

Excerpt from The Art of the Precursors: A Study in the History of Early Italian Maiolica With Illustrations
The aim and object of the present volume is the illustration of a series of examples of early Italian Maiolica which has come to light in the course of recent excavations in Italy. The work has been undertaken in the belief that it is on a basis of illustration alone that any satisfactory art-history can be solidly built. Mere words, however skilful the word-painter, can never render an accurate picture of a work of art, whereas a simple outline at once shows what the most elaborate verbal description will fail to express. Had the first historians of Maiolica taken the trouble to give representations of the objects they described, their abounding errors, inevitable, perhaps, in the preliminary stage of all enquiry, would not so long have passed current in the works of their successors, since having the illustrations for reference the mistakes would soon have been discovered and corrected. It is true that hitherto the examples of the art throughout its entire course have not all been known to the historians. Those belonging to its period of maturity and decline in the XVIth century have been sufficiently numerous and accessible. About the Publisher
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