volupté

INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF DECADENCE STUDIES

Volume 7, Issue 2

Winter 2024

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ISSN: 2515-0073

Date of Acceptance: 1 December 2024

Date of Publication: 31 December 2024

Citation: Jad Adams, 'How were the Yellow Book women lost?', *Volupté: Interdisciplinary Journal of Decadence Studies*, 7.2 (2024), pp. 1-15.

DOI: 10.25602/GOLD.v.v7i2.1858.g1965

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How were the *Yellow Book* women lost?

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Independent Scholar

Virginia Woolf did not appear a comfortable figure as she addressed the students of Newnham College on a bright but windy October day in 1928. The 200 young women in Clough Hall saw a tall, sad-eyed, long-faced woman.[1] She sat on a stage in a hall at a table illuminated by a reading light, alert and 'sensitively nervous', speaking of the loss to literature of female exclusion in history.[2] She famously called up the image of Shakespeare's sister who had all the attributes of her brother but was female, and so instead of gaining riches and lasting fame by her pen, came to grief. Woolf formulated the main problem as a power imbalance between femaleness and maleness, of the comparative denial of income and privacy between women and men. She proposed a counter-history of women and the interior life, suggesting it as if it were a recent literary discovery, while praising selected women writers of the past. As Talia Schaffer notes, Woolf's lecture, later expanded into *A Room of One's Own* (1929), ignored the recent generation of women writers altogether; 'her feminist historiography leaps from Charlotte Brontë straight to her own contemporaries'.[3]

Woolf overlooks the fact that a third of *The Yellow Book*'s literary contributors were women (47 of 137 writers). They were published and some sold at the same rate as men; *Keynotes* (1893) by George Egerton (1859-1945) sold 6,000 copies in the first year, was translated into seven languages, and also had the largest sales of any short story collection in the US, with the exception of those of Kipling.[4] However, by the 1920s, books looking back to the 1890s and commentators like Woolf ignored them or relegated their presence to a single sentence. Why did the *Yellow Book* women disappear so comprehensively, even in Woolf's prodigious reading? Woolf was evidently no stranger to modern fiction, as shown by the critique in her talk about *Love's Creation*, a 1928 novel by Marie Stopes (published under her first two names, Marie Carmichael). The 1890s were

at most three decades behind her, which is not very long in literary terms; many of the *Yellow Book* writers were still alive and working. Nevertheless, the only one of them Woolf mentioned was Vernon Lee (1856-1935), and only then in the context of her art criticism.[5]

In *Daughters of Decadence* (1993), Elaine Showalter declares that New Woman writers are 'the missing link between the great women writers of the Victorian novel and the modern fiction of Mansfield, Woolf and Stein'.[6] They were such a hope for fiction at the end of the Victorian period, so what happened to them to render them invisible to future generations? One answer is mere competitiveness. Woolf in 1928 was newly famous, having had six novels published over the previous thirteen years, with her most commercially successful novel *Orlando* (1928) published in the month of her Cambridge lecture. She was still apparently insecure of her position, however, and seems to have wanted to see herself in a literature of her own – where she was a pre-eminent priestess of modernism with no predecessors. The inclusion of unquestionably modernist innovators such as Egerton and Ethel Colburn Mayne (1865-1941) in her historiography would disrupt the trajectory of this narrative which moves much more smoothly if their achievements and sacrifices are simply ignored.

Woolf was very much concerned with the material wealth of writers, or the lack of it. She asked the questions, 'Why was one sex so prosperous and the other so poor? What effect has poverty on fiction?'[7] By the standards of many *Yellow Book* writers, Woolf always lived in luxury; her concept of poverty was living in a smaller house, not living in one rented room and dying in a workhouse hospital as did Ella D'Arcy (1856/7-1937). Woolf's frame of reference for wealth may be skewed but there is no question that it was more challenging to be a writer when poor than when comfortable. However, for many women as well as men, the need to earn money was a motivation. This is notable in the case of Egerton who wrote *Keynotes*, her most successful book, when threatened with homelessness.[8]

A more general economic impetus spurred on the *Yellow Book* writers. Regardless of their particular family circumstances, the larger economic picture was an increasing expectation that

women would earn their keep independently if they did not marry and rely on a husband's income. George Greenwood, writing as 'A Woman' in *The Yellow Book* Volume III, addressed 'the leaping, bounding new womanhood', but the phenomenon was presented as a social problem because of 'the too rapid growth of the female population […] the redundant female birth-rate which threatens more revolution than all the forces of the Anarchists in active combination'.[9] The jocular portent referred to a genuine social phenomenon of the preponderance of women over men in the UK, disclosed in the 1891 census as 19,400,00 women and 18,300,000 men.[10] Women could no longer expect male relatives to support them entirely even if this had been an attractive option for them (though for many it was odious).

Therefore, in the mid-1890s, Netta Syrett (1865-1943), Evelyn Sharp (1869-1955), D'Arcy, Mayne, and many others left home to try their luck in London. Women with sharp wits but few resources, such as Egerton and Gabriela Cunninghame Graham (1859-1906) had ventured out earlier. It was this great leap from the security of the family which was innovative, not their poverty which was something shared by many male writers who, like George Gissing (1857-1903), scraped a living writing literature. Gissing and H. G. Wells (1866-1946) each wrote a piece for *The Yellow Book* in Volume VIII, but they went on to become canonical writers as none of *The Yellow Book* women did.[11] Payment for inclusion in *The Yellow Book* was largely by literary form and length: £5 to £10 for prose pieces and a varying price for poetry depending on the celebrity of the writer and the length of the work. Olive Custance (1874-1944) received a guinea (£1.1s) for the sixteen-line 'Twilight'; John Davidson (1857-1909) received six guineas (£6.6s) for the 156-line 'Ballad of a Nun'.[12]

The Disappearing Women

If Woolf, the leading women's writer of the early part of the twentieth century, ignored the *Yellow Book* women, they had scant support from other critics either. Ann Ardis asks why 'uproar in the 1880 and 1890s about the New Woman was followed by such a resounding silence'.[13] In response,

Ardis has indicated how Ezra Pound and others deliberately ignored women writers and favoured men (though his support of Charlotte Mew [1869-1928] is an exception to this). Similarly W. B. Yeats, in compiling an influential anthology of 'all good poets who have lived or died from three years before the death of Tennyson to the present moment', largely ignored women including his *Yellow Book* contemporaries.[14] There is no Custance, Mew, or Rosamund Marriott Watson (1860-1911) in *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, with few women overall.

If these male creative artists felt this way about their female contemporaries, male literary critics were no more thoughtful where women were concerned. A casual reader of books about the 1890s published in the first decades of the twentieth century might be forgiven for assuming women played a reticent role in literary society with only occasional distinguished service. Books such as Bernard Muddiman's *The Men of the Nineties* (1920) and Max Beerbohm's comic parody *Seven Men* (1919) demonstrate in their titles a gender hegemony which is also to be found in works such as Holbrook Jackson's *The Eighteen Nineties* (1913) and Osbert Burdett's *The Beardsley Period* (1925) with no mention of the New Woman or even complete paragraphs devoted to women. A small number of women active in literature in the 1890s, notably Egerton and John Oliver Hobbes (1867-1906) are mentioned approvingly; most are simply ignored. It may be coincidence that these women with male pseudonyms are allotted a place in primarily male environments while undisguised female writers of importance such as Ménie Muriel Dowie (1867-1945) receive a mere mention and often not even that.

One cause of this neglect is the excessive emphasis on Oscar Wilde in works on the 1890s which has tilted attention towards maleness (if not masculinity) and helped solidify a set of clichés about the 1890s artistic sensibility which is represented as effete.[15] This limp-wristed aesthetic caricature excludes such robust realist writers as D'Arcy or the sexual insights of Dowie, the social observations of Sharp and Syrett, and the modernism of Mew, Egerton, and Mayne. It should be said that 1890s women did not have an obvious stand-out figure of enduring literary genius for

their generation of young women, like George Eliot, whose presence might have encouraged others.

An expectation of diffidence on the part of 1890s women in their own times did the *Yellow Book* cohort no good. As Susan Winslow Waterman comments about Mayne, 'the instinct to shun attention and disdain for self-promotion may have played a key role in [her] undeserved obscurity today'.[16] Mayne was an influential modernist writer but she did not ally herself to others or espouse theories, which has limited critical appreciation of her work. A letter from a kind editor, Lovat Dixon from Macmillan, gives an indication of the way Mayne approached the business of publishing. He wrote to her, 'because you said that you did not want the manuscript submitted if there was any chance of it being refused, I wanted to read it myself first before showing it to the directors.'[17] Any male writer might have been so sensitive to rejection; it is an excessively common trait in the 1890s woman. Mayne's nemesis D'Arcy, though eager to promote herself in person as a woman as Mayne was not, was still so diffident that a single rejection of one of her manuscripts led her to stop submitting it and put it in a drawer.[18] Even a woman as assured as D'Arcy was used to being treated as inferior; it seems she had internalized the misogyny. Even when writing to a publisher, D'Arcy undermined the credibility of her own work:

> I send the MS today by book-post, and I send it with many misgivings, for while I still think the two first portions of the story fairly good, I am beginning to fear that the third portion is violent and crude […]. Probably the subject – a difficult one – is altogether beyond my capacity, and I have rushed in like the fool where wiser men have forborne to tread.[19]

It is difficult to imagine a man making such a statement. Predictably, the book was rejected.[20]

Egerton, no shrinking violet in person, was typical in that she disdained publicity.

When Clement Shorter wrote to her asking to feature her in his magazine *The Sphere*, she replied,

> Mr Lane told me some weeks ago that you would like to have a portrait and if possible an interview. I have a very strong dislike to interviews, in fact I have refused many applications. I do not desire to be anything but "George Egerton" to the public.[21]

So much of a nineteenth-century woman's life was supposed to be private that it was challenging for her to promote herself in the public gaze. Commentators such as Eliza Lynn Linton

condemned the sort of public woman who occupied male spaces: 'She smokes after dinner with the men; in railway carriages; in public rooms – where she is allowed. She thinks she is thereby vindicating her independence and honouring her emancipated womanhood'.[22] It took a strong personal belief to be able to resist the sort of social opprobrium attracted by a public woman. With a single theatrical success (that of one performance), Netta Syrett attracted the attention of a male critic who insinuated her play about an adulterous woman had some relation to her own life. Syrett, who worked as a teacher, was summoned into the headmistress's office and summarily dismissed.[23]

Obscurity over time is also to some extent a function of the lack of resources. Schaffer laments 'the absence of even the most basic biographical information' on many late-Victorian women writers.[24] This was less true as the twenty-first century progressed, with the advent of such online sources as the *Yellow Nineties 2.0* and numerous Wikipedia entries, but it was still possible in 2023 for the present writer to publish *Decadent Women: Yellow Book Lives* where a condition for extensive inclusion was that the *Yellow Book* women represented 'should not have had a biography written about them before the project started'.[25] Sometimes the lack of biographical data was deliberate: Dixon sabotaged biographical study by destroying all her papers and writing a memoir, *Sketches of People I Have Met on the Way* (1930), which is largely accounts of famous men she encountered.[26] Valerie Felhlbaum has discussed female autobiography and the tendency of women to concentrate on their professional or public achievements, while men, having become known in a public sphere, use their autobiographies to discuss the personal.[27] Netta Syrett ordered her personal papers to be destroyed but at least wrote memoirs and personal pieces which supply biographical information. Mew seemed to regard the destruction of her papers as amusing, knowing it would frustrate later curiosity.[28] At least some of D'Arcy's papers were preserved but have subsequently been lost, though her letters were preserved by the recipients. Ethel Colburn Mayne's letters, similarly, have been preserved but very little other biographical material exists.

A shortage of biographical information is an impediment to detailed study but not an insuperable one: the works of the *Yellow Book* women could stand on their own for criticism or

public appreciation. They had to be remembered to be valued, however, and most suffered neglect in the new century. Some had done their best work by 1900; some like D'Arcy struggled to be published. Others like Egerton moved in a new direction and had new battles with, in her case, theatre managements. Netta Syrett and Sharp kept producing work which kept them in the public eye. Syrett wrote at least thirty-five novels in addition to plays, books for children, non-fiction works, and short stories. Mabel Dearmer (1872-1915) took another path from the illustrations she had contributed to the *Yellow Book* and had modest success in writing books. Dowie passed from being one of the best-known women writers of the 1890s through scandal to obscurity. After coming to grief when she adopted the same attitude to sexual morality as the men in her circle and having an affair which led to divorce, she retreated into farming, no longer making promotional appearances or even writing fiction.

Impediments to Progress

Childbirth interrupted some careers: 'Marriage, Motherhood and Writing are each whole time jobs', wrote Egerton.[29] The work of *Yellow Book* writers Dollie Radford (1858-1920) and Nora Chesson (1871-1906) undoubtedly suffered because of family responsibilities. For some, however, the reverse happened; Edith Nesbit (1858-1924) was markedly prolific as a result of having to maintain a family, a home, and a feckless husband on her own efforts.[30] Like Dearmer, she used her children for her novels so they were a net gain, rather than a hindrance, in literary terms.

There were factors affecting 1890s women which were impediments to success: diffidence; the self-sabotage of personal information which could have been used in biography; and the reluctance to see themselves as a 'movement' with the reinforcement of each other which that would have brought. The 1890s writers are sometimes accused of drawing from a limited range of experiences and it is certainly the case that many had little experience excepting their own lives, though like Jane Austen, some made up in depth for what they lacked in breadth. Mayne felt her limited experience as the spinster daughter of an Irish magistrate had limited her scope as a writer,

as she wrote to Mary Butts, 'I cannot see myself ever writing anything of my own again and it kills me. It's not because I am too old, too out of the movement (such as it is) – no, it's that my experience has not been rich enough, it has only been of what I may not now write of – the emotional life, the life of the sense and the spirit. It's not enough.'[31] Such limited life experience was not the case with men who had been able (in far greater numbers) to travel and live alone away from parents. However, some, notably Sharp, Graham, and Dowie, were travellers of considerable experience. Egerton had sufficient romantic adventures to fill several books. Mayne may be also over-stating her isolation; she went to London to work on *The Yellow Book* in 1896 and later moved there permanently, fitting in with Violet Hunt's set at Campden Hill.[32]

An enduring question is: if the women were so talented, why are they not better remembered? What explains the success of the Georges – Gissing, Meredith, and Moore – who have achieved canonical status with work no better appreciated than that of women writers? The simplistic answer would be quality: the women were by virtue of their gender, or (more benignly) because of insufficient training in the craft of letters, less worthy of respect than their male counterparts, and the men therefore were pre-eminent in the literary survival of the fittest. It is more likely, however, that the failure of posterity to recognize women lies in the way in which women were treated in the literary world. Through occasional mistakes where women are accidentally regarded as men a different standard is exposed. The publisher John Lane, for example, was anxious to make the acquaintance of a writer with the first name Evelyn, who he assumed to be male. Sharp recounted she had received an invitation for 'Mr Evelyn Sharp to a smoking evening at the Bodley Head. I think the occasion was a meeting of the Odd Volumes literary society of which Mr John Lane was at that time president'.[33] She politely explained her feminine status, which duly disqualified her from the event and whatever bookish networking was taking place.[34]

Similarly, an editor's frank statements to Egerton about a manuscript were later withdrawn with the comment, 'it never once dawned on me that the author of those virile sketches was not

one of my own sex or I would never for a moment have written as I did'.[35] The mask had slipped and he had addressed a woman with the honesty he would have used to a man. Such errors indicate how the drawing-room niceties of Victorian Britain were a serious constraint on candid discussion in the literary world, and how much was concealed from women writers even in direct discourse. Women were paternalistically excluded from conversations which might be thought 'indecent', limiting their access to discourse about modern writing and the literary marketplace.

Furthermore, women were literally not in the same place for much literary business. Egerton explained in a letter to Clement Shorter about a misunderstanding between them, ending: 'Now I hope I have made my peace with you – a woman is always handicapped, if I were a man I should have run across you long ago and have had the opportunity of saying this.'[36] She simply was not in the same spaces as an equivalent male writer would have been to sell her wares and deal with any impediment to that. When seeking a contributor for a periodical an editor might literally look around his club, as Lane and Henry Harland did while planning *The Yellow Book* in January 1894. Arthur Waugh was lunching at the National Liberal Club at 1 Whitehall Gardens when Harland and Lane came in to tell Edmund Gosse all about their new project and Waugh joined them. They went through a list of men who might contribute.[37] No women were, it seems, mentioned at this seminal gathering and as a gentlemen's club there were no women present, nor would they be members for another 80 years.

In *The Story of a Modern Woman* (1894), Dixon tells of the gruelling trudge around the corridors of Fleet Street trying to sell her work. Her character, Mary, witnesses the camaraderie of male companionship between the editor she is waiting to see and a young male contributor, both smoking and laughing. She waits before the editor's visitor departs, promising to 'See you at the club tonight' – a club in which Mary will never set foot.[38] Men might also meet for literary business discussion at a bar like the Crown in Charing Cross Road, a haunt of influential men but where respectable women could not be present; or he would think of people he knew from his all-male public school or all-male Oxbridge college. He may not have been intending to exclude women,

but that is what he did. There may even have been a conscious choice to include some work by 'the fairer sex' in a display of gallantry; or an acceptance that fiction-reading audiences were substantially female; or even a predatory eagerness to offer literary favours in exchange for sexual ones (Lane's fondness for women writers was such that he became known as 'Petticoat Lane').[39] Whatever the motives, women became secondary contributors; women were rarely so close to the source of patronage as were men.

There were always some women who were, by virtue of their male relatives, able to move to some extent in male spaces, such as Dixon, the daughter of an editor (William Hepworth Dixon) whose name gave her access to editorial offices if not the male friendships inside them. Dowie's relation to her celebrated grandfather Robert Chambers helped her in the early days, while Syrett's relative Grant Allen gave her access to literary circles. It was certainly D'Arcy's view that some women advanced their literary career by feminine wiles and achieved publication they would not have done on merit; women used what they could for their own advancement. The important point about these means of access is that they were not reinforced by other factors. Once their physical presence was absent, the women disappeared in the memories of the powerful, unlike those of the men whose positions were strengthened by the club, pub, school, college, and work network that reinforced male bonding.

Such neglect, or deliberate exclusion, of women continued throughout their careers and thereafter. Academic and antiquarian bookselling circles, which might have given kudos to writing of an earlier century, were similarly male endeavours for most of the twentieth century, and relegated women writers. Privilege favours those in closest proximity. Male privilege, like any other kind, can be exclusive and could deliberately exclude women. Undoubtedly that occurred, but privilege is much more likely to be determinedly *inclusive* of everyone else who has similar privilege, with occasional invitations to outsiders for variation. The act of including colleagues of the same sex, with similar backgrounds and experiences, necessarily excluded those who did not fit the criteria.

Dolf Wyllarde and '*Nous Autres*'

One of the neglected was Dolf Wyllarde (1871-1950), a *Yellow Book* writer who has left little trace despite her prolific output of over forty volumes of poetry and novels written between 1897 and 1939. Some of her novels were very successful and a film of Wyllarde's 1916 book *Exile: An Outcast of the Empire* was made by Maurice Tourner in 1917 as *Exile*. She has left almost no biographical information despite being sufficiently well known to be included in *Who Was Who* of 1952, though the editors did not know her birth date or her birth name.[40] In a 1906 novel, *The Pathway of the Pioneer*, she wrote of the struggles of women in the arts in the first years of the twentieth century. She describes seven women who meet as a club called *Nous Autres* [We Others]: a journalist, a writer, an actress, a teacher, a telephonist, a typist, and a musician. They find mutual support in a bare room with nothing for furniture except seven unmatched chairs and three packing cases; on one of these, in a setting reminiscent of a gentlemen's club, stand a syphon of soda water, a bottle of cheap claret, and half a bottle of whiskey, with cigarettes and matches on the mantelshelf.

Nous Autres are young women of some refinement but not the income to justify it, being 'professional men's' daughters without the private means of what they call 'Real Girls' who do not have to work for a living. By day they do grinding jobs which drain their strength while bringing in minimum income; they have 'too much delicacy for the fight before them'.[41] They talk about daily trials such as trying to keep clean in London (wearing dark colours which will not show the dirt), cooking their own meals with the cheapest ingredients possible, and darning their own clothes. Life is an unequal struggle where women are expected to maintain the same pace of work as men (but for less money): 'When we have ended our male day in the office, we have to go home and begin our female day – unless we have lost the sense of feminine decency and go in rags.'[42] Men were generally better equipped to live roughly and would accept less refinement in their living spaces. One of the friends remarks, 'A kind of rage came over me when I thought what a fight we

had, and how everything is made easy for men, and then they run us down for even trying to make our own living.'[43]

The women in Wyllarde's novel dodge sexual advances at work which are so frequent they treat any show of assistance or friendship from male colleagues with suspicion. *Nous Autres* are so used to sexual harassment that when a man proposes marriage to one of them in a roundabout way, she interprets it as an improper suggestion and rejects it. Professional advancement is slight for any of them and interviews for new work are a humiliation. An expectation of feminine restraint limits their self-promotion while their male colleagues have no such inhibitions. The lack of professional contacts curses such women, in a way that shows just how valuable were the 'at homes' of Aline and Henry Harland and the tea parties of Lane. In these the *Yellow Book* writers had not only been mixing with other writers, but with a publisher and editor who could commission their work. Clubs like The Lyceum, set up in 1909 for women working in literature, journalism, art, science and medicine, were all-female networking spaces which therefore did not provide a forum for women to access power in those worlds when power was almost exclusively in the hands of men.[44] Wyllarde's strongest depictions are of

> the great murderous world of journalism, which grinds and spares not, and asks impossible work of its victims, and dismisses without reason, and is bought and sold by interest behind the scenes. It is part of the everyday business of Fleet Street to break hearts. The stage is cruel, the musical world crushes and hammers the soul out of all endeavour into a grey monotony of form; but literature and journalism torture first and kill slowly – very slowly – by inches of a disease which, once caught, shall never be healed again.[45]

Wyllarde gives the most detailed description of Flair Chaldecott with her difficult personality, physical weakness and fondness for cats. Flair, who lives in two little rooms at the top of a gaunt building off Duncannon Street, Strand, is described as a writer or 'fictionist, freelance journalist, reporter, literary hack of all kinds, who lived on whatever work she could get, and had neither illusions nor ideals left from eight years of honest work.'[46] She is generous and giving to her friends but her long-term prospects are bleak and 'her possessions, when she died, amounted to twenty

pounds in the post office (which buried her) and certain trifling profits from two volumes of short stories'.[47] The profession of letters had given her much hard work for little reward.

The chief problem for the *Yellow Book* women was a lack of influential contacts and the absence of a network which supported them and included them outside of their own friendship group. Mutual support was all very well, but no match for a voice in the courts of favouritism that were publishers. Men without contacts were to suffer also, but they had many more opportunities to enter a discourse which was overwhelmingly male and held in male spaces. As the novelist Constance Smedley (known to the *Yellow Book* women) wrote, 'the sense of being at a disadvantage in all their communications with the world, business or social, was an impediment to success'.[48] This led to a dwindling of women's influence as the years passed while male networks reinforced each other. Periodicals predicated on male bonding, like *The Yellow Book*, effectively made women secondary contributors.

Much of the later neglect was the product of the lack of opportunities which women experienced in the 1890s. Women had been inhibited from promoting their literary wares at the same level as men, being reluctant to promote themselves. Not being brought up to be in the public sphere, they were continually at a disadvantage from men who took display and self-promotion as natural. The tradition of male spaces for business also militated against them; the pubs, clubs and 'smoking evenings' which were denied to them meant they did not have the contacts while in their prime, but also that they lacked the network of publishers, memoirists and anthologists to reinforce their value in later decades. In the twenty-first century, however, considerably more scholarly attention has been focused on women in the 1890s: conferences at Goldsmiths, University of London, on such subjects as 'Decadent Bodies' (2022) and 'Women Writing Decadence – European Perspectives' at the University of Oxford (2018); *The Latchkey, Journal of New Woman Studies* was founded in 2009; *Volupté: Interdisciplinary Journal of Decadence Studies* was established in 2018, and the British Association of Decadence Studies the same year. UK Universities of Goldsmiths, Surrey, Exeter, Loughborough, Durham, and Kings College London

have courses led by notable decadence scholars as do Stanford, the University of Delaware, and the University of California at Los Angeles in the USA. The study of *Yellow Book* women is therefore no longer outside the mainstream. The lives and work of these women are finally being appreciated anew, as the publication of *Decadent Women: Yellow Book Lives* (2023) and this special issue of *Volupté* demonstrates.

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[1] Hermione Lee, *Virginia Woolf* (Vintage, 1997), p. 564.
[2] Lee, *Woolf,* p. 566.
[3] Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis Psomiades, *Women and British Aestheticism* (University of Virginia Press, 2000), p. 13.
[4] See Jad Adams, *Decadent Women: Yellow Book Lives* (Reaktion, 2023), pp. 15, 74; and George Egerton *A Leaf from the Yellow Book: The Correspondence of George Egerton*, ed. by Terence de Vere White (Richards Press, 1958), p. 51.
[5] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own, and Three Guineas* (OUP, 2008), p. 103. Though not in *A Room of One's Own*, Charlotte Mew was the one *Yellow Book* woman writer Woolf took to herself (as a poet, not a fiction writer).
[6] Elaine Showalter, *Daughters of Decadence* (Virago, 1993), p. viii.
[7] Woolf, *A Room of One's Own,* p. 32.
[8] George Egerton, 'A Keynote to Keynotes', in *10 Contemporaries*, ed. by John Gawsworth (Ernest Benn, 1932), p. 58.
[9] *The Yellow Book*, vol. 3, October 1894, p. 12.
[10] www.histpop.org. By the next census of 1901, the figures were 21,300,000 women and 20,100,000 men (all figures rounded).
[11] George Gissing, 'The Foolish Virgin', *The Yellow Book,* vol. 8, January 1896, pp. 11-38, https://1890s.ca/YBV8_gissing_foolish/, and H. G. Wells, 'A Slip under the Microscope', *The Yellow Book*, vol. 8, January 1896, pp. 229-85, https://1890s.ca/YBV8_wells_microscope/. Both at *Yellow Book Digital Edition*, ed. by Dennis Denisoff and Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, *Yellow Nineties 2.0*, Ryerson University Centre for Digital Humanities, 2010-2020.
[12] Margaret Stetz and Mark Samuels Lasner, *The Yellow Book: A Centenary Exhibition* (Houghton Library, 1994), pp. 21-23. See Olive Custance, 'Twilight', *The Yellow Book*, vol. 3, October 1894, pp. 134-35, https://1890s.ca/YBV3_custance_twilight/, and John Davidson, 'The Ballad of a Nun', *The Yellow Book*, vol. 3, October 1894, pp. 273-79, https://1890s.ca/YBV3_davidson_ballad/; both at *Yellow Book Digital Edition*.
[13] Ann Ardis, *New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism* (Rutgers University Press, 1989), p. 2.
[14] W. B. Yeats, *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892-1935* (OUP, 1936), p. v.
[15] Jad Adams further discusses this in 'The 1890s Woman', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Fin-de-Siècle Literature, Culture and the Arts,* ed. by Josephine M. Guy (Edinburgh University Press, 2018), pp. 283-300.
[16] Susan Winslow Waterman, 'Ethel Colburn Mayne', *Dictionary of Literary Biography 197 Late-Victorian and Edwardian British Novelists,* ed. by George M. Johnson (Gale, 1999), p. 201.
[17] Lovat Dixon to Ethel Colburn Mayne, 19 February 1940, Macmillan Letterbook 463, Reading. The book was *Sentence of Life*.
[18] Arnold Bennett, *The Journal of Arnold Bennett 1896-1910* (Cassell, 1932), 12 December 1910. Bennett does not specify but this was probably her novel about the life of Shelley.
[19] Ella D'Arcy to Richard Watson Gilder, 22 December 1899, NYPL Century Collection.
[20] Ibid.
[21] George Egerton to Clement Shorter, 20 January 1894, Harlan O'Connell Collection, Princeton.
[22] Eliza Lynn Linton, 'The Wild Women as Social Insurgents', *Nineteenth Century,* 30 (October 1891), pp. 596-605 (p. 597).
[23] Netta Syrett, *The Sheltering Tree* (Geoffrey Bles, 1939), pp. 125-26.
[24] Schaffer, *Forgotten,* p. 30.
[25] Adams, *Decadent Women,* p. 337.
[26] Ella Hepworth Dixon, *'As I knew Them': Sketches of People I have Met on the Way* (Hutchinson, 1930).
Jad Adams discusses this in 'Feminist Solidarity in the Life and Work of Ella Hepworth Dixon', *The Latchkey: Journal of New Woman Studies,* www.thelatchkey.org/Latchkey5/essay/Adams.htm.
[27] Valerie Felhlbaum, *Ella Hepworth Dixon: The Story of a Modern Woman* (Ashgate, 2005), pp. 6-8.
[28] Alida Monro, 'Charlotte Mew: A Memoir', in *Collected Poems of Charlotte Mew* (Duckworth, 1953), p. xx.

[29] George Egerton, 'A Keynote to Keynotes', in John Gawsworth, *Ten Contemporaries* (Ernest Benn, 1932), p. 57.
[30] See Eleanor Fitzgerald, *The Life and Loves of E. Nesbit* (Duckworth, 2019).
[31] Ethel Colburn Mayne to Mary Butts, 14 June 1932, Gen MSS 487 Mary Butts Papers, Box 1, Folder 32, Beinecke Library, Yale.
[32] Joan Hardwick, *An Immodest Violet* (Andre Deutsch, 1990), p. 69.
[33] Evelyn Sharp letter to R. A. Walker, 14 April 1919, Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press.
[34] Lewis May, *John Lane* (John Lane, 1936), pp. 208-09 gives a partial list of the attendees, all male.
[35] Thomas P. Gill to George Egerton in *A Leaf from the Yellow Book*, p. 26.
[36] George Egerton to Clement Shorter, 7 July 1894, O'Connell collection, Princeton.
[37] Waugh, *One Man*, pp. 252-53.
[38] Ella Hepworth Dixon, *The Story of a Modern Woman* (Heinemann, 1894), p. 112.
[39] J. Lewis May, *John Lane and the Nineties* (Bodley Head, 1936), p. 150.
[40] 'Dolf Wyllarde', in *Who Was Who Vol IV 1941-1950* (A & C Black, 1952), p. 1271. Her birth name was Dorothy Margarette Selby Lowndes, and her date of birth was 3 April 1871.
[41] Dolf Wyllarde, *The Pathway of the Pioneer* (Methuen, 1906), p. 8.
[42] Ibid., p. 17.
[43] Ibid., *Pathway,* p. 138.
[44] Jad Adams, 'Netta Syrett: A Yellow Book survivor', *English Literature in Transition 1880-1920*, 62.2 (2019), pp. 206-43 (p. 236).
[45] Wyllarde, *Pathway,* p. 12.
[46] Ibid., p. 9.
[47] Ibid., p. 53.
[48] Constance Smedley, *Crusaders: The Reminiscences of Constance Smedley* (Duckworth, 1929), p. 54.