

CHIVERS AND BAGGULEY – TRANSCRIPT

In the discussion of modern binding decoration, particularly English, you have to talk about Riviere and you have to talk about Sangorski and Sutcliffe, and you have to talk about their rivalry to outdo each other in terms of splendid inlaid and jeweled bindings. But there are quite a number of other binders who have introduced special decoration to book covers that should not be overlooked.

Cedric Chivers of Bath is one of those. Now, I always hate it when I look at somebody else's slides and they tell me, "If that tree weren't there, you'd see a really good castle back behind it." But I'm afraid I'm going to have to do that because of the limitations of my inventory. I'm going to show you a book that's not typical of why Chivers is famous. Chivers is famous for another kind of binding. He's famous for what's called a vellucent binding, where he's figured out a way to put decoration on the underside of vellum, which has been treated so that it's transparent. The design then being protected from the elements by the vellum and it's not unlike what Edwards of Halifax was doing at the end of the 18th century.

But Chivers put out a fair number of bindings and vellucent bindings were not the only ones. Another kind that he did put out, and he did a number of these, were the sculpted or molded or modeled binding. These were sometimes beautifully realized, as this one is, using a kind of cement backing and then basically just carving. And this is a volume of Wordsworth's poems and it is not grand, it's not spectacular. In some of the segments on a modern bindings, we're looking at spectacular books. This is not. But it's quietly beautiful and if you look closely at the work that's been done here, you would recognize that it's carefully done, it's the product of taste and intelligence and it's in beautiful condition. It's also large paper copy of poetry that's worth having.

Another bindery, much less well known than Chivers is an outfit called Bagguley, or it might be Bagguley, I've never heard it said out loud. That's how uncommon it is. But the thing that the Bagguley binding did that nobody else seemed to do, partly because they patented the process, is they made doublures that are out of vellum that is then intricately gilded and painted in a design which normally complimented the contents of the book.

This is a copy of a Washington Irving's *The Alhambra* and it's a beautiful copy. Again, large paper just like this, worthy of a special binding. And unlike most other Bagguley bindings which tend to be quite plain on the outside so that all the music can be on the inside, this one's got lots and lots and lots of scrolling gilt decoration. But anyway, *The Alhambra*, Spanish, eras lost, decay. The idea of Moorish architecture is clearly reflected in the doublures, front and back of this Bagguley binding.

This is called a Sutherland binding after the, I think duchess of Sutherland, and that's the patented name. If you say Bagguley binding, there are some that don't have this particular treatment, but if you say a Sutherland binding, this is the only outfit that produced it. And it's particularly on those bindings from Bagguley that have a fairly plain cover, it's such a surprise, such a nice surprise to open it up and see this looking at you.

Anyway, uncommon binding, they only produced a few bindings over a relatively short period of time, but they did wonderful work.