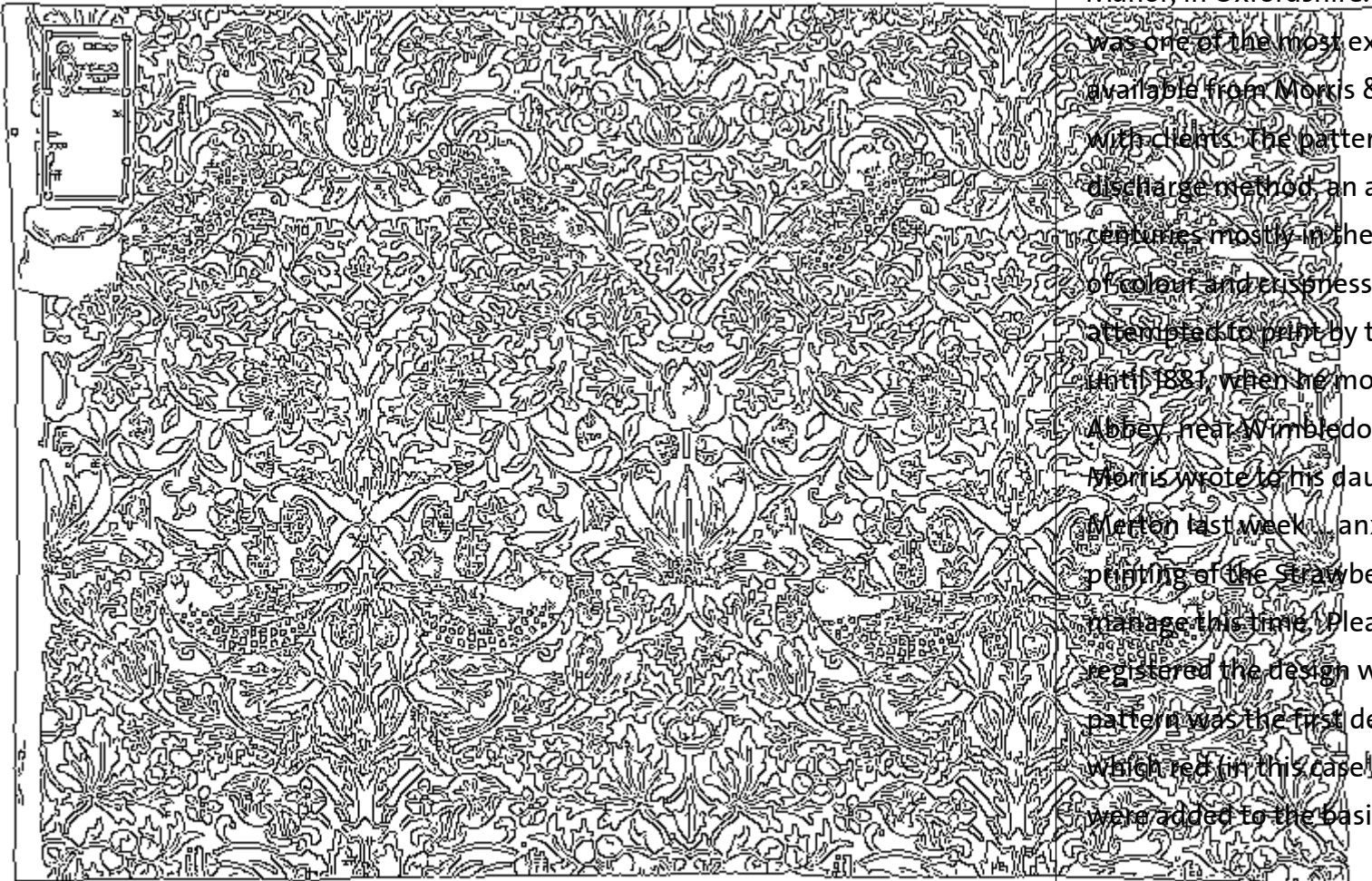


This printed cotton furnishing textile was intended to be used for curtains or draped around walls (a form of interior decoration advocated by William Morris for

loose covers on furniture. This is one of Morris Morris, William, 1883 (made), London best-known designs. He based the pattern and name on

the thrushes which frequently stole the strawberries in the kitchen garden of his countryside home, Kelmscott Manor, in Oxfordshire. Despite the fact that this design

was one of the most expensive printed furnishings available from Morris & Co., it became a firm favourite with clients. The pattern was printed by the indigo discharge method, an ancient technique used for many centuries mostly in the East. Morris admired the depth of colour and crispness of detail that it produced. He first attempted to print by this method in 1875 but it was until 1881, when he moved into his factory at Merton Abbey, near Wimbledon, that he succeeded. In May 1883 Morris wrote to his daughter, 'I was a great deal at Merton last week... anxiously superintending the first printing of the Strawberry thief, which I think we shall manage this time.' Pleased with this success, he registered the design with the Patents Office. This pattern was the first design using the technique in which red (in this case alizarin dye) and yellow (weld) were added to the basic blue and white ground.



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