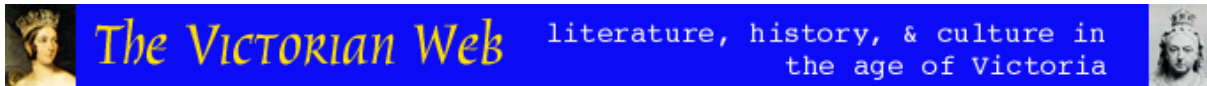


# Thomas Matthews Rooke RWS 1842-1942: An Overview



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## Introduction

T. M. Rooke is best known as [Burne-Jones](#)' studio assistant who worked for 'the master' for almost thirty years, and made an invaluable record of Burne-Jones's conversations in the last years of his life. He was also an interesting painter in his own right, producing imaginative and religious subjects in oils together with watercolours, mostly of old buildings.

He received his artistic education at the South Kensington and the Royal Academy Schools and in 1869 applied to work for Morris and Company. He was deputed to Burne-Jones' studio where he remained until the end of Burne-Jones' life. His own religious subjects had some success, for instance *The Story of Ruth* was bought for the Chantrey Bequest in 1877 (Tate Gallery). In 1878 Burne-Jones recommended him to [Ruskin](#) who was looking for artists to record old buildings threatened with demolition or restoration. Until 1893, Rooke spent half his time working for Ruskin; these watercolours are now in the Ruskin Museum, Sheffield. He produced a further series for the Society for the Preservation of Pictorial Records of Ancient Works of Art. These are in the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.

Rooke had a gentle unassuming personality; Burne-Jones wrote of him to Ruskin: "Also there is a very high place in Heaven waiting for him and He Doesn't Know It." He died in his hundredth year in his home in the "aesthetic" suburb of Bedford Park.

## Works

- Paintings in Oil and Watercolor

## Bibliography

*A Century of Master Drawings, Watercolours, & Works in Egg Tempera*. London: Peter Nahum, nd.

Ruskin, John. *Works*. Vol. 30. Eds. E. T. Cook and Alexander Cook. London: George Allen, 1907.