

HUMPHRY REPTON'S
RED BOOK FOR
WOBURN ABBEY

*A Limited Edition from the
Private Library of the Duke of Bedford*



Repton wrote that this beautiful book would grace 'the magnificent library in which this volume aspires to hold a place'.

Repton discussing the Red Book for Woburn Abbey



*A 21st century reproduction:
the facsimile
Red Book for
Woburn Abbey.*

THE RED BOOK

A Limited Edition

Humphry Repton's *Red Book for Woburn Abbey*, 1805

Commissioned to mark the bicentenary of the death of Humphry Repton (1752-1818).

Limited to 75 copies and signed by the 15th Duke of Bedford.

John Russell, 6th Duke of Bedford (1766-1839), invited Repton to prepare landscape designs for Woburn Abbey in Bedfordshire, England. Repton presented his ideas in the grandest Red Book he would create in his lifetime, and Woburn Abbey became the property where his proposals were most fully realised.

Shepherds, Sangorski & Sutcliffe, one of the oldest bookbinding firms in Britain, was chosen for this special commission. Combining traditional skills with the latest fine art printing techniques, Repton's soft tone watercolours and designs are reproduced to the highest standard. His 'reveals' which lift to show before and after scenes of the landscape are recreated in a beautiful handbound volume, which is faithful to the original 19th century binding and tooled in 24 carat gold leaf.



HUMPHRY REPTON

Gardener, Surveyor, Artist, Marketeer

Innovative landscape designer Humphry Repton designed over 400 gardens during a 30 year career. He introduced ornamental elements to garden design which allowed a more gentle transition from house to agricultural landscape. This would become a key tenet of Regency garden style which he advocated in several published texts offering a guide to 'landscape style' for designers unable to visit England.

Repton presented his proposals to clients as beautiful books - named for the leather in which some were bound. They contained maps, plans, surveys and architectural features alongside explanatory passages outlining his theory of landscape gardening. His clever before and after scenes helped clients imagine how his proposed improvements would alter the landscape. Today they document the 18th and 19th century landscapes on which he was consulted.



*John Downman
Humphry Repton
c.1790*

Private Collection
@ Philip Mould Ltd,
London/Bridgeman
Images



*Before and after
scenes helped
clients visualise
Repton's
proposals.*



THE WOBURN COMMISSION

A Career Highlight

When invited by the Duke of Bedford to Woburn Abbey in 1804 Repton had no other commissions on the horizon. The importance of obtaining the Duke's approval for his designs is reflected in the Red Book he produced: it is one of the largest and most carefully designed. Repton's hopes were high and ultimately successful.

'The Improvements ... have nowhere been so fully realised as at Woburn Abbey.'

Repton, Fragments, 1816

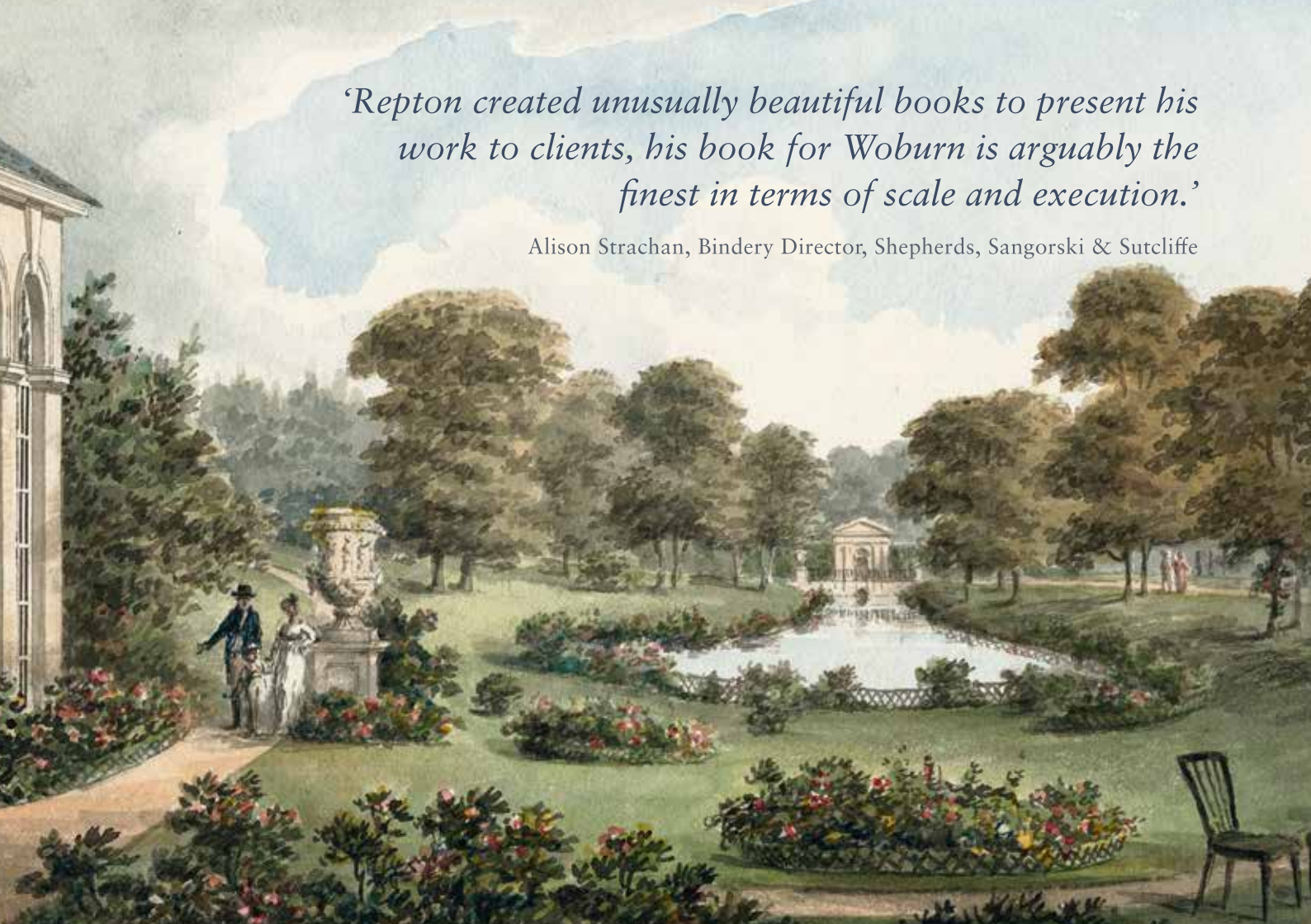
Today the Repton landscape at Woburn Abbey is gradually being restored and will become one of the best surviving examples of his work when the restorations are completed in 2025.

Plate XXVII
*'The Dressed
Garden' (after).*



‘Repton created unusually beautiful books to present his work to clients, his book for Woburn is arguably the finest in terms of scale and execution.’

Alison Strachan, Bindery Director, Shepherds, Sangorski & Sutcliffe







A 21st CENTURY REPRODUCTION

Facsimile Specifications

Creating a book as close to Repton's original as possible: matching the soft tone watercolours, materials, 'reveals', and even the folds, creases and signs of age. A signed introduction by the current Duke of Bedford and a colophon have been added. The edition is strictly limited and numbered.

PRINTING: 114 pages with 24 watercolours, 8 reveals; printed four colour throughout on HP Indigo Press on 100% cotton rag paper, 180gsm.

BINDING: Faithful to the original 19th century binding the pages are hand overcast with leather joints. Each volume is covered in vegetable tanned dark red straight-grain goatskin.

TOOLING: 24 carat gold tooling (five decorative roll panels to the front and back) with full gilt spine and blind decorative tooling to the edges of the doublures and flyleaves.

PRESENTATION: The facsimile (552 x 423mm) is housed in a slipcase in matching dark red cloth and lined with soft suedel.



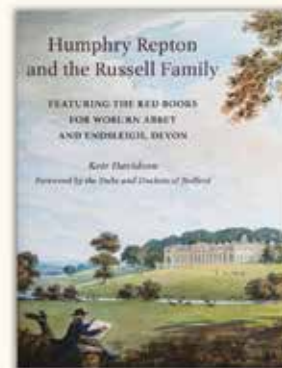
SHEPHERDS
Sangorski & Sutcliffe

Making the facsimile: printing, cutting, binding, gilding and gold tooling.

YOURS TO OWN

The *Red Book for Woburn Abbey, 1805* - Repton's grandest Red Book - is strictly limited to 75 numbered copies, 50 of which are offered for sale at this time - £4,995 (*Includes packing, postage & insurance for UK purchases; postage for deliveries outside the UK additional.*)

Each is presented with a richly illustrated companion book by landscape designer, garden historian and Repton scholar Keir Davidson who introduces Repton and his work for the Russell family - patrons of his most varied commissions.



'I am extremely proud of this unique facsimile, created by the most skilled craftsmen using the finest materials and worthy of the original.'

Andrew Russell, 15th Duke of Bedford

To purchase your limited edition facsimile

Please contact rare@heywoodhill.com



HEYWOOD HILL

MAYFAIR

*Repton's original
Red Book for
Woburn Abbey
in the Holland
Library, Woburn
Abbey 2018.*



THE RED BOOK FOR WOBURN ABBEY, 1805

A limited edition to mark the bicentenary of the death of celebrated landscape designer, Humphry Repton.

THE BEDFORD ESTATES

Bedford Office
Woburn
Bedfordshire
MK17 9PQ
UNITED KINGDOM



*There is a square between the houses and the entrance of the Park appearing to belong
equally to the one and the other. Whether the entrance should be brought nearer the
houses, or the House moved down to the entrance. I have several times thought
that the latter was preferred and therefore have suggested two rows of houses,
with the doors at the back of each and an avenue in front to prevent the dirty
appearance of a row of cottages and perhaps it might be more advisable to reserve
the place to the House by rows of trees with cottages behind them, but as the latter
will divide at the bridge it should be reserved as a village.*

