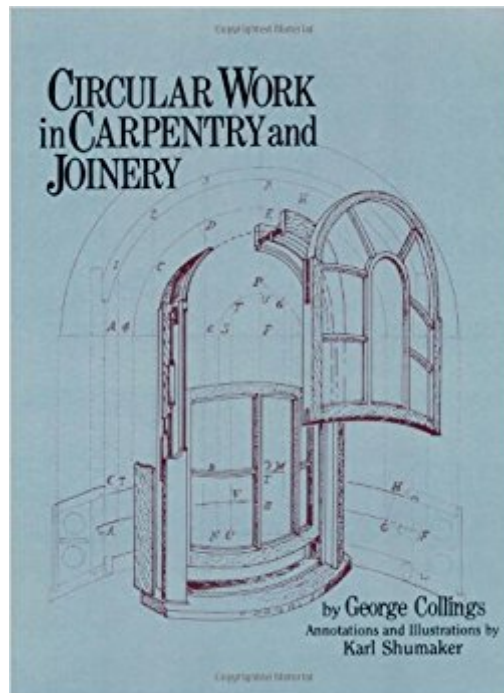


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# Circular Work In Carpentry And Joinery



## Synopsis

A survey of circular work of both single and double curvature.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It's sometimes difficult for contemporary woodworkers to remember that sophisticated and complex carpentry and joinery were routinely practiced centuries before the invention of the measuring tape, the calculator, the computer, power tools and CAD. Over the years, much original traditional woodworking knowledge, practices and techniques have disappeared from the trade and not been passed down through mentors and apprenticeships to modern carpenters and woodworkers. George Collings, a master carpenter writing in late nineteenth century England, authored his amazing *Practical Treatise on Circular Work of Single and Double Curvature* in 1886. "The finest examples of circular work in carpentry are found in Georgian and Victorian period architecture. Classical forms were revived during these periods, and the craftsman had to translate into wood the forms that had previously been executed in stone. Techniques of circular layout were developed in England, and passed along from master to apprentice over the decades."(From the Foreword.) A taste for simpler forms with less adornment developed towards the end of the 19th century, followed by the modernist movement of the 1920's. By the Depression era and WWII there was no longer any call for a craftsman with the skills to execute the labor-intensive work in circular joinery that the more elaborate forms required, and the skills and techniques - especially the layout methods -

virtually disappeared. Recently, however, an increasing popularity of Victorian reproduction, turrets and rotundas has rekindled an interest in circular work. Collings' work was resurrected and reprinted, with annotations and illustrations to make it more accessible to today's carpenters and woodworkers, by Karl Shumaker in 1992. This is a really fun book (if you like that sort of thing), with an impressive store of knowledge, techniques and inspiration. It occasionally makes my head hurt when I read it, but it's well worth the effort. As Mr. Shumaker so elegantly understates in his foreword, "While some of the geometry requires concentration, the attentive reader will be amply rewarded." If you enjoy this, try Collings' "A Practical Treatise on Handrailing".

This is not a book for the faint-hearted or mathematically challenged individual. It's layout is very weird to say the least. One half of the page is its original content, the other half has the author's clarifications and thoughts. A very hard read to say the least. BUT, if you are serious about gaining a LOT of knowledge regarding circular woodworking, especially repetitive capability, this is a must have book to get you started. It will guide you to places in your woodworking like no other and offers much for the designing mind. If you are extremely lucky to have a master circular woodworker at your disposal, you may not want to add all the thoughts of this book to your collection. This type of work is very demanding, let the master teach you as this book may confuse its reader. BUT, very few of us have this luxury so I recommend it highly. Read a little, let it soak in, practice what is shown. Let the book set for a while then start a new chapter.

I bought this book or one similar about 18 or 20 years ago and lent it out, never to see it again. I was not sure of the title but recognized the cover and ordered it at once. when the book arrived I was surprised to see only about half the book was there. I have some pages or parts that I zeroxed while designing something that are not there, in fact I am sure much more is missing. while checking on this it may have been the 1992 publication that I am looking for. Why did they leave the best pages out ?

This book is filled with excellent information on this subject. BUT, it is probably more for the professional architectural workshop. Hobbists can use it, too, but the investment needed for the time and efforts in producing these intricate pieces may be more than a hobbyist wants to put in.

George Collins takes both Geometric and Algebraic methods to you. And illustrates as well. Is your child a natural with straight edge and compass? Does he/ or she love to work with hands? Did he

make all A's in Algebra class? Wrap this with a bow and give it to your child with it's other Christmas Gifts. This is a lost art today and could keep your 13 year old child away from Mischief, if he is the hard working and intelligent kind. Some children would love to work with something real rather than just passing classes all the time.

If you want to cut circles with a Skil-saw, stick with E-How. This book delves into the geometry of compound curves. There are some annotations about construction methods with some priceless tips, but this book is more about planning and layout than it is about construction. Unless you are a serious woodworker who finished high school and paid attention, skip this one. Otherwise, this is the Bible of circular construction.

This takes some time to study and understand, but then building things with double curvature is pretty complicated stuff. There are a lot of ideas on how to create arches and domes. I was looking for a way to put an arch top door into a cylindrical tower and found a lot of help.

This book is a must for anyone doing circular and curved woodwork. It is a reprint of a text from the early 20th century. It is also the only book of it's type I've ever found. Went to this book a lot when I did Architectural Woodwork professionally.

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