

Mosaicon: Or, Paper Mosaic, and How to Make It by William Bemrose

William Bemrose wrote the book "Mosaicon: Or, Paper Mosaic, and How to Make It" in 1875. It is a quilling how-to book.

Google felt this book, Mosaicon, was important to maintain and it has been republished and scanned. It was put into the public domain as a complete book in PDF format. From Google: "This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it." To read this book you can simply google "Mosaicon" and click "read". You can also click the download button to save to your computer. The text was put into a modern, easy to read font. The original graphics and pictures are incorporated into the book as they appeared in the original book. The digital version has full color plate.



A short biography of William Bemrose: he was born in Derby, UK on 30 December 1831 and was named after his father. He was the middle of three sons and he had a younger sister. He lived to the ripe old age of 77. William and his elder brother Henry expanded the family printing business in the town of Derby to all across England after their father retired in 1857.

Throughout his life William took an interest in arts and crafts. He wrote and/or published manuals and books on wood carving, fretwork, marquetry, paper mosaics and paper rosette work, plus pottery and Porcelain. Beyond publishing and writing books on arts and crafts, Bemrose also created and collected artworks. He painted and sketched. He had an extensive Porcelain collection.

As I was researching Mr. Bemrose, I found another book from 1884 called "Books, &c." by the Messrs. W. H. Allen & Co. There are two reviews of Mr. Bemrose's Mosaicon. The first review is from the Art Journal. It assures us that this craft far surpasses the more idle enjoyments of home life such as knitting. OK! Let's quill!

The second review is by the Sheffield Post. A few bits of the review:

"This is a new art, whereby beautiful articles resembling Mosaic, may be made from paper in various hues. It appears extremely simple to learn, and once acquired, the worker may soon become an adept at it....It's properties are very lasting... We feel sure that when it gets more widely known it will become very popular..."

Mr. Bemrose's book is a fascinating read. Change a few words into modern English, e.g., gum to glue, and you have an excellent primer to learn how to quill! It describes techniques such how to make various quills and how to build borders. It gives color advice, background fill-in suggestions, and what you can decorate. It tells you how to achieve equal size quills and tools of the trade. That did not include a slotted tool, instead finger rolling and the use of a homemade needle tool are explained. Pictures of completed projects and samples are in full color with explanations of how to make them. This is a comprehensive book which was written in 1875, 145 years ago.

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He also sold a Mosaicon kit, paper strips and card stock, small boxes ready to accept quilling designs, patterns, strips of various types of wood to quill on, and even watch holders complete with hooks. I found photos of an original Mosaicon kit at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. This wonderful kit was donated by Miss Ethel A. G. Willoughby. To view a larger photo and more information, access it from the photo on my web page.

