DECORATING WITH WALLPAPER

C. 1840 - 1914

COVER

English wallpaper registered at the
British Patent Office in 1882 and
produced by the firm of Lightbown,
Aspinall & Co.
This unused remant was the gift of
Mrs Fay Bolton and a reproduction
of the design is available in
Australia from Paperhangings.

DECORATING WITH WALLPAPER

A Guide to Assist in the Conservation and Restoration of Buildings

by Phyllis Murphy
Having undertaken post-graduate research in the
use of historic wallpapers in Australia, Phyllis
Murphy is a retired architect whose interest stems
from an involvement in restoration projects during
her thirty four years of architectural practice
with her husband.
She is now a consultant to Paperhangings, an
Australian venture, which is bringing to our
market a range of historically accurate wallpapers
up to the 1930s.

WALLPAPERS BULLETIN

FORWORD

The National Trust is pleased to present this Technical
Bulletin, entitled 'Decorating with Wallpaper, circa 1840
to 1914'.

This new title is the latest in the series of Technical
Bulletins produced by the National Trust, with the assistance
of grants through the National Estate program. For this new
Bulletin, we have been fortunate to receive supplementary
sponsorship through the firm Paperhangings. This is our first
such joint venture in publishing, and we are keen to explore
further possibilities in the future.

I am certain that you will find this new Bulletin on Wallpapers
as fascinating as I do myself. Popular interest in authentic
period decoration has grown enormously in recent years and the
Wallpapers Bulletin will fulfil a real community need. The
Bulletin is outstanding both for the depth of knowledge displayed
by its author Mrs Phyllis Murphy and for the clarity of her
explanation. The Bulletin is very useful for layman and
specialist alike.

I commend our new Wallpapers Technical Bulletin to you.

<div align="right">

S.R. MOLESWORTH
Chairman
National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

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Acknowledgements

All illustrations in the Bulletin
are diagrammatic and not
to scale.

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout most of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries wallpaper was almost invariably chosen as part of the interior decoration used in Australian buildings from the simplest cottage to the grandest mansion. Today, there is a great movement to restore old buildings accurately and in sympathy with the intentions of the designers and original occupants.

Both the selection and application of a suitable historic wallpapers can be a complex and daunting task without some knowledge and understanding of stylistic characteristics. This bulletin sets out to explain and illustrate the correct methods of wallpapering at different periods. The suggestions, to some degree, are generalized since allowances must always be made for personal choice. The purpose is to clarify many of the doubts which exist in the minds of those who plan to restore a building or a room; to assist those in the decorating trade who do not have the time to carry out detailed research; to make it possible to evoke the beauty and character of the rooms when they were orginally used.

First of all it is essential to date, as accurately as possible, the period to which the room is to be restored, since fashions in interior decorating changed frequently. Another point to remember is that there was normally a time lag between the manufacture of wallpaper in England, France, America and other countries and its hanging on Australian walls.
Transportation and distribution could take up to several years. Although there is some evidence of locally made products, most wallpaper was imported.

Glossary:

Adaptation: A modern wallpaper which generally retains the overall appearance of an original document wallpaper.

Anaglypta: Highly embossed wallpaper, often imitating plaster work. Colour is generally applied after hanging.

All-over Design: Pattern which covers the entire paper without any predominant element.

Architrave: Moulded surround to windows and doors, generally of timber.

Block Printing: Printing by means of a wooden block which is pressed on to the paper.

Border: Narrow decorative band of wallpaper used as an embellishment.

Chair rail: Timber rail used at the top of a dado.

Chair rail border: Wallpaper border used at the top of a dado in place of a timber rail.

Colourway: Term for identifying the colours of a wallpaper design. The design may be available in alternative colour combinations or colourways.

Conventional Design: A regularly arranged pattern as opposed to the natural delineation of a subject.

Cornice: Continuous moulding at the junction of wall and ceiling.

Dado: Continuous design on the lower part of the wall between skirting, chair rail border or chair rail.

Damask Design: Usually of shiny ground and matt finish design; often of classical character.

Diaper: Design with elements which are linked together, usually in diamond shape or diagonally placed squares.

Document: The original wallaper which is accurately copied for reproduction.

Embossing: Process which gives the paper an irregular or textured surface.

Filling: Wallpaper which covers the main area of the wall.

Flocking: The pattern is defined by the application of cut or ground material which is glued to the paper to create a nap.

Frieze: Decorative band of wallpaper used just below the cornice until well into the twentieth century when it dropped below the picture rail.

Fullers Earth An absorbent clay compound, generally obtainable from pharmaceutical chemists.

Graining, imitation: Printing process which produced the appearance of natural timber.

Ground: A coating of background colour applied before printing the design.

Monochromatic: Colour scheme based on shades of one colour.

Neo-classical: Modern form of classical detail.

Powdering: Design formed of scattered motifs.

Repeat: One complete design element of a wallpaper.

Rococo: Application of renaissance details, usually expressed as elaborate scrollwork in wallpaper design.
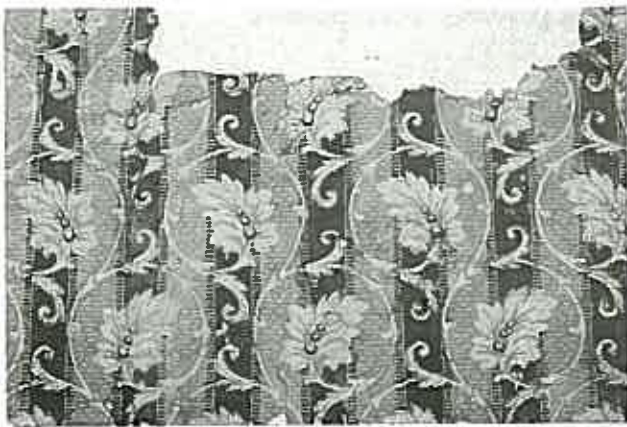
Sanitary Papers: Wallpapers which are printed in oil colours to provide an easily cleaned surface.

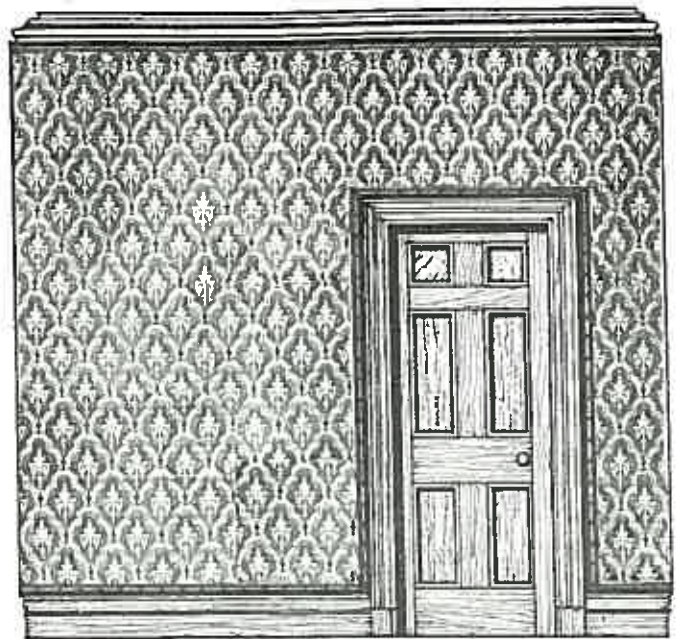**Satins:** Wallpapers which are produced with a polished background.

2. MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

Wallpapers used during the middle years of the nineteenth century were strongly influenced by French designers. They were generally block printed, using rococo details, naturalistic florals and imitation drapery. But after years of world supremacy, the popularity of French products began to wane while experimentation proceeded with machine printing which lent itself to small scale motifs, stripes and all-over patterns. There was, therefore, an intermingling of styles.

An eminent English authority, J. C. Loudon, suggested that a border was needed at base and ceiling level of the wall, to minimize the contrast between the pattern of the paper with the plain ceiling above. In 1850 his Amercian disciple, A. J. Downing, expressed the view that where no cornice existed in modest rooms, a border virtually represented the cornice. The border could have been scrolled and flocked or simple and narrow. It could have been gilt, floral or architectural, but whatever its design, the most essential characteristic was the contrast to the paper so that it read as a sharply contrasting outline or accentuation to the architectural elements of the room.
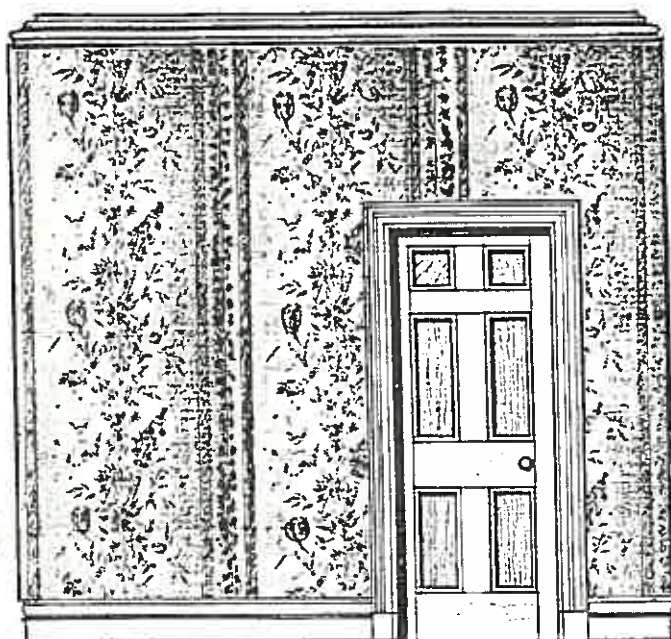
All-over pattern used with contrasting border or fillet to outline the architectural features of the room.
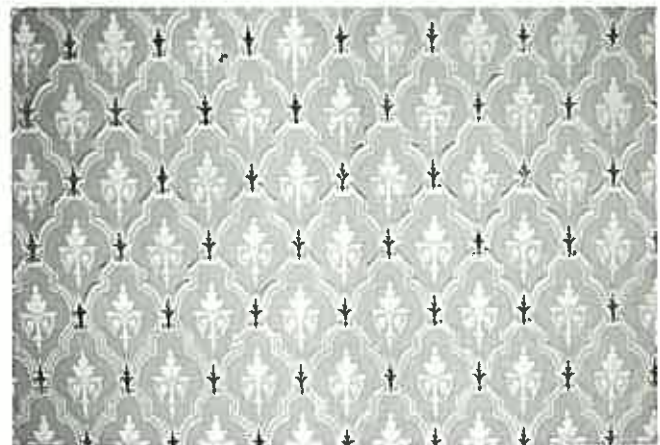
C.1850s Filling; unused remnant.

C.1840s Filling from Captain Mill's Cottage, Port Fairy, Victoria.
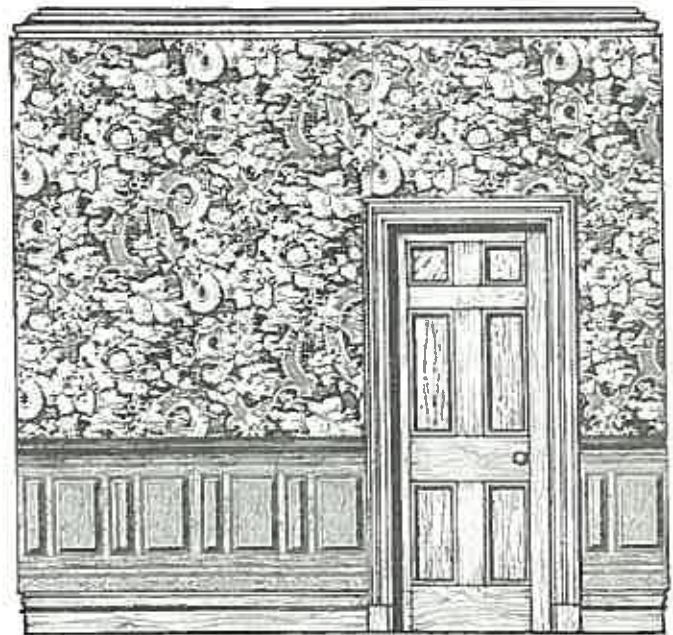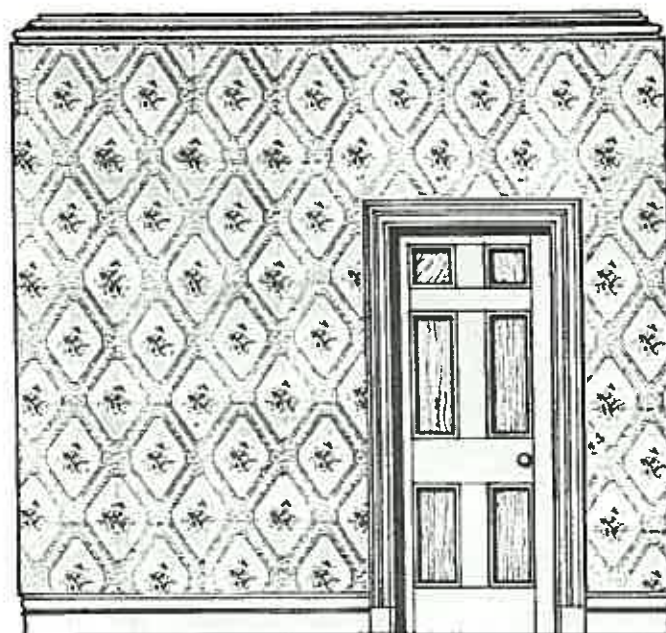
Suitable design for a dining room with a filling of flowers and scrollwork on a flock background, combined with timber panelled dado, C.1850s.

French influence filling of floral stripes on a satin ground, hung without borders, C.1850s.


Diaper pattern with floral posies, hung without borders, C.1860.

By about the 1860 s the border was often omitted.

Simple, geometric, foliate and floral forms printed in solid, flat colours were used as motifs in the repeating patterns of the period. The fashionable Gothic influence brought with it a new attitude to design which was reflected in some of the allover geometric patterns based on small, chaste motifs, sometimes developed from historic ornament.

Small scale patterns were chosen for small rooms and more elaborate, larger scale designs were more usually chosen for drawing and dining rooms.

Borders and corner pieces were sometimes used to form panels, or fresco papers as they were called in America. They could be plain, lightly patterned or contain scenes within the panels.
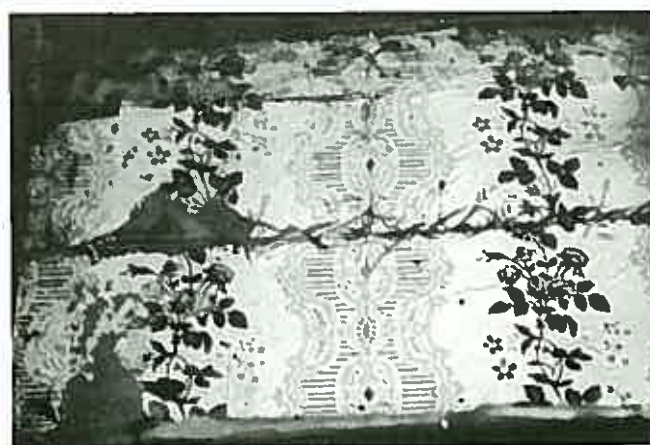
C.1850s Filling from Steam Packet Inn, Portland, Victoria.

Picture rails were either incorporated into the cornice or rods were bracketed from the wall just below the cornice. If panels were used, the rods were bracketed within each panel.
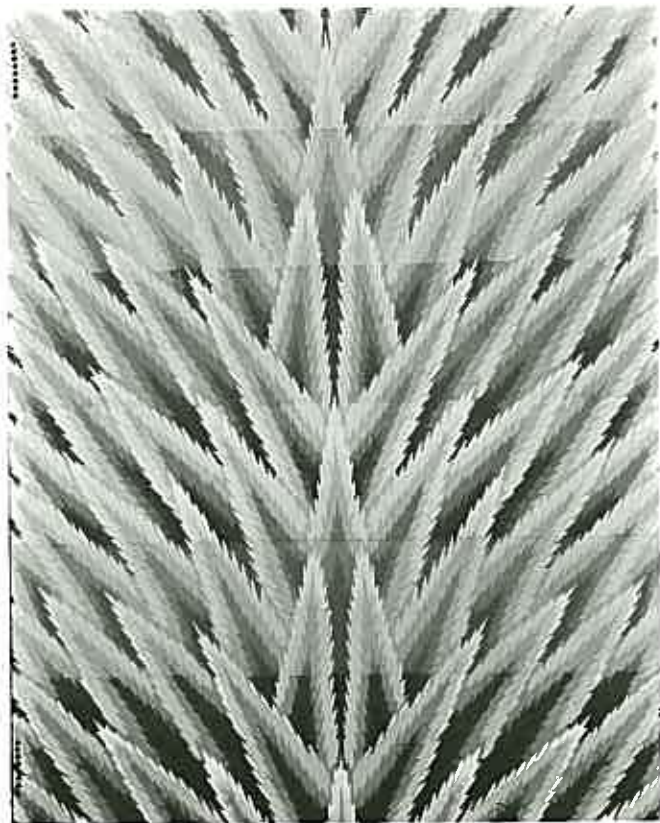
Reproduction of French Fillin (Cristaux) produced by Brunschwig and Fils; available from Decor Associates.

C.1850s Filling from 30 Campbell Street,Port Fairy, Victoria.
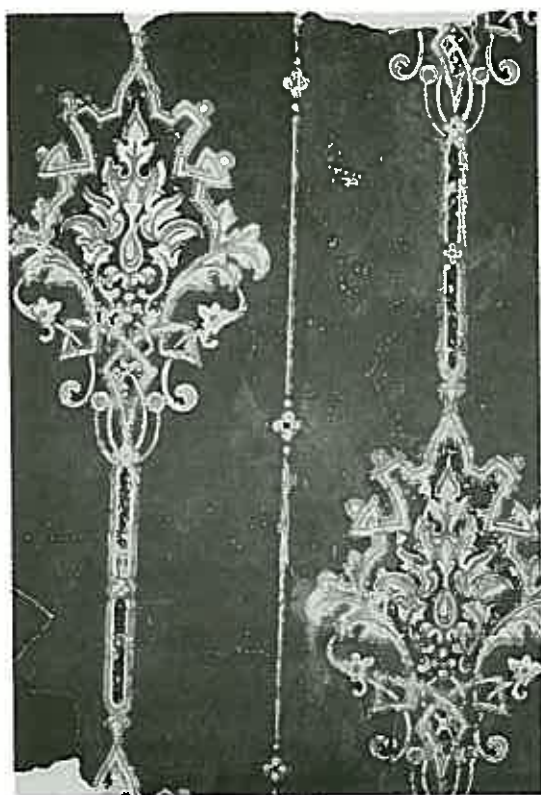
1858 Flock Filling from the formerColonial Bank, Yackandandah.

C.1850s Filling from 30 Welsh Street, Kyneton, Victoria.

3. HALLS, STAIRWAYS AND PASSAGES : IMITATION STONEWORK AND GRAINING

A remarkably long lasting technique was the use of imitation masonry and stone patterns, particularly for halls stairways and passages. They were considered suitable for use in churches, meeting halls and prefabicated buildings.

In 1833, J. C. Loudon recommended their use in the Enyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture and Furniture suggesting that a satisfactory wallpaper was "simply marked with lines in imitation of hewn stone.....when any part of this paper is damaged, a piece, of the size of the one of the stones can be renewed, without having the appearance of a patch."

By the 1850 s and 1860 s, shading, imitation chamfering and tooling were represented on the blocks of stone, thus creating an illusion of three dimensions. The plain variety were also in demand and appeared to reach a peak of popularity around the 1860 s.

So-called "granite" papers were sent out from England with pre-fabricated buildings. Many were printed by some form of spatter work which resulted in a rough, realistic texture. They could be purchased plain or marked with joint lines, so that each "block" could be cut out and hung in the way that ashlar masonry is laid.
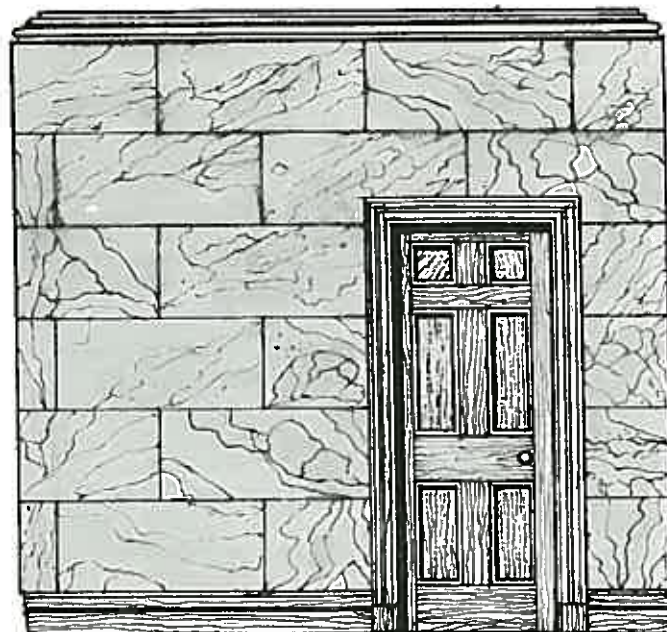
Halls, Stairs and Passages
Imitation ashlar masonry paper. This was cut into blocks and hung as if laying stone. Joints were already lined on the paper or were added after hanging.

The popularity of ashlar masonry papers over a number of years has been shown by the removal of several similar layers from the walls of Australian buildings. As the century proceeded, more elaborate designs were produced, based on masonry and sometimes incorporating scenes.

There was a widespread practice of applying varnish for cleanliness, although the devlopment of "sanitary" papers made this less necessary. Imitation timber graining, lining boards and panelling were popular for hall dados and offices. They also were used for many years and were varnished or printed in"sanitary" paper.

1856 Stair Hall wallpaper from Clarendon Terrace, East Melbourne.

C.1870s Stair Hall decoration from Fossway, Greenhill, Victoria which combined imitation masonry with a dado of imitation timber graining.
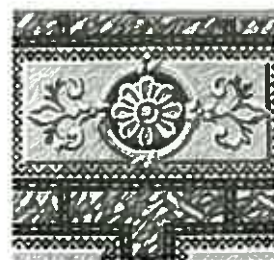
1889 design based on masonry from C. and J. G. Potter catalogue.

4. 1870s Period

By the 1870s, wallpaper designs using conventionalized motifs and based on geometric construction were generally accepted. These designs were two dimensional or "flat" and usually of simple and symmetrical character. Small motifs in powdered arrangement and all-over stylized florals were used with or without friezes, which at first were as narrow as borders but widened as the century proceeded.
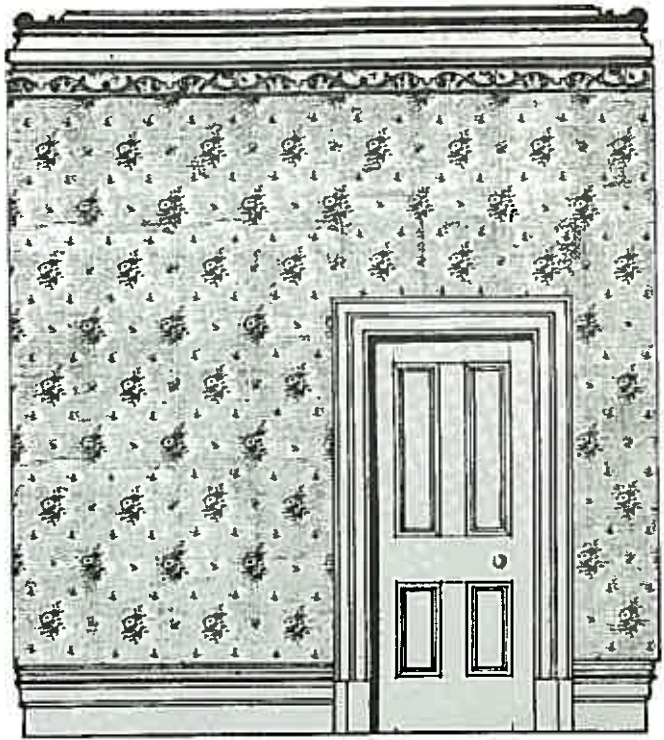
During this period, William Morris' first wallpaper designs were produced but they do not appear to have had an impact in Australia at this time, although many reproductions have been used subsequently. Morris' papers were expensive and 'art' interiors were rare in this country. Many wallpapers, however, did reflect the influence of this famous designer.

Powdered design of floral motifs, combined with narrow frieze, C.1870s

Amongst other exotic influences, Japanese motifs soon filtered through from other branches of decorative art to wallpaper design. It was the disciples of the Aesthetic Movement who found full expression for their admiration of Japanese art in the design of the dado. It was towards the end of the seventies that the dado-filling-frieze vogue began and by the 1880s it was well accepted in Australia.

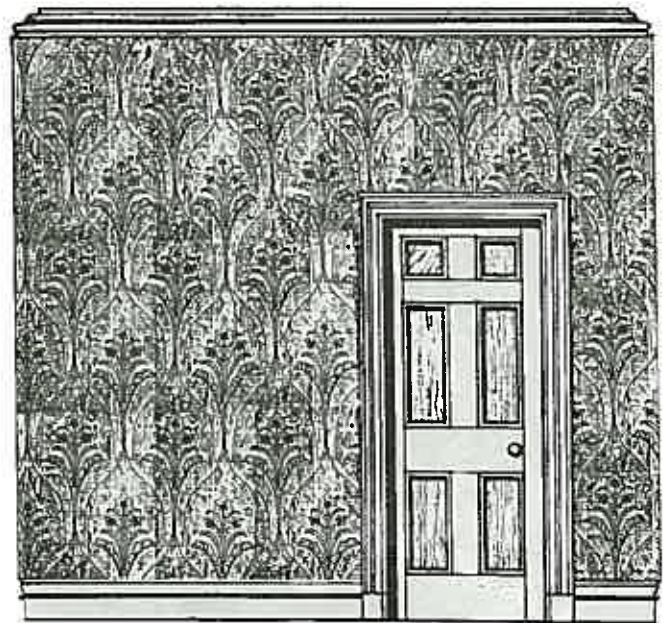C.1870s Filling from Gairdners Cottage, French Island, Victoria.

C.1870s Fifth layer from Box's Cottage, Moorabbin, Victoria (now demolished).

French wallpapers were losing favour in preference to those of English manufacture, but those that were available were usually simple designs of evenly spaced floral or classical motifs in subdued colours.

Diaper pattern of formalized floral motif which reflected the rejection of three dimensional patterns. A frieze was not necessarily used, C.1870s.

C.1870s Filling used at Clarendon Terrace, East Melbourne and found on under floor fragments at Labassa, Caulfield, Victoria.

C.1870s Filling from Clarendon Terrace, East Melbourne, Victoria.

There was a market for nursery papers and assymetrically arranged scenic panels and as the decade moved towards its close, interiors were more elaborately decorated. Unless the frieze was reasonably deep, the picture rail or fixings remained at cornice level or were bracketed from the wall just below the cornice. When a deeper frieze was used the picture rail often separated the filling from the frieze. Borders were sometimes used to outline the ceiling and the period can be seen as the forerunner to the flamboyance of the last twenty years of the nineteenth century.


C.1870s Filling from Pleasant Bank, Lauriston,Victoria.

5. 1880s Period

The dado, filling and frieze formula enjoyed the height of its popularity in the 1880 s. It was in this way that the majority of rooms were decorated with borders separating dados from fillings which in turn were topped by colourful friezes. These ususally had a depth of 18 cm or 26 cm, because they were printed two or three to the width of the roll. This fashion was by no means restricted to domestic use only. It was often to be seen in shops and commercial premises.

There was always a horizontal line of demarcation between the frieze and filling; it could have been a strong base line in the design itself, a narrow, painted or gilt bead or a picture rail. Where a bead was used, the rods for picture hanging were bracketed from the frieze. Sometimes the frieze was co-ordinated in colour or design with the filling or dado, but on the other hand it was not uncommon to combine a classical flowing design with a conventionalized filling.
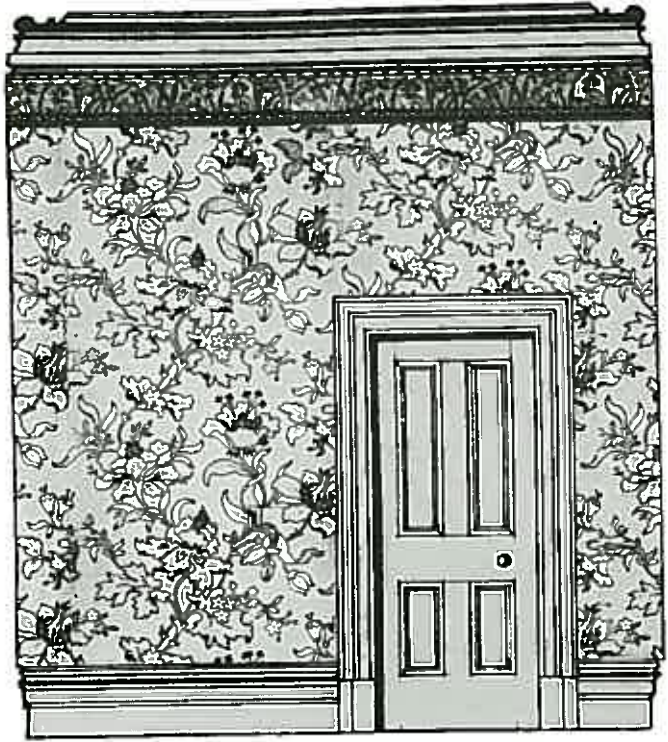
Conventionalized floral filling and frieze of patterns which did not necessarily match, C.1880s.
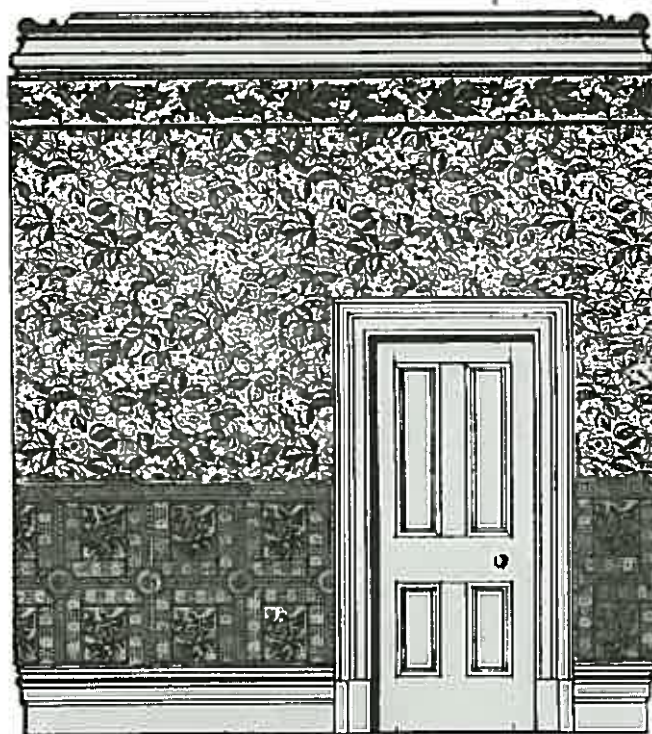

C.1881 Filling.

1889 Filling from C. and J. G. Potter catalogue.

Full reign was given to the popularity of Japanese motifs in the design of the dado largely through the influence of the Aesthetic Movement. Birds and exotic flowers were used in panelled and assymetrical arrangements. The filling above was always lighter in colour and character, both as a contrast and to provide a less obtrusive background for pictures. They were usually conventionlized florals in all-over patterns which camouflaged the repeats. There was also a demand for floral patterns with scrollwork as well as the stylish aesthetic designs.

If the decorative scheme did not include the dado, it was more likely to be a bedroom or perhaps a drawing room, but the frieze was included, almost without exception. A new dado might have been superimposed over an existing, earlier filling in order to "modernize" an interior and this helps to explain the odd combinations of design which were sometimes used.

Dado, filling and frieze shown at the height of its popularity. A contrasting border finished the Japanese influence dado, C.1880s.

During the 1880's the first multi-coloured "sanitary" papers were produced following earlier experiments in the production of monochromatic, washable wallpapers. They were printed in oil colours by engraved rollers and their popularity was due to their ability to be cleaned or wiped over. They were particularly popular for dados.

At this period, special staircase dados were designed to be used on the rake. Another way that stair dados were arranged was to use a panelled design in which each panel was cut and placed side by side up the staircase. It was then finished by a border on the angle.

In more elaborately decorated houses, the dining rooms, hall or library sometimes had an embossed dado, usually highlighted with gilding and hung beneath a timber chair rail. This might have been combined with a frieze in relief, but not necessarily of matching pattern.

The ceiling was often papered and elaborately bordered in this period of exuberant decoration when a variety of patterns were used together.

C.1880s Filling from Raheen, Kew, Victoria.

Married on 24th November, 1886 at North Melbourne, Jane Paull and Thomas Blake were photographed in a fashionably decorated room.
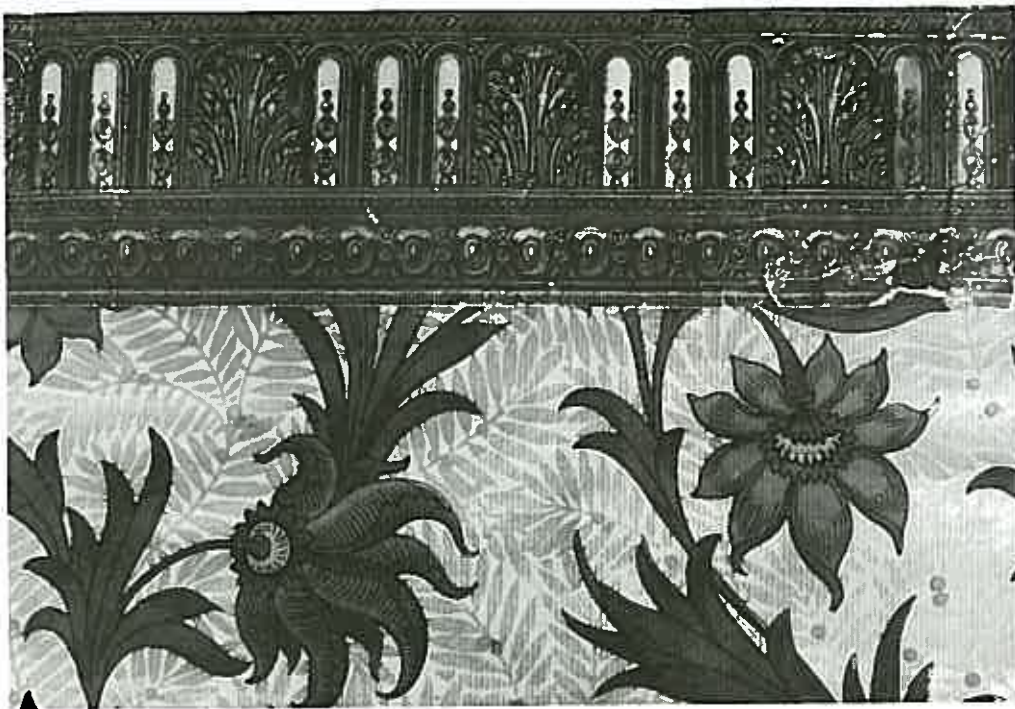
5. C.1880s Filling and Embossed Frieze used in a Melbourne dining room.

C.1880s Dado; unused remnant.

1889 Filling from C. and J. G. Potter
Catalogue.

6. 1890s Period

The last decade of the nineteenth century brought with it the re-emergence of the three dimensional flower, displayed in gilded magnificence. While a movement to simplify wall treatment was gaining momentum with architects and designers, the general public seemed to prefer to cover its walls with full-blown flowers, buds and foliage, often from different species, but all from the same stems which curved upwards from skirting to cornice.
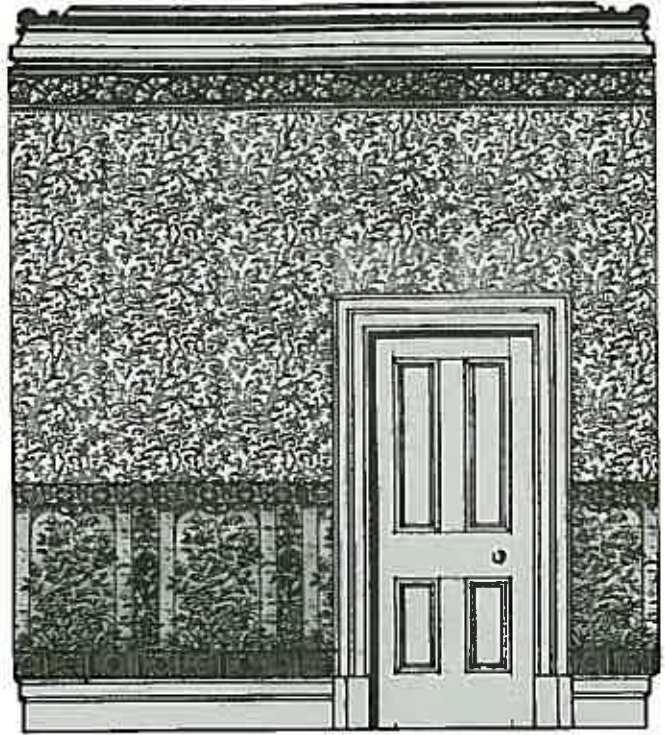
Renewed popularity of three dimensional floral patterns was reflected in this dado, combined with all-over floral filling and scrolling frieze, C.1890.

C.1890 Filling; unused remnant.

The influence of William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement was reflected in some of the imaginative and stylized designs which were now machine produced. The first signs of the Art Nouveau movement appeared, quickly becoming popular with the less conservative.

Although the dado began to lose favour during the nineties, it continued to be used to a lesser extent until well into the twentieth century, particularly in halls, passages and areas of use. Coincidentally, the frieze gained in importance and became the dominant element in the deoration of the wall. It could even be the full width of the wallpaper roll in depth and a beading, or more usally a picture rail, divided it from the filling.

C.1890s Frieze.

"Sanitary Papers" which had developed to a stage of technical excellence since first being manufactured in the 1880 s continued to satisfy the fetish for cleanliness. They were particularly popular in passages and hall or other positions of heavy wear.

Embossed papers added a look of luxury. When used in friezes the patterns were usually flowing and classical, perhaps based on traditional plaster mouldings.

As the nineteenth century concluded, the great era of elaborate decoration was about to wane and the quality of many wallpapers declined as they were mass produced at low cost. The move had begun towards plainer decoration of interiors.
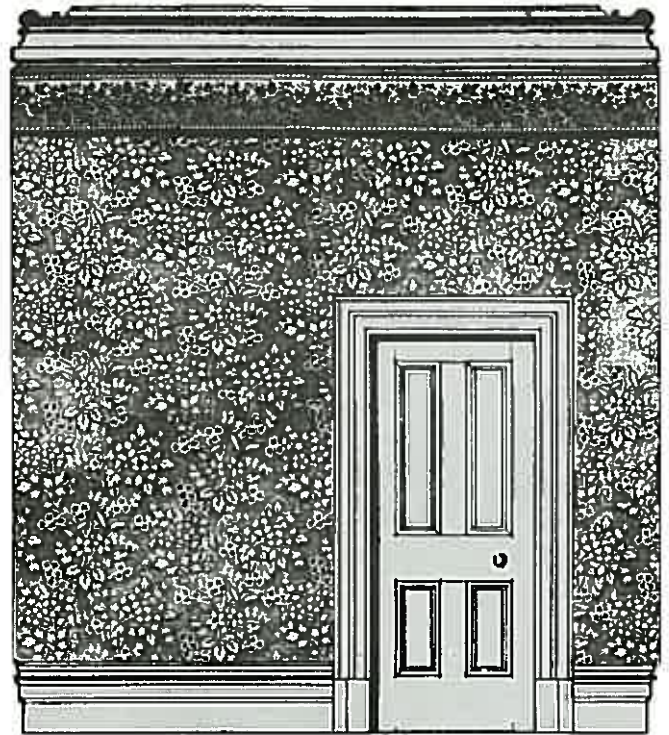
"Cottagey" and all-over florals, combined with flowing friezes, were popular in the 1890s.

C.1890s Filling from former surveyor's office, Collingwood Town Hall, Victoria.

1892 Frieze from Allan Cockshut and Co. catalogue.

C.1890s Dado, as shown in
Our Beautiful Homes - NSW at
Kenilworth, Harris Park, NSW.

C.1890s Filling from the dining
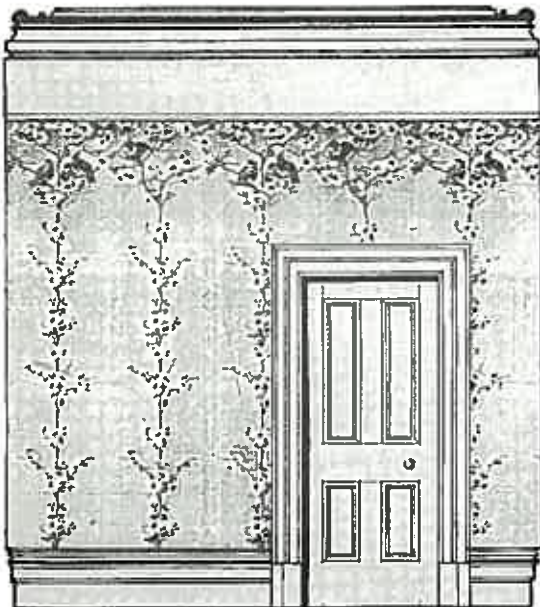room, Pastoria, Kyneton, Victoria.

Unidentified Melbourne interior, illustrating the late nineteenth century enthusiasm for
flowing floral wallpaper.
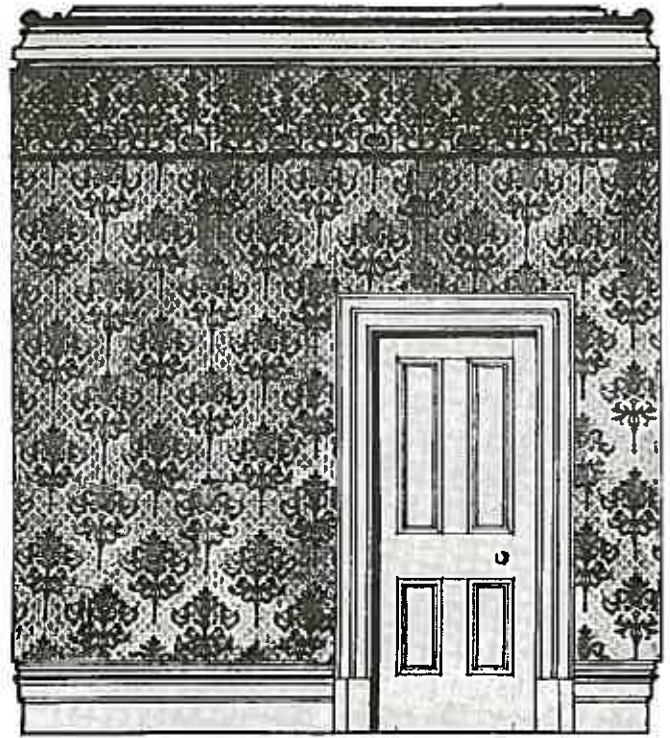
7. Early Twentieth Century

As the new century began wallpaper continued to be extensively used in a number of different styles. Art Nouveau designs gained a solid foothold in Australia, but so did decorating in the French revival manner. It was in the United States that this revival was particularly popular and many American wallpapers were imported into Australia, in addition to English, French and Canadian. Fleur-de-Lis, garlands of leaves and festoons of flowers were popular motifs, sometimes combined with fashionably graded backgrounds of blended colour.

Friezes were printed to match most repeating patterns. They had increased in width to the extent that they became the dominating elements in the decoration of walls. When the frieze was the full width of the roll, it stretched from cornice to the more modern, lower position of the picture rail.

The crown frieze was a new and innovative idea. The motif was usually a plant form: trunks, stems or vines rose from the base of the wall at regularly spaced intervals. These joined with the frieze at the top which then spread as a crown.

The use of a deeper frieze, sometimes matching the filling was popular around the turn of the century. In this example the design reflected a French revival influence.

A new innovation was the crown frieze which combined the frieze with vertical motifs incorporated in the filling and usually terminated at the picture rail, C.1907.

1905 Art Nouveau Filling; unused remnant.

With the more dominating friezes were combined painted walls or plain, self-patterned wallpapers. Landscapes, seascapes or depiction of special events added to the variety of friezes which were combined with plainer surfaces that had been the vogue in the previous century.

There was still a steady demand for traditional designs such as "cottagey" florals which were particularly popular for bedrooms. Embossed papers provided an appearance of luxury. Imitation leather papers and other relief designs reached the height of their popularity in the first decade of the twentieth century. They incorporated both Art Nouveau and neo-classical motifs.
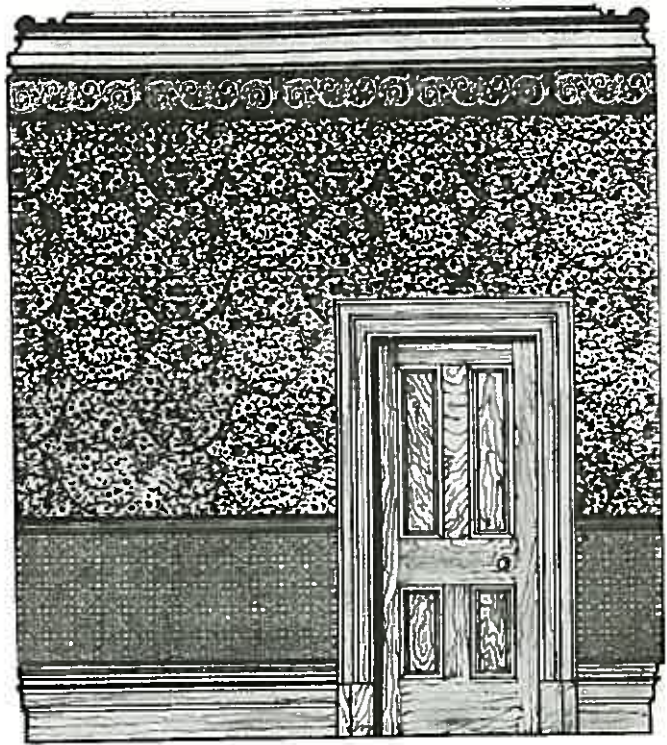
With Art Nouveau designs came bright colours, printed thinly on light and inexpensive paper. The frieze provided the brightest element in the room. Sometimes these lively designs were combined with plain, strong colours. Plain friezes were a new innovation; they often matched the ceiling in a pale shade of the predominant colour of the wallpaper.

A complete change in the use of colour resulted in a new fashion of white woodwork and ceiling. In another scheme, the cream walls and white ceiling were combined with gloss finish crimson and carmine woodwork. There was not complete acceptance of white. Some experts recommended that if desired it should be used on the ceiling rose and prominent moulding of the cornice with a deeper colour in a recess of the cornice and the ceiling in a lighter tint than the wallpaper. Whatever the choice of colour, it was important to harmonize the ceiling and cornice with the wallpaper. Skirtings, doors and joinery was usually painted in one colour only, unless wood grained or varnished.

Often in classical style, embossed wall papers reached the peak of their popularity around the turn of the century.
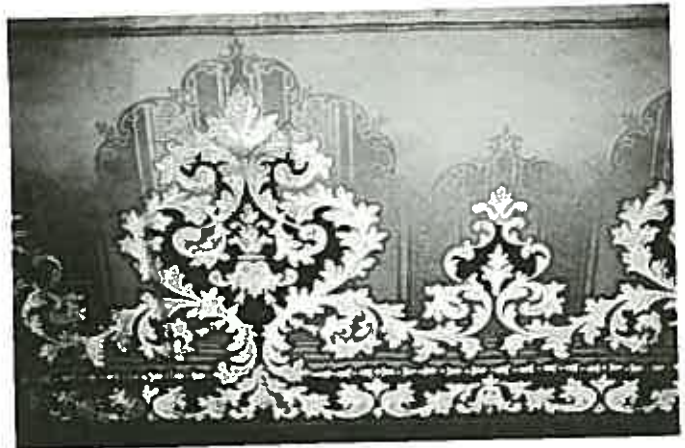
C.1905 Frieze by Watson, Foster Co. of Canada. A design similar to this full depth frieze still exists in the drawing room of Wardlow, Parkville, Victoria.

C.1905 Frieze manufactured in Canada; unused remnant.
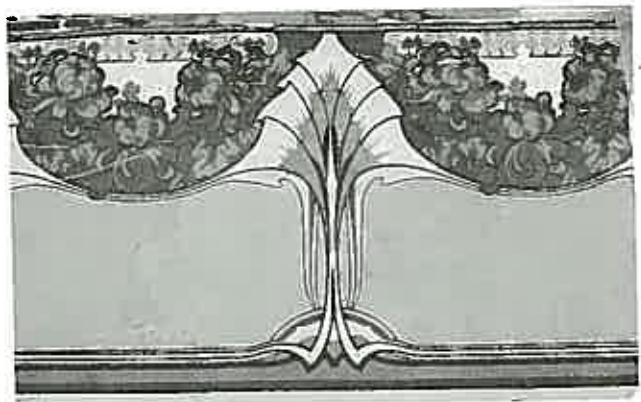
C.1905 Art Nouveau Frieze from house at the corner of Adair and Chapel Streets, Maldon, Victoria.

The French Revival of the early 1900s brought with it a considerable use of gilding. Imitation leather and embossed papers reached the height of their popularity. They continued to be used as hall and passage dados combined with useful colours such as stone and buff.
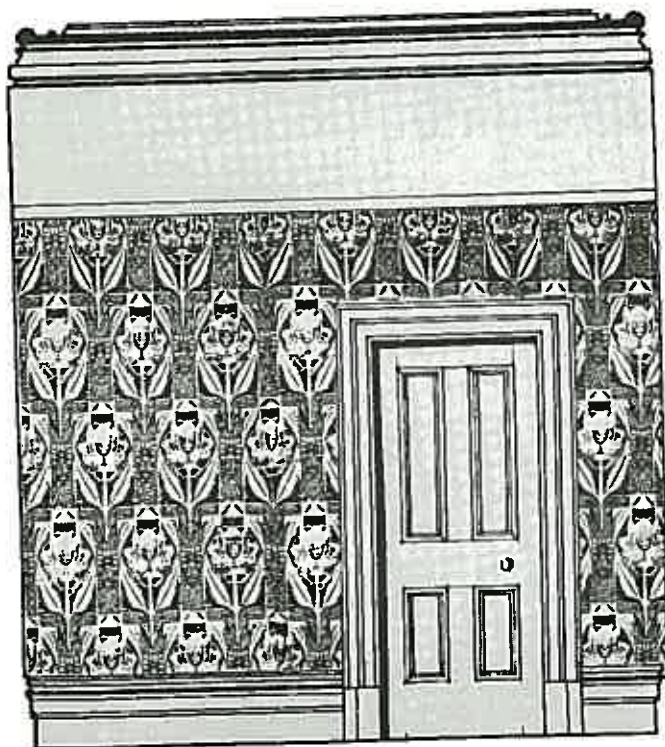
Pastel colours with touches of black were also to be seen. These were colours which were to become popular after World War I.

Festoons and swags provided a popular replacement for the classical, scrolling frieze. In Federation rooms this might have been combined with a simple, striped filling, C.1905.

1905 "Sanitary" paper; probably designed to be a dado.

A lower picture rail and plain colour above contrasted with this Art Nouveau filling, C.1905.

C.1905 Filling from the dining room at Elimatta, Kyneton, Victoria.
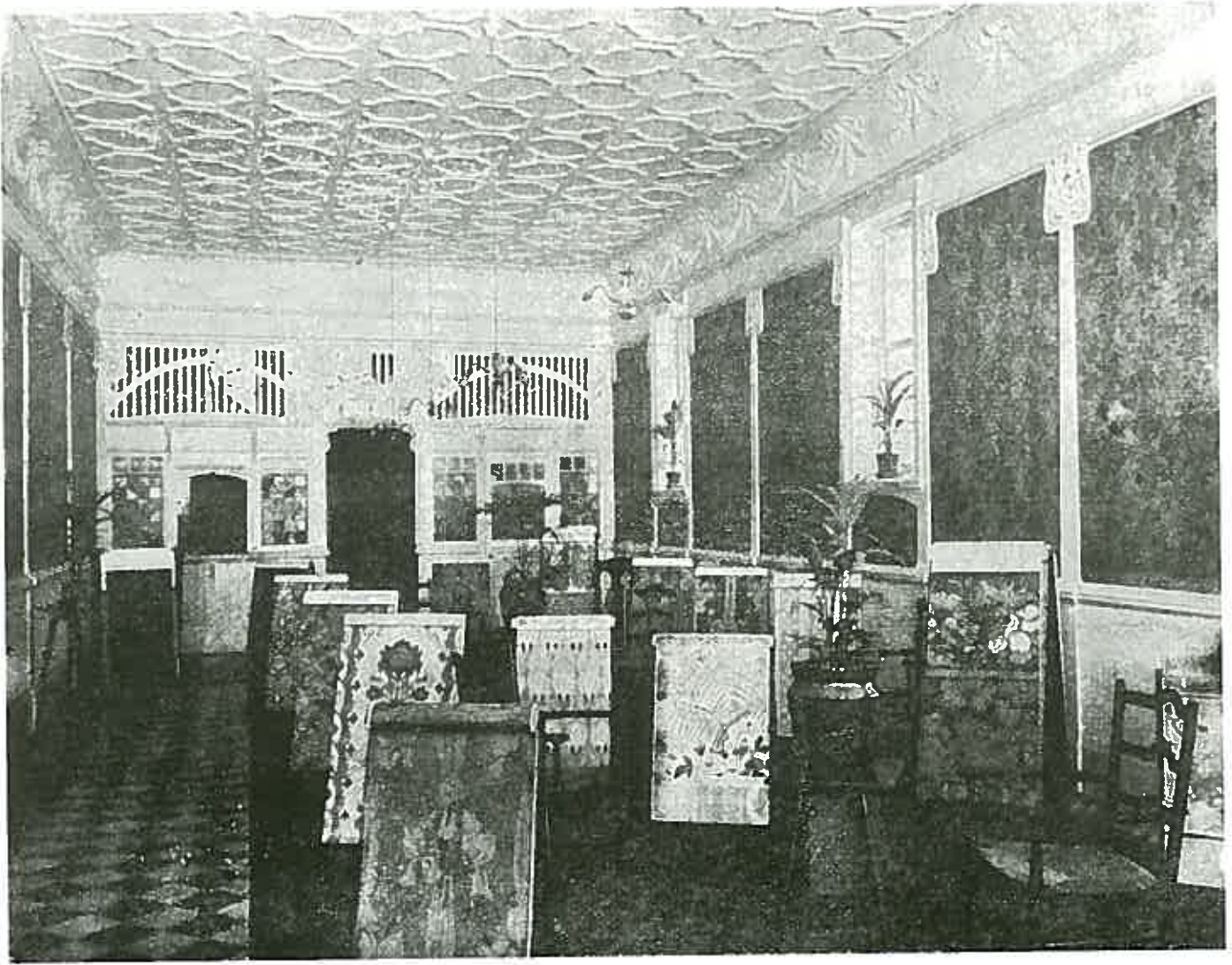
Sydney showroom of Thomas Whitelaw and Co. illustrated in Australasian Decorator and Painter 1 October 1905. The embossed ceiling, dado and frieze were painted snow white to contrast with panels of red wallpaper.``

8. Towards World War I

During the few years before World War I a new innovation was sometimes adopted. A deep, plain frieze was formed by the continuation of the ceiling colour down to the picture rail. Alternatively, it was formed by bringing down the ceiling paper in the same way. Rarely was a dado to be seen except in passages and halls and the relief frieze was also considered out of date.

There was a revival in the use of graded colour, often incorporated into damask designs and a continued use of plain or self patterned fillings with brightly coloured friezes. Varnished, washable imitation tiles were available for kitchen and bathroom use.
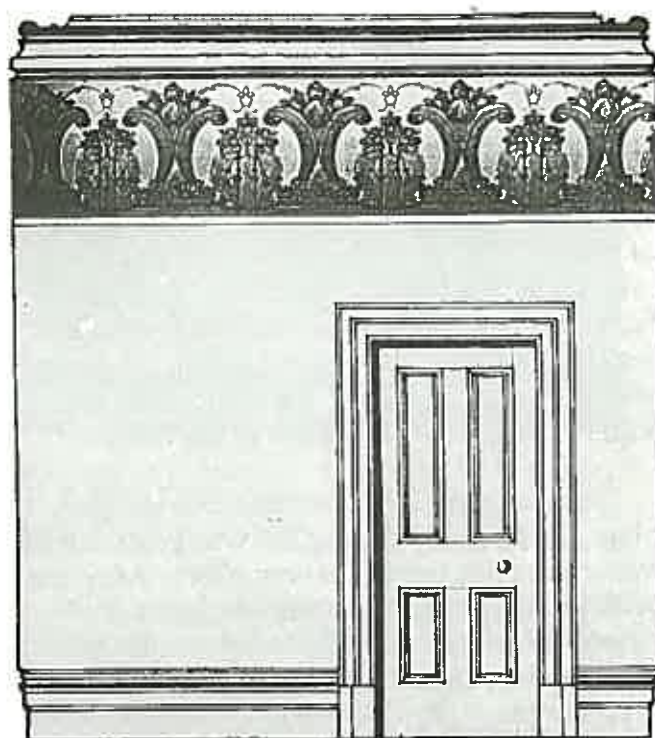
A deep, Art Nouveau frieze placed above the picture rail contrasted with a plain wall colour, C.1910.

1911 Art Nouveau Filling.
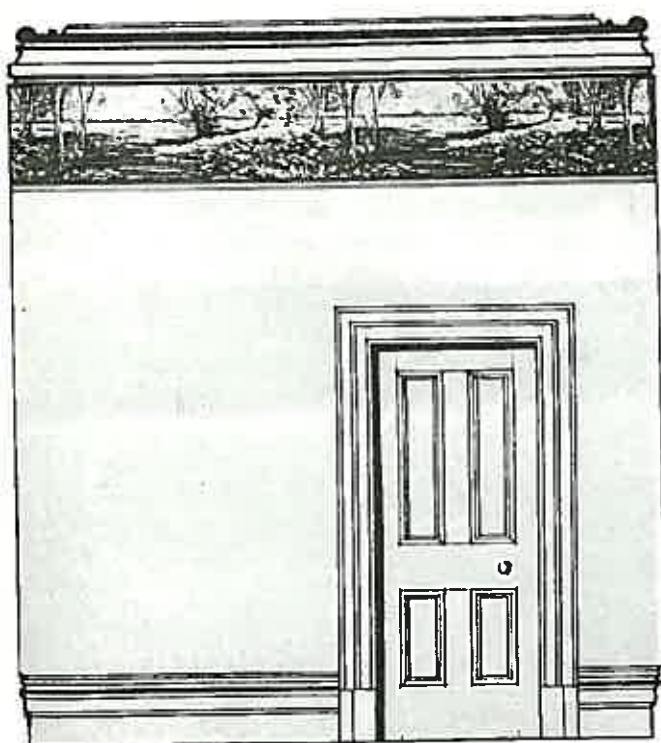
A deep, landscape frieze hung above the picture rail, C.1910.
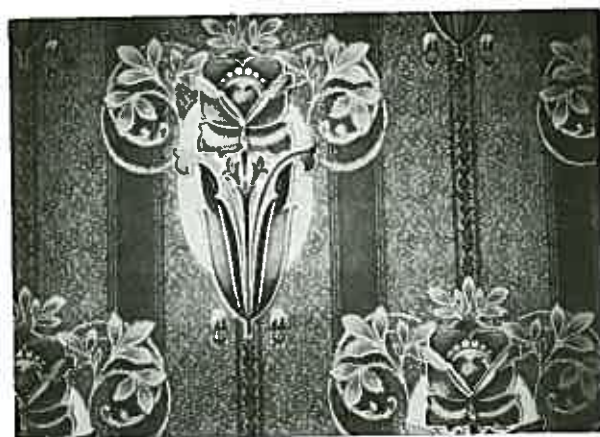
1914 Frieze; unused remnant.

Narrow borders were used to form panels of different shapes which enclosed floral infills or single motifs. Alternatively, the borders were used to outline architectural features in the room. Occasionally, the frieze was placed below the picture rail - the first sign of the post War fashion of the future.

This was a period when less change took place, particularly during the war years when many factories turned to war effort. After the War, the lingering decorative styles of the nineteenth century disappeared and there was a new attitude and fresh approach to decorating.
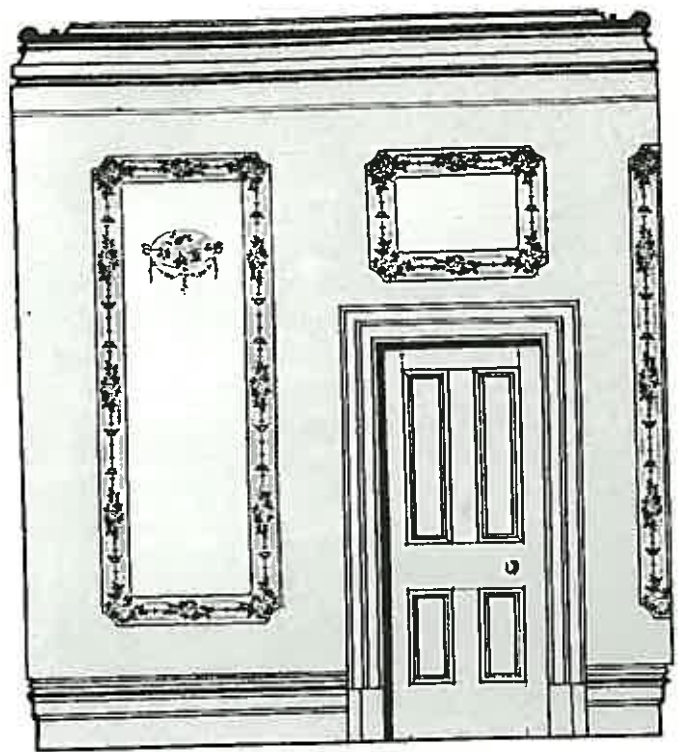
Floral border, cut and used to form decorative panels, C.1912.
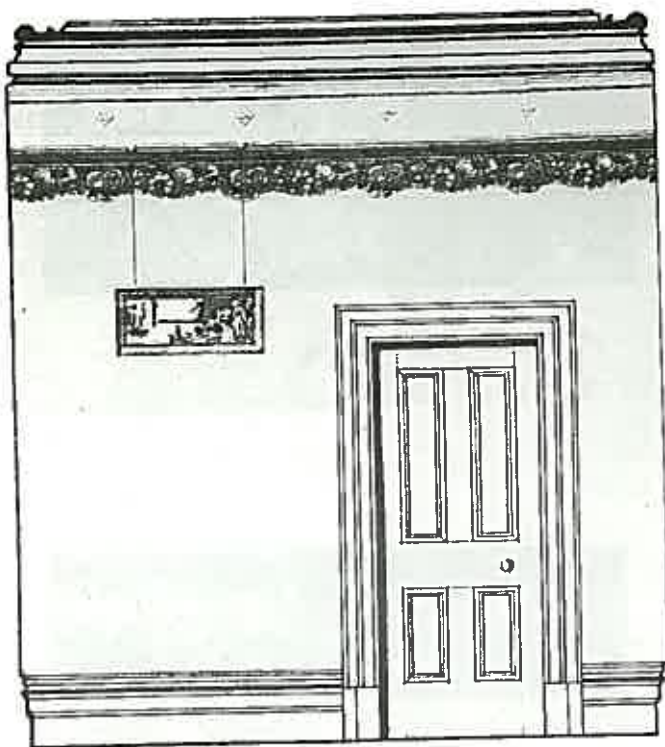
Cut-out frieze used below the picture rail; forerunner of Art Deco cut-outs which were used extensively in the twenties, C.1916.

C.1910 Filling of French Revival characteristics from Avondale, Kyabram, Victoria.

9. Ceilings

Papering of ceilings was an accepted practice although the main purpose was often to hide cracking. Designs were usually simple and repetitive or based on geometric plaster work of the past. In a similarly practical vein, rosettes were available for use above lamps or candelabra. In this way, stains could be covered without redecorating the whole ceiling.

Completely plain ceilings, painted in a lighter colour than the adjoining walls, were often seen in the mid-nineteenth century and so were imitation wood grain papers. These were used in modest buildings, particularly where the ceiling was of hessian or sailcloth. Plain ceilings lent themselves to the use of borders combined with matching decorative corners. These provided an outline to the ceiling and to some extent took the places of cornices. Roundels and medallions of wallpaper were sometimes incorporated into ceiling designs. Representations of putti and classical figures in relief sculpture were often chosen as motifs.

Hanging ceiling papers always presented some difficulty and this may have impeded complete public acceptance. During the 1870 s and 1880 s, however, more designs were available and these were sometimes combined with patterned filling and frieze and one or two borders on the ceiling, to form an elaborate decorative scheme.

1913 Ceiling paper and rose from Lightbrown, Aspinall catalogue.
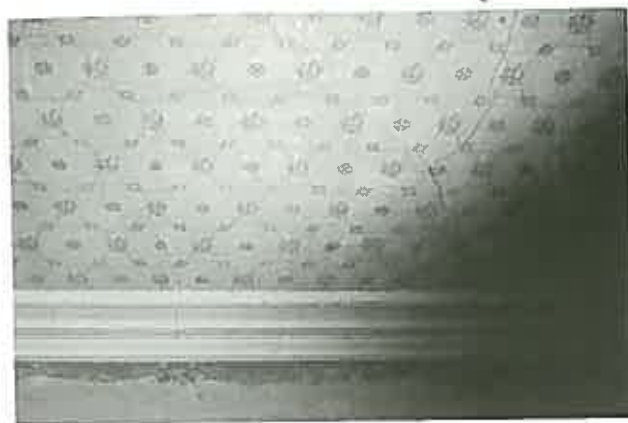
C.1880s Ceiling paper from Tylden Park, Kyneton, Victoria.

When aesthetic principles were in favour, ceiling papers reflected this attitude with abstract veining, worm like shapes and other flat motifs. Gold, silver and other metallic colouring on buff, cream and white were the most popular, but a movement began which suggested that the ceilings might be darker than the walls, if preferred. This choice, when combined with ceiling border, frieze and coloured cornice, provided an opulent appearance.

Interiors became more elaborate, with greater emphasis on plaster work or panelled ceilings and the treatment of mouldings, but the use of ceiling papers remained an alternative. Relief papers were also used, either prepainted or painted in multi-colours after hanging.

Around the turn of the century, Art Nouveau designs were produced in pale colours. In addition, geometric patterns reminiscent of traditional plaster work were printed on cream to off-white or pastel coloured backgrounds, sometimes with touches of gilding. They changed little from the end of the nineteenth century to World War 1.
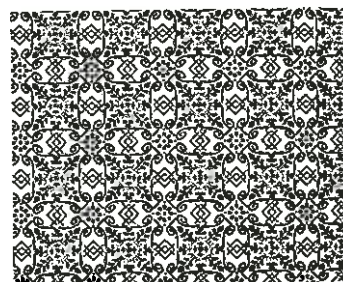
Late nineteenth century geometrically patterned ceiling paper.

10. Colour Notes

French wallpapers of the mid-nineteenth century were printed in thick, opaque colours on pale backgrounds. Chalky pastel blues, yellows, reds, pinks, and greens were often used, sometimes on a satin background which was a polished finish given to the paper. The ceiling tended to be light in colour and the woodwork slightly darker in tone than the walls. Grey, stone and delicate tints, in one or two shades, were used for woodwork unless it was polished, stained and varnished or wood grained.

Darker papers, sometimes in flock, were popular for dining rooms and libraries. Crimson, maroon, green and blue were favourites.

In the 1850 s a strong ultramarine blue was often used with grey and white or with brown; strong red was combined with brown and a very bright, light green appeared with grey, white and rose. Light ceilings and varnished or grained finish on the woodwork continued to be used with these colours.

By the 1860 s delicate, embossed motifs on grey or off-white backgrounds were popular, often with a touch of gold. Sometimes paint and gilding together played an important part in a decorative scheme, such as white and gold in a drawing room, in which case the woodwork would be painted to harmonize. In addition, light buff colour, pastels and grained finish were all used.

Pale blue and buff were popular in the 1870 s and with the light coloured ceilings, borders and polychromatic cornice colouring sometimes provided a rich contrast.

The colours used in the last quarter of the nineteenth century were richer, warmer and generally darker than those which proceded them. Stronger colours were generally used for passages and florals were invariably chosen for bedrooms. The exponents of aestheticism were responsible for the widespread use of tertiary colours including maroon, olive, yellowish-beige combined with black and metallic gold. William Morris favoured dull olive green, khaki, mustard yellow and the ebonizing of woodwork. The painting of woodwork became more common in the 1880 s. Skirtings, doors and window frames were frequently painted in two colours, taken from the colour scheme of the room. The doors would be treated in the same colours with the paler shade applied to the mouldings and panels although in elaborate schemes the moulding might be picked out in gold or a deeper colour.

More gilding was used in elaborate decorative schemes and ceiling papers of white to cream, pale blue and grey or pale olive were favourite choices. Generally, colours became muddier: muted pastels, shades of stone and "ashes of roses" were often seen.
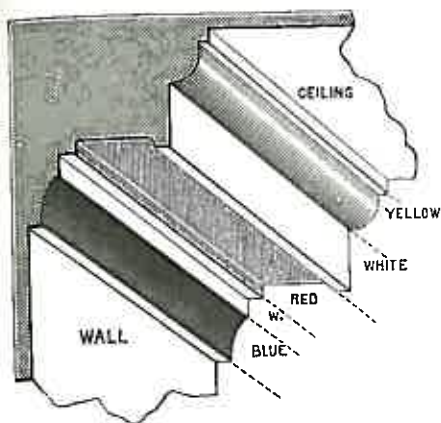
Mid-nineteenth Century primary colour scheme using principles of Owen Jones, (Illustration from Work, 20 June, 1891)
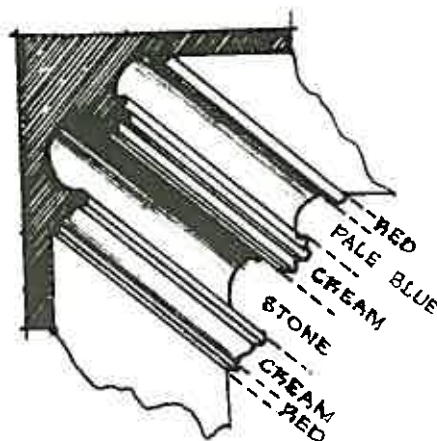
C.1880s drawing room.
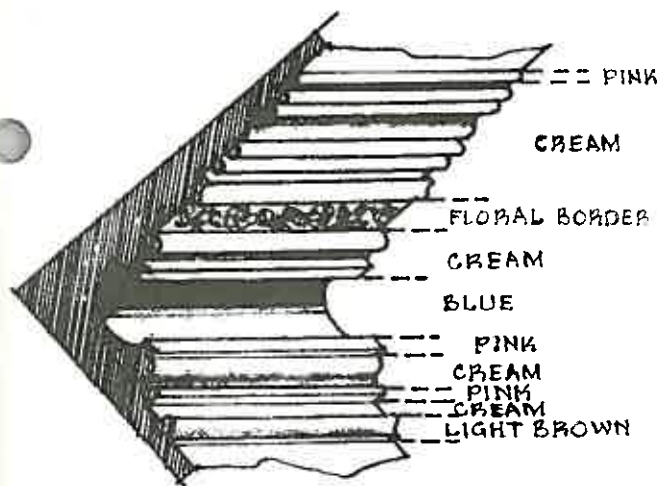
C.1880s bedroom.
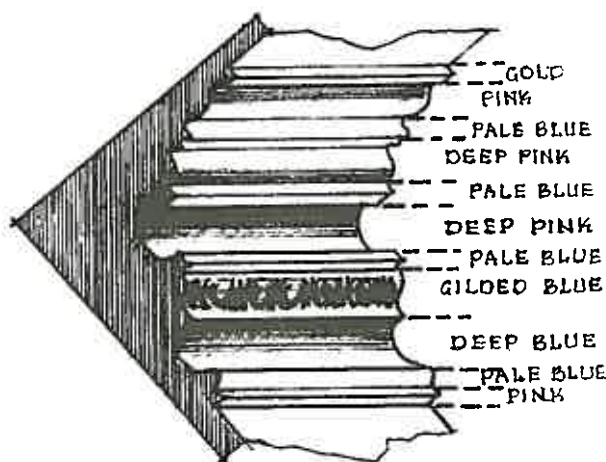
C.1880s entrance hall.
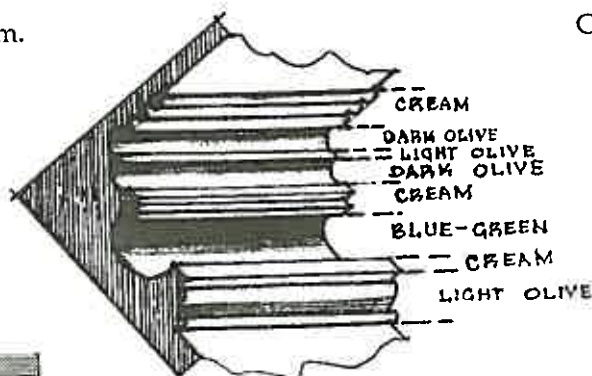
C.1890s drawing room.
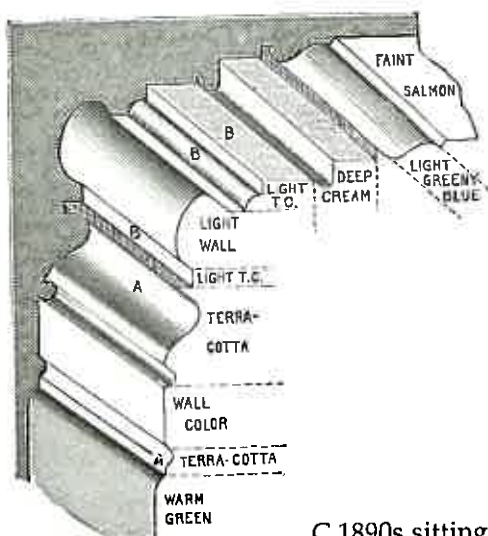
C.1890s sitting room, (Illustration from Work, 20 June, 1891).
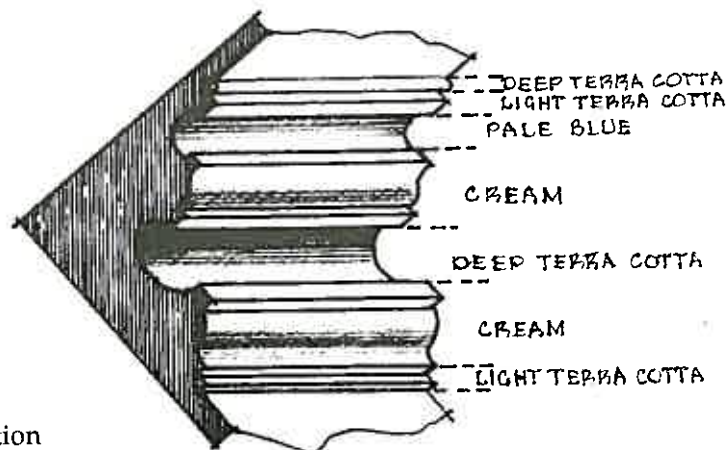
C.1900 drawing room.

27.

Painting the Cornice:

The cornice, or moulded section, which ran around the room immediately beneath the ceiling played an important role in the architectural design of the room. When repainting it is important to remember that some enhancement of these mouldings, even in a very simple decorative scheme, will add to the distinctive character of the room.

A study of earlier techniques should help to create an understanding of the decorative value of the cornice. The following illustrations show a variety of colour schemes that have been used and recommended in the past. Even simple versions, where the forward or raised edges are painted in lightly contrasting colours with perhaps a darker colour in the cove, will add considerable interest to the decoration of the room.

Painting the Ceiling Rose:

The painting and decorating of an ornate ceiling rose often appears to be a daunting prospect. There are a few basic rules, however, which if followed will simplify the task and will produce a worthwhile result. First of all select a basic colour with which to paint the entire rose. This should be a lighter shade of some colour used in the decorative scheme of the room, but it need not be the predominating colour. It could, for example, be the darkest or receding colour in the cove of the cornice or one of the other colours used in the colour scheme of the cornice. It should then be broken down with white or cream, until it is a very slightly darker tone than the ceiling so that it will still be a pale colour. In many cases the ceiling will be cream, buff or a very pale tint of the wall colour, so the basic colour of the rose will provide a contrast.

For the highlighting of the ornament, it is not necessary to use many colours or a large amount of gold. Colouring the edges of the raised ornament will provide sufficient depth to make the three dimensions obvious. Lightly apply a contrasting colour with a brush on to the raised edges of a small section and return to floor level to look at the result before proceeding. Gilded highlights and a little shading to mouldings such as fruit or cupids' faces may be added. The shading can be quite effective if carried out in a darker shade of the the base colour. The outer edge of the rim of the rose could be painted in a slightly contrasting colour to give extra delineation to the design.

Sparing use of fairly dry colour on the brush and a very light touch are the most important aspects of the technique. Always remember that more colour may be added after checking the result from the floor. This method can enhance the decoration of the ceiling in a reasonably simple way while at the same time conforming to the spirit of the decoration.

11. Conservation Notes

An owner whose building still has reasonably intact, original or early wallpaper is indeed fortunate. Although it may appear shabby, the prospect of cleaning and restoration should not be ruled out without considerable thought.

Signs of dampness causing discolouration or mould cannot easily be removed from the face of the paper. The only solution is to remove the cause of dampness in the building and allow the stains to completely dry out. This may take quite some time, even a few years. Once the paper has fully dried out and is perfectly clean, in-painting or over-painting of the discolouration is probably the best solution, using good quality water colours or gouaches. Always remember to let the colour dry and compare again with the original colour before applying it.

If colour is flaking off, it may be possible to flood with a clear, acid free adhesive and press back with a non-absorbent material. Larger areas which are missing might be replaced by a reproduction carried out by screen printing , although this is an expensive process.

Old fashioned remedies for cleaning are worth noting. The bread method was frequently recommended, whereby a stale loaf, without crusts, was used to rub over the soiled areas. As the face of the loaf became soiled, a thin slice was pared off to ensure that only clean bread was used. An alternative method was to use a dough made by kneading flour and a little ammonia until stiff and then setting it aside for twenty four hours. This was then drawn over the surface of the paper, presenting a clean face of the dough with each stroke. Grease spots were removed by mixing fuller's earth into a paste with water. This was plastered over the greasy area and left to dry until the next day. A piece of blotting paper was then held in place over the paste by means of a hot iron. This softened the grease and allowed it to be absorbed by the fuller's earth.

Vacuum cleaning of cobwebs and surface dust may call for a fine nylon screening if particles are loose on the paper. Very careful brushing with a soft brush may prove better for the removal of dust.

It is unusual to be able to salvage an early wallpaper in sufficiently good order that it can become part of the decoration of the room, if it has been covered by paint or more layers of wallpaper.

It is worthwhile, however, to carry out a complete search for any fragments or clues which may indicate the original room decoration. Any later additions such as partition walls, cupboards or a new mantelpiece may be obscuring early wallpaper. Even a power point or switch plate may reveal a fragment, although not usually of sufficient size to reveal the full repeat of the design. At the Steam Packet Inn, Portland, Victoria, repair work to the flooring and skirtings uncovered a mid-nineteenth century rococo and floral striped wallpaper shown in the photograph. A thorough examination behind bookcases, mirrors and overmantels or underneath curtain pelmets can, on occasions, be rewarding.

If a number of layers or "sandwich" of wallpapers is found, it may be possible to gently lever it from the wall and then separate the layers. Steam may help this process and an accurate and complete record should be kept of the order of the layers. It is worthwhile photographing and measuring even the smallest fragments and making notes of the exact locations in which they were found, including the height from the floor. Each sample reflects the taste of a former occupant and adds to the understanding of the building and its decorative character. Now that more reproduction wallpapers are being produced, information gathered about the original decoration can be of assistance in the selection of authentic, historic decoration.

This fragment was found behind a skirting board at the Steam Packet Inn, Portland, Victoria, when repair work was being carried out. Courtesy National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

STOCKISTS:

Blume Marketing Limited
98 Albion St., Surry Hills, N.S.W. 2010, Telephone (02) 212 1109
(Available at Paperhangings and selected decorators)

Decor Associates Pty. Ltd.
96 Bourke St., Woolloomooloo, N.S.W. 2011, Telephone (02) 358 5444

Suzanne Forge
1227 Malvern Road, Malvern, Victoria 3144, Telephone (03) 20 5199

Karman Grech Designs
6 Hinkler St., Brighton, N.S.W. 2216, Telephone (02) 597 5430
(Available at Paperhangings)

Paperhangings
2 Wakefield Street, Hawthorn, Victoria 3122, Telephone (03) 818 8370.

Wilson Fabrics and Wallcoverings
P.O. Box 221, Waterloo, N.S.W. 2017, Telephone (02) 699 1288
Available at selected decorators.

FURTHER READING:

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APPENDIX A	Technical Bulletins Steering Committe
	A Blake (National Trust)
	S Balderstone (Public Works Department)
	W Jacobs (Heritage Branch Ministry for Planning &
	    Environment)
	R Palmer (Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research
	    Organisation)
	R Tonkin (Historic Buildings Council)

APPENDIX B	Publications in the Conservation Bulletins Series of the Australian Council of National Trusts: Philosophy & Approach; Roofing; Timber Frame Construction Publications in the Technical Bulletins Series of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria): 1.2 Exterior Paint Colours for Buildings of the Victorian Period; 2.2 Lettering & Signs on Buildings c.1850 - 1900; 3.1 Principles of Cleaning Masonry Buildings; 4.1 Planting c.1850 - 1900; 5.1 Damage to Buildings on Clay Soils; 6.1 Decorating with Wallpaper c.1840 - 1914; 7.1 Preservation of Wood; 8.1 Fences & Gates c.1840 - 1925
APPENDIX C	National Trust and Australia ICOMOS Offices: The General Secretary Australian Council of National Trusts P.O. Box 1002, Civic Square, ACT 2608 Telephone: (062) 47 6802 The Director National Trust of Australia (NSW) Observatory Hill, Sydney, NSW 2000 Telephone: (02) 27 5374 The State Manager National Trust of Queensland G.P.O. Box 1494, Brisbane, QLD 4001 Telephone: (07) 229 1788 The Administrator National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Tasma Terrace 4 Parliament Place, Melbourne, VIC 3002 Telephone: (03) 654 4711 The Director National Trust of South Australia Ayers House 288 North Terrace, Adelaide, SA 5000 Telephone: (08) 223 1196 The Chief Executive Officer National Trust of Australia (WA) The Old Observatory 4 Havelock Street, West Perth, WA 6005 Telephone: (09) 321 6088 The Director National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) P.O. Box 711, Launceston, TAS 7250 Telephone: (033) 31 9077 The Administrator National Trust of Australia (ACT) P.O. Box 173, Manuka, ACT 2603 Telephone: (062) 95 7632 The Vice-President National Trust of Australia (Northern Territory) Shop 1 14 Knuckey Street, Darwin, NT 5794 Telephone: (089) 81 2848 Australia ICOMOS International Council on Monuments and Sites The Secretary P.O. Box 431, Fortitude Valley, QLD 4006

1   1880s borders in two colourways
2   C.1890 frieze
3   C.1860 filling
4   C.1840 filling by Karman Grech Designs
5   C.1890 border

Paperhangings

Paperhangings

6   1880s co-ordinated filling and frieze
7   C.1930 border
8   1880s filling
9   C.1910 Federation frieze
10   1880s frieze

11   1880s filling
12   C.1890 frieze by Blume Marketing Limited
13   1909 Art Nouveau frieze

Paperhangings