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[www.lassco.co.uk](http://www.lassco.co.uk)

THREE PIGEONS

LASSCO Three Pigeons

Milton Common,

Oxfordshire OX9 2JN

+44 (0)1844 277188

[3pigeons@lassco.co.uk](mailto:3pigeons@lassco.co.uk)

BRUNSWICK HOUSE

30 Wandsworth Road,

London SW8 2LG

+44 (0) 20 7394 2100

[brunswick@lassco.co.uk](mailto:brunswick@lassco.co.uk)



# THE RECONSTRUCTION OF PICCADILLY, WILLIAM WALCOT

1924

Framed and mounted black line etching by the artist-engraver William Walcot showing the rebuilding of Piccadilly Circus and the Swan and Edgar building following destruction by Zeppelin raid in 1917. Issued as part of Walcot's *London Set* in 1924.

DIMENSIONS: 28cm (11") High, 42cm (16½") Wide

PRICE: £840

STOCK CODE: AD1590



## HISTORY

Born near Odessa on the Black Sea Coast of Russian Ukraine to an English father and wealthy Russian mother, William F Walcot, RBA RE (1874-1943) travelled extensively in his youth in Spain, South America, France and Belgium. He received his education at Amiens and Paris where he graduated the Ecole Des Beaux Arts before completing his artistic training in Moscow at the Imperial Academy of Arts where he also designed the landmark Metropol Hotel.

After settling in London in 1906 he became a central figure in the British Etching Revival. Much like his mentor Frank Brangwyn, Walcot broke with many of the accepted rules of Modern British etching in using zinc rather than copper plates and creating on a larger scale and with a more impressionistic touch, occasionally applying nitric acid directly to the face of the plate.

In common with many etchers Walcot's career was diverted and distorted by the effects of the Wall Street Crash of 1929, and the ensuing economic depression. The market for etchings, which 'had developed a somewhat speculative character', collapsed almost overnight and many etchers gave up the technique entirely.

Walcot managed to continue producing his etchings for some time due to the personal patronage of the Crittal family, inventors and developers of the 'Crittall Window'.

Walcot was elected an Associate of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers (RE); and Fellow in 1920. He exhibited widely at the the Royal Academy, the Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts and the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool.

(Additional information Elizabeth Harvey-Lee RE)