A COTTAGE OF ONE'S OWN: MAKING MODERN WOMEN THROUGH WORD AND IMAGE IN INTERWAR WOMEN'S HOMEMAKING MAGAZINES

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ABSTRACT

A home with all modern conveniences became a reality for an increasing number of people, including aspirational lower middle- and working-class families, in the interwar years. Magazines such as Modern Home *and* Weldon's Ladies' Journal *helped forge a burgeoning home consumer culture and were an important factor shaping dreams of home ownership. This article examines the ideal modern home—its pleasures, discontents, and potential meaning for women—as it was constructed in and disseminated through domestic women's magazines. Conceptualizing periodicals as hybrid, composite texts, it argues that the multiple ways in which they framed, positioned, and reproduced word and image set up tensions and connections, opening a space for more diverse readers to engage with magazines in new ways. The metaphor of the magazine as both a "window" and "mirror" helps show how editors strove to balance appealing visions of modern living with advice that reflected readers' real circumstances. A focus on the dominant ideal of the modern cottage/suburban home helps unpack the complex relationship between rural and modern, the past and the present, conventional femininity and modern womanhood, and private and national life that operated in the pages of these popular magazines.*

KEYWORDS: *modern woman, suburban, interwar, homecrafts, gardens, rural modernity*

INTRODUCTION: RURAL MODERNS AND HYBRID MAGAZINES

A charming letter came to me the other day from a reader in a small Yorkshire village. It was not a long letter, but running between its honest, human lines I could sense a certain sadness. It ended with these two queries: "Do you think day-dreaming is a waste of time? And do such dreams ever come true . . . ?"
—Julia Cairns, "Dreams," *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* (March 1937): 26.

The theme of Julia Cairns's March 1937 editorial in *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* was "dreams," a timely topic given the widespread influence of Freud on popular culture in the period.[1] Dreams and the activity of day-dreaming signal aspirations for improvement and change, but also draw attention to emotions, subjectivities, and inner lives: all central preoccupations in women's magazines.[2] Perhaps surprisingly for the editor of a modern consumer magazine, Cairns presents a critique of the effects of commerce and modernization on what she terms "our race track lives." "One of the saddest things about modern life," she writes, "is that materialism and commerce with their noise and speed have hushed much of the romantic side of women and men, have made mute many of those whisperings from within."[3] The dream theme derived from a reader's letter, which Cairns deemed "honest" and "human." Imbued with "sadness," the letter embodied the very values that she considered under threat.

It is no coincidence that the reader hailed from the countryside, a place associated with preservation, permanence, and a deep nostalgia for timeless Englishness in the period.[4] Cairns herself was invested in country living. Appointed editor-in-chief of Weldon Publications (in charge of 18 titles) in 1933, she bought and up-dated a seventeenth-century yeoman's house—a former cowman's cottage—in Surrey.[5] She was one of the many middle-class professionals the literary historian Alexandra Harris calls "rural moderns," many of whom worked in arts and culture, who bought or rented country cottages for weekend or permanent living.[6] The term "rural moderns" exemplifies a paradox at the heart of interwar Britain, whereby the country cottage—or, for the masses, the suburban semi—represented the apogee of modern living. Similar contradictions were apparent in contemporary expectations that women be "both 'respectable' and at the same time modern."[7] Maintaining a traditional role as carers (for family, home, and self), women also held public responsibilities as newly enfranchised citizens and

were highly visible in the burgeoning modern popular culture of dance halls, cinemas, fashion, advertising, and magazines.[8] Such paradoxes and contradictions were integral to what literary historian Alison Light calls a culture of "conservative modernity" which, "Janus faced," could "accommodate the past in new forms of the present." Light understands this as a "deferral of modernity" that demanded a "different sort of conservatism."[9] In contrast, Kristin Bluemel and Michael McClusky, countering dominant constructions of the countryside as a "site of nostalgic retreat" in existing literary studies of interwar Britain, argue that the "rural" and the "modern" should not be seen in opposition but rather as two terms relating to "a vital relationship" that came under intense pressure in the period.[10] They focus on the "great variety of experiences of modernity" and the role of artists, writers, and others—"rural moderns" such as Cairns—in helping to foster a "new outlook and ambitions" in the countryside and the regions.[11] This article develops this direction of thinking by looking at the relationship between the "modern woman" and the "modern cottage," or suburban home, as it was developed in interwar women's homemaking magazines, focusing on *Modern Home, Woman's Life*, and *Weldon's Ladies' Journal*.

The literary scholar Mary Evans observes that "ideas about what women could be, and how women might both imagine and create themselves to be, seldom reflected the reality of those lives" in the interwar years.[12] For millions of women, this "fissure" between lived experience and fantasy was "one of the great cultural innovations of the advent of mass media" in the twentieth century. It remains fundamental today. Taking the idea of "fissure" as a starting point, this article argues that magazines, as hybrid and "composite texts"—consisting of copy, titling, drawn illustrations, photographs, editorial, features, advertising, fiction, advice columns, competitions, and more—were a quintessential medium for the expression of the paradoxes, tensions, and contradictions that were shaping women's lives and identities in the period, particularly as homeowners.[13] As Rachel Ritchie, Sue Hawkins, Nicola Phillips, and S. Jay Kleinberg observe, the "tensions and paradoxes that both characterize the relationship between women and magazines . . . are inherent within the magazines themselves."[14] Nowhere was this truer than in the contested relationship between word and image, reproduced in black and white and, increasingly by the 1930s, color. Following the greater prominence given to advertising's visual appeal in the period, image and text signified differently in magazines.[15] Marie Louise Bowallius contends that while text conveyed conventional messages, image signaled modernity

in the American *Woman's Home Companion*. Describing the *Companion*'s "selling recipe" as "a comfortable mix of 'new' and 'familiar,"' she argues that elements of novelty introduced through visually driven, full-page color adverts were facilitated by more conservative word-focused editorial text in black and white.[16] As color entered the typography and layout of editorials, they too became more modern in style and content. Meaning resulted not from any one element, but rather is "suggested by their conjunction."[17] Strategies varied depending on a magazine's status and readership. British penny weeklies such as *Home Chat* and *Woman's Weekly*, for instance, used line illustrations of the "Lipstick Girl," surly maid, or lazy secretary to gently subvert conventional messages of feminine propriety in editorial text, while consumer monthlies employed advertorials to "transmute" the "sponsored speech of ads" into editorials.[18]

Cairns and her reader agreed that "dreams" were the business of magazines. Yet magazines were also integral to women's lived experience, both in their content and how they were consumed.[19] Editors were aware that the "dreams" pictured (fantasy was, to a large extent, evoked through images) had to be meaningful and relevant to readers. On some level at least, readers needed to believe that these dreams could come true.[20] Features about celebrity homes appeared alongside tips for achieving the "look" in affordable ways, while problems about finding a man, a job, or with appearance, would find practical solutions in beauty editorials or emotional resolutions in fiction.[21] Talking to women about their memories of reading and looking at magazines in the 1930s reveals an awareness of the disjunction and interplay between fantasy and reality. Valuing their magazine as a "window onto a whole new world," as many put it, they also wanted to see their everyday concerns and aspirations reflected in, for instance, housekeeping features or fictional heroines. Operating simultaneously as a "window" and a "mirror," magazines "offered fluid imaginary spaces in which women could question, negotiate, and inhabit different identities, exploring the possibilities of what being both modern *and* a woman might mean."[22]

Advertising and the rise of the new profession of art direction resulted in the prioritization of the visual, and especially color, to communicate the dream of modernity in the interwar years.[23] Change, nevertheless, was dependent on innovation in print technology. The introduction of rotogravure (or rotary photogravure), an intaglio process whereby the design is engraved onto a cylinder and printed on a rotary press, was developed to improve image reproduction. Print historian Gerry Beegan argues that the

introduction of rotogravure, which produced a smooth, continuous surface and wide tonal range, presented the most significant challenge to the "cultural dominance of the word" that was inscribed in letterpress technologies and the dot matrix of the photo-mechanical half-tone.[24] Writing about *Picturegoer*, an early adopter of rotogravure, Beegan describes how it brought a "new intensity" and "flow" to the mass-produced image, the aesthetic equivalent of the filmic close-up.[25] In Britain, the Sun Engraving Company drove technological progress in gravure, becoming by 1938 the largest combined gravure and letterpress printing operation in the world.[26] Illustrated magazines were central to Sun's success and by the late 1930s they were printing over forty titles, either all-gravure or with gravure inserts or supplements, many of them women's consumer magazines.[27]

The intensity and flow that Beegan identified is also evident in women's homemaking magazines where fantasy and reality came dramatically together in response to the interwar "homeowning revolution which profoundly affected the lives of millions of people."[28] Three million houses were built for private sale and over one million more for rental by local authorities. Home ownership, above all else, became a marker of middle-class identity, but large numbers of new home owners came from the lower middle and respectable working classes, the new and expanding readership for popular women's and consumer magazines.[29] Twelve new home magazines were founded, from "'shilling' or 'glossy'" titles such as *Ideal Home* (1919) and *Good Housekeeping* (1922) to *Woman and Home* (1926) and *My Home* (1928) in the popular "'sixpenny' or 'fourpenny-ha'penny' market."[30]

The titles examined here were published by firms with an established stake in women's periodicals, aiming to capitalize on the growing homemaking market. *Modern Home* (1928–1951), a George Newnes Ltd. publication, addressed the "house-proud and modernizing professional housewife and her husband."[31] One of a raft of "service" monthlies that appeared in the 1920s, it aimed to "inform" and "entertain" readers: it comprised specialist departments led by editorial experts and carried a substantial degree of advertising and visual material.[32] *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* (1879–1954), in contrast, had been running since 1879. The first women's magazine for popular fashion, it continued to be known for its flat paper patterns. Cairns, tasked with refreshing a brand whose "style had become static," set about improving visual quality and increasing "home" content.[33] *Woman's Life* (1895–1934), subtitled "The Frank and Friendly Paper," was a letterpress tuppenny weekly printed on rough textured newsprint—"the hall-mark

of the cheap periodical of the past."[34] In 1934 it merged with Newnes's new color weekly *Woman's Own* (1932–), which was printed by Sun using "hybrid" print technology to achieve gravure color on the cover and center spread; from 1935 it was "an all-gravure book," heralding the birth of the mass market woman's magazine.[35]

Penny Tinkler urges researchers to adopt a "holistic approach" to magazines that includes thinking about how visuals and text are integrated in layouts.[36] This article examines how such paradoxical themes as the modern cottage and the modern woman were addressed in the changing interplay between and through word and image in interwar women's homemaking magazines. It argues that while word and image could variously signify reality and fantasy in magazines, it was the interaction between them that produced a space of agency and female subjectivity. These magazines functioned as a fantasy window onto the lives of others, and a mirror onto readers' own, where women could imagine, dream, or, as Cairns put it, listen to "those whisperings from within."[37]

CASTLES ON THE GROUND: IMAGING THE DREAM OF MODERN RURAL LIVING

Britain became a nation of homeowners during the interwar years—a revolution underpinned by an unprecedented expansion in municipal and speculative private suburban house building and the cheapest mortgages in the twentieth century.[38] Tudorbethan or "mock Tudor" is the style most associated with suburban housing.[39] Modern architects and design critics—informed by the programmatic modernism of such architects as Le Corbusier—prioritized function and "truth" to materials, and considered Tudorbethan inauthentic and inappropriate for modern living.[40] The architectural historian J. M. Richards, however, strove to understand its popular fascination. In *The Castles on the Ground: The Anatomy of Suburbia* (1946), he identified emotional needs and feelings motivated by fear and escape as the predominant mentality driving the suburban dream.[41] As one listener of the modernist design critic Anthony Bertram's 1938 BBC broadcast on the modern home put it, "'I believe that economic depression and fear of war are the chief promoters of the Tudoresque.'"[42] "Suburban" was a pejorative term for critics such as Bertram who associated it with feminine qualities of decoration, ornament, and bad taste. For architectural historians Andrew

Ballantyne and Andrew Law, the Tudoresque's appeal was due to its invocation of the Tudor and Elizabethan periods when England was a great imperial power—a vision given renewed urgency in the context of imperial decline.[43] Ballantyne and Law remind us that the Tudoresque style "originates in the cottage architecture of the pre-modern world" and "celebrates continuity with the past," a relation to the land and the right to work and benefit from it.[44] Quite simply, this cottage-style Tudoresque symbolized Englishness, nostalgia for a vanished past, and an imagined "golden age" of simplicity and contentment.[45] Unlike ideologically informed modernists, those producing magazines such as *Modern Home* understood this. They worked hard to align the modern home with supposedly feminine needs for stability, permanence, comfort, health, privacy, status, escape, and creativity or, in Richards's words, "an opportunity of making out of the world something personal."[46] Ultimately, the editors of home magazines recognized that a need to belong, to be respectable, and have a stake in society was a deeply felt impulse driving homeownership and home culture in the interwar years. This section draws on Svetlana Boym's notion of "reflexive" nostalgia, whereby representations of the past are recognized as constructions, giving agency to those producing, circulating, and consuming the rural idyll of the modern cottage.

Most magazines had to balance reader aspirations against potential constraints. In the 1920s this meant addressing readers who could be categorized as the New Rich and those belonging to the New Poor. The former comprised the expanding lower-middle class of skilled manual and non-manual workers entering white-collar professions and buying their homes for the first time; the latter consisted of the established middle classes facing a changed postwar economic climate who required advice on maintaining domestic standards with limited means.[47] An overall decline in the price of small, speculatively built housing, higher real wages, and a lower cost of living, meanwhile, brought homeownership within the reach of the "respectable" working classes in the 1930s.[48] Some issues breached the class divide. An advert for the L. G. Hawkins agency in the September 1929 issue of *Modern Home* promising "Servant Problems Solved" signals the retreat from domestic service, which radically changed all women's relationships to their homes in the interwar years.[49] Lack of space and a need to economize without loss of taste were recurrent themes in *Modern Home* as it aimed to present its readers with believable fantasies with which they could engage. Photography offered a "window," framing images of the

fashionable and fascinating, while editorial was a metaphorical "mirror" reflecting the scene back in ways that were relevant to readers. A celebrity interview with actress Nora Swinburn, for instance, was described as a "peep behind the scenes of running a small house, plus a baby son, and a husband."[50] While photographs display details of Swinburn's artistic drawing room and bedroom décor, editorial text details the color schemes she used to make a small space seem larger. The innovative "corner fireplace" pictured in the drawing room made space-saving fashionable, while details of the occasional antique, family heirloom, or wedding gift both signaled Swinburn's taste and educated the reader. The problem of achieving respectable modernity on limited means also pervaded advertisements, which offered "guaranteed antique" furniture suites for bargain prices, telescopic loft ladders so "Unexpected guests need cause no embarrassment," and painted ceramics to create "the cottage of your dreams" even in the city.[51]

From *Modern Home*'s first issue in 1928, a hand-drawn image of a cottage with thatched roof, mullioned windows, and flowers around the door appeared on its contents page (fig. 1). Anachronistic for modernists, this symbol of the rural idyll would have made perfect sense to those whose ideal modern home involved conventional notions of Englishness. The magazine itself, however, was a thoroughly modernized product along American lines with high-quality visuals and plenty of advertising. Monthlies, where cover price was higher and circulations tended to be lower than weekly magazines, employed advertorials and product placement—both highly controversial in the British press—to support production costs.[52] The advertiser's message, as a result, was embedded in the magazine. A dampproof firm advertising in the September 1929 issue, for instance, is recommended on the problem page, while items in the "A Household A.B.C." feature are blatant puffs.[53] Layout made visual connections between editorial text and advertisement. The advert for Williamson and Cole Ltd.'s cottage garden floral chintzes that occupies the lower half of the contents page (fig.1)—a prime and expensive location—echoes the cottage theme above. Signaling the outside of the home (the cottage) and its interior (the fabrics), the visual rhetoric of illustration and photography communicate a combined message of aspiration and achievement. The page acts as a window, a source of fantasy and escape, and a mirror reflecting reality, although a transformed one. While the line drawing of the cottage evokes the fantasy of the modern rural idyll, the advert's photographic

FIG. 1 Contents page and advertisement for Williamson & Cole fabrics and upholstery published in *Modern Home* (September 1929): 7.

imagery mingles "romance and reality," instructing readers how they might realize this dream.[54]

By 1926, Sun was routinely producing a complex combination of letterpress, color prints, and gravure monochrome inserts that proved

popular with publishers.[55] Newnes's close relationship with Sun suggests that *Modern Home*'s photogravure and color supplements were likely to have been printed by the firm. In 1929 the monthly photo-feature "Other People's Homes," which gave readers entrée to the homes of aristocrats, artists, and celebrities—a characteristic example of the magazine-as-window—occupied the gravure supplement. The September issue featured a newly built house designed in the style of a seventeenth-century cottage but with modern amenities.[56] The rich tones and fine-grained detail of the high-quality images rendered the house and its interiors with intensity and immediacy for viewers (figs. 2 & 3). The accompanying editorial text declared, "[w]ith its pure white walls and roof of golden thatch, this cosy little cottage looks charmingly old-fashioned, but it is really quite new, and is a comfortable and convenient modern home."[57] Thatch extends to the garage and a loggia, deemed an "additional room" for healthy outdoor living, a modern preoccupation that underpinned the interwar turn to the countryside.[58] Interiors complete with oak beams, red brick inglenook, needlepoint, brass ornaments, simple oak furnishings, and kilim rugs speak of Arts and Crafts influences and the "restrained Modernism" that design historian Paul Greenhalgh termed the "English compromise." For Greenhalgh, this distinctly English version of modernism in architecture and design was proselytized by influential critics such as John Gloag, who drew on the simplicity and proportions of the Georgian period for a model of "good design."[59] Layout design reinforces this compromise between old and new through a combination of conventional print devices derived from book design—borders, symmetry, unvarying type columns, typographical headings—with such modern elements as white space, fashionable "art deco" style titling, and overlapping borders that evoke the glamorous aesthetic of display advertising and the cinema screen.[60]

The cottage was the work of the architect, aircraft designer, and ceramicist Reginald Fairfax Wells, now best remembered as the father of Studio Pottery.[61] In the early 1920s, he set up a business designing modern cottages in Sussex and Kent: the photographs were supplied by him, with the magazine perhaps receiving an endorsement fee. One of seventy homes Wells built in Chiltington, West Sussex, close to the South Downs, its location was consistent with the country idyll beloved of the rural moderns to whom they were marketed. Accompanying editorial text enthused over the surrounding "lovely stretch of heather-clad country, made beautiful by pines, firs and silver birches—a place to delight the heart of any artist."[62] They were in

FIG. 2 "Other People's Homes," first page of Photogravure Supplement showing Cottage designed by R. F. Wells and built by Tiles & Potteries Ltd., published in *Modern Home* (September 1929): 29.

fact enormously popular with the urban bohemian cultural elite, the class of people producing magazines, many of whom moved to the countryside in the period.[63] For those who didn't want to fully commit, "Nutshell

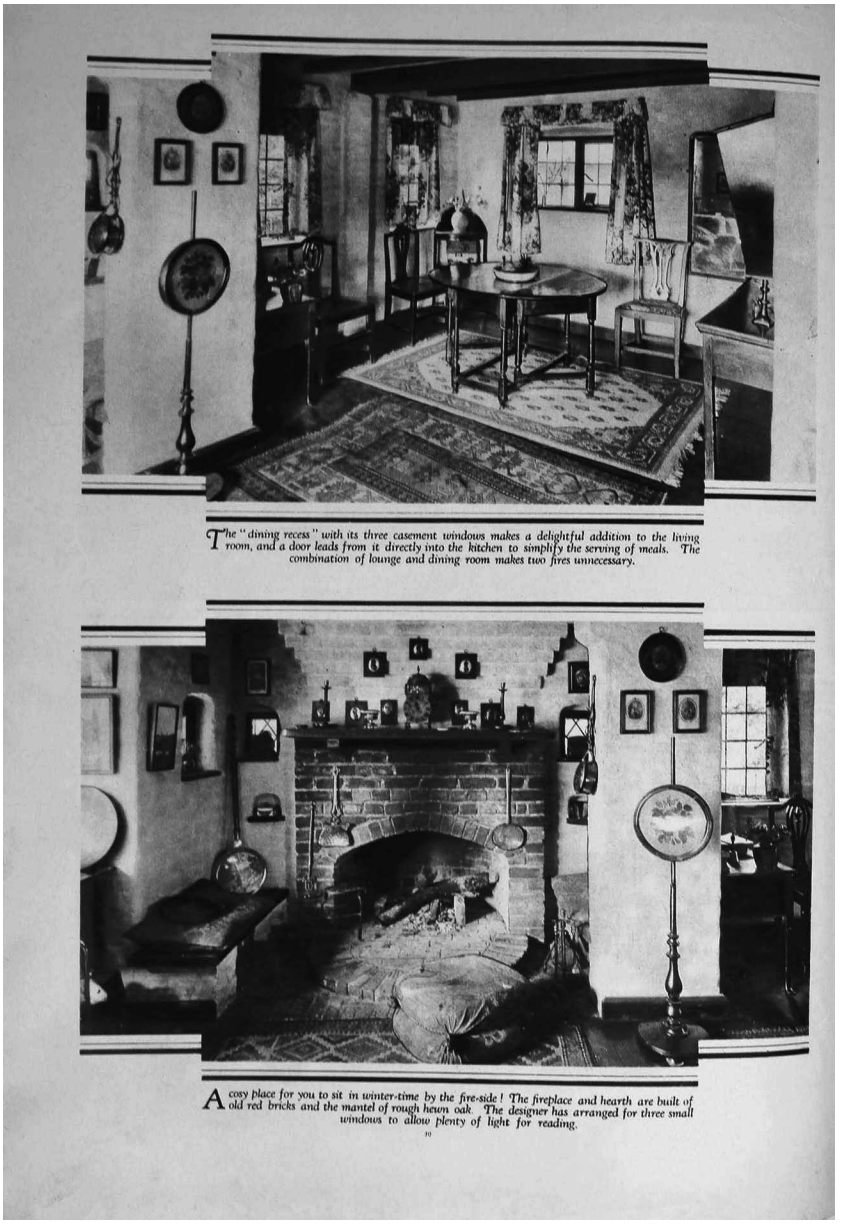


FIG. 3 "Other People's Homes," page from Photogravure Supplement showing interiors of cottage designed by R. F. Wells and built by Tiles & Potteries Ltd., published in *Modern Home* (September 1929): 30–31.

Cottages" (£450) were designed specifically for weekends and holidays.[64] Selling at prices from £750 to £850 and £1,500, Wells Cottages, as they came to be known, were competitively priced with a standard two-reception,

three-bedroom semi in Greater London that cost between £680 and £850 in the late 1920s.[65] An advert for the Universal Housing Company in the same issue offering what it terms "Houses of Character" alongside a photograph of a Tudorbethan-style home assures readers that this rural dream could be realized by anyone anywhere in Britain "at one inclusive cost" with finance arranged "as desired."[66] The Universal advert signposts a period in the 1930s when the unprecedented growth and decreasing cost of suburban housing due to low material building costs, low interest rates, and a growing range of mortgages meant that the dream of modern country living that the Wells Cottages represented became a reality for millions of people, not only in the Home Counties but across the UK.[67]

Fiction, furthermore, offered a space in which fantasy and the realities of modern life collide in *Modern Home*. Short stories such as "In a Dark House" and "Inside Four Walls" dramatized domestic life; subtitled a "novel of today," the latter declared that, "[u]nseen by the world, the real dramas of life are played out between the four walls of home."[68] A typical scenario was to take contemporary characters, whose problems readers could identify with, and resolve them through some form of transformation.[69] In "The Magic Carpet" by Edith Arundel, an old-fashioned cottage tea-room provides a "fairy tale" setting for magical change, as the independent modern girl heroine finds love with a cash-strapped young advertising man due to her judicious sale of an exotic kilim. The story opens with an eye-catching illustration of the heroine in reflective mood; the caption reads, "[u]p in her room she sat by the open lattice window and smiled to herself and wove absurd, beautiful dreams."[70] The heroine's setting and subsequent agency—it is she who saves the hero and saves the day, a familiar plot device in women's magazines of the period—suggest a reflexive nostalgia akin to the dream of modern cottage living visualized in the magazine's immersive photogravure features, and in the instructional context of advertising.

HOMES IN COLOR: INTERIORS AND HOMECRAFTS

Color gravure images became an increasingly important presence in women's and homemaking magazines from the late 1920s, where they functioned as a marker of modernity.[71] Demand was driven by manufacturers' desires to differentiate products within the expanding consumer market in the 1930s and enabled by innovations in print technology. British publishers looked to America, where color was more prominent

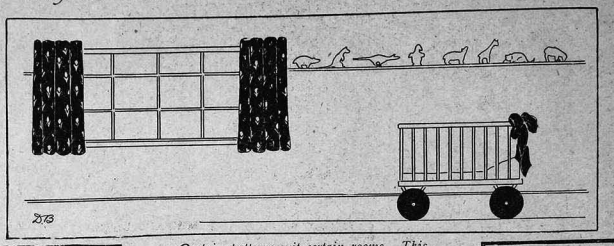
and consumer magazines were achieving enviable circulations. Bowallius argues that *Woman's Home Companion*, for instance, chose "colour as the most important means to modernise its appearance" by aligning it with a "new commercial aesthetic."[72] By 1927, Sun had developed a three-color photogravure machine, and by 1935 achieved an all-gravure approach with turn-around time equal to letterpress, but with greatly superior quality of illustration.[73] Magazine "colored interiors" could visualize domestic interiors with a new intensity of appeal just as home-ownership came within the reach of working-class families.[74] Textiles, rugs, wallpaper, paint, glass, ceramics, and other such items were regarded as a cheap way to modernize without the considerable expenditure of new furniture, giving increased importance to color schemes.[75] Editors such as Julia Cairns, who specialized in color for interiors, positioned their magazines as guides to good taste, design, and value for those entering the challenging world of modern home decoration. This section examines how color was evoked and deployed in *Modern Home* and *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* to communicate new versions of the modern home and feminine agency.

Unlike *Weldon's Ladies' Journal*, where from the mid-1930s full gravure and an increasing amount of color was introduced when Sun's directors took over ownership, color was only used on *Modern Home*'s front cover—the magazine's "shop window"—and in its color supplement.[76] Yet black and white line illustration could still create a light, bright, modern aesthetic that reinforced the ideas developed in editorial content. We can see this modern aesthetic at work in "We *Must* Have New Cretonnes!", an article on curtain and upholstery fabric, written by Dorothy Stote with illustrations by Dora Batty. Stote's editorial text, with its examples of "good" and "bad" design, and "fitness for purpose" according to context and functionality, follows the reformist credo of the Design and Industries Association (DIA).[77] Batty regularly worked for clients sympathetic to the DIA's principles, such as Frank Pick at London Underground (posters), the Curwen Press (jobbing print and illustration), and Clarks Shoes (advertising).[78] She also became head of textiles at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, which was dedicated to applying the Arts and Crafts philosophy of its first principal W. R. Lethaby to modern design. Beyond simply illustrating Stote's message about the "general principles" of good design, Batty's illustrations demonstrate these principles in their use of light against dark, line against pattern, positive against negative space, and the integration of blocks of illustration with columns of text (fig. 4).[79] Although the article is about

color, color itself is not required. Male design reformers, in fact, voiced concerns about women and color, believing that they could be seduced by it. According to design historian Deborah Sugg Ryan, these fears can be traced back to the taste for "Moderne or Modernistic stylised geometric and floral patterns in bright colours accented with black" that became fashionable from 1927 and was associated with women.[80] Stote expressed no such qualms. Responding to the realities of life with young children, she recommends a black chintz or cretonne as a light-reducing shade for nursery curtains when teamed with stylized modern florals: "an amusing array of stiff little tulips—red, orange, mauve and yellow, with green leaves and stalks."[81] Whereas editorial text aims to mirror and connect with readers, Batty's images show windows looking out onto empty white space, directing readers' imagination towards a future home that is modern, functional, and comfortable, and conforms to prescribed aesthetic principles of good taste.

Modern Home's color supplements, in contrast, were unashamedly commercial affairs. While Stote and Batty aimed to improve and educate, "Colour in the Modern Home," a four-page color supplement in the same issue, was designed to seduce and sell. Displaying four-room settings with full supplier details, the hand-painted artwork is romantic and nostalgic, a window onto another world conjured through the appeals of light, color, and seasonal change (fig. 5 & fig. 6). Produced by commercial studios (Knock Studios, R. A. Osborne etc.), the artwork, like Wells' photographs, was probably supplied by the named manufacturers. These painterly worlds of the imagination are intentionally escapist, part of the retail culture of advertising, furniture showrooms, show homes, and the Ideal Home Exhibition with their furnished houses and room displays. Like these spaces, the supplement was stylistically eclectic. Arts-and-Crafts-inspired cottage interiors sit next to neo-Georgian simplicity and Jacobean reproductions, echoing the multiple styles of reproduction furniture in retail outlets that sprang up on the Tottenham Court Road and elsewhere.[82] A commercial sensibility is equally evident in layout design where selected items (a fabric swatch or dining table) are shown in close-up, isolated from—and overlapping with—the interior scene. These images stage the product and stimulate desire, the domestic equivalent of a filmic close-up (fig. 5). Suggestive of transformation, this quality is also evident in furnishings such as the "'Adap-Table' Seat" (fig. 6), an "oak upholstered fireside settee" that magically transformed into a "Jacobean style dining-table."[83] While color dramatized modern home fantasies, flexible, multifunctional items such as the

Shall They Be Plain or Patterned?

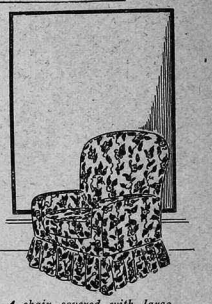


Certain patterns suit certain rooms. This tulip cretonne, with black ground, is just right for nursery curtains—gay yet serviceable

We *MUST* Have New Cretonnes!

IS YOUR *room crying out for a change of curtains and covers?* DOROTHY STOTE'S *advice will help you to choose them*

Put your chairs into plain covers if they have to live with patterned walls



A chair covered with large patterned cretonne should have a plain background

LONG before winter is actually here, human nature being what it is, one begins to look round the house with speculative eye. "That chair," one says firmly, "simply must be recovered this autumn. Those curtains," one asserts, "have to be replaced."

The truth is that cretonnes and chintzes are so fascinating, the merest excuse, together, of course, with a few spare shillings, are all one needs to start adventuring among them. Then, too, they afford such an effective means of dressing up the house. Only, because of the great variety of patterns and colours, care must be taken not to "lose one's head."

Everyone is familiar with certain general principles to be observed in choosing chair covers and hangings. You know that with figured wallpapers, plain colours are usually a wise selection for the materials. Also, you are aware that there should be a distinct tone relation between the two. But there is more to interior decorations than that. Suppose we think about some of the other points.

In the first place, how does the room face, and is it light or dark?

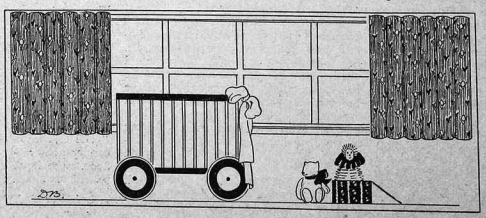
Recently I visited a house in which the sitting-room walls were primrose, the woodwork green, and the cretonne chair covers had brightly-coloured flowers on a primrose background. Such was the effect of sunny cheer, I was surprised when my hostess told me she had selected the scheme because that room never got any sun. Yet sunniness was in the very atmosphere. Think how pleasant this would be on one of our dull winter days!

However, I must get back to the real subject of this article, which is patterns rather than colours. I have already reminded you that figured wallpaper and figured cretonne cannot live together without quarrelling. But even when the paper is plain, the design of the cretonne or chintz must be carefully considered. For a small room, the design should be small, for a large-figured pattern will pull the room in, and make it appear even smaller.

There is a danger in putting too much figured material in a limited space. So why not try using figured curtains and plain chair and settee covers, their colours taken from the predominating tone in the curtains? Or, as an alternative scheme, figured slip covers and plain curtains.

Another point to remember is that if the chairs and settee are a bit on the large side for a small room, they will be less overpowering when dressed in dark, rather than light, material. A happy solution would be to have them closely

Continued on page 78



The tulip cretonne which is so charming for a nursery can be had with dark blue as well as a black ground

FIG. 4 "We *MUST* Have New Cretonnes!", home furnishings textile feature by Dorothy Stote, illustrated by Dora Batty, published in *Modern Home* (September 1929): 19.

"'Adap-Table' Seat" and the "Put-u-up" hidden bed—a staple of the magazine advertising pages that "accommodated guests without embarrassment"—were designed for the very real space-saving needs that working-class and many middle-class families would experience in the 1930s.[84]

Deborah Cohen notes that an aesthetic of "simplicity" and "restraint" achieved through limited use of patterns, wood furnishings, and "neutral" color schemes came to define "good taste" in the 1930s. This preference for a simple aesthetic was driven by an emotional economy of caution, fear of embarrassment, and the desire to conform: "fitting in," she writes, "was more important than standing out."[85] Color features in *Modern Home* in the 1930s certainly reveal a preponderance of oatmeal, brown, beige, and cream, occasionally relieved by the "[b]right Anemone colours" of a small floral pattern.[86] What Cohen doesn't mention, however, is the extent to which these color schemes were derived from nature and how important this was in the discourse of interior color decoration. Like their Arts and Crafts predecessors, many of the new professional interior decorators extrapolated the principles, rules, and language of color from nature. This is evident in Julia Cairns's writing and informed her own interior schemes; she recalls how walls of "winter jasmine yellow," a "golden brown carpet," and "lichen green" curtains transformed her office into a forest bower in the city.[87] Schemes based on natural principles were also believed to have health-giving properties. Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane, drawing on the domestic expertise of the New Health Society, told *Modern Home* readers that ceilings should be the "lightest in shade, the walls deeper, and deeper than all, the floor, with more concentrated colour in the smaller areas occupied by curtains and upholstery."[88] Color that disobeys these rules was judged "worrying to the eye," creating the "sensation of an insecure foundation with the roof pressing on one's head." Such healthful schemes were no doubt seen as a corrective to the dangerously seductive power of color for women.[89] Flowers, furthermore, were a staple in color interior features. Readers were advised that cut flowers brought nature and color into the home, especially if they were sourced from the garden or countryside. As *Modern Home* proclaimed in October 1935, a "charming fad of the moment is to use the simplest of country cottage garden flowers in sophisticated settings," on evening frocks and in "ultra modern rooms."[90]

As interior schemes became more uniform, homecrafts offered opportunities for, in Richards' words, "making out of the world something personal."[91] Homecraft was positioned in magazines as an appropriately

FIG. 5 "Colour in The Modern Home, Autumn Furnishings for a Hall-Dining-Room," color gravure illustrated Special Feature Color Supplement, published in *Modern Home* (September 1929): 41.

FIG. 6 "Furnish Your Sitting-Dining-Room with Space-Saving Oak Furniture," color gravure illustrated Special Feature Color Supplement, published in *Modern Home* (September 1929): 44.

modern, feminine activity located in folkcraft and cottage precedents; it was, however, not without its agencies.[92] When *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* became an all-gravure book with "a generous quantity of colour,"[93] it was the homecraft features, alongside articles about royalty and advertising, that were reproduced in color. There were sound commercial reasons for this as the "Free Gift"—often an item for homecraft—was judged a great "pull" by editors. Pictured on the magazine's front cover in high quality photographic detail, the free gift of a large square of "Old Bleach" linen (with transfer pattern) features in the April 1939 issue (figs. 7, 8). Reality and fantasy are drawn together in a visual language that combines photography with hand-drawn artwork and typography to provide an affective imaginative context for the material artefact. (figs. 9, 10).[94]

Improvements in rotogravure printing enabled the combination of word and image. Photographs, hand-drawn illustration, and typography in color and black and white created a dream-like environment that intensified the experiential and transformational promise of modern homemaking for readers. The sometimes-contradictory versions of the modern home on offer reflect tensions between the economic, technological, and cultural concerns that shaped them, including the ideology of design reform and the economics of advertising. The agencies bound up in the ideal of modern rural living, nevertheless, remained central to 1930s homemaking, manifest in the health-giving effects of natural color schemes, embroideries stitched from floral transfers—a modern form of folk craft—and the liminal activity of flower-arranging.

INSIDE OUT AND OUTSIDE IN: GARDENS AND GARDENING

The interwar years witnessed a significant "turn to gardening" as a major passion among all social classes with four million new domestic gardens established. According to Peter Scott, the historian of interwar suburbia, "[s]ubstantial gardens were an integral feature of the interwar suburban semi. They assured its lineage from the country cottage and English Vernacular architectural tradition, brought the countryside appeal of the suburbs right up to the suburbanite's front and back doors."[95] The majority of the new interwar gardens were in suburban semis occupied by lower-middle-class and working-class municipal renters or owner occupiers—those who Scott terms "garden pioneers."[96] This profile aligns with the "new readership" for women's magazines.[97] For city migrants, used to a small back yard and

FIG. 7 "Pure Irish Linen 'Old Bleach' and Embroidery Transfer," front cover, *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* (April 1939).

with little or no knowledge of gardening, substantial gardens opened a new world of possibilities. Magazines responded with practical guidance and cultural imaginaries addressed particularly to women. This section explores that advice and those imaginaries as they developed through the 1930s in the penny weekly *Woman's Life* and its sister monthly *Modern*

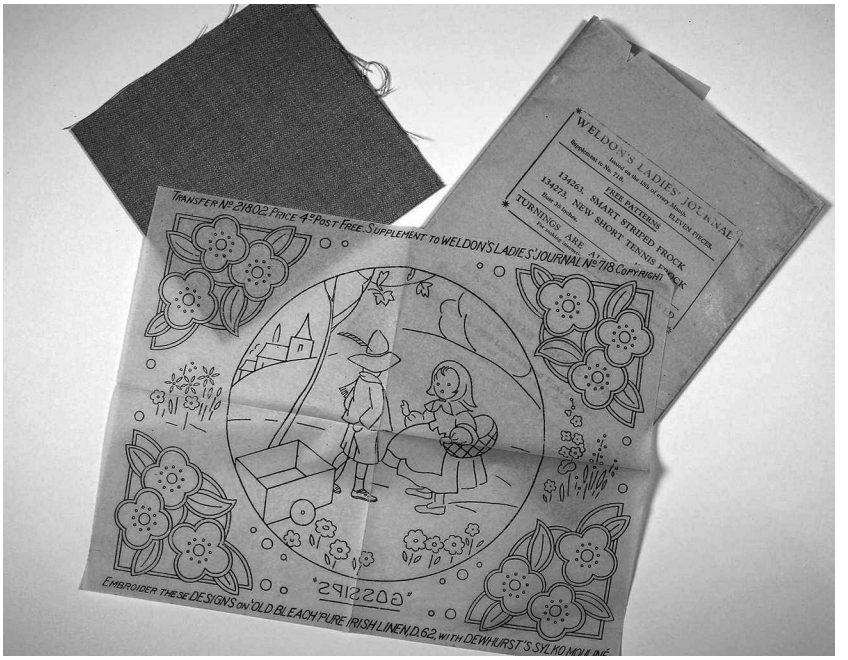


FIG. 8 Square of Old Bleach linen and embroidery transfer, free gift with *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* (April 1939).

Home. It argues that domestic imaginaries in magazines—constructed through word and image, in black and white and color—offered changing and sometimes contradictory identities for the modern gardening woman.

Gardening was not a regular topic in the 1920s in *Woman's Life*, a publication aimed principally at young working women and young marrieds. The "Gardening Number," which appeared on April 5, 1930, however, heralded change, suggesting that the editor was aware of a growing readership of suburban renters and homeowners requiring guidance. Articles combined editorial text giving practical advice with pen-and-ink illustrations, which imagined a more female-focused modern gardening that was fashionable and fun. The feature "Spring Sowing!" is characteristic (fig. 11). Detailed information about lawn care, cold frames, and growing flowers and vegetables from seed signaled the seriousness of gardening: many depended on their gardens to supplement family health and economy as well as for flowers for the home. The modernistic titling font and jaunty illustration of an up-to-date, crop-haired young flapper, however, suggest fun and contemporary fashionability. This fissure between a masculine discourse that privileged horticultural knowledge—editorial copy was generally written

FIG. 9 "18 Enchanting Ideas for using our Free Gift," opening page of double-page homecraft feature published in *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* (April 1939): 24.

by male horticultural experts—and fantasy imagery commonly drawn by female illustrators and featuring women, opened a space for the modern feminine imaginary to question accepted binary norms.

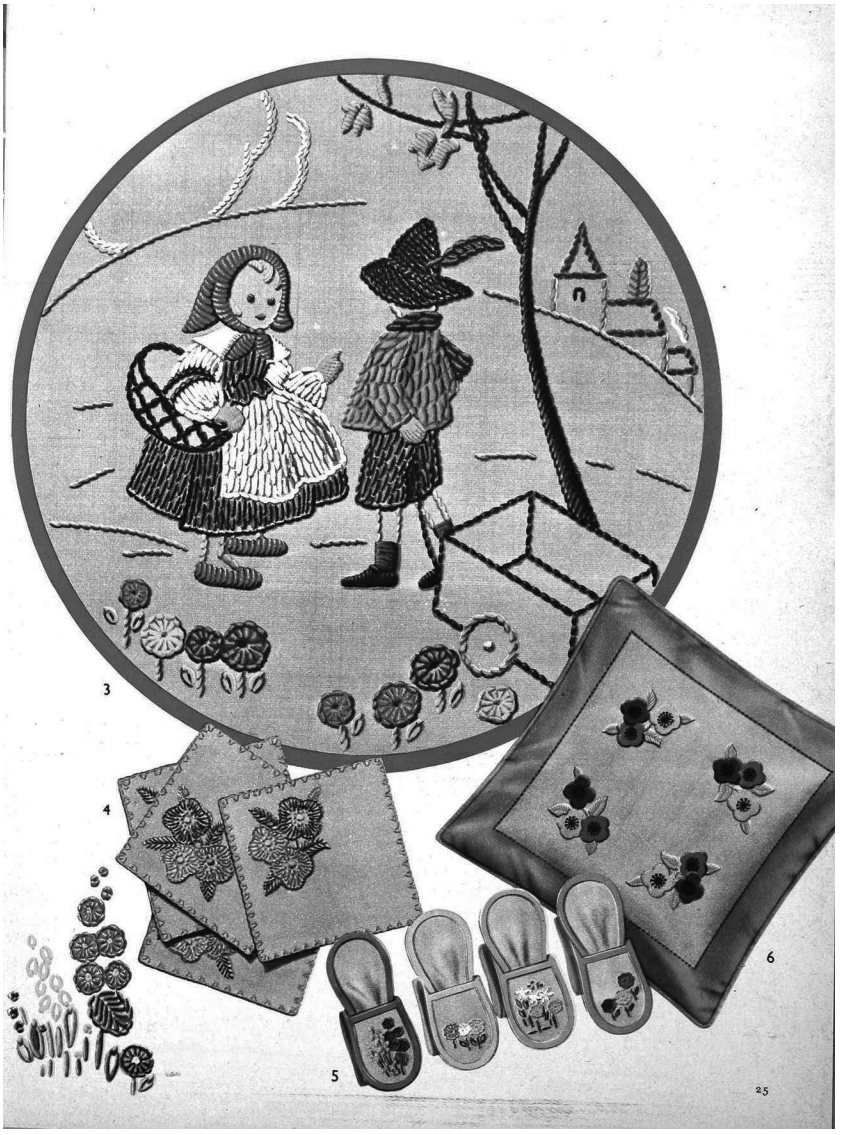


FIG. 10 Color illustration for homecraft feature, second page of double-page spread published in *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* (April 1939): 25.

Gardening, like housework, was generally divided along gender lines.[98] Digging, mowing, and growing vegetables were male activities—they connected suburbanites to their cotter forebears—while women

SPRING SOWING!

Start it now if you want gay flowers later on.

WHEN April arrives, seed-sowing must be tackled in real earnest. A great deal will depend later on on how this has been carried out, and a little care given to the condition of the soil when it has been partially prepared by the winter frost action, will mean an increased crop later on.

Make the surface of your seed bed into a fine condition by raking until all the lumps are broken down. This fine layer is particularly needed for small seeds, as they can then be placed evenly and their growth will not be disturbed by stones or large pieces of soil.

Avoid planting seeds too deeply. A rough rule to go by is to place the seed at a depth equal to its own length, which means with tiny seeds that only a mere sprinkling of earth must be laid on the top of them. Air is very necessary, and deeply planted seeds suffer severely from this lack, besides taking a long time to reach the surface, when they begin to grow.

The Vegetable Garden.

WHEN dealing with vegetables, which usually have to be planted in rows, use a string line and take out a shallow drill with a rake, afterwards covering the seeds with soil and pressing the top of the drill firmly down. This is most important, as it enables water to rise up from the lower layers and reach the seeds. A loose top layer should never be encouraged, as it tends to keep the seeds too dry, besides giving the seedlings no chance to fix themselves firmly in the soil.

There is no need to water after sowing, unless the ground is exceptionally dry, but if it is necessary, use a fine rose can, being careful not to disturb the surface to any extent.

Be Sparing!

IN the herbaceous border, flower seeds are best sown in clumps, and they can afterwards be thinned out and transplanted. Sow all seeds rather sparingly as this will save the very drastic thinning out which has to be practised if thick sowing is done.

Mark the position of all your sowings with wooden labels, or you will find it very difficult, as the various plants grow up, to recognize the place of each particular variety.

These labels can be cheaply made from pieces of firewood. Split the pieces of wood, smooth one side of each, and here write the name of the seed in indelible ink.

Practically all seeds, except late varieties, which are usually labelled as such, so that there is no difficulty in recognizing them, may be put in during April, preferably when the weather is open and the soil not too wet.

What To Do This Week.

Begin lawn mowing, giving the grass a good roll first to level all worm casts. Prune standard and bush roses, unless weather is severe. Sow broad beans for late crop, and main crops of peas, carrots, beet, onions, turnips, etc.

Sow sweet peas out of doors and protect from birds with black cotton. Pinch tops of chrysanthemum cuttings taken in January. Plant out pansies, calceolarias and pentstemons, raised in frames.

Allow bulb leaves to die off before removing them. Give ferns under glass a top dressing of good soil. Fork up soil in rockery. Keep check on slugs and snails by removing them from under pansies and violas where they collect.

FIG. 11 "Spring Sowing!" and "What To Do This Week," illustrated garden feature published in *Woman's Life* (April 5, 1930): 11.

took on planting flowers and "lighter" garden activities.[99] "Garden Jobs," an insert feature that appeared regularly in *Woman's Life* in 1930, nevertheless, connects images of women with growing vegetables and fruit.[100] This feminization suggests an extended sphere of female agency, but may also be linked to women's role in providing fresh and cost-effective meals, something that would have been particularly significant for cash-strapped families in the early 1930s. "Mary Evelyn's Cookery Pages" carried recipes for seasonal vegetables, advice for "'between-season'" "when one has to look at every penny," and enthused about foraging: "there is no delight equal to mushrooming in the country early in the morning."[101]

The feminization of magazine gardening, moreover, was enhanced by the increasing presence of articles written by women horticultural experts. For those who had worked in gardens during the war and/or trained in the new horticultural schools for women, the women's press provided an important point of entry to professional status and the media.[102] Marion Cran, FRHS, for instance, wrote for *Queen* in the 1920s and *Woman* in the 1930s, as well as *Good Gardening*. Violet Sully, FRHS, the horticulturalist, landscape architect, and author of *Gardens for Town and Suburb* (1926), contributed a series of articles to *Modern Home* from January to October 1932 offering more intimate and informal advice designed for amateurs, "the keen beginner," and "newly weds."[103]

Depictions of the modern gardener reflected real social change. Lilian Rowles's artwork for the cover of the Gardening Number, for instance, pictures the new ideal of the smaller modern family consisting of mother, father, and one child (fig. 12). Improved access to birth control and a desire for better living standards contributed to a significant reduction in the size of the interwar family, especially in lower-middle-class and aspirational working-class households.[104] Pictured happily planting seeds together, the family also represents the contemporary idea of the companionate, or "fifty fifty" marriage, whereby husband and wife shared domestic and sometimes economic responsibilities, although the latter was hotly debated in magazines.[105] Scott argues that for many working-class people, gardening represented a "merging of what had previously been regarded as essentially separate spheres of male and female leisure," reflecting the broader trend towards "shared and home-centred leisure in the new suburbs."[106]

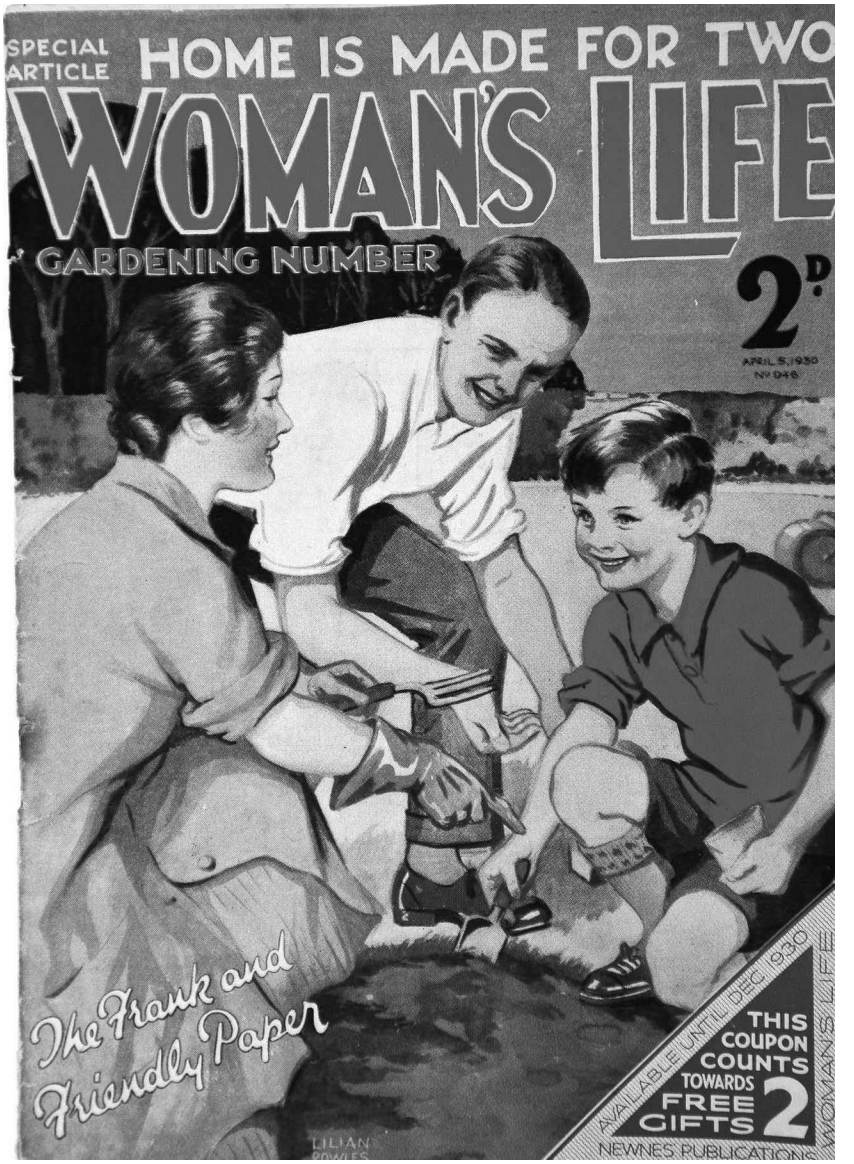
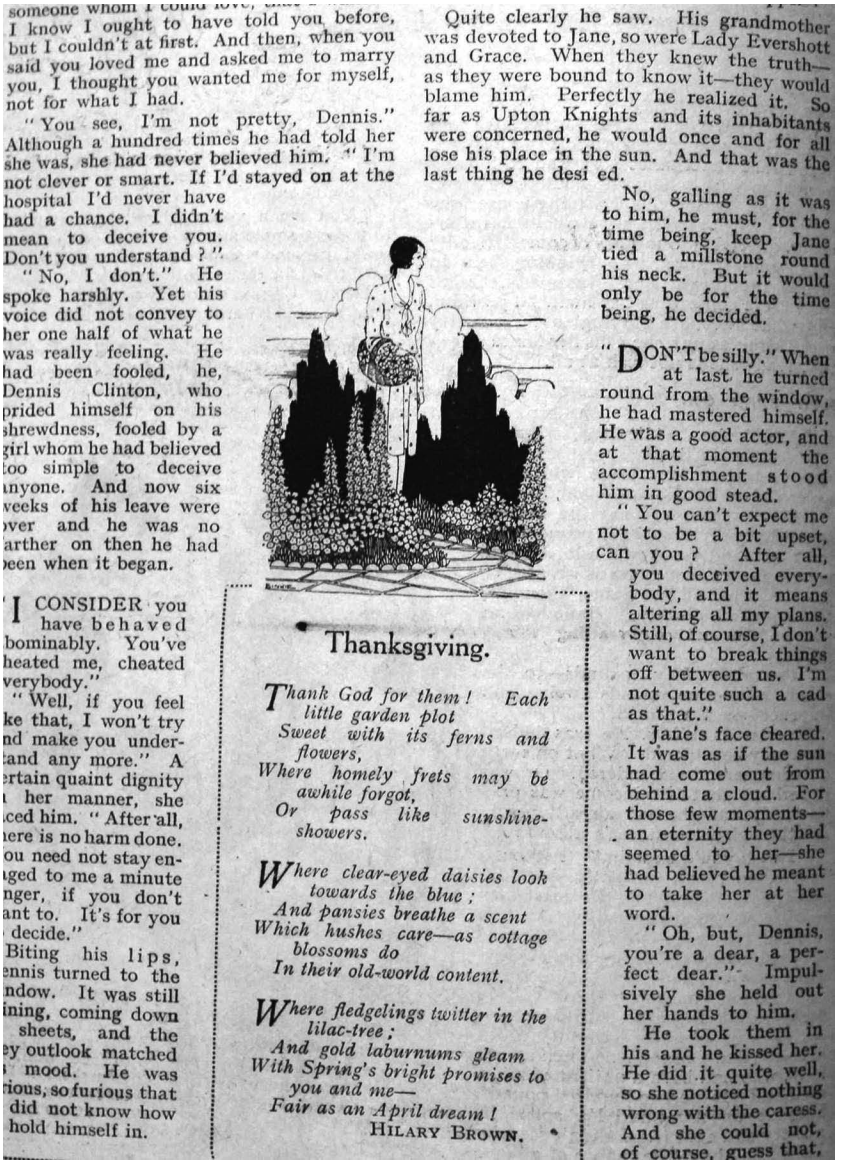


FIG. 12 Colored artwork showing a young family gardening by Lilian Rowles, front cover of *Woman's Life* (May 17, 1930): 16.

Although companionate gardening couples appear elsewhere in the magazine, *Woman's Life* tended to favor the sole female gardener.[107] Often pictured gazing meditatively into the distance, her pose conveys a sense of the garden as a window onto female subjectivity, and a space to dream. "Thanksgiving,"



someone whom I could love, [illegible]
I know I ought to have told you before, but I couldn't at first. And then, when you said you loved me and asked me to marry you, I thought you wanted me for myself, not for what I had.

"You see, I'm not pretty, Dennis." Although a hundred times he had told her she was, she had never believed him. "I'm not clever or smart. If I'd stayed on at the hospital I'd never have had a chance. I didn't mean to deceive you. Don't you understand?"

"No, I don't." He spoke harshly. Yet his voice did not convey to her one half of what he was really feeling. He had been fooled, he, Dennis Clinton, who prided himself on his shrewdness, fooled by a girl whom he had believed too simple to deceive anyone. And now six weeks of his leave were over and he was no farther on then he had been when it began.

I CONSIDER you have behaved abominably. You've cheated me, cheated everybody."

"Well, if you feel like that, I won't try and make you understand any more." A certain quaint dignity in her manner, she iced him. "After all, there is no harm done. You need not stay engaged to me a minute longer, if you don't want to. It's for you to decide."

Biting his lips, Dennis turned to the window. It was still raining, coming down in sheets, and the grey outlook matched his mood. He was furious, so furious that he did not know how to hold himself in.

Quite clearly he saw. His grandmother was devoted to Jane, so were Lady Evershott and Grace. When they knew the truth—as they were bound to know it—they would blame him. Perfectly he realized it. So far as Upton Knights and its inhabitants were concerned, he would once and for all lose his place in the sun. And that was the last thing he desired.

No, galling as it was to him, he must, for the time being, keep Jane tied a millstone round his neck. But it would only be for the time being, he decided.

"DON'T be silly." When at last he turned round from the window, he had mastered himself. He was a good actor, and at that moment the accomplishment stood him in good stead.

"You can't expect me not to be a bit upset, can you? After all, you deceived everybody, and it means altering all my plans. Still, of course, I don't want to break things off between us. I'm not quite such a cad as that."

Jane's face cleared. It was as if the sun had come out from behind a cloud. For those few moments—an eternity they had seemed to her—she had believed he meant to take her at her word.

"Oh, but, Dennis, you're a dear, a perfect dear." Impulsively she held out her hands to him.

He took them in his and he kissed her. He did it quite well, so she noticed nothing wrong with the caress. And she could not, of course, guess that,

Thanksgiving.

Thank God for them! Each little garden plot
Sweet with its ferns and flowers,
Where homely frets may be awhile forgot,
Or pass like sunshine-showers.

Where clear-eyed daisies look towards the blue;
And pansies breathe a scent
Which hushes care—as cottage blossoms do
In their old-world content.

Where fledgelings twitter in the lilac-tree;
And gold laburnums gleam
With Spring's bright promises to you and me—
Fair as an April dream!

HILARY BROWN.

FIG. 13 "Thanksgiving," a pen-and-ink illustration by Anne Rochester and a poem by Hilary Brown, published in *Woman's Life* (May 4, 1930): 14.

a poem by Hilary Brown, is one such example (fig. 13). The nostalgic words evoke the sensory aspects and charm of the "old-world" cottage garden:

Thank God for them! Each little garden plot

Sweet with its ferns and flowers,

Where homely frets might be awhile forgot,

Or pass like sunshine-showers.

Where clear-eyed daisies look

Towards the blue;

And pansies breathe a scent

Which hushes care—as cottage

blossoms do

In their old-world content.[108]

The pen-and-ink drawing by Anne Rochester (fig. 13), whose work appeared regularly in women's magazines, suggests something more akin to Boym's reflexive nostalgia and Light's conservative modernity in subject matter and aesthetic. Rochester's illustration depicts a modern young woman with feminine, softly-waved hair, standing amidst cottage flowers on a crazy-paved path, that supreme signifier of suburbia.[109] The sharp qualities of the decorative line recall the black and white images of Arts and Crafts or Art Nouveau predecessors (C. R. Mackintosh, Aubrey Beardsley) and the eighteenth-century silhouette, evoking a mood that is simultaneously modern and nostalgic, romantic and contemporary. Here, the past informs new ways of imagining the present and looking to the future.[110]

Articles in *Modern Home* in the 1930s also addressed the woman gardener's practical needs and dreams. Unlike *Woman's Life*, however, the monthly had access to color and higher quality photogravure images, which were employed principally to sell goods.[111] A variety of modern female gardening identities from flower artist to hard landscaper, housewife, and leisured consumer appear in the June 1930 issue. The picture on the cover—a striking watercolor painting of a woman dressed in contemporary artistic attire standing before a thatched cottage amid a mass of pink foxgloves and blue delphiniums—conveys a sense of female autonomy through a dream of country living and escape.

The 1930s marked the "beginning of popular gardening as one of the great marketing success stories of this century," as the many adverts for garden products—ornaments, seed catalogues, furniture, and summer houses—in *Modern Home* attest.[112] A press advert for *Good Gardening* professed that gardens offer "absorbing recreation" and business opportunities for those targeting the "enthusiastic thousands in this wide and ever-increasing field."[113] As the distance between the housewife, the home, and the garden—the outside room—were eradicated, pressures to achieve high standards increased for women. In her column "For You and Your Home," Susan Trim pronounced: "No real home is complete without a garden and our flowers and gay borders can express our personalities for the world to see, just as clearly as our curtains and furnishings. But good gardening is not easy, unless you know how."[114] Garden furnishings became a sign of taste and social status in the pages of *Modern Home* as it advised on "Summer-Time Entertaining," "Tea and Tennis," and "Designs for Outdoor Living."[115] Deemed "an art in itself," readers were urged to choose their color scheme as carefully as for indoors. The illustrated feature "Gay Comfort Out of Doors" shows how the impact of full-color layout—including scene-setting artwork that ran across the gutter of the double-page spread and product close-ups—is designed to intensify the reader's imaginative engagement with this dream of garden leisure and entertainment. The dream, however, was entirely dependent on consumption. Editorial text functioned as advertorial, giving detailed information about brands such as Lloyd Loom chairs that frequently bought advertising space in *Modern Home*, as well as the magazine's own embroidery patterns.[116] The diversity of furnishing styles showcased in the 1920s color supplement is replaced by a uniformly modern look with simple lines and tertiary tones set against the backdrop of a house that suggests modern suburbia rather than a cottage home.

Writing about modern gardens in the 1930s, the landscape architect Richard Sudell noted the "habits of the modern generation—the desire for games, and appreciation of outdoor life," declaring that "popular taste in colour and form has definitely improved."[117] Magazines contributed to such shifts but, more than this, offered a range of competing identities for the modern gardening woman, from nostalgic dreamer to hard paver, flower artist, and tasteful hostess. Each came with its own agencies, pleasures, and responsibilities as gardens became a space for the exercise of women's taste, knowledge, creativity, labor, and, just occasionally, her escape.

CONCLUSION

Feminist historians Leonora Davidoff and Catherine Hall observed that "home" is "as much a social construct and a state of mind as a reality of brick and mortar."[118] This article has examined how women's and homemaking magazines constructed, imagined, and mediated the new possibilities and paradoxes associated with the modern home and modern woman through

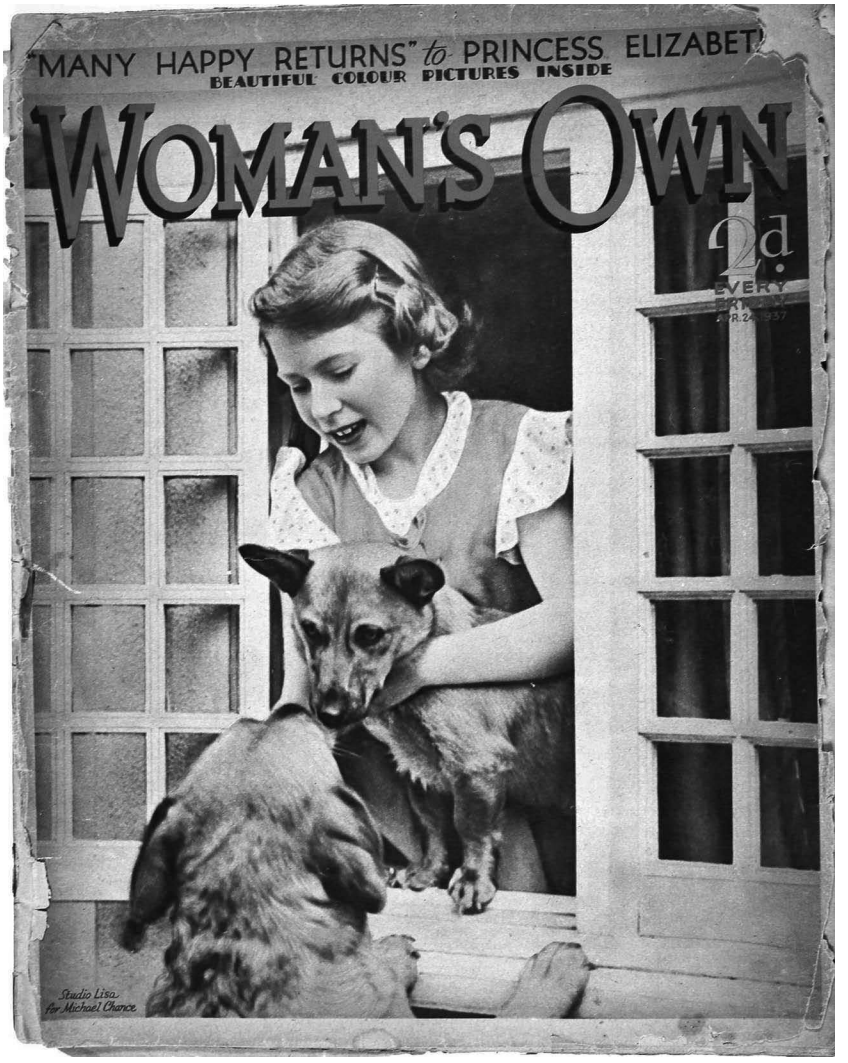


FIG. 14 Princess Elizabeth in Y Bwthyn Bach (The Little House), color gravure front cover of *Woman's Own* (April 24, 1937).

word and image. The increased visibility of modern women in popular culture as enfranchised citizens and homeowners provoked social anxieties as well as opportunities, particularly for women and working-class people.[119] Wishing to increase circulations, editors were quick to target readerships among the new homeowners, but were equally aware of the need to balance the new with the conventional. Fantasies of modern living (magazine-as-window) were featured alongside an acknowledgment of how people lived (magazine-as-mirror). Magazines, as hybrid visual, textual, and material artefacts—the product of hybrid printing and reproductive technologies—were ideal vehicles for capturing and communicating the tensions and contradictions of modern life, particularly for women.

While magazines both offered practical advice and opened a space to dream, monthlies such as *Modern Home* channeled these dreams through consumption, exploiting innovation in visual technologies to do so. The new visual culture dramatized the promise of modernity, staging everyday life for consumers. Alice Wood, describing *Good Housekeeping* as an outward-looking international periodical, contrasts this with *Modern Home*'s inward-looking Englishness.[120] *Modern Home*, and the other homemaking magazines examined here, nevertheless, evidence Light's articulation of a modernity that was "felt and lived in the most interior and private of places," including the living room, bedroom, garden, and at the kitchen table.[121] These magazines exemplify the interwar years as a time when inward-looking and private values took on new public and national significance, and speak of what Bluemel and McClusky term "new stories about British national identity and imagination."[122] The modern cottage, and all it represented, was established as a symbol of national life in April 1937, when Newnes's *Woman's Own* put a photograph on its cover of Princess Elizabeth looking out of the window of Y Bwthyn Back (The Little House), a life-size doll's house that had been gifted to her by the people of Wales (fig. 14). Architect-designed and made by craftsmen, the house was a white-washed thatched cottage with all modern conveniences.[123] The Royal princesses reportedly spent hours in it, Elizabeth gaining a reputation for cleaning and tidying and becoming exceptionally neat: the ideal modern housewife. While royalty played at modern housewifery and cottage living, such high-quality gravure images inscribed the fantasy of "a cottage of one's own," with its attendant challenges and agencies, in the imaginaries of hundreds of thousands of women.[124]

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JULIA BIGHAM graduated with an MA from the Royal College of Art and worked as a curator at the V&A Museum, London, for seventeen years, specializing in illustration and printed works of art, design, and ephemera. She curated or contributed to over twenty-five exhibitions and fifteen publications, and enjoyed teaching and running audience engagement creative workshops (an interest that continues today). There followed a career change, having gained qualifications in Horticulture, including a post graduate diploma in Historic Garden and Landscape Management and Conservation. In 2015 Julia became a Head Gardener for the National Trust. Working in historic gardens, dating from the eighteenth to twentieth century, has led to a greater appreciation of the horticultural and emotional investment in these landscapes and a deep interest in the cultural and social history of gardens and plants, in particular their significance for women.

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22. Hackney, "Women," 120.
23. Bogart, *Artists*, 125–70.
24. Gerry Beegan, "The PICTUREGOER: Cinema, Rotogravure, and the Reshaping of the Female Face" in *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1918–1939*, Catherine Clay, Maria DiCenzo, Barbara Green, Fiona Hackney, eds. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 193; Gerry Beegan, *The Mass Image: A Social History of Photomechanical Reproduction in Victorian* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Johanna Drucker, "What Is Graphic about Graphic Novels?" *English Language Notes* 46, no. 2. (2008): 39–56.
25. Beegan, "The PICTUREGOER," 186–88, 194–95.
26. Peter Greenhill and Brian Reynolds, *The Way of the Sun: The Story of Sun Engraving and Sun Printers*. Ontario (Canada: True to Type Books, 2010), 61–66.
27. Greenhill, *The Way*, illustration C1.16.
28. John Burnett, *A Social History of Housing 1815–1985* (London: Methuen), 253.
29. Deborah Cohen, *Household Gods: The British and Their Possessions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 192–93; Hackney, "They Opened," 108–10.
30. Julia Cairns, *How I Became a Journalist* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1960), 30; Cohen, *Household Gods*, 188.
31. Deborah Sugg Ryan, *Ideal Homes, 1918–39* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 81.
32. Fiona Hackney, "Woman Appeal. A New Rhetoric of Consumption: Women's Domestic Magazines in the 1920s and 1930s," in *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1918–1939*, Catherine Clay, Maria DiCenzo, Barbara Green, Fiona Hackney, eds., (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press): 294–309.
33. Cairns, *How I Became*, 37. It became *Home Magazine* (1954–1963), then merged with *Homes and Gardens*.
34. Cynthia L. White, *Women's Magazines 1693–1968* (London: Michael Joseph, 1970), 280.
35. Greenhill, *The Way*, 49, 53.

36. Penny Tinkler, "Fragmentation and Inclusivity: Methods for Working with Girls' and Women's Magazines," in *Women in Magazines: Research, Representation, Production and Consumption*, Rachel Ritchie, Sue Hawkins, Nicola Phillips and S. Jay Kleinberg, eds., (London, UK: Routledge, 2016), 32–33; Ritchie et. al, "Introduction," 7.
37. Cairns, "Dreams," 26.
38. Burnett, *A Social*, 253.
39. Paul Oliver, Ian Davis, and Ian Bentley, eds. *Dunroamin: The Suburban Semi and its Enemies* (London: Pimlico, 1981).
40. Paul Greenhalgh, *Modernism in Design* (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), 9.
41. J. M. Richards, *The Castles on the Ground* (London: The Architectural Press, 1946).
42. Anthony Bertram, *Design* (London: Pelican, 1938), 58.
43. Andrew Ballantyne and Andrew Law, "Tudoresque Vernacular and the Self-Reliant Englishman" in *Build from Below: British Architecture and the Vernacular*, Peter Guillery, ed., (London: Routledge, 2011), 123–28.
44. Ballantyne, "Tudoresque," 124–25, 140.
45. Ballantyne, "Tudoresque," 126–27.
46. Richards, *Castles*, 32.
47. Sugg Ryan, *Ideal*, 25–32.
48. Peter Scott, *The Making of the Modern British Home: The Suburban Semi & Family Life between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 7–12.
49. "Servant Problems Solved," *Modern Home* (September 1929): 51. Many domestics in this period were "country girls." For a servant's perspective on the "problem" see Selina Todd, *The People: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class 1910–2010* (London: John Murray, 2014), 40–45.
50. Annette Adams, "What We are Like AT HOME, Nora Swinburne Shows Her Charming House to Annette Adams," *Modern Woman* (September 1929): 17.
51. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 70–71.
52. Hackney, "Woman," 299–303.
53. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 68, 84, 83.
54. Bogart, *Artists*, 199.
55. Greenhill, *The Way*, 26–32.
56. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 29–32.
57. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 29.
58. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 31.
59. Greenhalgh, P., "The English Compromise: modern design and national consciousness, 1789–1940," in *Designing Modernity: The Arts of Reform and Persuasion 1885–1945*, Wendy Kaplan, ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995), 111–42.
60. Jeremy Aynsley, "Fashioning graphics in the 1920s: typefaces, magazines and fashion," in *Design and the Modern Magazine*, ed. Jeremy Aynsley and Kate Forde (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 37–44.
61. "Reginald Fairfax Wells," *Aberystwyth University School of Art Museums and Galleries*, http://sofa.tth3.co.uk/person/864 (accessed December 17, 2021).
62. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 32.
63. Beverley Nichols is perhaps the best-known journalist and writer of the period who moved to the countryside, making a career from writing about renovating his cottage and garden; see Bryan Connon, *Beverley Nichols: A Life* (London: Constable, 1991). The renowned *Woman* editor Mary Grieve also writes about her move to a cottage and love of the countryside, which represented a place of privacy and escape for herself and her life partner Dee Powell. Grieve, *Millions*, 117–19.
64. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 31.
65. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 29; Sugg Ryan, *Ideal*, 44–45.
66. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 73.
67. Sugg Ryan, *Ideal*, 44–45.
68. *Modern Home* (September 1929), 46.
69. Hackney, "They Opened," 265–301.
70. *Modern Home* (September 1929), 20.
71. Howard Cox and Simon Mowatt, *Revolutions from Grub Street: A History of Magazine Publishing in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 55.
72. Bowallius, "Woman's," 33.
73. Greenhill, *The Way*, 53.

74. Scott, *The Making*, 9.
75. Sue Bowden and Avner Offer, "The Technological Revolution That Never Was," in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, eds. Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 244–74.
76. Cairns, *How I Became*, 35–36.
77. David Jeremiah, *Architecture and Design for the Family in Britain, 1900–70* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 69–70.
78. Michael T. Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England: Medieval Modernism in the London Underground* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).
79. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 19, 73.
80. Sugg-Ryan, *Ideal*, 83.
81. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 73.
82. Pat Kirkham, Rodney Mace, and Julia Porter, *Furnishing the World: The East London Furniture Trade 1830–1980* (London: Journeyman, 1987).
83. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 43.
84. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 35; Sugg Ryan, *Ideal*, 75–76.
85. Cohen, *Household*, 195–98.
86. *Modern Home* (October 1930): 35.
87. Cairns, *How to Become*, 34.
88. *Modern* Home (July 1930): 24–25.
89. Fiona Hackney, "'Use Your Hands for Happiness: Home Craft and Make-do-and-Mend in British Women's Magazines in the 1920s and 1930s," *Journal of Design History* 19, no. 1 (2006): 28–29.
90. *Modern Home* (October 1935): 19.
91. Richards, *Castles*, 32.
92. Hackney, "Use," 35; Hackney "Quiet Activism and the New Amateur: The Power of Home and Hobby Crafts," *Design and Culture* 5, no. 2 (July 2013): 169–93.
93. Cairns, *How I Became*, 41.
94. Barbara Green "Feminist Things," in *Transatlantic Print Culture, 1880–1940*, Ann Ardis and Patrick Collier, eds. (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 77. See also "Sensuous Print" in Hammill and Hussey, *Modernism's Print Cultures*, 37–85.
95. Scott, *The Making*, 192–93.
96. Scott, *The Making*, 175.
97. Hackney, "They Opened," 108–13.
98. A gender division of labour prevailed in the monthly *Modern Home*: Robert W. Ascoft, for instance, penned the gardening column while Mrs. Robert Ascoft handled furnishings.
99. Scott, *The Making*, 191.
100. Onions, cauliflowers, peas, celery, kale, lettuce, raspberries, and loganberry canes in *Woman's Life* (May 17, 1930): 16; (April 19, 1930): 38; (June 21, 1930):13; (June 26, 1930): 4.
101. *Woman's Life*, March 8, 1930: 33; August 23, 1930: 33.
102. These women were the horticultural equivalent of the women succeeding in journalism and advertising in the interwar years. Hackney, "They Opened," 50–67; Bingham, "Women," 20–27.
103. Titles included "Lets make a Seed List" (January 1930), "Garden to live," (June 1930) "Town gardening," (April 1930) "Vegetable gardening. Hints to help you in your Kitchen patch," (July 1930) "Fruit in the garden. Hints for the keen beginner," (August 1930) "Planting bulbs – indoors and out," (September 1930) and "Garden plans to suit the Gardens of our 'Newly-Weds' first home." (October 1930).
104. Diana Gittins, *Fair Sex: Family Size and Structure in England, 1900–1939* (London, UK: Hutchinson, 1982), 185–87.
105. Ursula Bloom, "Fifty-Fifty Marriages," in *Home Notes* (November 26, 1932): 5050; Simon Szreter and Kate Fisher, *Sex Before the Sexual Revolution: Intimate Life in England 1918–1963* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 34–44.
106. Scott, *The Making*, 191–92.
107. *Woman's Life* (May 17, 1930): 16.
108. Hilary Brown, "Thanksgiving," *Woman's Life* (May 4, 1930): 14.
109. Beverley Nichol's novel *Crazy Pavements* is a satire on the gossip columnist based on his experience of writing for women's magazines. Connon, *Beverley*, 126–27.

110. Saler, *The Avant*-Garde. Color was generally limited to the outside covers in tuppeny letterpress weeklies such as *Woman's Life* and photographs tended to be small and smudgy.
111. *Modern Home* (September 1929): 25, 37–38.
112. Alan A. Jackson, *Semi-Detached London: Suburban Development, Life and Transport, 1930–39* (Didcot, UK: Wild Swan Publications, 1991), 159–60.
113. *Newspaper Press Directory* (London: Benn Bros., 1939): 360.
114. *Modern Home* (April 1939): 2.
115. *Modern Home* (June 1939): 21; *Modern Home* (June 1939): 14–15.
116. *Modern Home* (May 1936): 50–51.
117. Jane Fearnley-Whittinghstall, *The Garden: An English Love Affair: One Thousand Years of Gardens* (London,: W&N, 2002), 296.
118. Leonora Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850* (London: Routledge 1992), 358.
119. Alexander, "Becoming," and Todd, *The People*.
120. Alice Wood, "Housekeeping, Citizenship, and Nationhood in *Good Housekeeping* and *Modern Home*," in *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1918–1939,* Maria DiCenzo, Barbara Green, Fiona Hackney, eds. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press), 223–24.
121. Light, *England*, 10.
122. Light, *England*, 8–10; Bluemel and McCluskey, *Rural Modernity*, 16.
123. These included electricity, a gas cooker, hot and cold running water, a fridge, tiny radio and minute telephone. See Jessica Rach, "The Queen's first house!", *Daily Mail*, August 23, 2018, www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-6089821/Princess-Elizabeth-seen-posing-outside-Wendy-house-sister-Margaret-1930s.html (accessed December 19, 2021).
124. A "cottage of one's own" can be seen as the popular equivalent of Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (London: Hogarth Press, 1929; London: Grafton, 1977).

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