



THE SISTER ARTS:
Fashioning the Victorian Luxury Book



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Exhibition and Catalogue
by
Holly Forsythe Paul

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THE SISTER ARTS: FASHIONING THE VICTORIAN LUXURY BOOK



Although the expansion of literacy and the emergence of a national readership have justly been the focus of many classic studies of Victorian book production, the long nineteenth century (1789–1914) was also a period in which technologies proliferated to make books into beautiful objects. Outside of the dominant market for novels and non-fiction, a wide variety of illustrated, decorative, and commemorative books was produced for an audience of fashionable female connoisseurs. Typically, these gift books combined illustration with verse, uniting the ‘sister arts’ of painting and poetry. As Lorraine Janzen Kooistra observes, Victorian illustrated periodicals popularised this sororal trope on their covers as ‘two female figures, one with a pen and one with a brush’, habitually feminising the combination of genres.¹ If Victorian luxury books were made for women, they were also more likely to be created and manufactured by women as the decades passed. Inspired by women hobbyists, and focused on a female market, the luxury book trade was much more accessible to women labourers than the mainstream book industry. Whereas the fiction and periodical presses reserved select roles for women writers, luxury book manufacture came to provide positions for women in the book arts, initiating a sisterhood of illustrators, illuminators, engravers, designers, compositors, binders, and even publishers. The manufacture of these beautiful books provided women with the opportunity to adopt a range of professional roles in the book world.

A variety of technological, aesthetic, cultural, and professional factors influenced the role of women in luxury book production. As technology developed, new

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fields of expression and employment became open to women. Chromolithography, for example, enabled the production of accurate facsimiles of medieval manuscripts, stimulating emerging design principles by expanding access to traditional composition and layout aesthetics. The Design Reform movement, meanwhile, systematised aesthetics in a curriculum used at British Government Schools of Design to train women in industrial decoration. Similarly, the values of the Arts and Crafts movement prompted crucial cultural and professional changes. Inspired by medieval art and idealising pre-Industrial modes of labour, the Arts and Crafts movement placed high value on handicrafts traditionally associated with women's work. Its members established independent workshops using archaic equipment that fell outside of strict union controls. This more inclusive environment gave women employment in presses that made luxury books. In a scaled-down network, individuals could make a difference: Emery Walker (1851–1933), William Morris (1834–1896), and Elizabeth Corbet Yeats (1868–1940) each made individual contributions that had a significant impact on women's access to work in the book trades. Indeed, in small circles where personal connections mattered, artists such as Esther Faithfull Fleet (1823–1908), Christina Rossetti (1830–1894), Clemence Housman (1861–1955), Elizabeth Yeats, and Mrs Pine (fl. 1890–1896) found an opportunity to work alongside their siblings, signifying the idea of the 'sister arts' in an unexpectedly literal way. As Emily Faithfull (1835–1895) discovered in her efforts to train women compositors, the printing trade unions actively resisted women laborers in factory settings, but the intimate scale of workshops that made luxury books enabled women to break into the printing professions.

As the Art Nouveau movement emerged in the 1890s, the luxury book was produced in limited editions for an exclusive audience of sophisticated collectors. Women consumers who prized the work of Charles Ricketts (1866–1931) and Aubrey Beardsley (1872–1898) were taken seriously as intellectuals and connoisseurs. No longer concerned to appeal to the bourgeois mass market, artists and book designers could challenge moral and social conventions. The popular figure of the 'New Woman', a feminist, independent, educated embodiment of emancipation, lurks just beneath the surface of works that push the limits of social decorum or that provide barely veiled images of Victorian dress reform. As the twentieth century began, more women with formal training entered the book trades, producing first-rate work in all aspects of book

production. Mentored by members of the luxury book industry, some women even ran their own publishing houses.

Looking back to the genres that had informed the production of these deluxe and limited editions, it seems fitting that women would find their place in the book world through the luxury book. The decorative and curatorial practices of women hobbyists had a foundational influence on emerging ideas of book design and illustration in the nineteenth century. Artistic and bibliophilic practices had traditionally been the province of men, but from the start of the nineteenth century, a variety of manuals explicitly addressed a female audience, providing instruction in the arts and the book arts that was inaccessible to women through apprenticeships or institutions. The design of early luxury books imitated the combination of graphics and text that women had developed in ladies' albums, a popular and sociable hobby in which women displayed a variety of handicrafts and artistic practices along with souvenirs and transcriptions. Using an aesthetic indebted to women's handicrafts, the early Victorian gift book introduced a vast amount of illustration to a mass female audience, training women amateurs in graphics and illustration.

The Sister Arts traces the changing but always central role of women in the luxury book trade, from the early nineteenth century until the onset of the First World War. Within the context of Owen Jones's articulation of Design Reform principles and the Pre-Raphaelites' transformative impact on book design, the exhibition begins by exploring the increasing professional opportunities for women illuminators, illustrators, and engravers at mid-century, as more manuals addressed a female audience and more art schools accepted female students. Cases are organised chronologically and according to method of production (such as chromolithography, manuscript, and wood engraving), tracing artistic influences, uncovering professional networks, and exploring the changing technologies used to make luxury books over the decades. The work of women book makers is displayed alongside landmark achievements of their male colleagues, in order to reveal personal interconnections and to contextualise individual accomplishments among those of canonical figures. The upstairs displays reveal that, as fashions in the luxury book market moved from chromolithography to manuscript illumination, or from wood engraving to hand-press folios, women found their way into an increasing number of professional roles. The

downstairs exhibition area looks back to the first half of the century, when the dominant influence of women on the content of luxury books was established despite their amateur status in the book world. These displays begin with hobbyist practices such as *extra illustration* and album curation, and survey the influence of art manuals and books on the ‘language of flowers’, before moving to steel-engraved annuals and gift books. Drawing exclusively from materials in the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, the exhibition is designed to highlight the rich holdings of nineteenth-century luxury books in the Brabant, Delury, Endicott, Morris, Pantazzi, Tennyson, manuscript, and general collections.

Section I

SKILLED EMPLOYMENT: INCLUDING WOMEN IN THE BOOK TRADES



Starting at mid-century, social and technological changes led to new professional opportunities for women in the book trades. Gendered art schools and gender-segregated Government Schools of Design began to deliver a Design Reform curriculum to large classes of women. Along with some sympathetic male allies, women who had financial and personal autonomy established groups promoting women's right to employment as part of a suffragist platform, creating work places for women that included printing shops and binderies. At small luxury presses, individual relationships mattered, and exceptions could be made to include talented female artists. As a result, some Victorian women became accomplished illuminators, illustrators, engravers, designers, and publishers, producing books as beautiful as those made by their male counterparts in a period that was something of a golden age for the fine press.

Case 1: Owen Jones (1809–1874)

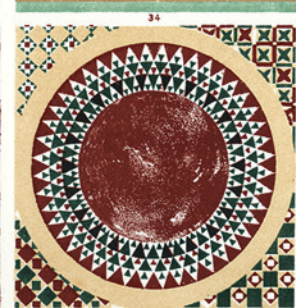
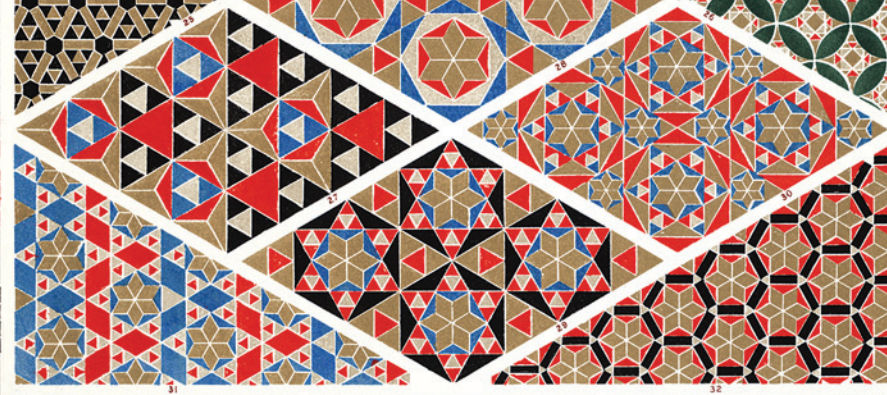
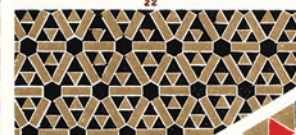
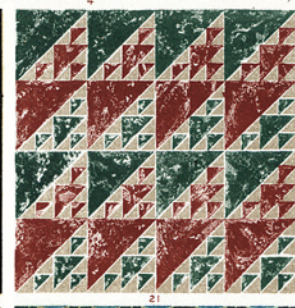
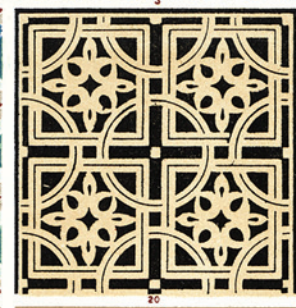
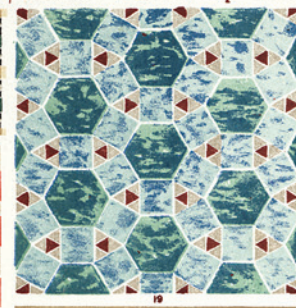
The enormous impact of architect Owen Jones on design theory and book production began with his research on the polychromy of ancient buildings during a Grand Tour in 1832 that took him from Cairo and Istanbul to Granada, where he explored the Islamic architecture of the Alhambra, particularly its use of geometry and flat colour.² In order to articulate his study of colour theory in *Plans, Elevations, Sections, and Details of the Alhambra* (1836–1842 and 1842–1845), Jones developed the emerging techniques of colour printing using lithography. Johann Alois Senefelder (1771–1834) had invented this planographic method of printing that applies greasy, acid-resistant ink to a smooth stone, and experimentation using colour began soon after lithography was first used in a publication (1796), but *The Alhambra* was the first significant work to use chromolithography.³ The success of *The Alhambra* was the foundation of Jones's reputation as a designer and design theorist. His advances in chromolithography would inspire new experiments in printed colour design and enable facsimile reproductions of artworks for dissemination to a mass audience for the first time.

In the 1840s, Owen Jones began collaborating with Henry Cole (1808–1882), a champion of the Design Reform movement who would become the first director of the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum). Central principles of Design Reform included a rejection of naturalism, the reduction of indiscriminate ornamentation, and a respect for form and function in decoration and materials. Jones sought to educate British taste according to Design Reform principles: modern interior design would reflect its architectural space and its machine production, rather than imitating nature or an earlier culture. Embracing a sense of British technological and imperial dominance, Design Reform sought to systematise the aesthetic principles used to train industrial designers.

[1] Owen Jones. *The Grammar of Ornament*. London: Day and Son, 1856.

A series of lectures which Owen Jones delivered to the Government School of Design (now the Royal College of Art) provided the foundation for his magnum opus, *The Grammar of Ornament*. *The Grammar* consists of nineteen chapters of chromolithographed plates, each exploring a different regional or historical tradition of design, with a twentieth chapter on forms in nature. Jones provides one hundred plates of chromolithographed ornaments (2,350 separate designs), many with seven or eight colours, in an effort to instill design principles through repetition. Although Jones drew inspiration from diverse traditions, he was eager to dissuade students from simply copying models and examples. Rejecting imitative styles such as chinoiserie, neo-Classicism, or Gothic revival, Jones wrote that the ‘principles discoverable in the works of the past belong to us; not so the results. It is taking the end for the means’.⁴ Many of the ornaments derive from Jones’s travels but they are abstracted from their architectural context; although Jones credits their sources, they appear as pure form. The effect is an expression of conventionalised design as advocated by Design Reform, wherein natural objects were reduced to flat shapes and basic geometric forms, then arranged in repeating patterns. *The Grammar of Ornament* is both a primer and a museum of graphic design within a folio.

The collection is prefaced with Jones’s theory of design, expressed in thirty-seven ‘general principles in the arrangement of form and colour in architecture and the decorative arts’. As a ‘grammar’, Jones’s work is concerned with providing rules that structure the relationships between elements. For instance, as Patricia Zakreski observes, the conventionalisation of natural forms meant that successful pattern makers were perceived as ‘correctly trained observer[s]’ in the ‘botanical laws’ of ‘radiation, alternation, repetition, and symmetry’.⁵ These principles, or ‘propositions’, differentiated the practice of design from the higher arts. The highly systematised approach of Design Reform distinguished the industrial designer from the Romantic conception of the inspired genius: a humbling distinction that generated wider acceptance of women trained to work as decorative artisans, designing textiles, wallpaper, and ceramics. Jones domesticated design into a tamer field than painting or sculpture, one that was more appropriate to Victorian conventions of femininity.



As Nicholas Frankel reports, *The Grammar* was adopted as ‘official credo by the design establishment of mid-Victorian Britain’.⁶ It was a major influence on the Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau movements and continues to be a reference for art historians and architects. Running on a curriculum largely derived from Jones’s principles, the Government Schools of Design that expanded across the United Kingdom (to a network of one hundred and fifty schools by the end of the century) were increasingly associated with female labour.⁷ Although Jones did not address a female reader in *The Grammar of Ornament*, his principles were developed by arts educators such as Henry Cole, Richard Redgrave (1804–1888) and Lewis Foreman Day (1845–1910) into a programme of lessons that were widely taught to women in gendered art schools, such as the Royal Female School of Art.⁸ In this respect, the artistic principles Jones articulates in *The Grammar* laid the foundation for the design training of hundreds of women illustrators like Kate Greenaway (1846–1901) and Helen Allingham (1848–1926), as well as engravers such as Clemence Housman.

Section II

BOOK ARTS AND THE LADY: READERS AND HOBBYISTS



Even before they found professional roles in the printing shops that made luxury books, women had always had a considerable influence on their format. As publishers began to issue albums in ready-made covers, women started to ornament the pages of blank books to complement their luxurious bindings. Publishers looked to women's handicrafts, particularly the curatorial practice of album keeping, to develop increasingly elaborate combinations of graphics and text, a format that brought an enormous amount of poetry and illustration to a wider audience than ever before.

Case 9: *Special Bindings*

Before the late 1820s, printed books were typically sold in temporary wrappers or as sets of sheets that the purchaser would have custom bound. This bespoke process provided book lovers with an opportunity to make any volume into a decorative or distinctive object. They could also insert additional materials before the book was sewn into a permanent binding, reformatting the mass-produced printed book into something unique. Special bindings continued to be used throughout the nineteenth century and, indeed, are available today. As the books in this case demonstrate, in the nineteenth century, special bindings were generally adopted for hobbyist and commemorative practices. By their contrast with the more specifically feminine and characteristically Victorian hobbyist practices on display, the long-standing practices of extra-illustration and special bindings are associated with male book owners.

[39] Francis Godolphin Waldron (1744–1818). *The Shakspearean Miscellany*. London: Knight and Compton, 1802.

This volume serves as a modest example of extra-illustration, a form of *bibliomania* that was fashionable from the 1780s until the 1840s.⁸⁹ Extra-illustration is a hobbyist practice which involves efforts to embellish a book with appropriate supplementary material, such as illustrations, maps, coins, ephemera, or diagrams. As Luisa Calè describes it, extra-illustration transforms a book into a unique object like ‘a paper cabinet in which to arrange the [owner’s] collection’.⁹⁰ Although simple marginalia might qualify as ‘extra-illustration’, this hobby tended to revolve around inserted ephemera, especially illustrations. It was especially popular during an era when supplementary printed material was readily available and, crucially, when books were typically purchased in temporary covers or as unbound sheets. Probably the most frequently grangerized book

* The Cock-pit, or Phoenix in Drury Lane had originally been dedicated to the purpose denoted by its first title, and derived its name from the circumstance of the fabulous bird, the Phoenix having been chosen for its sign when it was converted into a playhouse. It was situated opposite the Castle Tavern, and there is still in existence a passage from Drury Lane into Great Wild Street, called Cock-Pit Alley. Probably too, Phoenix Alley, leading from Heath long-acre into Mark-Street, went Sweden, derived its title from the neighbouring Theatre...

In the 4th May 1677. the house was pulled down by the populace... A mob of persons smitten with the love of novelty, began to attack all Bagnios, and extended their education to this Theatre, which they demolished, many ancient ones?—What have we, of this age, to compare with the pathos of Othello, and the sublimity of Macbeth? nothing better than the mean, recommended by the though moral, prose of Barnwell; and the heavy, though affecting pastoral falling of the Walls of Douglas.

THE ENGLISH STAGE.

Having thus given a brief sketch of the rise and progress of the English Stage, till it had attained a legitimate form; it becomes necessary to specify the early theatres: which, as it cannot be more accurately done, the reader is requested to take in the words of Mr. Malone.—Early in Queen Elizabeth's reign, the established players of London began to act in temporary theatres constructed in the yards of inns; and about the year 1570, I imagine, one or two regular playhouses were erected. Both the theatre in Blackfriars, and that in Whitefriars, were certainly built before 1580.—The most ancient English playhouses, of which I have found any account, are, the playhouse in Blackfriars, that in Whitefriars, The Theatre, of which I am unable to ascertain the situation, and The Curtain, in Shoreditch. The Theatre, from its name, was probably the first building erected in or near the metropolis purposely for scenick exhibitions. In the time of Shakspeare there were seven principal theatres; three private houses, namely, that in Blackfriars, that in Whitefriars, and The Cockpit or Phoenix, in Drury-lane; and four that were called publick theatres, viz. The Globe, on the Bank-side; The Curtain, in Shoreditch; The Red Bull, at the upper end of St. John's-street; and The Fortune, in Whitecross-street. The last two were chiefly frequented by citizens. There were, however, but six companies of comedians; for the playhouse in Blackfriars, and The Globe, belonged to the same troop. Beside these seven theatres, there were for some time on the Bank-side three other publick theatres; The Swan, The Rose, and The Hope: but The Hope being used chiefly as a bear-garden, and The Swan and The Rose having fallen to decay early in King James's reign, they ought not to be enumerated with the other regular theatres.

All the plays of Shakspeare appear to have been performed either at The Globe, or at the theatre in Blackfriars. The theatre in Blackfriars

was near the Northern end of St. John Street, Milkemeth. This name the place retained till towards the end of the last century, when it was christened Woodbridge Street—the lands & tenements thereon, belonging to the town of Woodbridge in Suffolk. It is a narrow dirty avenue, the first turning on the left above Byles buy Street. The appearance of the Building in it is extremely antiquated, but, as may be imagined, all traces of the Theatre have long disappeared... The exact spot is occupied... says the Editor of the London Illustrations.

* I have not seen after the year 1677.

One evening when Rich and 3^d was to be performed, Shakespeare observed a young woman delivering a message to Burbage the Player, in so cautious a manner, as to excite his curiosity. It happened that his master had gone out of town that morning, the mistress would be glad of his company after the Play, and to know what signal he would appoint for admittance.. Burbage replied... "Three Taps at the door - and it is I, Richard the 3^d..." She immediately withdrew, and Shakespeare followed, till he observed her

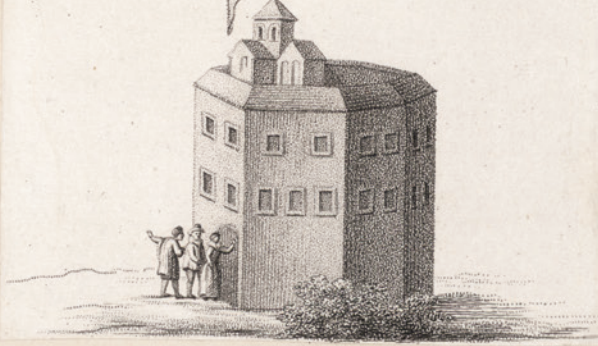
go into a house in the City, and enquiring in the Neighbourhood, he was informed that a young lady, used these the words of a rich Merchant... Near the appointed time of meeting, Shakespeare thought proper to anticipate Burbage, and got into a house by the convenient signal... The lady was very much surpris'd at



A Handing down *Le Guesp*

SHAK SPEARE

From an original Picture in the Possession of the late Duke of Chandos.



Shakespeare's presence, but as he did not want wit or eloquence to shew in the introduction, she was soon pacified... Burbage came soon after to the house and executed the signal, but Shakespeare's popping his head out of the window had been before; so that William the Conqueror escaped before Richard the 3^d...

was the Bible, because so much thematically appropriate secondary material was available.⁹¹ Shakespeare's works were also popular with extra-illustrators for similar reasons, as this copy of *The Shakspearean Miscellany* demonstrates. It bears the signature of George Daniel (1789–1864), a Grub Street writer of satiric poetry and reviews. George Daniel's grangerized *Miscellany* contains extensive manuscript notes as well as inserted letters, play-bills, poems, newspaper clippings, forty portraits, sixteen plates, and plans. Beyond 'enlivening' Waldron's text with visual material, Daniel's contributions provide a scholarly gloss and preserve rare ephemera. Daniel probably began collecting early editions of Shakespeare (including a first folio) and theatrical curiosities when he edited a thirty-nine volume series on British theatre, covering most of Shakespeare's works.⁹² As Lucy Peltz observes, extra-illustrated books became a 'genre of luxury book that had itself become an object of collecting', and, so, Daniel's copy of Waldron's *Miscellany* has been preserved.⁹³

In the nineteenth century, extra-illustration tended to be practiced by men because it was associated with collecting and antiquarianism.⁹⁴ Amassing interesting materials for custom bindings required personal control over significant resources, a degree of financial autonomy that has often eluded women. As late as 1895, William Roberts could confidently avow that English women were, 'as book-collectors or bibliophiles, an almost unknown quantity'.⁹⁵ Although some women, especially widows with large incomes, engaged in extra-illustration, they were anomalous and tended to provoke hostility among male grangerisers eager to protect their territory. Women were not taken seriously as connoisseurs in the early nineteenth-century, so they tended to be excluded from antiquarian practices.⁹⁶ Rather than elaborating on the form of the luxury book through its binding or covers, women hobbyists would prove to be influential in beautifying the inner contents of books in the early decades of the nineteenth century.

[40] Charles Dickens (1812–1870). *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*. London: Chapman and Hall, 1837.

Like almost all of Dickens's fiction, *Pickwick* first appeared in serialized form. It was issued in one-shilling monthly parts that readers could purchase, collect, and, when the series was complete, assemble in a permanent binding. This

human face; the damask cushion became an antique, flapped waistcoat; the round knobs grew into a couple of feet, encased in red cloth slippers, and the whole chair looked like a very ugly old man, of the previous century, with his arms a-kimbo. Tom sat up in bed, and rubbed his eyes to dispel the illusion. No. The chair was an ugly old gentleman; and what was more, he was winking at Tom Smart.

"Tom was naturally a headlong, careless sort of dog, and he had had five tumblers of hot punch into the bargain; so, although he was a little startled at first, he began to grow rather indignant when he saw the old gentleman winking and leering at him with such an impudent air. At length he resolved that he wouldn't stand it; and as the old face still kept winking away as fast as ever, Tom said, in a very angry tone—

"What the devil are you winking at me for?"

"Because I like it, Tom Smart," said the chair; or the old gentleman, whichever you like to call him. He stopped winking though, when Tom spoke, and began grinning like a superannuated monkey.

"How do you know my name, old nut-cracker face?" inquired Tom Smart, rather staggered,—though he pretended to carry it off so well.

"Come, come Tom," said the old gentleman, "that's not the way to address solid Spanish Mahogany. Dam'ne, you couldn't treat me with less respect if I was venerated." When the old gentleman said this, he looked so fierce that Tom began to grow frightened.

"I didn't mean to treat you with any disrespect, Sir," said Tom; in a much blunder tone than he had spoken in at first.

"Well, well," said the old fellow, "perhaps not—perhaps not. Tom—"

"Sir—"

"I know everything about you, Tom; everything. You're very poor Tom."

"I certainly am," said Tom Smart. "But how come you to know that?"

"Never mind that," said the old gentleman; "you're much too fond of punch, Tom."

Tom Smart was just on the point of protesting that he hadn't tasted a drop since his last birth-day, but when his eye encountered that of the old gentleman, he looked so knowing that Tom blushed, and was silent.

"Tom," said the old gentleman, "the widow's a fine woman—remarkably fine woman—eh, Tom?" Here the old fellow screwed up his eyes, cocked up one of his wasted little legs, and looked altogether so unpleasantly amorous, that Tom was quite disgusted with the levity of his behaviour;—at his time of life, too!

"I am her guardian, Tom," said the old gentleman.

"Are you?" inquired Tom Smart.

"I knew her mother, Tom," said the old fellow; "and her grandmother. She was very fond of me—made me this waistcoat, Tom."

"Did she?" said Tom Smart.

"And these shoes," said the old fellow, lifting up one of the red-cloth mufflers; "but don't mention it, Tom. I shouldn't like to have it known that she was so much attached to me. It might occasion some unpleasantness in the family." When the old rascal said this, he



"Tom," said the old gentleman, "the widow's a fine woman—remarkably fine woman—eh, Tom?"

Page 141.

intervening stage, between purchase of the text and binding into permanent covers, provided an opportunity to add supplementary material. The extra-illustration of Dickens's works departs, however, from the aristocratic, antiquarian associations of the practice. Whereas early grangerising was distinguished by research-intensive *connoisseurship*, Dickensian extra-illustration is a matter of commodification. As Luisa Calè reports, publishers recognized a merchandising opportunity in the popularity of *Pickwick*.⁹⁷ Various artists designed sets of extra-illustrations to accompany Dickens's novel, amplifying rather than replacing the original serialized engravings.⁹⁸ Dickens's publishers, Chapman and Hall, advertised these supplementary sets of illustrations at the ends of the serialized parts, even though they were produced by competitors.

Although sketches by an additional illustrator might normally be disruptive to the established style of the text, *Pickwick* already featured illustrations drawn by three different artists: after the suicide of Robert Seymour (1798–1836), who had originally been hired to make the sporting prints at the heart of the story,

Robert William Buss (1804–1875) had contributed two sketches for the second installment; unhappy with Buss’s work, the publishers hired Hablot K. Browne (‘Phiz’) (1815–1882) to complete the book. The assembled nature of the work seems to allow for the insertion of additional prints, with supplementary plates that bear the names of their publishers and illustrators. Although the opportunity to enhance the bound volume had an appeal, the ready-made nature of such illustrated sets eliminated the thrill of the hunt for apposite images and the antiquarian prestige of acquiring them. In their replacement of the hobbyist’s activities, they are a sign of the decline of grangerising as a popular hobby.

[41, 42, 43] Lewis Carroll. *Aventures d’Alice au pays des merveilles*. London: Macmillan, 1869.

Even after books began to be issued in ready-made publishers’ covers, special circumstances prompted the use of special bindings. During the nineteenth century, books might be bound to maintain uniformity in a collection or to mark occasions. For example, the Fisher Library’s Brabant collection holds several copies of the first edition of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* in French, and two of these have been

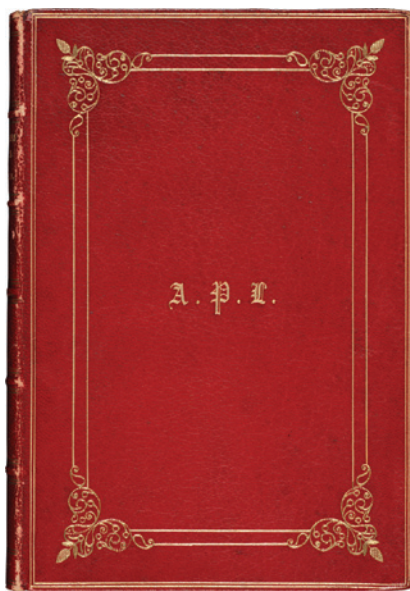


bound as a compliment to their recipients. In these cases, special binding transforms a mass-produced object into a keepsake.

The first specially bound copy of the French *Alice* is a prize book, presumably meant to be awarded to a student for excellence in French. Although the publisher issued the book in blue cloth, this prize book has been bound in red calf and tooled with a school crest on the front cover, along with other decorative devices, in gold. The gilt dentelle detailing on the turn-ins and the marble

endpapers are luxurious details that indicate the prestige of the prize or the school. The school's motto, *Collegium Reginae Victoriae Caesariense*, enables identification of the institution that awarded the book as Victoria College, an all-boys preparatory school established in 1852 and located in St. Helier, Jersey (Channel Islands). For the student awarded this book, the prize binding would transform the book into a token of his accomplishment, and a souvenir of his school days.

In addition to a prize binding, the Fisher holds a specially bound 'presentation copy' of the first edition of the French *Alice*. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, the figure behind the Lewis Carroll pseudonym, had the copy specially bound for Alice Pleasance Liddell (1852–1934), the story's inspiration and original audience. When a rift between Dodgson and the Liddell family ended his friendship with the children in June 1863, Dodgson's *Alice* stories became a surrogate for his friendship with Alice. By the time Macmillan published *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, three years after the boating



expedition when the story originated, Dodgson's breach with the Liddells was practically complete. Yet Dodgson continued to express his affection for Alice through custom bound presentation copies of his writing. Although he no longer spent time with Alice, he was able to pay tribute to their friendship through this series of gifts. Dodgson sent *Aventures d'Alice au pays des merveilles* (1869) to Alice when she was seventeen. It was bound by J. B. Hawes of Cambridge in a red goat skin panel binding with gothic monogram initials 'A. P. L.' on the upper board in gilt. On the half title, Dodgson wrote 'Alice Pleasance Liddell from the Author'. The presentation copy is a discreet but touching instance of a writer using a book to communicate when direct connections have been lost, and the souvenir of an unparalleled shared experience between an author and his muse. Alice Liddell Hargreaves kept Dodgson's extraordinary gifts to her until she was seventy-six, when she was forced to sell them to cover expenses after her husband's death.

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