

The Cockerell Influence

Douglas and Sandy Cockerell

So much has been written about the Arts and Crafts Movement that it is difficult to briefly state the importance of this philosophy to the craft of bookbinding. Nevertheless, the close relationship between the movement and the subsequent history of the Cockerell tradition demands that something must be recorded of those qualities which the movement inspired and which the Cockerell workshop carried through into practice. Perhaps the simplest and most effective way of demonstrating the lasting connection can be achieved by quoting the mentor of Douglas Cockerell, Cobden-Sanderson, in his essay *Industrial Ideals*, relates an anecdote which superbly expresses what is wrong with the state of the art and at the same time emphasises the proselytising influence of the movement:

Once upon a time, then, in the North of England I was invited to attend a kind of arts and crafts exhibition. Being a bookbinder, I was invited especially to judge the bookbindings, to award the prizes, and to give a lecture or demonstration on some branch of Art. I attended the exhibition, carefully went over it all and particularly examined the exhibit of bookbindings. I found, taking the exhibition as a whole that, so far as they were traditional and plain, the things of pure utility were well and suitably conceived and made and in some cases delightful to see and handle, but that the things so-called of beauty were for the most part not beautiful at all, and that many things which would have been fit and useful had they been left alone were spoiled by ornament. Ornament, indeed, seemed to have lost all sanity. The bookbinding was particularly bad. The forwarding was bad, and the gold-tooling was bad. I gave no prizes: I gave, however, a lecture, and I took the opportunity of saying frankly what I sincerely thought about the exhibition as a whole and about the bookbindings in particular, and I invited any binder who might be present to declare himself, that we might fight the matter out. But no binder announced himself, and I left without coming into contact with any craftsman of any of the crafts represented in the exhibition.

I returned to town, and, with a painful, perhaps exaggerated, vision of bad work everywhere, flaunting preposterous decoration, I took up my own craft again . . .

Douglas Cockerell started bookbinding at the age of twenty three in the year 1893. Douglas instilled in those who worked with

12. Insurance.

- (a) Unless otherwise instructed in writing all goods on Phillips premises and in their custody will be held insured against the risks of fire, theft following forcible entry and water damage (but not against accidental breakage or damage) for which insurance Phillips will charge a premium of £1 per £100 (minimum £1). The value of the goods so covered shall be the gross amount realised, or in the case of unsold lots the best bid, or in the case of goods withdrawn prior to a sale that which the specialised staff of Phillips shall in their absolute discretion estimate to be the auction value of such goods.
- (b) Phillips shall not be responsible for damage to or the loss, theft or destruction of any goods not so insured upon the owner's written instructions.
- (c) Phillips shall not be responsible for accidental breakage, loss or damage by negligence of their employees.
- (d) In respect of any article delivered to Phillips if the vendor has in force a policy or policies of insurance in which the article is specifically mentioned as being insured, whether or not for an agreed sum or value, the vendor shall notify his insurers of and shall himself note Phillips interest as bailees in such policy or policies.

13. Reserves.

- (a) All goods are put up for sale WITHOUT RESERVE at the Auctioneer's discretion unless written instructions as to reserves are received by Phillips prior to the commencement of the sale.
- (b) In the event of any reserve price not being reached at auction Phillips are empowered to sell after the auction, by private treaty, at not less than the reserve price, as long as the goods remain on sale by private treaty the Conditions of Sale applicable to a buyer governing the auction will apply.

14. Indemnity.

The vendor shall duly indemnify Phillips against any claims in connection with any goods sold by Phillips on the vendor's behalf.

15. Value Added Tax.

A vendor who sends for sale by auction any chattels which is an asset of his business must disclose to the Auctioneer whether or not he is a registered person for Value Added Tax purposes and if so, his intentions to operate the special scheme covering works of art, etc. This information must be supplied to the Auctioneer on or prior to delivery of the goods.

16. The vendor authorises the Auctioneer to deduct commission and expenses at the stated rates from the hammer price and acknowledges the Auctioneer's right to retain any premium payable by the purchaser.

17. Rights to Photographs and Illustrations.

The vendor gives Phillips full and absolute right to photograph and illustrate any lot placed in its hands for sale and to use such photographs and illustrations and any photographs provided by the vendor at any time at its absolute discretion (whether or not in connection with the auction).

BUYERS' CONDITIONS

18. Inspection. Each buyer by making a bid for a lot acknowledges that he has satisfied himself fully before bidding by inspection otherwise as to all the Sale Conditions that the physical condition of and description of the lot including but not restricted to whether the lot is damaged or has been repaired is correct.

19. Property and Risk. Legal title will not pass to the buyer until the lot(s) has been paid for in full and the Auctioneer shall be entitled to a lien on any lot sold until the purchase price (as defined in 23 below) is paid in full but each lot is at the sole risk of the buyer from the fall of the hammer. Each buyer shall forthwith give his full names and permanent address and it shall be the duty of the buyer to proportion of the purchase price as the Auctioneer may require. If the buyer fails to do so, the lot may at the Auctioneer's sole discretion be put up again and re-sold.

20. Every bidder shall be deemed to act as principal unless there is in force a written acknowledgment by Phillips that he acts as agent on behalf of a named principal.

21. Removal of Goods.

(a) No purchase shall be claimed or removed until it has been paid for and the sale has been concluded. All purchases shall be paid for and removed at the buyer's risk and expense by the end of the second working day after the sale, failing which the Auctioneer shall not be responsible if the same are lost, stolen, damaged or destroyed, and all lots not so removed shall remain at the risk of the buyer and subject to a minimum warehousing charge of 25p per lot per day. If they are not paid for and removed within seven days of the sale the Auctioneer may re-sell them by auction or privately without notice to the buyer. Any liability which there may be on the part of the Auctioneer in respect of any loss shall be restricted to a maximum of the price paid by the buyer of the lot.

(b) In the event of any failure of the buyers to comply with any of the above conditions the damages recoverable by the seller or the Auctioneer from the defaulter shall include any loss arising on any re-sale of the lot, together with the charges and expenses in respect of both sales, and together with interest at 2% above National Westminster Bank PLC base rate upon the price of any lot which has not been paid for within 48 hours of the sale, and any money deposited in part payment shall be held by the Auctioneer on account of any liability of the defaulter to them or to the seller. The Auctioneer are unable to accept payment from successful bidders other than in cash or by the bidder's own cheque. Cheques drawn by third parties, whether in the Auctioneer's favour or requiring endorsement, cannot be accepted.

22. Value Added Tax.

The buyer will be liable to pay VAT at the standard rate on the hammer price on those lots indicated with an asterisk (*) after the Lot number. This VAT is refundable on proof of export by Overseas buyers within 28 days of sale.

23. Purchase Price.

The purchaser shall pay the hammer price together with a premium of 10% of the hammer price (advised for VAT as necessary). The premium attracts VAT at the standard rate and is payable by all purchasers. The vendor authorises the Auctioneer to deduct commission and expenses at the stated rates from the hammer price and acknowledges the Auctioneer's right to retain the premium payable by the purchaser.