

A.R. 'Dick' Dufty: 1911–1993

The Journal is pleased to have been given permission by Mr. Tom Dufty to print the conclusion of the Address which he gave at the Service of Thanksgiving for the life of his father, at Kelmscott Church on 11th October 1993. In the earlier part of the Address he spoke of his father's early life: his architectural training; his work for the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments for England and Wales, of which he eventually became head; his wartime service in the R.N.V.R.; his appointment in 1962 as Master of the Armouries of Her Majesty's Tower of London; and the award to

him of the C.B.E. for his work for the Commission and the Tower. Mr. Dufty went on to say:

Earlier he had been elected a member of the Distinguished Society of Antiquaries. By 1960 he had become Secretary of the Society, once again involving a lot of voluntary work. In 1961, as some of you will know, Oxford University took the Antiquaries to court to show just cause why it, not the University, was the rightful owner of Kelmscott Manor. My father, as Secretary, had the amusing experience of being invited by the Chancellor of Oxford to dinner at the high table and, over the port, being served with a summons to appear in court and answer to the charge! As you all now know, the University won its case and the Antiquaries became the owners. For my father it was an opportunity to fulfil yet another boyhood dream. At the age of twelve he had cut photographs of the Manor out of *Country Life* and kept them in the hope, one day, of seeing it. His opportunity had come in a way that he could never have expected! The Antiquaries put him in charge of the restoration, and for the next four years, working with Donald Insall and Partners, what was rapidly becoming a ruin was restored to its former glory.

From then on my father immersed himself increasingly in the life and works of William Morris and in the maintenance of Kelmscott Manor and its collection of Morrisiana. Perhaps unfashionably in the decades following the war he had developed a love for Victoriana, the Pre-Raphaelites and the succeeding Art Nouveau movement, so it suited him admirably. He was able at the same time to build up a small collection of his own. Also another of his talents came to the fore – his genius for interior design and decoration. Wherever he worked or lived he applied this talent and every place became a gem of good taste and aesthetic delight. He was called on to apply it by many organisations responsible for the maintenance of historic buildings, including Royal Palaces. Once again, he concluded an interest at the top by becoming one of the world's foremost scholars on William Morris.

Throughout most of his association with Kelmscott he has been supported, encouraged, and aided by Jean. He delighted in her range of practical skills – everything from mulberry jam-making to embroidery. The kneelers in this church are a fine example of her craftsmanship. Together they nurtured Kelmscott Manor and Church. I was so pleased they married. The warmth of their love was evident and I am very grateful for the way Jean looked after him. I know he was very happy these last two years and I am sad it did not last longer. He loved his new step-sons and they enjoyed each other's company.

Now, somewhere out there, I can imagine a conversation which goes like this:

“I've waited so long to meet you, William. I bring you news from your earthly paradise. I have restored Kelmscott Manor for you; I have restored Kelmscott Church; and I was on the way to restoring Kelmscott Village Hall. Now introduce me to Dante Gabriel, Janey, and the others.”