

‘The other Miss Faulkner’: Lucy Orrinsmith and the ‘Art at Home Series’

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The ‘Art at Home Series’, published by Macmillan & Co. between 1876 and 1883, was a highly successful collection of domestic advice manuals devised and edited by the Rev. William John Loftie aimed at a growing lower-middle-class readership.¹ The series eventually encompassed subjects as diverse as *Amateur Theatricals* (1879) and *Sketching from Nature* (1883), but the most significant of the final twelve volumes are probably the four which considered aspects of the domestic interior.²

Lucy Orrinsmith’s contribution to the series, *The Drawing Room: its decoration and furniture*, published in November 1877, is mentioned in almost every study which considers the late-nineteenth-century domestic interior. Her opening comments, in which she condemns the ordinary lower middle-class Victorian interior as: ‘The very head-quarters of commonplace, with its strict symmetry of adornment and its pretentious uselessness’ are much-quoted, and often accompanied by illustrations from that volume. Nikolaus Pevsner, for instance, places *The Drawing Room* in the context of the late 1870s when ‘a whole spate of books appeared all dealing with furnishing, interior decoration and furniture’. Peter Thornton simply dismisses the volume as ‘tiresome’, while Asa Briggs makes wildly inaccurate comments in his chapter on ‘Hearth and Home’. More recently, Thad Logan opens her study of *The Victorian Parlour* with references to *The Drawing Room*, suggesting that Mrs Orrinsmith’s text ‘is a useful starting point for a study of the parlour’.³

However, none of these writers has questioned the validity of *The Drawing Room* as a source of information about the Victorian home. Instead, they have used the book as straightforward historical evidence, with little analysis of the text, and without considering the production of the publication or questioning the authority of its author. This article aims to recover the history of Mrs Orrin-

smith and explain her involvement with the 'Art at Home Series', while exposing the difficulties of using this book as a conventional source of information about the Victorian middle-class interior.

I

In March 1876, following discussions with a representative of the American publishing house, Coates & Co. of Philadelphia, William Loftie wrote to the publisher, Alexander Macmillan outlining his scheme for a 'little series of art books' aimed at a readership composed of 'people of moderate or small income'.⁴ Initially, this joint venture was to comprise eight books – four to be written in England and four in America – all of which would be published by Coates. The four British volumes (which it seems had already been commissioned and in some cases were nearing completion) were briefly described. They included Loftie's own contribution, initially entitled *Art at Home*, Rhoda & Agnes Garrett's *House Decoration*, and two other volumes which never saw publication; *Good Things We Have Lost: or Hints from Old English Households*, and *Hints from Foreign Households*.⁵

Loftie proposed that Macmillan should publish these four books, but not the four unnamed American volumes, which he felt 'would be of little or no use here: as the subjects proposed were such as would require local treatment'.⁶ Instead, he wanted Macmillan to commission at least four more books for the British market, including *Art at Table* and *Dress*, while proposing J.J. Stevenson for a volume on *Domestic Architecture* and John Pyke Hullah to write on *Music at Home*. He recommended that they should be 8vo, approximately 150 pages long, and illustrated with relatively cheap photo-zincographs. He also suggested that authors should receive £30 or £40 for their copyright, and that the books should sell for 1s, corresponding to the price of US 25 c proposed by Coates. Having volunteered to oversee the whole project in return for 4 % on the retail price, Loftie naturally sought to expand the series even further:

The list of eight subjects given above by no means exhausts those of which I have thought. [...] Another of the series might be on Needlework & Embroidery, generally, another on Sketching from Nature, another on Carving & amateur Carpenry; even reading aloud & elocution would make one, as well as dancing & gymnastics. Art would however be kept strictly in view, & the general title of the series would be Art at Home.⁷

Eventually Macmillan was to publish twelve volumes as the 'Art at Home Series'. These were planned as a collectable set, and from the outset possessed a clear visual identity. Books were bound in a suitably 'artistic' blue-grey cloth,

each bearing the title, the authors’ names and the Macmillan initial engraved by J.D. Cooper. Only four were published in America, by Porter & Coates of Philadelphia; these were bound in brown cloth and decorated with the ‘Art at Home’ motif designed by Harry Soane (Figure 1). Such visual unity belies the diverse and often contradictory advice given by contributing authors: each volume is written as a distinct text which highlights its own concerns and scarcely relates to others.⁸

Mrs Orrinsmith’s involvement with the series seems to be the result of friendship with her neighbours; George Lillie Craik (1837–1905), a partner in Macmillan & Co., and his wife, the novelist Dinah Mulock Craik (1826–1887). Indeed, on the first page of *The Drawing Room* are the words:

TO GEORGE LILLIE CRAIK

At whose suggestion this little book was written, it is dedicated by
Lucy Orrinsmith⁹

The friendship between the Craiks and the Orrinsmiths is noted by Lewis Carroll, who, with amusing inaccuracy, recorded a visit to Beckenham in January 1873:

Joined Mr. Craik and went down with him to Beckenham. The party are Mrs. Craik, their little adopted child ‘Dorothy’, a nice little creature, about five; Miss Craik, and a Mrs. Laing. Went with them to tea with Mr. and Mrs. Orangesmith. She is the sister of Faulkner of University, who was there.¹⁰

Yet the question remains: who was Lucy Orrinsmith and why did Craik ask her to contribute to the ‘Art at Home Series’ on what was considered the most important room in the house?

Few historians who have used the ‘Art at Home Series’ have considered this notion of authority, and only Charlotte Gere has offered any biographical details. Drawing on Bea Howe’s biography of Mrs Haweis, she comments:

Mrs Orrinsmith (*née* Lucy Faulkner, sister of William Morris’s associates Charles and Kate Faulkner) married the print maker Harvey Orrinsmith. The Orrinsmiths lived in a villa at Beckenham and she was a great advocate of do-it-yourself decoration, recommending the painting and varnishing of furniture and woodwork over the time-wasting activity of ‘dabbling’ in watercolour. She was also considered an authority on flower-arranging.¹¹

That Lucy Orrinsmith was part of the Morris circle would seem to offer a far wider range of sources from which to recover her personal history. Indeed, the William Morris Gallery holds letters both to ‘Miss Faulkner’ and ‘Mrs Orrinsmith’ dating from between 1861 to 1905; her correspondents include William Morris, Jane Morris, Philip Webb, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Georgiana Burne-Jones.



Figure 1- 'Art at Home' motif by Harry Soane. By permission of The Macmillan Archive, Macmillan Publishers Ltd.

These letters position her socially within the Morris circle, but significantly also indicate her role as a craftswoman who, with her younger sister Kate, worked for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Company.¹²

The Faulkner sisters are mentioned in both early biographies of Morris, and also by Georgiana Burne-Jones, where, given their lasting friendship, the emphasis is upon Kate. Writing about events in 1862, Georgiana noted:

Both sisters shared Faulkner’s own skill of hand, and one of them [Kate], as it proved, was but waiting time and opportunity to develop a power of beautiful ornamental design: friendship with them was a foregone conclusion, and between Kate Faulkner and me there grew up a lifelong intimacy: both Morris and Edward loved her also.¹³

Kate Faulkner (1841–1898), was a designer of fabrics, wallpapers and ceramic tiles produced by Morris & Co., and Jeffrey & Co., best known for her gesso-work, decorating the grand piano designed by Edward Burne-Jones for Alexander Ionides, now on display at the Victoria & Albert Museum.¹⁴ Far less is known about Lucy Faulkner, and perhaps it could be argued that a contributing factor to her comparative obscurity is simply that she married and changed her name. Indeed, Deborah Cherry has commented upon the difficulties faced by women in ‘the making of an author name’:

Those who married had to negotiate a change of family name and either re-establish their career with a second or sometimes third name or retain that by which they were already known.¹⁵

Moreover, several important sources have incorrectly given the date of Lucy’s marriage as 1861 (rather than 1870), an error which has effectively hidden the career of the elder Miss Faulkner from design history. Until fairly recently her work had been attributed to her more prolific sister: indeed, in 1964 Arnold Wilson commented upon this confusion of attribution, noting that Lucy Faulkner’s initials on the hand-painted tile panels at the William Morris Gallery ‘are usually overlooked and the painting is vaguely attributed to one or other sister’.¹⁶ Fortunately, the wealth of primary and secondary sources which surrounds Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Company has made it possible to piece together the following biography of this forgotten craftswoman, whose most lasting contribution to the Victorian interior is *The Drawing Room*.

II

Lucy Jane Orrinsmith (*née* Faulkner) was born at 99 Bath Row, Birmingham on 16 November 1839, the eldest daughter of Benjamin and Ann Faulkner, and one

of four surviving children. Her elder brother, the mathematician Charles Joseph Faulkner (1833–1891) met William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones at Oxford, and later became a founder member and, until 1864, bookkeeper of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. ('the Firm'; founded April 1861). The Faulkner family remained at Bath Row until the early 1860s, when, following the death of Benjamin Faulkner, they moved to 35 Queen Square, Bloomsbury.¹⁷ The Faulknors were closely connected to the Morris Circle: they were regular visitors to Red House, and were later neighbours at Queen Square. They also joined the Burne-Jones and Morris families on several holidays: Georgiana Burne-Jones describes the amusing antics of the three families at Littlehampton:

Occasionally also Edward would take some trifle as text and preach us a sermon in exact imitation of the style of different preachers; convulsing us one evening, I remember, as he turned with solemn pomposity to the two girls, Lucy and Kate Faulkner, saying, 'And now I address myself more particularly to the younger female portion of my congregation'.¹⁸

Charles Faulkner's lasting friendship with Morris is well documented; Lucy and Kate Faulkner became involved with the activities of 'the Firm' via their brother. Although they began as amateurs, both women later earned money for their work: J. W. Mackail's notes from an earlier (now missing) Minute Book for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., records that, in October 1862, payment was made to Miss Kate Faulkner and 'the other Miss Faulkner'.¹⁹

During the 1860s, both Lucy and Kate Faulkner produced embroideries for 'the Firm'. Preliminary sketches by Burne-Jones, based on Chaucer's *Legende of Goode Wimmen*, made in 1864, which depict heroines from classical antiquity, contain pencil notes allocating an embroiderer for each of the twelve figures; the name 'Lucy' appears next to the figure of Hypsipheles. The sketches, intended for embroidered hanging for John Ruskin's house, were re-workings of designs for twelve tiles produced by Burne-Jones during May or June 1862. Lucy Faulkner is known to have executed several tiles based upon this theme, and it was in production of hand-painted tiles that she came to play a significant role in 'the Firm'. As Aymer Vallance recorded 'at first Morris and Faulkner used to paint tiles themselves; later Miss Lucy Faulkner undertook this branch of the work in place of her brother and Mr. Morris'. According to May Morris, this 'branch of the work' seems to have been carried out both at Morris's workshop at 26 Queen Square and 'partly by the Faulknors in their own home lower down the square'.²⁰

The William Morris Gallery now holds the largest surviving collection of Lucy Faulkner's hand-painted tiles, which form an important part of the Gallery's exhibitions, the curators having 'always aimed to represent properly her historical significance'.²¹ The tile panels are signed with her distinctive 'LJF'

or later more stylized ‘LF’ monogram, first identified in 1964 by Arnold Wilson, and provide detailed illustrated information about surviving examples of Lucy Faulkner’s work in this medium. The invaluable survey of tiles produced by Morris and his fellow-workers by Richard & Hilary Myers provides detailed illustrated information regarding surviving examples of Lucy Faulkner’s work in this medium, and is the one of the few sources to highlight the significance of her contribution to the early work of ‘the Firm’.²²

Perhaps the best known surviving examples of Lucy Faulkner’s painted tiles are the fairy tale narrative tile panels also designed by Burne-Jones, depicting *Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella* and *Beauty and the Beast*, painted originally for bedrooms at The Hill, at Witley in Surrey, a house designed by Philip Webb for the artist Miles Birkett Foster. Richard & Hilary Myers list other tiles and panels which bear Lucy Faulkner’s ‘LJF’ or ‘LF’ monogram, including other *Cinderella* and *Beauty and the Beast* over-mantels; a vertical *Cinderella as Queen* tile; a tile designed by Burne-Jones depicting *Thisbe* from Chaucer’s *Legend of Goode Wimmen*; two of the twelve *Labours of the Months* and a Cockerel tile designed by Philip Webb. It seems likely that Lucy Faulkner also painted the figure panels for an over-mantel for the hall fireplace at Sandroyd, the home of Spencer Stanhope at Fairmile near Cobham in Surrey, also designed by Philip Webb.²³ In addition, Lucy Faulkner may have painted *The Four Seasons* and *SS Peter and George* for the Combination Room fireplaces at Peterhouse, Cambridge.²⁴ Vallance certainly highlights the importance of her role in the production of figurative tiles, stating that after her marriage ‘the firm produced but few figure-subject tiles’. He also comments upon Miss Faulkner’s lesser-known skills in wood engraving, a technique she learned at the office of ‘Messrs. Smith and Linton’.²⁵

On 8 January 1870, Lucy Faulkner married Harvey Edward Orrin Smith (originally Orrin Smith), a wood engraver and master bookbinder who had been in partnership with W. J. Linton, and was a director of the bookbinding firm, James Burns & Sons. The artist-designer Walter Crane was apprenticed to Linton from 1858 until 1862, and his autobiography describes his training at the office of Smith and Linton. He also gives a description of the character of Mr Orrin Smith, ‘a man of considerable energy’ and ‘an excellent friend to me’. However, he makes no mention of a female pupil in the office. Thus, Lucy Faulkner’s training seems to have begun after 1862. Archival sources and surviving objects offer evidence of her skill in wood engraving; besides the wood-block for *Goblin Market* discussed in an earlier article, she is also known to have cut at least one of the wood blocks for Morris’s *Earthly Paradise* in ca 1865. This is also mentioned by Vallance, and recorded by George Wardle:

These designs were ... all put on the block by me from B-J’s rather rough drawings on tracing paper [...] A few were given at first to the trade to be cut but

the result was so unsatisfactory that Morris tried to get the cutting done by unprofessional hands. G. F. Campfield, then a foreman of painters to the firm, and Miss Lucy Faulkner, sister of Charles Faulkner, each made a trial.

Lucy Faulkner's 'trial' was titled *Cupid leaving Psyche* and is now on display at the William Morris Gallery.²⁶

The 1871 Census shows that the Orrin Smiths lived at Beckenham Villa, Bromley Road, Beckenham (SE London). During the next decade they produced three children: Mabel Kate (b. 1871), who died of diphtheria in December 1880, Ruth Charlie (1873–1954), and Edward Harvey (b. 1881). The pastel portraits of the Orrin Smiths' daughters by Arthur Hughes, and the five pieces of embroidery executed by Lucy Orrin Smith now in the collection at the William Morris Gallery, all date from this period of motherhood and domesticity: as does *The Drawing Room*.²⁷

The Census for 1881 gives the Orrin Smiths' address as 'Sunnybank', Christ Church Road, Hampstead. Lucy Orrin Smith was widowed in 1904, and remained there until her death in 1910. A letter from Harvey Orrin Smith to W. J. Linton of April 1882 sent from this Hampstead address is one of the few pieces of archival evidence which mentions the domestic life of the Orrin Smith family. Written at a time 'blighted' by grief at the death of their eldest daughter, it states:

In your last letter you hoped I had reaped the reward of my hard work – Well! Yes! I have done fairly well – should have done better pecuniarily but that my dear wife is described best in Georges Sand's words:
"Elle n'estime pas l'argent, mais elle adore la dépense"
 Still I don't complain my wife has done so much for me – her high moral and intellectual qualities have raised my nature.²⁸

During the 1880s Mrs Orrin Smith continued to design, make and purchase decorative objects. The catalogues of the first two exhibitions of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society record that she exhibited a book cover for James Burns & Co. in 1888, and a mural brass the following year. A book-cover design with a repeating motif of acorns and oak leaves designed by Lucy Orrin Smith is also illustrated in Gleeson White's *Practical Designing* (1893). A full-page illustration of her design accompanies a chapter 'On the Preparation of Designs for Book Bindings' written by Harvey Orrin Smith.²⁹ Nonetheless, Mrs Orrin Smith's best known work after her marriage seems to be *The Drawing Room*.

III

The book was written and produced quickly. Mrs Orrinsmith agreed to write it in June 1877; the dedication to George Lillie Craik is dated September 1877; a first edition of three thousand copies was issued in November 1877. In total six thousand copies were printed, the majority of reviews appearing after the second printing in February 1878. It includes several illustrations which had already appeared in ‘Beds and Tables, Stools and Candlesticks’, a series of eleven illustrated articles on house furnishing by the American art critic, Clarence M. Cook, published by *Scribner’s Illustrated Monthly* between June 1875 and May 1877. Cook’s articles were collected and published in America in 1878 as *The House Beautiful*, and it is interesting that his text unwittingly refers to Mrs Orrinsmith:

Some of the ladies belonging to the families of the house of Morris, Marshall & Company have distinguished themselves by the beauty and originality of their designs and no less by the excellence of their workmanship; and they have become important members of the business, their work and their taste having not a little to do with the success of the enterprise.

Although Mark Girouard alleges that Macmillan & Co. plagiarised the illustrations from Cook’s articles for use in the ‘Art at Home Series’ (an allegation that has been often repeated), my examination of the Macmillan archive has shown this charge to be false.³⁰

In March 1877, Cook had written to Frederick Macmillan offering him the British publication rights to this collection of articles. Macmillan, however, after asking Loftie for his advice on the matter, refused this proposal, and wrote to Cook offering instead ‘to buy the very beautiful illustrations & to re-cast or re-write the text so as to suit it to English requirements’. After brief negotiations, Macmillan & Co. bought electrotypes of the original wood engravings from Scribner’s for £100, and immediately set about finding authors willing to write new books *around* the illustrations. A letter from Craik in June 1877 recorded that Mrs Orrinsmith had ‘gone over the illustrations’ and ‘is much interested in the book’ feeling ‘a certain confidence that she could do it’.³¹

The Scribner’s illustrations appear in only six of the final eight chapters of *The Drawing-Room*: ‘Walls and Ceilings’; ‘Fireplaces and Chimneys’; ‘Floors and Carpets’; ‘Windows, Doors and Curtains’; ‘Furniture’; ‘Lighting and Floral Decoration’ and ‘Picture Frames, Mirrors, Odds and Ends’ were considered in turn, and Mrs Orrinsmith resolved the difficulties of writing around these images simply by reorganising them, inventing new descriptions, and re-naming many of the cuts. For instance, an illustration ‘drawn by Mr. Lathrop, from “the life”’ appeared in *The House Beautiful* as ‘A French Settee’, but reappeared in *The*

Drawing Room as ‘A “Sheraton” Sofa’. Similarly, an image which Cook describes as an ‘Italian Fire-screen’ became, in Mrs Orrinsmith’s text, ‘lovely pieces of Japanese embroidery ... worked in glowing silks, representing peacocks’ feathers’. (Figure 2)

It is debatable whether this says more about the knowledge of the author, the quality of the engraving or the fluidity of its meaning. Indeed, the use of these images was to cause criticism and complaint from the professional press and rival authors. Never one to pull her punches, Mrs Haweis commented upon the illustrations – among other things – in her stinging criticism of the ‘Series’:

I vainly overhauled the many manuals of good advice now daily pouring from the press – among them ‘*House Decoration*’ in the Art at Home series – a series, by the way, which, considering how good was the primal notion, has been ill-carried out by the writers, and is meagre in suggestions to a miracle. [...] and the illustrations, which are peculiarly American in character, better suited the articles in ‘*Scribner’s Illustrated Monthly*’, where they first appeared, than the English series, which they probably fettered.³²

As the journal for the contemporary furniture trade, *The Furniture Gazette* also took Mrs Orrinsmith to task in two separate reviews, complaining at length of her ‘censorious criticism of modern cabinet-work’:

Of the merits of the book as a whole we regret to say we cannot speak very highly. The work is marred by a strong predilection which the writer evinces for antique, which propensity asserts itself again and again.

Another biting review, by E. W. Godwin, appeared in *The British Architect and Northern Engineer*. His own designs, first published in the same journal in 1874, had also been used in Cook’s articles and *The House Beautiful*, where, modified by Francis Lathrop, they are at least acknowledged as Godwin’s work. What Godwin condemned was their unacknowledged reproduction in the ‘Art at Home Series’:

In the *Art at Home series*, Mrs Orrinsmith lectures us on *the Drawing Room*. In her last chapter she says (p. 142), ‘The encouragement of original ideas has been throughout the motive of this book’. [...] This is all very fine, but if Mrs Orrinsmith and her friends would have the grace to acknowledge the sources of their ‘original ideas’, it would enlighten readers as to the method to adopt in searching ‘after pure decorative beauty’...

The most scathing review was published in *The Athenaeum*, which complained both about the images and the text, and also questioned the authority of the female author:

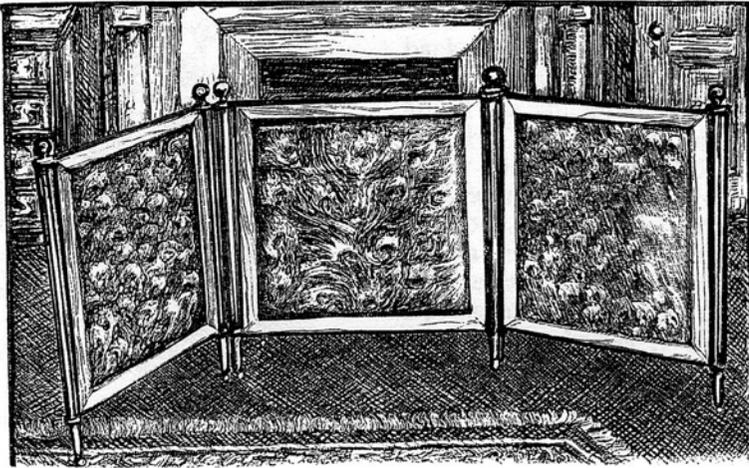
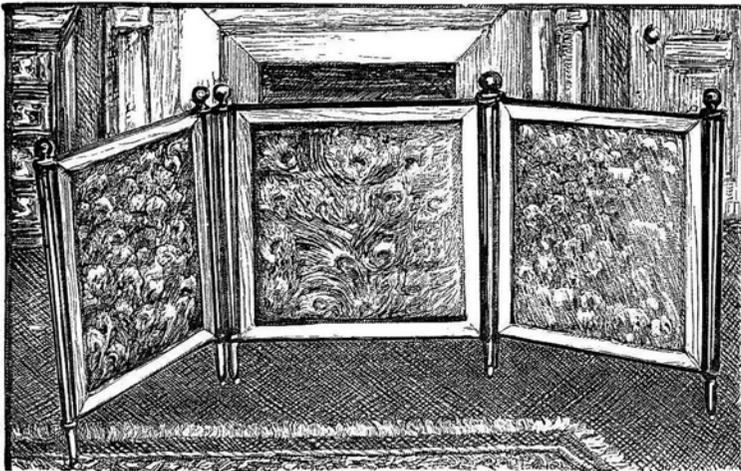


FIG. II. ITALIAN FIRE-SCREEN.



A PEACOCK SCREEN.

Figure 2- 'Italian Fire-Screen' from Clarence M. Cook's The House Beautiful (above), re-titled a 'Peacock Screen' in Mrs Orrinsmith's The Drawing Room (below), as photographed by the author. 'By permission of The Macmillan Archive, Macmillan Publishers Ltd.'

In the name of the author of this little book we recognize that of John Orrin Smith, the well-known and clever pupil of William Hervey. The writer may therefore be said to have ‘married into the arts’ which is a very sufficient introduction in these days of pretence. It would be introduction enough for one less competent than this volume proves its author to be. Yet, notwithstanding the limited nature of its aims, the work hardly proves its right to exist.³³

Sadly, only one letter survives in the Macmillan archive which mentions production of *The Drawing Room*, and this highlights a crucial aspect of the text missed by most twentieth-century design historians, but referred to in Imogen Hart’s recent study.³⁴

In October 1877, Craik had written to Loftie about the ‘Preface’: it seems that William Morris was uncomfortable with the flagrant puffery of the text. Craik commented that ‘William Morris altho’ not once named’ was ‘referred to throughout Mrs Orrin Smith’s book’. He also expressed concern that Morris ‘might not like the concluding words’ of Loftie’s Preface, and asked him to omit the words ‘Earthly Paradise’ which had been included in the original draft: consequently, these words did not appear in the published version of the ‘Preface’ to *The Drawing Room*.³⁵

As Craik noted, references to the unnamed William Morris appeared on almost every page, but were perhaps most apparent in the chapter on ‘Walls and Ceilings’, where the only illustrations were two cuts of the Morris wallpaper designs *Vine* (1874) and *Rose* (1877). In this chapter Mrs Orrin Smith, having described examples of bad taste in wall decoration in recent times, even referred to:

Real genius, true art, have of late years come to our aid; and in London, at all events, one need not long be ignorant of the vast improvements which a short time has produced in one important branch of drawing-room decoration – wall papers.³⁶

Other products sold by Morris & Co. were also recommended. These included fabrics and, unsurprisingly, hand-painted tiles:

At present hand-painted over-glazed tiles in blue and white, or yellow and white, may be purchased at certain well-known London houses, at prices varying from one shilling to two shillings each. A tile called the ‘Longden’ pattern can be recommended for surrounding borders or slanting sides of grates or hearths. [...] Others, such as the swan, sunflower, or bough patterns, differ but slightly in price and are all suitable.³⁷

The four designs – *Longden*, *Swan*, *Sunflower* and *Bough* – were first produced by Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. during the 1860s and 1870s, and it is prob-

able that Lucy Faulkner had painted some of them: *Swan* pattern tiles surround the fairytale narrative panels from *The Hill*.³⁸ Morris also gave Lucy Orrinsmith some practical assistance with the research she undertook for her chapter on ‘Floors and Carpets’. In a letter dated 20 July 1877, he replied thus to a request for advice:

My Dear Lucy

You are very welcome to any information our Misters Smith can give you either he of Oxford St. or he of here: the Persian Rugs are up here: the really good ones are very expensive articles, because they are old & are no longer made. The modern oriental carpets that are made for the European market are very much deteriorated; especially in colour.

I have passed the word to the Smiths that you are to have every assistance into this matter.³⁹

The Misters Smith were indeed able to help, for in *The Drawing Room*, Mrs Orrinsmith gave detailed information about eastern carpets, both ancient and modern.

While the influence of Morris is obvious throughout, it could also be argued that the ideas expressed by Mrs Orrinsmith suggested a subject for Morris to consider. Striking similarities are apparent when comparing *The Drawing Room* with Morris’s lecture ‘Making the Best of It’ (1880), later published in *The Architect* as ‘Hints on House Decoration’. For example, in her first and most significant chapter, ‘Evils and Remedies’, Mrs Orrinsmith presents good taste as a social duty, ‘which may prevent an exhibition distressing to a visitor or, perchance, more educated taste than our own’. Similarly, in his lecture, Morris remarked that ‘We are heedless if our houses express nothing of us but the very worst side of our character both national and personal’.⁴⁰

Morris delivered ‘Making the Best of It’, written three years *after* publication of *The Drawing Room*, before the Trade’s Guild of Learning and the Birmingham Society of Artists. Much of his lecture was devoted to pattern design and the use of colour, but both he and Mrs Orrinsmith dealt with the treatment of the walls and ceiling, the floor, the windows and doors, the fireplace and ‘movables’. They made the same complaints about plate-glass windows, the evils of gaslight, ugly modern fireplaces and over-ornamented furniture: interestingly, both referred to the strictures of Dr Richardson on the unwholesome practise of fitted-carpetts. Both texts also identified the root of these decorative problems, considering the damaging impact of the division of labour, the use of machinery, and the moral and social effects of art. For Morris, these themes became opportunities for political rhetoric, but with self-deprecating irony, Mrs Orrinsmith was prepared to ‘take lower ground, and say that a well-dressed room, like a well-dressed dinner, conduces to a suave and equable temper’.⁴¹

While Morris's lecture suggested that the drawing room 'ought to look as if some kind of work could be done in it less toilsome than being bored',⁴² for Mrs Orrinsmith, *The Drawing Room* was work. A close reading reveals this text to be a demonstration of the expertise she had acquired as 'Miss Faulkner' of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. In effect *The Drawing Room* is autobiography, and in each chapter it is possible to discern oblique references to her experiences, skills and knowledge. For instance, in 'Fireplaces and Chimneypieces', this crafts-woman, whose hand-painted tiles adorned fireplaces at Sandroyd, The Hill and Peterhouse, commented:

Perhaps the inclination of some might tend to the production of home painted tiles, and in that case a little inquiry is all that is now needed to find out proper colours and assisting kilns [...] But lest unwittingly the absorbing topic of tile and pottery painting should lead to lengthy digression, we will here bring our chapter to a close.⁴³

This article has aimed to account for the partial disappearance of 'the other Miss Faulkner' from design history and to draw attention to the complex relationships between *The Drawing Room*, *Cook's House Beautiful* and Morris's later lecture 'Making the Best of It'. That contemporary critics of *The Drawing Room*, and indeed the twentieth-century historians who have cited it, were unaware of the author's true identity, has led to its misinterpretation: one wonders whether the critical reception would have accused Mrs Orrinsmith of having 'married into the arts' had it been known that she was the former Miss Faulkner of Morris, Marshall Faulkner & Co. This partially recovered history of Mrs Orrinsmith makes it clear that *The Drawing Room* did not simply represent the views of a Beckenham housewife with a passion for flower-arranging, and while her decorative work is relatively unknown, her contribution to the 'Art at Home Series' has survived to offer us an imperfect window into the drawing rooms of the past.

NOTES

1. Emma Ferry " ... information for the ignorant and aid for the advancing ... " Macmillan's "Art at Home Series", 1876–1883', in Jeremy Aynsley & Kate Forde, *Design and the Modern Magazine*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007, pp. 134–155; "Decorators may be compared to doctors": An Analysis of Rhoda and Agnes Garrett's Suggestions for House Decoration (1876)', *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 16, No. 1, Spring 2003, pp. 15–33.
2. Rhoda & Agnes Garrett, *Suggestions for House Decoration in painting, wood-work and furniture*, London, Macmillan, 1876, 90 pp; Mrs Orrinsmith, *The Drawing Room: its Decoration and Furniture*, London: Macmillan, 1877, 154

- pp. (Afterwards Mrs Orrinsmith); Mrs W.J. Loftie, *The Dining Room*, London, Macmillan, 1877 (but dated 1878), 128 pp; Lady Barker, *The Bedroom and Boudoir*, London: Macmillan, 1878, 116 pp.
3. Mrs Orrinsmith, pp. 1–2; Nikolaus Pevsner, 'Art Furniture of the 1870s' in *Studies in Art, Architecture and Design*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1969, p. 126; Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor, The Domestic Interior, 1620–1920*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984, p. 318; Asa Briggs, *Victorian Things*, London: Batsford, 1988, p. 231; Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour: A Cultural Study*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 1–2.
 4. W.J. Loftie to Alexander Macmillan, 11 March 1876; British Library Add. MS 55075/122/124/126/128.
 5. W.J. Loftie to Alexander Macmillan, 29 February 1876, British Library Add. MS 55075/118; Loftie to Philip Gilbert Hamerton *via* Alexander Macmillan, 29 February 1876, British Library Add. MS 55075/120.
 6. See Note 4.
 7. *Ibid.*
 8. George A. Macmillan to Rev. W. J. Loftie, 4 October 1876, British Library Add. MS 55400/411; W.J. Loftie to George A Macmillan, 12 August 1876, British Library Add. MS 55075/136; John Tebbel, *A History of Book Publishing in the United States, Volume II: The Expansion of an Industry 1865–1919*, New York: R.R. Bowker, 1975, pp. 422–423.
 9. Mrs Orrinsmith, Dedication.
 10. Roger Lancelyn Green, ed, *The Diaries of Lewis Carroll*, London: Cassell & Co., 2 volumes, 1953, Vol. 2, p. 318.
 11. Bea Howe, *Arbiter of Elegance. A biography of Mary Eliza Haweis*, London: Harvill Press, 1967, p. 152; Charlotte Gere & Lesley Hoskins, *The House Beautiful. Oscar Wilde and the Aesthetic Interior*, London: Lund Humphries/Geffrye Museum 2000, p. 80.
 12. Georgiana Burne-Jones to Lucy Orrinsmith, 9 November 1905; Dante Gabriel Rossetti to Lucy Faulkner, 'Monday' [?] 27 February 1865. William Morris Gallery J553, J549.
 13. Aymer Vallance, *William Morris: his art, his writings, and his public life. A record*, London: George Bell & Sons, 1897, 462 pp. (Afterwards Vallance); J. W. Mackail, *The Life of William Morris*, London: Longmans, Green & Co., 2 volumes, 1899 (Afterwards Mackail); Georgiana Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, London: Macmillan & Co., 2 volumes, 1904 (London: Lund Humphries, 1993, pp. 249–250). (Afterwards *Memorials*)
 14. Linda Parry, *William Morris Textiles*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd, 1983, p. 46. (Afterwards Parry)
 15. Anthea Callen, *Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870–1914*, London: Astragal Books, 1979, 232 pp. (Afterwards Callen);

- Deborah Cherry, *Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850–1900*, London: Routledge, 2000, p. 157.
16. Callen, p. 223; Parry, p. 46; Norman Kelvin, ed, *The Collected Letters of William Morris, Volume 1: 1848–1880*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 386 (Afterwards Kelvin); Arnold Wilson, 'More from Morris and Company', *Apollo*, July 1964, p. 59. (Afterwards Wilson)
 17. D. G. Rossetti to Charles Faulkner 28 November 1861. Addressed to Bath Row, Birmingham, but forwarded to University College, Oxford; William Morris Gallery, J547.
 18. *Memorials*, pp. 277–280; Mackail, Vol. 1, p. 163.
 19. J. W. Mackail's unpublished notes for *The Life of William Morris*, 1899; William Morris Gallery, J163 and J 164. The original minute books, now at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California (MOR 20 Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. Minute Book, A. MS. [110 pp.], [1862–1874], London, Eng.), cover the period 10 December 1862 – 4 November 1874. I am very grateful to Gayle Richardson at the Manuscripts Department of the Huntington Library, who has catalogued the William Morris Papers, for confirming these dates, and for providing me with copies of the finding aid to this collection. Photocopies of the minute books are held at Hammersmith and Fulham Archives and Local History Centre: DD/235/1.
 20. Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, BMAG 1904 P13; Richard & Hilary Myers, *William Morris Tiles*, Shepton Beauchamp, UK: Richard Dennis, 1996, p. 21 (Afterwards Myers & Myers); Vallance, p. 81; May Morris, 'The Art of William Morris', *William Morris, Artist, Writer, Socialist*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2 vols, 1936, Vol. 1, p.14.
 21. Email from Peter Cormack to Emma Ferry, 6 June 2003.
 22. Wilson, pp. 57–59; Myers & Myers, pp. 71–2; William Morris Gallery C214, C175.
 23. Myers & Myers, *Ibid.*
 24. This is suggested by a copy of Vallance which once belonged to Lucy Orrin-smith, now at the William Morris Gallery, K330a; Peter Cormack, personal communication. The pencilled initials 'L. O.' occur next to descriptions of the tiles *Sandroyd* and *Peterhouse*, p. 81. See also Myers & Myers, p. 71, n. 180.
 25. Vallance, p. 81, p. 377.
 26. The marriage certificate states that they were married at the Parish Church of St. George the Martyr, 44 Queen Square, Holborn. Harvey Orrin-smith was aged 40 and Lucy Faulkner aged 30. He gives his profession as 'Book binder', and his address as 35 Hatton Garden. Lucy does not give a profession; F. B. Smith, *Radical Artisan: William James Linton 1812–97*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973, 254 pp; Walter Crane, *An Artist's*

- Reminiscences*, London: Methuen & Co., 1907, p. 48; Emma Ferry, ‘Lucy Faulkner and the “Ghastly grin”: Re-working the title-page illustration to *Goblin Market*’, *Journal of William Morris Studies*, XVIII, Part 1, Winter 2008, pp. 65–84; Martin Harrison & Bill Waters, *Burne-Jones*, London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1973 (1989 edition), pp. 78–80; *Ibid.*, pp. 80–81; ‘Cupid leaving Psyche’, William Morris Gallery, R193 Woodblock.
27. William Morris Gallery O94, F144, F145a & F145b, F146, F147.
28. Harvey Orrinsmith to W. J. Linton, 11 April 1882; National Library of Australia MS 1698/118.
29. A.C. Sewter, *The Stained Glass of William Morris and his Circle: A Catalogue*, London: Yale University Press, 1975, Appendix I, p. 227; *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society: Catalogue of the 1st Exhibition 1888*, London: The New Gallery, 121 Regent Street, The Society, 1888, 116, p. 119; *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society: Catalogue of the 2nd Exhibition 1889*, London: The New Gallery, 121 Regent Street, The Society, 1889, 646, p. 226. Peter Stansky comments that ‘Unlike the Art Worker’s Guild, membership was not limited to men and that May Morris, Evelyn de Morgan and Kate Faulkner belonged’ (*Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880s and the Arts and Crafts*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985, p.238). However, examination of the archive of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society shows that Mrs Orrinsmith was not listed as a member. Nor did she exhibit at the 1890 or the 1893 exhibitions; Gleeson White, ed, *Practical Designing: A Handbook on the Preparation of Working Drawings*, London: George Bell & Sons, 1893, p. 226.
30. *Scribner’s Illustrated Monthly*: June 1875, January, February, April, June, October, November 1876, May 1877; Clarence M. Cook, *House Beautiful: Essays on beds and tables, stools and candlesticks*, New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1878 (Dover reprint edition, 1995), p. 139; Mark Girouard, *Sweetness and Light: The ‘Queen Anne Movement’ 1860–1900*, Yale: Yale University Press 1977 (1984), p. 211.
31. Frederick Macmillan to Clarence M. Cook, 171 W. 10th Street, New York, 18 April 1877, British Library Add. MS. 55402/372; Macmillan & Co. to Messrs Scribner, Armstrong & Co., New York, 18 April 1877, 4 June 1877, British Library Add. MS. 55402/372; George Lillie Craik to Rev. W. J. Loftie, 27 June 1877, British Library Add. MS. 55402/954.
32. Mrs Orrinsmith, pp. 65–6; p. 78; Mary Eliza Haweis, *The Art of Decoration*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1881, pp. 336–7.
33. ‘Drawing-Room Furniture’, *The Furniture Gazette*, 9 February, 1878, p. 73; E. W. Godwin ‘In the Art at Home Series’, *The British Architect and Northern Engineer*, 8 February 1878, p. 64; ‘Review: *The Drawing Room: its Decorations and Furniture*’, *The Athenaeum*, No. 2625, 16 February, 1878, p. 225.

34. Imogen Hart, *Arts and Crafts Objects*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010, pp. 44–50.
35. George Lillie Craik to Rev. W. J. Loftie, 24 October 1877, British Library Add. MS. 55403/972.
36. Mrs Orrinsmith, p. 12.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 48
38. Myers & Myers, pp. 67–70, 99–106.
39. Kelvin, pp. 385–6. See also Fiona MacCarthy, *William Morris: A Life for our Time*, London: Faber & Faber, 1994, p. 409.
40. ‘Making the Best of It’, reprinted in *Hopes and Fears for Art*, Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1994, pp. 81–119 (Afterwards *Hopes and Fears*); Mrs Orrinsmith, p. 6; *Hopes and Fears*, p. 92.
41. *Hopes and Fears*, p. 92; Mrs Orrinsmith, p. 8.
42. *Hopes and Fears*, p. 92.
43. Mrs Orrinsmith, p. 49