



Plastering Plain and Decorative: 4th Revised Edition

William Millar, George Bankart

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William Millar's classic book "Plastering Plain and Decorative" is universally referred to as the 'Plasterer's Bible'. It was first published in 1897 and was clearly a great success, with a second edition following a couple of years later in 1899 and a third edition in 1905 (a reprint of the first edition is available from Donhead). In 1927 the publishers, B. T. Batsford Ltd, decided that it was time to republish Millar's 'magnus opus', but that the fourth edition should be revised and updated. They asked George P. Bankart, an architect/craftsman and author, who had already written another book for them, to take on this task. George Percy Bankart was an architect highly influenced by the 'Arts and Crafts' movement, who had chosen to work as a decorative craftsman. The 'Arts and Crafts' was an English movement dedicated to the idea that architecture could be inspired by a revival of traditional building crafts and materials. It started in the second half of the 19th century, based on the writings of Ruskin and was driven by the ideas Morris, amongst many others; and carried on into the first quarter of the 20th century. Bankart was born in Leicester on the 20th January 1866, and was a great friend of Ernest W. Gimson, another Leicester born architect, just over a year his elder. Both men studied and became architects, and shared a creative passion for the handicrafts. Whilst Gimson's career included embroidery design, traditional chair-making and furniture design, as well as decorative modeled plasterwork, Bankart concentrated primarily on plasterwork. Their different activities were true to the ideas of the Arts and Crafts movement, and their designs reflect the movement's interest in a return to nature. Bankart's career as an author started with "The Art of The Plasterer", which was published by B. T. Batsford Ltd in 1909. He seems to have taken a break from writing until, together with his son G. Edward Bankart, he produced two books "Modern Plasterwork Construction" in 1926, followed in 1927 by "Modern Plasterwork Design", both published by the Architectural Press. Also in 1927 he was back with B. T. Batsford Ltd for the publication of this fourth and revised edition of 'Millar'.

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