



Tuppence Plain, Penny Coloured

50 Years of Furniture Advertising and Selling

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Twopence Plain, Penny Coloured charts the way furniture has been sold to the British public for some 50 years – from the 1920s to the 1960s – from days when furniture was still being piled on the pavement in front of a workshop in the East End of London, to the heady days of experiencing a whole new life-style by a visit to Conran's. It covers the ever more splendid buildings in which manufacturers made and sold their wares, each competing with the others in terms of acreage covered and grandeur of facades; the special exhibitions in which the latest designs were put on show; the use of catalogues and leaflets – from single sheets to compendiums of hundreds of pages; and the use of press and hoarding advertising. The title 'Twopence Plain, Penny Coloured' is taken from a lecture at the Royal Society of Arts and refers to the constant battle, over the period covered by the book, between well-designed and well-constructed largely unadorned furniture made from good quality materials – consequently expensive – and mass-manufactured, frequently 'period' ornamented furniture, cheaply veneered and cheap to buy.