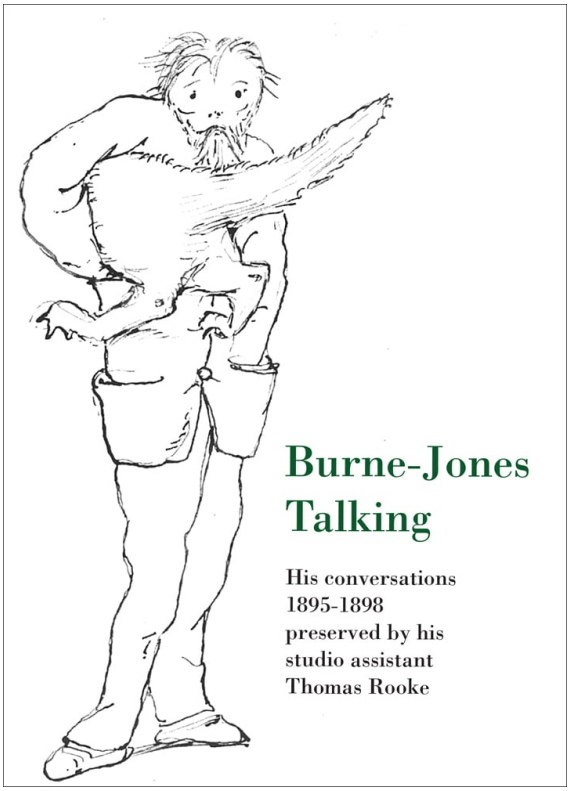
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Burne-Jones Talking

His Conversations 1895-1898 Preserved by His Studio Assistant Thomas Rooke

Edward Burne-Jones

Thomas Rooke

Mary Lago

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- The conversations of Burne-Jones, 19th-century painter of melancholy, abstract angels, with his assistant, revealing a loveable, witty man, articulate about his world, craft and contemporaries

'To know his work without his talk is "not to know him" …only when they are side by side is the common origin and aim seen and the complete man displayed.' Thus Thomas Rooke, studio assistant to Burne-Jones, who over four years memorized and recorded much of his master's studio and lunch-table talk. The man revealed with startling freshness and immediacy is far from the familiar painter of knightly melancholy and abstract angels. Burne-Jones emerges as a loveable and charming man, far more practical and down-to-earth, far more witty and ironic than might have been expected. He may still regret that he was not born in the Middle Ages and reminisce about the golden years with William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti in the 1850's and '60s. But he is still hard at work on his last great collaboration with Morris, the Kelmscott Chaucer, while not hesitating to fulminate about Britain's imperial pretensions and the hypocrisy that accompanied them. And he is unfailingly articulate when it comes to discussing the craft of painting in relation to himself, his contemporaries and the giants of the past. The conversations are edited by Mary Lago, Professor of English at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898) was one of the greatest and most original artists of Victorian England; his romantic and dreamy output was belied by his sharp and practical private persona. **Thomas Rooke** (1842-1941) was a painter and topographer, much patronized by Ruskin. He served as Burne-Jones's studio assistant for the last four years of the older painter's life. **Mary Lago** was Professor of English at the University of Missouri-Columbia. She wrote extensively on William Rothenstein, Rabindranath Tagore and E. M. Forster.

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