

WILLIAM MORRIS

Full-Color Patterns & Designs

By William Morris

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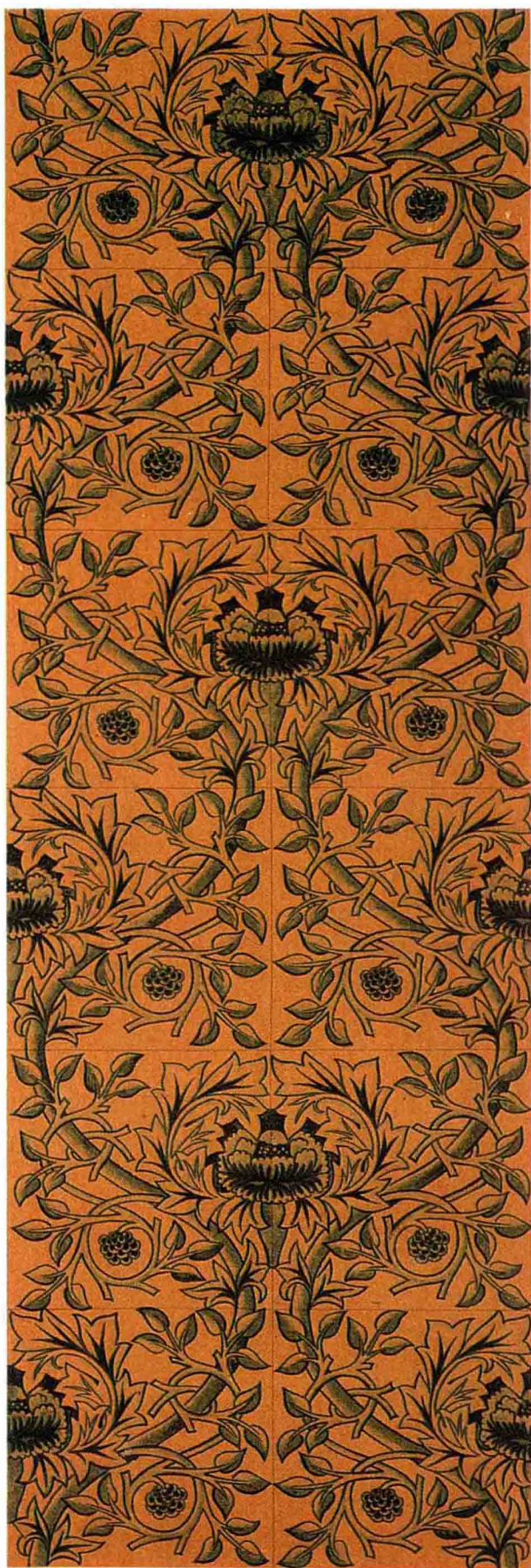
WILLIAM MORRIS (1834–1896) was one of those unflagging Victorians whose energies were spread fearlessly across many disciplines. In his own lifetime, he attained fame for his poetry, paintings, designs for the decorative arts and development of various crafts (including printing) and for his activities as a Socialist. Although the reputation of his written works, once held in very high esteem, has slipped to some extent, Morris' fame as an artist and craftsman continues to grow.

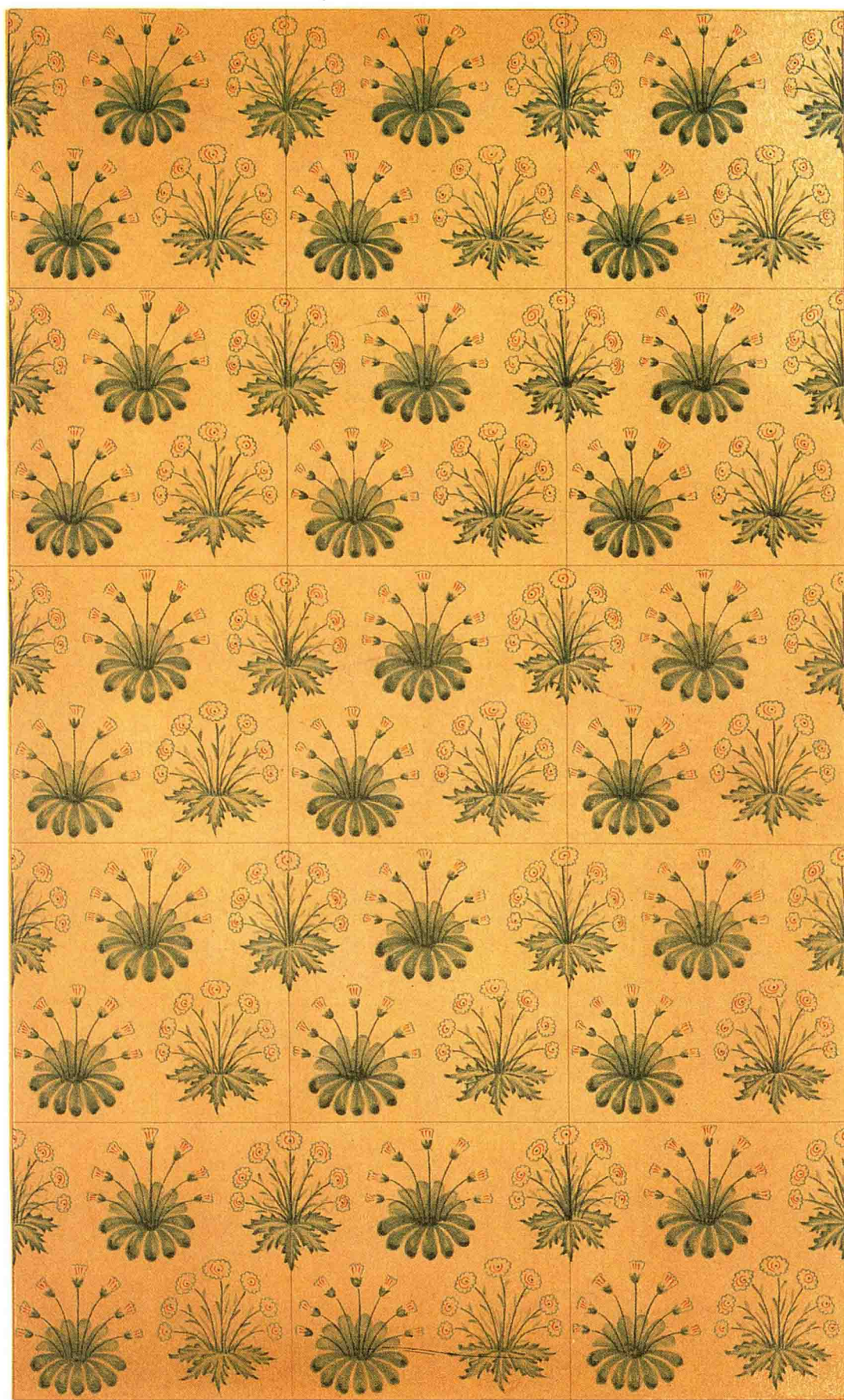
Morris' friendship with Edward Burne-Jones (formed at Oxford), his readings in Ruskin, his work in the office of the Gothic Revival architect George Street and his close association with Dante Gabriel Rossetti (one of the most important members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood) were instrumental in developing his Medievalism. Using the painstaking methods of the craftsman, he adapted the arts of the Middle Ages for the modern world. Morris spurned the cheap and shoddy, striving to reintroduce quality and a uniform style in the decorative arts, which the mass production of the Industrial Revolution had rendered chaotic. In particular, he loathed the aniline dyes that had been introduced in the 1850s, and experimented with vegetable dyes, developing a unique palette.

The decorating firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulk & Company (Morris & Company after 1874) was established in 1861. Over the years it produced works, ranging from stained-glass windows and furniture to tapestries, carpets and printed and woven fabrics, that had great influence on the course of British design. (The Cherwell, Wey, Kennet and Wandle designs, thought of as flowing, are named after tributaries of the Thames.) The wallpaper designs created by Morris for the firm are particularly famous and remain in production, more than a century after their introduction.



Angel with scroll (cartoon for decorative painting).





Daisy pattern (for hand-painted tiles).





Trellis design (for wallpaper; the birds by Philip Webb).





Vine design (for wallpaper).





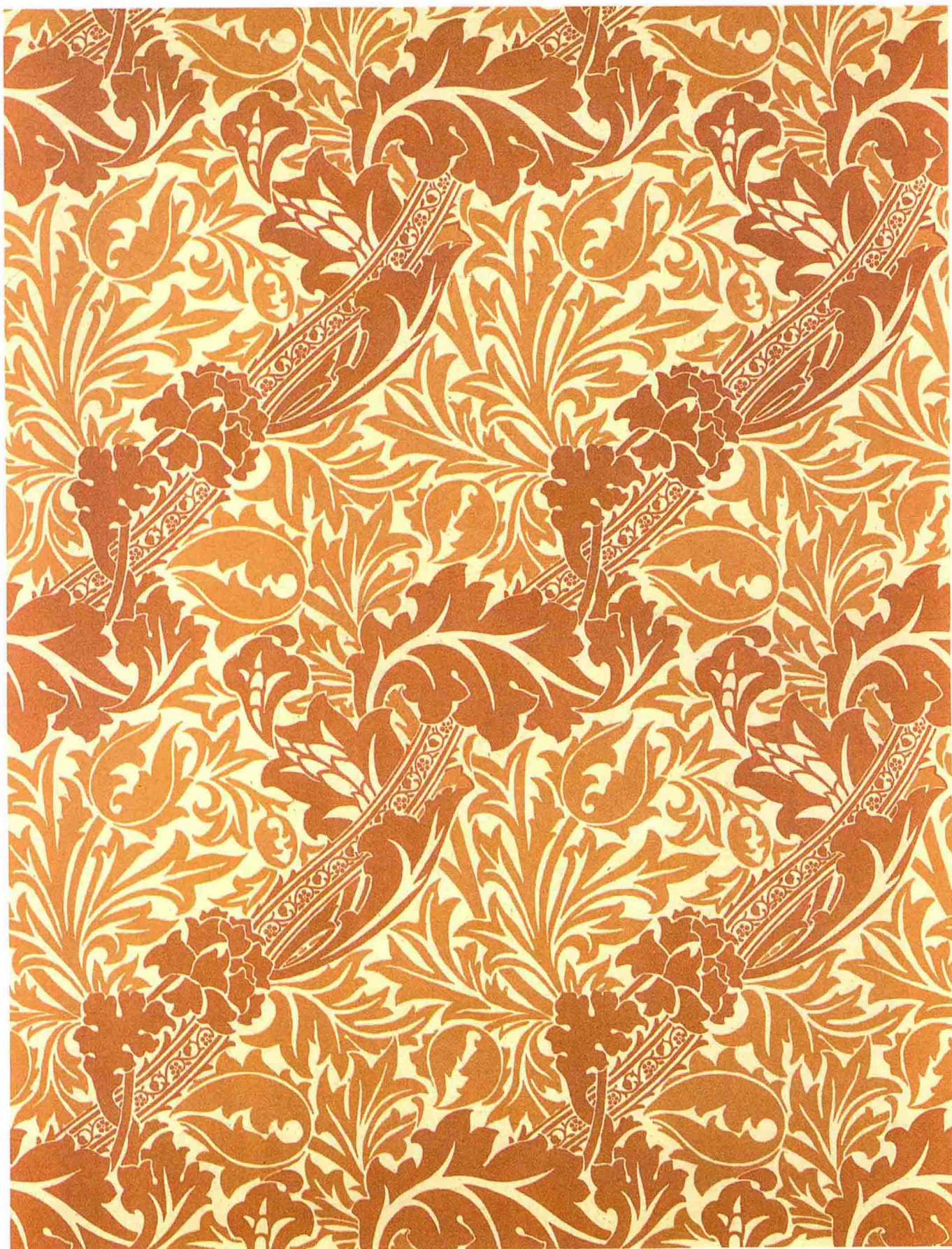
Apple design (for wallpaper).





Wallpaper (designed for St. James's Palace).





Bruges design (for wallpaper).