brandimarte, "Somebody's Aunt," 204; Jane Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 32, 155-156; Sarah Haley, *No Mercy Here: Gender, Punishment, and the Making of Jim Crow Modernity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 9-11; LeeAnn Whites, *Gender Matters: Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Making of the New South* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 119. As scholars like Sarah Haley and LeeAnn Whites have made clear, labor roles in the postbellum South were constituted through race first, followed by gender. Because domestic labor was inextricably linked to Black women, this was an avenue of employment largely closed, according to societal standards, to poor white women, who pursued work in textile mills and other new industries that were typically exclusionary to Black labor. Neither of these forms of labor would have been deemed suitable for white affluent women.

[31] William Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily," (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2000), 21; Brandimarte, 223.

Newcomb College and the Newcomb College Pottery were both formed to provide training and opportunities for white affluent women. In addition to working as designers in the Pottery, many art alumnae became teachers and writers throughout the United States.[32] William Lycett taught at numerous white women's educational institutions in Atlanta and its environs, and advertisements for Lycett's lessons were often aimed specifically at teachers during the summer months. Eventually, some white women's institutions in the region advertised that their art instructors had taken courses with the Atlanta studio.[33] Newcomb and Lycett's, therefore, were also contributors to a particular construction of working womanhood for white southerners.

While the two firms provided leisure and professional pursuits for an audience of white women, their objects participated in critical inventions of "Southernness" that advanced impressions of cultural legitimacy interior and external to the region. This dissertation reconsiders the selections of ceramic designs at the Newcomb College Pottery and William Lycett's studio as active responses to the anticipated desires of their potential consumers. In much of its historiography, the Newcomb College Pottery is presented as an outlier of "good design" in the American South, upheld as an example of the length of reach and level of interest in Arts & Crafts Movement principles in the United States. Rarely is the potential role of consumer preference in determining the design of Newcomb's products recognized, and usually only as a factor in its decline in creativity in the 1920s due to the popularity of its "moss and moonlight" landscapes.[34] Long before romanticized

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[32] Adrienne Spinozzi, "The Pursuit of Paying Work," in *The Arts & Crafts of Newcomb Pottery*, David Conradsen et al (New Orleans: Tulane University, 2013), 187-188; Tucker and Willinger, 7; Sally Main, "Biographical Notes on Sixty Newcomb Pottery Decorators," in Conradsen et al, 297.

[33] "The Atlanta Female Institute," *Atlanta Constitution*, Sunday, August 29, 1886; Advertisement, Georgia Capital Female College, *Atlanta Constitution*, August 1, 1888; Advertisement, Agnes Scott Institute, *Atlanta Constitution*, June 24, 1891; Advertisement, Lycett's, *Atlanta Constitution*, June 24, 1894; Advertisement, Lycett's, *Atlanta Constitution*, May 5, 1905; "C.B.F. Institute," *Raleigh* (NC) *Biblical Recorder*, September 2, 1903; "Art and Music," *Dothan* (AL) *Eagle*, August 7, 1909.

[34] See Suzanne Ormond and Mary E. Irvine, *Louisiana's Art Nouveau: The Crafts of the Newcomb Style* (Gretna, LA: Pelican, 1976); Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery*; Poesch, "The Art Program at Newcomb College and the Newcomb Pottery,

landscapes came to dominate Newcomb Pottery surfaces, the firm's dedication to purportedly regional subjects indicated its comprehension of the interest among its consumers in the South's distinctive qualities, as made apparent in the language and images used to promote the Pottery in a plethora of national newspapers, magazines, and other periodicals. Conversely, the far more limited scholarship on Lycett's studio cites William Lycett's ability to cater to local tastes as one of the chief reasons for the firm's success.[35] I maintain that Lycett's use of gilded and florid naturalistic designs for its products carries important meanings for consumers, just as connected to the project of proving cultural knowledge to northeastern peers as Newcomb's visible fluency in British design reform principles. They also represent the skill with which the white business class in the region navigated the formation of a New South while gesturing to the Old.

Specializing in the production of artistic, small-batch domestic goods, the Newcomb College Pottery and William Lycett's studio both fall into a category of manufacturers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which, historian Regina Lee Blaszczyk argues, actively sought out consumers' shifting tastes and shaped their products to suit their needs and desires. Unlike burgeoning ceramics manufacturers in industrial centers, neither Newcomb nor Lycett's used techniques of mass production to generate large amounts of goods, yet they also cannot be described as single individuals or organizations of art potters who exercised complete control of their craft, from raw material to finished product. While large businesses during this period, especially those generating disposable goods, flooded markets with standardized products and used

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1886-1940," in *Southern Arts and Crafts 1890-1940*, ed. Bill Anderson (Charlotte, NC: Mint Museum of Art, 1996), 63-71, David Conradsen et al, *The Arts & Crafts of Newcomb College*, Kaplan, "Women Designers and the Arts and Crafts Movement," in *Women Designers in the USA 1900-2000: Diversity and Difference*, ed. Pat Kirkham (New York: Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, 2000), 92-93; Richard B. Megraw, *Confronting Modernity: Art and Society in Louisiana* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), 24-44; Meghan Freeman, "Newcomb College Pottery, Arts and Crafts, and the New South," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 17, no. 1 (2018): 121-144. Most surveys of American art pottery also discuss the Newcomb College Pottery according to these terms.

[35] Miller, 104-105.

persuasive advertising techniques to create new consumer needs and expand those markets further, Blaszczyk contends that smaller firms and those outside core centers, especially home furnishings manufacturers, continued batch production because of the flexibility it afforded. These industries understood taste as heterogeneous and dynamic, and they avoided the financial risks that accompanied bulk production in a particular style. Many, as Blaszczyk describes, used "fashion intermediaries," a wide-ranging group of positions involved in the space of product development between producer and consumer, to ascertain changes in taste and provide them with recommendations.[36]

Both the Newcomb College Pottery and Lycett's studio utilized fashion intermediaries to comprehend the taste and values of their anticipated consumers. I argue that the Pottery's leaders, especially Newcomb College Art Department Director Ellsworth Woodward and Pottery director Mary Given Sheerer, engaged in a number of activities to gauge consumer interest from the firm's outset. Their training in British design reform principles in New England and Cincinnati, respectively, not only helped them educate their southern students in recent developments in industrial design, but also familiarized them with consumers who were particularly invested in "good design" in this period. They understood that participating in exhibitions at Arts & Crafts organizations, engaging with newly-established museums and their curators, and sending students to attend summer institutes led by designers and artists would generate important critical feedback and allow them to shape the direction of designs to suit these audiences. The Lycetts' business model of an art school combined with a china decorating works was derived from its founders' formative experiences in New York City and could be found in cities throughout the United States. Blaszczyk

[36] Blaszczyk, 1-13; T. J. Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertising and the Therapeutic Roots of the Consumer Culture, 1880-1930," in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1930*, ed. Richard Wightman Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 1-36.

describes these lessons and offerings in firings as "new vehicles for monitoring tastes" for crockery retailers in the period, because they allowed retailers to directly view the preferences of their primary clientele.[37] Furthermore, the Lycett family's consistent organization of exhibitions in their retail spaces, as well as involvement on committees for other art displays and related social activities as documented in local and regional newspapers' social registers, allowed them increased opportunities for comprehending the predilections of local consumers who wished to prove themselves cultured or artistic.

Because many of the standards for achieving cultural legitimacy in the New South were shaped by perceived external cultural centers, this dissertation probes the Newcomb College Pottery and Lycett's studio's design choices against their chief geographic sources for emulation. Although designs or agents from other locales played important roles at both firms, the places selected for focus in this dissertation played especially significant parts in the firms' relationships with the white business class and southern identity. Chapter One examines the social and aesthetic connections between the Newcomb College Pottery and New England. Building on Martin Eidelberg's essay, "Newcomb Pottery: The Deep South and New England" in the most recent monograph on the Pottery (*The Arts & Crafts of Newcomb Pottery*, Conradsen et al, 2013), I trace the Pottery's orientation to New England educational institutions and cultural arbiters from the activities surrounding the foundation of Newcomb College, through the short-lived but significant predecessor to the Pottery, the New Orleans Art Pottery Club, and finally to the Pottery's formation.[38] I then analyze the Pottery's emphasis on the regional sources of its clays, iconography, and decoration at the hands of white southern women as markers of the objects' authenticity as southern products, especially

[37] Blaszczyk, 70-71.

[38] Martin Eidelberg, "Newcomb Pottery: The Deep South and New England," in *The Arts & Crafts of Newcomb Pottery*, David Conradsen et al (New Orleans: Tulane University, 2013), 115-147.

important for northeastern consumers who viewed the region as tantalizingly different.[39] I contend that many of the firm's most popular subjects were only understood to be southern because of the discourse that surrounded this material and a desire to see it as such, and not necessarily for its exclusivity to the region. Chapter Two focuses on the familial and aesthetic connections between Lycett's studio and New York City. I probe the ways in which William and Francis Lycett publicized their training and business connections in New York City in order to establish their cultural authority in Atlanta, extended through William's active participation in the social activities of the white business class. Comparing the renderings of botanical subjects that comprised much of Lycett's output with developments in American porcelain production, I argue that the firm participated in analogous attempts to combine fine arts with industrial manufacture and create "cultured" objects for the home. I then examine the firm's more fantastic decorative objects for their emulation of northeastern industrial capitalists' assemblages of styles. The non-specificity of these constructions, as well as the generic flora selected for reproduction in Lycett's works, speak to attempts to adhere to an externally-established standard.[40]

The next two chapters shift the examination from geographic centers in the United States to more far-flung sources for emulation. Chapter Three interprets the undercurrents of Japanese art's influence in Newcomb College Pottery. I contend that, like the emphasis on regional sources in the Pottery's selection of clay and subject matter, the evident relationships between Japanese ceramics and prints and the forms, linearity, and flatness of color in Newcomb College Pottery catered to the prevailing tastes of New England critics and cultural figures. Conveniently, many of the Pottery's natural subjects can also be found in Japanese prints. These characteristics, I argue, allowed for an

[39] Miles Orvell, *The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 158-160. As Orvell discusses, authenticity, as enshrined in late nineteenth-century American Arts & Crafts ideology, was considered indicative of both correct design and superior moral character.

[40] Orvell, 50-55.

elision of one "exotic" culture with another, contributing to a mythologized and distanced impression of the South already established in contemporary literature. Chapter Four explores the aesthetic and business connections between Lycett's studio and France. I maintain that nineteenth-century French porcelain manufacturers' close working relationships with American retailers allowed them, like small-scale firms in the United States, to shape their wares to highly localized consumer desires. At Lycett's, this largely entailed a predilection for eighteenth-century style, or rococo, forms. I assert that Lycett's reliance on rococo in both form and decoration allowed its consumers to signal cultural dominance in terms simultaneously modern and external, as well as historic and internal, because of the style's prevalence in homes of the upper classes prior to the Civil War. Even in their most global inspiration, the designs employed by the Newcomb College Pottery and Lycett's studio contained significant and specific markers of culture for their audiences.

Design in the New South, as exemplified in the work of the Newcomb College Pottery and Lycett's studio, reflects the consistent outward orientation of a rising white business class that participated in a series of emulations of the stylistic preferences of their chosen possessors of social, political, and cultural power. This practice appeared, on one hand, as an alignment with modernity and national reconciliation, but, on the other, it simultaneously supported the reification of a highly romanticized version of regional antebellum life. The critical project of cultural legitimacy necessitated fulfilling roles in both regional and national conceptions of the South.

Chapter 1

Southern by Design: Newcomb & New England

A vase decorated by Marie Medora Ross in 1902 exemplifies the primary approaches to design at the Newcomb College Pottery in the first decade of the twentieth century (fig. 1.1). As common at the Pottery, the ornament on the vase is largely restricted to a register wrapping around the vase's shoulders, framed by green, incised bands at the top and bottom. Alternating flat, dark green lily pads and medium blue waterlily blossoms fill the register, conforming to the firm's dedication to stylized natural subjects and a blue and green primary color palette. Contrasts between ornament and background are heightened with dark, incised outlines, and the forms of the waterlilies are enhanced with slight modeling on the clay's surface. The addition of cobalt around the rim further balances the use of medium blue on the waterlilies and below the register on the remainder of the vase. This sharp delineation and emphasis on contrast were also key characteristics of Newcomb College Pottery during this period.

As other scholars have noted, Ross's work shares numerous commonalities with Adelaide Alsop Robineau's treatment of the "American Pond Lily" in the October 1900 issue of *Keramic Studio*, a northeastern publication that was dedicated to the development of the ceramic arts and also served as the official newsletter of the National League of Mineral Painters, an organization dedicated to china painting (fig. 1.2).[1] Explicating her design in an accompanying article, Robineau

[1] Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen et al, *American Art Pottery: The Robert A. Ellison Jr. Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018), 224. Robineau, who studied painting with William Meritt Chase, launched *Keramic Studio* with her husband Samuel in 1899. She was devoted to serious study of ceramics, rather than as a limited pasttime, and encouraged this approach to the subject in her publications and practice. In turn, *Keramic Studio* often served as a collective community for budding ceramicists, most of whom were women, because it sought out contributions and practice studies from its readers. For more on Robineau and *Keramic Studio*, see Peg Weiss, ed., *Adelaide Alsop Robineau: Glory in Porcelain* (Syracuse: Everson Museum of Art, 1981); Thomas Piché Jr. and Julia A. Monti, eds., *Only an Artist: Adelaide Alsop Robineau American Studio Potter* (Syracuse: Everson Museum of Art, 2006); Catherine W. Zipf, *Professional Pursuits: Women and the Arts & Crafts Movement* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2007), Zipf, "We Can Not

makes plain that her work is an effort to modernize historic ornament, in the form of the Egyptian lotus, to make it suitable for "our times and country."[2] Like Ross's ornament on the vase, Robineau's design alternates stylized lily blossoms with flat lily pads, and the author invokes the concept of "notan" in her suggestions for balancing light and color in the description. While Robineau's design and suggestions certainly may have influenced Ross, the similarities between the vase and the *Keramic Studio* illustrations more broadly represent Newcomb's active participation in contemporary discourse on modern design, as generated by groups of artists, designers, and practitioners in the Northeast, especially New England. Robineau's use of "notan," undoubtedly from Massachusetts artist Arthur Wesley Dow's *Composition*, evinces the connections among these groups. The close aesthetic relationships between Ross's vase, as part of a body of work that was consistently discussed as genuinely southern, and Robineau's "American" design, demonstrate the significance of this participation for Newcomb as part of New South efforts to visibly align with northeastern standards in economics and culture, and the simultaneous, contradictory distinction of Newcomb College Pottery because of its geographic locale. This chapter probes the outward orientation of the Pottery, tracing it from early precedents in other artistic activities in New Orleans, through the training of the College's founding art instructors, and to the Pottery's promotion in publications and exhibitions based in the Northeast. Reframing the Pottery's early endeavors as attempts to shape designs to the interests and preferences of its potential clientele, rather than as the reflexive result of New England artists and critics' influence, this chapter then explores the manner in which the Pottery's earthenware material and natural subject matter contributed to the understanding of its authenticity to the South. Encouraged through promotional efforts, the

Publish What We Can Not Procure': Women Readers as Content Providers in *Keramic Studio* (1899-1924)," *American Periodicals: A Journal of History & Criticism* 27, no. 2 (2017): 140-164.

[2] Adelaide Alsop Robineau, "Modern Design – Pond Lilies," *Keramic Studio*, October 1900, 119.

Newcomb College Pottery helped to construct an image that bolstered regional pride while also reaffirming its distinction for external audiences.

Looking Outward: Foundations of the Newcomb College Pottery

During his sojourn to the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans in 1885, Eugene V. Smalley provided the readers of *The Century Magazine* with abundant colorful commentary about the sights and exhibits. Comparing the displays offered by companies and states in the South with those of the Northeast and West, he bluntly conveyed his disappointment:

> Must we conclude that the genius of skillful handicraft does not spring from opportunity, but is a rare instinct? Manufacturing is an inherited tendency in the New England stock, and has advanced westward with the migration of that stock…The old Southern stock, very little changed by the infusion of new blood since the war, has no aptitude for the small economies, the close application, the attention to detail, and the mastery of machinery required for successful manufacturing.[3]

In Smalley's description, southerners' innate flaws rendered them incapable of performing tasks common among their peers in New England and the West. New England often served as the paragon for industrial development in the United States. With this exemplar firmly established, alongside Southerners' failure to meet it, it is little wonder that Newcomb consistently looked to New England for models for its curriculum and designs. The tendency to place particular importance on New England as a source for cultural approval haunts the story of Newcomb's founding, beginning with its roots in activities surrounding the 1884-1885 Exposition and culminating in the figures selected to lead the school's Art Department.

For the New Orleans Exposition, a Board of Management primarily composed of white, local businessmen and led by New South proponent Edward Austin Burke recruited Julia Ward Howe to lead the Women's Department. Hiring Howe, a prominent Bostonian abolitionist, women's rights leader, and author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," was a maneuver intended

[3] Eugene V. Smalley, "In and Out of the New Orleans Exposition," *Century Magazine,* June 1885, 196.

to symbolize the city and region's reconciliation with the Northeast, and it tacitly recognized a certain degree of northeastern cultural superiority. Women leaders in New Orleans were highly insulted by the decision and its implication that they were incapable of helming the department. For the exhibition, Howe replicated the model from her experience directing the Woman's Department for a fair for the New England Merchants' & Mechanics' Institute in 1883, and she drew upon her vast social and professional networks to secure a variety of displays from across the country. Several other departments and state entries also exhibited women's work, sometimes removed from their intended destination in the Women's Department to complete a more limited state entry.[4] While the Women's Department included numerous examples of women's contributions to the sciences, industry, and literature, presentations of women's artwork and handcraft had some of the largest impact upon visitors and lasting effects in New Orleans. Among the most important were the contributions from Cincinnati, especially art pottery and hand-carved wooden furniture, and educational exhibits provided by the Rhode Island School of Design and the Massachusetts Normal Art School.[5] These exhibits, as well as Howe's call to action to New Orleans women to support themselves through the production of handcrafted goods, generated further local interest in the possibility of decorative arts to provide women, albeit those who were white and affluent, with a

[4] Herbert S. Fairall, *The World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition at New Orleans, 1884-1885* (Iowa City: Republican Publishing Company, 1885), 11, HathiTrust; Miki Pfeffer, *Southern Ladies and Suffragists: Julia Ward Howe and Women's Rights at the 1884 New Orleans World's Fair* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2014), 3-4, 20-25, and 43-51. As Pfeffer and others recount, many women in New Orleans had already begun leading the call for women's suffrage and employment outside the home in the city, including Martha Reinhard Field, who wrote weekly columns on women's work under the pen name Catharine Cole for the Times-Democrat; Eliza Nicholson, who had inherited ownership of the New Orleans Picayune in 1876 following her husband's death; Caroline Merrick, an active suffragist who secured property rights for Louisiana women in the 1870s and wrote the Louisiana report for Susan B. Anthony's History of Woman Suffrage; and Caroline Walmsley, who helped found and led the Christian Woman's Exchange, which organized sales of women's handcrafts and used furniture.

[5] Fairall, 372-373; Smalley, 189; Ellen Paul Denker, "New Women in the New South," in *The Arts & Crafts of Newcomb Pottery*, David Conradsen et al (New Orleans: Tulane University Press, 2013), 93-95; Sally Main, "Conscious Freedom: The Newcomb Pottery Enterprise," in Conradsen et al, 40; Jessie Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery: An Enterprise for Southern Women, 1895-1940* (Exton, PA: Schiffer, 1984), 11-12. Fairall and Smalley both singled out Cincinnati's contributions as particularly exemplary. For more on Howe's management of the Women's Department, see Pfeffer, 85-104.

recourse for income in the face of ongoing financial instability, following models already established by institutions in New England.

To advance the development of women's roles in the arts in New Orleans, Julia Ward Howe turned to fellow New Englander William Woodward to lead art courses in her educational series for the exposition. Woodward had recently been hired as professor of drawing and manual training at Tulane University, and he suggested that his younger brother Ellsworth be brought to New Orleans to assist. Shaping artistic activity in New Orleans through evening and night classes, art clubs, and art education organizations, the two young men continuously supported efforts to utilize decorative arts as a means of employment for women from 1885 onward. Their significant role in arts instruction in the city, heavily influenced by their own education, ensured that ideas about art and design derived from New England pedagogical models dominated discourse, including at Newcomb College and later in the foundation of the Pottery. Both men were alumni of the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), which was established in 1877 for the purpose of training industrial designers, in the hopes of thereby improving American products and their competitiveness on the global market. William also attended the Massachusetts State Normal Art School, which was formed by the state government in 1873 to train public school teachers in methods of drawing and design and subsequently improve elementary and high school students' mental fitness and preparation for industrial futures. Although intended for different bodies of students, both schools shared a common goal of ameliorating American products. They drew heavily upon pedagogical models established by Sir Henry Cole at the South Kensington School in London; in the case of the Massachusetts School, its administration directly consulted with the educator. A prominent member of British design reform circles, Cole emphasized the importance of drawing for industrial design and encouraged burgeoning designers to understand materials and their construction. Cole dismissed the direct copying of historical precedents prevalent at the time among Western manufacturers,

instead calling for greater attention to nature as a design source. Like many of his peers, Cole advocated for designers to stylize these natural subjects, rather than reproducing them in exacting detail, to simplify their execution for machine production and thus better suit their mode of manufacture.[6] These themes, of the importance of drawing, the role of materials, and nature as a design source, recur throughout the Woodwards' work in New Orleans.

As a precursor to the Newcomb College Pottery, the New Orleans Art Pottery Company represents one of Ellsworth and William Woodward's most important artistic pursuits in the city. The Company grew from the free drawing and decorative art classes that the brothers taught through Tulane University, a continuation of Ellsworth's courses for women for Julia Ward Howe during the Cotton Exposition.[7] In 1887, a group of roughly 75 women who had taken the courses formed the Women's Decorative Art League, with William Woodward as President. Ellsworth and his wife, Mary, were later named Executive Committee members. The League's members combined their resources to organize the New Orleans Art Pottery Company that same year, renting a house to serve as workshop, reception hall, arts reading room, and exhibition space. Foreshadowing his employment with the Newcomb College Pottery, the League hired Joseph Fortune Meyer to throw "the rough flower pots used by florists, the more artistic designs of which will be ornamented in

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[6] Main, 41; Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery*, 10-13; Poesch, "The Art Program at Newcomb College and the Newcomb Pottery, 1886-1940," in *Southern Arts and Crafts 1890-1940*, ed. Bill Anderson (Charlotte, NC: Mint Museum of Art, 1996), 63-64; Isabelle Anscombe, *A Woman's Touch: Women in Design from 1860 to the Present Day* (New York: Viking, 1984), 46-48; Wendy Kaplan, "Spreading the Crafts: The Role of the Schools," in *"The Art that Is Life": The Arts & Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920*, ed. Wendy Kaplan (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1987), 298-301; J. M. Mancini, *Pre-Modernism: Art-World Change and American Culture from the Civil War to the Armory Show* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 46-55; Anthony Burton, "Ruskin and South Kensington: Contrasting Approaches to Art Education," *Journal of Art Historiography* 22, no. 1 (Jun 2020): 7-9. For more on Ellsworth Woodward's leadership in the arts in New Orleans and the South, especially outside the bounds of this dissertation, see Richard B. Megraw, *Confronting Modernity: Art and Society in Louisiana* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008). For more on Sir Henry Cole, see Elizabeth Boynton and Anthony Burton, *The Great Exhibitor: The Life and Work of Henry Cole* (London: V&A Publications, 2003).

[7] Main, 41; Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery,* 13-14; Suzanne Ormond and Mary E. Irvine, *Louisiana's Art Nouveau: The Crafts of the Newcomb Style* (Gretna, LA: Pelican, 1976), 13-14; "Tulane Drawing School," *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, May 27, 1888.

relief by the ladies of the league."[8] Unfortunately for its organizers, the Company was short-lived, and its entire stock was sold at auction in October of 1889. From the sale's description, the Company appears to have specialized in utilitarian objects, and ones of great size – "Large Outer Flower Pots for halls and galleries, in pretty colors; Terra Cotta Umbrella Stands; Vases of late firings, perfect in workmanship and glaze; Cemetery Vases, Milk Pitchers; Money Banks…"[9] William Woodward later noted that the Company's failure was due to its inability to make sufficient returns.[10]

Extant pieces from the New Orleans Art Pottery Company demonstrate the Decorative Art League's familiarity with recent developments in the ceramic field, particularly among practitioners in Cincinnati and New England. Two different cachepots in the collections of the Louisiana State Museum are decorated with high relief, naturalistic renditions of flora, fitting their contemporary descriptions (fig. 1.3). These pieces resemble a distinct body of work produced at T. J. Wheatley & Company of Cincinnati beginning in 1880, in which high relief or three-dimensional clay flora were affixed to vases and other objects (fig. 1.4).[11] They also bear strong likenesses with pieces produced at one of the country's first self-designated art potteries, the Chelsea Keramic Art Works in Chelsea, Massachusetts. Formed by established potters James Robertson and his sons Alexander and Hugh around 1874, the company produced a variety of utilitarian and decorative wares. Their

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[8] "Work for Women," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, December 13, 1887; "The Art Pottery Company," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, June 10, 1888; Trapp, 94; Main, 41. Meyer brought George Ernest Ohr with him (mistakenly dubbed "John Ohr" in a June 1888 article on a reception at the Company). Ohr later gained notoriety as "The Mad Potter of Biloxi," and is now viewed as a seminal figure in the studio pottery movement. For more on Ohr, see Frelinghuysen et al, 131-157; Ellen J. Lippert, *George Ohr: Sophisticate and Rube* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013); Eugene Hecht et al, *George Ohr: The Greatest Art Potter on Earth* (Biloxi, MS: Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art, 2013); Garth Clark, Robert A. Ellison, Jr., and Eugene Hecht, *George Ohr: The Mad Potter of Biloxi* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989).

[9] "Pottery, Wednesday," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, September 30, 1889.

[10] William Woodward to Mrs. Levy, November 12, 1898, Folder 6, LaRC-022, William Woodward Papers, Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

[11] Frelinghuysen et al, 68.

advertisements listed many of the same types of objects produced at the New Orleans Art Pottery Company, including "fancy flower-pots, elegant vases, and jugs, ampelons, umbrella-stands..."[12] The high-relief Company pieces parallel vases that Hugh Robertson made at Chelsea, which feature modeled, highly detailed renditions of plant life in white clay applied to red earthenware vessels (fig. 1.5). Additional similarities between the New Orleans Art Pottery Company and the Chelsea Keramic Art Works can be viewed in the Company's products with floral and vegetal decorations raised in relief and carved or incised on the ceramic surface. For example, one Company flower pot exhibits comparable treatment of its vegetal and floral subjects as an ewer and stand by Hugh Robertson (fig. 1.6). The caladium leaves and sunflower blossoms that repeat around the body of the immense Company flower pot are raised to the same degree as the lily pads and blossoms that encircle the body of Robertson's ewer and dot the border on its base. The large handles on the Company pot reference antique forms in a manner similar to many Chelsea Keramic Art Works products. Most strikingly, both the Company pot and the Robertson ewer are decorated with olive green and drab glazes, mottled on the Company pot and dripped on Robertson's, and are finished with glossy glazes.

The Chelsea Keramic Art Works, and specifically Hugh Robertson's work, likely served as models for the Decorative Art League, and similar awareness of Robertson's oeuvre and business activities are evident later at the Newcomb Pottery. The Chelsea firm was established, regularly advertising, exhibiting in galleries, and donating works to the Museum of Fine Arts Boston in the 1870s and early 1880s, while William and Ellsworth were studying design in New England institutions, and during William's tenure in Boston at the Massachusetts Normal Art School.

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[12] Frelinghuysen et al, 91-93; Eidelberg, "Art Pottery," in *The Arts and Crafts Movement in America*, ed. Robert Judson Clark (1972, reprint; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 163. The company was initially named James Robertson & Sons.

Additionally, the objects that Hugh Robertson and other artists produced at the Chelsea firm demonstrate a strong familiarity with principles espoused by contemporary British design reform figures like Christopher Dresser, who urged ceramics manufacturers to pay greater attention to clay's malleable surface quality and the organization of ornament in relationship to function. Dresser, an early industrial designer in a variety of media and prolific author, created designs for Minton's Art Pottery Studio at South Kensington in London that were displayed at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, to great acclaim.[13] In the example of the Chelsea Keramic Art Works, the Woodwards would have found a solution for marrying many of the principles of modern design at the core of their education with handcraftsmanship and pottery making.

Concurrently with the formation of the Women's Decorative Art League and the New Orleans Art Pottery Club, key figures in the foundation of Newcomb College also participated in this outward orientation. The H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College was established in 1886 as a coordinate women's college with Tulane University, which had been privatized from the public University of Louisiana and renamed for its chief benefactor, Paul Tulane, only two years prior. Aided in his efforts by the discourse surrounding women's work that had become more visible during the New Orleans Exposition, Tulane President William Preston Johnson found Paul Tulane's philanthropic equal in Josephine Louise Le Monnier Newcomb. Like Tulane, Newcomb's husband, Warren Newcomb, was a native northeasterner who had achieved enormous financial success with enterprises in New Orleans. Warren died in 1866, and their fifteen-year-old daughter, Harriet Sophie, in 1870. As a significant benefactor of other educational institutions in the region, including Washington & Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, during Johnston's tenure there, and a grieving

[13] Frelinghuysen et al, 95-101; Christopher Dresser, *Principles of Decorative Design* (London: Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, 1873), 117-120, 124, HathiTrust; Widar Halén, *Christopher Dresser: A Pioneer of Modern Design* (London: Phaidon, 1993), 199-130.

mother looking for a memorial befitting her daughter, Josephine Newcomb was a logical resource for Johnston's vision of achieving high-quality education for white women in the South. After securing Josephine Newcomb's donation, Johnston worked quickly to recruit Brandt van Blarcom Dixon as the new college's first president, and he worked closely alongside the St. Louis, Missouri educator to combine the liberal arts education found at women's colleges like Vassar in New York or Smith in Massachusetts with the practical industrial training of the Pratt Institute in New York.[14] In a letter to Dixon in June 1887, Johnston demonstrated his aspirations for the school, writing "I regard your acceptance as a guaranty of the success of this undertaking, which is the inauguration of a real Higher Education for women in the South west [sic], if not the entire South."[15]

The progressive nature of William Johnston and Brandt V. B. Dixon's aspirations aligned with New South proponents' desires to industrialize the region, but they were accompanied by many of the New South's limitations. Newcomb College was always expressly dedicated to white women's education, and Johnston, a former aide to Jefferson Davis, was a vocal proponent of segregationist policies that limited Black education largely to preparation for manual labor. In his history of the college, Dixon claimed that the position partly appealed to him because he and his wife were "attached to the South through sympathy with their cause in the Civil War."[16] Likewise, Paul Tulane was one of the largest donors to the Confederate States of America, and the Newcombs are also believed to have been Confederate sympathizers. Therefore, despite appearances of adherence to

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[14] Susan Tucker and Beth Willinger, "Beginnings," in *Newcomb College 1886-2006: Higher Education for Women in New Orleans*, ed. Susan Tucker and Beth Willinger (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 1-2, 12; see also Tucker and Willinger's Josephine Louise Newcomb Letters Project, https://josephinelouisenewcombletters.tulane.edu; Brandt van Blarcom Dixon, *A Brief History of H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College 1887-1919* (New Orleans: Hauser Printing Company, 1928), 5-11, HathiTrust.

[15] William Preston Johnson to Brandt van Blarcom Dixon, June 14, 1887, Folder 1, LaRC-15, Brandt V. B. Dixon Papers, Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

[16] Dixon, 23.

northeastern pedagogical modes and points of view, Newcomb College was funded and formed by individuals dedicated to maintaining racial and social hierarchies in the region, and its educational offerings were part of an effort to preserve white, affluent women's role within them. Art education was emphasized, and very popular from Newcomb's inception, because of its traditional associations in the region as a marker of refinement, and its acceptability as a means of employment for women, should they not marry.[17]

Just as William Johnston and Brandt V. B. Dixon had looked to the Northeast for paradigms in women's education, the faculty they hired to lead the art department ensured the application of New England-style approaches and an orientation toward design for industry. Ellsworth Woodward was named Director of the department, and Massachusetts Normal Art School alumna Gertrude Roberts Smith an Associate Professor. This followed New South rhetoric's dual emphases on industrialization in the region and meeting standards established in the Northeast. Although nearly a decade would pass before the Newcomb College Pottery emerged, the Cotton States and International Exposition, Women's Decorative Art League, and the New Orleans Art Pottery Company had already laid significant groundwork for its formation by bringing together key figures and their social and professional networks. These events also represent important precedents for the habits of looking to New England for design examples and the leaders that would continuously inform the Pottery's direction.

[17] Dixon, 29; Tucker and Willinger, 12-13; Trent Watts, "What Makes a 'Newcomb Girl?' Student Culture in the Progressive Era," in Tucker and Willinger, eds., 81-83; Meghan Freeman, "Newcomb College Pottery, Arts and Crafts, and the New South," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 17, no. 1 (2018): 126-127; Christie Anne Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle: Higher Education and Student Socialization in the Antebellum South* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 64-67. A wider range of students was permitted to study at Newcomb as "special" art students, including younger women, teachers, and those who did not yet meet the academic requirements to be admitted into the regular academic course. These special courses also provided much-needed tuition dollars for the school. Students' level of preparation for collegiate study was a consistent problem at Newcomb, such that, like many women's educational institutions in the region during the period, it began offering high school courses to address the issue.

Seeking an Aesthetic Identity

In the first few years following the Newcomb College Pottery's formation in 1894, its leaders, along with their participants, appear to have engaged in an active search for an aesthetic for the Pottery's products that would meet critical standards and be commercially viable. Much of the direction of this search was oriented toward the northeastern United States in service of appealing to a national clientele. The Pottery shipped a large group of examples of its work to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in 1898 for critical assessment and potential donation, later repeatedly using quotes from its curators about the quality of the ware in its promotional materials. It became a member of the Society of Arts and Crafts of Boston, participating in exhibits and other programs. Ellsworth Woodward and Mary Given Sheerer, the Pottery's director, wrote prolifically about Newcomb and its art industry for national publications nearly immediately after its foundation. Additionally, several Newcomb art students received scholarships to attend special summer courses at institutions in New England. These activities allowed some of the Pottery's key figures to hone the dialogue surrounding its products and narrow a plurality of approaches to ceramic design to more specific versions that better suited prescriptions of good design emanating from northeastern design centers, evident in the shifting design of objects at the Pottery during this initial period. Ultimately, this process seems to have further encouraged the Pottery's leaders to emphasize its locale in the American South and the products' authentic "Southernness" for a primarily exterior audience.

In the preparations for commencing the pottery program at Newcomb, the first source for emulation was not New England, but Cincinnati, because of the early success of several china painting and pottery efforts there, especially the Rookwood Pottery. Rookwood had swiftly become the best-known art pottery in the United States by this point, and it established the model for many of the firms that followed. Ellsworth Woodward encouraged Brandt V. B. Dixon to travel to Cincinnati to visit Rookwood and view a wider range of Cincinnati ceramics at the city's art

museum. During his visit in 1894, Dixon approached Mary Given Sheerer, who lived in nearby Covington, Kentucky, about the planned pottery at Newcomb. Sheerer spent most of her childhood in New Orleans, until her father's death in 1883 prompted the family's return to their native Covington; she then took art courses at the Art Academy of Cincinnati, where Maria Longworth Nichols Storer and many other women china painters had received their training. She agreed to return to New Orleans to lead instruction in china decoration.[18] Sheerer began teaching china decorating classes at Newcomb in 1894 and experimenting with different clays taken from sources throughout the South over the course of that winter. Although Sheerer led instruction and decoration, Jules Gabry, a French potter, was initially charged with turning and forming the earthenware, but Joseph Fortune Meyer, the potter from the earlier New Orleans Art Pottery endeavor, soon replaced Gabry as head potter.[19] In May of 1896, after a new art building with a 25-foot kiln had been finished, Newcomb College held its first exhibition of work in pottery. Cincinnati was very much on viewers' minds, as demonstrated in comments that appeared about the exhibit in the local *Times-Democrat*: "There is every reason to expect that with the influence of the college to back it this pottery will make a name for itself equal to that of Rookwood." The journalist

[18] Dixon, 77; Tulane University Catalogues, Archives, Tulane University, New Orleans; "Last Will and Testament of John W. Sheerer," Orleans Parish, Louisiana, Orleans Parish Wills Books, https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=9067&h=3780673&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=DCZ1&_phstart=successSource, accessed February 12, 2019; and Covington, Kentucky, Directories for 1886, 1890, and 1897, United States City Directories, https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2469&h=782049250&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=DCZ4&_phstart=successSource, accessed February 12, 2019.

[19] Mary Given Sheerer, "Newcomb Workers: An Appreciation," facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University; *Tulane University Catalogue 1893-1994 and Announcement 1894-1895* (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1894), University Archives, Tulane University; "Newcomb Building a Pottery Kiln," *New Orleans Daily Times-Picayune,* July 7, 1895; "Fine Art Features at Newcomb College," *New Orleans Daily Times-Picayune,* December 12, 1895; Main, 44; Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery*, 18; Frelinghuysen et al, *American Art Pottery*, 222. According to previous Newcomb College Pottery scholarship, Joseph Fortune Meyer started working with Newcomb after Jules Gabry's death by suicide in Biloxi, Mississippi in 1897. However, by a December 1895 *Daily-Picayune* article, the "old man," a reference to Gabry from previous articles, was replaced by a "new man, who is said to be even more expert." I believe that the "new man" may be Meyer, although Gabry may have continued to work at Newcomb.

then reveals the primary means through which the Newcomb College Pottery would come to distinguish itself: "Its aim is to be a natural outgrowth of this artistic Southern city, to use Southern clays, Southern flora and animals for decoration – for the whole thing to have a strong local color."[20] A lengthier *Times-Democrat* article later in 1896 explained the necessity for distinction further:

> There is in all varieties of art pottery something distinctive, either in form, style of coloring or general type of decoration and finish, which is localized by adoption by given noted potteries. At Newcomb the aim is to imitate the best in all types of pottery. Thus there is no particular variety of ornamentation copied, except that most of the decorative work is in some way evidence of Southern influence and Southern environment.[21]

This report underscores the importance and scale of imitation that occurred at the Newcomb College Pottery in its first years, and it implies that its originality was to be found, vaguely, in southern inspiration.

Illustrations that accompanied the *Times-Democrat* article and extant works from the Newcomb Pottery's earliest years evince this wide-ranging approach to ornament, suggesting that the educators and their protegées tested different techniques, styles, and color schemes. For the most part, and in all likelihood purposefully, they appear to have steered away from many of the more painterly modes of representation and pastel and tonal coloration employed at Rookwood at the time, which were more in keeping with the application of contemporary painting methods to ceramic surfaces (fig. 1.7).[22] Revealing Newcomb designers' familiarity with historic examples, the paired roosters or hawks in the center and foliage around the rim of "A Plaque of Interesting Design" illustrated in the *Times-Democrat* article evoked ornament that had been used on slipware in Europe and the American colonies through the early nineteenth century. More frequently, Newcomb's decorators heavily delineated their natural subjects, and in varying degrees of

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[20] "Society Notes," *New Orleans Times-Democrat,* May 31, 1896; "Art Exhibit," *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, May 24, 1896.

[21] "Pottery at Newcomb," *New Orleans Times-Democrat,* November 22, 1896.

[22] Anita J. Ellis, "American Tonalism and Rookwood Pottery," in *The Substance of Style: Perspectives on the American Arts and Crafts Movement*, ed. Bert Denker (Winterthur, DE: The Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum, 1996), 301-315.

naturalism. Esther Elliott's sweet peas on a vase completed in 1897 curve upwards on stems from the base, their leaves twisting and curling over each other, to form a series of blossoms in profile around the rim (fig. 1.8). Juxtaposed against a background of tightly applied horizontal lines, and executed in black against the clay's undecorated buff color, the linear ornament appears as though a woodcut were wrapped around the vase. A plate decorated by Gertrude Roberts Smith around the same period evinces similar reliance upon line and demarcation (fig. 1.9). Smith's orange trees are stylized, rendered as cloud-like clusters of simple green leaves and orange circles above flat, spidery brown branches, and the cypress trees' layers are evoked through dark blue outlines and the application of the green glazes in streaks. On the more abstract end of the representational spectrum, Katherine Kopman's monochromatic, repeating motif of hawk-moths is more difficult to distinguish; close looking is required to discern wings, striped bodies, and eyes (fig. 1.10). As also seen in Smith and Elliott's work, Kopman's linear ornament revolves around its object's shape, rather than generally covering its surface. All of these characteristics were espoused in British design reform publications and other guides for industrial design in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century, familiar to Gertrude Roberts Smith through her Massachusetts Normal Art School training, and likely conveyed to Elliott and Kopman during their coursework at Newcomb College.[23]

Besides moving out from Rookwood's long shadow, the varying degrees of abstraction seen in Newcomb College Pottery ornament indicate its stronger orientation toward industrial design; this represents a practical solution for marrying art instruction with New South industrialization, and therefore achieving cultural legitimacy simultaneously alongside economic stability. Because New England offered most of the standards for industrial manufacture, it follows that Newcomb would

[23] *Tulane University Catalogue 1897-1898* (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1897), 136.

look to resources and paradigms favored in New England institutions concerned with shaping design, whose members, in turn, largely followed the principles espoused by British design reform leaders. Books by British design luminaries such as Lewis Foreman Day, Christopher Dresser, Owen Jones, and A. E. V. Lilley and W. Midgeley were included as textbooks in Newcomb's curriculum. Furthermore, Newcomb's primary faculty members in the art department – Ellsworth Woodward, Gertrude Roberts Smith, and Mary Given Sheerer – were trained according to pedagogy inspired by the South Kensington Museum. For most of these design reformers, the reduction of natural subjects to their salient elements, often in a highly flattened, geometric, and linear manner, presented the best solution for ornament for industrial design. Typically described as "conventionalization," the forms from this process of reduction and simplification are easier to mechanically and repetitively reproduce than more complex or detailed naturalistic renditions.[24]

According to art historian Beverly K. Brandt, art critics in the emerging field in the late nineteenth century, particularly those centered in Boston, likewise argued in favor of conventionalization as the appropriate methodology for rendering natural subjects in a successful manner for domestic objects.[25] Definitions of conventionalization were often fluid, partly because the method was so frequently tied to ideas about personal expression. In his *Nature in Ornament* (1898), Lewis Foreman Day wrote that "the one thing to be insisted upon in reference to convention is that it has *not* been done for us once and for all, that we have to do our own conventionalizing; and not only that, but that we have to do it again and again, each time afresh, according to the work in hand."[26] While Day provides some guidelines for the use of nature in ornament and its application

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[24] Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery*, 21-25; Main, 47; Kaplan, 303; David Brett, "Design Reform and the Laws of Nature," *Design Issues* 11, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 37-49, JStor.

[25] Beverly K. Brandt, The Craftsman and the Critic: Defining Usefulness and Beauty in Arts and Crafts-Era Boston (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009), 50-51.

[26] Lewis Foreman Day, *Nature in Ornament* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1898), 7.

in his text, its creation and employment is intended to be conducted with individual consideration for the object in mind (fig. 1.11). Similarly, when *Keramic Studio*'s editors attempted to define conventionalization for their readers in 1905, they explained that "A decorative conventional treatment…is an arrangement which endeavors to bring into harmonious whole, the general and characteristic points which the artist has noted, omitting all personal traits of the subject in such a way that these points will immediately impress itself upon the beholder, and the whole thought, the whole design is to be seen at once."[27] The simplicity of form achieved through conventionalization allowed space for "expression." As Brandt narrates, simplicity of form created literal room for the viewer's interpretation. By incorporating empty space, or only suggesting a subject, rather than providing an exacting representation of it, designers allowed a viewer to appreciate the work and complete it with their own imagination. This relationship with simplicity was thought to indicate a sophisticated sensibility, both on the part of the designer and the viewer, and it served to distinguish an intellectual elite from a class of wealthy industrial capitalist patrons with a propensity for abundant ornament.[28] By increasingly engaging in the burgeoning practice of conventionalization, Newcomb's designers demonstrated their awareness of contemporary industrial design principles, and they also ensured that their objects would be appreciated by New England intelligentsia.

Newcomb College students' education in these design principles, as well as their awareness of contemporary developments in ceramics in the Northeast, were expanded via special educational opportunities in New England. Beginning in 1901, many advanced students received scholarships to attend summer courses at Arthur Wesley Dow's summer school in Ipswich, Massachusetts, among them some of the Pottery's longest-lasting designers, including Hattie Joor, Roberta Kennon, and

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[27] Editors' Notes, *Keramic Studio*, October 1905, 1.

[28] Brandt, 211-215, 220-221; Ellen Paul Denker, "The Grammar of Nature: Arts and Crafts China Painting," in *The Substance of Style: Perspectives on the American Arts and Crafts Movement*, ed. Burt Denker (Winterthur, DE: Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum, 1996), 293. See Chapter Two for more on the tastes of industrial capitalists.

Henrietta Bailey. Amélie Roman, in the midst of her promotion from graduate art student to instructor at Newcomb in 1901, also attended Dow's summer courses and maintained sufficient contacts in Ipswich to return four times. Dow emphasized reductive compositional structure and delineation in treatment of naturalistic subjects; his courses and textbook *Composition* (1899) are credited with many of the aesthetic changes present in extant Newcomb Pottery at the beginning of the 1900s.[29] Mary Given Sheerer also traveled to New England for study in the summer of 1901, but she attended Denman Ross's lectures on design at Harvard University. The following year, student Marie de Hoa LeBlanc received a scholarship to attend Ross's lectures. Much like Dow, Ross focused on the study of spatial relationships and the use of geometry in design, as understood through formal analysis of a vast array of artworks and objects.[30] Additionally, Mary Frances Baker attended Charles Woodbury's summer program in Ogonquit, Maine, in 1902, which was known for its emphasis on painting and drawing outdoors, and creating works based on personal perceptions of nature.[31] These different course series allowed students to engage with emerging methodologies in the field of design. They bolstered the legitimacy not only of the College art program but also, as these students translated their experiences into practical application, the Pottery's products. Conveniently, these New England courses also offered Newcomb students the opportunity to visit

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[29] *H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College Announcement for 1910*-11 (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1910), 75-76, University Archives, Tulane University; *Tulane University Catalogue 1901-1902* (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1901), 91, University Archives, Tulane University; *Tulane University Catalogue 1898-1899* (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1898), 145, University Archives, Tulane University; "Memoirs of Amelie Roman," Box 4, Mary E. Irvine Papers, LaRC-751, Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University; Jessie Poesch, "Arthur Wesley Dow and Art Pottery: The Beauty of Simplicity," in *Arthur Wesley Dow and American Arts & Crafts*, Nancy E. Green and Jessie Poesch (New York: American Federation of the Arts, 1999), 111-112; Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery*, 26-28; Main, 47. The nature of Dow's influence on Newcomb and its relationship with collecting and Japanese art are discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Three.

[30] Martin Eidelberg, "The Deep South and New England," in Conradsen et al, 125; *H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College Announcement for 1910-1911*, 75, University Archives, Tulane University; Marie Frank, *Denman Ross and American Design Theory* (Hanover: University Press of New Hampshire, 2011), 183-187.

[31] *H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College Announcement for 1910-1911*, 75, University Archives, Tulane University; Roberta Zonghi, "The Woodbury School: The Art of Seeing," in *Earth, Sea and Sky: Charles H. Woodbury – Artist and Teacher, 1864-1940*, ed. Joan Loria and Warren A. Seamans (Cambridge: The MIT Museum of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1988), 32-33.

rival studios, including the Grueby Pottery in Boston, Massachusetts, on their travels.[32] While attending these courses and lecture series were undoubtedly valuable educational opportunities, they also provided means of ascertaining directives for modern design, helping the instructors and designers at Newcomb make informed decisions regarding approaches to ornament.

In addition to instructing students in contemporary design theories and ensuring that the Pottery's products adhered to them, Ellsworth Woodward and Mary Sheerer sought out the opinions of major New England institutions and collectors. Just as the Robertsons did with their Chelsea Keramic Works, Woodward sent a small group of Newcomb wares to the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, which were put on display in May 1899. Charles Loring, the museum's director, corresponded with Woodward to acquire three pieces for the collection. The exhibition in Boston also resulted in commendation letters from Edward Sylvester Morse, Keeper of Japanese Art at the museum at the time, and Arthur Wesley Dow, who was Assistant Keeper. Sheerer quoted their platitudes in an article on the Pottery for *Keramic Studio* in 1899, and they later appeared in *The Daily Picayune*. The exhibition in Boston was one of the first of Newcomb Pottery outside New Orleans; the Cincinnati Art Museum highlighted Sheerer's work at Newcomb in its galleries in 1897 and received a vase for its collection as a gift in 1898. Later, Newcomb became a member of the Society of Arts and Crafts Boston, one of the chief organizations devoted to organizing and exhibiting crafts in the United States, and the Pottery participated in exhibitions at organizations and institutions in New York, Providence, Rhode Island, and Chicago, among other locales.[33] Woodward and Sheerer's

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[32] Eidelberg, 25.

[33] Lilian Whiting, "Increasing Privileges of the Sophie Newcomb Memorial College," *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, May 7, 1899; "Newcomb's Annual Exhibit of Art," *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 4, 1899; Mary Given Sheerer, "Newcomb Pottery," *Keramic Studio*, November 1899, 151-152; "Newcomb Art Pottery," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, December 3, 1899; "Returning from Beth Hill and Dale Are the Painters and Sketchers to Town," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, September 5, 1897; Eidelberg, 121-123; David L. Conradsen, "Crafting an Arts and Crafts Identity: Newcomb College Pottery at Expositions and Museums, 1900-1910," in Conradsen et al, 149-153, 157.

efforts to engage these outside authorities helped the enterprise to gain critical approbation from significant cultural figures, as well as widespread national publicity.

Moreover, Newcomb Pottery's participation in varying exhibitions provided the firm with insight into what forms, subjects, styles, and glazes garnered the greatest attention and praise in outside markets, allowing them to steer the pottery's design accordingly. Brandt V. B. Dixon attested to Ellsworth Woodward's attention to the Pottery's commercial side in his history of the college, writing that the professor urged him to seek out sales agencies in New York, Boston, and Chicago as early as 1900, after the school received a bronze medal at the Paris Exposition Universelle. Articles in New Orleans newspapers predating the Exposition achievement boasted of the Pottery's demand in Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago outpacing the designers' ability to supply it.[34] The rapid failure of the New Orleans Art Pottery Company probably added further impetus to considerations of a larger clientele. Although Newcomb's founders began to sow the seeds of the earthenwares' "Southernness" in local media from its initial stages, receiving positive responses to the designers' representations of the region among audiences in New England encouraged them to further solidify their dedication to this subject. As one commenter wrote on the Museum of Fine Arts Boston exhibition, "When I learned that this was produced from the native clays of Louisiana, that the designs were adapted and created from suggestions in the landscape, in plant and insect life, in the conditions that were local and individual to the section, there was still a deeper interest in the work."[35] Newcomb's engagement of northeastern markets and emphasis on regional origins has contemporaneous parallels in the Appalachian craft revival movement. William Goodell Frost, the president of Berea College in eastern Kentucky, began promoting students' handwoven coverlets

[34] Dixon, 121; "Eve Up to Date," *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, May 12, 1899; "Opening of Newcomb," *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, September 30, 1899.

[35] Whiting, 22.

among his networks of potential donors in 1894 and formed the college's Fireside Industries in 1902. Similarly, mission worker Frances Louisa Goodrich started recruiting women in western North Carolina in 1895 to revive handweaving traditions in the region, also focusing on coverlets, which had become more widely popular amidst increased general interest in the colonial period in the United States in the wake of the Centennial in 1876. Goodrich promoted her various cottage industries nationally, including in mission publications, newspapers, the *Pratt Institute Monthly,* and *House Beautiful.* Like the Woodwards, Frost and Goodrich were from progressive families in New York State, and their backgrounds and social ties helped them gauge the interest in these types of products in markets outside the region, driven by the distinction of the region itself.[36] Imitating the best in pottery demonstrated Newcomb's fluency in contemporary design discourse, but emphasizing its regional origins made it all the more noteworthy.

To this end, Ellsworth Woodward and Mary Given Sheerer routinely stressed the Newcomb Pottery's unique status as a "southern" product in their articles in national publications. Many of Woodward's claims intertwined with his views on the importance of place to artistic production. Often arguing that only southern artists could properly create works that were fittingly expressive of their locale, his descriptions of Newcomb's art department suggested that it intervened in a cycle of artistic exodus and neglect in the region. Writing in a second article on Newcomb Pottery for *Art Education* in 1898, Ellsworth Woodward stated, "In their failure to enter into the spirit of locality, an instructive lesson is given as to the need of schools in the South which shall train pupils to speak for themselves, and in the language of art to interpret the history, social life, and scenery of their native habitat. One of the qualities in Newcomb pottery that appeals most clearly to the judicious critic is

[36] Jane S. Becker, *Selling Tradition: Appalachia and the Construction of an American Folk, 1930-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 63-66; Jane Kessler, "If I Can: Influential Women and the Southern Craft Revival," in Anderson, ed., 35-36.

precisely this characteristic note."[37] Woodward's proclamations regarding the specificity of Newcomb Pottery to the South were repeated time and again, not only in newspapers, but also in early shelter magazines and trade journals. "Individuality has been a cherished aim in the undertaking, the promoters well understanding that any art which is to have enduring value must in the greatest possible measure express locality and character – that local habitat the climatic conditions of which bring forth a special flora and incline men's minds to differ in some subtle way from those of other zones," narrated one article that appeared in *House Beautiful* in 1899.[38] For *Keramic Studio*, also in 1899, Sheerer claimed that "The whole thing was to be a southern product, made of southern clays, by southern artists, decorated with southern subjects!"[39] Through their rhetoric, extended in subsequent articles about the Pottery in later years, Woodward and Sheerer established an important foundation for national audiences to view Newcomb Pottery as particularly representative of the American South.

Examining the illustrations that accompanied these articles demonstrates the extent to which this rhetoric was necessary to understanding the objects as regionally specific. Ellsworth Woodward's first article in *Art Education* featured photographs of Katharine Kopman's plate with moths (misattributed to Louise Wood), another Kopman plate with cicadas, a design for a plaque with carnations by Frances McKee, a jar with carp by Medora Ross, and a vase with peacocks by Louise Wood. The follow-up article was accompanied by small objects with various leaf patterns, as well as peacock feathers. Carnations, carp, and peacocks are not native to the region or specific to it, and hawk moths and cicadas are both seen widely throughout the United States. Kopman's cicada plate and Wood's peacock vase made additional appearances alongside Mary Given Sheerer's article

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[37] Ellsworth Woodward, "Newcomb Pottery," *Art Education* (1898), 12. Facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University.

[38] "Newcomb Pottery," *Crockery & Glass Journal*, April 27, 1899, 22, reprinted from *House Beautiful.*

[39] Mary Given Sheerer, "Newcomb Pottery," *Keramic Studio*, November 1899, 151.

in *Keramic Studio*, along with a plate painted with a landscape of rolling hills, a distant tree line, and foregrounded wildflowers (fig. 1.12). This plate could make reference to a rural landscape most anywhere in the United States. Furthermore, several of the pieces illustrated with these articles bear striking resemblances to work completed at other potteries. For example, Kopman's moth and cicada plates, with their repeating motifs around the outer rim and cobalt blue underglaze decoration, share characteristics with the tableware produced at Hugh Robertson's second venture, the Dedham Pottery in Dedham, Massachusetts. Photographs of similar pieces manufactured by Dedham had already appeared in a glowing feature in *House Beautiful* in 1897 (fig. 1.13).[40] Despite its lack of specificity and ready comparison with other potteries' products, Newcomb College Pottery's reputation for its representation of the South steadily grew after these foundational years, especially after it received more national attention after its award at the Paris Exposition.

In order to achieve cultural legitimacy, the Newcomb College Pottery needed to visibly represent the types of industrial design most acclaimed in major northeastern metropolitan centers, where the standards for design were determined, while also functioning as a viable industry. The failure of the New Orleans Art Pottery Company could be framed as evidence of New Orleanians' reticence to embrace culture, and its internal orientation limited its ability to serve as evidence of cultural activity. Turning to the Northeast as a market, and not only a model, offered a means of attaining legitimacy on a national level. Through publications, exhibitions, and education, the Newcomb College Pottery's leaders and designers acquired a thorough knowledge of contemporary design standards that could be parlayed into successful reception and, to lesser extent, profit.[41] Besides ultimately forming a more consistent aesthetic identity, all of these activities further

[40] Nathan Haskell Dole, "The Best American Pottery," *House Beautiful*, September 1897, 87-94.

[41] Adrienne Spinozzi, "The Pursuit of Paying Work: Challenges to Newcomb Pottery Decorators," in Conradsen et al, 184. Although Newcomb College Pottery products were widely sold, the lower prices attached to them, in comparison to competitors like Rookwood and Grueby, contributed to an ongoing struggle for profit.

confirmed the importance of selling a version of the South. For all of its attention to design idioms in the Northeast, the Newcomb College Potter needed to reaffirm its regional authenticity, reinforcing notions of the South's distinctiveness, in order to generate external interest. The Pottery primarily conveyed authenticity through three elements: its clay, its subjects, and its artists.

Mississippi Mud: Material Authenticity

Using "Louisiana clays" to create commercial products was the most critical element of the Newcomb College Pottery enterprise. With one maneuver, it accomplished two significant New South goals. Firstly, it demonstrated the viability of natural resources in the region, especially clay, for transformation through industrial processes into saleable goods. Secondarily, it conferred a sense of regional authenticity upon the wares, generating more interest among northeastern consumers and culture brokers in service of securing cultural legitimacy. Irene Sargent made these efforts plain in her article in *The Craftsman* in 1903, writing that "Another equally wise provision of the [Newcomb Pottery's] policy was made in the interest of what may be called sectional patriotism. It was an effort to create an artistic industry which should utilize native raw material, develop native talent, and so symbolize the place of its activity as to attract and enlist the attention of the outside world."[42] In order to ensure that its Southern origins were readily understood, especially since they could not be quickly perceived, they were touted through articles on the Pottery in *The Craftsman* and other publications, as well as other Newcomb advertising mechanisms. Clay offered a neat bridge between industry and the arts for Newcomb's founders.

Several significant precedents likely impacted the decision to use local clays. In the 1880s, a group of entrepreneurs in New Orleans established the New Orleans Porcelain Works, importing kaolin, a key ingredient for creating fine-bodied porcelain, from the St-Yrieix quarries in Limoges, France and hiring French potters to complete their lines of thick, heavy tableware. The costs of

[42] Irene Sargent, "An Art Industry of the Bayous: The Pottery of Newcomb College," *Craftsman*, October 1903, 71.

importation and limitations of the manufacturer's products led to a prompt closure, demonstrating the importance of access to raw materials, as opposed to the exact replication of French porcelain, as a priority for commercial solvency.[43] The New Orleans Art Pottery Company had used clays from the Biloxi, Mississippi area for its objects, probably due to Joseph Fortune Meyer's familiarity with Biloxi sources from his time in his father's pottery in the city. These could be transported relatively easily via water routes to New Orleans.[44] Furthermore, using "native clays" followed the example set by the Rookwood Pottery, which reportedly used clays from the Ohio River Valley and Chattanooga, Tennessee. In addition to its subjects, this use of "native" or "indigenous" clay was often touted as one of the qualities that made Rookwood Pottery distinctly American.[45] Because Rookwood had already been praised for utilizing this kind of material, and many other American art potteries, like the Chelsea Keramic Art Works, similarly employed clay from their environs, Newcomb's use of local clay followed the practices of its available paradigms.

Because of the Pottery's location in the American South, clay took on another layer of significance. Like wood, stone, and various ores, clay was one of the raw materials prevalent in the region that received renewed attention in the late nineteenth century for its potential for manufacturing. At the 1884-1885 Exposition in New Orleans, state exhibits from Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and West Virginia included samples of clays, or objects made from them, such as fire brick and stoneware. Railroad companies also included materials and resources found along their routes; the Queen and Crescent Railroad Company went

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[43] Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, *American Porcelain: 1770-1920* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), 237-238; for more on the New Orleans Porcelain Works see also the "New Orleans Reports" in *Crockery & Glass Journal* for 1887 through 1889. The owners of the New Orleans Porcelain Works attempted to find kaolin sources closer to their factory, publishing a query in the *Crockery & Glass Journal* about quarries of kaolin in closer proximity to river routes to New Orleans, but they do not seem to have solved the problem quickly enough to become solvent.

[44] Ormond and Irvine, 13.

[45] Nancy E. Owen, *Rookwood and the Industry of Art: Women, Culture, and Commerce, 1880-1913* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001), 145-146.

so far as to display a set of dishes made from kaolin found in its territory.[46] In 1887, John M. Ordway, a chemist and the Dean of Technology at Tulane University, argued that New Orleans could support porcelain manufacturing.[47] As occurred with most other raw materials, however, southern clays were most commonly shipped northward to more well-established manufacturing centers. In what could be seen as capitalization on regional pride, if not a little prodding, the Ceramic Art Company of Trenton, New Jersey invited its "Friends in the South" reading the *Crockery & Glass Journal* to view the products at its display at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta in 1895, claiming that "This exhibit will be of more than ordinary interest to the people of the Southern States, as it will give them an opportunity of seeing what supreme elegance may be produced from materials found exclusively in their section of the United States."[48]

Utilizing clays from the region enabled Newcomb to participate in the effort to cease exporting raw materials to other locations and instead establish modes of production within the region, another step toward ensuring the South's participation in industrial capitalism and therefore its legitimacy according to northeastern economic standards and values. In its early years, the art programs at Newcomb College were frequently discussed as though they were preparatory, training a new generation of designers for the needs of emerging industries. The Pottery was then presented as a solution to the problem of the lack of such industries in the region to employ the women trained in the College's methods. Susan Stuart Frackelton wrote of the enterprise in *The Sketch Book* in 1906:

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[46] *The World's Exposition Catalogue and Guide: A Complete Catalogue of Exhibits & Exhibitors* (New Orleans: Crescent News, 1885), Special Collections, UVA; "New Orleans Exposition," *Crockery & Glass Journal*, February 26, 1885, 10. Around the time of the exposition, the Queen and Crescent traveled from Cincinnati, Ohio to New Orleans and Shreveport, Louisiana via Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama.

[47] Main, 42; Eidelberg, 115.

[48] Advertisement, *Crockery & Glass Journal*, September 12, 1895, 11.

> During the latter half of the century the economic conditions of the South were peculiar. Agriculture had always been the outlet of southern industrial energy and no artistic manufactures had been established. These were coming in the natural course of things. With a people keenly sensitive to beauty, but untrained in their knowledge of art, it became apparent that a school giving practical training in the applied arts would be directly helpful in its relation to the general community. It would both give employment to the pupil, and show the growing industries of the South that commercial success in high-grade manufacture depends upon artistic design.[49]

From this laudatory perspective, Newcomb represented hope for the future, a small-scale version of the quality that could be obtained in southern industries if they heeded the importance of design and certain aesthetic standards. One astute local reporter predicted that the Pottery's limited production and highly particular training would ultimately limit its ability to grow as a commercial entity. He posited that "there will be an opportunity for some enterprising capitalist to step in, and establish here, or near by, a business that drawing inspiration and ideals and instructed talent from the minds and hands trained in Newcomb pottery, shall make of the clays of Louisiana and Mississippi pottery which by its excellence and beauty will rank with that of Delft, of Limoges, and of Burslem."[50]

These observations indicate the tensions between the Newcomb College Pottery's stated purpose of training industrial designers and its attempts to adhere to some of the tenets of the Arts & Crafts Movement. The Pottery's dependence on wheel throwing as its primary form of manufacture reflects design reformers' and Arts & Crafts writers' invectives against heavily divided processes or mechanized modes of production. Despite designing for manufacturers, Christopher Dresser wrote, "If potters would but content themselves, in order to the production of such articles as we require in common life, with the 'potters' wheel,' we should be almost sure of a certain amount of beauty in domestic earthenware, but such is not the case. They make fancy moulds of

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[49] Susan Stuart Frackelton, "Our American Potteries – Newcomb College," *Sketch Book,* July 1906, 430-433, facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University.

[50] Anthony Radcliffe, "Our Potter and His Clay: Newcomb's Great Department," *Harlequin*, Thursday, June 23, 1904, facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University. Radcliffe was one of the few journalists who acknowledged the extensive hours (8 to 10 per day) and toll of the work upon the women at the Pottery, while also making plain their limited pay. "No one needs envy, except for their honorable success, the women who have been able to make it a profession."

plaster of Paris and wire gauze, and roll out clay as the pastrycook does dough, and manipulate it as so much pie-crust, instead of applying to it simple skill."[51] Dresser's passage pejoratively describes the typical approach of many large-scale porcelain manufactures, such as those in the aforementioned Limoges. Several other American art potteries focused their efforts on creating molds that would produce novel results in the clay's surface, simultaneously reducing their reliance on specialized decorators, increasing the rate of production, and decreasing overall costs.[52] More strictly following the writings of Dresser and others, Newcomb's emphasis on hand decoration and wheel-throwing made its feasibility as a larger-scale endeavor unlikely, and thus more conducive to rhetorical framing as a prototype or training ground for the future.[53]

Besides suiting hopes for development of the South's natural resources, even if it could not fully satisfy them, using local clays significantly contributed to the impression of Newcomb Pottery products as authentic representations of their region. Hidden underneath decoration and glazes, the origins of the clay were not discernible to their audiences unless heavily promoted as such. Pamphlets for the Pottery consistently claim that the clay was taken from the "Bayou Tchulakabaufa in Mississippi," probably a reference to inlets off of the Tchoutacabouffa River north of Biloxi; Irene Sargent, in her *Craftsman* article, and Edna Lyman Reed, writing for *Good Housekeeping,* repeated this geographic reference.[54] Other articles more obliquely describe the clays as having been sourced from Louisiana or Mississippi. These claims were restated from one publication to another, and,

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[51] Christopher Dresser, *Principles of Decorative Design* (London: Cassell, Petter, & Galpin, 1873), 119. HathiTrust.

[52] Kenneth Trapp, "Introduction," in *American Art Pottery* (New York: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 1987), 26.

[53] For more on this tension between industry and Arts & Crafts in the rhetoric surrounding the Newcomb College Pottery, see Meghan Freeman, "Newcomb College Pottery, Arts and Crafts, and the New South," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 17, no. 1 (2018): 121-144.

[54] Advertising pamphlets, c. 1903 and c. 1905-1907, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University; Sargent, 71; Edna Lyman Reed, "Arts and Crafts as Shown in College Pottery," *Good Housekeeping*, June 1905, 661.

from the reviews of the Pottery's contributions to various exhibits, as seen in the comments of the visitor to the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, also included in the materials that accompanied these displays. They assured potential consumers of Newcomb Pottery's geographic origins, underscoring their novelty and distinguishing them from other art potteries.

Though the specificity of the Newcomb clay sources was probably exaggerated, they do appear to have mostly come from the South. According to the notes taken by Maude Robinson during her coursework at Newcomb in the 1900s, the compositions of the "Q" and "W" earthenware bodies included two different clays taken from Biloxi, as well as kaolin from Georgia.[55] Other notes compiled on the history of the Pottery for the Tulane University Archives state that the clays came from various beds in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Kentucky, and that flint and feldspar were added to the mixture to increase its density.[56] Much like Rookwood simplified the origin story of its clay to the Ohio Valley for most publications, Newcomb limited explanations for the sake of brevity. It also obfuscated the actual complexity of the body's composition, probably to maintain the perception of the material's relative simplicity in comparison to something more mixed and fabricated, like porcelain. Citing the source as a Misssissippi bayou with a complicated name underscored the difference of these objects for New England audiences and collectors of the different types of art pottery, aligning Newcomb with the mystique surrounding bayous in the American South in the late nineteenth century.

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[55] Maude Robinson notebooks, Doc.1002, Joseph Downs Manuscript & Ephemera Collection, Winterthur Library. For more on chemical composition of Newcomb Pottery objects using Maude Robinson's notes, including chemical and radiographic analyses, see Emily Elizabeth Davis, "The Pottery Notebook of Maude Robinson: A Woman's Contribution to Art Manufacture, 1903-1909" (MA thesis, Winterthur Program in Early American Material Culture, University of Delaware, 2007). For more on Maude Robinson, see her biography in Sally Main, "Biographical Notes on Sixty Newcomb Pottery Decorators," in Conradsen et al, 311.

[56] "Newcomb Pottery History," Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University. These undated notes may postdate this dissertation's period of inquiry; other clays were developed and used at Newcomb after 1910.

The Newcomb College Pottery's use of regional clays allowed it to simultaneously tread several different, if not opposing, approaches to the production of consumer goods at the turn of the twentieth century. It followed the models for art pottery already in place in New England and Cincinnati, and it satisfied burgeoning Arts & Crafts movement practitioners' championing of hand-thrown ceramics using readily available natural materials. Because the Pottery could be discussed as an initial stage of development, it also supported New South rhetoric about using the region's natural resources to achieve the levels of industrialization in New England and rising in the West. Most importantly, using actual Mississippi mud to create Newcomb College Pottery products provided external audiences with a tangible connection to the region, imbuing them with an important sense of authenticity. However, their colorful glazes and ornament obscured this material authenticity. The much-lauded flora and fauna used as subject matter added another layer to this construction of "Southernness."

Live Oaks and Magnolias: Iconographic Authenticity

During the Newcomb College Pottery's earliest years, displaying its objects in museums and various exhibitions had helped to promote the firm widely and generate important critical feedback necessary to respond to the perceived desires of an external clientele. Likewise, sending students to various design institutes in New England also afforded means to direct decoration to suit contemporary principles of "good design." By the first decade of the twentieth century, Newcomb's products, while still retaining a bit of their reputed individuality according to their designer, steadily became more standardized, especially after the Pottery established a juried process for approving completed pieces for final sale.[57] The firm produced vases, in all manner of sizes, and other

[57] Dixon, 121-122. If objects were deemed unworthy of sale, the "NC" cipher on the object was scratched out. This juried process also entailed a change to the designers' payment, shifting from a piece work system, in which decorators were paid after their works were sold, to one in which the designers received a percentage (Dixon claimed 50%) of the retail value of the object upon the jury's acceptance. Once the object was sold, the remaining percentage went toward covering the dealer's commission and the College's costs of production.

decorative ware, such as lamp bases, plaques, and cachepots, as well as a small amount of desk objects and tableware, particularly mugs, steins, and vessels for drinking tea and chocolate. All conformed to the same color palette, encompassing a range of blues from cobalt to lighter hues, sage and olive greens, and yellow. Designers also more consistently relied upon registers of conventionalized, strongly delineated ornament as a compositional scheme. Following the professed interest in their use of regional flora and fauna, Newcomb's promoters continually drew attention to the purported geographic specificity of their designers' subjects. The emphasis on regional flora and fauna at Newcomb should be considered a deliberate exercise in constructing an iconography that would reaffirm the region's distinction, both to serve "sectional pride" and the perceptions of northeastern consumers, while also capitalizing on Newcomb designers' gender and status.

Newcomb's subject matter was one of the most oft-discussed and critically praised aspects of its output. The *Trenton Times* in New Jersey excoriated its large ceramics manufacturers for failing to encourage these approaches to nature among their designers, writing "But here is a pottery actually built and in successful operation way down in New Orleans, far from the proud centres of culture and commerce which is realizing the very ideal held up for our Trenton School of Industrial Arts."[58] The *Times* reporter likely alludes to both Newcomb's choice of subject matter, in selecting flora and fauna, and also its execution in varying degrees of conventionalization. The reporter's indignation at Trenton's well-established manufacturers being outdone by a *southern* company indicates the degree to which Newcomb Pottery products were perceived as being modern, with their appearance and subjects fitting new, higher standards in industrial design. Irene Sargent wrote for *The Craftsman* that, "According to the new art movement, which, felt throughout the world, is a return to Nature as the source of inspiration, the designers selected their decorative *motifs* from the

[58] "The Newcomb Art School," *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, Sunday, April 27, 1902.

vegetation indigenous to the entire South; making, of course, special reference and allusion to the flora of Louisiana."[59] Again, Sargent's words demonstrate that Newcomb's selection of subject matter allowed the firm to navigate the dynamism of contemporary design movements at the turn of the century. In this instance, the Pottery's choice of subject matter suited Western designers' increasing emphasis on floral and vegetal ornament in a more conscious effort to move away from historical precedents.[60]

Despite these testaments to Newcomb's products' alignment with new, international developments in design, the emphasis on the natural subjects' origins in the South assured critics and viewers of the material's authenticity and reasserted its distinction. In his review of ceramics contributions at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo in 1901, William A. King lauded the Pottery's contribution, claiming that "An especially praiseworthy feature of the pottery industry at Newcomb is that it develops an indigenous art work which is thoroughly characteristic of its local habitat. The students are taught to use in their designs no plant, landscape, bird or flower which is not locally familiar."[61] King's use of the term "indigenous" to describe the firm's work, rather than its natural subjects as Sargent had, demonstrates the ease with which viewers could elide the two – the products themselves are "native" to the region. Newcomb's affinity for southern flora and its relationship to southerners was further romanticized in later publications. By 1910, Mary Given Sheerer was quoted as saying that these subjects were "forms familiar and endeared by association to our Southern students, who, in childhood, have gathered the fallen petals of the white magnolia

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[59] Irene Sargent, "An Art Industry of the Bayous: The Pottery of Newcomb College," *Craftsman*, October 1903, 71.

[60] Paul Greenhalgh, "The Cult of Nature," *Art Nouveau 1890-1914*, ed. Paul Greenhalgh (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 2000), 55; Jeremy Howard, *Art Nouveau: International and National Styles in Europe* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1996), 3-7.

[61] William A. King, "Ceramic Art at the Pan-American Exposition," *Crockery & Glass Journal*, May 30, 1901, 15.

blossom to make their fairy boats, or have marked the coming of spring by the first appearance of the climbing jasmine and the Cherokee rose."[62] Sheerer's description positions the designers as having an especially close relationship to nature, if not a premodern one, suggesting that this elision extended to the designers as well.

In his efforts to promote Newcomb Pottery's unique qualities, Ellsworth Woodward cited southern vegetation's distinctiveness itself as the logical reason for the firm's decorative orientation, claiming "There is so much in our Southern flora beautiful and artistic that it would seem folly to go from home for designs. Magnolias, cotton bolls, cypress and live oak, a thousand exquisite wild flowers and quaint growths supply the most prolific artist with ideas, and so in every dainty product of the Newcomb pottery department there is something suggestive, something that recalls our swamps and bayous, and abundant shrubbery."[63] Indeed, treatments of southern magnolias abound in Newcomb Pottery, their variety evincing the possible permutations of subjects when they are conventionalized – Mary Williams Butler's version flattens the entire tree into a pattern of curving blue branches with immense, multilayered, light blue blossoms surrounded by large green leaves; Sabina Wells's iteration focuses on the unfolding layers of the blooming flower, in light green; and Harriet Joor's flowers are dissected through the centers, aligned as though springing from a vine (fig. 1.14).

Ellsworth Woodward's calling upon the imagery of "swamps and bayous" suggests his awareness of the growth of interest among people in the Northeast and West after the Civil War in the difference between landscapes of the South and their own. As Rebecca Cawood McIntyre has contended, the swamp became especially important for tourism to Deep South locales, shifting

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[62] Nathaniel Wright Stephenson, "Newcomb College and Art in Education," *Forensic Quarterly,* 1910, 259, facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Files, University Archives, Tulane University, New Orleans.

[63] "The Newcomb Pottery," *Harlequin*, September 26, 1901, 5. Facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Files, University Archives, Tulane University, New Orleans.

symbolically over the course of the late nineteenth century. Prior to and just following the Civil War, many viewed southern swamps as dark and dangerous places, riddled with disease and other dangers. Their frequent appearance in self-emancipation narratives also made them a symbol of slavery, and they were configured as a potential source of the region's amorality. With greater temporal distance from the war, and improvements to infrastructure that made increased travel to the region possible, southern swamps increasingly became a thrilling, grotesque locale to visit, with their strange alligators, gnarled trees, and Spanish moss. Coupled with their descriptions in contemporary literature about the region, written by northerners and southerners alike, these landscapes became more strongly associated with bygone civilizations, serving as settings for an archaic past that contrasted the Northeast's urban and industrialized present. Louisiana's bayous, in particular, were especially helped by their romantic treatment in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "Evangeline," first published in 1847.[64] Its opening equates bayou flora with melancholy and the distant past:

> This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
> Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
> Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
> Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
> Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean
> Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.[65]

The popularity of this particular iteration of the landscape, and some disappointment in its lack of visibility in Newcomb College Pottery, is evident in a critic's notes on Newcomb's display at an exhibition at the New York Society of Keramic Arts in 1905, in which he wrote "The keramic workers of the lower Mississippi must certainly have tried their hand at the characteristic mossed

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[64] Rebecca Cawood McIntyre, *Souvenirs of the Old South: Northern Tourism and Southern Mythology* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011), 79-91; Karen L. Cox, *Dreaming of Dixie: How the South Was Created in American Popular Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 108-109, 113. For more on the shifting views on Louisiana's wetlands landscape in painting, particularly in regard to ecological concerns, see Katie A. Pfohl, ed., *Inventing Acadia: Painting and Place in Louisiana* (New Orleans: New Orleans Museum of Art, 2019).

[65] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie" (New York: Van Cleve-Andrews Co, 1895), 7. HathiTrust.

cypress of the region, which would seem to be particularly inviting for a bold flooding on of colour and would have been well worth seeing."[66]

Significantly, direct representations of wetlands did not begin making frequent appearances in Newcomb Pottery until late in the first decade of the twentieth century; instead, the designers more often used aquatic plants as a synecdoche for the region's fascinating bayous. Thus, Marie Medora Ross's waterlilies, despite being flattened and transformed into a decorative band, evoked broader imagery of lily-covered bayous overhung with Spanish moss. The spatterdock (cow lilies) surrounding Amélie Roman's vase perform a similar function; its broad, flat leaves and distinct blossoms distinguish the aquatic plant and call the swamp to mind (fig. 1.15). Those seeking the more thrilling or grotesque end of the swamp vegetation spectrum were well-served by depictions of carnivorous hooded pitcher plants, such as those that surround a plaque designed by Sabina Wells (fig. 1.16).

Waterlilies, lotuses, and spatterdock, however, are not exclusive to the American South, and they present the paradox embedded within the enthusiastic rhetoric surrounding Newcomb's use of the region's environment for its inspiration. Much of this discourse conveys the impression that the choices of subjects distinguish not only the firm from other art potteries, but also its region from the remainder of the United States. Many of the more prevalent subjects seen in Newcomb work, such as irises, were generally popular decorative motifs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While Louisiana boasts native varieties of irises in its wetlands, numerous varieties are native to other regions of the United States, as well as around the globe.[67] There are many other examples of this regionalization of national flora in Newcomb Pottery, such as Charlotte Payne's use

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[66] "Notes on the Crafts and Industrial Arts," *International Studio*, June 1905, 134. Facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Files, University Archives, Tulane University.

[67] Ralph W. Tiner, *Field Guide to Coastal Wetland Plants of the Southeastern United States* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), 202, 269.

of blackberries on a vase (fig. 1.17), or Marie de Hoa LeBlanc's numerous plates with rims featuring roosters alternating with grapes (fig. 1.18). Tiffany & Company's "Magnolia Vase," which was displayed to great fanfare at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, underscores the flexibility of vegetal motifs in representing different regions of the United States, as well as the regions' nebulous boundaries (fig. 1.19). Now in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the *New York Sun* explained at the time that the large silver vase's register of pinecones and pine needles around the rim was intended to symbolize the north and east, the enameled magnolias around the shoulders to represent the "mid-south," and the lattice of cactus leaves and palm fronds near the base the sub-tropical regions. Stalks of goldenrod, executed in gold, were meant to unite all of the regions in an American whole.[68] All of these subjects, save goldenrod, can be found in Newcomb Pottery as representative of the South (fig. 1.20).

Moreover, the abstraction achieved through conventionalization impedes exact identification of some subjects, and for others, their rather generic appearance poses a similar problem. Helpfully, the Pottery printed and affixed labels that included the subject to the undersides of pieces. For example, to the untrained eye, Sabina Wells's magnolia buds are difficult to discern without the label's direction, as they appear much like many other flower buds, if not artichokes (fig. 1.21). In many examples, the viewer must encounter the object under the assumption that it represents something distinctively "southern" to interpret the design accordingly. This can be seen in current attempts to identify the plants featured on Newcomb Pottery objects for which labels have been removed or lost. The white, five-petaled flowers on a chocolate pot decorated by Effie Shephard have been previously described as "mock orange," but without this direction, they could represent any number of flowers, from cherry blossoms to hawthorn (fig. 1.22).[69] The perception of these

[68] "Bloom of Magnolia," *New York Sun,* Friday, May 12, 1893.

[69] There is no label attached to the chocolate pot today.

subjects as particularly authentic representations of the region is dependent on viewers' assumptions, which were confirmed through Newcomb's promoters' work and in aides like labels.

Framed as documentarians of their local surroundings, descriptions of the designers' relationship with their subjects enhanced these impressions of their genuinely regional origins. The *New-York Tribune* reported that "Many a worker has perpetuated upon the vase or mug of her own creation the fragile beauty of some flower or weed from her own garden."[70] Another author for *Scribner's Magazine* claimed, when describing one piece of Newcomb Pottery, that "The herbage and flowers of the neighborhood are utilized; thus the tall jar, twelve and a half inches high, is adorned with the as yet unopened shoots of the horsetail, *Equisetum*."[71] A newspaper advertisement for Marshall Field & Company's offerings of Newcomb Pottery visualizes this creative process for consumers (fig. 1.23). Along the top, an illustration depicts a woman crouched at the edge of a stream in a rural setting, plucking or examining a flower. Situated below, within the accompanying text, is the presumable product of her botanical exploration: a vase with a band of repeating flowers and foliage encircling its shoulders. Just as reporters in national magazines claimed, this imagery suggests that designers merely stepped outside of their doors to find the inspiration for their ornament, their proximity granting them unparalleled access to southern landscapes. The implications that the Newcomb decorators did not have to travel far afield in search of their subjects upheld an expectation that refined young ladies would remain in close proximity to domestic life.[72]

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[70] "Newcomb College Pottery," *New-York Tribune*, Monday, July 14, 1902.

[71] "American Pottery – Second Paper," *Scribner's*, March 1903, 382. Facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University.

[72] These assertions about the decorators' proximity to gardens, and therefore acceptably domestic settings, continued long after Newcomb's aesthetic changed. Sadie Irvine similarly claimed that the decorator "had her own portfolio, pencil studies of various plant forms, tree, etc., that she knew well and probably grew in her own garden: wild iris, Cherokee rose, Confederate jasmine oak, pine, or cypress trees." Note Irvine's adherence to the same plant varieties mentioned by Sheerer and others. Quoted in Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery*, 74.

Situating the flowers and vegetation that appeared on Newcomb College Pottery, whether magnolia tree, pond lily, or horsetail (marsh rushes), as natural elements within the designers' domestic environment evokes relatively rural landscapes, perpetuating a stereotype of southern women inhabiting pastoral settings. This insistence on the Newcomb designers' proximity to the domestic sphere, reinforcing notions of the endeavor's respectability for white affluent women, was bolstered on other fronts as well. Notably, when Philadelphia architect Wilson Eyre designed the new Pottery Building in 1902, he provided the designers with a setting that appeared residential, with its balcony, small chimneys, hipped roof, and dormers. Inside, the Pottery's salesroom was modeled as a "reception room," or front parlor, furnished with Newcomb College Pottery goods, cloaking the building's commercial function under the guise of domesticity (fig. 1.24).[73]

In some instances, the designers' simplistic renderings, despite their relationships to contemporary design principles, were also attributed to the insularity of the South, and these women within it. In her article in the *Craftsman*, Irene Sargent describes the Pottery's movement toward simplicity in the early twentieth century as "judicious…because through the employment of more highly developed design, the pottery would lose its distinctively sectional character."[74] Ednah Robinson opined in *Sunset Magazine* that

> The girls are encouraged to study the distinctive and varied flora of the south, to sharpen their observation and their originality, and to express their own ideas with independence. Singularly some of the happiest conceits have originated with the girls who have never passed the boundaries of their native state. The disadvantage incident to a lack of comparative study seems to have been more than counterbalanced by their freedom of expression, the unconsciousness of fixed methods that leads toward servile imitation.[75]

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[73] Reed, 661; "Louisiana Purchase Exposition Ceramics," *Keramic Studio,* April 1905, 268. These domestic settings were fairly common for the display of women's work, as seen at various international expositions and tearoom shops of craft goods. For more on tearooms as showrooms for southern crafts, in particular, see Bill Anderson, ed., *Southern Arts & Crafts 1890-1940*, 97-100.

[74] Sargent, 73.

[75] Ednah Robinson, "Newcomb Pottery: Its Makers and the Lesson They are Teaching Southern Women," *Sunset Magazine,* June 1903, 132. Facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Files, University Archives, Tulane University.

Simplicity, therefore, was understood to be part of the identity of the southern woman, whose naïveté and insularity from external influences helped foster the creation of pottery most genuinely expressive of her region. Mary Given Sheerer's descriptions of pastoral childhood fantasies using regional flora, such as passing time via blooming flowers, played upon these impressions of premodern women.

Beyond this supposed isolation, Newcomb's designers were also consistently dubbed "girls" or "college girls," continually emphasizing their youth. Many of Newcomb's peer art potteries, Rookwood included, were begun by women or employed them alongside men, but Newcomb was one of the few and earliest among them to be very clearly tied to women students' work and gain national fame. In some respects, this aligned with a national fascination with women college students, who participated in an important stage on the path to becoming the self-determined, educated, early feminist "New Woman." Parallels can be drawn between this form of modernization and the significance of the changes proposed in New South rhetoric.[76] Simultaneously, many of Newcomb College's founders and students struggled to reconcile the ideals of personal and financial independence associated with the New Woman with the enduring symbol of the domestically-oriented southern woman.[77] This is evinced to some degree by the photographs of southern college students included in a 1902 *Ladies' Home Journal* photo essay titled "The College Girl at her Studies." Students at northeastern women's institutions Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Smith, Vassar, Wellesley, and Wells are shown attentively listening to lectures, conducting scientific experiments in laboratories or observatories, and assiduously studying books in their libraries. Students at Newcomb, South Carolina's Winthrop College, and the Women's College of Baltimore are documented participating

[76] Denker, "New Women in the New South," 87.

[77] Watts, 80-81.

in courses in art and domestic sciences; Newcomb students are depicted "painting from nature" in front of the college chapel.[78] These images suggest that, where northeastern women students actively pursued serious, academic endeavors that had previously been associated with men, their southern sisters maintained women's traditional associations with cultivation and domesticity. Further complicating this ongoing construction of the young white southern woman during this period, the South itself was often presented in contemporary literature as a feminine, domestic counterpoint to a masculine, business-driven North, personified in the romantic stereotype of the tempestuous or elegant, young, white southern belle. These comparisons increased alongside the growing discomfort of conflicts brought about by industrialization and urbanization in the Northeast, with the South serving as a fictive, anti-modern and pastoral opposite for which white, Anglo-Saxon audiences yearned.[79] Thus, the rhetoric that cast Newcomb designers as young and insular, and in close proximity to their predominantly rural subjects, helped evoked these romanticized visions of young, wealthy, white southern women in plantation settings. In one contemporary's description of the Newcomb College Pottery's having "young ladies of the *best* [emphasis mine] families engaged in the pottery," "best" was likely intended as a reassurance to readers of the historic affluence and whiteness of Newcomb decorators, and may have likewise brought to mind the southern belle type.[80] Although many of the women designers were far older than the descriptor of "college girl" would have one believe, and they inhabited an actively urbanizing setting, the rhetoric surrounding

[78] Caroly Halsted, "The College Girl at her Studies," *Ladies Home Journal*, April 1902, 26-27.

[79] Nina Silber, *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 5-10. Immigration and labor conflicts prompted much of this anxiety, and New South proponents often pointed to the lack of immigration, and therefore labor organization, to the region as a benefit for financial investors.

[80] Reed, 660.

their production and their use of regional flora in their designs supported prevailing romantic imagery about southern women, and the South by proxy.

The designers' gender also likely limited the range of subjects, which tend far more to the floral than the faunal. Although northeasterners' interest in swamps and bayous certainly extended to alligators, a vase with an alligator by Mazie T. Ryan seems to be one of the few extant examples of Newcomb Pottery to feature it.[81] Most animal subjects at Newcomb involve birds or small creatures, such as rabbits. They often coordinate with the intended use of the object, especially as the firm began to generate small sets of tableware. For example, a series of plates with fish around the rims, or another with crawfish, were probably attempts to resolve the challenge of applying conventionalized design to tableware, still predominantly the purview of porcelain and naturalistic ornament (fig. 1.25). This amusing correlation of design with the object to be consumed can also be seen in some designers' vegetal work, such as Roberta Beverly Kennon's use of Dutchman's Pipe vine, native to Southern Appalachia, on a humidor, or the various iterations of steins decorated with hops (fig. 1.26). For the most part, the animals that served as subjects are more widely found throughout the United States, and they are even less regionally specific than the plant subjects.

Upon close examination, Newcomb's iconography for the South has broad parameters, less an exercise in botanic specificity and more a simultaneous construction and reaffirmation of preconceived distinctions between the American South and the remainder of the United States. Enacted through repetitive discourse about the relationship between the firm and its environs, everything from the regionally distinct to the nationally quotidian in vegetation and flora could be repositioned as southern. These notions were further confirmed by the southern origins of Newcomb's decorators, whose assumed insularity and proximity to their subjects guaranteed the

[81] Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery*, 117.

iconography's authenticity for external viewers. At the same time, the decorators' gender and socioeconomic status placed limits on this iconography, preventing much representation of subjects that would have been perceived as too wild or dangerous to be respectable for young ladies' surveys.

Conclusion

Marie Medora Ross's vase demonstrates the degree to which Ellsworth Woodward, Mary Given Sheerer, and others' promotional efforts are requisite to understanding Newcomb College Pottery as especially evocative of the South. In order to appear modern and as evidence of cultural achievement, products from the Pottery needed to evince an investment in contemporary ideas about design. Limited to a register around the vase's shoulders, Ross's ornament of conventionalized waterlilies simplifies the subject to its key parts – lily pads, vines as connecting and border devices, and blossoms, all flattened and reoriented into a tidy composition. As exhibited in its relationship with Adelaide Alsop Robineau's treatment of the same subject, Ross's decoration serves as testament to Newcomb's fluency with design ideals espoused by northeastern artists, educators, and critics. Because regional and national audiences alike wished to see the South as distinct, the designs require a simultaneous repositioning as genuinely expressive of the region. Through extensive promotional efforts, what was deemed an "American pond lily" in Robineau's descriptions of her designs becomes transformed into an example of southern flora and a symbol for Louisiana bayous. These connotations for the waterlilies support the construct of the South as a pastoral landscape, and Ross, as one of Newcomb's famous "college girl" decorators, a southern belle within it. Despite the professed efforts of Newcomb's leaders to participate in the industrialization of the region and the adherence of the Pottery to tenets of modern design, all in service of ushering in a New South, many of the tropes of the Old South firmly gripped the national imagination.

Chapter 2

Artistic Capital: Lycett's & New York

The long pair of storks adorning a tall vase decorated at William Lycett's studio demonstrate the skill with which Lycett's decorators replicated natural subjects on their porcelain media (fig. 2.1). Small gray-green and dark gray shadows give their bodies and plumage the illusion of fullness, accentuated by the curling, striped tailfeathers of the right stork. The dark purple luster behind them contrasts sharply with the birds' white bodies, contributing to this sense of dimensionality. Bounding the scene within its ornamental function, swirling scrollwork forms the pool in which the storks are meant to stand. This painterly, representational approach to the natural subject, broadly described in the period as naturalism, typifies much of the work completed at Lycett's, and it stands at the opposite end of a design spectrum from the restrained conventionalism employed at the Newcomb College Pottery. While conventionalism represented good or modern design to many during this period, naturalism also had its proponents, and the Lycett's vase demonstrates the studio's fluency in contemporary design discourse in some of the same ways as Marie Medora Ross's vase for the Newcomb College Pottery (see fig. 1.1). The storks were illustrated by Adelaide Alsop Robineau on the back cover of the December 1900 issue of *Keramic Studio*, after Plate 41 from Jules Auguste Habert-Dys's *Fantaisies décoratives* (fig. 2.2). Habert-Dys's chromolithographs, published between 1890 and 1899, provided designs for application to screens, furniture, wallpaper, and ceramics; the storks are shown as a design for a panel. Whether the decorators obtained the design directly from *Fantaisies décoratives* or from Robineau's transfer to *Keramic Studio*, their employment on the vase attests to Lycett's awareness of design discourse and the possibilities for decoration.

In this chapter, I contend that Lycett's selection of ornament was the result of carefully-honed attention to the desires of consumers in Atlanta and the broader region. Founders William

and Francis Lycett learned and developed these skills during their training under their father, china painter Edward Lycett, in his numerous china painting enterprises in New York City. During this significant period, they would have witnessed the rise in cultural power of a new class of extremely wealthy industrial capitalists, whose patronage enabled the growth of numerous purveyors of "art goods," ceramics manufacturers and china painters among them. In Atlanta, the Lycetts found a similar set of conditions, as the white business class, many of whom were vocal champions of a New South, attempted to assert control and establish the city as a cultural capital for the South, following the model established by their New York counterparts. Using china painting courses and custom orders as gauges of consumers' tastes, the Lycetts and their professional decorators came to understand that gilding, detailed renditions of flora and fauna, and occasional forays into "exotic" ornament from the Middle East and Asia would please their consumer audiences, who were emulating examples of these same forms of ornament found in New York capitalists' homes.

New York Foundations

In their youth and early careers in New York City, William and Francis Lycett would have witnessed the rise in social power of extraordinarily wealthy industrial capitalists like the Vanderbilts, as well as their attempts to harness control of American cultural power and center it in the city through their patronage of the arts and newly-established civic institutions. This patronage included ownership of artistic domestic goods, accumulated through expanded modes of consumption and hobbyist pursuits, china painting among them. Through their work with their father, the Lycetts experienced several different approaches to china decorating enterprise and design. Edward and his sons participated in the self-perpetuated ascendancy of New York as a cultural capital in the United States, and the younger Lycetts were thus granted access to the activities and design choices pertinent to this formulation. This more than adequately prepared them to serve their southern clientele, who visibly endeavored to emulate this model in their business, social, and civic practices.

In the decades following the Civil War, New York City became the center of activity for a new class of extremely wealthy families who amassed their fortunes through industrial processing, managing, and development, the Vanderbilts chief among them. Unable to claim a traditional conception of aristocratic heritage for themselves, they consistently looked to examples in Continental Europe and England and created visual and social ties to these sources. They constructed immense mansions in varying styles associated with royalty or nobility, eventually clustering them in the north of the city on Fifth Avenue. These lavish homes not only made these families' wealth readily apparent, but they also allowed them to distinguish themselves from older families in power of more moderate means, who seemed to possess simpler stylistic preferences. These new families used style to assert the dominance of a new economic class.[1] Moreover, many of these individuals engaged in efforts to establish arts institutions, or they patronized manufacturers of art goods and dealers in art and antiquities located in the city. Attempting to create their own London or Paris, this class actively transformed New York City into a cultural capital in the United States, placing themselves and their tastes at its helm.[2] Following Pierre Bourdieu's framing of constructions of social class and their accumulation of forms of capital, these relatively new dominant figures in the American economic sphere recognized the power of cultural capital, or the knowledge of culture and the control of its associated objects, technologies, and institutions, and attempted to quickly harness it for themselves. Especially among the initial members of this class,

[1] Richard Guy Wilson, "The Great Civilization," in *The American Renaissance: 1876-1917* (Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Museum, 1979), 32-37; Wayne Craven, *Gilded Mansions: Grand Architecture and High Society* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2009), 9-12, 34-37; Kevin D. Murphy, "The Francois Premier Style in New York: The William K. and Alva Vanderbilt House," in *New York: Art and Cultural Capital of the Gilded Age*, ed. Margaret R. Laster and Chelsea Bruner (New York: Routledge, 2019), 41-43.

[2] Margaret R. Laster and Chelsea Bruner, "Introduction," in *New York: Art and Cultural Capital of the Gilded Age*, ed. Laster and Bruner (New York: Routledge, 2019), 3-4; Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 140-145. Trachtenberg discusses the moving definitions of culture in the United States during this period, and contends that "culture" strictly signified the arts, religion, higher culture, and personal refinement.

who in many instances hailed from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, they could not claim the inherited knowledge and education that Bourdieu described as the "embodied state." Thus, they compensated for that gap by emulating the examples of those at the top tiers of European society who were associated with an embodied culture understood to be superior. Their founding of arts institutions represents their attempts to further use economic capital to transform cultural capital, and thereby institutionalize their forms of knowledge or culture as superior.[3] Establishing New York City as the cultural capital of the United States required the rapid accumulation of cultural capital, in numerous forms.

Despite much of these industrial capitalists' economic capital being devoted to the acquisition of artwork by European artists or the commission of manses in legibly European aristocratic styles, their patronage of New York-based producers of art goods helped to solidify the city's status as a cultural center. Firms like Herter Brothers and Tiffany and Company profited immensely from industrial capitalists' commissions of highly ornate rooms, filled with the mélange of ornament and furnishings associated with the Aesthetic Movement, for their new manses. Some of the most extravagant examples were found in William Henry Vanderbilt's massive home on Fifth Avenue, constructed between 1879 and 1881 and later destroyed (fig 2.3). Behind the palazzo-like façades of the home's exterior lay a series of fanciful rooms with copious materials and ornament, executed by Herter Brothers. Photographs of the interiors were published in *Artistic Houses*, a compendium of America's largest, most ornate homes produced in several volumes between 1883 and 1884. The library exemplified the extent of permutations possible in Aesthetic movement

[3] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in J. Richardson, *Handbook of Theory and Research for Social Education* (New York: Greenwood, 1986), 243-248. During this period, Thorstein Veblen wrote about cycles of emulation in *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, which partly drives my use of the word "emulation" to describe southerners' activities. Veblen's condemnations of these practices were rooted in their ties to capital and its accumulation, with ownership of goods and art as additional signals of wealth. Besides criticizing the attachment to "beauty" of the Aesthetic Movement, he also took the Arts & Crafts Movement's valuation of the "hand of the maker" to task. See Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, 2nd ed. (1912, reprint, New York: Random House, 1931), especially 126-166.

combinations of ornament. Multiple registers of gilt, pressed panels of scrollwork and acanthus leaves occupy the cove between the carved picture rail and the ceiling, above walls covered in gold wallpaper with blue plush foliage. Strings of beads and other shapes in mother-of-pearl inlay, interpenetrated by carved, high-relief faces, filled the cornices, pilasters, and bookcases. Drapes across the doorways added more patterns to the array, as they were composed of rectangles of carpet-like fabrics. A variety of objects, including ewers with Wedgwood-like raised figures, silver presentation cups, porcelain vases and mantle clocks, and innumerable other ceramic pieces and metal accoutrements fill the flat surfaces of the room. Every corner of the room presents a feast of patterning, textures, and materials for the eye, an extreme example of the variety and juxtapositions attempted in the Aesthetic Movement interior.[4]

Much as these industrial capitalists patronized New York decorating firms and art dealers, other affluent individuals turned to providers of small goods, including Edward Lycett and his numerous china painting firms. Edward Lycett apprenticed in various potteries in Staffordshire, England in his youth, and he worked in a London china painting firm in the 1850s. Like many British potters and china painters, the elder Lycett immigrated to the United States to join new potteries being established in New York and New Jersey, sometime around 1861.[5] William, who was

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[4] Dianne H. Pilgrim, "Decorative Art: The Domestic Environment," in *The American Renaissance*, 116-123; Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, "Patronage and the Artistic Interior," in *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*, Katherine S. Howe et al (Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1994), 81, 88; Craven, *Gilded Mansions*, 89-93; Arnold Lewis, James Turner, and Steven McQuillin, *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses"* (New York: Dover, 1987). Although an anonymous publication, *Artistic Houses* was likely compiled by art critic George William Sheldon. The volumes included photographs and text about 97 buildings, most of which were located in New York City or its suburbs, with a smattering of examples from New England, Chicago, and St. Louis. The southernmost houses were located in Washington, D.C. At this early point in the rise of the industrial capitalist millionaire figure, William H. Vanderbilt and other figureheads of industries like railroads, steel, and oil were less numerous in representation than older forms of industrialism, such as textile production and meat-packing, or mercantile capitalistic endeavors like trade and banking. See *The Opulent Interiors,* 1-15, for more on the economic status and cultural activities of the individuals represented in *Artistic Houses*.

[5] Barbara Veith, "Edward Lycett (1833-1910): An Anglo-American Potter," MA thesis, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum and Parsons School of Design, 1999: 4-7, 16.

born in England in 1855, had begun working in his father's china decorating studio by 1875, noted as a "clerk" in city directories.[6] Shortly after, Edward partnered with another china decorator in the city, George Warrin. While Edward traveled throughout the United States, teaching painting courses in Cincinnati, St. Louis, and other cities, William taught courses and supervised decorating at Warrin & Lycett. Warrin & Lycett was a significant precedent for William's later enterprise in Atlanta. The large establishment included several decorating departments for completing different types of wares – the firm's excellence at producing sanitary ware is mentioned in one contemporary review. It also offered courses for amateur china painters. Its advertisements listed "Imperishable Photographs on China, Decorating to Pattern, or original designs, Coats-of-arms, Initials, Crests, Monograms, and every variety of decoration to order" (fig. 2.4). Many of these services, such as photographs and monograms, became key elements at the later Atlanta studio. George Warrin developed the firm's techniques for reproducing photographs on porcelain, and, due to Edward Lycett's peripatetic career during this period, most likely assisted with William's entrepreneurial training in his absence.[7]

A collection of sketches and designs bearing William Lycett's stamp from this New York period, now in the Brooklyn Museum of Art's archives, reveals the young china painter's typical subject matter and approaches to ornament. Prefiguring the later output of the Atlanta studio, most of the subjects are natural, comprising an assortment of marine life (likely for fish sets and oyster plates), game birds (for game sets), and flowers. In one design for a lobster, the artist delineated the serrated edges of the creature's claws, texture of its legs, and segmentation of parts, exaggerating the curve of its distinctive antennae. The pink-red coloration is added in layers, perhaps a practice exercise in preparation for application of mineral colors in multiple firings. Another card features a

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[6] *Goulding's New York City Directory for 1875-1876* (New York: Lawrence G. Goulding, 1875), 870. Ancestry.com, U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995.

[7] Veith, "Anglo-American Potter," 16-19; Notice, *Crockery & Glass Journal*, May 31, 1877, 14; Advertisement, Warrin & Lycett, *Crockery & Glass Journal*, November 7, 1878, 19.

"salmon trout," or lake trout, comparably finished with exacting attention to detail and a little bit of artistic license. Fins, gills, and other characteristics are outlined, and the creature's miniscule scales and distinguished, spotted coloration are rendered with layers of tiny dots; much like the lobster's antennae, the pink lower fins and spots are elaborated from the drawing's actual counterpart, probably to further differentiate from other fish in the series (fig. 2.5). Likewise, a design for a floral arrangement incorporates many of the same elements seen in the Lycett studio's Atlanta work. A few bright red nasturtiums peek out from behind pink and white rose blossoms, also combined with rosebuds, in a small bouquet (fig. 2.6). Slightly yellow-green in color, the pastel foliage of the nasturtiums and roses in the background contrasts with the blue and gold-tipped foliage in the foreground. Much as seen with the lobster and fish, this depiction evinces close attention and replication of the details of the subject, such as the striations of leaves and yellow stamens of a rose fully in bloom, but in a combination and color scheme more oriented toward decorative interest than scientific exactitude.

Although the exact nature of William Lycett's relationship with Edward Lycett's second firm, established around 1879, remains uncertain, it afforded him connections to different styles and another model of china decorating business. After returning to New York City, the senior Lycett joined forces with fellow former Staffordshire potter John Bennett. In addition to decorating wares, the pair engaged in a mail-order business, in which hobbyist china painters could ship their projects to the firm for final firing. They also shifted their advertising to publications such as *Art Interchange* and *Art Amateur* to appeal to affluent subscribers, mostly women, and they sold some of their products through Tiffany & Company.[8] At this time, William appears to have focused on teaching china painting courses independently of his father's businesses, but works by Bennett from his

[8] Veith, "Anglo-American Potter," 21-23.

personal collection appeared in Edward Atlee Barber's *The Pottery and Porcelain of the United States* (1893).[9] A vase from Lycett's in Atlanta in the collections of the Georgia Museum of Art readily compares to Bennett's work (fig. 2.7). Bennett frequently positioned detailed, but slightly flattened renditions of flora against highly saturated, monochromatic backgrounds. On these decorative objects, the delineation of flowers and leaves in black separate their modulated coloration from the colorful ground. Lycett's vase incorporates these same elements, with the purple iris blooms and green foliage that extend up the body given a slight flattening effect by their articulation in black. Where Bennett's vases typically have a colorful ground, Lycett's contrasts the purple and green flowers with extensive gilding. These similarities demonstrate the familiarity of the Atlanta studio with Bennett's techniques, as well as a wider range of possibilities for naturalistic ornament. Because William Lycett possessed examples of John Bennett's work and hosted displays of contemporary ceramics in his art rooms, it is possible that this vase was custom painted to emulate one placed on exhibit, if in a more lavish manner.

Perhaps most importantly for his eventual consumers in Atlanta, William Lycett opened his first art school in 1882 in Union Square, in the heart of one of New York City's most fashionable shopping districts. His brother Francis, six years his junior, joined the endeavor the following year.[10] The school was short-lived, but establishing a first business in New York allowed the pair to foster a connection between it and Atlanta. An advertisement for "Lycett's Art Schools and China Decorating Works" appeared in *Art Amateur* in January 1884, promoting both the Union Square and

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[9] *Trow's New York City Directory for the Year Ending May 1, 1882* (New York: Trow City Directory Company, 1881), 992, Ancestry.com, U.S. City Directories, 1822-1955; Edward Atlee Barber, *The Pottery and Porcelain of the United States* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons), 306-307. In the 1881-1882 city directory, William Lycett is listed as a teacher at a different address than Bennett & Lycett's china decorating firm, and his later advertisements for his own art school in New York focus allude to his previous location in the Domestic Sewing Company Building. One of the most famous china painting schools at the time, Osgood's, would have been his next-door neighbor.

[10] Advertisement, "A New Art School," *Art Amateur*, September 1882, iii. JSTOR; *The New York City Directory 1884-1885* (New York, 1885), 1066. Ancestry.com, U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995.

Atlanta studios. "For the convenience of our Southern pupils and Amateurs we have opened a branch of our New York establishment in Atlanta, Ga., and we are now prepared to give instruction as above advertised," it states.[11] This description indicates that students of the Atlanta studio would receive the same training and offerings as those in New York, with the second branch opened to grant greater accessibility. It also suggests that the Lycetts had received sufficient inquiries or interest from southern consumers to perceive a demand.

William and Francis had already decamped to Atlanta when Edward Lycett was hired as artistic director for the Faience Manufacturing Company in Greenpoint, Brooklyn in 1884, but the elder Lycett's next maneuver provided his sons with another significant connection to the production of artistic goods in New York. After two years of experimentation with ceramic bodies after Lycett's arrival, the Faience Manufacturing Company's advertisements began promoting wares that were in "Royal Worcester, Sevres, Minton, and Royal Dresden decorations," suggesting that they emulated a variety of European sources. The company garnered the greatest attention for and frequently advertised large-scale vases and other objects that followed the example of English potteries and the prevailing Aesthetic Movement.[12] Reflecting the eclecticism of Aesthetic design sources and the movement's general love of patterning, these pieces juxtapose a wide range of ornament with unique bodies. Two Faience Manufacturing Company ewers with identical bodies but highly different ornamental schemes demonstrate Edward Lycett's array of interests (fig. 2.8). The ewers combine double-gourd bases, elongated necks, spouts with fluting and acanthus leaves, and double-scroll handles, arranging elements derived from classical and rococo design atop a form more typical of Asian ceramics. On one, the base is covered with elaborate scrollwork and

[11] Advertisement, "Lycett's Art Schools and China Decorating Works," *Art Amateur*, January 1884, front matter. ProQuest.

[12] Veith, "An Anglo-American Potter," 31; Barbara Veith, *Aesthetic Ambitions: Edward Lycett and Brooklyn's Faience Manufacturing Company* (Richmond: University of Richmond Museums, 2011), 22.

arabesques in a range of colors, gilding, and raised gold paste decorations, as if an ornamental plate had been repositioned on the ewer's surface. On the other, a scene of poultry pecking in the grass against a mottled turquoise background encircles the base, and a blackberry vine extends over their heads. The subjects' slightly flattened, delineated rendition evokes Japanese woodblock prints. Patterns of flattened flora, outlined with raised gold paste, adorn other vessels with pierced lids or handles derived from Middle Eastern examples (fig. 2.9). This free application of wide-ranging sources, often in different registers on the same object, parallels the eclectic design sources employed in the greater Aesthetic Movement interior for the purpose of achieving harmonious compositions and demonstrates Lycett's ability to develop new decorating approaches to suit the fluctuating tastes of his clientele. Illustrations of vases with similar pierced lids and handles to those on the Faience Manufacturing Company pieces, decorated by William Lycett and his students, accompanied a later article on the Atlanta studio, suggesting that he maintained a relationship with his father's company in order to supply his local consumers with fashionable artistic objects.[13]

The Lycetts' formative period in New York consisted of formal education in art school and apprenticeship-like experiences with Edward Lycett's varying china painting endeavors. Through these enterprises, the Lycetts learned of critical components that would be especially helpful for their own Atlanta studio. Most important among these was the significance of offering china decorating courses and firing services, but each stage also added another element to their design repertoire – photoceramics from George Warrin, different variations on rendering flora from John Bennett, and assemblages of historic ornament to suit Aesthetic Movement tastes from their father's work in art pottery. Working in arts industries in New York as its economic elite sought to recenter American culture in the city, with themselves at its head, also prepared the Lycett brothers to participate in similar efforts on the part of New South proponents in Atlanta.

[13] Maude Andrews, "Summer Sketches," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 4, 1891.

Establishing Expertise

On Sunday, October 7, 1883, a large advertisement announcing an "Art Opening" appeared in the *Atlanta Constitution* (fig. 2.10). Wm. Lycett & Bro planned to open their Art Room the following Tuesday, with the advertisement inviting "the ladies of Atlanta and their friends to come and see their specimens of china painting," among other items, including "new novelties from New York." This initial announcement conveys three significant factors of the Lycetts' establishment. Albeit brief, the mention of availability of items from New York demonstrates the firm's connection to the city and its potential appeal as a cultural center to Atlantans. The firm was presented as an artistic hub, a place for socializing and viewing art, while also making available the materials necessary to pursue one's own creative endeavors. Furthermore, the notice makes evident that the Lycetts prioritized women consumers, particularly "ladies" and their social circles. Building upon their training and prior experience, the Lycetts developed a business model that engaged directly with their consumers and their desires, while simultaneously establishing themselves as New York art experts who could offer affluent Atlantans and other southerners the objects and designs available to their northeastern counterparts.

At the time of the Lycetts' arrival, Atlanta was particularly primed for the establishment of galleries, commercial art schools, and other enterprises. Just as Henry Grady and other prominent business figures championed the New South's economic changes and Atlanta's role as the epicenter of the region's evolution, many of these same individuals and other members of the business class sought to secure the city's position as a cultural center. In 1881, the city's Atlanta International Cotton Exposition included displays of massive paintings by local artist Horace J. Bradley, who, along with James H. Moser, provided illustrations of the fair for *Harper's Weekly*; later, these artists became instrumental figures in promoting the arts in the city. The next year, Oscar Wilde, the figurehead of the Aesthetic Movement, gave a lecture on decorative arts to a full audience at the DeGive Opera House during his American tour. His appearance was sponsored by the Young

Men's Library Association (YMLA), whose membership included Grady.[14] Wilde criticized the city's lack of architecture and art, and he apparently provided his eager audience with keys to achieving the artistic home. Following Wilde's lecture, the YMLA sponsored its first of many "art loan" exhibitions and other activities that fall, borrowing paintings, prints, furniture, and other objects from private collections for a short-term public display aimed, in part, to offer a corrective to public taste. To further this effort to increase Atlantans' art education, Horace Bradley opened his Atlanta Art School in the summer of 1883, after having attended classes at the Art Students League in New York.[15] This flurry of efforts to generate interest in the arts and establish institutions devoted to the production and dissemination of "culture" echoes the white business class's enthusiastic embrace of industrial capitalism in its efforts to mold the New South. Much like building railroads, mills, and factories represented steps on the path to achieving a particular mode of modernity, founding art galleries, schools, and museums achieved the goal of attaining cultural legitimacy according to the standards set by northeastern industrial capitalists.

The *Constitution*'s laudatory response to Lycett's opening demonstrates the level of significance afforded the new entry into the small Atlanta art scene. Pronouncing it "a most delightful place," the report described the studio as follows:

> We have never seen such a display of fine artistic china as is displayed by these young men. They have been connected with Tiffany, Callamore for years, and for a long time have been at the head of the famous china art store on Union Square known as Lycett's. At this store orders are taken for the most distinguished people, and many sent here for execution. Mr. Lycett is now at work on a set of soup plates for Mr. Vanderbilt. They have brought the gems of their immense stock for display here…Their walls are covered with designs, and their tables and shelves full of exquisite things they have decorated on order or for sale.[16]

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[14] Deborah C. Pollack, *Visual Art and the Urban Evolution of the New South* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2015), 18-21. Despite its name, this exposition cannot be considered international in scope, because it drew scant participation from countries outside the United States, let alone states outside the South. In current world's fairs historiography, the International Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans in 1884-1885 is considered the region's first international exhibition.

[15] Carlyn Gaye Crannell, "In Pursuit of Culture: A History of Art Activity in Atlanta, 1847-1926," (PhD diss., Emory University, 1981), 33, 54-56, 63-64; Pollack, 24. Crannell extensively documents the relationship of Atlantans to art and institutions, tracing this civic desire to become the cultural capital of the South to its antebellum foundation.

[16] "A Most Delightful Place," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 14, 1883.

To be sure, Atlanta newspapers during this period were frequently engines of New South boosterism, and the hyperbolic language surrounding the displays serves more as advertising than objective review. The invocation of New York names indicates the power of this connection for this local audience. In this light, the Lycetts' studio offered Atlantans the same level of fine, artistic goods that could be found at high-end retailers like Tiffany, Collamore in New York, and that famous industrial capitalists such as the Vanderbilts desired. The suggestion that customers in the northeastern capital made their orders in the Union Square shop to be completed at the southern branch implies the kind of intervention in the north-south distribution relationship that New South proponents aimed to achieve. The following year, the *Constitution* reported that "the Messrs. Lycett have made their art school an institution which would reflect credit on a much more pretentious city than Atlanta. They have had unusually large classes in china decoration, and are now known over Georgia almost as widely as in Atlanta."[17] Once again, the success of Lycett's served as a marker of the ability of local audiences to recognize the importance of decorative arts and show their appreciation for high quality goods through their consumption.

Beyond this great enthusiasm for Lycett's goods and services, William Lycett worked relatively quickly to insert himself into the art scene and establish a reputation for expertise. Mere weeks after opening the Atlanta studio, he exhibited a decorative panel at the YMLA Art Loan.[18] The following month, Horace Bradley added a special display of decorated china to the gallery. Commenting on the exhibit, one reporter noted, "The Lycett art school makes a fine show…Every piece shown has merit and some of them are rare and exquisite specimens. They show that in Atlanta the decorative art is receiving close and intelligent study."[19] Lycett's placement of his work

[17] "Lycett's Art School," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 1, 1884.

[18] "Art Loan Notes," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 26, 1883.

[19] "The Art Loan," *Atlanta Constitution*, November 6, 1883. The article notes that among the items displayed from Lycett's was the "rich and costly" set they were decorating for the "Wm. H. Vanderbilts" at the time.

and the results of his students' lessons in these exhibits operated at multiple levels. It showcased his abilities as both an artist and a teacher to potential consumers of lessons from the art school and decorated china from the works. It also demonstrated a certain amount of civic participation, especially in Bradley's addition of a designated display of decorated china, a form of welcome for William Lycett from Atlanta's preeminent artist. Additionally, these exhibits served as further proof of the city's cultivation of the arts, now widened to include its population's "intelligent study" of decorative art. Expanding his sources of income and further cultivating his image as an expert in the field, William took on the role of director of the art department of the Atlanta Female Institute in 1885; he served short terms in the same role at the Georgia Capital Female College and the Agnes Scott Institute in Decatur, Georgia, among others, and he taught classes at a local girls' school.[20] William's reputation was sufficiently strong by 1887 that the managers of the annual Piedmont Exposition appointed him manager of the art department, a position in which he served subsequently several times.[21] Each of these endeavors solidified William's status as an expert in his artistic medium.

This self-fashioning as artist shaped many of William Lycett's familial and social activities. Francis Lycett left the business in 1884 and returned to the Northeast, closing the Union Square store shortly thereafter, but Lycett's remained largely a family affair.[22] Evidently, William trained his

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[20] "The Atlanta Female Institute," *Atlanta Constitution,* August 29, 1886; Advertisement, "The Sunny South Female Seminary," *Sunny South* (Atlanta), July 23, 1887; Advertisement, "Georgia Capital Female College," *Atlanta Constitution*, August 1, 1888; Notice on Mrs. DeJarnette's School, *Atlanta Constitution*, September 5, 1890; Advertisement, "Agnes Scott Institute," *Atlanta Constitution*, June 24, 1891.

[21] "Ladies in the Art Department," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 4, 1887; "The Art Department," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 22, 1889; "Piedmont Exposition," *Atlanta Constitution*, April 11, 1890; "Awards Made in the Art Department, Piedmont Exposition," *Atlanta Constitution*, November 6, 1891.

[22] Veith, "Anglo-American Potter," 46; Advertisement, "F. Lycett, Designer & Decorator," *Bridgeport City Directory* (Bridgeport, CT: Price, Lee & Company, 1888), U.S. City Directories, 1822-1955, Ancestry.com. Veith estimated that the Lycetts closed their Union Square store at some point between 1885 and 1886. Francis's wife Alice, whom he married in 1884, was from Bridgeport, Connecticut, and it appears that Francis relocated there and opened his own china painting school and decorating business around 1886.

brother-in-law, Richard Cordon, in china decoration; Cordon left his work in a brass shop in Connecticut to join the firm, probably around the time of Francis's departure, and worked at Lycett's until William's death.[23] After his retirement from the Faience Manufacturing Company in 1890, Edward Lycett joined the Atlanta firm, returning to the types of decorating styles more common in his early career, and experimenting with luster glazes. During the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta in 1895, William gave visitors to his shop copies of Edward AtLee Barber's article on Edward for *New England Magazine*, in which Barber dubbed him "The Pioneer China Painter of America," underscoring his father's reputation and publicizing his presence in the Atlanta studio.[24] Joseph Lycett, the youngest of the brothers, also worked as a decorator at Lycett's for several years, in between attempts to foster ceramics enterprises in St. Louis, Missouri.[25] William's first wife, Lydia, was noted in one article as "one of the most prominent business women of the south," implying that she, too, was involved with the enterprise. She was also named to the committee organizing the fine arts department of the Women's Building for the 1895 international exhibition.[26] As a couple, William and Lydia consistently reminded those in the business class of their status as artists, promoted through notes of entertainments at their home and with friends in

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[23] *Bridgeport City Directory for 1884* (Bridgeport, CT: Price Lee & Company, 1884), 85, U.S. City Directories, 1822-1955, Ancestry.com; *Bridgeport City Directory* (Bridgeport, CT: Price, Lee & Company, 1887), 87, U.S. City Directories, 1822-1955, Ancestry.com; *Atlanta City Directory for 1890* (Atlanta: R.L. Polk & Company, 1890), 540, Internet Archive.

[24] Veith, "American China-Painting Pioneer," 46-47, 121. Several of Edward Lycett's experiments with glazes from this period, which primarily involved attempts at replicating Chinese and Persian glazes, are now in the collections of the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Edward Atlee Barber and Edward Lycett had a strong relationship, and I suspect that Barber's publication was timed to draw more attention to Edward and William's business in Atlanta during the international exposition.

[25] *Atlanta City Directory for 1899* (Atlanta: V.V. Bullock and Mrs. F. Saunders, 1899), 933; *Atlanta City Directory for 1904* (Atlanta: Foote and Davis, 1904), 880; Advertisement, "Joseph Lycett's Ceramic Studio," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 19, 1893; "Sculptor Lycett Robbed of Vase," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat,* December 27, 1906.

[26] "Five Generations of Lycett Family of Atlanta," *Atlanta Constitution*, July 6, 1902; "The Women Named Who Are to Lead in the Good Work of Upbuilding the Woman's Department of the Exposition," *Atlanta Constitution*, April 23, 1894.

the local social registers. In 1890, William was described as "an indispensable factor of Atlanta society. He makes a specialty of those branches of work most affected and appreciated by our fashionable folks, and his patrons are found among the elite of the state."[27] His status within the white, business class community can be seen in the group of individuals named as pallbearers for his funeral, among them Coca-Cola tycoon Asa Griggs Candler, restauranteur H. R. Durand, candy entrepreneur Harry L. Schlesinger, and jeweler J. R. Watts. This strategic sociability extended to their children's social activities – at one party, Sadie and Edward gave the nine year-old daughter of local businessman W. B. Burke a cabinet vase for her birthday gift. At Sadie's own birthday party, "the tables displayed that knowledge of the artistic betokening a master hand. At each guest's place was a gaily decorated pipkin full of candy, bearing her monogram and that of Miss Sadie."[28] These events offered the Lycetts opportunities to further affirm their standing in the business class, their reputation for artistry, and, conveniently, advertise their studio's china decorating capabilities and its possibilities for affluent individuals' social activities.

The Lycetts' ascendancy as taste-makers is made particularly evident in Maude Andrews's detailed, breathless description of their drawing room for her Atlanta society column in 1890, which simultaneously reveals some of the Lycetts' ostensibly personal predilections and their attunement to contemporary movements in interior decoration. The compulsion to describe this interior demonstrates the degree to which William Lycett was regarded more as an artist than as a commercial crockery retailer or instructor; these types of descriptions and representations were popular among readers interested in the Aesthetic Movement and fascinated with artists and their

[27] Minnie Quinn, "Painters of Merit: Art in Atlanta," *Atlanta Constitution*, November 30, 1890.

[28] "Lycett Ends Life with a Revolver," *Atlanta Constitution*, April 16, 1909; "Gossip and News of Society," *Atlanta Constitution*, May 18, 1890; "The Society Event," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 24, 1890.

lives.[29] Andrews pronounced it "The most enchanting drawing room I have seen recently…Just such a drawing room as one would an expect an artist to have." The Lycetts' drawing room walls were decorated according to many of the standards common among Aesthetic Movement interiors, with a narrow wallpaper frieze at the top and a lincrusta (a linoleum-like wall covering) dado at the bottom, harmonizing muted tones of gray, green, and gold. They eschewed carpets and rugs for "art matting," another popular material in American Aesthetic home decoration. Other typical features included bookshelves with niches for busts of Shakespeare and Byron, mounted above a piano near the fireplace, and a "cozy corner," with crimson Turkish divan and lamp with porcelain base painted by Lycett. Most of the furniture was made of wicker, painted white and trimmed in gold; Lycett advertised offerings of materials for painting wicker at the studio.[30] Besides a variety of watercolors, sea scenes, and landscapes, Andrews notes the presence of works by a group of acclaimed Atlanta painters: "a splendid magnolia against a rich, dark ground from Mr. Barnitz [Harry Wilson Barnitz], an overturned basket of red and yellow cling peaches from Mr. James Field [James Pope Field], a box of bonbonniers from Mr. Horace Bradley."[31] This noted patronage of Atlanta artists

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[29] Charlotte Gere, *Artistic Circles: Design & Decoration in the Aesthetic Movement* (London: V&A Publishing, 2010), 23.

[30] Advertisement, "Enamels in All Colors Available at Lycett's," *Atlanta Constitution,* September 28, 1890; Clarence Cook, *House Beautiful* (1881, repr. ed., New York: Dover, 1995), 46-193; A. R. Ramsey, "Interior Decoration," *Ladies' Home Journal,* February 1889; Julia Darrow Cowles, *Artistic Home Furnishing for People of Moderate Means* (New York: F. M. Lupton, 1898), Rare Books, Winterthur Library. The advertisement promotes enamels "for renovating your old wicker chairs, will look as good as new," and appeared one month after the description of the Lycetts' drawing room.

[31] Maude Andrews, "Summer Salad for Sunday Readers," *Atlanta Constitution,* August 10, 1890. Harry Wilson Barnitz was an Ohio transplant who taught at Horace Bradley's art school, and he assumed a leadership role in Atlanta's fine arts scene after Bradley departed to New York City to become art editor for *Harper's Weekly* and director of the Art Students' League. Field trained in Paris and taught courses in outdoor sketching. Notably absent from this list of local artists in Lycett's collection is the most famous American artist to have worked in Atlanta at this time, Henry Ossawa Tanner. The Black painter knew James Pope Field and had been a student at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts at the same time as Barnitz. Like Lycett, he also taught art courses, but at Clark University, a historically Black university. Whether Tanner was actually part of Lycett's circle or not, his lack of coverage in this article and other local media reports on the arts demonstrates the degrees to which racial discrimination governed daily life, including the arts, in Atlanta. See Pollack, 32-37.

demonstrates the Lycetts' participation, if not level of dedication, to the artistic cause in the city. It also reveals a shared preference for natural subjects and representational modes of their depiction.

All of these individual efforts solidified William Lycett's reputation, and thereby that of Lycett's studio, as a knowledgeable source of information about contemporary art and decorative arts. In turn, the china painter's circulation among the social classes that made up his primary consumer audience provided him with insights into their activities, the role his products may have played within them, and their aesthetic preferences. The various china painting courses that Lycett's offered likely provided the most fruitful information regarding consumer taste. Throughout the United States, and as Lycett had directly witnessed in New York, crockery retailers in the last quarter of the nineteenth century realized that providing firing services and lessons allowed them to gauge the interests of most of their primary consumers; hobbyist pursuits did not, as they first feared, compete with sales of elaborate decorative wares or full table sets, because few completed such extensive projects.[32] Lycett's advertising publicized its china painting lessons and firing services as much, if not more, than its ceramic products, consistently directing this information to the women the firm anticipated purchasing lessons and goods, as seen in the Lycett brothers' initial invitation to the "ladies of Atlanta." In early advertisements, Lycett's consistently suggested women undertake the courses to create holiday presents for their friends, but the actual relationship between lessons and consumption of custom goods are made particularly transparent in an 1893 advertisement:

> Ladies can with a few lessons at Lycett's paint their own gifts for their friends. It isn't necessary to take a course; you can take a few lessons and have something to show for your time and trouble. If you cannot come up to paint yourself and want Christmas or wedding presents he can show you novelties not to be had in the ordinary store and can paint you something to order with initials or monograms on, and can carry out ideas you may suggest.[33]

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[32] Regina Lee Blaszczyk, *Imagining Consumers: Design and Innovation from Wedgwood to Corning* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 70-74.

[33] Advertisement, "Lycett's," *Atlanta Constitution*, November 12, 1893.

Here, the advertisement clearly indicates the multiple levels at which Lycett's operated – a few lessons to complete a particular project, a full course to learn china painting as a practice, or, if time did not allow a woman to complete this work herself, a piece decorated according to her direction and tastes.

William Lycett's knowledge of consumer taste was not limited to Atlanta women; students from throughout the South traveled to the studio to take his courses, and Lycett also participated in some of the same traveling teaching practices as his father. The national publication *Art Amateur* responded to a query about southern art schools from a woman in Macon, Georgia with a recommendation for Lycett's, stating "We know of no better art school in the South than that of William Lycett & Brother, Atlanta, Ga. In china painting especially the instruction is practical and thorough."[34] Society columns noted the accomplishments of women who took courses at Lycett's. For example, Lillian Dent of Newnan, Georgia, studied china painting at the firm after graduating from Wesleyan College, and Carrie Mae Brown of Asheville, North Carolina traveled to Lycett's studio to study. After returning home from studying Lycett's school, Helen Gill of Huntsville, Alabama had her china painting work displayed at a local store.[35] In addition to teaching courses at the various women's institutions surrounding Atlanta, William led china painting instruction at the regional Chautauqua summer college. He appears to have begun traveling furth afield to teach courses in the late 1880s, typically hosted by a prominent woman in town.[36] Occasionally, advertisements announcing Lycett's arrival illustrated the style in which potential students would be

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[34] "Sundry Queries Answered," *Art Amateur*, January 1884. ProQuest.

[35] "News of the Week in Society Circles," *Atlanta Constitution*, November 10, 1895; "In Society Circle of State," *Greensboro* (NC) *Daily Industrial News,* January 27, 1907; "The Social Circle," *Huntsville* (AL) *Morning Mercury*, September 8, 1905.

[36] "The Summer College," *Atlanta Constitution*, June 10, 1888; "Exquisite China Painting," *Macon* (GA) *Telegraph,* April 24, 1884; Maude Andrews, "Working for Others," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 8, 1889.

working or consumers could purchase. An elaborate rococo style vase decorated with roses accompanies one such promotion (fig. 2.11).[37] Eventually, former pupils opened studios as branches of the Atlanta firm, as Mary "Mamie" Goodwin Griggs did in Columbus, Georgia in 1890. Lycett also made appearances in support of other china painting studios, such as that of Carrie W. Morgan and Ida Norton McGuire in Macon in 1899.[38] Later, William's son Edward was also sent to Columbus to manage a china painting studio, after apprenticing with his father and grandfather and attending the Georgia Technical Institute.[39] More oblique references to Lycett's broader travels may have included leading short-term china painting lessons, establishing connections with retailers, or selling and setting up kilns.[40] Moreover, after Lydia's sudden death in 1905 and William's subsequent remarriage to LaGrange, Georgia china painter Caroline Watson Morgan, the firm advertised more widely.[41] These extended networks augmented the firm's connections to the aesthetic preferences of a wide swath of affluent southerners.

Short-term courses likely comprised single-project efforts on the part of many of the women who undertook them, but for others, china painting courses at Lycett's contributed to their teaching repertoire or promised a potential career of its own. The firm promoted reduced tuition for summer

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[37] Advertisement, "Mr. Lycett of Atlanta," *Columbus* (GA) *Enquirer-Sun*, October 11, 1908.

[38] "Short News Notes," *Columbus* (GA) *Daily Enquirer*, January 2, 1890; "Items of Local News," *Americus Times* (GA), January 22, 1895; "An Art Opening," *Macon* (GA) *Telegraph*, April 2, 1899. The article mentions that Carrie W. Morgan moved to Macon from Atlanta, so she may have also been a pupil of Lycett's.

[39] Michelle Miller, "Painted Porcelain of the Lycett Studios of Atlanta," in *Homecoming: The Sixth Henry D. Green Symposium of the Decorative Arts*, ed. Dale L. Couch (Athens: Georgia Museum of Art, 2012), 113; "Mr. Edward Lycett in the City," *Columbus* (GA) *Enquirer-Sun,* October 18, 1908.

[40] "Mr. Lycett," *Tuskegee* (AL) *News,* June 1, 1905; "Returned to the City," *Atlanta Constitution,* May 17, 1896, 18. For example, William Lycett's presence in Tuskegee, assisting with a china kiln, was noted in a local newspaper, and Lycett's return to Atlanta was described as taking place after "an extended trip through Texas."

[41] "Mrs. William Lycett Dies," *Atlanta Constitution,* February 24, 1905; Marriage License, William Lycett and Carrie Watson Morgan, Fulton County, Georgia, October 24, 1905, Marriage Records from Select Counties, 1828-1978, Ancestry.com; Advertisement, "Mr. William Lycett, Mrs. Carrie Watson Lycett," *Keramic Studio*, February 1906, back matter. Advertisements for Lycett's appeared in issues of *Keramic Studio* from this point through 1911.

courses for teachers and young women students, and it offered "practical information to young ladies desirous of teaching Decorative Art."[42] Eventually, Lycett's advertisements boasted that pupils had become teachers all over the country. Although never expressly stated, Lycett's lessons were probably limited to white participants, especially those with sufficient means to afford them. "It is interesting to visit the studio when his classes are at work and see the gold and brown and dusky heads of our dainty belles bending over the delicate work, and watch it under their deft fingers," Minnie Quinn reported in 1890.[43] To a limited extent, these courses also helped the Lycett family train students for future employment in the china decorating works. With few exceptions, decorators did not sign their pieces, making anonymous contributions to the general Lycett's oeuvre, and no employment records with full lists of decorators exist in public collections. Some information about pathways to promotion at Lycett's can be gleaned from newspaper articles and city directories, which list many women, all white, as decorators or artists at the firm. The aforementioned Mamie Griggs, who was entrusted with opening a branch of the firm in another city, was one of the school's best known and most successful pupils. She also won several medals at the annual Piedmont expositions and exhibited a vase in the 1895 international exposition (fig. 2.12). Much as occurred with William Lycett's own rise from apprentice to decorator in New York directories in the 1870s, Bertha Heins is noted first as a saleslady in Atlanta directories in 1907, then a clerk the following year, then a decorator in 1909.[44] While the various costs of courses at Lycett's presented one obstacle to widespread participation for women of lower economic means, it must be

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[42] Advertisement, "Wm. Lycett's Art School & China Decorating Works," *Atlanta Constitution*, August 1, 1888; Advertisement, "William Lycett," *Atlanta Constitution*, May 5, 1905.

[43] Quinn, "Painters of Merit." Although "dusky" was often used as a derogatory term to describe Black skin, I believe in this context it was employed strictly in reference to hair color.

[44] *Atlanta City Directory for 1907* (Atlanta: Foote and Davis, 1907), 827, Internet Archive; *Atlanta City Directory for 1908* (Atlanta: Foote and Davis, 1908), 776, Internet Archive; *Byrd's New City Directory of Atlanta for 1909* (Atlanta, 1909), Internet Archive.

noted that some of the decorators and clerks at the firm appear to have come from working-class families or were the daughters of widows. A tribute published at the time of William's death alluded to his "liberal kindnesses to poor girls."[45] These descriptions, the racial hierarchies at the firm revealed in city directories, and the limits of William Lycett's teaching to white women's colleges and social groups indicate that, like most other facets of life in turn-of-the-century South, entry to Lycett's was understood to be restricted to white people, with concessions made for white individuals of lower socioeconomic status that were not extended to Black individuals of any background.[46]

Through the Lycetts' participation in a number of artistic and social networks, as well as consistent reference to their connections to New York, Lycett's, as a firm, came to represent a place of artistic authority, where white affluent consumers could create or command items that would represent their carefully-honed aesthetic sensibilities. Understanding the flexibility that their artist-entrepreneur model afforded, the Lycetts ably navigated relationships within an emerging artistic community as well as among the white business class that would comprise the majority of their firm's clientele. Inserting themselves into these communities not only increased the reputation of their studio, but also provided them with valuable insight into the tastes and aspirations of their primary consumers. William Lycett increased this body of knowledge with his traveling china painting courses, along with secondary studios operated by his pupils and other travels throughout

[45] Mrs. J. C. Gautier, "A Tribute to William Lycett," *Columbus* (GA) *Enquirer-Sun*, May 12, 1909.

[46] Unlike the Newcomb College Pottery, for which several scholars have compiled biographies of the decorators, the limited scholarship on Lycett's thus far emphasizes members of that family. From city directories, beginning in 1890, and newspaper advertisements, the following individuals outside the Lycett family worked as clerks or decorators at the firm: William H. Barker (1906-1909, left to work with Louise M. Green), Ida Campbell (1907-1908), Louise Conaway (1908), Eula Dozier (1908), Louise M. Green (1907-1908; established her own china painting firm in 1909), Sarah E. Haley (1901-1903), Winnie Hind (1902), Cora Martin (1903-1905), Josie Pearce (1907), Elise Schwitzerlet (1909), Hattie Sewell (1907), Herbert Storer (1892-1896), D Homer Van Degriff (1909). The following individuals, all Black men, were noted as porters, packers, or "office boys": Crawford Hare (1887), Alvarian Davis (1902), William King (1901-1903), Edward Seagrave (1895), William Turner (1899).

the South. Success in china painting depended on one's ability to develop a reputation for producing quality work and an understanding of the local population's tastes. From extant Lycett's china, this appears to have largely entailed a dedication to naturalism.

Naturalistic Tendencies

Much of Lycett's success came from its "white and gold" tableware, consisting of various white porcelain objects decorated with gilt stippling along rims or other edges, and fanciful monograms in the center, which are discussed further in Chapter Four. Setting "white and gold" aside, remaining objects demonstrate that the Lycetts discovered that their local clientele generally preferred natural subjects, executed in varying degrees of representation. This includes the firm's production of photoceramics, for which it consistently hosted an adjoining photography studio. Lycett's products align with larger art goods manufacturers' efforts to satisfy a continued predilection for these decorative modes, as well as contemporary china painting instructors' obeisance to naturalism over conventionalization. Compared to the Newcomb College Pottery's insistence on geographic specificity, the general botanical origins of most of the flowers represented on Lycett's objects betray a desire for consistency with national standards for culture. The flora on Lycett's china, therefore, operate in much the same way as southerners' selection of architectural styles first patronized by wealthy northeasterners or their adherence to these capitalists' economic models – a form of visible reconciliation enacted through the erasure of perceived difference.

Whereas the Newcomb College Pottery applied principles of "good design," mostly derived from British design reformers' ideas about creating different forms of ornament suitable to industrial manufacture, Lycett's deployment of "naturalism" more readily corresponds with others' calls for the application of fine art methods to manufacture. British theoretician John Ruskin firmly believed in fostering close ties between the two fields, claiming in 1859 that "If you glance over the map of

Europe, you will find that where the manufactures are strongest, there art also is strongest."[47] In Ruskin's opinion, art should "describe or explain" a natural subject, or "the facts of the universe," and it entailed the artful composition of these facts with close attention to the use of color.[48] Conventionalization, in this view, did not qualify as *art*, and thus did not resolve industrial manufacturing's aesthetic problems. Likewise, French manufacturers earned great renown, and numerous awards at international exhibitions, for their commingling of fine arts techniques with the industrial arts in a traditional, representational manner. Sculptors executed highly realistic human and animal figures to adorn immense sideboards and cabinets, artists created designs for wallpapers with abundant bouquets and garden scenes, and painters rendered miniscule flowers and highly detailed fauna on the surfaces of the famed porcelain of Sèvres and Limoges.[49] The primacy of representation, therefore, was maintained by those invested in a close aesthetic relationship between the fine and decorative arts, and who preferred the traditional, representational modes of art associated with fine arts academies. This type of ornament was most heavily associated with the French luxury trades, and thus carried important signifiers of upper-class wealth and taste. Having established his firm as a producer of art, and himself an artist within it, it follows that William Lycett

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[47] John Ruskin, "Lecture II: The Unity of Art," published in *The Two Paths: Being Lectures on Art and the Application to Decoration and Manufacture, Delivered in 1858-1859* (New York: John Wiley & Son, 1870), 53.

[48] Ruskin, "Lecture I: The Deteriorative Power of Conventional Art over Nations," published in *The Two Paths: Being Lecture son Art and the Application to Decoration and Manufacture, Delivered in 1858-1859* (New York: John Wiley & Son, 1870), 23-26.

[49] Catherine Lynn, "Decorating Surfaces: Aesthetic Delight, Theoretical Dilemma," in *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement*, Doreen Bolger Burke et al (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), 58; for more on France's positioning of luxury goods and hand manufacture at the Crystal Palace Exhibition and beyond, see Whitney Walton, *France at the Crystal Palace: Bourgeois Taste and Artisan Manufacture in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Claire Jones, *Sculptors and Design Reform in France, 1848 to 1895: Sculpture and the Decorative Arts* (London: Ashgate, 2014); Peter Trippi, "Industrial Arts and the Exhibition Ideal," in *A Grand Design: The Art of the Victoria & Albert Museum*, eds. Malcolm Baker and Brenda Richardson (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1997). These divisions were also driven by historic rivalries between British and French industries, and British design reform can be seen as a nationalistic counter to French naturalism.

would similarly embrace the representational modes associated with fine art, rather than design, during this period.

Many American porcelain manufacturers in the late nineteenth century addressed their perceived inadequacies by incorporating fine art approaches to form and ornament. Besides the Union Porcelain Works's Century Vase (see fig. I.3), Trenton, New Jersey manufacturer Ott & Brewer's immense baseball vases were some of the other few American porcelain contributions at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition to receive great critical praise. Executed in parian, a low-fired porcelain with a marble-like texture, the vases feature bands of molded ornament, including low-relief sculptures of baseball players in action, and are surrounded on their bases by freestanding players, each in a different pose (fig. 2.13). These sculptural figures blurred the boundaries between fine art and commercial products to such an extent that one of the vases was removed to the Art Hall shortly after the exhibition's opening.[50] Albeit a display piece, this attention to detail and quality speak to the solutions that Ruskin and others wished to see come to fruition in manufactured goods. A similar sculptural treatment of porcelain objects can be seen in the work of the Willets Manufacturing Company, also of Trenton. For example, a series of pitchers produced from 1887 to 1893 take the form of a swirling nautilus shell; a putto sits on top and holds a cascading ribbon, which acts as the object's handle (fig. 2.14).[51]

More frequently, the application of representational modes from fine art to porcelain at larger manufacturing firms occurred via hand-painted decoration. While some firms specialized in the repeating patterns, raised gilt interlace, and stylized ornament associated with the Aesthetic Movement and bodies of work like Edward Lycett's for the Faience Manufacturing Company, other

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[50] Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, *American Porcelain 1770-1920* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), 166.

[51] Frelinghuysen, *American Porcelain*, 202-203.

firms, either simultaneously with this type of work or as the predominant focus, decorated art wares with soft, pastel renderings of botanical subjects and figures. Ornament's variability during this period is made apparent in an 1890s pitcher attributed to Knowles, Taylor, and Knowles of East Liverpool, Ohio. The pitcher's overall bulbous form, linear gilt foliate decorations around the spout, raised gilt scrollwork, and turquoise, enamel dots around its middle evince the same interest in Middle Eastern forms and ornament expressed by many British design reform authors, but these are combined with bunches of light pink, pale yellow, and cream roses with blue-green foliage, on a misty, rainbow-hued ground (fig. 2.15).[52] After designing for Ott & Brewer and the Willets Manufacturing Company, Walter Scott Lenox founded the Ceramic Art Company (later Lenox) in 1889 in Trenton and primarily focused on botanical scenes and figural paintings in its decorated wares; it also produced undecorated Belleek porcelain for hobbyist decorators and small decorating companies, including William Lycett's.[53] Many of the Ceramic Art Company's pieces incorporated soft-hued renditions of floral subjects, and the company later garnered a strong reputation for its cabinet plates that featured elaborate renditions of orchids. Competing with European porcelain manufacturers and the nascent art potteries, these American porcelain makers made inroads in their domestic market by providing consumers with this variety of romantic, representational ornament.

Decorators at William Lycett's studio took up approaches to ornament that paralleled that of the decorators at the large American manufacturers, offering southern consumers a regionally-produced variation of these art wares in its offerings of decorative objects. A coordinating vase and

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[52] Frelinghuysen, *American Porcelain*, 216-217.

[53] Ellen Paul Denker, *Lenox China: Celebrating a Century of Quality 1889-1989* (Trenton, NJ: Lenox, 1989), 13-17, 28; Denker, *Faces & Flowers: Painting on Lenox China* (Richmond, VA: University of Richmond Museums, 2009), 10-17; Pamela Wagner, *Hidden Heritage: Recent Discoveries in Georgia Decorative Art, 1733-1915* (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 1990), 105. Denker documents William Lycett's Art School as one of CAC's customers in a 1903 company ledger. The exhibition *Hidden Heritage* included a CAC vase decorated and signed by C. W. Lycett, attributed to a cousin at the time; this is more likely by William Lycett's second wife, Carrie Watson Lycett.

ewer provide particularly ornate examples (fig. 2.16). On the vase, clusters of light pink roses are separated in a thin, gold frame from a porcelain body completely covered with light pink and mottled gilt. As seen with other decorative work in this vein, the roses and their bright green foliage are set against shadows of further background foliage in greens and light blue, imbued with a light green mist. Similarly, the roses occupying the central band of the accompanying ewer are surrounded by a green mist, and rosebuds and light blue and green shadows of foliage escape the central band to meet the gilt encrustations around the ewer's base. In addition to these dimensional, hazy renditions of flowers, the light pink and green color combinations also correspond with those of the northeastern manufacturers. Lycett's seems to have been particularly cognizant of the output of the Ceramic Art Company. Placing a vase and a dessert plate decorated at Lycett's alongside a Ceramic Art Company vase painted by William H. Morley makes some of these likenesses more apparent (fig. 2.17). Morley's pastel roses were a frequent subject of the firm's advertisements, and he became famous for the soft, rainbow-like blends of color that appeared in their background. The arrangement of roses on Morley's vase is echoed in Lycett's decorations; although Lycett's are more flattened and delineated with gilding, the spidery branches, impossible downward growth pattern, and light green and blue shadows of foliage are shared elements. Morley's signature rainbow background is employed, with slightly higher saturation and less blending, behind the berries on the Lycett's dessert plate. The strong highlights on the leaves on Lycett's ivy are comparable to those that shine on the leaves on Morley's vase. Evidently, William Lycett completed figural work that was probably similar to Lenox's face plates (fig. 2.18), including a series of cups with faces from George du Maurier's *Trilby* that were auctioned at a local society event in 1895, and a miniature portrait of

Jefferson Davis's daughter Winnie for a member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy in the early 1900s.[54]

Although most of Lycett's tableware conformed to its most popular "white and gold" scheme, the firm decorated some dining objects with natural subjects, especially for fish and game sets, and they, too, conformed to ongoing national fashions in ceramics decoration. Extant in numerous iterations, Lycett's game sets were likely painted by Edward Lycett when he worked at the studio during his retirement, between 1892 and 1910 (fig. 2.19). Most feature highly-detailed illustrations of game birds in landscapes in their center, matching watercolors of the same subject in a book of Edward Lycett's sketches now in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.[55] Not entirely original in concept, such arrangements are identical to European porcelain fish and game sets sold through New York retailers (fig. 2.20). These sets also reflect the enormous impact of one of the other significant events in ceramics production in the United States in the 1870s: the commissioning of President Rutherford B. Hayes's White House dining service. Manufactured by Haviland & Company in Limoges, France from designs by American Theodore R. Davis, a prominent illustrator for *Harper's Weekly*, each plate in every course, as well as most of the serving dishes, featured highly detailed paintings of fish, fowl, flora, and other creatures, typically in a landscape setting, that represented different locations in the United States (fig. 2.21). They were also

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[54] "A Busy Week It Has Been in Society," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 20, 1895; "Georgia Daughters End Interesting Convention," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 30, 1903. Purportedly, the *Trilby* cups were so popular that "the artist has received more orders for Trilby cups than he can fill in a month's time." The Winnie Davis miniature was donated to a memorial sponsored by the UDC at what was then Georgia's state normal college in Athens, later absorbed into the University of Georgia. Although she spent most of her adult life in New York City or northeastern vacation locales, Varina Anne "Winnie" Davis (1864-1898) made appearances at events in the South that promoted Lost Cause efforts. The original "Daughter of the Confederacy," she became an emblem of white women's supposed purity and the paternalistic, supremacist societal structures put in place to protect it. For more on Winnie Davis and her relationship with the United Daughters of the Confederacy, see Cita Cook, "Women's Role in the Transformation of Winnie Davis into the Daughter of the Confederacy," in *Searching for Their Places: Women in the South Across Four Centuries*, ed. Thomas H. Appleton and Angela Boswell (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 144-160.

[55] Veith, *Aesthetic Ambitions*, 100-101.

finished with the type of gilt, clouded or stippled borders that are regularly seen on Lycett's dishes. Haviland published a pamphlet of illustrations to promote their work on the Hayes set, and several duplicate sets were made and exhibited in major metropolitan areas. Its popularity was such that Louise Vance-Phillips still referenced its exceptional quality and scale when she published her *Book of the China Painter* twenty years later.[56] Even as European porcelain manufacturers began producing simpler designs, some figures in American china painting criticized this direction of design and insisted on the importance of thorough representation of the subject. Conveying news of the latest European decorations in retail stores in New York for its readers, editors of *The China Decorator* sniffed, "Quite a novel decoration is a game set decorated with fish and seaweeds. What the manufacturer had in mind can only be conjectured. The coloring was delicate and pretty, but the fish swam over an expanse of white china with never an indication of water."[57]

This dedication to representation and reticence to embrace more abstract forms of ornament, particularly conventionalization, is especially pronounced in much of the writing around china painting at the turn of the century, and the Lycetts likely drew the conclusions that led to their continued dedication to naturalistic ornament from similar preferences made manifest in their china painting courses. "Too many happy days have I spent in the wild greenwood, in the grand old, self-planted pine-forests of my native State, to bow entirely at the altar of the 'purely conventional," Susan Stuart Frackelton wrote in her 1886 china painting guidebook *Tried by Fire*. "Even the correct designs on English wall-paper, though they please, and there is great good in them, fail to conquer

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[56] Margaret Brown Klapthor, *Official White House China: 1789 to the Present*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999), 102-118; David Barquist, "Presidents and Porcelain: 'To Fix the Taste of Our Nation Properly," in *American Presidential China: The Robert L. McNeil, Jr. Collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art*, ed. Susan Detweiler (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2008), 15-17; Louise Vance-Phillips, *Book of the China Painter* (New York: Montague Marks, 1896), 125. The set sufficiently impressed one New South railroad magnate, James Henry Dooley of Richmond, Virginia, that he purchased a duplicate. It is now displayed at Dooley's former home in Richmond, Maymont.

[57] "New Decorations," *The China Decorator*, March 1889, 197. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

the hot Philistinism which burns in my blood. It is beyond belief that the circles of the grand poem of the universe can be squared or reduced to paper in strong outlines, flat tins, and thin washes."[58] Acknowledging the aesthetic possibilities of conventionalism for the rendition of flowers on ceramics, given the "strong love of the American for the beauties of the floral world," another author claimed in 1896 that the responsibility for ongoing resistance to conventionalization lay with hobbyists, writing "For what may strictly be called conventional ornament there is little inclination among our amateurs."[59] The debates surrounding naturalism's appropriateness for utilitarian objects reached such a degree that by 1903, in an effort to offer clarity, the editors of *Keramic Studio* assigned it a specific role. "We believe in the naturalistic painting of flowers and other subjects – but we wish to impress on china painters the fact that such work forms a *picture* and not a *decoration* and should be treated as such – painted on a panel, framed or unframed, and hung on a wall as is an oil painting or water color of the same subject."[60] The periodical continued to publish the sorts of soft, pastel renditions of natural subjects that appear on Lycett's objects, but they were usually presented as panels or nature studies, with subsequent suggestions for the abstraction of similar subjects for application on utilitarian objects (fig. 2.22).

Considering William Lycett and his audiences, the evident preference for this approach to ceramics decoration may have been enhanced out of an effort to attain cultural capital. To paint natural subjects, or commission their replication, on decorative objects and tableware signified one's level of appreciation of "fine art"; this alignment of representational modes with the fine arts is embedded within *Keramic Studio*'s entreaties to its readers to leave such subjects to pictures and

[58] Susan Stuart Frackelton, *Tried by Fire* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1886), 13.

[59] L. Vance-Phillips, *Book of the China Painter* (New York: Montague Marks, 1896), 2.

[60] Editor's Notes, *Keramic Studio*, August 1904, 73.

paintings. Lycett's consumers probably held the same opinion as the editors of *The China Decorator*, who criticized what they called the "Boston style" and firmly declared in 1889:

> Painting is the art of copying nature's most beautiful objects: the human face and form, the flowers and landscapes, the fruits and birds and animals, and the nearer the copy approaches to nature's handiwork the more perfect the work, but when one attempts to improve upon nature – and surely these new departures are claimed to be an improvement on the old style of work – a more skillful hand will be needed than has yet made itself apparent…[61]

Desirous of approximating the levels of culture attributed to their northeastern counterparts, Lycett's consumers brought fine art into their homes in as many ways possible, including to the dishes on their table. Their relatively easy access to such artistic china, or ability to commission it, attested to the greater region's development and an overcoming of a certain amount of backwardness. Thus, the "William Lycett/Atlanta, GA" stamp that appears on the reverse of most of Lycett's products may have been the most important decoration of all, since it affirmed the southern origins of these stylish goods.

Beyond a preponderance of roses, most of the other flora used in Lycett's ornament were fairly common varieties found in gardens throughout the United States, and they further evince Lycett's consumers' desires to be perceived as cultured or artistic, following national standards. Examining the April 1893 Floral Supplement for the popular periodical *The Ladies' Home Journal* alongside dessert plates and nut dishes decorated at Lycett's, commonalities between recommendations for contemporary gardens and these frequent subjects emerge. To steer readers away from the "close-clipped" and "neatly-trimmed" formal garden and toward a more "artistic" direction, F. Schuyler Mathews implored readers to select flowers such as poppies and asters for their brilliant color and natural, asymmetrical forms; this asymmetry and informality is reflected in Lycett's nut bowls, on which *grisaille* poppies and asters stretch into the bowl's green centers (fig. 2.23). Mathews and another contributor, Eben Rexford, concurred on the quality of nasturtiums in

[61] "Local Exhibitions," *The China Decorator*, January 1889, 159. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

the modern garden, with Rexford citing their versatility in the garden and interior decoration, particularly in dining rooms decorated with white and gold. This color combination may explain the frequent incorporation of deep red nasturtiums with white and gold decorations on Lycett's porcelain (fig. 2.24). Other flowers found on Lycett's china include phlox, violets, and lily-of-the-valley, all cited by contributor George Ellwanger for their "sweetness." Even the seemingly more exotic chrysanthemum, derived from Japanese ornament, "became the most popular flower of the autumn" (fig. 2.25).[62] Like the roses, these flowers bear little specific relationship to the South, either in botanical origins or mythos, and appearances of ornament on the firm's products that could be connotated in such a fashion, such as dogwoods, are relatively few in number.[63]

Moreover, by painting roses, nasturtiums, chrysanthemums, and other garden flowers on the surfaces of their projects, the women in Lycett's china decorating courses associated themselves with civilizing approaches to the natural world. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the cultivation of domestic gardens came to symbolize the civilization of the wilderness, or a woman's refinement of the self. In literature, flowers were referenced as a civilizing force in women's lives; they also presented many of the same qualities associated with stereotypes about women – fragility, impermanent beauty, and diminutive stature.[64] Because these cultivars were so closely associated with domestic gardening, they also connoted lives centered around the domestic sphere. Many of

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[62] F. Schuyler Mathews, "The Laying Out of an Artistic Garden," Floral Supplement, *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1893, 3; Eben E. Rexford, "The Pansy and Nasturtium," Floral Supplement, *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1893, 4; George H. Ellwanger, "Which Is the Sweetest Flower?" Floral Supplement, *Ladies' Home Journal,* April 1893, 2; William K. Harris, "Growing the Chrysanthemum," Floral Supplement, *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1893, 1.

[63] Caroline Matilda Kirkland, *The Poetry of the Flowers* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Company, 1886). Contemporary "language of flowers" manuals, such as Kirkland's, do not point to any signifiers of meaning specific to the South. The amount of china decorated at Lycett's in public collections or published is fairly limited, but searches through auction records or online sales of this material also demonstrate the dominance of roses, violets, nasturtiums, chrysanthemums, and asters on these objects. I have seen two examples of pink dogwoods, one on a serving plate and another on a tray, and one bowl finished with oranges and orange blossoms.

[64] Beverly Seaton, *The Language of Flowers: A History* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 6-7; 17-18.

these flowers' mention in articles suggesting more "artistic," less formalized approaches to gardens thereby also signify their appropriateness for projects meant to convey the depth of the owner's artistic appreciation, whether in Lycett's students' work or in custom designs. Additionally, flowers and plants increasingly became important elements of the domestic interior in the late nineteenth century, with the cultivation of outdoor gardens extended to the display of botanical materials within the home. Specialized manuals for flower arranging and articles on the subject in periodicals like *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Good Housekeeping* offered myriad solutions for decorating the dining table and parlors with flowers. "All the airy castles of the confectioner are passed over by the eye, which is at once arrested and refreshed by the brilliant beauty of the products of a garden or conservatory; and we wonder how any person of taste, who possesses the means, should ever fail to have flowers on the table when entertaining friends," one author proclaimed in 1892.[65] This statement connects the production of floral centerpieces to personal gardening talents, taste, and socioeconomic status, implying that the proper representation of all of these personal factors required these floral displays. It is therefore important to remember that Lycett's decorative objects and tableware were likely components of a much larger display of a woman's artistic ability, expressed through floral decoration, from her acumen in selecting or decorating objects, to her pairing them with table arrangements, to her combining them with potted plants or bouquets within a larger space.

Bringing their consumers further into the fold of modernity, Lycett's photoceramics production offered its consumers the services of a New York decorating firm, complete with relatively new technologies of representation and replication. The firm was consistently joined with a photographer's studio from at least 1890, when William Lycett moved his studio into the upper two

[65] Peter Henderson, *Practical Floriculture: A Guide to the Successful Cultivation of Florists' Plants, for the Amateur and Professional Florist*, 2nd ed. (New York: Orange & Judd, 1892), 219.

floors of a new building on Whitehall Street.[66] Lycett's photographic work is typified in a pair of decorative trays completed for photographer and family friend William Easter Lenney and his wife and assistant, Loiette (fig. 2.26). William Lenney's rectangular portrait occupies the upper right corner of the tray and is framed in raised gilt paste scrollwork. Surrounding the portrait, a cluster of maroon nasturtiums with leaves in greens, blues, and golds descends into the center; splashes of light rainbow-colored hues occupy most of the remainder of the white space. The scrolling edges of the tray are also gilt, the borders carefully delineated in maroon. Loiette Lenney's portrait is trimmed into an oval cartouche with a thin gilt border. Light pink single roses and abundant green and blue foliage extend outward from all sides of the cartouche, with pastel shadows in the ground behind. The elliptical tray's scalloped edges are finished in Lycett's more common clouded gilding, imbuing the entire object with a softer appearance than William Lenney's tightly controlled borders and angular portrait. Because these objects were made for a photographer who occupied studio space at Lycett's, it is possible that they were intended as samples of Lenney and Lycett's collaborative work for visitors to the art rooms. Novelty items for display in drawing rooms and use as gifts, these photographic objects offered new possibilities for self-fashioning and allowed their consumers to situate themselves or their loved ones within an artistic framework, using more modern and inexpensive technologies than the traditional painted portrait. They also demonstrate consumers' appreciation for these new developments. By making these types of products available to Atlantans and other southerners, the Lycetts and their associated photographers expanded the realms of possibility for cultural production, thereby engendering a certain degree of enhanced regional pride.

[66] "What Atlanta Talks About," *Atlanta Constitution*, April 3, 1890; Notice, Lycett's studio relocation, *The Atlanta Constitution*, August 31, 1890; "The Social World," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 28, 1890; Peggy Lenney, "Provenance for William Easter Lenney Portrait Photographer," Collection records, Georgia Museum of Art. Photographers who occupied studio space with Lycett's include Linnie Condon, William Easter Lenney, Charles F. McDannell, John G. Bowden, and Albert R. Adkinson.

Lycett's found much of its success by catering to the aesthetic preferences the firm uncovered through the classes it held throughout the region and exhibitions at its art rooms. From these activities, the firm was able to discern a general predilection for naturalistic ornament, especially varieties of flora cultivated for domestic gardens. Differing little from the aesthetic decisions governing the manufacture of art wares at American porcelain manufacturers, these objects convey the strength of the associations of representational modes of depiction with fine art and the necessity of their extension to the decorative arts in order to appear artistic or cultured. To avoid self-distinction, and possibly concomitant accusations of possessing more "sectional pride" than was strictly appropriate, southerners' limited range of preferred subjects did not result in constructions of floral or vegetal iconography for the region at the firm. Lycett's photographic objects offered a similar level of consistency, providing the urbane, customized, and modern developments as could be found in a major northeastern metropolis like New York. In some of its more fantastical decorative schemes, Lycett's offered consumers a means of emulating the ornate interiors of their industrial capitalist models on a smaller scale.

Emulating the Mélange

Most of Lycett's output was devoted to "white and gold" tableware or renderings of botanical subjects, but descriptions of the results of its lessons and some extant objects suggest that consumers were interested in the complex arrangements and patterning encouraged in Aesthetic interiors. Frequently, these works combined elements more common in Lycett's work, such as stippled gilding or slightly flattened renditions of flora, with unique ceramic forms or more abundant ornament. Emulating New York industrialists with particularly artistic homes, filled with ornament and objects evocative of an array of time periods and geographic sources, china painters in Lycett's courses and patrons who commissioned works from the studio created similar objects to complete affordable, localized versions of these interiors in their drawing rooms or other spaces. These objects indicate that there was more than one path to approximating New York culture.

As previously mentioned, illustrations that accompanied Maude Andrews's 1891 article in the *Atlanta Constitution* highlighting a visit to William Lycett's studio provide several examples of this practice of Aesthetic Movement ideas (fig. 2.27). Phebe Ellis's large urn-shaped vase, with its domed, pierced lid and flat, scrolling arms, may have come from the Faience Manufacturing Company and loosely evokes the shapes of Middle Eastern incense burners, bottles, and other objects.[67] Ellis finished the handles, base, and rim with bronze color and gold tracing, further encouraging these connotations of metalwork, as well as lavish finishes. She painted morning glory vines dangling down the elongated neck and the bulb-shaped bottom. William Lycett's illustrated vase was a commission, "to go as a wedding gift to one of the most distinguished and beautiful young women in New York." The vase's round base was covered with yellow roses and mottled with gold on one side, with a poem from the sender and the bride's monogram on the other.[68] The conical neck and mouth and dolphin-shaped handles were also gilt. This commission combines the flora and monograms that Lycett's consumers preferred with poetry, a more fantastic shape, and metallic finishes, all appropriate for an object signifying artistic knowledge and talents. A Faience Manufacturing Company vase painted by Joseph Lycett in 1889 shares many of both Ellis and William Lycett's characteristics – the dolphin handles on Lycett's vase, the reticulated, domed lid on Ellis's, and the overall organization of naturalistic ornament above and below the central rings on both pieces (fig. 2.28). Joseph Lycett's ornament also suggests that Ellis and William Lycett's projects may have incorporated more stylization or gilding than Andrews describes and the limitations of newspaper cuts portray. The similarity of the Atlanta work with that produced by the

[67] Veith, *Aesthetic Ambitions*, 25. The Faience Manufacturing Company used molds to create interchangeable ceramic elements, allowing for numerous combinations of similar elements to create different objects.

[68] Maude Andrews, "Summer Sketches," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 4, 1891.

Lycetts in New York and in response to contemporary fashions indicates the desire to possess such objects, and with them exhibit the ability to appreciate and patronize artistic objects.

Likewise, a decorative vase produced at Lycett's and sold at auction in 2016 probably demonstrates the combination of approaches to form and ornament that the firm employed in these more Aesthetically-oriented works (fig. 2.29). Much like Andrews described on William Lycett's vase with yellow roses, the decorator paired a naturalistic rendering of flowers and the firm's renowned "white and gold" finishing scheme with a unique ceramic form. The swirling, ridged lid and band of beading around the base on the bottle-shaped vase are completely gilt, as are the bottom portion of the vase and its elongated neck, but with a mottled, stippled finish and encrustation. A long, winged dragon curling up the neck is also thoroughly gilt. Leaving the small blossoming branches that are molded in the vase's shoulders untreated, the decorator instead painted a series of blossoming pink azaleas and green foliage in a band around the base. Flattened, lightly delineated with gilding, and absent of the rainbow-hued or shadowed backgrounds associated with Lycett's work, the azaleas more closely conform to the types of flattened patterns seen in Aesthetic interiors. The vase itself, with its mysterious dragon, also bespeaks the commingling of geographic and temporal sources in these objects and interiors – a body with Asian or English medieval iconography is juxtaposed against the flora of a common garden shrub, one of the few instances in which a plant more often associated with the American Southeast makes an appearance on a Lycett's piece. These objects underscore the extensive parameters and possibilities associated with art goods in the American interior during this period, and they further elucidate Lycett's southern consumers' definitions for this material as well.

These assemblages of ornament were occasionally employed on Lycett's tableware, suggesting that some of the firm's consumers extended displays of this level of artistic taste to their dining practices. For example, a set of small dishes, likely for tea or dessert, exhibits characteristics

associated with Middle Eastern ceramics in its deep rust ground around the rim, and in the elaborate gilt arabesques and interlace reminiscent of Persian metalwork surmounting it (fig. 2.30). Additional swirling scrollwork surrounds the small monogram in the center. This application of vaguely Middle Eastern ornament is reminiscent of the creation of Moorish smoking rooms in the homes of the Vanderbilts and others, miniaturized in the form of "cozy corners" with poufs or couches and elaborate textile hangings in the drawing rooms of those with more moderate income and seen in the description of the Lycett family's drawing room. This tableware was likely limited to more affluent patrons of Lycett's who could afford to custom-order specialty sets outside the predominant white and gold themes. Etiquette writers in the late nineteenth century recommended that hostesses, who were charged with organizing and arranging most social meals, not only change the dishes for each course, following more widespread customs of utilizing dishes of specific shapes and sizes for the consumption of different foods, but also display varying sets or decorative schemes: "Where people have well-filled china-closets, a complete change of design and color is made for each course."[69] Therefore, these more artistic dining sets represent a particularly aspirational consumer choice, one made from a desire to appear well-versed in current social customs, capable of appointing one's home according to those customs, and also to display one's taste and knowledge of contemporary culture through design.

Smaller in number, and often still retaining a dedication to clouded gilding and naturalistic ornament, the Lycett studio's more fantastical and heavily ornamented goods feature an array of designs from myriad sources, often difficult to pinpoint. This was precisely their point, to emulate

[69] Florence Howe Hall, *Social Customs* (Boston: Dana Estes & Company, 1887), 118; Mrs. John Sherwood, *Manners and Social Usages* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1884), 183; Vance-Phillips, 125; Barquist, 14. Hall particularly recommended china displays for luncheons, when daylight would make viewing the variety of china more feasible. Where formal dinners were typically attended by both men and women and often associated with establishing social and business networks, luncheons were a newer phenomenon and tied to women's social practices, rarely attended by men, who were to be at work. Thus, painted china offered an opportunity to display one's own artistic skills or accomplishments, or to demonstrate the taste level and economic status accorded to custom-ordered china, within important feminine social structures.

the ability to combine and arrange an assortment of subjects, colors, and forms into pleasing compositions, as executed by interior designers for New York City's economic elite and publicized in national publications and manuals for interior decorating. These objects indicate a recognition of the importance of being artistic for southern consumers, of quickly attaining cultural capital in much the same manner as the industrial capitalists whose socioeconomic status and power they hoped to achieve.

Conclusion

William Lycett's studio stood at one point along a line of a series of emulations. New York industrial capitalists, having only recently achieved their economic status, secured social and cultural control by emulating the European aristocratic model, in selection of style, collecting habits, and degrees of patronage. For New South proponents in Atlanta and other parts of the region, these New York industrial capitalists presented a model for achieving reconciliation with the remainder of the United States and resuscitating the South. Their emulation of these capitalists was not limited to economic activity; it extended to everyday life and cultural concerns as well. New South proponents recognized the significance of cultural capital and sought to acquire it through the establishment of art galleries and institutions, and through the patronage of purveyors of artistic goods, like Lycett's. The Lycett family's attunement to these desires is revealed in their social activities and their efforts to establish themselves as artists and arbiters of taste in their adapted home. In turn, their skills at ascertaining the preferences of their local consumer audiences, through social activities, china painting courses, and the firm's other offerings, ensured their business's financial success. The storks that adorn Lycett's vase similarly result from imitation, and potentially a series of them at that. They may have been taken directly from Jules Auguste Habert-Dys's *Fantaisies décoratifs*, or from Adelaide Alsop-Robineau's replication of them for *Keramic Studio*. In either instance, the decorator's application of them to a large vase also represents the emulation of fine arts approaches, or painterly, naturalistic modes of representation, in decorative arts practice. They represent Lycett's

consumers' connection to national and international discourse on aesthetics and the interior, determined from slightly different perspectives than those governing the design decisions at the Newcomb College Pottery.

Chapter 3

Floating Worlds: Newcomb & Japan

In one of the few examples of architecture making an appearance on Newcomb College Pottery, a vase decorated by Alice Raymond Scudder in 1902 features a series of light blue rooftops and steeples in a band of ornament around its shoulders (fig. 3.1). Interspersed among green trees, the roofs appear diminutive in comparison to the expansive blue clouds that fill the broad, light blue sky. Scudder's flattened and linear rendition of the scene, and its composition, indicate her awareness of the work of artist Arthur Wesley Dow. Her simple, geometric buildings and puffs of treetops echo those seen in his *Views of Ipswich* print series from 1895 (fig. 3.2). Because the roofs and steeples in Scudder's landscape meet the lower border of the register, the scene has been interpreted as a depiction of a flood, with the dark blue lower border constituting the water line.[1] Though it also could be construed as a focused study of cloud patterns in the sky, the streaks of light blue glazes on the bottom portion of the vase encourage such aqueous connotations.

This vase presents a view of a "floating world," ostensibly one located in the American South. References to proximity to bodies of water permeate the iconography and landscapes depicted on Newcomb College Pottery, consistently connecting the region to its coastal and swampland environs. They also create an analogy with Japan, a country more frequently understood as a "floating world" during the period. Perceived as a mysterious land with a premodern culture, Japan served as a source of fascination and artistic inspiration for many Westerners. At Newcomb, numerous elements of Japanese artwork became sources for emulation. Japanese ceramic forms,

[1] Doug MacCash, "Hidden Treasure? Nondescript Vase Might Be a Newcomb Rarity," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, July 8, 2009, Facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University; see also David Conradsen et al, *The Arts & Crafts of Newcomb Pottery* (New Orleans: Tulane University Press, 2013), 32. After the vase's rediscovery, Sally Main researched National Weather Service data and found that a hurricane came ashore in August 1901, flooding the Algiers neighborhood near where many Newcomb students lived. Her interpretation led to its being titled "Vase with Rising Mississippi River Design" in the 2013 catalogue.

which received high critical praise, particularly among a group of intellectuals in the northeastern United States, provided models for the firm's wares. Popular *ukiyo-e* prints informed many of Newcomb's methods of artistic representation, among them the flattening of subject matter, use of broad expanses of color, and strong delineation of shapes. These prints also feature flora and fauna identical or analogous to those depicted in the firm's ornament. Emulating Japanese artwork helped Newcomb gain legitimacy in the eyes of the connoisseurs and consumers whose approval its founders continuously sought. It also imbued the products and their subjects with a similar sense of exoticism, underscoring the South's distance and difference for its viewers. This chapter analyzes Newcomb's aesthetic relationship with Japan, probing the potential effects of its use of these forms and characteristics in shaping a vision of the American South as a mysterious floating world within the United States' own backyard.

"Yankees of the East"

For the purposes of achieving cultural legitimacy, the Newcomb College Pottery's use of Japanese sources corresponds to the country's stature in the eyes of Western critics and collectors. Among the various "exotic" cultures to whom Western artists and designers looked for inspiration in the late nineteenth century, Japan received uniquely laudatory attention. Japanese artists received especial praise for their use of space, manifested in interior decoration, ornament, and other art forms. Wrote one critic:

> The ready grasp of sweeping impressions, from the merest suggestion of detail, is not among the Japanese a matter of habit and eye alone, but is apparently a national mental attribute unlike anything we Europeans can conceive of. This does not apply to their art alone, examples of which are familiar to everyone, but is equally true of their poetry and literature, which everywhere boldly leaves to the individual imagination the delightful task of filling out the details of the work…in whatever way the personality of the individual happens to lead.[2]

This commentary reveals the significance accorded to space and its implications of imaginative thinking and intellectual acuity in the period, nearly identical to the positive qualities attributed to

[2] Paul Stanhope, "Makuza Kozan," *House Beautiful*, January 1897, 21-22.

conventionalization. Japanese culture was certainly viewed as distinct, but that difference was enshrined within the admirable characteristic of great intelligence. "Perhaps the great compliment we can pay such an ingenious people as the Japanese is to designate them by the honorable title – Yankees of the East," wrote one *Decorator & Furnisher* author.[3] For those not afforded this distinction, Japan represented a logical source for emulation.

Although this commentary suggests correlations with modernity, Westerners also valued Japanese art for its simplicity of material and form, part of the perception of the island nation as permanently pre-industrial.[4] American connoisseur Edward Sylvester Morse insisted that "the rigid simplicity, approaching an affected roughness and poverty, which characterizes the tea-room and many of the utensils used in the ceremony, has left is impress upon many forms of pottery…Indeed, it has had an effect on the Japanese almost equal to that of Calvinistic doctrines on the early Puritans."[5] Aligning this positive characteristic with a traditional Japanese ritual and portraying it as an innate quality, Morse also draws comparisons with a colonial New England population. These descriptions underscore the associations that Americans believed existed between Japanese people and pre-industrial culture in the late nineteenth century. It is no coincidence that this appreciation for spareness in Japanese art parallels the insistence on clean lines found in the works of proponents of the Arts & Crafts Movement who rejected extensive ornamentation as indicative of manufacturing processes brought about through industrialization. In this way, Japanese art straddled

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[3] "Japanese Art Works: The Interior of a Japanese House Described," *Decorator & Furnisher*, January 1885, 144. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

[4] William Hosley, *The Japan Idea: Art & Life in Victorian America* (Hartford, CT: Wadsworth Athenaeum, 1990), 28; Julia Meech, "Collecting Japanese Art in America," in *Japonisme Comes to America: The Japanese Impact on the Graphic Arts, 1876-1925*, in Julia Meech and Gabriel P. Weisberg (Brunswick, NJ: The Jane Vorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, 1990), 54; Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, "Chinoiserie and Japonisme," in *The Orient Expressed: Japan's Influence on Western Art 1854-1918*, ed. Gabriel P. Weisberg (Jackson: Mississippi Museum of Art, 2011), 99-100; Elisa Evett, *The Critical Reception of Japanese Art in Late Nineteenth Century Europe* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982), xii-xv.

[5] Edward S. Morse, *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* (Boston: Ticknor and Company, 1888), 151.

the same fine line between modern design and traditional methods of manufacture with which the Newcomb College Pottery contended.

Looking to Japanese ceramics as an exemplar was the standard for most American producers of art ceramics in the late nineteenth century. One of the first categories of Japanese art that most Americans encountered, the country's displays at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876 left a lasting impression. Additionally, at that same exposition, many European porcelain companies exhibited works with clear influences from Japanese design. Where Chinese ceramics were criticized for "excessive ornamentation," those from Japan received great acclaim. Woodblock prints were not shown in Japan's pavilion in 1876, and they would not see as much widespread popularity in the United States until later in the century. The art ceramics movement in the United States that was in large part sparked by the Centennial Exhibition therefore occurred alongside an ever-increasing enthusiasm for collecting Japanese art, especially ceramics, and astute manufacturers understood that using Japanese-inspired forms and ornament often led to financial success.[6] Editors of *Crockery & Glass Journal* noted by 1884 that "Japanese potters are catching on to the popular wants of the outside barbarians in this country, and we are beginning gradually to produce goods of more acceptable forms and weights than they have hitherto done since Japanese wares first became popular in this country."[7] The Rookwood Pottery, in so many ways the model for Newcomb's own artistic and business practices, was partly founded out of Maria Longworth Nichols Storer's interest in Japanese ceramics, and it frequently used forms that evoked them. The firm also hired a Japanese

[6] Hosley, 118; Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen et al, *American Art Pottery: The Robert A. Ellison, Jr. Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018), 35; Gabriel P. Weisberg, "Japonisme: The Commercialization of an Opportunity," in Meech and Weisberg, 19.

[7] *Crockery & Glass Journal,* October 2, 1884, 26.

artist, Kitaro Shirayamadani, as a decorator in 1887.[8] By the early 1900s, china painting periodicals regularly showcased Japanese pottery, and popular magazines, such as *Good Housekeeping*, *House Beautiful*, *House & Garden*, and *Ladies' Home Journal*, routinely published articles about myriad aspects of Japanese culture, including ceramics.[9]

Newcomb's use of Japanese sources aligns with other producers of art ceramics, but differs in its specific attunement to the tastes of a circle of intellectuals in New England who expressed a uniquely connoisseurial interest in Japanese art. In 1899, while serving as Keeper of Japanese Pottery at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Edward Morse offered high praise for Newcomb, according to the standards set by Japanese pottery. Later quoted in several of Newcomb's advertising pamphlets and other materials, he wrote "I must express my admiration for the very beautiful essays of your oven…in your work we have forms and glazes which must appeal to the critical eye even of the old potters of Japan."[10] Morse's acclaim marks a milestone for Newcomb in seeking the approval of New England cultural figures, and this appreciation came from one of the most well-known authorities on Japanese art in the United States during the period. Much of the firm's early positive responses came from this circle of Japanists in Boston, including Arthur Wesley Dow and Ernest Fenollosa. As ceramics scholar Martin Eidelberg acknowledges, "Their interest in the East would

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[8] Nancy E. Owen, *Rookwood and the Industry of Art: Women, Culture, and Commerce, 1880-1913* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001), 146; Elizabeth Fowler, "Kitaro Shirayamadani and the Creation of Japanese Rookwood," *American Ceramic Circle Journal* 16 (2011): 175-195.

[9] These articles are not limited to encyclopedic information about various styles of Japanese pottery or artworks, which are broad in scope. Newcomb's embroidered products, outside the bounds of this dissertation, bear a striking resemblance to Japanese towels, featured in numerous articles. Many of these early shelter magazines included flower arranging suggestions that used Japanese ceramics as the vessels, or discussions of travel to Japan, accompanied by illustrations. *Keramic Studio* offered its readers examples of works for sale at A. A. Vantine's in New York, one of the largest purveyors of Japanese goods in the country. For more on Japan and American taste in publications, see Jane Converse Brown, "The 'Japanese Taste': Its Role in the Mission of the American Home and in the Family's Presentation of Itself to the Public as Expressed in Published Sources, 1876-1916," (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1987).

[10] Edward Sylvester Morse, in a letter dated July 15, 1899, quoted in Newcomb College Pottery brochure, ca. 1900. Newcomb College Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University.

have favored such work, and the influence of these men may have prompted Newcomb to pursue such avenues in the first place. There seems to have been an interesting symbiosis."[11]

Shifting the view of the Newcomb College Pottery's relationship with these collectors from one of passive influence to that of active attention, the emulation of Japanese design sources becomes a design choice suited to the tastes of an anticipated New England audience. Where other producers of art ceramics utilized Japanese ceramic forms or directly referenced its ornament, Newcomb combined these ceramic forms with evocative color schemes, as well as principles of composition and delineation derived from Japanese graphic traditions, to create a distinct version. Curiously, some contemporary critics saw Newcomb Pottery as resistant to Asian influence. In her extensive article on the enterprise in *The Craftsman* in 1903, Irene Sargent claimed "Oriental lines do not seem to have attracted the designers to any marked degree, and, in general, the same observations can be made upon the shapes as upon the decorative *motifs*. Both are taken largely as found: the shapes as they are necessitated by structure, or as they occur in certain pleasing modes; the motifs of ornament as they are seen in Nature."[12] However, Sargent and others were greatly taken with the rhetoric that presented Newcomb as uniquely southern. The particular result of the Pottery's amalgamation of sources, in addition to the subject matter, obscured their origins to such a degree that they were only readily recognizable as different, if not "exotic" to these viewers. Understanding the underlying, conflicting implications of modernity, historicity, and exoticism

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[11] Martin Eidelberg, "Newcomb Pottery: The Deep South and New England," in Conradsen et al, 123. I use the terms "Japanism" and "Japanists" to refer to a group of Americans who possessed a dedicated interest in Japanese art and culture, and who in most cases directly studied their material or traveled to Japan. This distinction is meant to underscore these individuals' activities as separate from *japonisme*, which more often refers to the Western predilection for Japanese prints as influenced by and filtered through French artists and patrons like Siegfried Bing. For more on Edward Morse, as well as Boston as the "intellectual hub" for Japanism, see Hosley, *The Japan Idea*; Meech, "Collecting Japanese Art in America," in Meech and Weisberg, 43-56; Vivien Green, "Aestheticism and Japan: The Cult of the Orient," in *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, ed. Alexandra Munroe (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 2009), 59-87; Helen Burnham, *Looking East: Western Artists and the Allure of Japan* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2014); Frelinghuysen et al, 107.

[12] Irene Sargent, "An Art Industry of the Bayous: The Pottery of Newcomb College," *The Craftsman*, October, 1903.

embedded within these aesthetic characteristics, when joined with their purported capability to represent the region, alters their meaning. Through this series of design choices, these objects reframed the South through the lens of a respected, yet mysterious other.

Vasemania

The Newcomb College Pottery's reliance on vases in its repertoire affirms the firm's awareness of the contemporary taste for ceramics in decoration, their significance within the home, and the role of Japanese ceramics within such domestic displays. Though Newcomb produced other types of objects, including a limited number of dining wares, vases comprised the majority of the firm's output. A photograph of the "reception hall" at the Pottery, published in *Keramic Studio* in 1905, attests to the preponderance of vases and vase-like objects that the firm manufactured (fig. 3.3).[13] Filling the shelves that line the rear wall, a plethora of shapes of vases and cachepots far outnumber the other forms on display. Wall pockets, or vases to be mounted on the wall, occupy the panels above. Additional vases are placed around the room, as if to suggest their function in the home once a customer departs the building. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, authors of articles and books on home decorating insisted upon the necessity of vases for the completion of a home's interior. Every available flat surface in the drawing room or living room provided a potential location for the display of ceramics, particularly vases (fig. 3.4).[14] In 1884, *The Decorator & Furnisher* clarified ceramics' importance: "Ceramic ware, now everywhere accepted as ranking among the most beautiful of interior adornments, and as an appropriate finish to a room artistically furnished, is to be regarded as an indication of refined taste," the magazine proclaimed.

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[13] "Louisiana Purchase Exposition Ceramics (continued)," *Keramic Studio*, April 1905, 268. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

[14] For examples, see Julia Darrow Cowles, *Artistic Home Furnishing for People of Moderate Means* (New York: F. M. Lupton, 1898), 47-51, Rare Books, Winterthur Library; Frank Douthitt, *Manual of Art Decoration*, 5th ed. (Flushing, NY: Press of the Flushing Evening Journal, 1902), 125-126, Rare Books, Winterthur Library; Lillie Hamilton French, *Homes and Their Decoration* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1903, 197-198, Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

The anonymous author continued, with a warning, "A subdued use of it is, however, necessary. No arrangement of vases should bear the appearance of a mere collection."[15]

Frequently, these home decoration experts recommended enlisting Japanese ceramics in the service of decoration and the expression of good taste. While Sèvres vases and clocks were typically cited as the ideal, Japanese ceramics were positioned as an affordable and tasteful alternative. "When one must strictly consider expense in the purchase of ornaments, these products of Japanese workmanship will yield the most satisfactory artistic effects for the least money," Helen Jay informed her *Ladies' Home Journal* readers.[16] In her narration in *House Beautiful* of a relaxing afternoon spent on her friend's front porch, Hazel Wood Waterman similarly complimented the value of Japanese ceramics. "Fashion, though not ignored, is no dictator here; nor is artistic arrangement and a degree of elegance. A potted plant or two…a Japanese vase with delightfully characteristic arrangement of flowers or branches, are among the little things that make this porch attractive."[17] Fashions changed from the late nineteenth into the early twentieth centuries, and progressive-leaning magazines like *House Beautiful* continually extolled the virtues of ever more simplicity in home decoration. Japanese ceramics maintained their status as indicators of taste, now described or pictured within domestic settings alongside fewer objects. American art pottery studios, including Newcomb, took note of the accolades laid upon these forms and appropriated them for use in their own products.

From its inception, the Newcomb College Pottery regularly produced vases in the elongated forms associated with Asian vases. Jules Gabry's tall, cylindrical vases have such narrow bases, wide mouths, and heavy walls that they are difficult to stand upright. Joseph Fortune Meyer's early pieces

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[15] *Decorator & Furnisher*, Janurary 1885, 143. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

[16] Helen Jay, "Buying Bric-à-Brac and Arranging It," *Ladies' Home Journal,* February 1898, 30.

[17] Hazel Wood Waterman, "On My Friend's Porch," *House Beautiful*, April 1902, 221.

for Newcomb more clearly reference these profiles, with their high shoulders, dramatically narrow necks, and widely flaring mouths (fig. 3.5). They sharply depart from the thick forms of redware that Meyer produced in his own pottery, as well as the immense jardinières that he turned for the failed New Orleans Art Pottery Club venture that preceded Newcomb. These pieces tend to be very thick-walled and bulbous, with heavy bottoms and enormous handles (fig. 3.6). Too gargantuan in size and exuberant in ornament to be displayed among collections of fine works on a shelf, the Art Pottery Club pieces could not accomplish the same goals of demonstrating aesthetic comprehension to an outside audience. By moving to the range of sizes and delicacy seen in the works of their Japanese counterparts for Newcomb, the potters and founding figures were more likely to achieve both financial and critical success.

Newcomb's wares not only emulated the shapes of Asian vases, but also repurposed forms associated with different uses in their original context. Many of the vases produced in the early 1900s, as forms became more standardized, exhibit characteristics typical of Japanese tea jars. These increasingly simple pieces are typically ovoid or cylindrical in shape. Instead of contrasting curves, from broad shoulders to narrow necks, they more frequently have short, wide rims just above the shoulders, similar to a tea jar with its lid removed (fig. 3.7). Edward Morse's appreciation for these wares was well documented at this time; both Morse's immensely popular *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* and Sylvester Baxter's catalogue of his pottery collection were published in the 1880s and included in Newcomb College's library collections.[18] Sketches of Morse's ceramics collection also appeared in *Architectural Record and Building News* in 1888 and included a series of Seto tea jars (fig. 3.8). Most conspicuous of these adaptations, however, are several gourd-shaped vases, modeled after sake and wine bottles, which were also illustrated in Morse's books. It is little wonder that the

[18] Jessie Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery: An Enterprise for Southern Women, 1895-1940* (Exton, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1984), 154-155.

curator and collector responded so enthusiastically to the ceramics that were sent from Newcomb to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1898. The grouping included a gourd-shaped vase and another in a bottle-shaped form that remain in the museum's collections today (fig. 3.9).[19] Newcomb's use of such shapes further evinces Meyer and the other founders' depth of knowledge of Japanese ceramic forms, as well as their consideration of the aesthetic preferences of potential consumers.

Joseph Fortune Meyer's treatment of the ceramics' surfaces, in both structure and glaze work, fosters additional associations with Japanese ceramics. As Martin Eidelberg has pointed out, Newcomb's experimentation with metallic glazes and application of drip glazes to otherwise undecorated pieces have roots in Japanese techniques. Like the shapes that Meyer employed, these drip glazes were also illustrated in Morse's publications, and the other vase that the Museum of Fine Arts acquired in 1899 has a bright green drip glaze (see fig. 3.9).[20] Further underscoring Meyer's attention to surface treatments, the finishing of the walls of some of these vases remains ridged from the building process of the pottery wheel, just as seen in Japanese wares. These details, when compared to Meyer's previous work, make Newcomb's attunement to the potential taste for Japanese-inspired goods all the more apparent.

Besides demonstrating awareness of contemporary tastes, the appropriation of Japanese forms and glazing techniques into Newcomb's works contributes to the impression of their origins as being culturally distinct. Even for audiences less conscious of the exact design sources, the vases' simplicity in shape and visibility of manufacture connote the emphases on utility and hand manufacture associated with preindustrial cultures. More unfamiliar forms, like gourd-shaped bottles and tea jars, bespeak wares not commonly used for consumption practices in white, affluent homes

[19] Poesch, 25; Eidelberg, "The Deep South and New England," 121-123. Eidelberg also notes that Ernest Fenellosa, Morse's predecessor at the Museum of Fine Arts and another Japanese art collector gave lectures in New Orleans in 1896.

[20] Eidelberg, "The Deep South and New England," 121.

in the United States. Shifting their primary usage to modes of decoration and display implies that such items are no longer needed for daily use; they can now be set on a shelf to indicate connoisseurial, if not ethnographical, knowledge. Newcomb Pottery's forms established a significant foundation of exoticism, on which further layers were added through its chosen styles of ornamentation and subject matter.

Woodblocks on Clay

Where Newcomb's potters took their cues from Japanese ceramics to shape their pieces, the decorators' choice of ornament reveals their own attention to the period enthusiasm for Japanese print culture. Rather than directly imitate these prints, the decorators incorporated compositional elements from them into their designs. This mixing of sources resulted in unique variations upon a theme, likely contributing to impressions of the pottery as novel instead of derivative. Although approaches to ornament underwent aesthetic shifts at the Newcomb College Pottery over the course of its first fourteen years, Japanese *ukiyo-e* prints remained a consistent reference point. Using sources from Japanese culture for the purpose of Southern "expression" in this manner fostered further unconscious correlations between the region and a country regarded as mysterious and distant, both geographically and culturally.

A jardinière decorated by Esther Huger Elliott in 1898 demonstrates the clear influence of Japanese prints in Newcomb's early years (fig. 3.10). The round piece features three different chrysanthemum renderings on its sides, executed in a yellow slip against a black ground. The simplification of the chrysanthemums to the suggestion of their petals, in addition to the black outlines surrounding them, echo similar treatments of flowers in woodblock prints. Their asymmetrical arrangement, both within their vignettes and in the organization of three groups around the piece's exterior, comparably evoke these prints' compositional structure. In addition to the chrysanthemum's prevalence in Japanese art, these characteristics of linearity and asymmetry are common elements in woodblock prints. Similarly, a vase by Mary Given Sheerer, now in the

collection of the Cincinnati Museum of Art, bears numerous similarities to Japanese prints (fig. 3.11). Extending upward from the base of the vase to its shoulders, a series of highly delineated irises stand against a background of tight, repetitious, swirling blue lines that imply a watery surface. The repetition of small lines to suggest the movement of water was one of the most popular motifs that Western artists took from Japanese *ukiyo-e* prints and other material culture; such small-scale renderings often appear on Japanese porcelain objects.[21] Lewis Foreman Day illustrates these patterns in *Nature in Ornament* in his discussion of Japanese artists' use of nature in their own work.[22] This suggests Sheerer's strong familiarity with Japanese prints, or at least the possibilities of their characteristics for use in conventionalization. Given her vital role at the Pottery, it also indicates that Newcomb had a leader who was capable of translating Japanese-inspired modes of representation and methods of composition into ceramic design in place from its beginning.

Around the turn of the century, as Newcomb's decorative programs became more consistent, the ornament grew increasingly linear; the pottery's designs have bolder outlines surrounding the shapes and flat planes of color in between them. On Ada Wilt Lonnegan's cylindrical vase, the sage green stalks, leaves, and buds of the hollyhocks are outlined in cobalt blue (fig. 3.12). Flattened as if pressed in a book, the spiraling petals of the blue hollyhock blossoms are also outlined in cobalt. None of the colors are modulated, keeping relatively consistent amounts of saturation within the borders of their assigned shapes. Lonnegan's limited color palette is also representative of the continuing standardization at the firm, as its products were largely executed in these shades of blues and greens. Continuing the earlier works' linearity, the broad planes of color add another element derived from Japanese prints to the ornament. These same formal qualities are

[21] Siegfried Wichmann, *Japonisme: The Japanese Influence on Western Art in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: Harmony Books, 1980), 126-127 and 136-137.

[22] Lewis Foreman Day, *Nature in Ornament* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1898), 216-219; Poesch, 154-155.

found in period American graphic design and stained glass that were driven by Japanists' appreciation for prints, and they, too, were associated with the "good design" emanating from northeastern urban centers.

Within the same moment as the founding of the Newcomb College Pottery, the United States saw the birth of a craze for the art poster. Prompted by the success of Harper and Brother's posters advertising its monthly issues in 1893, publishing companies in major northeastern cities began engaging illustrators to create posters for their monthly magazines as well as their covers. *Harper's* worked first with Swiss illustrator Eugène Grasset before art director Edward Penfield assumed control of the posters' production. Other magazines, including *Lippincott's* and *Century*, soon followed, hiring graphic artists Will Bradley, Louis Rhead, Ethel Reed, and others to create posters, cover art, and illustrations. These artists built upon this work by establishing little magazines, as well as publications devoted to poster collecting. Most of the artists incorporated the broad planes of color, sharply delineated forms, and asymmetrical compositions frequently found in Japanese prints into their work (fig. 3.13). Their efforts were applauded at home and abroad.[23] William Woodward was well aware of these developments in the publishing industry, and he organized exhibitions of illustrations and covers from Charles Scribner's Sons at both Tulane and the Newcomb Art Gallery in the 1890s.[24] Many of Newcomb's decorators were talented graphic designers, and some of them supplemented their insufficient incomes from the firms' output by creating illustrations, bookplates, and other materials.[25]

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[23] Gabriel P. Weisberg, "Sowing Japonisme," 72-85.

[24] Correspondence with Charles Scribner's Sons, August 11, 1896, Folder 4; Exhibition Announcement, n.d., Folder 12; William Woodward Papers, LaRC-022, Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

[25] Adrienne Spinozzi, "The Pursuits of Paying Work: Challenges to Newcomb Pottery Decorators," in Conradsen et al, 187 and 190; Kenneth Trapp, Introduction to *American Art Pottery* (New York: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 1987), 25. Trapp is one of the few historians of art pottery to have observed these stylistic correlations between the material and turn-of-the-century poster design.

Newcomb's linearity, saturated color, natural subject matter, and simplified forms also resemble stained glass, especially that of the period's leading designers in the medium, John La Farge and Louis Comfort Tiffany. Much like their peers in graphic design, La Farge and Tiffany were enamored with Japanese visual culture. La Farge was an early and avid collector of Japanese *ukiyo-e* prints and other artwork.[26] He saw great potential for application of many of their elements to stained glass, particularly as a guide for structuring leadlines and in the selection of subject matter. La Farge's use of simplified, natural motifs represented a departure from the highly pictorial material that dominated the medium. Similarly, his rival Louis Comfort Tiffany was probably influenced by his connections to Edward C. Moore at his father's firm and Parisian art dealer Siegfried Bing, both avid collectors of Japanese woodblock prints, and he employed many of the same characteristics in his designs for stained glass (fig 3.14).[27] The decorators at Newcomb were directly exposed to examples of Tiffany's stained glass at their College's chapel, as Josephine Newcomb had commissioned Tiffany Studios to complete a series of three figural windows in 1894 and purchased several more afterward.[28] The similarities between Tiffany and Newcomb were not lost on the enterprise's leaders. Writing in *International Studio* in 1910, decorator Harriet Joor tells of the Pottery's struggle to find suitable shades "of strong yet simple design" for the lamp bases it began producing in the early 1900s, explaining that "a few of the jars were then sent to Tiffany's to be fitted out with shade and tank, but daily the conviction deepened that this problem would never be adequately solved until Newcomb herself made the shades for her lamps."[29]

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[26] Green, "Aestheticism and Japan," 62; see also Meech and Weisberg, 61. La Farge's access to Japan was aided by his marriage to the grandniece of Commodore Matthew Perry, who led the initial effort to reopen trade routes between Japan and the West.

[27] Hannah Sigur, *The Influence of Japanese Art on Design* (Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2008), 134-140.

[28] These windows are now on display at the Newcomb Art Museum at Tulane University, New Orleans.

[29] Harriet Joor, "The Art Industries of Newcomb College," *International Studio*, July 1910, 6-15. Facsimile, Newcomb Pottery Files, University Archives, Tulane University. Joor also relates that a painted rice paper lamp from a

Formal relationships among graphic design and stained glass, and their potential for ceramic decoration, were evident to contemporary commentators, too. These objects were not only produced by major figures in northeastern metropolitan centers, further confirming the familiarity of Newcomb's instructors and employees with design movements in those centers, but they were also all informed by the same elements from Japanese woodblock prints. In *Book of the China Painter*, Louise Vance-Phillips included one of Eugène Grasset's most well-known posters as a design suitable for a window of stained and painted glass.[30] Adelaide Alsop-Robineau and Henrietta Barclay Paist published designs for "Posteresque Plaques" for *Keramic Studio* in 1900 that were based on work by Belgian artist Henri Privat-Livemont (fig. 3.15).[31] Alsop-Robineau and Paist's references to the "posteresque" demonstrate that the qualities of linearity and flatness of color were readily and commonly understood as elements of poster design. Similarly, those writing about Newcomb Pottery noted its relationships with two-dimensional design. Edna Reed, writing for *Good Housekeeping*, observed that "the student, trained in the school, upon entering the pottery, besides the technical skill, has only to learn how to apply design to different molds and forms instead of to flat spaces."[32] Therefore, Newcomb Pottery exhibited legible aesthetic relationships with critically-lauded works executed in other media.

Adding a knowledge of compositional structure to their repertoire of elements derived from Japanese art, several Newcomb decorators took courses with Arthur Wesley Dow at his Ipswich

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Japanese shop was deemed suitable, but such finds were "so rare that one enthusiastic worker chancing upon such a shade while on her vacation trip bore it toilsomely in her hand, cherished as tenderly as a Paris bonnet, all the way from Boston to New Orleans."

[30] Louise Vance-Philips, *Book of the China Painter* (New York: Montague Marks, 1896), 236. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

[31] Adelaide Alsop-Robineau, "Designs for Posteresque Plaques," *Keramic Studio*, May 1900, 8-9; Henrietta Barclay Paist, "Color Supplement: Design for Posteresque Plaque," *Keramic Studio,* July 1900. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

[32] Edna Lyman Reed, "Arts and Crafts as Shown in College Pottery," *Good Housekeeping,* June 1905, 660.

Summer School in Massachusetts.[33] The firm included his praise, also written in 1899, alongside Morse's in its advertising materials: "The examples I have seen were beautiful in form and color, simple in design, and of excellent workmanship."[34] Dow's impact on Newcomb has been well-documented; most scholars have attributed the elements of the firm's steady standardization in the early 1900s, particularly the designs' linearity and the decorators' movement toward incised surfaces, to his influence. Many of Dow's ideas stemmed from his appreciation for Japanese prints, which he began to put into practice in the creation of his own version of *ukiyo-e* prints in the 1890s. By the early 1900s, the artist was recognized as an authority on design whose judgment and advice was sought for use in publications like *Art Interchange*, as well as *Keramic Studio*.[35] His most well-known contribution to art instruction, *Composition*, first published in 1899, emphasized the importance of line in composition and advocated for the incorporation of Japanese concepts such as *notan*, or the beauty of contrast between dark and light, into Western art practices. Clear correlations exist between Dow's examples in *Composition* and Newcomb Pottery, particularly in his renderings of landscapes according to series of vertical lines and his suggestions for abstracting landscape to its most salient elements (fig. 3.16).[36] For one mug, for example, Desirée Roman represented pine trees as a repeating motif of rectangular trunks, broken by alternating branches and cloud-like puffs of

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[33] "Memoirs of Amelie Roman," p. 13, Box 4, Mary E. Irvine Papers, LaRC-751, Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University; Notes on Harriet Coulter-Joor, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University; Frelinghuysen et al, 227; Sally Main, "Biographical Notes on Sixty Newcomb Pottery Decorators," in Conradsen et al*,* 297-318; Poesch, 27.

[34] Newcomb Pottery Pamphlet, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University.

[35] Poesch, 26-28; Nancy E. Green, *Arthur Wesley Dow and American Arts & Crafts* (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1999), 62-63; Jessie Poesch, "Arthur Wesley Dow and Art Pottery: The Beauty of Simplicity" in *Arthur Wesley Dow and American Arts & Crafts*, by Green, 111-117; Frelinghuysen et al, 227-228. For example, Dow was enlisted to judge submissions for a design competition in 1901 for *Keramic Studio*, wherein he was described as a "recognized authority on design, author of treatises on design and composition, and himself a landscape painter of note." See *Keramic Studio*, April 1901. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

[36] Arthur Wesley Dow, *Composition: A Series of Exercises Selected from a New System of Art Education*, sixth ed. (New York: Baker and Taylor, 1905), see especially 25-26, 33-35, and 51-52.

needles, much like Dow's recommendations for reducing groves of trees to a series of basic shapes and lines. Contrasting strongly against the light blue background, the dark blue glazes that Roman applied to the tree trunks epitomize *notan* (fig. 3.17).

Arthur Wesley Dow's influence on the Newcomb College Pottery's designers is certainly important, but attributing the early twentieth century changes in the Pottery's products so thoroughly to his instruction obscures a potentially more active and perceptive relationship between the firm and the potential of the artist's ideas. These changes occurred alongside Dow's rise in popularity and initial publications, and Ellsworth Woodward and his colleagues therefore recognized the relevance of Dow's exercises for their curriculum at Newcomb and its potential for application into the Pottery's earthenware from a relatively early moment. Furthermore, *Composition* includes numerous examples of Old Masters or late nineteenth-century painters whose works suit the principles of *notan* that Dow espoused, and many of his suggestions for abstraction are meant to serve as foundations for the arrangement of forms within a composition, not necessarily the final actual landscape when realized.[37] Adhering to his principles so strictly and conspicuously in Newcomb's final products further attests to a desire to be readily understood as "modern" and noticeably fluent in these design ideas. It also more visibly aligns Newcomb's products with the Japanese sources for Dow's work, rather than more traditional Western variations on his suggested compositional schemes. Just as Newcomb's use of British design reform tenets, with its natural subjects and conventionalization, this adaptation of elements, particularly from publications, in such a literal manner mimics the processes through which many cultures have historically shaped their wares to suit the aesthetic tastes and expectations of external markets. It is an understanding of the elements that are required in order to make an object that is comprehensible as aesthetically

[37] Dow, 27-28 and 53. Dow illustrates works by Piero della Francesca, Giotto di Bondone, James Abbott MacNeill Whistler, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, and Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, among others, as artists whose arrangement of lines in compositions exemplify his perspective.

acceptable or even superior for that audience, but also sufficiently unique in some manner as to render it evocative of the traditions of the locale of its manufacture. Through the Dutch and English East India Companies, for example, Chinese and Japanese porcelain manufacturers in the late seventeenth centuries began copying forms more common to British or Continental European dining and decorating habits, and utilized Western prints as sources for ornament.[38] At Newcomb, executing ornament in a manner that followed Western translations of Japanese print culture allowed both aspects to occur simultaneously – the ornament suited critical assessment of what constituted good design in the period, but also came from a culture viewed as exotic, thus also fitting a view of the South as exotic. A comparable conflation of the two lands occurred in Newcomb's selection of subject matter.

Parallel "Floating Worlds" – The Gulf Coast and Japan

Besides its use of regional clays, the flora and fauna represented in the ornament on Newcomb Pottery serves as one of the most obvious indicators of its "Southernness," but upon closer examination, much of this iconography shares convenient commonalities with Japanese subject matter. In some instances, these overlaps represent the overt usage of non-native plant and animal sources within Newcomb's decorative schemes. In others, the parallels may have been unwitting, as experimentation with botanical samples during European settlement led to the transplantation of many Asian plants into the region. Some of the subjects that are actually native to the South have cousins that appeared in Japanese artwork or bear structural similarities to them. Furthermore, the strong tendency to gesture to bodies of water in these objects' decoration, even where nonsensical, underscores the region's saturated landscape, with its bayous, rivers, and coastal locale, while drawing another visual link to the island nation's print culture. Constant reminders of

[38] Stacey Pierson, *Collectors, Collections, and Museums: The Field of Chinese Ceramics in Britain, 1560-1960* (Oxford, UK: Peter Lang, 2007), 39-40; Li Jixian, "Qing Dynasty Ceramics," in *Chinese Ceramics from the Paleolithic Period through the Qing Dynasty*, ed. Li Zhiyan, Virginia L. Bower, and Le Hi (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 440.

the region's distinct flora, abundance of swampland, and proximity to the Gulf Coast and Atlantic Oceans serve to distance the South from the remainder of the country, presenting it as a nearby "floating world."

The Newcomb College Pottery presented consumers with subjects from Asian sources while simultaneously promoting them as regional from its foundation. In an 1898 article on Newcomb's venture into pottery production for *Art Education*, Ellsworth Woodward's insistence upon the local derivation of its subjects is contradicted in the accompanying photographs. "In the shapes of vases it is not possible to avoid imitation, the best forms having been for centuries established. Imitation in other respects, however, is carefully guarded against. All designs are adaptations of the local flora, insects, landscapes, etc., with the greatest possible liberty of treatment in their application."[39] Pictured directly above these words are a jar with a "fish design" by Medora Ross and a vase with a "peacock design" by Louise Wood (fig. 3.18). Ross's fish design portrays carp swimming or leaping in a river, and Wood's vase extends a peacock's spread feathers into a pattern from the vase's base to its mouth. Neither of these subjects is actually local to New Orleans or the region and more likely came to fruition by imitating Asian sources, contradicting Woodward's implication of regional specificity and his assertions about the designs' originality. Chrysanthemums, such as those featured in Esther Huger Elliott's jardinière, were another favored subject for early wares. Selina Bres painted a crane flying over the ocean, rendered in a series of curving, repetitively delineated waves, around the sides of another vase around 1897 (fig. 3.19). Both the subjects of the crane and the ocean, as well as their methods of depiction, are indebted to Japanese prints. The subjects also, however, fit the Gulf Coast, as neither is especially unique to any one geographic locale.

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[39] Ellsworth Woodward, "An Experiment with Applied Art in Newcomb College, New Orleans," *Art Education,* May 1898, 168. Facsimile, Newcomb Pottery (A) File, Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University.

By presenting these subjects as singular and representative of the region, the enterprise's founders and contemporary critics alike established a pattern wherein flora and fauna from a far-flung location imbued with mystery became symbols for the South, transferring a comparable sense of otherness upon it. Already regarded as geographically distinct from the rest of the United States, reiterating these impressions through the presentation of Asian subjects as regionally-derived further proved them. This series of ties to Japan amplified assumptions about the South's cultural distinction. Those who viewed Newcomb College Pottery as expressions of the region wished to see it and its people as different. Reifying this perspective benefited both the northeastern consumer body to which Newcomb was oriented, who seemed to understand the region through the lens of exoticism, as well as southerners who were invested in retaining a sense of pride in the region's difference.

Concurrently with the firm's aesthetic shifts in its selection of form and linearity of ornament at the turn of the century, its use of regional flora and fauna as iconography for the region became more firmly established. It also continued to draw praise from contemporary critics and gain renown. While the use of distinctly Japanese subjects, as seen in a plate with a spiraling koi pattern by Sabina Wells (fig. 3.20), occurred with less frequency, the decorators regularly chose subjects that could be found in the South, but were also native to Asia and frequently seen in Japanese art. The decorators' conventionalization of their subjects makes distinguishing one variety from another difficult, and it renders their appearance very similar to those seen in Japanese sources. The abundance of lotuses, water lilies, and irises on Newcomb Pottery attests to the easy transference between the two regions (fig. 3.21). Although the Louisiana iris or Louisiana flag grows throughout the swamps of the American Southeast, its form is not highly distinct from that of other regions. The numerous irises on Newcomb vases differ little from those that appear in Japanese prints, or in the many Western art products inspired by them (see fig. 3.15). Similarly, the lotus is a well-known

sacred symbol in many Asian religions, and both Asian and native varieties grow successfully throughout the United States, as do similar varieties of water lilies. Lotuses and water lilies were immensely popular during the period, both as subjects in artwork and as desirable additions to home gardens. Even one of the best-known icons of the South, the magnolia, has numerous cousins with Asian origins and frequently appears in Japanese art.[40] This transference also extends to animal subjects. Crabs, like those that appear on a vase by Mary Williams Butler (fig. 3.22), are a common motif in both Chinese and Japanese art, appearing on innumerable decorative arts objects and in prints.

Some of the other botanical species viewed as particularly southern were transplanted to the region during European settlement in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and are, in reality, of Asian origin, creating a potential set of shared subjects between the two locations and thus additional possibilities for overlap. Crape myrtles, peaches, oranges, camellias, and oleander, all of which are used in Newcomb College Pottery decorations, are but a few of the plant varieties of Asian origin that were brought to the region during this period and subsequently came to be seen as native plants. The dangling clusters of yellow berries on Harriet Joor's vase accurately depict those of the chinaberry tree, another example of a plant with Asian origins brought to the United States in the colonial period and popularized throughout the South (fig. 3.23). Cotton and sugar, two of the Gulf Coast region's largest agricultural products, were likewise colonial transplants; sugar originated in the Pacific Islands and Southeast Asia, and cotton, known to Europeans via trade with India, was brought to North America from South America and Mexico.[41] The incorporation of non-native

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[40] William Tricker, "How to Make a Garden – Water Lilies and Other Plants," *Country Life in America*, August 1903, 275-277; Ralph W. Tiner, *Field Guide to Coastal Wetland Plants of the Southeastern United States* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), 58, 208; Lisa J. Samuelson and Michael E. Hogan, *Forest Trees: A Guide to the Southeastern and Mid-Atlantic Regions of the United States* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2003), 282-296.

[41] Samuelson and Hogan, 298; James F. Hancock, *Plantation Crops, Plunder and Power* (London: Routledge, 2017), 5-6, 12-27, 59-74; see also M. S. Swaminathan and S. L. Kochhar, *Major Flowering Trees of Tropical Gardens* (Cambridge,

species into southern regional identity can be seen in Mary Given Sheerer's romantic narration of her students' relationship with their natural environment, in which she references jasmine and Cherokee rose. Despite its growth throughout the region, few varieties of jasmine are native to the United States and many come from Asia; moreover, the Cherokee rose's origins are in China.[42] Though none outside of the field of botany likely recognized the cultivation history of these plant species, their depiction in Asian art, especially Japanese woodblock prints, encouraged unconscious connections between the two regions.

Newcomb's ornament also continually references water, visually reminding its viewers of the region's abundance of swamps and bayous and its proximity to the Gulf Coast while also invoking another subtle tie to island-based Japan. The tiny blue lines that undulate across the background of Sheerer's early iris vase are echoed in the ripples across a black surface at the base of another of her early jars, the rest of which is decorated with a repeating motif of the aquatic plant bull-tongue arrowhead (fig. 3.24). Less obvious implications of water also occur during the foundational years. The agaves surrounding a small vase decorated by Mary Williams Butler stand in a dark blue ground, transforming the desert plant into an aquatic species (fig. 3.25). Rendered as if viewed from slightly below, Mazie T. Ryan's cotton bolls are separated from a green band around the base of the tyg by a series of undulating blue lines (fig. 3.26); in this configuration, cotton bolls almost become water lilies. Even the application of glazes in these early works, with their concomitant transparent, streaky qualities, lends these objects a waterlogged appearance, evocative of their having spontaneously emerged from a bayou or bay. The wash-like application of glazes to the surface of Ada Wilt

UK: Cambridge University Press, 2019). I would like to thank David Allen Burns and Austin Young, the artists behind the collaborative Fallen Fruit, who made the foreign origins of these plants and their potential contribution to the constructions of an "exotic" South apparent in the didactic materials for their installation *Empire* at the Newcomb Art Museum at Tulane University, April 13 – December 22, 2018.

[42] See Frederick G. Meyer, Peter M. Mazzeo, and Donald H. Voss, *A Catalog of Cultivated Woody Plants of the Southeastern United States* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1994).

Lonnegan's vase with hollyhocks contributes to an impression of its having been soaked, heightened during the final glazing that blurred the various contour lines (see fig. 3.12).

Decorators continued to incorporate subtle allusions to water through the turn of the century, and the increasingly limited blue and green color palette enhanced these reminders of the region's vicinity to water. The register at the top of a tyg decorated by Leona Fischer Nicholson presents a tripartite structure of white indeterminable blossoms sprouting from a green band in the foreground, blue band in the middle ground, and a series of green vertical lines against a white band in the background (fig. 3.27). The composition reads as plants blossoming across the surface or along the banks of a body of water, with additional reeds or aquatic plants on the other side. References to bodies of water occur with greater frequency in more landscape-like decorative schemes. On a vase by Mary Frances Baker, multi-branched trees (purportedly crape myrtles) stand at the edge of a creek or river, its movement implied by short, horizontal, incised, dark blue lines in the center of a light blue band. Little splashes of light blue among and behind the trees hint at additional vegetation (fig. 3.28). Less overtly, a jardinière decorated by Marie de Hoa LeBlanc, which also features a repeating motif of trees, includes a second, slightly different hued band above the blue-green one from which the trees emerge, implying that the trees line some body of water (fig. 3.29). Through choice of subject and modes of depiction, Newcomb constantly offered its viewers a saturated South, resembling the "floating world" seen in Japanese prints.

Newcomb's project of establishing an iconography for the South repeatedly deployed or made reference to imagery found in Japanese art, aligning the region's flora and fauna with that of a country viewed as exotic. Therefore, the firm's chosen subject matter helped affirm for its consumers that the region was, at the very least, as geographically distinctive as Japan. On another level, this kind of elision with Japan supported an impression of the South as culturally distinct, just as distant and mysterious as the island nation from which Newcomb drew so much of its material.

Because these subjects were rendered through methods of conventionalization, and thus understood during this period to be incomplete images, it is important to consider the potential permutations of completions in their viewers' imaginations.

The Imagined Subject

Because of the semi-abstraction of their subjects, both conventionalization and Japanese art were considered to be indicative of superior intellect in the late nineteenth century. This applied to both the makers, who possessed the ability to conceive of landscapes and other natural motifs in a reduced form of representation, and to their audiences, who were sufficiently intelligent to fill out the details in their minds. A repeating motif of a single plant or animal, such as irises or arrowhead, served as a signifier for the entirety of a southern bayou or other landscape – in seeing Mary Given Sheerer's arrowhead blossoms, one was to imagine them within the pond, possibly surrounded by cypress and other botanical subjects (see fig. 3.24). Other compositions, as seen with Mary Frances Baker's vase and Marie de Hoa LeBlanc's jardinière, combine botanical subjects with suggestions of scenery in such a way that they evoke landscapes, thereby implying a view of a largely southern landscape (see figs. 3.28 and 3.29). Completely unpopulated, these landscapes also rarely include signs of human life. Given the period understanding of conventionalized representations as incomplete, it is important to consider how these images could have been finished within the viewer's imaginary.

Newcomb students and decorators' print work, particularly a series of calendars that they produced, provide some insight into the possibilities. They exhibit a similar increasing attention to landscape, as opposed to patterns of repeating motifs, over the course of the first decade of the twentieth century. The pages for the 1896 New Orleans Calendar are bordered with scrollwork and strapwork seemingly inspired by medieval illuminated manuscripts. These are interspersed with four illustrations, varying slightly in style among the calendars' four designers, that correspond with the

previous three months (fig. 3.30).[43] All incorporate astrological signs and a plant or tree into their iconography: roses among Mardi Gras symbols for January through March, magnolias behind a balustrade for April through June, artfully arranged banana plants for July through September, and oranges branching over the signs for October through December. The variety and different levels of representation approximate those seen in the works produced at the Newcomb College Pottery at the time.

Four years later, Frances Jones and Katharine Kopman's 1900 New Orleans Calendar paired flat, linear renditions of regional flora and fauna in color with scenes of modernizing New Orleans and its environs in black and white. Dandelions frame a picture of steamboats pulling up to docks, blue flags are topped by a view of sugar refinery buildings and a stand of cane, and arrowheads surround a trestle crossing a bayou (fig. 3.31).[44] With the smoke billowing from the stacks atop the steamboats and the sugar refinery buildings, and the train trestle "conquering" the swampy ground, these landscapes demonstrate processes of modernization that took place over the previous century and point to the regional's potential for future development. A small section at the end of the calendar describes many of these facets of southern life, and it indicates the simultaneity of nostalgia for the past and visions for the future in operation in these images. The steamboat, a technological advance that allowed the days of flatboats to be left behind and became a "veritable floating palace," is now "a beast of burden" because of the speedier trains lining both sides of the Mississippi River. The development of additional railroads is clearly the hope for the future, but these same modes of transportation still afford views of the romanticized landscape: "…it passes through the most characteristic Louisiana scenery. Travelling under the biggest skies, it strikes across the swamps,

[43] "The New Orleans Calendar 1896," Caroline Ogden et al, Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

[44] "The New Orleans Calendar 1900," Frances D. Jones and Katharine Kopman (New Orleans: D. H. Holmes, c. 1899), Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

whose long and level lines are cut here and there by a slow stream. At sunset the water between the sedge grass turns red in sympathy with the crimsoned sky, and as the soft winds set across the prairies there is a suggestion of enchantment more than of reality."[45] This kind of duality mirrors that of the language surrounding the Newcomb College Pottery, which was at once presented as a paragon of industrial design and aspiration for development, but also a small operation dedicated to handcraftsmanship techniques. It is also reflective of the challenges of New South rhetoric and its own straddling of romanticized past with optimistic future.

Beginning in the mid-1900s, the calendars, all designed by Rosalie Urquhart, evince greater interest in New Orleans's architecture and, more importantly, the romantic language surrounding it in contemporary fiction. Her Mary Ashley Townsend Calendar for 1904 is not all that dissimilar from Jones and Kopman's calendar in the organization of its illustrations, using flattened and linear depictions of flora as framing devices for a series of landscapes.[46] Urquhart's cover hints at the noticeably different approach to the subject of local scenery seen within the calendar (fig. 3.32). The city is but a silhouette of steeples set on the horizon against radiating lines implying a rising or setting sun; foregrounded are bayous, trees, and irises. The quote below, taken from Townsend's poem "Down the Bayou," emphasizes the sense of geographic distance evoked by this rendition of the landscape. Subsequent illustrations in the calendar depict buildings and scenes, devoid of people and coupled with nostalgia-filled lines from Townsend's poems. Similar themes dominate Urquhart's other calendars from the decade, culminating in the 1909 Louisiana calendar (fig. 3.33).[47] Its hazy, wide landscapes anticipate the aesthetic shifts that occurred in the following decades at the

[45] "The New Orleans Calendar 1900," back matter.

[46] "The Mary Ashley Townsend Calendar 1904," Rosalie Urquhart, Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

[47] "The Louisiana Calendar 1909," Rosalie Urquhart, Folder 4, New Orleans Art School Calendars, Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

Newcomb College Pottery. Set above quotes from contemporary authors, they offer predominantly rural views, with only small hints at architecture or people: roses wind around white columns on a balustrade overlooking a river, lotuses fill a strangely isolated fountain at Newcomb College, and a sugar refinery building is barely visible through a parted stand of cane. Shadowy and dark among a pine grove on a river bank, the only perceivable figures in one scene are explained through the corresponding quote: "Fishermen along shore – old Negroes mostly – pottered among the rafts setting their lines and if the oarsmen listened keenly they might almost surely have caught short snatches of low-pitched song." The calendar closes with a full-page quote from George Washington Cable's essay "Who Are the Creoles?" which appeared in *Century* in 1883. It begins as follows:

> The scenery of this land where it is still in its wild state, is wild and funereal, but on the banks of the large bayous, broad fields of cotton, of corn, of cane, and of rice, open out at frequent intervals, on either side of the bayou, pushing back the dark pall-like curtain of moss-draped swamp, and presenting to the passing eye, the neat, and often imposing residence of the planter, the white double row of field-hands cabins, the tall red chimney, and broad gray roofs of the sugar house…

By the end of a single decade in these calendars, New Orleans and greater Louisiana had been transformed, regressing from a region undergoing processes that would better its connections with the remainder of the United States to the geographically and temporally distant version promoted in literature and media in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

George Washington Cable and Mary Ashley Townsend's words, as well as those of numerous other authors of literature about the South, contributed to the Lost Cause effort to depict the region's antebellum past as a halcyon age. Further solidified through publications like sheet music and tourism promotion, the symbols that emerged from these materials included white-columned plantations, Spanish moss-laden trees, Black individuals in servitude, and young white "belles" in hoop skirts. Cable's quote at the end of the calendar neatly incorporates many of these symbols – planter's mansion, moss and bayou/swamp, and "field hands" (often code for enslaved people). At first glance, the Newcomb College Pottery's ornament, with few direct references to such subjects, would seem to avoid Lost Cause imagery. Rather than emphasizing southern people

and their purported structures of gentility, the ornament relies upon the perceived exoticism of the region's flora and fauna. In their landscape configurations, the decorators provided audiences with anticipated views of the South, to be filled with whatever elements they found most appealing. Reconsidering this ornament alongside designers' evident familiarity with contemporary literature and the spread of Lost Cause iconography, the elements that the viewer would mentally furnish become more apparent. Glimpses of palatial homes on the horizon line can be inserted in between the crape myrtles on Mary Frances Baker's vase or Marie de Hoa LeBlanc's jardinière (see figs. 29 and 30), or fishermen, like those referenced in Urquhart's calendar scene, can be visualized standing on the banks or floating in canoes on the bayou. Viewers could also imagine these scenes as perspectives from within the plantation, like an owner while walking the land or from a porch, as in the cover for Urquhart's 1909 calendar (see fig. 3.33). All of these "picturesque" elements, as they were often described in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, can be applied at will. Though rarely directly depicted on Newcomb pieces, these landscapes likely include the Black bodies that many outside the region found a fascinating and distinctive part of southern life.[48]

Visions of stereotypical white belles could also be incorporated into these projected views, but, as previously discussed, they were also simultaneously pictured as the makers of these objects. Jane Grey Rogers's poem, "Lines to a Newcomb Vase," published in *House Beautiful* in 1902 and

[48] Rebecca Cawood McIntyre, *Souvenirs of the Old South: Northern Tourism and Southern Mythology* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011), 103-109; Karen L. Cox, *Dreaming of Dixie: How the South Was Created in American Popular Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 110-115. As Cox makes clear, examples of treatments of Black individuals as objects within a southern landscape abound in period literature written by both northern and southern authors. As he did with most other aspects of the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans in 1884-1885, Eugene V. Smalley thoroughly described all of the characters, including Black individuals in this manner, in his articles about the fair; see "In and Out of the New Orleans Exposition," *The Century Magazine*, June 1885, 193. The breadth and depth of Lost Cause writing can be seen in the plethora of stories of this type published in national magazines. For a few examples, see Rebecca Cameron, "Christmas on an Old Plantation," *The Ladies' Home Journal*, December 1891, 7; Mrs. Thaddeus Horton, "Romances of Some Southern Homes," *The Ladies' Home Journal*, September 1900, 18-19; Grace King, "Christmas on a Louisiana Sugar Plantation," *Country Life in America,* December 1903, 127-133. A vase decorated by Mary Wolcott Richardson in 1902 and sold at the Neal Auction House in 2012 presents a rare representation of Black people on a Newcomb College Pottery piece, and in that case directly references minstrel sheet music, with the phrase "Rastus on Parade" around the neck.

subsequently reprinted by Newcomb with illustrations by Sadie Irvine, further reveals the fascination with the objects' makers:

> …Perchance some slender Creole maid
> in shaping thee hath somehow laid
> A spell upon thee, ere, half sad
> She sent thee forth to make men glad
> I seem to see her earnest face
> Her pliant fingers as they trace
> Thy form with sweet unconscious grace
> The soft dark eyes that watchful burned
> While fast the wizard wheel was turned
> I catch the gentle words she sung, --
> A dream-song, in her mother tongue, --
> A song that sank to silent prayer
> Awhile she worked, with holiest care,
> And placed her superscription there…[49]

Rogers's allusion to a Creole maid makes evident another side of the allure of the "girls" who were creating these objects: their unique heritage, made all the more acceptable because of the clarification by George Washington Cable and others that the term "Creole" was reserved for those of French and Spanish ancestry, or whiteness. Romanticizing these makers as Evangeline-like figures or white southern belles allowed viewers to situate Newcomb designers within the mythological roles assigned to them in Lost Cause narrative constructions. Because of the impressions of authenticity promoted by figures like Ellsworth Woodward and Mary Given Sheerer, which often hinged on the southern origins of these designers as much as their materials and subjects, these women completed the fantasy's cycle. The knowledge of southern white women's role in creating Newcomb College Pottery contributed to the objects' potential to prompt visions of the antebellum period's purported grandeur within the spaces of its ornament.

The pervasive spread of nostalgia-laden literature likely led most consumers to conjure romanticized images of plantation life when viewing these landscape motifs on Newcomb College Pottery objects, but their openness allowed for a range of interpretations and insertions of different

[49] Jane Grey Rogers, "Lines to a Newcomb Vase," reprint ed., University Archives, Tulane University; see also *House Beautiful*, February 1902, 174.

subjects. Audiences sufficiently familiar with Japanese prints could mentally place figures from those prints into the scenes. Large bands with repeating pine trees are a frequent subject in Newcomb work and strikingly resemble renditions of rural byways in Japanese art. For example, Katsushika Hokusai's print *Hodogaya on the Tokaido* filters a view of Mt. Fuji through a pine grove along a rural road. Travelers on foot and horseback trudge along the road in front of the pines. In Utagawa Kuniyoshi's print *Wayfarers Looking at the Statue of Jizo Bostatsu in a Pine Grove at Hashiba*, travelers in traditional garb pause before a shrine in the midst of tall pines. Both show pine trees with elongated trunks, stretching to spindly branches topped with small puffs of green, to represent their formations of needles (fig. 3.34). These same treatments of pine trees are seen in numerous Newcomb objects, including the mug decorated by Desirée Roman (see fig. 3.17). Whether unconsciously, or if it was part of Newcomb's appeal, the figures traveling through rural Japan in such prints could be easily transposed into Roman and Bailey's pine groves, layering one exoticized landscape on top of another. The similarities of these views, like Newcomb's selections of botanical subjects, conflate one culture regarded as premodern and exotic upon a region often similarly viewed as archaic and different, and it allowed for a transferability of imaginary visions between them.

Conversely, these unpopulated landscapes could have satisfied some viewers' desires to envision the American South as a land of abundant, unlimited natural resources, devoid of society and its ills. New South proponents regularly advanced a version of the region as having untapped potential for industrial development. Just as the use of native clays participated in the effort to develop the region's raw materials, views of open land and stands of pine trees support the idea of the South's verdancy and its capacity for transformation, not only in service of diversified agricultural production but also manufacture. Pine trees, for instance, become lumber and furnishings. The emphasis on space and lack of evidence of architecture in the Newcomb College

Pottery's landscapes also participate in the idea of the South as the premodern counterpart to the fully industrialized, and therefore modern, if not occasionally taxing, Northeast. From this viewpoint, the region itself was an object to be consumed, a tourist's paradise in which to take respite from the pressures of the modern world. Newcomb's vacant landscapes emphasize the South's rurality and attendant provincialism. They negate the reality of the region's slowly increasing urbanization. With this, they also contribute to the fictional narrative of a region free from social and economic conflicts, despite its conspicuous poverty and racial strife.

Because of the period understandings of conventionalization and Japanese art and their relationships with imagination, the ornament employed in Newcomb College Pottery must be understood as a series of signs or frames to be completed in their viewers' fantasies. In all likelihood, the increasing popularity of a mythologized antebellum past in contemporary literature most strongly informed these visions, filling the gaps with planters' palaces or "picturesque" shacks, fields of cotton, and stereotypical Black individuals. Yet, these relatively open frames were simultaneously receptive to other interpretations. The artistic conventions and correspondences between these scenes and landscapes in Japanese prints helped solidify a vision of the South as geographically and culturally distinct by fostering unconscious associations between the two. Lacking much evidence of inhabitation, Newcomb's landscapes could also support conceptions of the region as a resource simply awaiting its proper use, whether for play or for profit. For viewers skilled in fleshing out the details on their own, the firm's ornament provided the scaffolding for innumerable fantasies.

Conclusion

Among the numerous design sources that the Newcomb College Pottery emulated, Japan was one of the most significant, for it yielded the most variety. In Japanese art, the firm's potters and decorators found paragons for their ceramic forms and representative modes; they also utilized shared sets of imagery. Notably, these elements came from a culture that, although undeniably seen as an "other" by Westerners, was granted a certain amount of respect. Their blending, together and

with other design influences, resulted in objects that seemed sufficiently unique, and thereby southern. They also suited the expectation that the region's geographic distinctiveness would result in markedly different artwork, partly by appropriating forms already viewed in this manner by Americans. Given the long history of Asian art manufacturers utilizing print materials and other resources to shape their products to suit Western expectations and tastes, it seems fitting that Newcomb, in turn, looked to Asian models to attune their wares to their fellow Americans' taste.

Just as Americans consistently imagined Japan as a world very distant, geographically, temporally, and culturally from their own, the subjects that Newcomb's decorators selected for their work and their methods of depicting them contributed to similar fantasies about the American South. In reality, Meiji emperors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries increasingly took up Western modes of dress, embraced industrialization, and waged very modern wars as they expanded their empire. The New South saw like patterns of industrialization occur; modern railroads allowed many northeasterners to travel to the swamps and orange groves they found so fascinating. It is difficult, though, to imagine the New Orleans streetcars that prompted the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision and upheld the legality of Jim Crow laws among the streams and trees that stretch across the Newcomb College Pottery's pieces. Even on Alice Raymond Scudder's vase, the steeples and rooftops in her landscape evoke a pastoral country town. In actuality, her vase presents a view of no particular place or time, only imagined as distant and in some way southern because of the rhetoric that surrounds it, and the artistic conventions used to realize it.

Chapter 4

Rococo Relocations: Lycett's & France

George W. Adair's somber black-and-white photographic portrait contrasts sharply with its heavily gilt and ornamented surroundings on a porcelain vase (fig. 4.1). Dressed in collared shirt, tie, and jacket, and with an unsmiling countenance, Adair appears every bit a serious, turn-of-the-century, white businessman, his participation in modern life encapsulated using contemporary technology and then affixed to an object through Lycett's deployment of relatively new transfer-printing techniques. Adair's portrait is set within an oval frame finished with extensive gilt scrollwork, flanked by enormous pink roses and abundant foliage in a range of greens. Additional roses and branches on the reverse of the vase direct the eye toward Adair's birth and death dates and underscore the vase's primary function as a memorial. Forming a secondary frame, splashes of gilding adorn the scalloped edge at the vase's bottom and the rim of its curving mouth at the top; the scrolling handles on either side are thoroughly gilded to appear as metallic mounts. These characteristics – gilding, scrollwork, pastel hues – coupled with the vase's porcelain material evoke eighteenth-century, and particularly French, aristocratic style.

Lycett's decorative schema positions Adair as a modern figure within a historical aristocratic context. This chapter interprets the china painting firm's consistent reliance upon eighteenth-century rococo style and porcelain material as a reconciliation of New South with Old. This style and material saw a resurgence in popularity in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, especially among northeastern industrial capitalists whom the emerging business class in the South sought to emulate. Both rococo and porcelain's French aristocratic connotations held great significance for a group of individuals who aspired to similar levels of wealth, as well as political and cultural power. When William Lycett began importing undecorated porcelain directly from France in

the 1890s, rather than strictly buying from New York wholesale dealers, he fostered a connection between the South and global commodities, further solidifying the region's participation in modern cosmopolitanism. This chapter considers the ways in which Lycett's more direct relationship with French manufacturers may have been impacted by and therefore reflective of local design preferences. It then turns from the links between this material and contemporary regional concerns to examine rococo and porcelain's previous enthusiastic reception in the South during the antebellum period. Eighteenth-century style French porcelain allowed Lycett's consumers to simultaneously invoke the design choices of the so-called planter aristocracy, aligning themselves with the most powerful class of the previous era.

Rococo in America

In accordance with its increasing popularity, the American trade publication *Decorator & Furnisher* attempted to define the term "rococo" in August 1887 for its readers as follows:

> Littre derives the word from *rocaille*, rockwork, and the Imperial Dictionary defines it as a debased variety of the Louis Quatorze style of ornament proceeding from it through the degeneracy of the Louis Quinze. It is generally a meaningless assemblage of scrolls and crimped conventional shell work, wrought into all sorts of irregular and indescribable forms, without individuality and without expression… By some it has been thought to be rich though luxuriant; and by others it is condemned as a weak attempt to refine and improve upon the purest models in art, producing capricious, fantastical or childish results.[1]

Notwithstanding its amusing cynicism, this explanation affords a glimpse into the cultural associations with the style, which saw a lasting resurgence in the United States beginning in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It is linked, albeit as "degenerate," with the reign of the French king Louis XV, signifying connections with monarchical power. Additionally, the descriptor "rich though luxuriant" alludes to the style's connotations of immense wealth. The authors' commentary about scrolls and shell work aligns with the typical definitions of the term, but with the added negative descriptors of meaninglessness, irregularity, and capriciousness. These complaints would be repeated continuously as design reformers and other concerned parties more vociferously

[1] Editors' Notes, *Decorator & Furnisher,* August 1887, 200. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

championed simplicity and symmetry over the course of the decades that followed. However, the fantasy that rococo offered its enthusiasts was anything but meaningless. For Americans, particularly a class of exceptionally wealthy individuals, it granted a significant set of aristocratic associations in a national context that proudly claimed to have none, while ralso endering their prosperity more materially visible. By purchasing objects in the style, Lycett's consumers demonstrated their awareness of contemporary taste preferences among powerful northeastern industrial capitalists.

The summer homes constructed or remodeled at Newport, Rhode Island from the 1880s onward exemplify these relatively new millionaires' attempts to outfit their interiors according to European precedents. Writing in 1884, Mary Gay Humphreys documented the spreading fashion for French drawing rooms, furnished with expensive antiques and objects imported from France, occurring at Newport. "To do this of course comes within the ability of only those with the purse of Fortunatus," she observed.[2] Not long after, generations of Vanderbilts and other of their peers, who had made their fortunes in the railroad, coal, steel, and other industries, constructed or remodeled homes modeled after seventeenth and eighteenth-century French chateaus, complete with interiors furnished by Allard and Sons of Paris. Meanwhile, in New York City, Henry Clay Frick worked with the Duveen Brothers to fill his manse with European art and antiques, especially of French origin.[3] When *House Beautiful* published a series of articles that highlighted the domestic interiors of wealthy individuals, such displays were highlighted as evidence of "The Poor Taste of the Rich." Though rococo style was not wholly rejected, its endless application appears to have been the source of great ire. Taking aim first at Bradley and Cornelia Martin, who had earned the distinction in 1893 of having thrown one of the most expensive balls in American history, the authors bemoaned their

[2] Mary Gay Humphreys, "Hints from Newport Houses," *Decorator & Furnisher*, October 1884, 20. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

[3] Charlotte Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts, 1880-1940* (New York: The Frick Collection, 2019), 26, 172-173, 185-192; Dianne H. Pilgrim, "Decorative Art: The Domestic Environment," in *The American Renaissance*, 145-151.

New York City home's ostentation, perceiving it to be a mere display of money (fig. 4.2). In a description of a "Louis XV" bedroom, the authors declared "Louis XV, did some one say? The decorators of Louis' court would be moved to tears could they but see the crimes committed in their name."[4] Despite the numerous protests to their supposed abuses of rococo, the perpetrators were among the particular class of individuals from whom an upwardly mobile set of southerners hoped to gain respect, if not capital investment. Furnishing their homes in the same manner, and with similar styles in porcelain, would demonstrate their knowledge of this group's particular design preferences and, in turn, command similar levels of respect or understanding. At the very least, the heavy deployment of rococo signaled the accumulation of great wealth and thus achievement of an analogous socioeconomic status.

Besides legible costliness, one of the other important points of attraction of rococo was its attachment to aristocracy. In 1889, *Decorator & Furnisher* noted furniture dealers' complaints of being "sadly disturbed by flocks of lady visitors fresh from the Paris Exhibition, who chat mellifluously, wearisomely and with an air of intimate familiarity, of styles Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI…"[5] Newport cottage builders not only sought out expensive European goods and antiques, but they also commissioned architects to follow specific noble examples. William and Alva Vanderbilt commissioned Richard Morris Hunt to model Marble House after the Petit Trianon at Versailles; silver heiress Theresa Fair Oelrichs hired Stanford White to follow the Grand Trianon for her Rosecliff. The Elms, by Horace Trumbauer for Edward Julius Berwind, copied the mid-eighteenth century Château d'Asnières, located outside Paris.[6] This emulation of aristocratic

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[4] "The Poor Taste of the Rich," *The House Beautiful,* December 1904, 23. At the infamous ball, the Bradley-Martins required all of their attendees to dress as members of royalty from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, and Marie Antoinettes and Madames de Pompadour abounded.

[5] Editors' Notes, *Decorator & Furnisher*, December 1889, 68. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

aesthetic paradigms, especially to this degree of specificity, conveyed a sense of the political power of this class. Enshrining themselves within the salons of the eighteenth-century aristocracy, these turn-of-the-century American plutocrats fashioned themselves as the heirs of this legacy.

Many of the sets of game plates painted at Lycett's reveal a similar depth of knowledge of eighteenth-century style. One particular set, in the collections of the Atlanta History Center, places illustrations of birds against green vegetation and an all-over green ground (fig. 4.3). This decorative scheme echoes that of one of the most expensive sets produced at the French royal porcelain manufactory at Sèvres, the 1771-1772 table service for Louis-René-Édouard, prince of Rohan-Guémenée (fig. 4.4). In both sets, most pieces feature a central cartouche with a highly detailed depiction of birds in their natural environs; different varieties of birds and plant life appear on each object. Likewise, the cartouches are encircled with gilt framing devices, oak leaves on the Sèvres set and scrollwork on the Lycett's. Color fills the space between the cartouche and gilding borders or edges in both as well. Many of the items in the Sèvres table service incorporate a large, gilt, foliate "LPR" monogram, another eighteenth-century precedent for comparable ornament within Lycett's work, the large scrolling monograms that appear on the firm's custom pieces. Lycett's game plates call to mind these ornate sets and their close proximity to eighteenth-century nobility.

Porcelain, as a material, conjured similar identifications with princely patronage, in no small part due to its European history. Princes and other authorities in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Louis XIV among them, feverishly collected Asian porcelains and engaged in a technological race to discover the secrets of their manufacture. Louis XV, with whom rococo style is closely tied, became patron of the porcelain factory at Vincennes in 1740, moving it to Sèvres in 1756 and ultimately buying out other shareholders in order to achieve sole proprietorship in 1759.

[6] Richard Guy Wilson, "Architecture and City Planning," in *The American Renaissance: 1876-1917* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum of Art, 1979), 106-107.

As with most other porcelain factories in Continental Europe during the eighteenth century, Sèvres survived ongoing financial strife because of royal and aristocratic patronage. Louis expected his courtiers to purchase items from sales, or, as seen with the table service for the prince de Rohan-Guémenée, commissioned works from the manufactory for personal and diplomatic gifts.[7] For better or worse, porcelain's close ties to aristocratic patronage stuck, as seen in Edmund Russell's biting criticism of the passion for French porcelain in an article for *Good Housekeeping* in 1906. "No wonder popular appreciation fastened on Sevres and Saxe," he writes. "Was not the royal monogram there! Did not a king's mistress announce that those who bought not as much as they could afford were not good citizens?"[8] Like rococo style, porcelain's history among aristocrats lent the material lasting connotations of wealth, nobility, and heritage. Lycett's game sets, therefore, not only foster such connections through their stylistic characteristics and the inclusion of monograms, but also through their material.

Limoges and America

As revealed in Edmund Russell's complaints, the traditionally aristocratic porcelain firms, Sèvres and Dresden (formerly Meissen, or Saxe), held enormous sway in Americans' impressions of European porcelain. Etiquette writers advised their readers that "rare china of Sèvres, Dresden, or turquoise and gold" were the preferred articles for formal dining.[9] The expense of these items placed them far beyond the reach of most Americans, so, instead, many looked to the abundance of porcelain manufacturers in Limoges, France for their wares. Where the Sèvres manufactory benefited immensely from royal, imperial, or republic patronage, depending on the regime, and

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[7] Svend Eriksen, *Sèvres Porcelain* (London: The National Trust, 1968), 13-16; Robert Finlay, *The Pilgrim Art: Cultures of Porcelain in World History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 259, 276-277; Jeffrey Munger, *European Porcelain in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018), 5.

[8] Edmund Russell, "Sacred Sèvres," *Good Housekeeping,* July 1906, 3.

[9] Frances Stevens, *The Usages of the Best Society: A Complete Manual of Social Etiquette* (New York: A. L. Burt, 1889), 93. See also Mrs. John Sherwood, *Manners and Social Usages* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1884), 183-188.

primarily focused on technical research and producing goods for the use of the state, the manufacturers in Limoges heavily relied upon exports, especially to America, for their success.[10] Their attention to American stylistic preferences and dining practices ensured that these "French" products found ready reception among their audiences across the Atlantic. William Lycett's endeavors into importation directly from European manufacturers, rather than solely through New York City wholesalers, represents active participation in this network of trans-Atlantic exchanges, which may have resulted in forms designed specifically for his southern clientele.

Limoges's rise to prominence as a porcelain manufacturing center in the nineteenth century is heavily indebted to its lengthy relationship with consumers in the United States. The city is far closer in proximity than Paris to the quarries of kaolin clay at St. Yrieix-la-Perche. Discovered in 1765, St. Yrieix kaolin afforded the production of hard-paste porcelain, akin to that created in China, in France. However, much of this raw material was mined and subsequently sold to Sèvres and, later, other well-established Parisian manufacturers in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Eventually, prompted by lack of available space, legal restrictions on manufacturing, and continuous political instability in the capital, some manufacturers relocated to Limoges and began mass-producing undecorated porcelain wares to be shipped to Paris for completion in hand-painting ateliers. Around mid-century, Limoges porcelain manufacturers, influenced by David Haviland, turned increased attention to the potential for exporting directly to the United States, rather than through Paris or to other European countries. Haviland, an American tableware merchant, first attempted to sell French porcelain through his family's New York company in 1836, but, after finding that it did not align with American stylistic tastes and dining habits, decided to go directly to

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[10] Susan Williams, *Savory Suppers and Fashionable Feasts: Dining in Victorian America* (New York: Pantheon, 1985), 80; Antoinette Faÿ-Hallé and Barbara Mundt, *Porcelain of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 168-170; for more on Sèvres during the nineteenth century, see Derek E. Ostergard, ed., *The Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory: Alexandre Brogniart and the Triumph of Art and Industry, 1800-1847* (New York: Bard Graduate Center, 1997).

the source to find a solution. After moving to Limoges with his family in 1841, Haviland worked closely with local producers to provide designs for forms better suited to American dining habits, then purchased and shipped them to New York. In 1847, he established a decorating studio for finishing his colleagues' blank porcelain, and by 1853, Haviland was a licensed porcelain manufacturer.[11] Within the American market, Haviland's wares occupied a void between the most expensive Sèvres porcelain and fine English bone china and the inexpensive English stoneware most people commonly used. Numerous other manufacturers in Limoges followed suit, with French manufacturers expanding their attentiveness to Americans' desires, and, later, American wholesalers setting up their own factories in the city. Exports of porcelain from Limoges to the United States amounted to $100,000 per year from 1840 to 1850, grew to $1.5 million in the 1880s, and then by 1900 reached $3 million.[12]

Examining the communications between Théodore Haviland, David Haviland's second oldest son, and his agent in the United States, William Briggs, sheds light on the active nature of these manufacturers' relationships with American retailers by the late nineteenth century. The younger Haviland was born and raised in France, and he worked alongside his father for many years before being sent to New York to manage distribution and promotion for the Haviland company stateside. He returned to France in 1879, but constant battles with older brother Charles Edmond over Haviland's direction led to Théodore's creation of a separate firm, Théodore Haviland & Company, in 1891. Through Briggs, Théodore Haviland worked closely with his American clients.

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[11] Régine de Plinval de Guillebon, "De la Porcelaine fabriquée à Paris à la Porcelaine décorée à Paris: Evolution pendant la première moitié du XIXe siècle," *The French Porcelain Society Journal* 7 (2018): 176-178; Jean d'Albis, *Haviland*, transl. Laurens d'Albis, English ed. (Paris: Dessain et Tolra, 1988), 6-10; Nora Travis, *Evolution of Haviland Design* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer, 2003), 6-7; Barbara Wood and Robert Doares, *Old Limoges: Haviland Porcelain Design and Décor 1845-1865* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer, 2005), 21-24, 80, 93-117; Faÿ-Hallé and Mundt, *Porcelain of the Nineteenth Century*, 172. Travis points to American dining habits as the primary cause of the problem for French manufacturers – they did not typically use the immense soup tureens and other dishes that were common in French dining and therefore production.

[12] D'Albis, 65; Travis, 122-123; Wood and Doares, 25-26; Faÿ-Hallé and Mundt, 176.

In a letter sent to several large American china purveyors in 1892, Théodore consistently refers to his use of their critical input in the early stages of developing his products, and suggests that this relationship can continue into the future, saying in closing "If these samples *can be made to suit your trade* [emphasis mine], I think it will be to your interest to do all you can to give us liberal orders…"[13] Subsequent letters depict a system in which samples of new products or custom wares were shipped to Briggs in the United States for his approval, or for him to use to gauge clients' interest, and clients offered suggestions based on these small sample batches; some include sketches of forthcoming products (fig. 4.5). Occasionally, this willingness to cater to consumers' wishes caused Théodore consternation: "You [Briggs] say your customer finds the knick saucers too deep, while it is the flatest [sic] saucer ever made by us, any thing more flat will be more like a pan cake than a saucer."[14] For those who ordered in large amounts, the manufacturer offered to print the name of their store on the back of the wares, alongside his mark, or designed exclusive patterns, usually by the addition of a border or other decoration.[15] Since Briggs performed many of the same duties that Théodore previously carried out for Haviland & Company under his father's command, it stands to reason that this constant communication between the Limoges manufacturer and its American customers was not unique to Théodore's endeavor, or to the Haviland family. These relationships afforded the ability to shape wares to very particular desires of specific communities, so long as they were profitable.

As a smaller-scale proprietor, William Lycett likely selected undecorated porcelain from Haviland and other manufacturers' available samples that he perceived to be best suited to his

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[13] Théodore Haviland to 'Mssr. Davis Collamore & Co.,' dated November 16, 1892, 23J art. 92, Manufacture de Porcelaine Haviland, Archives Départmentales Haute-Vienne.

[14] Théodore Haviland to William Briggs, March 21, 1907, 23J art. 93, Manufacture de Porcelaine Haviland, Archives Départmentales Haute-Vienne.

[15] D'Albis, *Haviland*, 20; Travis, *Evolution of Haviland China Design*, 11-13.

clients' tastes, catering to a general predilection for eighteenth-century styles. His name appears among Théodore Haviland's orders with an assigned number in its account books, further evidence of the growth of his more direct relationships with French manufacturers after 1890.[16] His business's success with its "white and gold" offerings necessitated close consideration of the quality of porcelain objects, their shape, and their potential aesthetic relationships with the gilt monograms and stippled borders that the workshop typically employed. In an advertising pamphlet from the 1910s, the firm elucidated its purchasing habits for consumers, stating that each course for a dinner set was usually selected from a different factory, or at least a different shape, "The main idea being to have your set distinctive and as little like the 'Ready Made' as possible." Offering further clarification, the pamphlet goes on to claim that few factories made complete sets in white china, or produced one type of article better than another. It also points out, significantly, that this variety allows the sets to be replenished as needed, with "the newest things in the market," keeping the set "intact and forever in style."[17] While variety was a sought-after quality in dinner sets during this period, these artful explanations hint at the firm's maneuvers to satisfy a customer base that perhaps had less readily disposable income than their northeastern industrial capitalist counterparts. This model afforded the company's customers an acceptable means of steadily building a dinner set as income allowed, or the ability to keep up with the period's ever-changing dining fashions without buying an entirely new set. However, it also enabled these consumers to distinguish themselves from individuals of lesser means who could afford to purchase an entire set of lower-grade porcelain tableware decorated with printed or decal decorations from a Montgomery Ward catalog. The variety of the porcelain bodies, coupled with Lycett's signature monograms, underscored their custom selection and therefore

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[16] Orders from May 1901, 23J art. 92, Manufacture de porcelain Haviland, ADH-V; T. Haviland Client List, p. 120, 23J art. 550, Manufacture de porcelain Haviland, Archives Départmentales Haute-Vienne.

[17] Pamphlet for "William Lycett Son & Co," ca. 1910s, Lycett Business File, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center.

greater expense. These consumers, and the firm itself, tread a very delicate line between emulating one class as much as could possibly be afforded, while successfully distinguishing themselves from those less wealthy or fashionable.

In a collection of Lycett's "white and gold," painted for Adolph and Helen Montag and now at the Atlanta History Center, the range of porcelain bodies implied by the firm's advertising appears, in practice, more as a series of variations on a rococo theme. The set includes objects produced by numerous porcelain manufacturers, with marks by makers in Limoges and Austria. From one to another, most have the same distinct, large, gilt "AHM" monogram, executed in scrolling script and flanked by small palmette decorations. All have stippled gilt borders. Examining the porcelain closely reveals differences in shapes and molding. One small plate, manufactured by Pouyat, has a scalloped edge, molded with crinkles like a flower petal (fig. 4.6). Another, marked by Redon, is heavily molded, with extensive scrollwork and cartouches around the edge (fig. 4.7). The set includes three different cups, two for tea and one for after-dinner coffee, and all in noticeably different forms. One teacup, by Moritz Zdekauer of Altrohlau, Austria (now Stara Role, Czech Republic), features lobed sides, molded scrollwork around the base, a delicate, multi-looped handle, and scalloped rim on its underside (fig. 4.8). The other, without a maker's mark, has a conical cup with scrolling C-shaped handle perched atop a small stand with a scalloped base (fig. 4.9). Finally, the after-dinner coffee cup, manufactured by Pouyat and stamped with a 1906 patent date, has beaded and scrolling vegetal ornament molded around its edge, and a twig-like, D-shaped handle with a series of "knots" (fig. 4.10). All exhibit rococo characteristics, with their varying loops, scrollwork, and scallops, but in different permutations.

The Montag porcelains' variety aligned with contemporary dining modes and accommodated steady acquisition or changes with fashion. Adolph and Helen Montag were married in a large Jewish ceremony in Columbus, Mississippi in 1897, and many of the pieces in their collection were

probably purchased or given to them at that time; the mark on the underside of the Redon plate, for instance, dates it appropriately. The patent date on the underside of the Pouyat after-dinner coffee cup suggests it was added to their dining service later, following the purchasing methods that Lycett's advertising describes. The Montags' continued patronage of Lycett's studio demonstrates the firm's lasting ties to white southern business class figures. Helen was the daughter of a large dry goods store owner in Columbus, and Adolph was the founder of a stationery goods manufacturer in Atlanta.[18] The growth of their "white and gold" set affirms the strength of Lycett's relationship with affluent consumers, as well as the importance of European porcelain and eighteenth-century style to them. The significance of the purchase of Lycett's china for the Montags, as members of a cultural and religious group that often struggled to overcome prejudice and a negative, outsider status within the South, must also be acknowledged. These purchases can be viewed as an attempt to mitigate that status, participating in a particular socioeconomic group's aesthetic preferences and patterns of consumption, while also visibly contributing to efforts to support southern enterprise.[19]

When William Lycett shifted to a business model that entailed more direct importation from overseas manufacturers, he served as a translator within an ongoing dialogue between these European firms and their American customers. The success of his business depended on his ability to convey the needs and desires of his regional consumers to agents, and thus to foreign manufacturers. Unlike department stores or catalogue services, which sold a large variety of items en masse, Lycett's depended upon intimate knowledge of its clients and the perception of its products as special and unique, possibly even individual. To please the regional business class, the firm

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[18] Collections Records, Atlanta History Center; "Social News," *Birmingham* (AL) *News*, December 9, 1897; "Society Notes," *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, January 8, 1898; "Dixie Manufacturing Stationers Move," *Geyer's Stationer*, July 22, 1920.

[19] The Montags were called as witnesses on behalf of Leo M. Frank, whose trial, conviction in 1913, and subsequent kidnapping and lynching in 1915 rendered anti-Semitic attitudes even more visible and spread increased fear among Jewish communities in the region.

consistently selected eighteenth-century style porcelain from all manner of companies and in numerous variations, signaling its strong hold on these individuals' taste.

Rococo Revival, Once Removed

By furnishing their interiors with eighteenth-century objects, Lycett's customers demonstrated their awareness of contemporary fashions and participated in national efforts to draw visual comparisons with rococo style's aristocratic originators. French style, as a hallmark of European culture, became a symbol of legitimacy for northeastern capitalists, and subsequently for the southerners attempting to emulate them. Conveniently for this particular audience of southern consumers, though, rococo, and porcelain with it, had seen a previous moment of popularity in the region among plantation owners during the antebellum period. Turning to rococo allowed white business class southerners to simultaneously foster associations with a prior regime, cultivating specific connotations of wealth and power to reify their status within the region for a new generation.

Rococo saw several revivals throughout the nineteenth century, but its recurrence in the decades just prior to the Civil War provided a significant paradigm for later New South consumers. During this period, the style's resurrection in France was partly driven by Louis Philippe's self-fashioning during the July Monarchy, followed by Empress Eugénie's patronage during the Second Empire. Accordingly, plantation owners who benefited from a cotton boom in the 1830s built enormous manses and outfitted their interiors to suit the prevailing taste for eighteenth-century style. Relationships with French culture appealed to these individuals for many of the same reasons as the industrial capitalists of the late nineteenth century, but they also used rococo materials to draw attention to their familial heritage, a habit especially prevalent among families of French ancestry in Louisiana and Mississippi.[20] Furniture retailers such as Prudent Mallard of New Orleans collaborated

[20] Jason T. Busch, "Equal to Any in the World: Rococo-Revival Furniture in America," in *Rococo: The Continuing Curve, 1730-2008*, ed. Sarah D. Coffin et al (New York: Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, 2008), 195; Busch,

with Parisian manufacturers like Marchand & Bastard and Frédéric Roux; Mallard also purchased items from Roux's brother Alexander, an award-winning cabinetmaker and retailer in New York City.[21]

An illustration of Mallard's showrooms in the *New Orleans Business Directory of 1858* demonstrates the depth of mid-nineteenth century southerners' infatuation with French eighteenth-century style (fig. 4.11). Every inch of the room incorporates some element of rococo style. The space has been finished with paneling with light, scrolling foliage and flowers, and each doorway and window is topped with massive brackets with scrolling ends. Chandeliers composed of clusters of C-scrolls or overflowing with flowers dangle from the ceilings. Furniture pieces with curving fronts or backs and cabriole legs are arranged around the room, and some items, such as the small dressing table near the room's center, appear to be eighteenth-century antiques. An open doorway on the left of the image provides a glimpse of an elaborate bedstead, complete with canopy, textiles, and tassels, that one could easily imagine having been taken from a Parisian hôtel. Placed atop each flat surface or small shelf, numerous small objects and figurines demonstrate the extent of Mallard's furnishing capabilities. Many of these *objets*, particularly the vases visible on the center table, were likely made of porcelain.

Although Prudent Mallard's showrooms were extraordinarily elaborate, plantations throughout the South in the decades just prior to the Civil War boasted similarly ornate, eighteenth-century style furnishings. Melrose, a plantation house built in 1848 in Natchez, Mississippi, includes

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"The French Rococo Revival Along the Mississippi River," *Magazine Antiques* 166, no. 2 (2004): 84; Melissa Lee Hyde, "Rococo Redux: From the Style Moderne of the Eighteenth Century to Art Nouveau," in *Rococo: The Continuing Curve*, ed. Coffin et al, 13; for more on the revival of rococo styles by nineteenth-century French porcelain manufacturers, see Audrey Gay-Mazuel, "Nostalgie pour le 'vieux Sèvres' et le 'vieux Saxe': les lignes rocailles de la porcelaine de Paris aux XIXe siècle," *The French Porcelain Society Journal* 7 (2018): 183-201.

[21] Jason T. Busch, "Handsomely Furnished in the Most Fashionable Style: Art and Decoration Along the Mississippi River," in *Currents of Change: Art and Life along the Mississippi River, 1850-1861* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2004), 86.

many of the trims and furniture originally purchased by the home's first owners, John T. and Mary Louisa McMurran (fig. 4.12).[22] Much like Mallard's showroom, suites of upholstered furniture in rosewood and walnut with serpentine backs, cabriole legs, and floral carvings occupy the home's parlor and drawing room. Windows are surmounted with ornately carved and gilt cornice boxes, and a massive, gilt pier mirror features enormous scrollwork flanking a grand, feather-like finial on its top. The McMurrans' selections of furnishings indicate the popularity of rococo revival style furnishings among the members of the South's wealthy, landholding class, which undeniably exerted the most power and cultural influence in the region prior to the Civil War. Moreover, these stylistic preferences were not limited to the Lower Mississippi region, or manufacturers and patrons of French descent. For example, in North Carolina, free Black cabinetmaker Thomas Day earned a strong reputation for the furniture he completed for white, affluent customers, much of which featured scrollwork and ornament conversant with eighteenth-century French stylistic characteristics (fig. 4.13).[23] For many white southerners, this style signified the height of socioeconomic achievement.

Tied to this enthusiasm for eighteenth-century style, French porcelain also saw heightened patronage in this region during this period. Plantation owners and other wealthy southerners engaged retailers like Prudent Mallard to secure porcelain tableware, garnitures, and other objects from Parisian manufacturers. In his survey of the American ceramics industry, Edward Atlee Barber claimed that New York decorators Haughwout & Daily "did an extensive business, in ante-bellum days, with Cuba and the Southern States. It was not uncommon for a wealthy planter to order a

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[22] Carol Petravage, "Historic Furnishings Report: Melrose, Natchez National Historical Park, Natchez, Mississippi," National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 2004.

[23] Patricia Phillips Marshall et al, *Thomas Day: Master Craftsman and Free Man of Color* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Jonathan Prown, "The Furniture of Thomas Day: A Reevaluation," *Winterthur Portfolio* 33, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 215-229, JSTOR.

large service of decorated ware, with massive gilding, often in duplicate to provide against breakages."[24] Haughwout's solo firm was one of Edward Lycett's earliest employers.[25] Returning to the Atlanta History Center game set and its comparability with eighteenth-century Sèvres examples, this set also bears strong likenesses to tableware commissioned for plantation owners in the South in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1843, William St. John Elliott commissioned a set of tableware from two separate Parisian porcelain manufacturers, Edouard Honoré and Jacob Petit, for D'Evereux, his plantation house in Natchez, Mississippi. It was decorated in Paris by Louis-Marie-François Rihouët (fig. 4.14). As with the Atlanta History Center set and the eighteenth-century Sèvres set for the prince de Rohan-Guémenée, the decorations join colored bands on the rims or bodies of the pieces with illustrations in their centers, framed in light, gilt scrollwork. In the Elliott set, the color is turquoise, and the illustrations are of varying assemblages of colorful flowers. Rihouët finished all of the pieces with gilt touches around rims or on handles, or in some instances by fully gilding the handles, just as Lycett's would do later in the century. The porcelain bodies' scalloped rims and scrolling handles also share commonalities with much of Lycett's tableware. Additionally, Lycett's "white and gold" combination has other precedents found in antebellum plantation homes. For example, each of the small porcelain pots in a condiment set from a Louisiana plantation, now in the collections of the Louisiana State Museum, is decorated with bands of gilding around its edges and on the loop handles (fig. 4.15). On the sides are curvaceous monograms, set inside laurel branches. Lycett's foliate monograms and palmettes call to mind these arrangements, establishing visual continuity from the landholding class of the region's past to the urban business class of its future.

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[24] Edward Atlee Barber, *The Pottery and Porcelain of the United States* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1893), 183.

[25] Barber, 183; Veith, "Edward Lycett (1833-1910): An Anglo-American Pioneer," (MA thesis, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum and Parsons School of Design, 1999), 10.

Besides these examples of patronage on the part of the exceptionally wealthy, French porcelain also made its way into the homes of other affluent southerners in the two decades prior to the Civil War. Several historians of David Haviland's Limoges firm have implied that its successes may have been tied less to understandings of American taste, broadly construed, but more specifically those of a southern audience.[26] Haviland benefited from his membership in a large familial network of merchants that included brothers Robert and Daniel, who operated pharmaceutical businesses with branches in Augusta, Georgia, Mobile, Alabama, and Charleston, South Carolina. Although the brothers eventually moved from the South due to their opposition to the continued practice of slavery, many of the branches of their business remained intact and continued to flourish. Several were ideally situated near crockery dealers. For instance, William L. Truwit was a known dealer of Haviland china in Mobile, Alabama, and his crockery establishment was located adjacent to the branch of the Haviland, Clark, & George pharmaceutical company in that city.[27] Because Daniel later partnered with David's other brothers in their New York china wholesale business, it is likely that his knowledge of regional retailers was especially helpful for enhancing the Havilands' sales networks stateside, as well as for communicating design preferences to the growing operations in Limoges. The Haviland family's wholesale business in New York so heavily depended on these southern markets that it went bankrupt in 1863, and David Haviland dissolved ties to the New York house in 1864.[28]

The Haviland firm's early designs cater to predilections for rococo, as seen in a drawing for a teapot from an 1850 factory book (fig. 4.16). The teapot's scrolling handle, S-curved spout, scalloped

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[26] Barbara Wood and Robert Doares, "Vieux Paris? Vieux Limoges? – New Light on Haviland Porcelain in the Antebellum South," in *Neighboring Voices: The Decorative Culture of Our Southern Cousins*, ed. Dale Couch (Athens: Georgia Museum of Art, 2010): 59-81; d'Albis, 19.

[27] Wood and Doares, "Vieux Paris? Vieux Limoges?": 67, 77.

[28] Doares and Wood, *Old Limoges*, 25; d'Albis, *Haviland,* 19.

rim and base, and applied vegetal ornament all speak to eighteenth-century design idioms. If Haviland's sales were as dependent on southern audiences as the firm's historians have suggested, then these designs reveal the pervasiveness of interest in eighteenth-century style among affluent individuals in the region. Limoges porcelain manufacturers' wares were not as expensive as those from Sèvres or other Parisian makers, like Petit and Honoré, or English bone china. They occupied a space between these very high-end products and the English stoneware on the lower end of the spectrum. Rococo style goods were made available at several levels of the upper strata of southern society in the mid-nineteenth century, ensuring that objects in this style would be sufficiently familiar as status objects later on in the century.[29]

Furthermore, the Lycett family's business model, of custom painting imported porcelain, had an antebellum predecessor in New Orleans china painter Rudolph Theodore Lux. Like the Lycetts, Lux achieved success by catering to the tastes and needs of affluent southerners, most of whom in his case were involved with early industries and agricultural processes, as evident from the numerous extant presentation sets he painted for steamboat commissions. His works exhibit a dedication to gilding, monograms, and naturalistic representation similar to that seen in Lycett's oeuvre. Lux's attention to detail also enabled him to foster a reputation as a skilled portraitist, and he frequently painted colorful, lifelike versions of his subjects, replicated from daguerreotypes, on cups and saucers or the sides of pitchers. During the Civil War, Lux first captured the visages of Confederate generals on such pieces; after the tides turned and New Orleans fell to the Union Army, he promptly turned to painting their generals.[30] Just as seen with the plantation owners' commissions from Parisian manufacturers and Haviland's designs for Limoges manufacturers, Lux's works align with revivals of eighteenth-century style. A pitcher in the collections of The Historic New Orleans

[29] Doares and Wood, *Old Limoges*, 24.

[30] Busch, "Handsomely Furnished," 75-76; Rudolph Theodor Lux Personality File, HNOC.

Collection exemplifies Lux's work and seems to presage Lycett's photographic pieces, such as the Adair vase (fig. 4.17). The large porcelain pitcher's curving body and spout and curling, branch-like handle betray an indebtedness to rococo forms. Gilding covers large portions of the pitcher: on the handle and inside of the rim, the spangled decorations on one of the sides, the molded foliage, and the additional laurel and oak leaf framing devices for the portraits. On one side, Lux painted Union Army General Ulysses S. Grant, and on the other, Admiral David Glasgow Farragut. Saluting in front of a swirling United States flag, Lady Liberty adorns the front of the spout. Lux's work not only demonstrates the widespread enthusiasm for imported porcelain and eighteenth-century style during the period, but it also presents an important antecedent for Lycett's work in Atlanta thirty years later.

Thus, the stylistic choices that dominate Lycett's turn-of-the-twentieth century production have numerous, important correlations with the aesthetic preferences of the class in power in the region before the disruptions of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Examining turn-of-the-century philosophy, psychology, scientific thought, and artistic activity in Western Europe and the United States, Stephen Kern has argued that "this generation looked to [the past] for stability in the face of rapid technological, cultural, and social change. Its thinkers developed a keen sense of the historical past as a source of identity in an increasingly secular world and investigated the personal past with a variety of purposes."[31] Many of Kern's "historicist" thinkers saw the past as fluid, moving through and with the present, and they looked to history for frameworks to guide social forms and other structures.[32] In addition to its popularity in northeastern industrial capitalists' collecting and decorating habits, then, rococo offered white southern consumers a connection to their last period

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[31] Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 44.

[32] Kern, 51.

of relative social and economic stability. The white business class also looked to the antebellum past for social structures and their attendant symbols of power. Studying the turn-of-the-century resurgence of classicism in public and domestic exterior architecture, which had regional precedents in Greek Revival style plantation homes like Melrose and D'Evereux (fig. 4.18), architectural historian Catherine Bishir concluded that this later iteration not only helped romanticize a purportedly glorious antebellum past, but also allowed its patrons to harness its visual symbolism of power. "Seen in the context of contemporary cultural and political events, the creation of symbolic sculpture and architecture functioned as part of their reclamation of regional and national power," Bishir explains. "And…this architecture perpetuated and revitalized for modern daily use the deferential social values of the heirs and heiresses of the glorified traditions."[33] As Bishir makes clear, the classicism seen in regional architecture during this period presents a slight variation on reexaminations of classical architecture and "colonial" heritage occurring at the national level. Its deployment allowed those in power in the South to gesture toward their peers in the Northeast while simultaneously connoting the previous regional social and political hierarchy. With plantations like Melrose as their model, affluent southerners likewise chose rococo style for its dual significations in the interior. They fostered another set of visual ties to the antebellum past, and in so doing further undergirded their desired role as the descendants of the holders of power during that period. Setting their tables with eighteenth-century style porcelain dining services, or decorating their mantles with elaborate porcelain objects, added more significations of power in like manner. In their selection of this style and material, these individuals also continued the project of solidifying social and racial hierarchical structures from the antebellum past into the future.

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[33] Catherine W. Bishir, *Southern Built: American Architecture, Regional Practice* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 255-256, 276.

The employment of rococo style in domestic interiors, versus the austere edifices of Greek Revival façades, likewise reified conservative expectations of gender relationships. Over the course of the nineteenth century, rococo was increasingly positioned as feminine, attributed by some to the patronage of eighteenth-century aristocratic female figures in a relatively positive light. By suggesting that noble ladies maintained their homes instead of venturing further afield in search of independence, as "new women" were doing, this framing reinforced perceptions of women's innate suitability for domestic roles.[34] Conservative separate spheres ideology tasked American women with the maintenance of the home, and period advisors on home décor did not mince their words for women readers, offering such firm charges:

> The daily toil on the farm, or in office, store or shop is perhaps cheerfully endured by this father of the house; the work carefully, even willingly performed, but it necessarily brings weariness, and the daily life in the busy world, though in a sense one of enjoyment, is among men, perhaps strangers, and a man of business is "everybody's man"; but when the long shadows tell that even-tide has come, and turning from plow, or desk, or counter, this man shuts the door behind him and carefully locks back all the day's perplexities and cares; what is he to find when he opens the other door, and his own bit of life is reached; when the one fragment of day he may call his own dawns down upon him? House-wife, 'house-mother,' you are to answer. You are to make the home.[35]

In this conservative description of the world, all that is external "is among men," whereas "the other door" opens into the domestic world of women. This world expanded to include certain leisure activities, such as shopping or attending events at other women's homes, which were external, but still tied to forms of domesticity. The mythos that surrounded wives of antebellum plantation owners likewise glorified an interior orientation, as so-called "plantation mistresses" were believed to have lived and socialized much like the constructed roles for their eighteenth-century European aristocratic forebears; in reality they were charged with most of the daily management of the

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[34] Debora L. Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France: Politics, Psychology, and Style* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 67-76.

[35] Mrs. C. S. Jones and Henry T. Williams, *Beautiful Homes: How to Make Them* (New York: Henry S. Allen, 1885), 6. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

household and acted in place of their spouses when they traveled.[36] As Grace Hale writes, white southern men and women of the upper classes "insisted on conflating the plantation household and the post-Reconstruction white home in order to ground their own cultural authority within the power – which by the late nineteenth century had grown to mythic proportions – of the plantation-based planter class."[37] Therefore, nearly identical roles were assigned to turn-of-the-century white, affluent southern women in their oversight of the state of the home, including maintaining its appearance. The physical toil of domestic labor, however, was to be largely relegated to Black women.

Expressly directing their advertising and activities at women consumers, the Lycett family likely understood the potential role of their business in white women's lives. The school offered lessons and supplies most strongly associated with the leisurely, domestic activities of eighteenth-century nobility and the maintenance of a beautiful home, and these lessons created pathways to careers still tied to domesticity or child-rearing, such as teaching, for some women. The china decorating works provided objects in the *style* of that all-important aristocratic class, which also aligned with that of the antebellum plantation class. In their selection of eighteenth-century style porcelains, the women who shopped at Lycett's, or the men who purchased items for them, established themselves as the queens or mistresses of their domain. In doing so, however, the expectation was likely that they were not to venture too far outside of that sphere.

When owners of Lycett's china produced these objects to serve their guests, they enacted an important set of contemporary and historical associations, participating in the flow of time from the

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[36] Jessica Parker Moore, "Keeping All Hands Moving': A Plantation Mistress in Antebellum Arkansas," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 74, no. 3 (Autumn 2015): 257-276, JSTOR; Leah Rawls Atkins, "High Cotton: The Antebellum Alabama Plantation Mistress and the Cotton Culture," *Agricultural History* 68, no. 2 (Spring 1994): 92-104, JSTOR.

[37] Grace Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 87.

past through the present. Just like Alva Vanderbilt, an Alabaman transplanted to Newport by marriage, or Mary Louisa McMurran of Melrose, the lady of the house possessed the taste of the elite, and she or her spouse possessed sufficient wealth to purchase custom-painted porcelain objects from Lycett's. In choosing these objects, the owners not only invoked the monetary status associated with rococo style, but also its lineage of power brokers, from European nobility through antebellum plantation holders. Therefore, these stylistic and material selections also represent an attempt to harness these connotations for their potential to project power and wealth into the future. They likely carried with them the expectations that the same hierarchies of gender, race, and socioeconomic class would also continue into this future.

Invention along the Rococo Continuum

The multivalence of Lycett's design sources stems, in part, from their lack of specificity. These works frequently reference eighteenth-century stylistic characteristics without imitating exact, identifiable examples, allowing for a variety of connotations from multiple periods and locales to occur simultaneously. By combining these elements with different subjects, forms, or materials in novel ways, William Lycett and his decorators also imbued the pieces with a sense of contemporaneity, linking eighteenth-century style to the turn-of-the-century "artistic" home, not uncommon within the eclecticism of the American Aesthetic Movement. This blending occurs in examples ranging from forms highly derivative of eighteenth-century sources to those more in keeping with turn-of-the-century Art Nouveau. Recombining historic sources to create objects more in keeping with modernity parallels New South proponents' reconfiguration of old ideas about politics, economy, and social hierarchies into models that were supposedly new.

In some instances, Lycett's artists utilized decorative techniques that reconstituted particularly eighteenth-century style pieces for modern viewership. For example, the forms in one Lycett's after-dinner coffee set recall rococo silverwork in their novel deployment of elements taken from natural subjects (figs. 4.19 and 4.20). The coffeepot is formed as a fish, visible in the whirling

eyes and mouth at the spout and the elongated, fin-like, *rocaille* finial on a lid. The attending sugar bowl and creamer have textured surfaces that seem to imitate hammered metal, and their scalloped, ridged rims take on the appearance of lapping water. Formed as pieces of coral, the knobby texture of the finial atop the sugar bowl lid is echoed on all of the handles in the set, further evoking undersea formations. Rather than make further allusions to the fish's body in the decorations on the coffeepot, however, the painter obfuscated much of the porcelain with a matte, light aqua glaze. Curling stems of a branch with small, delicate leaves rise up from the base, almost as if bobbing in the waters above a sea floor. With these finishes, the coffeepot obliquely refers to both fish and habitat in one piece. This overarching aquatic theme continues on the accompanying creamer and sugar bowl, which have the same foliage extending downward from their rims. These decorative treatments extend the vague subject of the fish with suggestions of environment – there are no exacting renditions of particular scenes on the objects' sides. Unlike eighteenth-century precedents, in which zoomorphic elements in metalwork tableware referred to their intended contents, the fish bears little obvious relationship to coffee, meaning that the object's decoration has been derived from its form and therefore entirely references itself.

Likewise, examples of this intermingling of varying design sources with contemporary modes of use and interests point to southern consumers' participation in activities that were nationally fashionable. One Lycett's jardinière combines a form derived from eighteenth-century precedents with a function and ornament more relevant to turn-of-the-century interests (fig. 4.21). Its porcelain material, scrolling feet, and double handles in the form of bowing swans recall forms from the eighteenth century. The orchids that adorn both of the jardinière's sides, however, attest to the growing popularity of the flower. Somewhat rare and extraordinarily expensive, orchids became a fashionable plant for indoor gardening and flower arranging at the end of the nineteenth century. The enthusiasm for orchids led to their being translated as subjects in a variety of media, from

Paulding Fornham's exacting reproductions in brooches for Tiffany and Company, to Martin Johnson Heade's dramatic renderings in small landscapes (fig. 4.22).[38] The Lycett's jardinière may have been used as a container for the coveted flowers, but it more likely brought a bit of the current fashion onto the tabletop in an effort to elevate more mundane and affordable ferns.[39] As seen with some of the firm's other renditions of flowers, the continued preference for detailed representations of natural subjects did not evade the influence of Japanese prints – the orchids are arranged asymmetrically and slightly flattened, with many features delineated in gold, emphasizing this slight stylization. While clearly indebted to the rococo forms of previous eras, this piece also demonstrates southerners' fluency in contemporary floriculture, fashions for dining, and stylistic movements.

Lycett's assemblage of diverse historic sources into modern configurations is best displayed in the immense vase with storks discussed at the beginning of Chapter Two (fig. 4.23). As previously noted, the storks were clearly derived from contemporary design sources, either Adelaide Alsop Robineau's illustration on the back cover of the December 1900 issue of *Keramic Studio* or Plate 41 from Jules Auguste Habert-Dys's *Fantaisies décoratives* (see fig. 2.2). Instead of a stream and the aquatic plants shown in both Habert-Dys's plate and Robineau's illustration, the storks stand amidst eddies formed by overlapping scrolls of *rocaille*, with a little lattice work at their upper end. Furthering the connotations of a water's edge, the reverse of the base is painted with light green cattails twisting up from the base nearly to the vase's neck, some of the leaves bent as if moved by a small breeze. These decorations appear to have been partly inspired by the swirling moldings in the vase's base, which, along with the cattails, extend up from the base as small "arms" of porcelain,

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[38] Eliza Butler, "Substitute Blooms: Nature and Artifice in Tiffany and Company's Orchid Brooches," *Winterthur Portfolio* 52, no. 4 (2018): 181, 199-200, JSTOR; Sophie Bledsoe Harrick, "Orchids," *Century Magazine*, June 1885, 230-240; Peter Henderson, *Practical Floriculture: A Guide to the Successful Cultivation of Florists', for the Amateur and Professional Florist*, 2nd ed. (New York: Orange & Judd, 1892), 230; Nancy Mann Waddle, "A Flower of the Air," *The Ladies' Home Journal*, July 1893, 3.

[39] Edwin C. Powell, "Floral Centerpieces," *Good Housekeeping*, January 1904, 53-54.

leaving spaces between the body and these appendages. Dynamic and fluid, the porcelain body demonstrates the impact of Belgian and French Art Nouveau designers, particularly Victor Horta, Hector Guimard, and Emile Gallé. These artists and architects extrapolated vegetal ornament into elongated, serpentine lines as part of an effort to find a new style, distinct from previous generations' work and their constant revivals during the nineteenth century and more suited to their own modern, technologically and socially advanced age, as well as the particular needs of their home nations or regions.[40] While in some ways Art Nouveau represented a departure from much of the historicism that governed design and decorative arts during the nineteenth century, it remained firmly rooted in historic styles, using elongated and twisted versions of eighteenth-century precedents. In it, some patrons and practitioners in France found a means of carrying forward nationalistic pride in the artisan heritage of the *ancien regime*, while fostering approaches to design that appeared thoroughly modern.[41] This vase attests to the Lycett family's cognizance of contemporary movements in design, and the firm's importation of these products suggests that its consumers were also familiar with recent developments in design and wished to incorporate them within their homes, likely part of overall, ongoing efforts to appear "artistic" and cultured. The selection of Art Nouveau bespeaks an embrace of a particular kind of engagement with modernity, one that simultaneously keeps one foot firmly planted in the past.

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[40] Paul Greenhalgh, "The Style and the Age," in *Art Nouveau 1890-1914*, ed. Greenhalgh (London: V&A Publications, 2000), 18; Gabriel P. Weisberg, "The Parisian Situation: Hector Guimard and the Emergence of Art Nouveau," in Greenhalgh, ed., 268-271; Françoise Aubry, "Victor Horta and Brussels," in Greenhalgh, ed., 279-282; Jennifer Hawkins Opie, "The New Ceramics: Engaging with the Spirit," in Greenhalgh, ed., 200; Jeremy Howard, *Art Nouveau: National and International Styles in Europe* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1996), 1-9, 16-17, 31-33; Jessica M. Dandona, *Nature and the Nation in Fin-de-Siècle France: The Art of Emile Gallé and the Ecole de Nancy* (London: Routledge, 2017), 1-4, 137-144.

[41] Silverman, 8-9 and 50-51; Meredith Martin, "Remembrance of Things Past: Robert de Montesquiou, Emile Gallé, and Rococo Revival during the Fin de Siècle," in *Rococo Echo: Art, History and Historiography from Cochin to Coppola*, ed. Melissa Hyde and Katie Scott (Oxford, UK: Voltaire Foundation, 2014), 132-142.

Like the porcelain from Lycett's studio, champions of a New South similarly recombined previous economic and political models in an attempt to become modern. Though they vocally embraced industrialization, the region's leaders and investors tended to focus on the extraction of natural resources, such as through forestry and mining. Some of these materials remained in the region for manufacturing, most notably in furniture, but most of these products were shipped to the Northeast and Midwest, where factories were already well in place. This differs little from the shipment of cotton to northeastern and British textile mills prior to the Civil War. Textile mills sprang up throughout the region in the postbellum decades, but this activity simultaneously reflects the continued primacy of cotton, despite calls for a "diversified" and "scientific" agriculture. Although chattel slavery was abolished, exploitative labor practices resumed, subjecting mill workers and sharecroppers to low wages and little opportunity in this supposedly new era. Racial hierarchies were also quickly reestablished and legally encoded, reiterating systems in which Black people were relegated to a completely separate, and often punitive and impoverished, sphere.[42] Lycett's works render this continuity of old into new visible through their materials and their ornament, objects belonging to yet another permutation of regimes that maintained control and reified centuries-old systems that supported them.

Conclusion

William Lycett's studio consistently looked to France as a source for attaining cultural legitimacy. Through his importation endeavors, Lycett obtained French porcelain, long regarded as superior, and fostered ties to Limoges manufacturers in order to supply customers with precisely the types of objects that they desired. The results of this relationship reveal the strength of the hold of eighteenth-century rococo style in these consumers' imaginations and indicate its importance for

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[42] Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 105-117; C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*, reprint ed. (1971, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 175-182 and 291-320.

signaling wealth and taste. Given the popularity of rococo during the period, particularly among the northeastern industrial capitalists whose favor and respect southern entrepreneurs wished to curry, its prevalence in Lycett's china should be viewed, first and foremost, as demonstrating its owners' knowledge of and ready participation in national movements in design. For contemporary viewers throughout the United States, rococo was inseparable from its eighteenth-century aristocratic patronage, and its popularity tied to a desire to approximate that heritage for a newly wealthy class that still keenly felt a sense of inferiority to landed nobility at home and abroad. Conveniently, rococo was also previously popular among wealthy plantation owners during the antebellum period, allowing white affluent southerners to harness the style to visually support their claims to the inheritance of the legacy of the region's upper echelons. Although this deference to the past may seem regressive, Lycett's also sufficiently varied historical references and their combinations to be viewed as products of their own time, paralleling New South enthusiasts' use of past systems in order to inform those of the future.

In this reading, Lycett's memorial vase perfectly suits an individual like George W. Adair, who effectively transitioned his socioeconomic position through the Civil War to establish himself among the wealthiest individuals in Georgia by the end of his life. Adair worked as a conductor for the nascent Georgia Railroad as a young man before becoming a slave auctioneer, and during the war he established the newspaper *The Southern Confederacy* and worked as an aide to Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest. Afterward, he made his fortune in real estate development, and his partnership in the establishment of the Atlanta Street Company in 1870 allowed him to thoroughly capitalize on suburban commuting.[43] Thus, Adair epitomizes a model New South businessman, one whose successes were based on bringing elements of a modern northeastern metropolis to Atlanta

[43] Don H. Doyle, *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860-1910* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 99-100; The Pioneer Citizens' Society, *Pioneer Citizens' History of Atlanta 1833-1902* (Atlanta: Byrd Printing Company, 1902), 247-248, HathiTrust.

and investing in the city's rise to prominence. Depicted as such through Lycett's transfer-printed photograph, none of the roses, gilding, or elements in the vase's form overtly references the South or this man's status within the Confederate States Army, supporting the illusion of a fully reconciled individual. At the same time, the vase recalls decorative themes used by wealthy individuals in the region prior to the Civil War; its form and gilding are simultaneously contemporary and nostalgic, national and regional. Adair's photographic portrait echoes those Rudolph Lux completed "from daguerreotypes" of prominent New Orleanians during the 1850s. The vase operates from multiple points of reference, and thus imbues its subject with legitimacy derived from both the past and the present. Through projects like these, William Lycett's studio threaded a very thin needle between southern and northeastern, historic and modern, reflecting the dual, if not multiple, operations of its patrons' turn-of-the-century existence.

Conclusion

Despite evident differences, Esther Huger Elliot's vase with caladium blossoms for for the Newcomb College Pottery and a vase with roses decorated by an anonymous figure at William Lycett's studio reflect American southerners' engagement with modernity, as largely defined by those in the northeastern part of the country (fig. C.1). Examining them closely as emulative, aspirational objects clarifies their relevance within greater sets of regional concerns. Each vase in its own way satisfies New South efforts to promote economic development in the region, following dominant models of industrial capitalism, and both vases' designs correspond to aesthetic preferences of northeastern individuals deeply involved with industrialization. These objects simultaneously participate in romanticized constructions of the South and gesture to a supposedly superior past age. As products created in or for the hands of white women, these vases also indicate the roles, however prescribed, that were created for affluent white women in the turn-of-the-century South. The afterlives of these aesthetic choices, in their ending at the Newcomb College Pottery and lasting power with the various permutations of Lycett's firm, parallel the increased power of the Lost Cause and decreasing interest in this first "New South."

Both vases serve as symbols for New South proponents' hopeful visions for the region's economic future. These individuals aimed to direct a shift away from agriculture's dominance and toward forms of industrial capitalism that had come to define modernity and had proven lucrative in the northeastern and middle portions of the United States. They emphasized manufacturing that could transform natural resources into consumer products, limiting dependence on importations from other regions of the country and generating competition with these more established centers. However, this also required the support of northeastern financial investment. The vases' aesthetics each correspond to different conversations about industrialism during the period.

Made from a mixture of clays derived from sources throughout the South, Esther Huger Elliott's vase represents precisely the type of consumable object that New South rhetoric upheld as the salvation for the region. Newcomb College Pottery objects were formed on a pottery wheel and associated with more preindustrial modes of fabrication, but the visible and gendered division of labor in place at the Pottery followed the model of a small craft industry. The Pottery and its products were often presented as prototypes, symbolic of the potential for development of larger-scale ceramics manufacturing in the region. This positioning helped the firm narrowly navigate a path between Arts and Crafts Movement thinkers' preference for the pottery wheel and New South proponents' aims for industrial development.

Esther Huger Elliott's conventionalization of her natural subject aligns the vase with contemporary discourse about appropriate ornament and its treatment in industrial design. Elliott abstracted the caladium blossom to simple forms, with lines and dots providing minimal details to help identify the subject, and used it as a flat, repeating motif across two bands encircling the vase. Her solution demonstrates Newcomb College students' fluency in contemporary design pedagogy popular in the northeastern United States. This pedagogy was heavily influenced by British design reformers, who asserted that natural subjects and conventionalization best suited the needs of modern, mechanized methods of production. This approach did not imitate the details traditionally associated with hand workmanship, and it instead suited the repetition and standardization of mechanized production. By the time Newcomb College Pottery designers were applying these principles, conventionalized motifs were viewed by design reformers as the appropriate form of ornament for modern ceramics, even when created by hand. Thus, the designs employed by Elliott and others at Newcomb, by conforming to principles of modern design, also served the New South effort to meet northeastern standards for achieving industrial modernity. In material and ornament, Elliott's vase symbolizes the promise of the New South for the region as a whole.

Where Esther Huger Elliott's vase embodies the potential for southern industrialism, the Lycett's vase evokes the potential wealth and status of southern industrialists and entrepreneurs. Emulating the examples provided by wealthy industrial capitalists who constructed castle-like manses on Fifth Avenue in New York City and palatial vacation "cottages" in Newport, Rhode Island, members of an aspirational white business class in the South exhibited preferences for styles associated with European aristocracy, especially eighteenth-century French style. Characteristics of eighteenth-century style are molded into the form of the Lycett's vase, seen in the myriad of scrolling foliage, beading, ribbons, and bosses around the base and top, as well as the petal-like protrusions around the rim. Materially, porcelain was especially suited to this visible melding of historic European aristocracy with a relatively new American millionaire class, due to its associations with princely patronage and competition. The perceived superiority of French and German porcelain over others, and Lycett's importation from mostly European manufacturers, furthered the connotations of porcelain with elitism. The extensive gilding on the vase conspicuously demonstrates the original patron's prosperity.

The Lycett's vase also represents the ability of Atlantans to match northeastern industrial capitalists' standards for cultural legitimacy, through their establishment and patronage of local arts institutions. The vase is not especially aesthetically unique to the region, as it follows many of the same artistic conventions and subjects that were employed at larger art ceramics manufacturers in New Jersey and New York, such as the detailed renditions of roses draping down the vase's central shaft. This similarity is highly important, because it signifies the recognition of taste and the ability of southerners to purchase or even produce similar products within their region – the lack of difference indicates a "catching up" with the status quo established in the remainder of the country, just as New South rhetoric attempted to reconcile the region to external economic standards.

Examining the two vases alongside this rhetoric, both become emblematic of its proponents' expectations for the region and the developments that they hoped to achieve. However, New South enthusiasts also encountered resistance from those who saw the emphases on individual achievement and material acquisition embedded in their rhetoric as antithetical to supposedly regional values of honor and dedication to community. To demonstrate their power within the region, members of the white business class consistently referenced or completely appropriated the visual languages of the powerful landholding class of the past in order to secure their claim over the region's future. Many of these individuals also had ties to this history. No matter their preferences in economic model or social values, most strove to continue white supremacy into perpetuity. In their subject choice and style, these vases also reveal the lasting power of Old South mythologies.

The caladium blossoms that wrap around Esther Huger Elliott's vase engendered connotations of distant, tropical climes for northeastern consumers, contributing to constructions of the South in contemporary literature and travel writing as a premodern opposite to the industrialized, urbanizing East and West. Native to Central and South America, the plants thrive in warm, humid conditions, limiting their cultivation in the United States to gardens in the Southeast. The use of caladium blossoms underscores the climatological differences between this region and others, and, because of the Pottery's promoters' insistence on the southern origins of the subjects, underscored regional distinctions. Choosing this type of plant material and combining it with the regular discussion of Newcomb College Pottery's "southernness" visually supported contemporary depictions of the South as an accessible but exotic and archaic swampland, ripe for exploration or even exploitation. As revealed by the graphic design material prepared by many of the designers at the time, Newcomb College Pottery's founders understood the power of these descriptions, as well as their associations with the mythos surrounding antebellum plantation life. Thus, while none of the objects that the Newcomb College Pottery produced directly reference or depict the icons of the

Old South construction, the viewsheds and botanical selections that were employed called to mind this type of imagery.

The vase's clay body and simple form further promote such fantastical visions of a premodern region. The extensive discussion of these objects' southern origins in national and international media was not limited to the subjects of their ornament; the clays that were used accentuated their authenticity as markers of Southern "expression." Although this use of regional clay represented the hope placed upon local raw materials for industrial development, the objects' being hand thrown on a pottery wheel, as opposed to shaped and fired in molds, kept a foot firmly planted in a preindustrial past. Utilizing simplistic forms, free from complex handles or applied ornament, further aligned Newcomb College Pottery objects with precepts of good design while also correlating the firm, and thereby the region, with cultures, particularly that of Japan, that were valued as ancient and opposite of modern life. Thus, the Pottery's level of participation in modernity was in flux, dependent on how the audience wished to perceive it. Its designers could be lauded for their advancement of modern industrial design techniques in a backward region, while they could be praised simultaneously for the authenticity of their representation of that region in its archaic state.

Similarly, the Lycett's vase embraces both New South aspirations while suiting Old South frameworks. Lycett's consumers' apparent predilection for eighteenth-century European style was highly compatible with New York capitalists' attempts to visually associate themselves with European aristocracies, but it also corresponded to the stylistic preferences of many of the members of the antebellum planter class in the South, who likely were engaged in the same effort to establish aesthetic identities evocative of European aristocracy in order to suggest the formation of their own. At the height of the cotton booms in decades prior to the Civil War, from which much of the material used to mythologize the antebellum South was drawn, planters filled their parlors with objects heavily influenced by eighteenth-century French style, with curving lines, scrollwork, and gilt

finishing. Their favoring of these styles and attention to French style, in particular, extended to porcelain, and the wealthiest among these plantation owners purchased rococo porcelain objects and garniture sets for their mantles, or tableware from Parisian manufacturers who had begun reusing their eighteenth-century molds to answer the needs of this revival.

Beyond the stylistic references to previous eras and European aristocracies embedded in its surfaces, the Lycett's vase's porcelain body thus also supports material consistency between the white business class and the antebellum plantation regime. Just as northeastern industrial capitalists at the turn of the twentieth century were lured by porcelain's connotations of royal and aristocratic patronage, the southern landholding class appears to have been especially appreciative of the material's noble associations, likely reinforced by active patronization of Sèvres by French royal and imperial powers during this period, and they heavily patronized French porcelain manufacturers. Much of the rise and success of Limoges, France as a hub for porcelain manufacturing is credited to the attentiveness of American ex-patriate David Haviland and his family to the preferences of consumers in the South in the antebellum period. Haviland expanded the possibility of attaining French porcelain to those of socioeconomic status below the most extremely wealthy planters, answered in kind by the level of these consumers' desire to own French porcelain tableware; further, Haviland understood the power of rococo style among his clientele. The various porcelain goods that Lycett's provided its consumers, from its white and gold table furnishings to decorative objects like the vase, speak as much to the preferences of those previously in power as those in the firm's contemporary moment. In this fashion, the supposedly reconciled white business class in the South demonstrated its obeisance to the region's antebellum past, the Lost Cause, and the continuation of much of that mythologized class's distribution of power, including the subjugation of Black individuals. With this understanding of the multiple temporalities and geographic histories immersed in rococo style and porcelain, it may now be pertinent to further probe northeastern American

industrial capitalists' preference for these styles, especially considering that the standard for much of this activity was established by Alva Vanderbilt, a daughter of Mobile, Alabama planters.

As products of women's production or aesthetically directed by their assumed consumption, both of these vases also represent the complexity of constructions of affluent white womanhood in the South in the postbellum period. China painting served an important role in several capacities of this construction. For some women, china painting offered a respectable source of income, primarily through instructing others in the subject. The professional pursuit negated dependency on husbands and fathers, who were less available or reliable as sources of financial stability in the decades following the Civil War. For others, it symbolized the achievement of sufficient means and status to engage in an expensive and time-consuming hobby strongly associated with European nobility, a pastime for the new "plantation mistresses." Just like their design, these vases' relationships with gender simultaneously correlate with New and Old South frameworks for white womanhood.

During its founding and throughout its historiography, the Newcomb College Pottery has frequently been discussed less in terms of its output and more as an unprecedented opportunity for women to work as designers, engaging in the kind of professionalization associated with the modern, independent "New Woman." This neatly corresponds to the idea of a New South, essentially modernizing the southern woman right along with the remainder of the region. However, just as New South rhetoric simultaneously worked to maintain white supremacy, Newcomb College's restrictions on admissions, overtly racist and tacitly classist, preserved a special role for affluent white women within an industrial capitalist hierarchy. The designer role opened a bit to include white women, or perhaps even left it entirely to them while men pursued other careers; more arduous or menial positions were to be filled by poor white or Black women, depending upon the circumstances. Furthermore, for all of the discourse surrounding the Newcomb College Pottery's creation of opportunities for women, the Pottery was often not sufficiently lucrative to earn a living.

This rhetoric frequently positioned the women designers as young "college girls," a trope not far removed from the much-romanticized southern belle, especially when these women were described as being from "the best families." Thus, despite its progressive appearances, the role that the Pottery constructed for its designers did not depart far from many of the contemporary tropes about southern women derived from Old South mythology.

This continuity from Old South into New is all the more evident in Lycett's relationships with women. Much as seen with Newcomb College, some of the women who took classes at Lycett's aimed to augment their teaching portfolios, entering professional fields newly opened to women, or starting their own china painting careers. The firm's direct appeals to women as consumers can also be construed as a recognition of the new shape of consumerism, which was encouraged by New South rhetoric's championing of industrial capitalism and the concomitant growth of urban centers with increasingly visible white business classes for whom shopping became a women's leisure activity. For many of Lycett's consumers, however, undertaking classes in china painting or commissioning custom-painted gifts and tableware represented the achievement or security of an elevated socioeconomic status. Decorating porcelain objects for the home exudes a form of gentility strongly associated with domesticity. It supports gender roles in which women are assigned to the management of the domestic sphere, and men the external world, differing little from the antebellum construction of the plantation mistress. Likewise, access to Lycett's classes was probably limited to white women, and the professional and social mobility that the firm appears to have encouraged among poor white women was not extended to Black women, further solidifying the social positions of white women over Black.

In material, design, and relationship to constructions of race and gender, these vases demonstrate the lasting power of antebellum regional identity and its reformulation for the so-called New South. The changes in design, or lack thereof, that occurred at the Newcomb College Pottery

and Lycett's studio after 1910 correspond with Lost Cause mythology's overtaking of New South rhetoric in the public sphere. Aspirations for an urban, industrial future gave way to an ever more pervasive preoccupation with the region's agrarian past. As anticipated in Newcomb designers' graphic works, the Pottery's ornament began turning toward representational treatments of southern landscapes executed in matte glazes around 1909, and designers steadily produced similar variations on a "moss and moonlight" theme through the 1920s (fig. C.2). Conversely, the popularity of Lycett's "white and gold" china continued after William Lycett's death and was produced not only in the family's business, but also in those of others who had trained or worked for the firm and then started their own (fig. C.3).[1] The ability of Lycett's "white and gold" to convey status and power according to the standards of both contemporary northeastern industrialists and the antebellum landholding class encouraged its continuation into 1970, despite shifts in priorities.

The sharp aesthetic changes at the Newcomb College Pottery have historically been attributed to the impact of hiring Paul Ernest Cox as technical director in 1910 and his degree of attention to the consumer market, meriting a brief examination of the rising tide of romanticism of the antebellum past's collision with increasing demand for landscape subjects and matte glazes among enthusiasts for art ceramics.[2] As previously noted, Newcomb arrived relatively late to the turn toward matte glazes – most other potteries in the United States were already experimenting

[1] Advertisement, "Art and Artists," *Atlanta Constitution*, April 4, 1909; "Will Build Studio on Peachtree Street," *Atlanta Constitution*, March 5, 1911; Advertisement, "Lycett's," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 3, 1911; Advertisement, "Rich Cordon & Co," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 17, 1911; Carlyn Crannell Romeyn, *The Lycetts* (International Porcelain Art Teachers, 1983), 27; Miller, "Painted Porcelain," 115-116. Each one of the cited advertisements refers to the proprietors' familial or business connections to William Lycett, as well as the ability to produce gold monograms on white china. Because this dissertation terminates in 1910, I have not delved into the history of the Lycett family's various businesses in Atlanta after Carrie Watson Lycett and Edward Cordon Lycett dissolved their partnership and divided the firm in 1911. Edward Cordon's daughter, Lydia, married one of his apprentices, William White, and the pair operated a china importing and decorating firm in the Lycett name until 1970.

[2] Jessie Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery: An Enterprise for Southern Women, 1895-1940* (Exton, PA: Schiffer, 1984), 56, 67-68; Sally Main, "Conscious Freedom: The Newcomb Pottery Enterprise," in David Conradsen et al, *The Arts & Crafts of Newcomb College* (New Orleans: Tulane University, 2013), 57-59.

with the treatment by the time of Newcomb's foundation.[3] Mary Given Sheerer evidently traveled to Alfred University, by this point a major center for ceramics innovation in the United States and the source of Cox's training, in an attempt to perfect a matte glaze that Newcomb introduced and which had been well-received by critics and consumers.[4] Perhaps most significantly, the exemplar for Newcomb, the Rookwood Pottery in Cincinnati, created a new line of "Scenic Vellum" pieces in 1905.[5] These vases and plaques imitate contemporary tonalist painting, with their hazy renderings and highly contrasting hues (fig C.4). They often feature glimpses of mountains or rivers through stands of trees, including the pines frequently found in Newcomb Pottery ornamental schemes. The steady move toward more representational landscapes at the Pottery therefore corresponds with its tendency toward emulation of successful models. For Newcomb, however, which had invested so greatly in a reputation for creating authentic views of the South and already displayed careful attunement to its northeastern consumers' interests, executing such landscapes also followed the general, national popularity of literature associated with the Lost Cause movement that romanticized the South's antebellum history into stories of gentility set against backdrops of moss-laden oaks and pines. The popularity of these later ornamental schemes has been blamed for the Pottery's repetitive output through the 1910s, and the subsequent lapses in stylistic change or innovation that likely brought about its demise in 1939. This consistent correlation between Newcomb's design motifs and national audiences' desired perceptions of the South is critical, because it lays bare the depth and breadth of enthusiasm for romanticized visions of the antebellum period. Far from isolated to the

[3] See Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, Martin Eidelberg, and Adrienne Spinozzi, *American Art Pottery: The Robert A. Ellison Jr Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018), 159-203.

[4] Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery*, 56.

[5] Nancy E. Owen, *Rookwood and the Industry of Art: Women, Culture, and Commerce, 1890-1913* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001), 100-102.

region, the nation at large participated in the construction of dangerous fantasies about a pastoral plantation life that have only recently begun to be dismantled.

Considering Newcomb College Pottery within the greater field of art ceramics, there is also a strong possibility that increased competition from New England endeavors necessitated these aesthetic changes. Most notably, the Saturday Evening Girls club, a social reform club formed to help young women in immigrant communities in North Boston, began producing pottery around 1906 in an enterprise dubbed the Paul Revere Pottery. Its primary wares included children's breakfast tableware, vases, tea tiles, and other decorative objects, all finished with bands of stylized rabbits, farm animals, trees, or flowers, in a color scheme of soft greens, blues, and yellows (fig. C.5). The Paul Revere Pottery's artistic direction, which was managed by former illustrator Edith Brown, undoubtedly shared many stylistic influences with Newcomb, including contemporary graphic design, Arthur Wesley Dow's *Composition* and woodblock prints, and nearby precedents like the Dedham Pottery.[6] Given the extensive coverage and positive critical reception of the Newcomb College Pottery in education and ceramics publications during the period, its sales and displays in the Boston area, and its reputation as an engine for social uplift for women, it may have served as an important institutional and aesthetic model for the later Paul Revere Pottery. Their striking similarities are rarely considered in contemporary scholarship on the two firms. With the Paul Revere Pottery, Newcomb's emulative practices may have come full circle, its modes of assembling and transforming northeastern industrial design sources into "southern expression" fully turned on their head for a decidedly New England venture.

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[6] Nonie Gadsden, *Art & Reform: Sara Galner, the Saturday Evening Girls, and the Paul Revere Pottery* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2006), 35-56; Frelinghuysen et al, *American Art Pottery*, 247-252; Joseph Cunningham, "Simple and Artistic, Simple and Good: Assessing the Best of the Saturday Evening Girls' Paul Revere Pottery," *Magazine Antiques* 187, no. 2 (March 2020): 52-58. For more on the Saturday Evening Girls club as a reform organization, see Kate Clifford Larson, "The Saturday Evening Girls: A Progressive Era Library Club and the Intellectual Life of Working Class and Immigrants Girls in Turn-of-the-Century Boston," *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 71, no. 2 (April 2001): 195-230, JSTOR.

Broadly, this close examination of the designs produced by the Newcomb College Pottery and William Lycett's studio as selective aesthetic and material responses to overlapping sets of consumer values helps shift discussions of design history from the documentation of potential patterns of rote imitation to an interpretation according to the specificity of audience and place. The significance of the sources for Newcomb and Lycett's designs lies not only in their existence, i.e. the spread of British design reform rhetoric, the extent of interest in the arts of Japan, or the predominance of French style, but also in their relationships with the bodies of consumers who appreciated or desired them. Rather than making assumptions as to these sources' superiority, this dissertation seeks a more thorough understanding of their importance in a particular moment and locale. While I have focused rather narrowly on the American South in this study, each of the explorations of these sources opens up additional questions about their wider significance within the United States, and beyond. The acceptance of British design reform pedagogy at many institutions established at the turn of the century has greater implications for comprehending the ways in which design was instructed and understood, in modes distinct from the architectural instruction and practice with which it is more often connected in historiography. Tracing routes of this instruction thus affords a more expansive definition of design. Considering the formation of arts institutions in cities throughout the United States as efforts to secure cultural power, particularly in competition with each other or with older capitals in Europe, can help illuminate the parameters that these groups established for art and culture and their lasting effects. Probing Americans' fascination with miscellaneous aspects of Japanese art and culture, in accordance with different levels of knowledge and socioeconomic status, calls into question Eurocentric narratives of these exchanges and may help shed light on the complexity of political and cultural relationships between the United States and Japan during this period. Finally, this dissertation only begins to explore the possibilities of the consistent trans-Atlantic exchanges that took place between Limousin porcelain manufacturers and

American retailers, exemplifying another route of design transfer and communication that existed outside the major centers of Paris and New York.

What lies at the core of all of these emulations is design's ability to demonstrate an individual's role within structures of power. From the entirety of a house or public building to the minutia used to furnish it, the design choices in play reflect levels of taste and knowledge, according to economic, social, and cultural power, singularly or in concert. Even where these choices may appear to attempt to reject or upend certain groups' dominance, such decisions remain attached to a degree of cognizance of these roles. The assignation of "modern" versus "non" also falls into these patterns, representing one group's ability to distinguish itself from others by positioning its design choices as inherently superior. Examining the products of the Newcomb College Pottery and William Lycett's studio in tandem, especially alongside New South rhetoric, crystallizes the futility of these labels and asks us to reconsider possible motives, rather than outcomes, when studying design. Like the applications of glazes to their surfaces, these objects contain layers of meaning, each one further contributing to their makers' and consumers' attempts to formulate positions within the turbulent structures of their time, and none perfectly clear on its own.

Illustrations

Introduction

Figure I.1. Vase with Pines, 1905. Newcomb College Pottery, New Orleans, LA; Henrietta Davidson Bailey, decorator; potter unknown. Earthenware. 15 3/16 in x 8 3/8 in (38.6 x 21.3 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018.294.149.

Figure I.2. Platter with Roses, ca. 1890-1910. Pouyat, Limoges, France, manufacturer; William Lycett's Studio, Atlanta, GA, decorator. Porcelain. 13 ¾ in x 13 in (34.95 cm x 33 cm). Private collection. From Michelle Miller, "Painted Porcelain of the Lycett Studios of Atlanta."

Figure I.3. Century Vase, 1876. Union Porcelain Works, Greenpoint, Brooklyn, NY; Karl L. H. Mueller, designer. Porcelain. 22 ¼ in x 10 in (56.5 cm x 25.4 cm). Brooklyn Museum of Art, 43.25.

Figure I.4. Left: Vase with Dogwood Blossoms, 1884. Rookwood Pottery, Cincinnati, OH; Laura Anne Fry, decorator; William Auckland, pewtersmith. Earthenware. 6 ½ in x 3 7/8 in (16.5 cm x 9.8 cm). Cincinnati Art Museum, 1970.514. Right: Vase with Lotus Blossoms and Foliage, 1886. Rookwood Pottery; Laura Anne Fry, decorator; William Watts Taylor, shape designer. Stoneware. 23 in (58.4 cm). Cincinnati Art Museum, 2011.14.

Figure I.5. Vase with Buds and Foliage, 1898-1900. Grueby Faience Company, Boston, MA. Earthenware. 12 3/8 in x 5 ½ in x 5 ½ in (31.43 cm x 13.97 cm x 13.97 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 65.213.

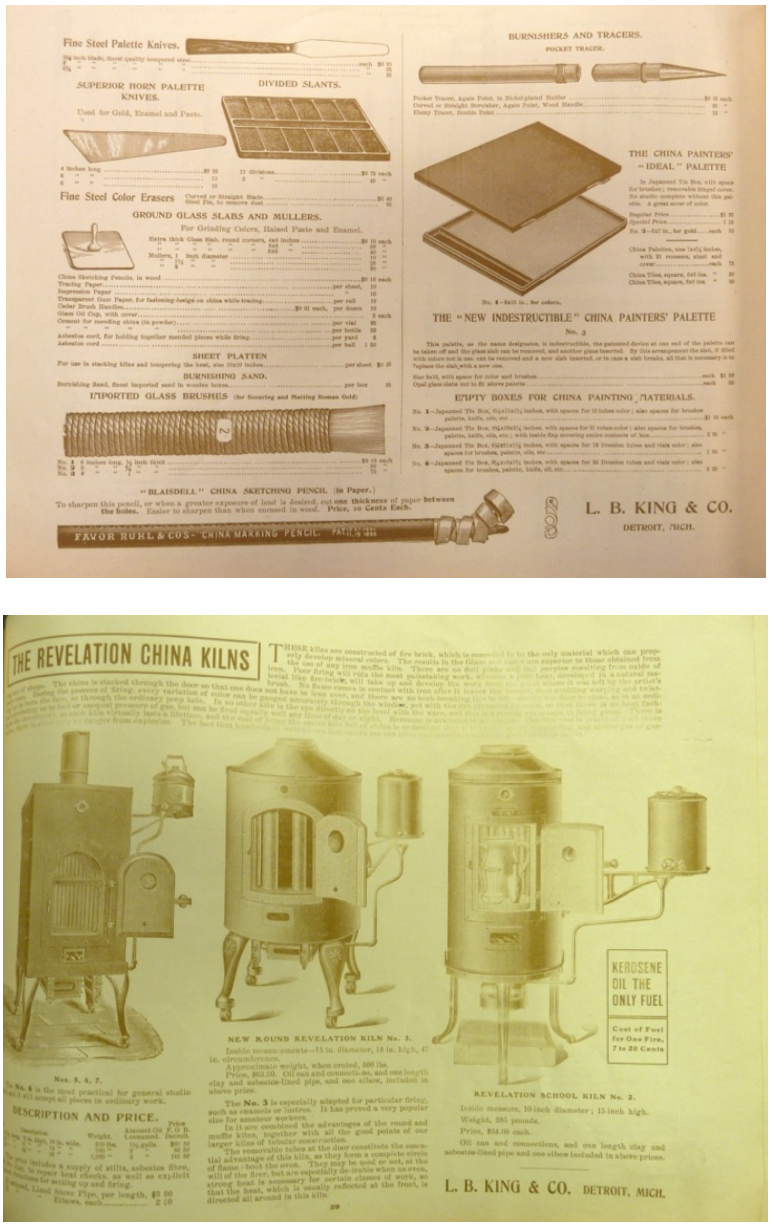


Figure I.6. Pages from the L. B. King & Company Catalogue, 1905, advertising kilns and china painting accessories. L. B. King & Company, Detroit, MI. Rare Books, Winterthur Library.

Figure 1.1. Vase with Waterlilies, 1902. Newcomb College Pottery; Marie Medora Ross, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 16 1/8 in (41 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2017.357.5.

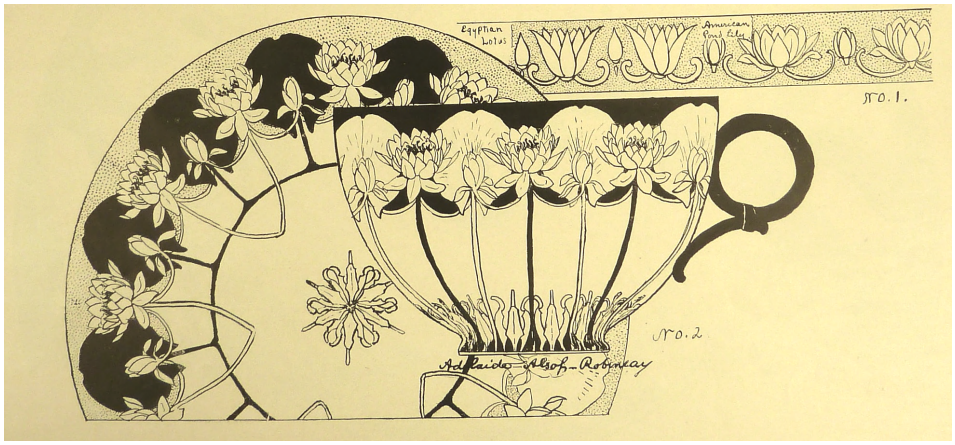


Figure 1.2. Design for Pond Lilies, 1900. Adelaide Alsop Robineau. *Keramic Studio*. Winterthur Library.

Figure 1.3. Jardinière with Ferns, 1887-1889. New Orleans Art Pottery Company, New Orleans, LA; Katherine Davis, decorator. Earthenware. 15 in (38.1 cm). Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans, LA.

Figure 1.4. Vase with Morning Glories, ca. 1880-1882. T. J. Wheatley & Company, Cincinnati, OH. Earthenware. 9 ½ in (24.1 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018.294.242.

Figure 1.5. Vase with Clover, ca. 1877-1884. Chelsea Keramic Art Works, Chelsea, MA; Hugh C. Robertson, potter. Earthenware. 7 15/16 in (20.2 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018.294.29.

Figure 1.6. Left: Jardinière with Caladium and Sunflowers, ca. 1887-1889. New Orleans Art Pottery Company. Earthenware. [Dimensions]. New Orleans Museum of Art. Right: Ewer on Stand with Waterlilies, ca. 1875-1880. Chelsea Keramic Art Works; Hugh C. Robertson, potter. Earthenware. 14 5/16 in (36.4 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018.294.20a,b.

Figure 1.7. Vase with Daisies, 1890. Rookwood Pottery Company; Artus van Briggle, decorator. Earthenware. 18 in x 6 ¾ in (45.7 x 17.1 cm). Cincinnati Museum of Art, 1978.350.

Figure 1.8. Vase with Sweet Peas, 1897. Newcomb College Pottery; Esther Elliott, decorator; Jules Gabry, potter. Earthenware. 9 ¼ in x 5 in (23.5 cm x 12.7 cm). Private collection. From "Early 20th Century/Arts & Crafts," auction catalog, Rago Arts, October 2012.

Figure 1.9. Plate with Cypress and Orange Trees, 1896-1897. Newcomb College Pottery; Gertrude Roberts Smith, decorator. Earthenware. 8 ½ in (21.6 cm). The Historic New Orleans Collection, 2018.0436.4.

Figure 1.10. Plate with Moths or Bees, c. 1897. Newcomb College Pottery; Katharine Kopman, decorator. Earthenware. 8 in (20.3 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, C.1973.133.A.

Figure 1.11. Detail, "Inlaid Flower Panels," Plate 31 from *Nature in Ornament*, Lewis Foreman Day, 1898.

Figure 1.12. Photograph of Newcomb College Pottery plate with landscape painted by Katharine Kopman, from *Keramic Studio*, 1899.

Figure 1.13. Left: Photograph of Dedham Pottery plates and vases, *House Beautiful*, 1897. Right: Plate in "Two Ear Rabbit" pattern, ca. 1896-1929. Dedham Pottery, Dedham, MA; Joseph Lindon Smith, possible designer. Stoneware. 8 ½ in (21.6 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. 67.1056.

Figure 1.14. Left: Vase with Magnolia Trees, ca. 1902-1903. Newcomb College Pottery; Mary Williams Butler, designer; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 12 in (30.5 cm). Newcomb Art Museum. Center: Vase with Magnolias, 1903. Newcomb College Pottery; Sabina Elliott Wells, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 8 7/8 in (22.5 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1973.54.A. Right: Vase with Magnolias, 1904. Newcomb College Pottery; Harriet Joor, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 8 ½ in (21.6 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1988.511.A.

Figure 1.15. Vase with Spatterdock or Cow Lilies, 1904. Newcomb College Pottery; Amélie Roman, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. Louisiana State Museum, 1977.76.

Figure 1.16. Plaque with "Fly Catchers" [Hooded Pitcher Plants], 1903. Newcomb College Pottery; Sabina Elliott Wells, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 9 1/8 in (23.2 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, 1973.63.

Figure 1.17. Vase with Blackberries, 1902. Newcomb College Pottery; Charlotte Payne, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 4 ½ in (11.4 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, 2010.12.62.

Figure 1.18. Plate with Roosters and Grapes, 1907. Newcomb College Pottery; Marie de Hoa LeBlanc, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 11 in (27.9 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1973.62.A.

Figure 1.19. The Magnolia Vase, ca. 1893. Tiffany & Company, New York, New York. Silver, gold, enamel, and opals. 30 7/8 in x 19 ½ in (78.4 cm x 19 ½ cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 99.2.

Figure 1.20. Left: Jardinière with Pinecones, 1907. Newcomb College Pottery; Marie de Hoa LeBlanc, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 8 ½ in x 10 in (21.6 cm x 25.4 cm). Private collection. From Neal Auctions, New Orleans, LA, Spring 2012. Center: Vase with Magnolia Blossoms, c. 1898-1902. Newcomb College Pottery; Irene Borden Keep, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 10 5/8 in (27 cm). Newcomb Art Museum. Right: Plate with Cactus, 1903. Newcomb College Pottery; Harriet Joor, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 12 7/8 in (32.7 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, 2010.9.13.

Figure 1.21. Left: Vase with Magnolias, 1903. Newcomb College Pottery; Sabina Elliott Wells, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 8 7/8 in (22.5 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1973.54.A. Right: Underside with labels and inscriptions.

Figure 1.22. Chocolate Pot with Flowers, 1906. Newcomb College Pottery; Erin "Effie" Shepard, decorator; Joseph Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 7.25 in x 4.75 in (18.4 cm x 12 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, 2010.12.16.

THE Newcomb Ornamental Pottery, which is rapidly growing in popularity, is produced by the young women of Sophia Newcomb Memorial College at New Orleans, Louisiana. The potters themselves assert that it is a "ware produced in the interest of artistic handicraft." Being potted in the South it is not at all unnatural that southern flowers are used as subjects of the designs. This pottery is made in individual pieces, no duplicates ever being put into the kilns. Some charming pieces of Newcomb Ornamental Pottery, in shapes and designs which should win the admiration of Christmas gift buyers, are shown in our Art Section on the Second Floor.

Marshall Field & Co.

Figure 1.23. Advertisement for Newcomb College Pottery at Marshall Field & Company, *Chicago Tribune*, Chicago, IL, 1907.

Figure 1.24. Left: Newcomb College Pottery Building, pictured in a Pottery advertising pamphlet, ca. 1905-1907. University Archives, Tulane University. Right: Reception Room, pictured in *Keramic Studio*, 1905.

Figure 1.25. Plate with Fish, 1906. Newcomb College Pottery; Mary Frances Baker, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 9 in (22.9 cm).

Figure 1.26. Humidor with Dutchman's Pipe, 1904. Newcomb College Pottery; Roberta Beverly Kennon, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 6 ½ in x 5 in (15.9 cm x 12.7 cm). The Historic New Orleans Collection, 2017.0080.43.

Figure 2.1. Vase with Storks, ca. 1900-1910. Lycett's, decorator; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. Georgia Museum of Art, Athens, GA, 2012.323.

Figure 2.2. Left: Illustration of storks, 1900. Adelaide Alsop Robineau. *Keramic Studio*. Right: "Grand Panneau," from *Fantaisies décoratives*, c. 1890-1899. Jules Auguste Habert-Dys, artist. Charles Gillot, lithographer. New York Public Library, New York, NY.

Figure 2.3. Library in William Henry Vanderbilt Home, c. 1883. From *Artistic Houses.*

Figure 2.4. Advertisement for Warrin & Lycett, November 7, 1878, *Crockery & Glass Journal.* Joseph Downs Manuscripts and Ephemera Collection, Winterthur Library.

Figure 2.5. Left: Trade Card with Sketch of Lobster, ca. 1879-1882. Stamped "William Lycett, Teacher of China Painting." Graphite, ink, and watercolor (?) on paper. Right: Trade Card with Sketch of Lake Trout, ca. 1879-1882. Stamped "William Lycett, Teacher of China Painting"; inscribed in graphite "Salmon Trout." Graphite, ink, and watercolor (?) on paper. Lycett Collection, Special Collections, Brooklyn Museum Libraries.

Figure 2.6. Sketch of Bouquet of Flowers, ca. 1879-1882. Stamped "William Lycett, Teacher of China Painting." Graphite, ink, and watercolor (?) on paper. Lycett Collection, Special Collections, Brooklyn Museum Libraries.

Figure 2.7. Left: Vase with Saucer Magnolias, 1877. John Bennett, Brooklyn, New York. Earthenware. 6 ½ in (16.5 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011.321.1. Right: Vase with Irises, c. 1900-1909. Lycett's, decorator; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. 17 3/8 in x 7 7/16 in (44.1 cm x 18.9 cm). Georgia Museum of Art, 2002.39.

Figure 2.8. Left: Ewer with Arabesques, ca. 1886-1890. Faience Manufacturing Company, Greenpoint, Brooklyn, New York; Edward Lycett, designer. Earthenware. 22 in (55.9 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004.95. Right: Ewer with Roosters and Blackberries, ca. 1886-1890. Faience Manufacturing Company; Edward Lycett, probable designer. Earthenware. Private collection.

Figure 2.9. Covered Vase with Chrysanthemums, ca. 1886-1890. Faience Manufacturing Company; Edward Lycett, probable designer. Earthenware. 27 in x 14 ½ in (68.6 cm x 36.8 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986.57a,b.

Figure 2.10. Advertisement for "Wm Lycett & Bro," *Atlanta Constitution*, 1883.

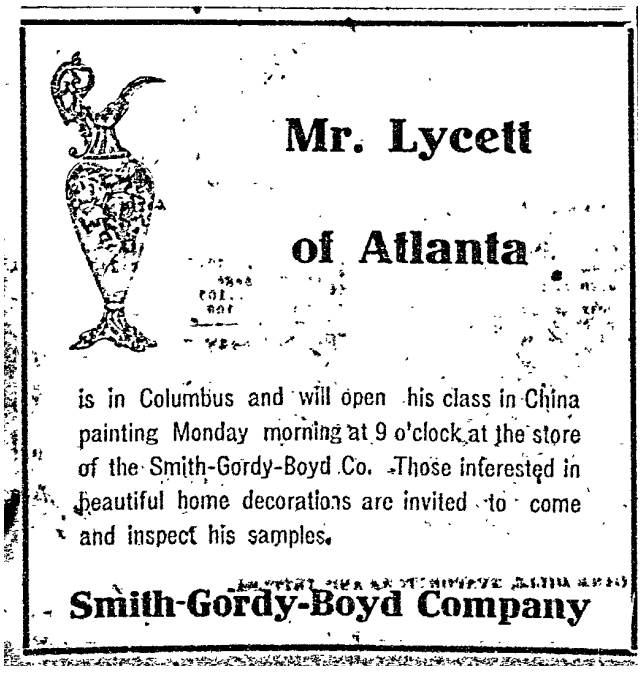


Figure 2.11. Advertisement for William Lycett's china painting lessons, *Columbus Enquirer* (Columbus, GA), October 11, 1908.

Figure 2.12. Vase with Roses, ca. 1891-1895. Mary "Mamie" Goodwin Griggs, decorator; William Guérin, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Atlanta History Center.

Figure 2.13. Baseball Vase, ca. 1875-1876. Ott & Brewer, Trenton, NJ; Isaac Broome, designer and modeler. Porcelain. 38 ¾ in (98.4 cm). Detroit Historical Museum, Detroit, MI, 56.77.1.

Figure 2.14. Pitcher in Nautilus Form, ca. 1887-1893. Willets Manufacturing Company, Trenton, NJ; Walter Scott Lenox, designer; William Bromley, modeler. Porcelain. 9 1/8 in (23.2 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000.415.

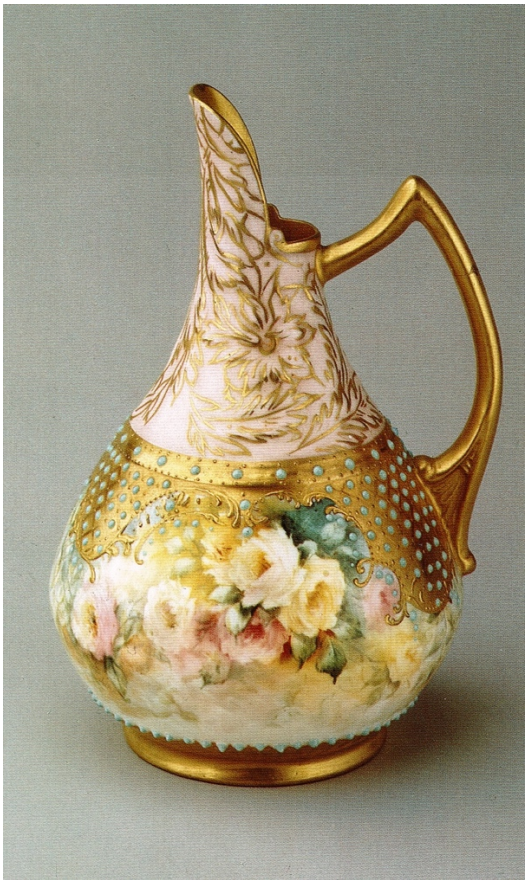


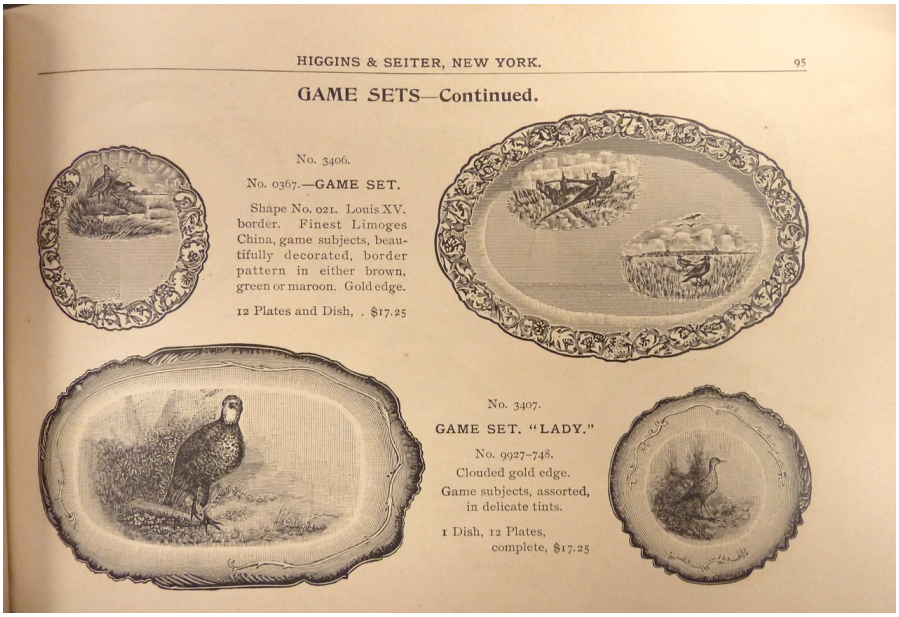
Figure 2.15. Pitcher with Roses, ca. 1891-1897. Knowles, Taylor, and Knowles, East Liverpool, OH; Kenneth P. Beattie, designer. Porcelain. 5 ¾ in (14.6 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986.443.8.

Figure 2.16. Vase and Ewer with Roses, ca. 1890-1909. William Lycett's, Atlanta, GA, decorator; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. Vase, 8 ¾ in x 14 in (22.2 cm x 35.6 cm). Ewer, 15 ¾ in (40 cm). Private collection.

Figure 2.17. Left: Vase with Roses, ca. 1900-1905. Ceramic Art Company, Trenton, NJ; William H. Morley, decorator. Porcelain. 18 ½ in (47 cm). New Jersey State Museum, CH86.22. Center: Detail of Dessert Plate with Ivy and Berries, ca. 1883-1909. Lycett's, decorator; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA, 1953.3.2. Right: Vase with Roses, ca. 1900-1909. Lycett's, decorator; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. 12 ¼ in (31.1 cm). Atlanta History Center, 2003.I69.M1.

Figure 2.18. Plate, *The Parson's Daughter, after George Romney*, ca. 1905-1906. Ceramic Art Company, for Tiffany & Company, New York, NY; Bruno Geyer, decorator. Porcelain. 10 3/8 in (26.4 cm). Private collection.

Figure 2.19. Game Plate with Ruffed Grouse, ca. 1892-1910. Lycett's; Edward Lycett, probable decorator; Haviland & Company, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Porcelain. 8 ½ in (21.6 cm). Private collection.



HIGGINS & SEITER, NEW YORK. 95

GAME SETS—Continued.

No. 3406.

No. 0367.—GAME SET.

Shape No. 021. Louis XV. border. Finest Limoges China, game subjects, beautifully decorated, border pattern in either brown, green or maroon. Gold edge.

12 Plates and Dish, . $17.25

No. 3407.

GAME SET. "LADY."

No. 9927–748.

Clouded gold edge.

Game subjects, assorted, in delicate tints.

1 Dish, 12 Plates, complete, $17.25

Figure 2.20. Game Sets page from Higgins & Seiter Catalog, New York, NY, 1898. Winterthur Library.

Figure 2.21. "Wild Turkey" Dinner Platter, ca. 1882. Haviland & Company, Limoges, France; Theodore Russell Davis, designer. Porcelain. 19 7/8 in (50.5 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2006.4.149.

Figure 2.22. Left: Roses. Teana McLennan Hinman. *Keramic Studio*, March 1904. Center: Design for Cup, Saucer and Plate with Roses. M. L. Candler. *Keramic Studio*, May 1904. Right: Rose Design for Teapot Stand. Edith A. Ross. *Keramic Studio*, January 1905.

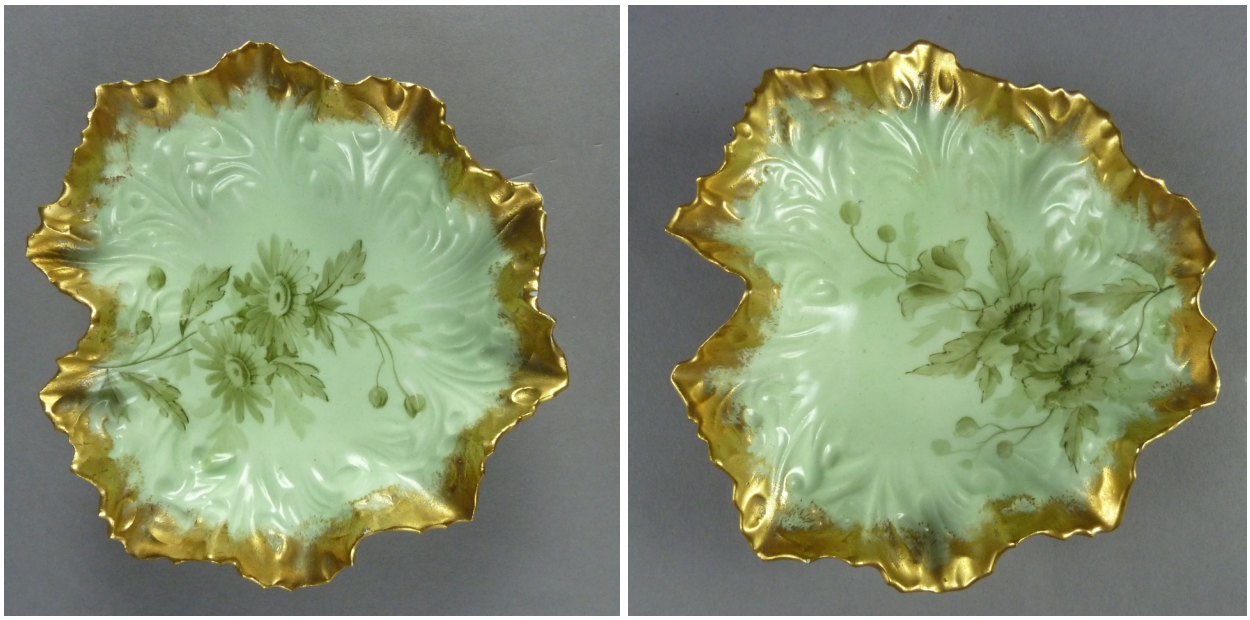


Figure 2.23. Nut Dishes with Asters (Left) and Poppies (Right), ca. 1883-1909. Lycett's, decorator; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. 1 5/8 in x 5 ½ in (14 cm). Atlanta History Center, 1981.207.

Figure 2.24. Dessert Plate with Nasturtiums, ca. 1894-1910. Lycett's, decorator; Coiffe Jeune, Limoges, France, manufacturer. 11 in (28 cm). Atlanta History Center, 1953.3.M1.

Figure 2.25. Vase with Chrysanthemums, ca. 1883-1910. Lycett's, decorator; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. 12 in x 6 ½ in (30.5 cm x 16.5 cm). Private collection.

Figure 2.26. Left: Decorative Tray or Plaque with Portrait of William Easter Lenney, ca. 1893-1907. Lycett's, decorator; Tressemanes & Vogt, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Porcelain. Georgia Museum of Art, 2012.321. Right: Decorative Tray or Plaque with Portrait of Loiette Keim Lenney, ca. 1896-1910. Lycett's, decorator; Charles Ahrenfeldt, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Porcelain. Georgia Museum of Art, 2012.322.

Figure 2.27. Illustrations from "Summer Sketches," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 4, 1891.

Figure 2.28. Lidded Vase with Waterlilies, 1889. Faience Manufacturing Company; Edward Lycett, designer; Joseph Lycett, decorator. Earthenware. 28 in (71.1 cm). The Henry Ford, Dearborn, Michigan, 60.135.

Figure 2.29. Lidded Vase with Dragon and Azaleas, c. 1883-1910. Lycett's, decorator; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. 17 in (43.2 cm). Private collection.

Figure 2.30. Dishes with Monograms, c. 1883-1890. Lycett's, decorator; Gérard, Dufraissiex, & Morel, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Porcelain. 9 ½ in (23.5 cm). Private collection.

Figure 3.1. Vase with Landscape, ca. 1901. Newcomb College Pottery; Alice Raymond Scudder, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 7 in x 4 ½ in (17.8 cm x 11.4 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, 2009.4.2.

Figure 3.2. "Ipswich Town" or "Harbor Scene" (left) and "View of Ipswich" or "A Bend in the River" (right), from the *Along the Ipswich River* series, ca. 1893-1895. Color woodcut on paper. Left: 5 in x 2 ¼ in (12.7 cm x 5.7 cm), right: 5 in x 2 5/16 in (12.7 cm x 5.9 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 42.54.1 and 42.54.3.

Figure 3.3. "Reception Hall of Newcomb Pottery," in *Keramic Studio*, 1905. Winterthur Library.

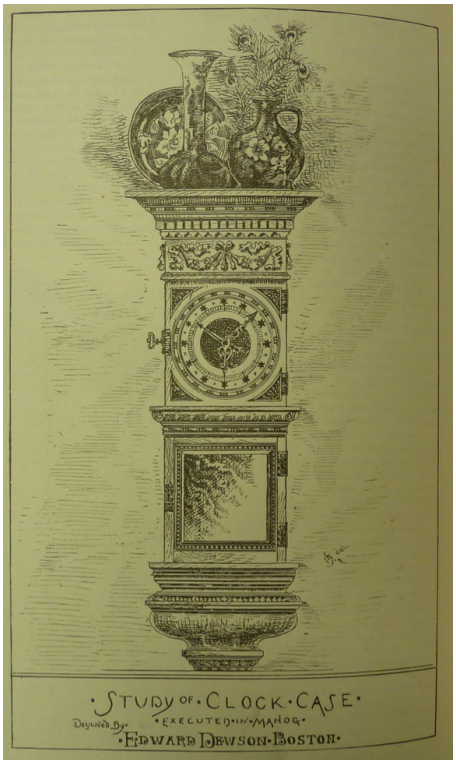


Figure 3.4. "Study of Clock Case," in *Decorator & Furnisher*, 1884. Edward Dewson, designer. Winterthur Library.

Figure 3.5. Left: Vase with Chrysanthemums, 19th century. Unknown artist(s), Japan. Earthenware. 20 ½ in x 8 15/16 in (52 cm x 22.7 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1908.673. Right: Vase with Yucca Blossoms, ca. 1897. Earthenware. 7 7/8 in x 3 ½ in (20 cm x 8.9 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1986.506.A.

Figure 3.6. Jardinière with Hibiscus and Dogwood, ca. 1887-1890. New Orleans Art Pottery; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter; decorator unknown. Earthenware. New Orleans Museum of Art.

Figure 3.7. Left: Vase with Owls, ca. 1902. Newcomb College Pottery; Mary Frances Baker, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 6 ¾ in (17.2 cm). Louisiana State Museum, 1976.62. Right: Tea Jar, from the Morse Collection, ca. 1680-1840. Unknown artist, Japan. Earthenware. Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 92.4836b.

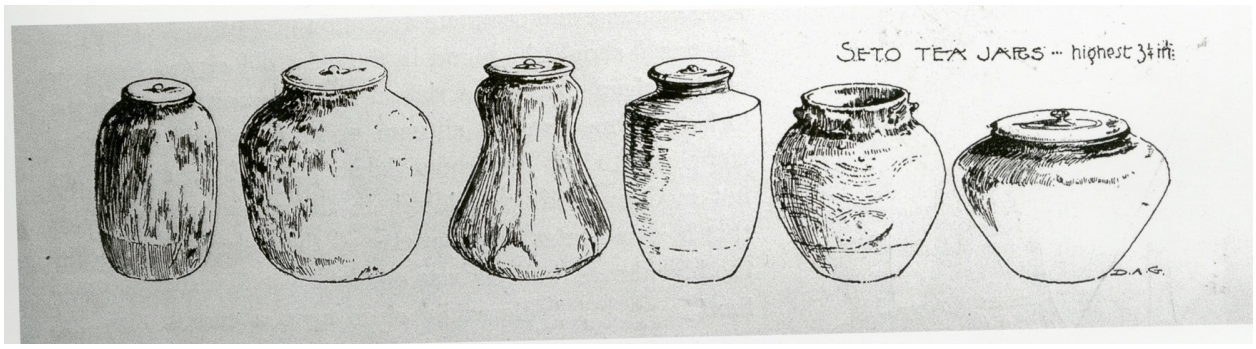


Figure 3.8. Illustration of Seto Tea Jars in Edward Morse's collection, *Architectural Record and Building News*, 1888.

Figure 3.9. Left: Gourd-Shaped Vase and Two-Handled Vase, ca. 1898. Newcomb College Pottery; probably Joseph Fortuné Meyer and Selina Bres, potters. Earthenware. Gourd-Shaped Vase, 10 in (25.4 cm). Two-Handled Vase, 5 ½ in (14 cm). Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 99.74 and 99.76. Right: Bottle-Shaped Vase with Oak Leaves, ca. 1899. Newcomb College Pottery; Emilie de Hoa LeBlanc, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 8 ¼ in (21 cm). Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 99.75.

Figure 3.10. Jardinière with Chrysanthemums, ca. 1898. Newcomb College Pottery; Esther Huger Elliott, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 10 ½ in (26.7 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1973.394.A.

Figure 3.11. Vase with Irises, ca. 1898. Newcomb College Pottery; Mary Given Sheerer, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 12 in (30.5 cm). Cincinnati Art Museum, 1898.221a-b.

Figure 3.12. Vase with Hollyhocks, ca. 1901. Newcomb College Pottery; Ada Wilt Lonnegan, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 11 5/8 in x 5 ¾ in (29.5 cm x 14.6 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, 2009.5.1.

Figure 3.13. Left: Poster for Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1895. William Henry Bradley. Letterpress on paper. 19 13/16 in x 12 7/16 in (50.3 cm x 31.6 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990.1016.1. Center: *Jane*, 1897. Louis Rhead. Color lithograph on paper. 13 ¾ in x 8 ½ in (35 cm x 21.5 cm). Smithsonian American Art Museum, 1979.60.4. Right: *The Penny Magazine*, ca. 1896. Ethel Reed. Color lithograph. 21 9/16 in x 10 ¼ in (54.7 cm x 26 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999.402.

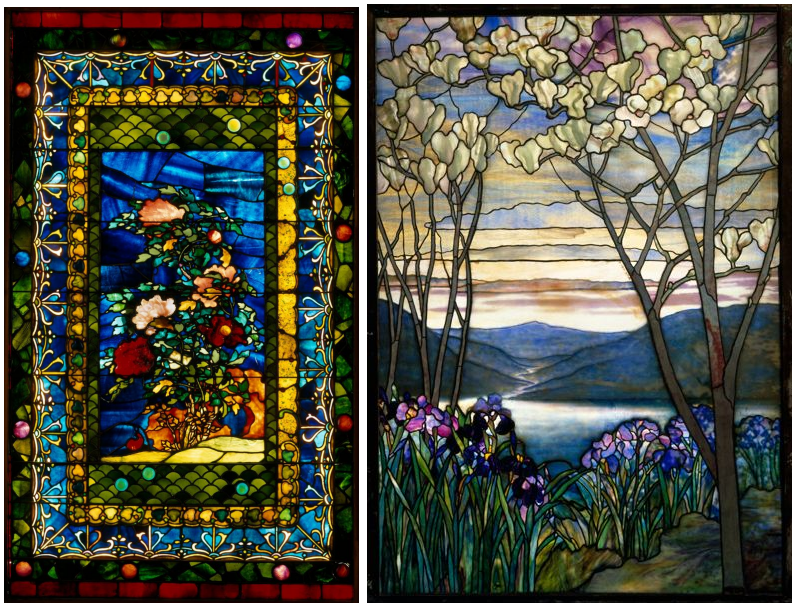


Figure 3.14. Left: Peonies Blown in the Wind, ca. 1880. John LaFarge. Leaded opalescent glass. 75 in x 45 in (190.5 cm x 114.3 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 30.50. Right: Magnolias and Irises Panel, ca. 1908. Tiffany Studios, New York, New York; Louis Comfort Tiffany, designer. Leaded Favrile glass. 60 ¼ in x 42 in (153 cm x 106.7 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1981.159.

Figure 3.15. Design for "Posteresque Placque," color plate in *Keramic Studio*, 1900. Henrietta Barclay Paist. Winterthur Library.

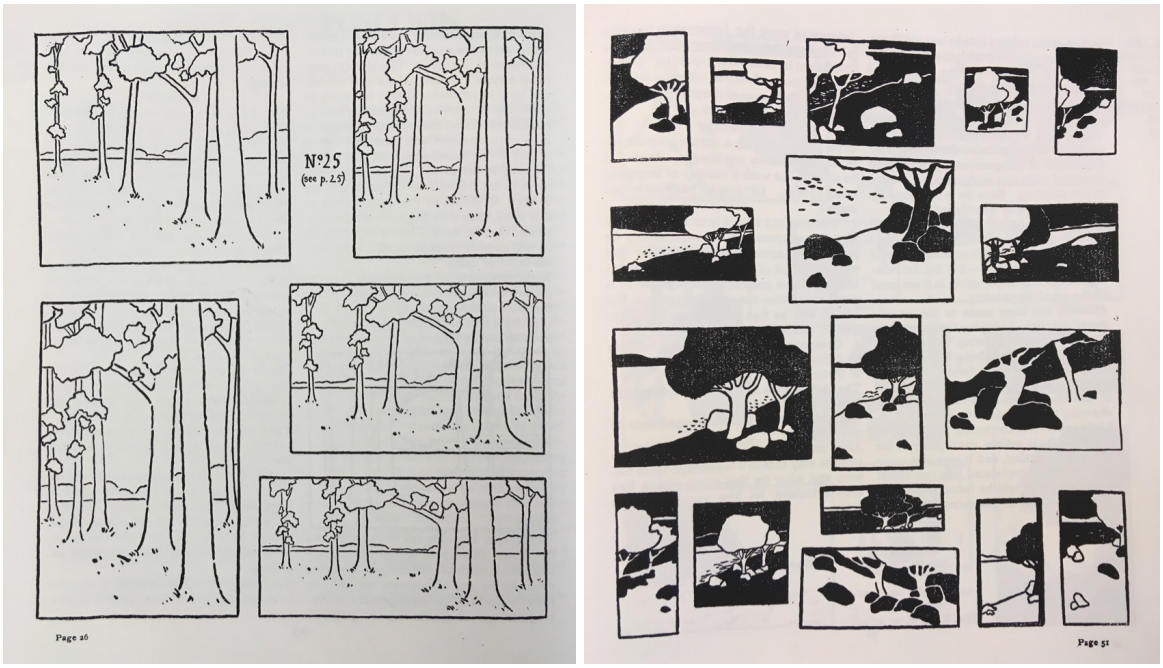
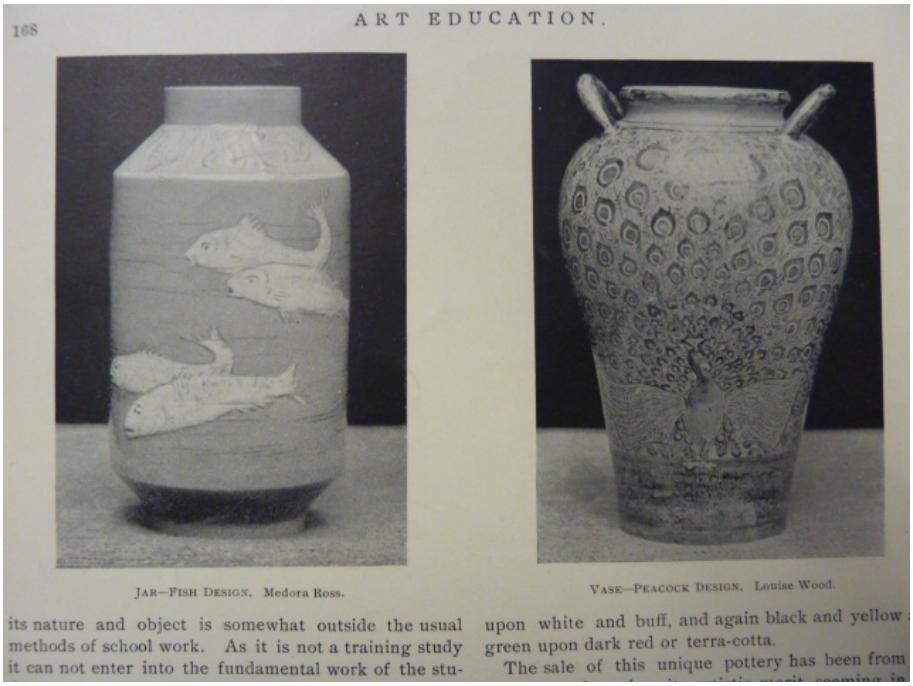


Figure 3.16. Exercises from Arthur Wesley Dow's *Composition*, sixth edition, 1905. Left demonstrates the reduction of landscape to vertical lines and rectangles, right illustrates the use of *notan*.

Figure 3.17. Mug with Pine Trees, 1905. Newcomb College Pottery; Desirée Roman, decorator; unknown potter. Earthenware. Newcomb Art Museum, 1982.404-C.



168 ART EDUCATION.

JAR—FISH DESIGN. Medora Ross.

VASE—PEACOCK DESIGN. Louise Wood.

its nature and object is somewhat outside the usual methods of school work. As it is not a training study it can not enter into the fundamental work of the stu-

upon white and buff, and again black and yellow green upon dark red or terra-cotta.

The sale of this unique pottery has been from

Figure 3.18. Images of Newcomb Pottery that appeared in *Art Education* in 1898. Newcomb Pottery Vertical Files, University Archives, Tulane University.

Figure 3.19. Vase with Crane and Waves, ca. 1897. Newcomb College Pottery; Selina Elizabeth Bres, decorator; unknown potter. Earthenware. 5 1/6 in x 5 in (12.8 cm x 12.7 cm). Louisiana State University Museum of Art, Baton Rouge, 89.13.

Figure 3.20. Plate with Koi, 1904. Newcomb College Pottery; Sabina Elliott Wells, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 11 in (27.9 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1973.34.A.

Figure 3.21. Left: Vase with Irises, 1903. Newcomb College Pottery; Marie de Hoa LeBlanc, decorator; unknown potter. Earthenware. 9 3/16 in x 4 ¾ in (23.3 cm x 12.1 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018.294.151. Center: Vase with Irises, 1905. Newcomb College Pottery; Roberta Beverly Kennon, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 15 in x 8 1/8 in (38.1 cm x 20.6 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1982.415.A. Right: Vase with Irises, 1908. Newcomb College Pottery; Amelie Roman, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 7 ¼ in x 4 3/8 in (8.4 cm x 11.1 cm). Private collection.

Figure 3.22. Vase with Crabs, 1903. Newcomb College Pottery; Mary Williams Butler, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 7 7/8 in x 7 ¼ in (20 cm x 18.4 cm). New Orleans Museum of Art, 38.31.

Figure 3.23. Vase with Chinaberries, ca. 1902-1903. Newcomb College Pottery; Harriet Joor, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. New Orleans Museum of Art, 38.29.

Figure 3.24. Vase with Bull-Tongue Arrowhead Design, ca. 1896-1898. Newcomb College Pottery; Mary Given Sheerer, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 9 3/8 in x 7 ¾ in (23.8 cm x 19.7 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, 2008.3.1A.

Figure 3.25. Detail, Vase with Agaves, ca. 1898-1901. Newcomb College Pottery; Mary Williams Butler, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 4 in (10.2 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, 2010.11.1.

Figure 3.26. Tyg with Cotton Bolls, ca. 1901. Newcomb College Pottery; Mazie T. Ryan, decorator; unknown potter. Earthenware. Louisiana State Museum.

Figure 3.27. Tyg with Flowers, 1905. Newcomb College Pottery; Leona Fischer Nicholson, decorator; unknown potter. Earthenware. 4 ¾ in x 5 7/8 in (12.1 cm x 14.9 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, FIC2016.4.

Figure 3.28. Vase with Crape Myrtles, 1906. Newcomb College Pottery; Mary Frances Baker, decorator; unknown potter. Earthenware. 8 7/8 in x 7 1/8 in (22.5 cm x 18.1 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2017.357.9.

Figure 3.29. Jardinière with Trees, 1907. Newcomb College Pottery; Marie de Hoa LeBlanc, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 5 3/8 in x 7 in (13.7 cm x 17.8 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1982.435.A.

Figure 3.30. Pages from The New Orleans Calendar, 1896. Caroline Ogden, Frances Jones, Frances Howe, and Katharine Kopman, designers. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

Figure 3.31. Pages from The New Orleans Calendar, 1900. Frances Jones and Katharine Kopman, designers. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

Figure 3.32. Cover, The Mary Ashley Townsend Calendar, 1904. Rosalie Urquhart, designer. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

Figure 3.33. Pages from The Louisiana Calendar, 1909. Rosalie Urquhart, designer. Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University.

Figure 3.34. Above: *Hodogaya on the Tokaido (Tokaido Hodogaya)*, from the series *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji (Fugaku sanjurokkei)*, ca. 1830-1832. Katsushika Hokusai, Japan, artist. Color woodblock print on paper. 9 15/16 in x 14 ¾ in (25.2 cm x 37.5 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, JP1427. Below: *Wayfarers Looking at the Statue of Jizo Bosatsu in a Pine Grove at Hashiba*, ca. 1840. Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Japan, artist. Color woodblock print on paper. 10 1/8 in x 14 15/32 in (25.7 cm x 36.8 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, JP750.

Figure 4.1. George Adair Memorial Vase, 1900. William Lycett's Studio; William Lycett, decorator; Pouyat, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Porcelain. 8 in x 10 in (20.3 cm x 25.4 cm). Atlanta History Center, 1953.2.M2.

THE POOR TASTE OF THE RICH

THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES WHICH SHOW THAT WEALTH IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO THE DECORATION OF A HOUSE, AND THAT THE HOMES OF MANY OF OUR RICHEST CITIZENS ARE FURNISHED IN EXECRABLE TASTE

THE BRADLEY-MARTIN HOUSE

IT is customary in many schools to teach English by means of incorrect sentences; to give examples of false construction, and to show on another blackboard similar sentences correctly written. Distinguished educators have questioned this method, claiming that the mind should be trained by reading and writing correct English only.

The policy of THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL has been based on a similar theory; that the good only should be illustrated, and that examples of faulty house furnishings should be carefully avoided.

Some mistakes in English are so flagrant that they are valuable as object lessons; some houses are so atrocious that they are valuable as warnings. A few examples of blunders in the grammar of architecture and decoration are herewith reproduced for the benefit of our readers. We would write in large letters beneath each illustration:

WHAT TO AVOID

Cheap ugliness is bad enough, but costly ugliness is a crime, for the responsibility of the rich man is greater than that of his poorer brother. His opportunities to improve public taste are so vast that he cannot neglect them without violating a sacred trust. Is there one millionaire in ten who recognizes this responsibility, or who fulfils this trust? Is there one costly palace in fifty that is not an outrage against good taste? Is there one expensive residence in a hundred that is an object lesson in the beautiful?

Finally, is there one cottage in this broad land that can compare in ugliness and vulgarity with the millionaire's house which we have chosen as a text for our first sermon on *The Poor Taste of the Rich*—a sub-heading of which might run: *The Compensations of Poverty*.

We do not question the rich man's right to his mansion. It is his duty to build a costly house. The man of wealth who lives in miserly surroundings is evading his responsibility quite as much as the man who builds a monument of ugliness in brown stone and plush. Both are offenders. One does not use his opportunities; the other misuses them.

THE BRADLEY-MARTIN HOUSE—THE HALL

20

Figure 4.2. "The Poor Taste of the Rich," *House Beautiful*, 1904. Winterthur Library.

Figure 4.3. Plate from Game Set, ca. 1892-1910. Lycett's; probably Edward Lycett, decorator; Haviland & Company, Limoges, France. Porcelain. 9 3/8 in (23.8 cm). Atlanta History Center, 2005.273.M12.

Figure 4.4. Wine-Bottle Cooler, 1771-1772. Sèvres Manufactory, France. Porcelain. 6 5/8 in x 9 ¼ in (16.8 cm x 23.5 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976.155.80.

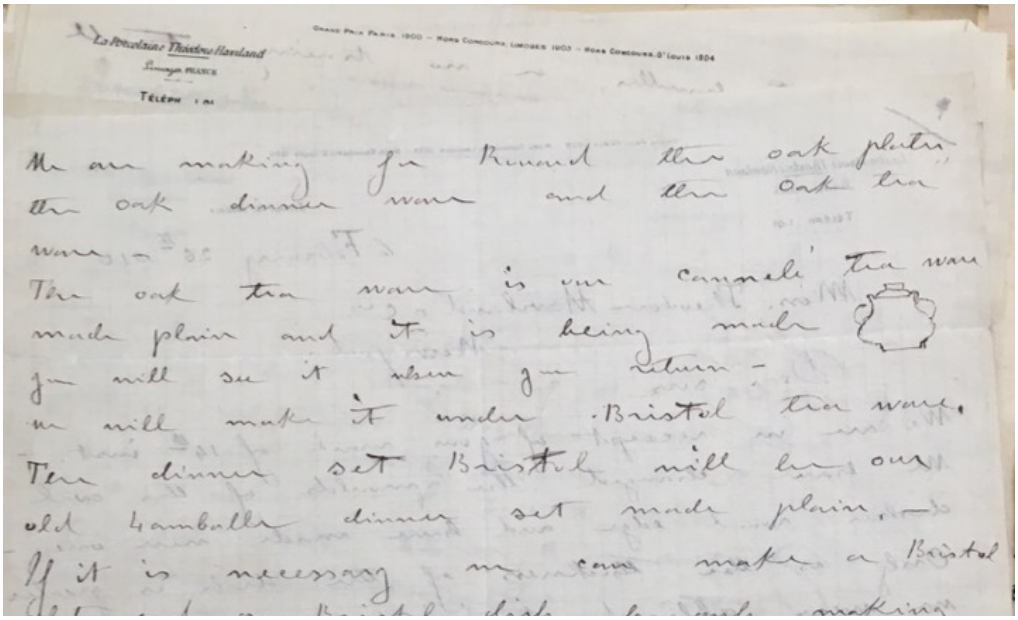


Figure 4.5. Detail, letter from Théodore Haviland to William Briggs with sketch of body shapes, 1910. Archives Dèpartmentales Haute-Vienne.

Figure 4.6. Small Plate with "AHM" Monogram, ca. 1897-1910. Lycett's; Pouyat, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Porcelain. Atlanta History Center, 2013.80.M59.

Figure 4.7. Small Plate with "AHM" Monogram, ca. 1897-1910. Lycett's; Redon, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Porcelain. Atlanta History Center, 2013.80.M46.

Figure 4.8. Teacup with "AHM" Monogram, ca. 1897-1909. Lycett's; Moritz Zdekauer, Altrohlau, Austria. Atlanta History Center, 2013.80.M35.

Figure 4.9. Teacup with "AHM" Monogram, ca. 1897-1909. Lycett's; manufacturer unknown. Atlanta History Center, 2013.80.M71.

Figure 4.10. After-Dinner Coffee Cup with "AHM" Monogram, ca. 1906-1910. Lycett's; Pouyat, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Atlanta History Center, 2013.80.M70.

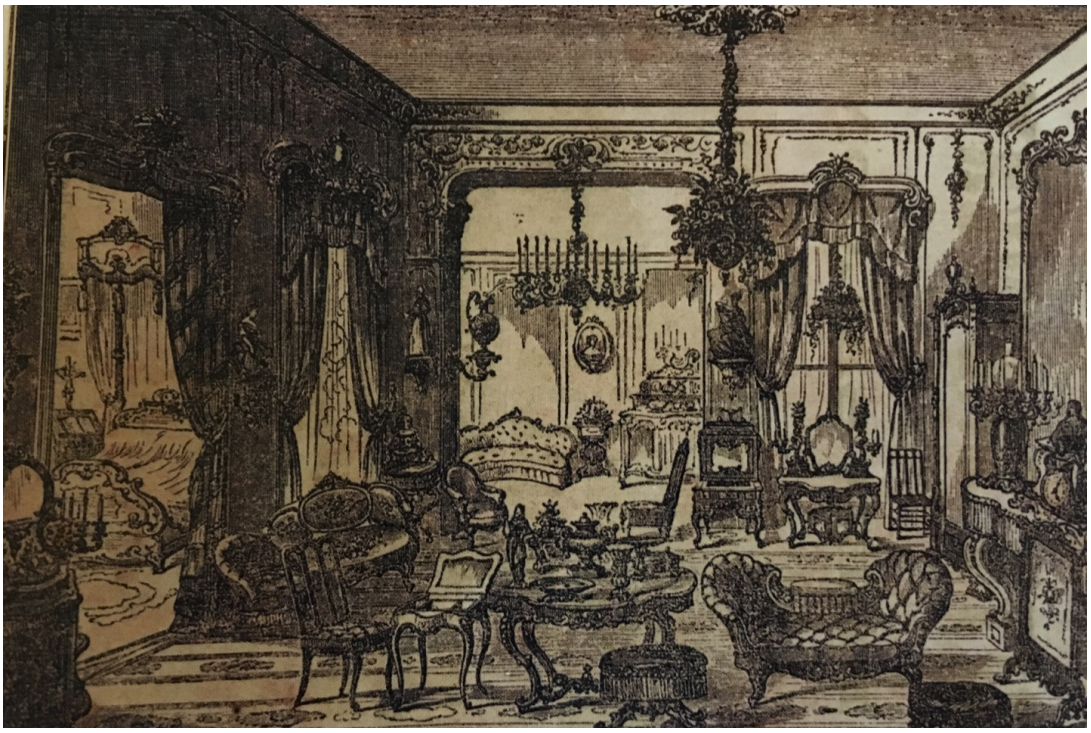


Figure 4.11. Illustration of Prudent Mallard's Showroom, *A. Mygatt & Company's New Orleans Business Directory of 1858*.

Figure 4.12. Parlor at Melrose, Natchez National Historical Park, Natchez, Mississippi.

Figure 4.13. Dressing Bureau, 1850. Thomas Day, cabinetmaker, Milton, North Carolina. Mahogany veneer, poplar, yellow pine. 85 ¼ in x 42 in x 23 in (215.9 cm x 106.7 cm x 58.4 cm). Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, 5399.

Figure 4.14. Selections from a Dinner Service, ca. 1843. Louis-Marie-François Rihouët, decorator; Jacob Petit and Edouard Honoré, manufacturers. Porcelain. Private collection.

Figure 4.15. Crème Pot, ca. 1825-1830. Makers unknown. Porcelain. Louisiana State Museum.

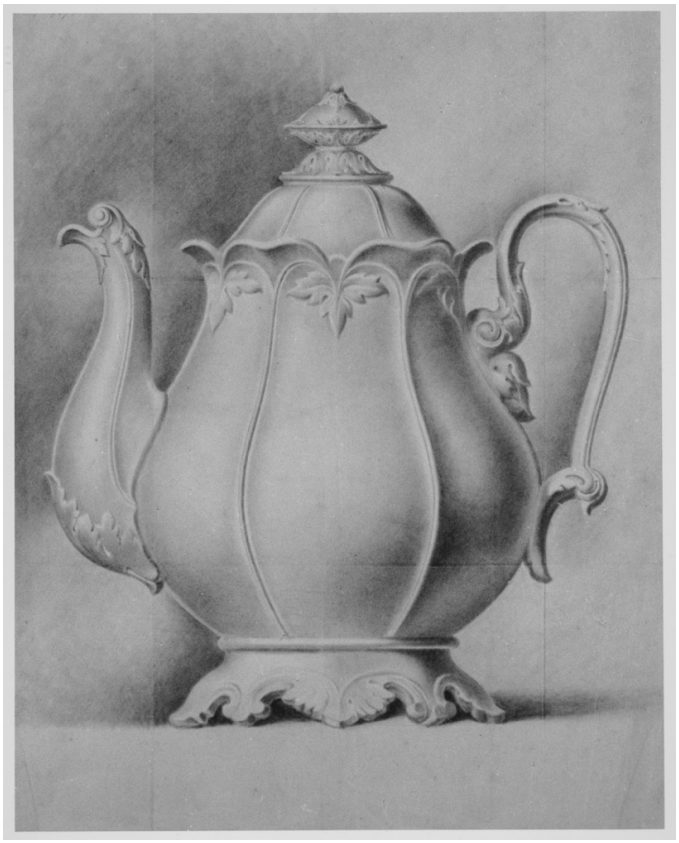


Figure 4.16. Design for a Tea Pot, from the Haviland Factory Design Book, 1850. Haviland & Company, Limoges, France. Pen and black and brown ink on paper. 17 13/16 in x 11 7/8 in (45.2 cm x 30.2 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 65.714.

Figure 4.17. Pitcher with Portraits of Ulysses S. Grant and David Glasgow Farragut, ca. 1864-1866. Rudolph Theodor Lux, New Orleans, Louisiana, decorator; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. The Historic New Orleans Collection, 1998.49.

Figure 4.18. Front Elevations of Melrose, Natchez, Mississippi, constructed ca. 1845, and D'Evereux, Natchez, Mississippi, constructed ca. 1836-1840.

Figure 4.19. Sugar Bowl, Coffeepot, and Creamer, ca. 1895. Lycett's; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. Sugar Bowl: 5 ¼ in x 5 1/8 in x 3 ¾ in (13.3 cm x 13 cm x 9.5 cm). Coffeepot: 12 in x 5 in x 6 ½ in (30.5 cm x 12.7 cm x 16.5 cm). Creamer: 4 ¼ in x 4 ¼ in x 2 5/8 in (10.8 cm x 10.8 cm x 6.7 cm). Brooklyn Museum, 2011.58.5a-b, 2011.58.3a-b, 2011.58.4.

Figure 4.20. Coffeepot, 1757. François Thomas Germain, Paris, France, silversmith. Silver with ebony handle. 11 5/8 in x 12 in (29.5 cm x 30.5 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 33.165.1.

Figure 4.21. Jardinière with Orchids, ca. 1896-1900. Lycett's; Elite Porcelain Works, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Porcelain. Georgia Museum of Art, 2013.55.

Figure 4.22. *Orchids in a Jungle*, ca. 1871-1874. Martin Johnson Heade, New York, New York. Oil on canvas. 16 3/16 in x 20 ¼ in (41.1 cm x 51.4 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1978-1-48.

Figure 4.23. Vase with Storks, ca. 1901-1910. Lycett's; manufacturer unknown. Porcelain. Georgia Museum of Art, Athens, GA, 2012.323.

Conclusion

Figure C.1. Left: Vase with Caladium Blossoms, 1904. Newcomb College Pottery; Esther Huger Elliott, decorator; potter unknown. Earthenware. 9 ½ in (24.1 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1982.448.A. Right: Vase with Roses, ca. 1883-1909. William Lycett's Studio, decorator; unknown manufacturer. Porcelain. Atlanta History Center, 1979.321.07.

Figure C.2. Vase with Landscape, ca. 1920. Newcomb College Pottery; Anna Frances Simpson, decorator; Joseph Fortune Meyer, potter. Earthenware. 4 7/8 in x 3 1/8 in (12.4 cm x 7.9 cm). Newcomb Art Museum, C1973.128.A.

Figure C.3. Berry Bowl with Monogram, c. 1911-1925. Mrs. William Lycett's Studio, Atlanta, Georgia, decorator; Theodore Haviland, Limoges, France, manufacturer. Porcelain. 5 in (12.7 cm). Worthpoint.

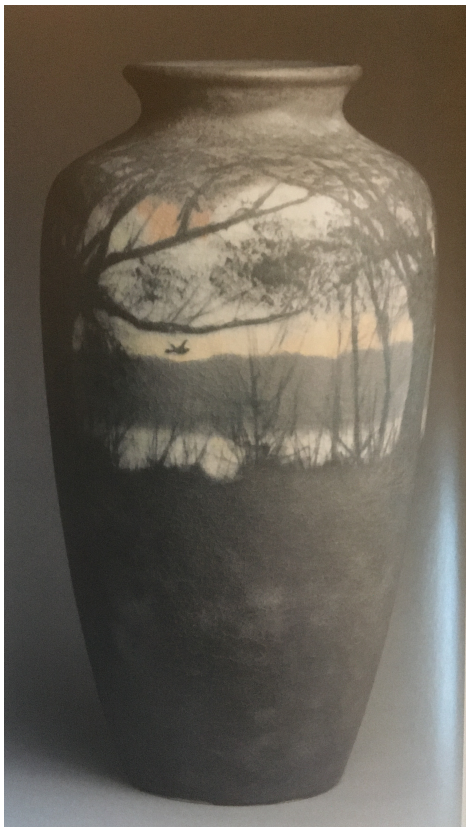


Figure C.4. Vase with Landscape, 1908. Rookwood Pottery Company; Edward Timothy Hurley, decorator. Earthenware. 10 ¼ in x 5 ¾ in (26 cm x 14.6 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018.294.210.

Figure C.5. Bowl with Lotus Blossoms, 1917. Paul Revere Pottery; Sara Galner, decorator. Earthenware. 2 ½ in x 9 in (6.4 cm x 22.9 cm). Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 2007.368.

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Rare Books, Winterthur Library
University Archives, Tulane University

Select Newspapers & Periodicals
Art Amateur
Atlanta Constitution
Country Life in America
Century Magazine
China Decorator
Craftsman
Crockery & Glass Journal
Decorator & Furnisher
Good Housekeeping
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