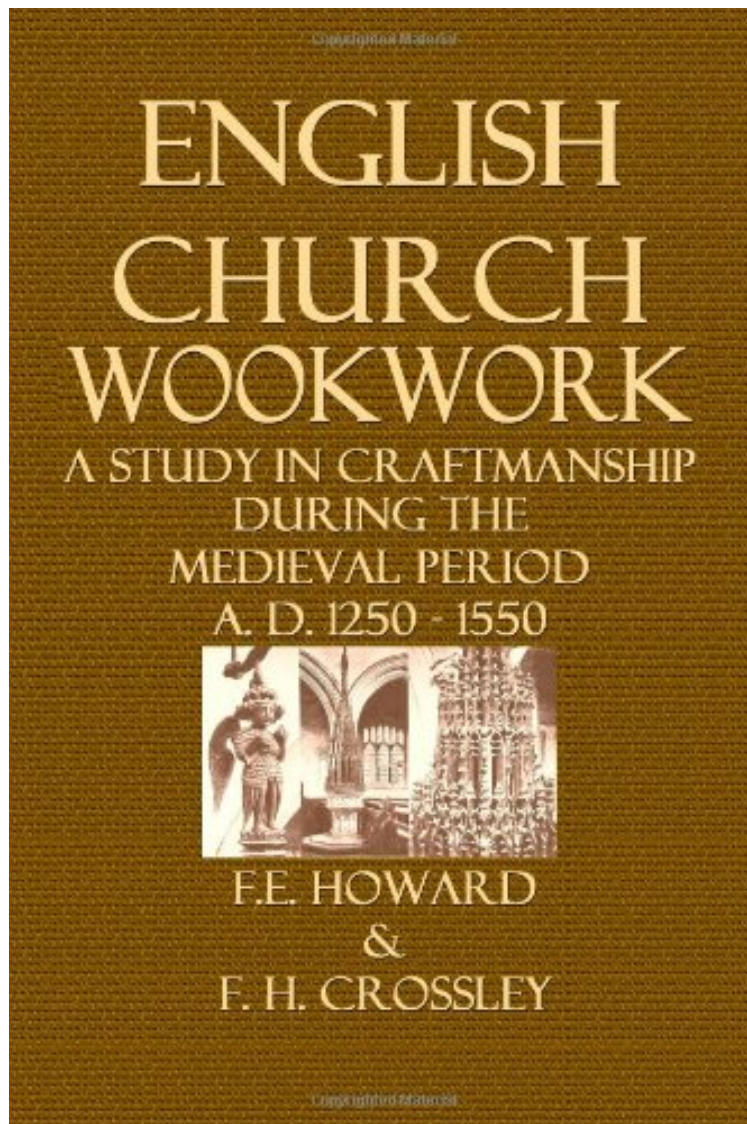


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## English Church Woodwork: A Study in Craftsmanship During the Medieval Period A.D. 1250 - 1550

*F. E. Howard, F. H. Crossley*

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**F. E. Howard, F. H. Crossley : English Church Woodwork: A Study in Craftsmanship During the Medieval Period A.D. 1250 - 1550** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised English Church Woodwork: A Study in Craftsmanship During the Medieval Period A.D. 1250 - 1550:

From the Journal of the American Institute of Architects, Vol. 6 [1918]: It is an unfailing source of wonder what a treasure-house of human experience the Bible is. Something apt for almost any situation can be found in it, and the authors, as the text of the admirable and exhaustive treatise on the carved work of England, quote verses six and seven of the seventy-fourth Psalm: "He that hewed timber afore out of the thick trees was known to bring it to an excellent work. But now they break down all the carved work thereof with axes and hammers." The house of Batsford has been the presiding genius of English-speaking architects for more years than one can remember, and the debt owed them is incalculable. One is glad then to find in Mr. Crossley's preface to this work a tribute to the house and a dedication to Herbert Batsford, whose death occurred just before its publication. It is somewhat amazing to find that there are men who, in the year 1917, can live in England and find, not the time, perhaps, but the courage, to follow the common tasks of peace; and yet one may well believe that because the Englishman does not lose his head, and can keep cool in emergencies, and attend to everyday duties, we have full confidence in his fighting ability. One has heard Mr. Gladstone criticized because, at a time of great national crises, he could withdraw himself and lay aside wholly his responsibilities and anxieties, and even could go to the play when the news of Gordon's death had just shaken England to the core. So here it may well be but an example of England's true strength and force that a work like this should be published in the days of the great war. It is quite a wonderful book. One has felt that drawings and photographs, modern, cheap methods of reproduction, and a time when every one travels, had exhausted the architectural beauties of England, and that nothing could be published that was not already known. The book is full of illustrations of unfamiliar things, and more than that the text is thoughtful, scholarly, and full of interest. Others have said before what Mr. Howard says, but he has a way of putting things that makes them seem new. The charm of this English wood-carving is that these craftsmen had an "eye for proportion and a sense of scale," and that their methods were "human" . . . "devoid of effort"; that "minute accuracy and exact symmetry were not esteemed as virtues" and that he "cared little for open joints, twisted timbers, irregular setting out, and rough surface, provided the complete work was strong in construction and beautiful in design." One has heard this before, perhaps, but it is the kind of truth that is worth restating when it is done so well. The book covers the great wood-working period of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, and it includes critical, historical, technical, and ecclesiastical reviews of the causes that produced the work, influenced its design, controlled its construction, and suggested its ornament. The book covers structural woodwork, all wood fixtures, and the lesser fittings or movable furniture. Under each head there is an excellent descriptive text, beautiful measured drawings, and a wealth of photographs.