



# CURIOUS CURATOR: LES LOINTAINS SCENIC WALLPAPER

*by Samantha George*

The paper is a scenic design of a temperate forest in sage and grisaille tones to create the panorama that surrounds an occupant in the Rose Room, located at the north east corner of the Estate, in the daughters' wing, now an office space.

Grisaille is the term applied to the use of grey tones in the printing of the wall paper. The use of the grey tones is believed to mimic the colours of classic sculpture, making the images feel alive and leaping from the wall.

The wallpaper, originally entitled *Les Lointains*, was created by Pierre Mongrin in the early 1800s. The design still used today, belongs to the French design house, Zuber Manufactory. Zuber is the last company in the world to produce scenic wallpapers from carved woodblocks, like was done in the last centuries. The 149 woodblocks used for this particular design, sometimes anglosized and called *Jefferson*, were carved in 1825 and have been designated as historically significant and artefacts by the French Ministry of Culture.

Through the late 1800s and into the 1920s, scenic papers like these were replicated worldwide lending a classic presence to any room.

We have no idea when this paper was added to Parkwood, and the walls of the Rose Room. Perhaps in 1918 or much later? It is understood that in later years of the residency of the family, this was a favoured room of Isabel McLaughlin to stay in when returning to visit home.