

A  
PRACTICAL  
GUIDE TO  
PATENT LAW

BRIAN C. REID

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THIRD EDITION



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## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

The hope expressed in the preface to the second edition (1992) as to patent law proving to have been re-born under the European Patent Convention (1973) and subsequent domestic Patents Act of 1977 has not been entirely fulfilled. Although the provisions of the previous domestic Act of 1949 have now effectively run their course, the Courts have exhibited in this decade a somewhat Euro-sceptic approach. Where a concept appeals to them, they will embrace it as reflecting in any event traditional domestic law. Where it does not, it will be rejected—albeit with consummate reasoning and considerable politeness. Prominent in their minds appears to have been the underlying thought that the United Kingdom was a pioneer in this field of law; in a word, that “British is still best”. The result is that the domestic law is in practice still in something of a state of uncertainty in a number of important areas.

This new edition is accordingly substantially revised as compared to the second edition. Much of the detailed material relating to the 1949 Act has been jettisoned. But it is hoped that enough from that era (and still earlier eras) has been retained to provide sufficient historical continuity with the still-looming past. The overall aim of the book remains the same—to illuminate the way and guide the reader, rather than try to be encyclopaedic.

Brian C. Reid  
Lincoln's Inn  
London  
August 1998

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