



The Papered Wall: History, Patterns and Techniques of Wallpaper

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From the highly prized luxury of Louis XVI panels to the myriad patterns ordinary home, and drawing on extensive new, research in many countries, this study follows the history of wallpaper from its beginnings around 1500 to the present day. Leading experts on wallpaper from Belgium, Britain, France, Germany and America unfold the story chronologically. The earliest papers were an offshoot of the printer's craft, produced in single sheets. The apparently simple step of pasting the small sheets together into rolls revolutionised both the design and the status of wallpaper, and opened the way for spectacular decorative effects: hand-painted Chinese panels, French panoramas to encircle a room, exquisitely printed bowers of roses. Reforms by William Morris and others, together with technical inventiveness in the later 19th century, put new kinds of wallcoverings and a vast choice of patterns before a world-wide market. In the 20th century a struggle between radically modern and traditional ideas has produced a multitude of striking styles, from Jugendstil and Art Deco to Bauhaus and post-war contemporary prints. Hundreds of carefully chosen illustrations, of not only the papers themselves but also of their settings in paintings and on the walls of contemporary rooms, offer a vivid visual record of patterns for different uses, markets and tastes. Lesley Hoskins, a design historian, is Archivist for Arthur Sanderson and Sons, and is currently working on the wallpapers of William Morris for the Morris centenary exhibition to be held in 1996 at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

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