WALLPAPER – FURTHER READING and COLLECTIONS

The literature on Wallpapers is not extensive and comparatively little has been published over the past decade. The best survey of the subject is Hoskins 2001 which provides an excellent history of the main techniques and trends in Europe and America. Saunders 2010 explores the ways in which wallpaper was used and bought and sold. Parry's catalogue of the major William Morris exhibition includes a section on his wallpaper, and Hawksley 2016 provides a fascinating insight into the use of arsenic in Victorian wallpapers. The Wallpaper History Society, established in 1986, publishes a bi-annual Journal which contains scholarly articles and short updates related to the history, production, reviews and recent discoveries.

The largest collection of historic wallpaper in Britain is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which has been acquiring wallpapers since the early 1900s. The collection at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester includes a good representation of 19th and 20th century wallpapers, particularly machine-printed patterns. The Museum of Domestic Architecture (MoDA) at Middlesex University includes many early 20th century designs from the Silver Studio and examples of inter- and post-war wallpapers. The archives of Arthur Sanderson & Sons, and Cole & Sons, remain within their respective companies and are only accessible by appointment.

Large collections of wallpaper also exist abroad, at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York, and at the Musee des Arts Decoratifs in Paris. The Musee du Papier Peint in Rixheim has a fine collection of French, luxury papers. The Tapetenmuseum in Kassel is the only museum exclusively devoted to the history of wallpapers.

Historic houses that retain period decorations often include old wallpapers. The majority date from the mid 19th century and later and there are varied examples at Calke Abbey, Tyntesfield, and Brodsworth. Interiors with William Morris wallpaper can be seen at Wightwick Manor, Standen, and Emery Walker's House. Earlier samples and Chinese wallpapers feature at Oxburgh Hall, Saltram House, and Erdigg (all National Trust properties).

Further Reading

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Hapgood, O., Wallpaper and the Artist from Durer to Warhol, New York, 1992

Hawksley, L., Bitten by Witch-Fever: Wallpaper and Arsenic in the Victorian Home, London, 2016

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Jacque, B. (ed.), Les Papiers Peints en Arabesques, Rixheim, 1995

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Oman, C. C., and Hamilton, J., Wallpapers: A History and Illustrated Catalogue of the Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1982

Parry, L., (ed.) (exh. cat.), William Morris, New York, 1996

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Schoeser, M., Sanderson: The Essence of English Decoration, London, 2010

Sugden., A. V., and Edmondson, J. L., A History of English Wallpaper 1509-1924, London, 1926

Turner, M. and Hoskins, L., Silver Studio of Design. A Design and Source Book for Home Decoration, London, 1988

Wells-Cole., A., Historic Paper Hangings from Temple Newsam and Other English Houses, Leeds, 1983

Woods, C., Sanderson 1860-1985, London, 1985

Places to Visit

Emery Walker House, Hammersmith Standen House, West Sussex Linley Sambourne House, Kensington Wightwick Manor, Woverhampton Tyntesfield, North Somerset Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich Calke Abbey, Derbyshire Brodsworth Hall, South Yorkshire Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk Erdigg, Wrexham Saltram House, Devon Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire Wrest Park, Bedfordshire

Jo Banham, January 2022