

(Download pdf ebook) The Britain of Brian Cook

## The Britain of Brian Cook

*Brian Cook, Brian Cook Batsford*  
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**Brian Cook, Brian Cook Batsford : The Britain of Brian Cook** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Britain of Brian Cook:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Cook and covers By Robin This book, up until 2010, seems to be the only one about Brian Cook that features many of his glorious Batsford English countryside covers but unfortunately I think it has a serious editorial flaw. The whole point of Cook's many covers was the sheer exuberance of color and design and at the time, in the Thirties, they must have seemed quite unique on a bookshop shelf but there are only forty-eight in color and sixty in mono making the point of the book somewhat redundant. Cook's covers just don't work in black and white. The vibrant flat colors he used get reduced to shades of grey which merge together to make a dull image. On page thirty-nine there is a short explanation of the Jean Berte printing process Batsford used to create these delights. The system used rubber plates with a tracing of the cover picture transferred to the plate for each of the five colors and the design was then cut by hand. The inks were the three primary colours, a grey and finally a black to finish off the book jacket and print the typography. The very bright flat colors were obtained by using watercolor inks (rather than the normal printer's oil-based ones) and overprinting them. Because the plates have to be cut by hand it meant that the pictures were much more graphic and relatively simple in appearance which gave them their unique look. Fine detail was not possible except with the black plate. Rather oddly, these bright, modern looking book jackets were for titles that presented a rosy, nostalgic backward view of Britain's towns and countryside. The front of the book has some wonderful pen and ink illustrations by Cook, confirming that he was a rather accomplished

artist and well suited to be involved with Batsford's publishing endeavors. I mentioned earlier that this was, until 2010, the only book about Brian Cook and his Batsford jackets which no doubt explains why copies of it are expensive. Fortunately there is a new book (Brian Cook's Landscapes of Britain) about Cook and his covers with everything in color so his fans can at last enjoy seeing his work as it should be seen.\*\*\*LOOK INSIDE THE BOOK by clicking 'customer images' under the cover.

Distinctive in its drawing and brilliant use of colour, the work of Brian Cook originally appeared on Batsford book jackets from the 1930s to the early 1950s. These books have been enduringly popular; they are collectors items and for many were the beginning of a life-long interest in British landscape and architectural heritage. In this volume these jackets are brought together for the first time. In his introduction, the author describes his own background and the publishing world in which he first worked. He is the nephew of the late Harry Batsford, chairman of the family publishing firm from 1919 to 1952. Brian Cook outlines the genesis of the major series of books he worked on - notably "The British Heritage Series" and "The Face of Britain Series" - and he describes the "Jean Berte" printing process that gives many of these jackets their characteristic bold colours and analyzes the design principles and practical methods of his craft. Virtually all Brian Cook's designs for jackets are here illustrated - the majority of them in colour - reproduced either from the original painting or from the finished jacket. For the benefit of book collectors, there is a checklist with bibliographical details, illustrating for reference finished jackets shown earlier as paintings. The book also includes a wide selection of the artist's pen and ink drawings which appeared in several volumes in "The British Heritage Series". The foreword to the book is written by Sir Hugh Casson, and the preface by Ian Logan.