

Slightly Foxed

READERS' CATALOGUE • SPRING 2021



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OUR IMPRINTS

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These beautifully produced collectable children's books strike a nostalgic chord with many readers and introduce a younger generation to writers whose work has often been allowed to slip out of print.

OFFERS

Buy any four Slightly Foxed Editions and save £1 per book

Buy any four Plain Foxed Editions and save £1 per book

Buy any two SF Paperbacks and save £4 per book



THE READERS' CATALOGUE

Welcome to the Readers' Catalogue. Here you'll find listings for our cloth-bound limited-edition hardbacks, back issues of *Slightly Foxed* together with handsome slipcases in which to keep them, Plain Editions, our Foxed Cubs series of classic children's fiction, a small collection of literary goods and our pick of titles from other publishers. We do hope you enjoy receiving it.

Everything listed in this catalogue or on our website can be sent to you, or directly to a recipient, in good time for a date of your choice. *SF* subscribers can use their usual discount on all items, whether they are to be sent to you or to someone else. Non-subscribers may purchase all items at the undiscounted rates as usual. The office is well-stocked with smart gift cards, reams of brown paper, foxed ribbon and handsome gift boxes in anticipation.

Please note that we can also order many other books so if there's a new or second-hand title you're looking for that isn't listed here or on our website (where you'll also find hundreds of books recommended in past catalogues, back issues of the quarterly magazine and on our podcast) do get in touch with Jess in the office and she will do her best to rootle it out for you.

With best wishes from Gail, Hazel and all of us here at Slightly Foxed

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NEW THIS SPRING

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 54

Laurie Lee

AS I WALKED OUT ONE MIDSUMMER MORNING

When Laurie Lee set out on foot from his home in the Gloucestershire village of Slad one midsummer morning in 1935 he knew he was saying farewell to the idyllic country boyhood that he would later capture so unforgettably in *Cider with Rosie*. He was 19 and off to see the world with only his violin for company. He was aiming for London but decided to go via Southampton because he had never seen the sea. And so began a year of wandering that would take him from the north of Spain south to the Mediterranean.



In London he slept where he could, earning a few pennies with his fiddle, eventually finding work on a building site and a cosy lodging with a half-cockney half-Irish family who could have come straight out of Dickens. When he was sacked from his building job he bought a one-way ticket on a ship sailing to the Spanish port of Vigo, a town that seemed to him to rise from the sea 'like some rust-corroded wreck, as old and bleached as the rocks around it'. People lay sleeping in doorways or sprawled on the ground, 'like bodies washed up by the tide.' It was his first sight of a country in which life had barely changed since the Middle Ages, and where people lived intensely in the moment to escape the poverty that dominated their lives. Music was their drug, and his violin became his passport.

Trudging south through fly-blown villages and the historic cities of Segovia, Madrid and

Toledo, he finally holed up for the winter in the small Mediterranean town of Castillo, by which time civil war was imminent. The journey that had begun as a young man's romantic dream ended somewhat ignominiously with rescue from the coast by the Royal Navy. But in Spain Lee had come face to face with a savage reality that would soon draw him back to fight on the Republican side. *Cider with Rosie* is a warm, golden book, but this brilliant evocation of the vanished Spain of the 1930s is unsentimentally observed and darkly haunting, like a painting by Goya. Illustrated by Leonard Rosoman.

PUBLISHED MARCH 2021 • HAND-NUMBERED LIMITED EDITION OF 2,000
CLOTH-BOUND HARDBACK • 170 X 110 MM • FROM £17 • 240 PAGES

ALSO AVAILABLE

To follow you'll find listings for all available titles from the original SF Edition series together with others on a loosely similar theme that we have reissued as Plain Foxed Editions or SF Paperbacks. After a romp through our Foxed Cubs list of classic historical, adventure and nature novels for younger readers, you'll discover a couple of pages dedicated to books featured in the new issue of the quarterly and our latest pick of good reading from other publishers' shelves. So, whether you're in need of a few good books for yourself or as presents for someone you're fond of this season, we hope you'll find our suggestions helpful.

COUNTRY SCENES

Laurie Lee, *Cider with Rosie*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 53 • 272 PAGES

ILLUS. • FROM £17

Laurie Lee was born in Stroud in 1914 and in 1917 the family moved to a damp and crumbling cottage in the remote Cotswold village of Slad. When the First World War was over Laurie's father abandoned his wife and children and life was hard, but for Laurie his warm hugger-mugger home and the village with its familiar characters and unchanging round were full of wonder.

He writes ecstatically of going blackberrying in summer, and skating and carol singing in icy Christmas weather when it hurt to breathe and the air was 'like needles'. Yet he acknowledges that village life could be brutal too. *Cider with Rosie* is not just a rosy picture of a rural past, but a magical evocation of growing up in a lost world that still rings emotionally true.

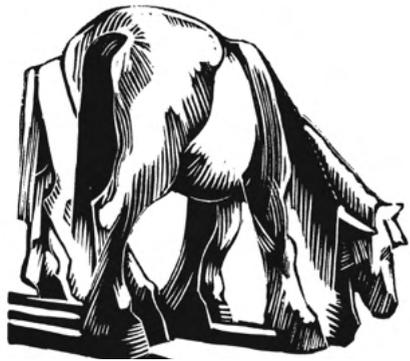


Adrian Bell, *Corduroy*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 288 PAGES • FROM £17

Adrian Bell was a rather frail young man of 20 when, in 1920, he left London to learn agriculture on a Suffolk farm. He arrived one autumn day on an old motorbike feeling all wrong for the part. Like many townies, he assumed at first that the locals were somewhat simple, but soon his own ignorance and initial inability to do the most basic physical tasks taught him a new respect. A farmer, he discovered, stored away in his head thousands of facts about animals, crops and fodder, while his eye for a pig was 'as subtle as an artist's'.

Bell's eye was subtle too. He grew to love the land, and *Corduroy* is filled with precise and poetic descriptions of the countryside and of farming life. It is not simply a period piece – it captures what is unchanging about the lives of those who live from, rather than simply on, the land.



Adrian Bell, *Silver Ley*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 30

288 PAGES • FROM £17

In this captivating sequel to *Corduroy*, Adrian Bell describes the hardships and happiness of setting up on his own farm. The story opens in 1921 as Bell wakes, full of hope, to start his new life at Silver Ley. This second book in Bell's trilogy is a quietly observed and unsentimental picture of a rural world and a way of life which were even then fading.

Adrian Bell, *The Cherry Tree*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 38 • 256 PAGES • FROM £17

In this final volume of his trilogy Bell makes a happy marriage and settles down with his wife Nora on their own small farm. But behind this cheerful picture lurks the shadow of the growing agricultural depression and the passing of an old rural order. Bell's poetic eye and farmer's knowledge come together once more to complete a timeless record of life on the land which still resonates today.

Special Offer: The Adrian Bell Trilogy

SF Subscribers: UK & Ireland £48; overseas £54 *SAVE £7.50

Non-Subscribers: UK & Ireland £52.50; overseas £58.50 *SAVE £3

John Moore, *Brensham Village*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 34 • 272 PAGES • FROM £17

In this second volume of Moore's interwar trilogy the setting moves from Elmbury to a small village nearby. It is the 1930s, there is unemployment, and change is creeping in, with mannerless weekenders arriving from the city, a shady 'Syndicate' of developers, an ugly petrol

station and a local cinema. But there is still cricket on the village green, and Moore and his friends still go fishing, ferreting and bird's-nesting. Moore tenderly evokes the last shadows of an England that was on the very point of vanishing.

John Moore, *The Blue Field*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 42 • 256 PAGES • FROM £17

The last in John Moore's trilogy, *The Blue Field* shifts the focus from town and village to a single farm and the life of its owner, William Hart. It is 1948 and the aftermath of the war signals the end of a particular way of rural life. In the touching, and often hilarious, stories of this wild and intractable man, Moore captures a very English sense of resistance and resilience. Hart is a master wagon-maker, reveller and brewer of parsnip wine; a steadfast defender of small liberties; a self-professed descendant of Shakespeare who grows the finest Brussels sprouts in England. And he's the man responsible for the field of linseed, grown in defiance of the War Agricultural Executive Committee, which flowers one summer morning on Brensham Hill.



ROGUES, REBELS & RIDDLES

Diana Petre, *The Secret Orchard of Roger Ackerley*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 33 • 272 PAGES • FROM £17

Diana and her twin sisters grew up in Barnes, South London, in the care of an elderly housekeeper, having been abandoned in 1912 by their mother, the enigmatic Mrs Muriel Perry, whose real name and true identity were a mystery. After an absence of ten years, Muriel reappeared and took charge of her children, with disastrous results. For the girls, one of the highlights of their isolated lives were visits from a kindly man they knew as 'Uncle Bodger'. In fact, as Muriel finally revealed, he was their father, Roger Ackerley.

Jessica Mitford, *Hons and Rebels*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 52 • 320 PAGES • FROM £17

In this funny and perceptive memoir Jessica Mitford describes growing up as the fifth of the six notoriously headstrong Mitford sisters. An isolated childhood in the hideous Cotswold house built by their father Lord Redesdale, where life centred round the church and the Conservative Party, turned 'Decca' as she was known into a lifelong socialist. At 18 she made her escape, eloping spectacularly with her charismatic left-wing cousin Esmond Romilly, moving to the East End of London and then running a bar in Miami. It's a story of sheer bravado brilliantly told by one of the most eccentric members of an eccentric family.

Eric Newby, *Something Wholesale*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 41 • 256 PAGES • FROM £17

Who would have thought that the adventurous traveller and decorated wartime hero Eric Newby had started his working life in the rag trade? But that is the story he tells in this characteristically jaunty and very funny book. Lane & Newby, 'Mantle Makers and Wholesale Costumiers', occupied a warren of offices in Great Marlborough Street. Here young Eric was put to work in the Mantle Department and forced to accompany Mr Wilkins, the head salesman, on his twice yearly excursions to drum up orders in the great industrial towns of the North. As Eric blundered his way through the various departments, things were beginning to go wrong. Eric's father, an Edwardian patriarch with a light-hearted attitude to accounting, had been running up debts, and during the Fifties Lane & Newby finally collapsed. By this time, however, Eric was laying plans for an excursion to the Hindu Kush – and the rest is travel history. Buy with *Love & War in the Apennines*, see p. 9



Roald Dahl, *Boy*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 48 • 184 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

It's easy to see from this childhood memoir where the ogres who people Dahl's fiction come from: the vengeful and filthy-fingernailed sweetshop owner Mrs Pratchett, the school doctor who lances little Ellis's boil in such a heartless manner, the creepy headmaster of Repton who wields the cane with unacceptable relish. But there's another, far more cheerful side to the story in the person of Dahl's adored mother Sofie who, widowed at 35 with six children to care for, nevertheless managed to leave them with idyllic childhood memories. Like many individualists, Dahl never fitted in at school and was ecstatic when he finally escaped to work for Shell, setting off for East Africa with the same infectious bounce and enthusiasm that permeate this irresistible little book. Buy with *Going Solo*, see p. 9

A WORLD AT WAR

Eric Newby, *Love and War in the Apennines*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 47 • 360 PAGES • FROM £17

'That night something happened to me on the mountain . . . It was not physical; it was simply that part of my spirit went out of me, and in the whole of my life since that night it has never been the same again.' It was the winter of 1943 and young Eric Newby, later to become known for his jaunty accounts of his adventurous travels, was facing probably the hardest test of his life. Captured by the Germans in 1942 while on a secret mission to bomb a German airfield

in Sicily and incarcerated in Northern Italy, he had escaped during the chaos of Italy's surrender to the Allies. During those long months on the run in the mountains he was fed and sheltered by poor peasant farmers who hated the Italian Fascist militia as much as he did and risked torture and execution to help him. As well as being a spine-tingling escape story it is a fascinating picture of life in these remote mountain communities which at that time had changed little since the Middle Ages.

Hermione, Countess of Ranfurly, *To War with Whitaker*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 50 • 416 PAGES • FROM £17

Hermione, Countess of Ranfurly and her husband Dan had been married for less than a year when he was called up in September 1939. Their characterful cook-butler Whitaker volunteered to go with him, but Yeomanry rules decreed that though officers could take their servants to war they could not take their wives. Undeterred, however, Hermione immediately set off for Egypt in pursuit. Between snatched reunions with Dan, who was eventually taken prisoner, she worked for SOE in Cairo and as personal assistant to General 'Jumbo' Wilson in Jerusalem, entertaining everyone who was anyone from King Farouk to Evelyn Waugh. This sparkling diary is both a passionate love story and a unique behind-the-scenes picture of the war in the Middle East and Europe as seen by a very unconventional aristocrat.

Roald Dahl, *Going Solo*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 49 • 236 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

This sequel to *Boy* finds Dahl a representative of Shell, travelling the dirt roads of Tanganyika in an old station wagon visiting distant and often eccentric customers, the people who quite literally kept the machinery of Empire running. It was a free and adventurous life, but nothing like as hair-raising as what happened when war was declared and Dahl joined the RAF. Flying solo in 1941 to join his new squadron, he crashed in the Western Desert and suffered horrendous injuries, but five months later he was up and off again to join the tiny British force attempting to defend Greece. He was clearly a brilliant pilot, and *Going Solo* is a story of extraordinary courage as well as a haunting evocation of the unspoiled beauty of East Africa in the 1930s and its now extinct breed of expatriates, 'the craziest bunch of humans I shall ever meet'.



ferry at Wami River

John Hackett, *I Was a Stranger*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 320 PAGES • FROM £17

In September 1944 John Hackett, commander of the 4th Parachute Brigade, was severely wounded and captured during the Battle of Arnhem. After being taken to a hospital in enemy hands and given emergency surgery, he was spirited away by the Dutch Resistance and hidden

in a house owned by three middle-aged sisters, who risked their lives to nurse him back to health and help him escape down the canals of occupied Holland to the British lines. *I Was a Stranger* is less a war memoir than a story of friendship, a tribute by a very unusual soldier to a group of outstandingly brave, unassuming and resourceful people.

Christabel Bielenberg, *The Past Is Myself*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 384 PAGES • FROM £17

In 1934, shortly after Hitler's rise to power, Christabel Burton, a beautiful woman from an influential Anglo-Irish family, married a liberal young German lawyer, Peter Bielenberg, and they settled in Berlin. When Allied bombing made the city too dangerous she fled with their children to a small village in the Black Forest, where she experienced a very different society from the Nazi-dominated one she had left behind. *The Past Is Myself* is her surprising account of life in that 'other Germany', and of her own nail-biting encounter with the Nazi regime.



Richard Hillary, *The Last Enemy*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 39 • 224 PAGES • FROM £17

Richard Hillary was a charming, good-looking and rather arrogant young man, fresh from public school and Oxford, when, like many of his friends, he abandoned university to train as a pilot on the outbreak of war. At the training school, meeting men who hadn't enjoyed the same gilded youth as he had, Hillary's view of the world, and of himself, began to change. In 1940, during the Battle of Britain, he shot down five German aircraft and was finally shot down in flames himself, sustaining terrible burns. With its raw honesty, lack of self-pity and gripping and terrifying accounts of aerial combat and the psychological aftermath, *The Last Enemy* is a wartime classic, the harrowing story of a carefree young man who, like many others, was suddenly and cruelly forced to grow up.

Anthony Rhodes, *Sword of Bone*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 35 • 320 PAGES • FROM £17

It's hard to imagine that anyone who took part in the disaster of Dunkirk could write an amusing book about it. But that is what Anthony Rhodes has done in *Sword of Bone*, his wry account of the events leading up to the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force in May 1940 – a 'strategic withdrawal according to plan' as the chaos was officially described.

Being observant and cool-headed, with an ironic sense of humour, he manages to capture the absurdity as well as the tragedy of what took place.

Priscilla Napier, *A Late Beginner*

SF PAPERBACK • 336 PAGES • FROM £11

Priscilla Napier grew up in Egypt during the last golden years of the Edwardian Age. Here she brings to life that far-off world – the house and its devoted Egyptian servants, the desert picnics with Nanny, the visits to Cairo Zoo, the afternoons playing in the grounds of the Gezira Sporting Club – and the long summers in England among their mother's family, as the First World War began to take its tragic toll of uncles and cousins. It is a wonderful evocation of a place, a time and a climate of mind – a book that, as Penelope Lively writes in her preface, 'ranks quite simply with the greatest accounts of how it is to be a child'.

WRITING LIFE

Jennie Erdal, *Ghosting*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 43 • 304 PAGES • FROM £17

'A large sapphire on the lapel of a bold striped suit, a vivid silk tie so bright that it dazzles . . . on his fingers a collection of jewels . . .' – this is the man Jennie Erdal calls 'Tiger', the flamboyant figure at the centre of *Ghosting*, the strange and gripping story of the 20 years in which she became his ghost writer. Erdal created a whole literary oeuvre in his name, and even turned his ludicrous plot ideas and sexual fantasies into novels which were seriously and admiringly reviewed. *Ghosting* is a wickedly funny book, but it is also a thoughtful look at deception and self-deception, and the masks that most of us wear.

Michael Holroyd, *Basil Street Blues*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 29 • 368 PAGES • FROM £17

Well-known for his frank biographies of such controversial figures as Augustus John and Lytton Strachey, Holroyd teases out the story of his own distinctly problematic family in this delightful and original book. His volatile father, always busy with his own enterprises, and his glamorous Swedish mother with her succession of exotic husbands, had only walk-on parts in his life. It was only after both parents died that he was overcome by a desire to find the 'connecting story' which his fragmented childhood had so lacked. The result is a very personal detective story, subtle, funny and poignant.

Gavin Maxwell, *The House of Elrig*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 31 • 256 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

The writer and naturalist Gavin Maxwell is best known for *Ring of Bright Water*, his moving account of raising otters on the remote west coast of Scotland. In his childhood memoir

The House of Elrig he describes, with the same lyrical power that made that earlier book a classic, how it all began. In loving detail he evokes the wild moors around his Scottish home and the creatures that inhabited them. As was then the custom, he was ripped away from this paradise to go to a series of brutalizing schools. But always in his imagination he was at Elrig. It was his refuge and his escape.

Rosemary Sutcliff, *Blue Remembered Hills*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 208 PAGES • FROM £17

Rosemary Sutcliff is one of Britain's most distinguished children's writers. Born in 1920, the only child of a naval father and a pretty, manic-depressive mother, as a child Rosemary suffered from juvenile arthritis, which burned its way through her, leaving her permanently disabled. Yet *Blue Remembered Hills* is the very opposite of a misery memoir, full of poetry, humour, affection, and joy in people and the natural world.

In some ways, hers was an enchanted childhood, lived among the vivid sights and sounds of the dockyards, which would later feed into her books. When her father retired from the sea the family moved to North Devon, and at 14 Rosemary went to Bideford Art School, becoming a skilled miniaturist. In time, though, feeling cramped by the small canvas of her paintings, isolated in the country and wounded in love, she turned to writing. Her novels would bring the past vividly to life for generations of children. *Blue Remembered Hills* is the unforgettable record of the making of a writer.



Jan Morris, *Conundrum*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 46 • 200 PAGES • FROM £17

'I was three or perhaps four years old when I realized I had been born into the wrong body and should really be a girl.' In 1972 James Morris booked himself a return ticket to Casablanca, where he underwent what is now called gender reassignment surgery. Soon after she wrote a book about what it had felt like to live – or try to live – for forty-odd years with the conviction that she was a woman trapped in a man's body, and how this agony had finally been resolved. How James finally became Jan is an extraordinary story, and *Conundrum* is a gripping and thought-provoking read which casts fascinating light on the fevered debates of today.

Helene Hanff, *84, Charing Cross Road*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 240 PAGES • FROM £17

In the drab and traumatized post-war London of 1949, Marks & Co., second-hand and antiquarian booksellers at 84, Charing Cross Road, received an enquiry from 'a poor writer with an antiquarian taste in books', a Miss Helene Hanff of New York City. It was not the kind of letter they were accustomed to receiving, but it was one that would make history.

After a while, letters between the feisty, eccentric New York writer and the staff of the bookshop began to encompass much more than books. Soon the whole office was joining in, slipping in notes about their families, describing life in London, and thanking her for the food parcels she sent from New York. It was a correspondence that would last for twenty years.

Helene never made her fortune as a scriptwriter, but when she finally had the idea of making the letters into a book, it became a bestseller. It's a gloriously heart-warming read, the account of a friendship – almost a love story – conducted through books.

Hilary Mantel, *Giving up the Ghost*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 37 • 232 PAGES • FROM £17

Hilary Mantel has said that this powerful and haunting book came about by accident. She never intended to write a memoir, but the sale of a much-loved cottage in Norfolk prompted her to write about the death of her stepfather, and from there 'the whole story of my life began to unravel'. *Giving up the Ghost* is a story of 'wraiths and phantoms', and of a life full of challenges, but it is very far from being a misery memoir. Rather it is a compulsively readable and ultimately optimistic account of what made Hilary Mantel the writer she is, full of courage, insight and wry humour.

V. S. Pritchett, *A Cab at the Door*

SF PAPERBACK • 296 PAGES • FROM £11

The writer V. S. Pritchett's mother was an irrepressible cockney, his father a reckless, over-optimistic peacock of a man, always embarking on new business ventures which inevitably crashed – hence the 'cab at the door' waiting to bear the family quietly away from yet another set of creditors. In this vigorous and original memoir Pritchett captures unforgettably the smells, sounds and voices of London in the first decades of the 20th century, and the cast of Dickensian characters among whom he grew up.



IN WORDS & PICTURES

Erich Kästner, *When I Was a Little Boy*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 40 • 216 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

Erich Kästner, author of the immortal children's book *Emil and the Detectives*, was born at the end of the 19th century in Dresden – that 'wonderful city full of art and history' which was razed to the ground by the Allies in 1945. Erich's gentle father Emil, a master saddler, and his mother Ida, an intelligent woman who set up as a hairdresser, had come to Dresden from small-

town Saxony. Times were tough, and Erich grew up in a tenement flat at the shabby end of a long street called the Königsbrücker Strasse. Yet the book shines with the everyday happiness of a young boy's life in a close-knit, hardworking family, set against the backdrop of the ancient city with its baroque buildings, its parades before the Kaiser, its trams and glittering shops. *When I Was a Little Boy* is an affecting picture of both Erich's childhood and the city he never ceased to mourn.

Gwen Raverat, *Period Piece*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 320 PAGES

ILLUS. • FROM £17

Gwen Raverat is best-known for her glorious wood engravings, but in her childhood memoir *Period Piece* she created a perfect small masterpiece of another kind – a deliciously funny, affectionate and atmospheric picture of life in the small world of 19th-century academic Cambridge among the eccentric Darwin clan. Illustrated with Gwen's own delightful drawings, it not only brilliantly captures a moment in time but also shows us the making of the artist Gwen was to become. As Rose Macaulay wrote when it was first published, it is 'funny, witty, beautifully written, more than beautifully illustrated, everything such a book can be'.



Richard Kennedy, *A Boy at the Hogarth Press & A Parcel of Time*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 208 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

In 1926, at the age of 16, Richard Kennedy left school without a single qualification and went to work at the Hogarth Press. The Woolfs clearly developed a fondness for their apprentice, but when he left several years later, Leonard pronounced him 'the most frightful idiot he [had] ever had the privilege of meeting in a long career of suffering fools'. But Kennedy, who became a successful artist and children's book illustrator, was taking everything in, and 50 years later he produced a minor classic in *A Boy at the Hogarth Press*, accompanied by his own wonderfully alive illustrations. Later still, he wrote his touching childhood memoir, *A Parcel of Time*. Now published together in a single edition, the two are a sheer delight.

Edward Ardizzone, *The Young Ardizzone*

SF PAPERBACK • 208 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £11

The creator of the ever-popular *Little Tim* and *Lucy* books begins his story in 1905 when he was 5 and his mother brought him and his two sisters home to England from Haiphong where his father was a telegraph engineer. Left in Suffolk in the care of their grandmother, the three grew up with a full complement of young bachelor uncles, great-aunts and eccentric family friends – a comfortable Edwardian world which is beautifully captured in Ardizzone's deceptively simple prose and delicately humorous drawings.

Ernest Shepard, *Drawn from Memory and Drawn from Life*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NOS. 44 & 45

192 & 224 PAGES • ILLUS. • PAIR FROM £34

The much-loved artist Ernest Shepard, whose delicate and humorous illustrations will forever define the characters of Winnie the-Pooh, and Mole, Ratty and Toad in *Wind in the Willows*, grew up in London as the 19th century faded into the 20th. In *Drawn from Memory*, he tells, in words and enchanting pictures, the story of his happy middle-class childhood, beginning in 1887, the year of the Golden Jubilee when Ernest was 8 and already determined to be an artist like his father. *Drawn from Life* opens with the tragic death of his mother when he was 10 and describes the family's brave recovery, Ernest's time at the Royal Academy Schools, and his happy marriage to a fellow artist. Together these two volumes form a vivid canvas filled with the vision of a gentler, more leisurely world which makes one long to return to it.



QUIETLY HILARIOUS

Diana Holman-Hunt, *My Grandmothers and I*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 288 PAGES • FROM £17

Diana Holman-Hunt spent her Edwardian childhood shuttling between two wildly contrasting grandparents. Her paternal grandmother, the eccentric widow of the Pre-Raphaelite painter Holman Hunt, lived entirely in the past in her big gaunt house in Kensington, while her mother's mother, in her comfortable and well-ordered home on the edge of the Sussex marshes, lived entirely in the present. Both competed for Diana's affection while being spectacularly blind to her needs. *My Grandmothers and I* is Diana's touching and darkly funny memoir of that time – a small comic masterpiece of pitch-perfect dialogue and deadpan observation.

Frances Wood, *Hand-grenade Practice in Peking*

SF PAPERBACK • 240 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £11

China in 1975 was a strange, undiscovered country, still half-mad from Mao's Cultural Revolution, when young Frances Wood boarded a plane in London to study for a year in Peking. Virtually closed to outsiders for the preceding decade, China was just beginning to make tentative moves towards the outside world when Frances and her fellow students were driven through the dark silent countryside to their new quarters at the Foreign Languages Institute. Throughout the following year in an extraordinary Alice-in-Wonderland world where 'education' consisted of shovelling rubble, hand-grenade practice and crippling tedious ideological lectures, Frances never lost her sense of humour. Based on the letters she wrote home, *Hand-grenade Practice in Peking* is both affecting and hilarious.

Harold Carlton, *Marrying Out*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 27 • 288 PAGES • FROM £17

This darkly comic story of a Jewish family's rise and fall is seen through the eyes of the teenage Harold Carlton, lightly disguised as 'Howard Conway'. But you don't have to be Jewish to recognize the characters in this dysfunctional family – Howard's dyspeptic and dominating father; his delightful but dissatisfied mother; his brother and sister, who provide a kind of background chorus; lovable, easy-going Grandad, with his surprise secret life; and glorious, ghastly Grandma, the arch manipulator and expert in emotional blackmail. A brilliantly observed study of family dynamics, and of a certain kind of Jewish life in 1950s North London.

Ysenda Maxtone Graham, *Mr Tibbits's Catholic School*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 200 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

Like many of the best books, this unusual history of an unusual school – St Philip's prep-school in Kensington, founded in 1934 by Catholic convert Richard Tibbits and still going strong today – is hard to classify. 'As you live through its story,' the author promises her readers, 'you'll be taken on a meander through the 20th century. War, rationing, smog, mini-skirts, strikes, Thatcherism, the first computer . . .' Enough to say that for anyone who has enjoyed *Decline and Fall* or *St Trinian's*, anyone who loves to laugh yet feels the poignancy of the passage of time, this book will be a treat.



Ysenda Maxtone Graham,

Terms & Conditions: Life in Girls' Boarding-Schools, 1939–1979

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 272 PAGES • FROM £17

'When I asked some girls who had been at Hatherop Castle in the 1960s whether the school had had a lab in those days they gave me a blank look. "A laboratory?" I expanded, hoping to jog their memories. "Oh that kind of lab!" one of them said. "I thought you meant a Labrador."' As we discover from this quietly hilarious history of life in British girls' boarding-schools, this was a not untypical reaction. Harsh matrons, freezing dormitories and appalling food predominated, but occasionally these eccentric establishments imbued in their pupils a lifetime love of the arts and a thirst for self-education. In *Terms & Conditions* Ysenda speaks to members of a lost tribe – the Boarding-school Women, who look back on their experiences with a mixture of horror and humour.

Christopher Robbins, *The Empress of Ireland*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 51 • 384 PAGES • FROM £17

The subtitle to this delicious book is 'A Chronicle of an Unusual Friendship', and it would indeed be difficult to imagine two more unlikely companions than its author and his subject, the

80-year-old gay Irish film-maker Brian Desmond Hurst. Christopher Robbins was young, green and broke when he was first introduced to Hurst as a possible scriptwriter for a forthcoming film: a great religious epic covering 'the events leading up to the birth of Christ'. As he struggled to get his head round this fantastic commission for which he knew he was spectacularly ill-suited, Robbins began to realize that he had indeed entered a fantasy world. The film was never made of course, Robbins was never paid and the script was never finished. But in *The Empress of Ireland* he produced a comic masterpiece, a picture of a wickedly unapologetic old rogue it's impossible not to like.

Roger Hudson, *An Englishman's commonplace Book*

SLIGHTLY FOXED OCCASIONAL BOOKS • HB • 112 PAGES • FROM £12.50

'Variety, the unexpected, a bit of vulgarity and the ridiculous mixed in with the elevated,' has been Roger Hudson's recipe in compiling this commonplace book from material he's gathered over the past 40 years. And that is what we are given in this wide-ranging collection by a well-read man with a sharp eye, an ironic – indeed very English – sense of humour and a devotion to history. Ranging over the centuries, it contains a rich mix of often arresting facts, vivid descriptions, absurd observations and wise words. Sir Christopher Wren rubs shoulders with Eddie Izzard, Princess Margaret with Elizabeth I. And all organized under subject headings to help find that appropriate quote.

Above all it gives us a perspective on our own history via the voices of those who were living it, reminding us that the past was not a rehearsal for the present, that there is no substitute for the horse's mouth. Altogether a book for the times and a perfect present for a thoughtful and humorous friend. It may even inspire you to start a commonplace book of your own.

'Thank you for your books, your blog and the interesting recommendations that decimate my budget but bring great joy and enrichment.' M. Taylor

'I simply wanted to tell you how glad I am that Slightly Foxed exists! I look forward with anticipation to the quarterly and listen every month to the podcast . . . usually with pen in hand to scribble down suggestions for books to add to my growing to-be-read list. Thank you for what you do. And may 2021 be much better than 2020!' S. Joiner

'I'd like to say how happy I am that I discovered your books. After trying out a few SF Editions, I concluded that you can do no wrong and subscribed. I am particularly thankful for the more obscure gems.' P. Kremer

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***Slightly Foxed* Issue 69, Spring 2021 • FROM £12**

Anthony Wells marvels at Montaigne • C. J. Driver spends a month in the country • Alice Jolly stays up late with Dr Spock • Sue Gaisford feels the dawn wind • Christopher Rush returns to 1984 • Ysenda Maxtone Graham gets stuck on the mezzanine • Andy Merrills gets the lowdown on Lyndon B. Johnson • Selina Hastings pays a visit to Don Otavio, and much more . . .

To buy books featured in this issue, please see p. 36

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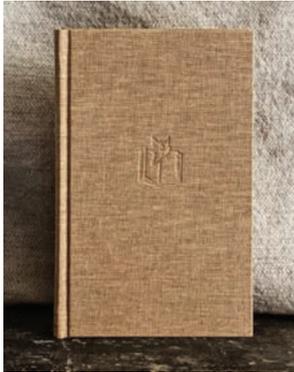
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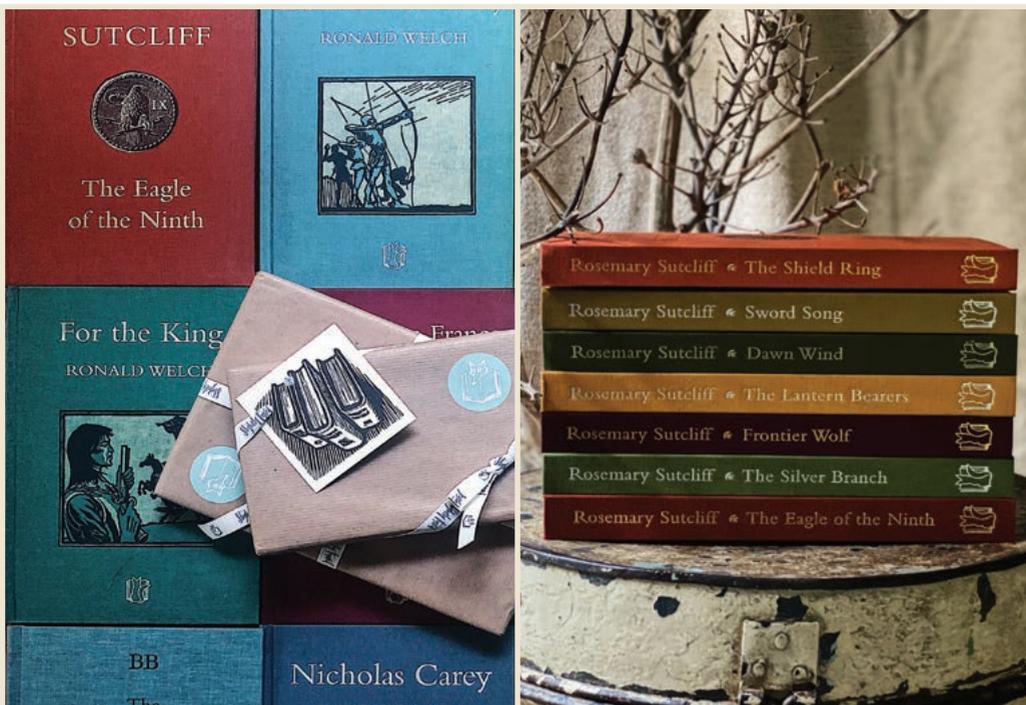
FORMAT: 110 X 80MM

Last year we received a cheque from a generous subscriber to use in any way we wished, and we decided to commission a bookplate from the illustrator and printmaker Clare Curtis. We asked her for a lasting image that would sum up the spirit of *Slightly Foxed*, and this is the elegant result.

The SF bookplate is produced on fine cream acid-free paper with space for you to write your own name. It's a decorative and practical way to keep track of your favourite books, and the perfect gift for a bookish friend. We love it, and we hope you will too.

(TO AFFIX: PRITT STICK OR EQUIVALENT)





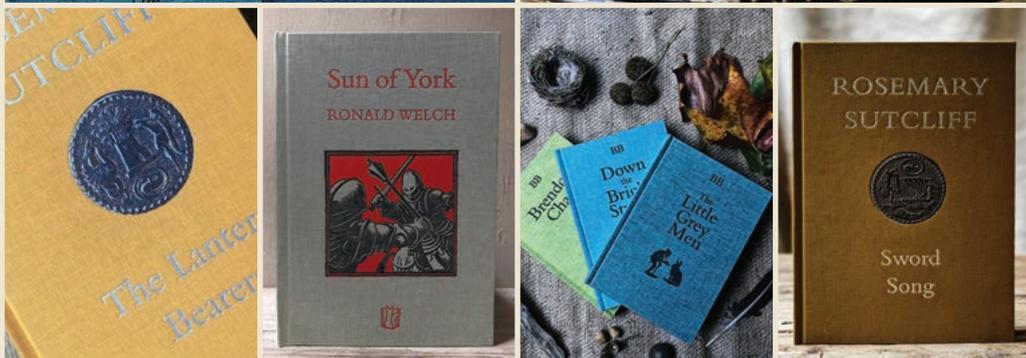
SLIGHTLY FOXED CUBS

Slightly Foxed Cubs is a series of beautifully produced collectable children's books, which strike a nostalgic chord with many older readers and introduce a younger generation to writers whose marvellous books have, unaccountably, been allowed to slip out of print. Bound in coloured cloth, with printed endpapers and original illustrations, the Cubs make ideal presents, as stand-alone titles or in sets.

ROSEMARY SUTCLIFF

Rosemary Sutcliff (1920–92) wrote three of her four great historical novels for children set during the last years of the Roman occupation of Britain – *The Eagle of the Ninth*, *The Silver Branch* and *The Lantern Bearer* (winner of the Carnegie Medal) – between 1954 and 1959, and the fourth, *Frontier Wolf*, which comes third in the chronological story, in 1980. The four books are only loosely inter-connected, but together they give a vivid picture of the ebbing away of imperial power from Britain as Rome's values were undermined and her defences gradually weakened by Saxon invasions. The three final novels that follow in this brilliant sequence – *Dawn Wind*, *Sword Song* and *The Shield Ring* – continue the story, forming a vivid panorama of the mysterious years from the departure of the Roman Legions, through the Dark Ages to the first decades of Norman rule.

Sutcliff was writing primarily for children, but she never talks down to her readers, and adults too find these novels impossible to put down. All of them are based on historical



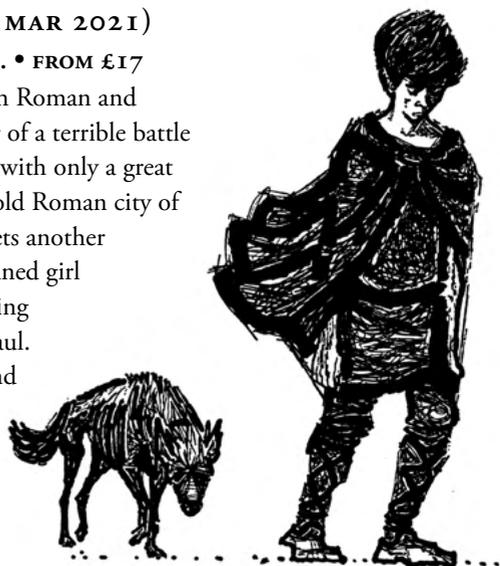
fact but it's Sutcliffe's imaginative brilliance that makes you smell the burning cherry log warming old Uncle Aquila's cosy study, feel the tension in the air at the Saturnalia Games, and shiver in the icy winds howling round the bleak frontier forts along Hadrian's Wall. Her protagonists are no cardboard cut-outs but flesh-and-blood people with understandable weaknesses and beset by recognizable human dilemmas, and it's they who drive the plots. As well as being brilliant reads, together these novels make sense of a far-off period that left its mark on almost every aspect of British life. They have been difficult to find for some time and we're delighted to be reissuing all seven of the Roman and post-Roman novels, with their original illustrations, in a limited, numbered edition.

NEW THIS YEAR

DAWN WIND (PUBLISHED MAR 2021)

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 248 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

Owain, the book's teenage hero who has both Roman and British blood in his veins, is the sole survivor of a terrible battle with the Saxons. Wounded and hungry, and with only a great fighting dog for company, he makes for the old Roman city of Viroconium where, among the ruins, he meets another survivor, Regina, a young and terrified orphaned girl and together they set off for the coast, planning to leave Britain for a British settlement in Gaul. On the journey Regina falls desperately ill and Owain buys her safety with his own freedom, becoming a thrall in a Saxon household. But in the years that follow he never forgets Regina, and when he regains his freedom the two meet again.



SWORD SONG (PUBLISHED SEPT 2021)

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • ILLUS. • FROM £17

Sixteen-year-old Bjarni Sigurdson, a young Norwegian living in the Viking settlement of Rfanglas, is exiled for five years by the chief, Rafn Cedricson, for the hot-tempered murder of a priest, so breaking an oath Cedricson had sworn to his foster-brother to protect Christians within his lands. Bjarni joins a merchant ship sailing for Dublin from where, robbed of his possessions but with a new companion, a stray hound he calls Hugin, he embarks on a career as a mercenary in the wars between the clan chiefs in Ireland, Wales and the Scottish Isles. On

Mull, he falls under the influence of the chief's devoutly Christian mother Lady Aud, and after a chance meeting on a journey with her to the monastery on Iona, he is able to return and receive absolution from Rafn Cedricson for the breaking of his vow.

THE SHIELD RING

(PUBLISHED SEPT 2021)

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • ILLUS. • FROM £17

England is now under Norman rule, but hidden high among the Cumbrian fells is one last Viking stronghold. Into it comes the five-year-old Saxon girl Frytha, saved by her father's shepherd Grim after her family farm has been torched and her family murdered by the Normans. Here she meets another orphan, Bjorn, and over the years the two become inseparable. When William the Conqueror's son William II marches north through Lakeland to confront the Scots, the Norsemen send a peace envoy, who is cruelly tortured and murdered by the Normans. It's clear William is determined to take this final tactical outpost, but Bjorn, disguised as a travelling harper and secretly accompanied by Frytha, enters the enemy camp and after a terrifying ordeal brings back vital information which gives the advantage to the Norsemen.

Buy a set of all seven novels and receive the same hand-numbered limited edition of each title. The first five books will be dispatched straightaway (or for a date of your choice) followed by *Sword Song* and *The Shield Ring* in September. Please see the order form or the website for details.

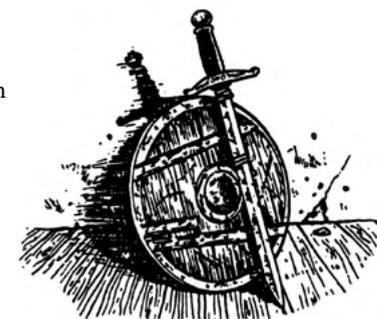


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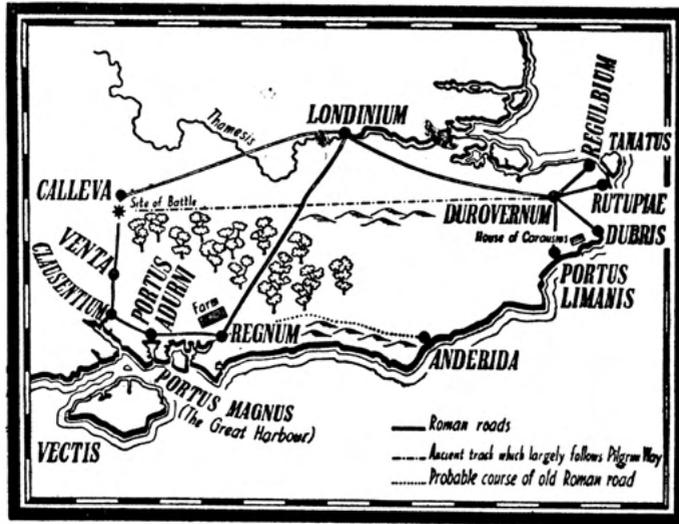
THE EAGLE OF THE NINTH

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 248 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

As Marcus the young centurion arrives in Britain to take up his first command, he is haunted by the memory of his father and the 6,000 men of the Ninth Hispana Legion, who twelve years earlier had marched north of Hadrian's Wall to quell an uprising and were never seen again. Seriously wounded soon after in an attack by hostile tribesmen, invalided out of the Roman Army and wondering what to do with his life, Marcus determines to make the hazardous journey north in a bid to discover the fate of the Ninth Legion, and



in particular of the Roman eagle, the Legion's standard and a possible rallying point for the northern tribes in their war against Rome. Sutcliff's most famous book is a gripping adventure and a touching coming-of-age story, based on the real disappearance of the Ninth Legion around the year AD 117.



THE SILVER BRANCH

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 216 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

Roman influence in Britain is waning. The Empire is increasingly threatened by hostile tribes along its borders, and divided by political struggles at home. Two distant cousins who have met by chance in Britain – Justin, a shy, newly qualified army surgeon and Flavius, a young centurion – are caught up in the power struggles between Carausius, the charismatic Emperor of Britain, his cruel and ruthless treasurer, and the Emperor in Rome. Disgraced after their attempt to warn Carausius about a plot against him fails, the two go underground, rallying support for the legitimate Emperor and finally taking refuge at the home of their formidable Great Aunt Honoria. Here they make an astonishing discovery which affects their future and links directly back to their ancestor Marcus and the disappearance of the Ninth Legion.

FRONTIER WOLF

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 224 PAGES • FROM £17

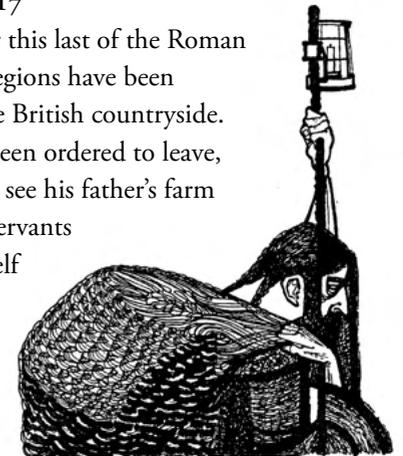
After a disastrous misjudgement which cost the lives of half his men, Alexios, another young centurion and member of the Aquila family, is sent to take charge of a bleak Roman outpost on Hadrian's Wall and the savage bunch of men who defend it, the Frontier Wolves

of the title. Dealing with this notorious legion is literally a matter of life and death for Alexios, for a commander who alienates them is unlikely to survive. *Frontier Wolf* tells the story of how this flawed but likeable hero grows in stature, gradually gaining his legion's respect and the co-operation of the surrounding tribes, and defending Rome as the threat from the North grows.

THE LANTERN BEARERS

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 264 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

The shadow of the approaching Dark Ages hangs over this last of the Roman novels. Rome's legacy is finally decaying, the regular legions have been withdrawn, and Saxon raiding parties are invading the British countryside. As commander of a cavalry troop, young Aquila has been ordered to leave, but he has grown to love Britain and stays on, only to see his father's farm torched by the Saxons, his father and the household servants murdered and his sister Flavia abducted. Aquila himself is captured and spends years as slave to a Saxon clan, but as the darkness gathers over Britain, it only strengthens his determination to avenge his family and keep Roman values alive.



RONALD WELCH

THE CAREY NOVELS

Ronald Welch's Carey novels, written between 1954 and 1972, follow the fortunes of the same family from their involvement in the Crusades to their service in the First World War. Grippingly plotted and scrupulously researched, together they join up the dots of English history in a remarkably vivid and human way.

Welch was a historian who served as a Tank Corps officer in the Second World War and in 1947 became Headmaster of Okehampton Grammar School in Devon. He was, by all accounts, an inspiring teacher, and he certainly knew how to bring history alive for younger readers. You can't finish a Welch book without having grasped such precise details as the construction of a crusader's armour and why it was so designed, or why the longbow was crucial to the English victory at the Battle of Crécy.

Most importantly they are brilliant reads – fast-paced, colourful and imaginative, with

entirely believable central characters. The Careys are a distinguished Welsh land-owning family and they are involved in all the great events of their times, from the plots against Elizabeth I and the Civil War to the Peninsular War, the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny.

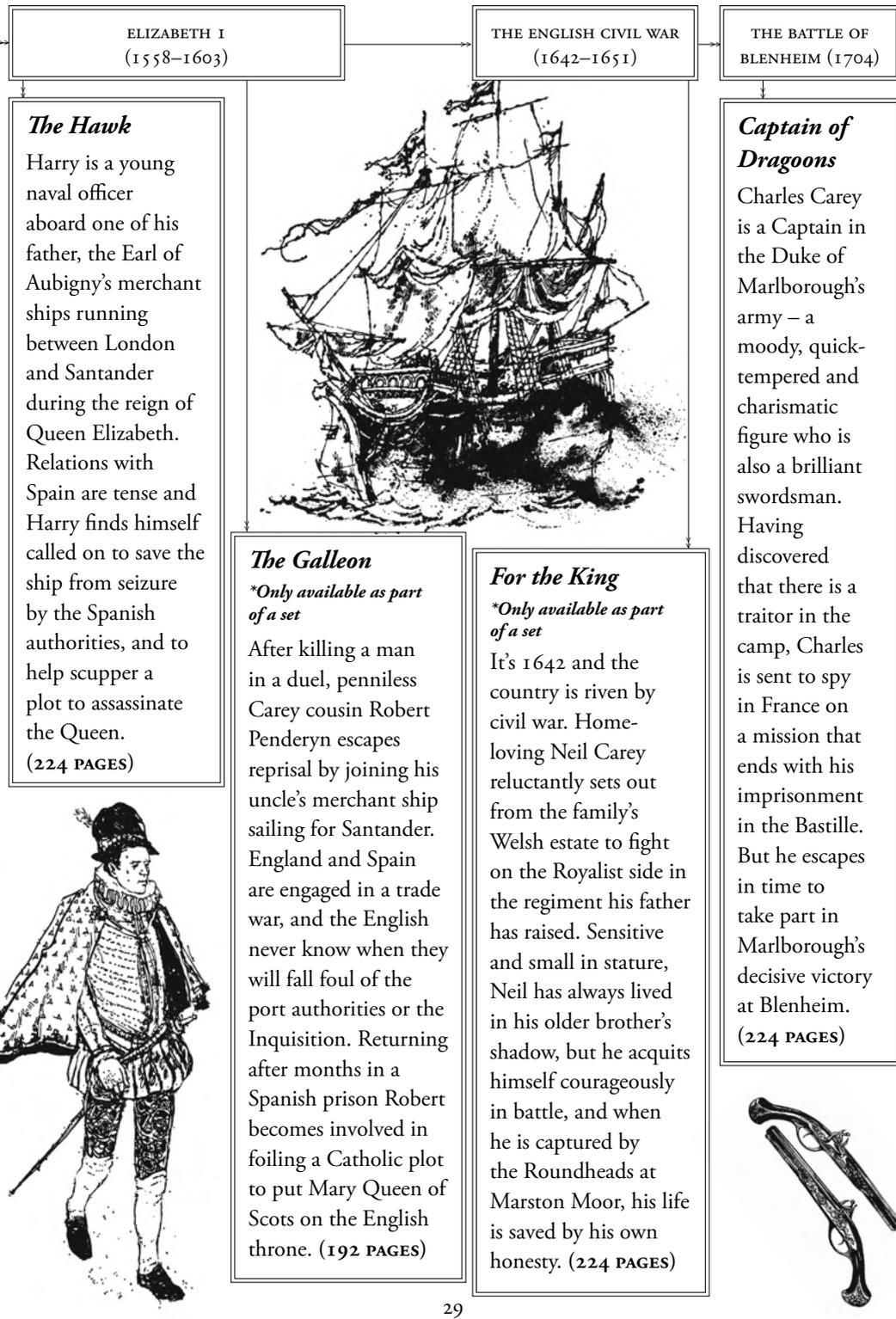
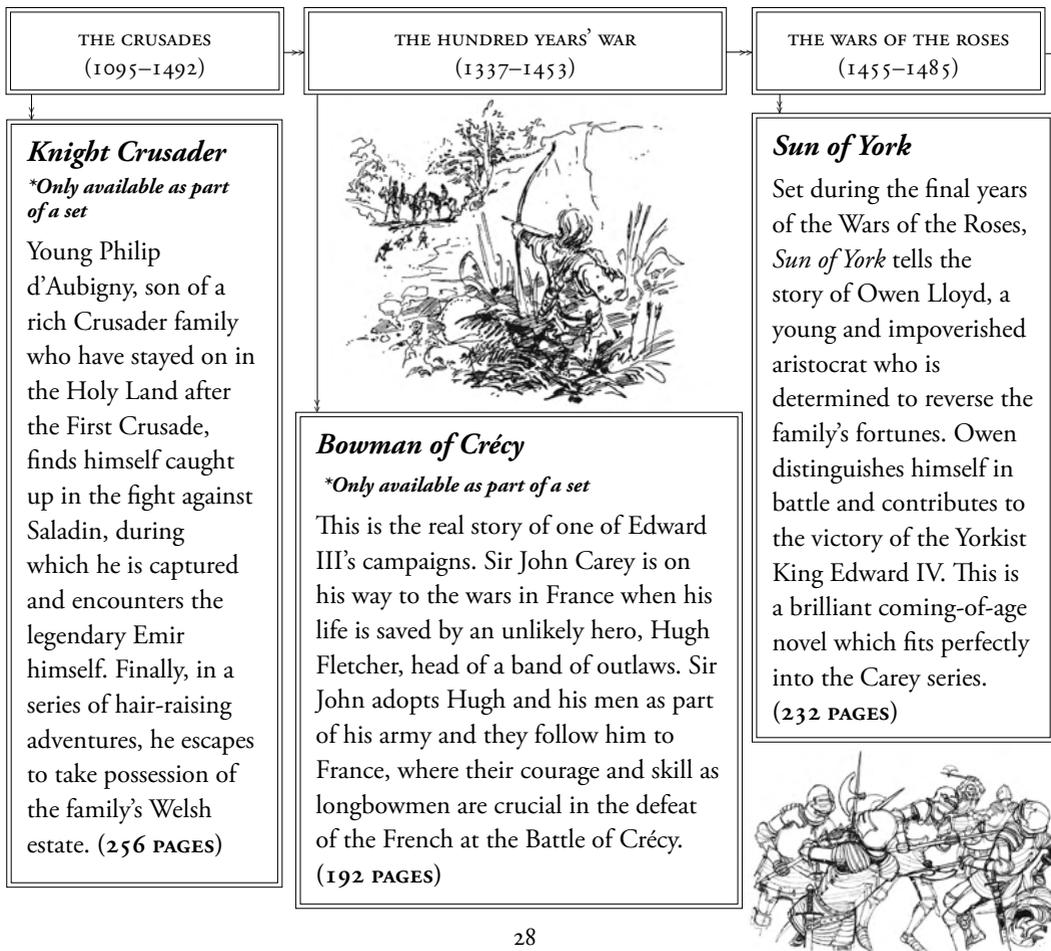
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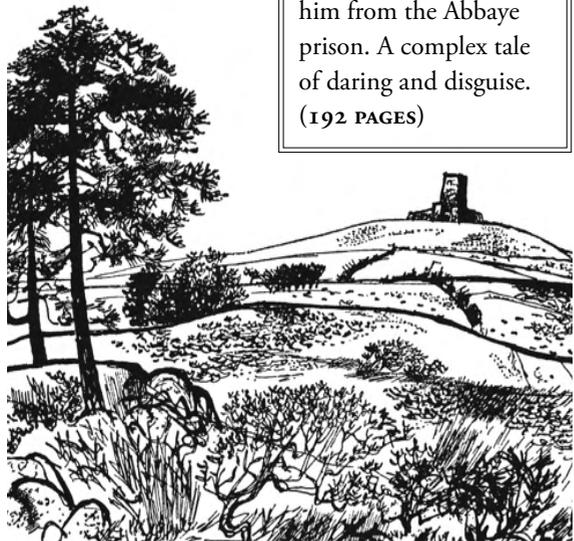
THE CRUSADES — THE FIRST WORLD WAR



THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR
(1756-1763)

Mohawk Valley

In 1755 Alan Carey is sent to the colony of New York by his father the Earl to look into his estates in Mohawk Valley. It's a life-changing experience. Alan grows in moral stature as he deals with a dishonest bailiff, learns the ways of the forest, overcomes hostile Indians and renders invaluable service to General Wolfe during the capture of Quebec. (224 PAGES)



REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE
(1789-1799)

Escape from France

With news of the revolution in France, the Careys are anxious about the fate of their relatives, the aristocratic d'Assailly family. Young Richard Carey, still a Cambridge student but already an outstanding swordsman, is sent secretly by his father Lord Aubigny on a mercy mission to bring them back to England. When he arrives at their chateau in Normandy Richard finds that the Marquis has already been arrested and he and his cousin Armand set out for Paris with a bold plan to spring him from the Abbaye prison. A complex tale of daring and disguise. (192 PAGES)

NAPOLEONIC WARS
(1803-1815)

Captain of Foot

Young Christopher Carey is serving as a Lieutenant in the 43rd Light Infantry – part of the famous Light Brigade – under Wellington. Chris takes part in the retreat to Corunna with Sir John Moore, fights in the major battles of Vimiero and Busaco, is captured by the French, escapes and falls in with Spanish guerrillas, and ends up as a Captain, having been noticed by Wellington himself. (224 PAGES)



The Road to Waterloo

The manuscript of *The Road to Waterloo* lay unread among Ronald Welch's papers for more than 30 years after his death and has now been published, with specially commissioned illustrations, for the first time. It's a thrilling picture of the build-up to Wellington's victory at Waterloo and of a great army preparing for battle, and it has all the inimitable Welch ingredients – a young hero who grows up during the course of the book, entirely believable characters and a fast-paced plot brought alive by vivid historical detail. (88 PAGES)

THE CRIMEAN WAR
1853-1856

Nicholas Carey

On holiday in Italy, Captain Nicholas Carey is persuaded by his impulsive cousin to help three Italian revolutionaries avoid capture and escape the Papal States. After returning to England, Nicholas runs his cousin to earth in Paris, where he is still involved with the revolutionaries, and the two foil an assassination attempt on Napoleon III. Nicholas then rejoins his regiment and is sent to fight the Russians with Lord Raglan's army, where he distinguishes himself in the Battles of Sebastopol and The Redan. (224 PAGES)

THE INDIAN MUTINY
1853-1857

Ensign Carey

In the seedy and dangerous mid-nineteenth century London underworld, William Carey has a frightening encounter with George Hampton, a violent and unprincipled young man on the make. Banished from Cambridge as a result, in 1856 William travels to India, where his father has obtained a commission for him in the 84th Bengal Native Infantry, and his path again crosses that of Hampton. William is no saint, but when the Indian Mutiny breaks out among the native troops, he acts with generosity and courage. (200 PAGES)

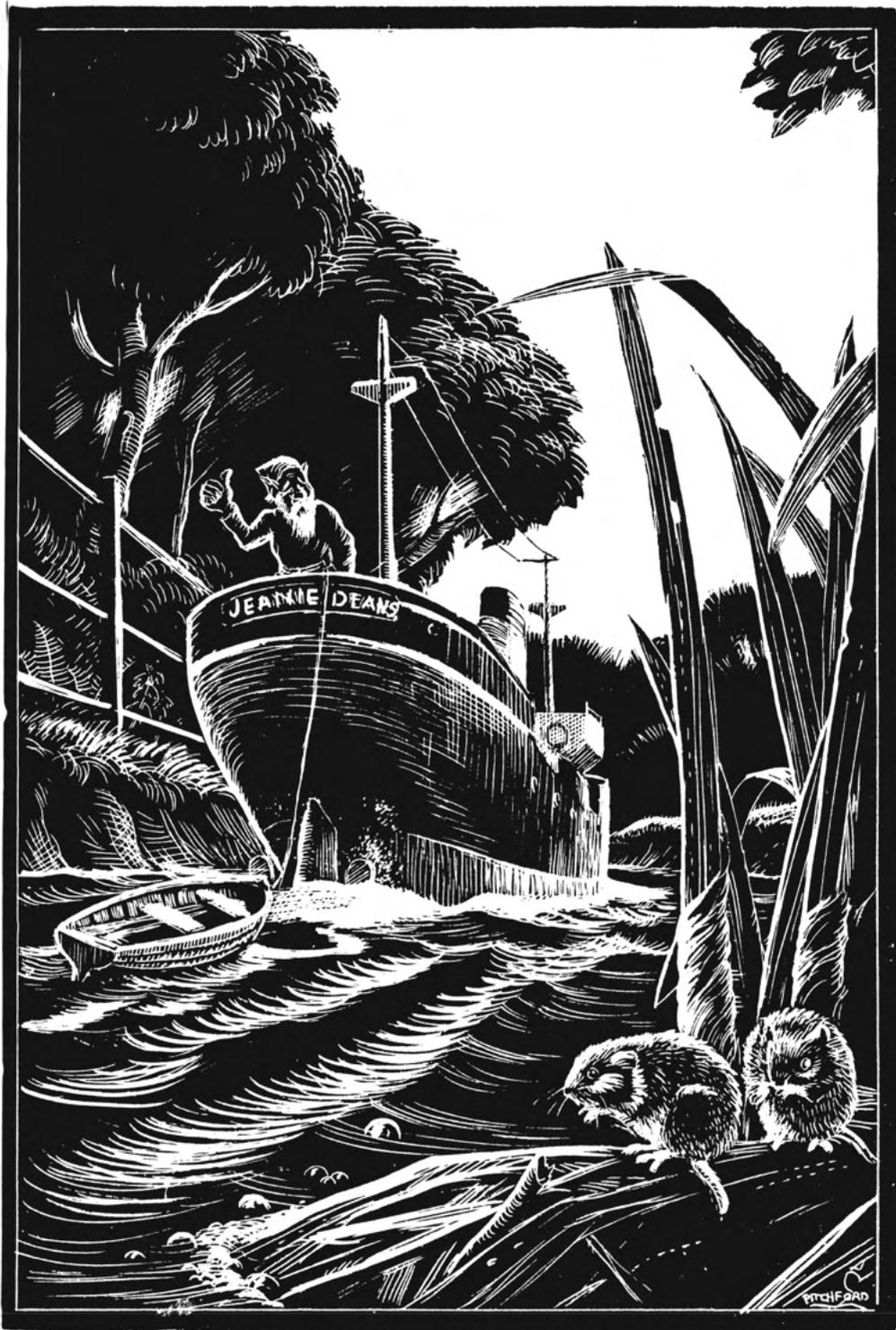


Tank Commander

In the summer of 1914 the Germans enter Belgium and Britain mobilizes for war. Second Lieutenant John Carey, with his regiment the West Glamorgans, exchanges his comfortable quarters at Tidworth for the mud and bloodshed of the trenches. As the death toll mounts, John is called on to take responsibility far beyond his rank and experience in what often seems a hopeless situation. But with the introduction of a revolutionary new weapon – the tank – the tide begins to turn. (232 PAGES)



THE FIRST WORLD WAR
1914-1918



‘BB’

Denys Watkins-Pitchford (1905–90), who wrote under the pseudonym ‘BB’, was the author of more than sixty books for adults and children, but *The Little Grey Men*, which won the 1942 Carnegie Medal, its sequel *Down the Bright Stream* (1948), and the classic adventure story *Brendon Chase* (1944) are his masterpieces.

BB was both a writer and an illustrator, and his charming original illustrations decorate these books. But above all he was a countryman, whose intimate and unsentimental knowledge of animals, birds and plants, as well as his gifts as a storyteller, make these books unique.

Growing up in a rural Northamptonshire rectory and thought too delicate to go to school, BB roamed the countryside alone. His nostalgic evocation of the unwrecked England of his childhood, inhabited by the last survivors of an ancient and characterful tribe of small people who live in total harmony with their surroundings, is magical.

The Little Grey Men, *Down the Bright Stream* and *Brendon Chase* will be remembered by many adult readers as the best-loved books of their childhood, and they still enchant today.



THE LITTLE GREY MEN & DOWN THE BRIGHT STREAM

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUBS • 224 & 200 PAGES • ILLUS. • PAIR FROM £34

The last gnomes in England – Dodder, Baldmoney, Sneezewort and Cloudberry – are living contentedly in Warwickshire, in a burrow beneath the roots of an aged oak tree on the banks of the Folly Brook. Contentedly, that is, until Cloudberry becomes obsessed with the idea of exploring the world beyond the riverbank and sets off alone, ignoring his brothers’ fears and warnings. Two years later he has not returned and Baldmoney and Sneezewort decide they must look for him. But Dodder at first refuses to go with them, and so with heavy hearts the two gnomes set off upstream in their boat the *Dragonfly*, leaving him behind. So begins a heroic quest to find their missing brother. Before the four gnomes are finally reunited they confront shipwreck, starvation and their worst enemy – Man – in the form of the terrifying gamekeeper Giant Grum, with his ‘stick that roars’ and his horrifying gibbet on which hang the corpses of some of their animal friends.

In *Down the Bright Stream*, Dodder, Baldmoney, Sneezewort and Cloudberry are woken from a long winter sleep in their snug burrow beneath the roots of an ancient oak tree, to find their world collapsing. The Folly Brook, beside which they have lived for five hundred years, and on which they and their animal friends depend, is being diverted to supply

water for a new reservoir and is drying up. Human civilization is beginning to destroy the idyllic English countryside.

Now the gnomes must set out once again on the Folly in search of a new home, sailing downstream towards the big river and the sea. It's a perilous journey as they move from one temporary base to another, taking refuge in a disused mill and in a friendly badger's sett. Before their journey is done their boat will have been sunk and one of them will have come to a nasty end. Will the remaining little grey men finally find an unspoilt home?



BRENDON CHASE

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 288 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £17

Three brothers run away from home to live like Robin Hood and his merry men, deep in the forest of Brendon Chase.

Faced with the end of the holidays and the prospect of school, who hasn't dreamt of running away to the woods to live wild as a badger, to hunt and forage like a woodsman, to tread as softly and cautiously as a fox through the undergrowth? In *Brendon Chase*, by the writer who called himself 'BB', this is precisely what three boys do. At the end of the Easter holidays, Robin, John and Harold Hensman escape their aunt's house and go to live in an eleven-thousand-acre forest. It's a marvellous idea.

Brendon Chase was first published in 1944 but is set roughly thirty years earlier. There's a wonderful cast of pre-war English village characters: a fussy maiden aunt, a butterfly-collecting vicar and a rather hapless policeman and his bicycle, among others. None of the grown-ups believe the boys will make it past teatime, or nightfall, or the end of the week. Needless to say, the brothers outwit them all. With remarkable resourcefulness, they last till just after Christmas, living in a hollow oak tree and spending their days hunting for their supper, swimming in the Blind Pool and playing tricks on all who come searching for them.

The book is also full of finely observed detail from the natural world, beautifully captured in BB's illustrations.



We discover which trees the rare Purple Emperor butterfly prefers, and how it is quite impossible to kill a hedgehog, even for a hungry teenage boy: 'they looked so comical when they ran along and their little eyes were full of intelligence'. BB captures the freedom and simplicity of childhood without idealizing it (the brothers squabble and worry, and they crave the sweet things of Aunt Ellen's kitchen).

Brendon Chase is one of the great children's books, a bewitching blend of adventure and natural history, high jinks and skilled bushcraft – just the thing for anyone who has caught themselves eyeing up a patch of woodland and wondering what fun might lie there.

Set of three BB books: UK & Eire from £48; Rest of the World from £54 *save <£9



'I want to thank you for producing this wonderful collection of BB books. They are truly stunning editions and it's so exciting to see his work still in print and being made available for a new generation of readers.' E. Mayes

'I wanted to pass on to you personally the joy that Noah (year 5) has experienced in receiving the Ronald Welch full set for Christmas. He loves history and reading about battles and adventures . . . so these books have been an absolute magical delight for him!' A. Wilson

'*The Eagle of the Ninth* and *The Silver Branch* arrived in Canberra safely this afternoon. I have both on Kindle, but the pleasure of holding and smelling and in time reading these two volumes is immeasurable.' M. Lyons

BOOKS FEATURED IN SLIGHTLY FOXED ISSUE 69 (SPRING 2021)

Fred Uhlman, *Reunion*

HARVILL • PB • 96 PAGES • FROM £9.99

On a grey afternoon in 1932, a Stuttgart classroom is stirred by the arrival of a newcomer. Middle-class Hans is intrigued by the aristocratic new boy, Konradin, and before long they become best friends. It's a friendship of the greatest kind, of shared interests and long conversations, of hikes in the German hills and growing up together. But the boys live in a changing Germany. *Reunion* is a story of the fragility and strength of the bonds between friends.

Robert Caro, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson, Vols. I-IV*

BODLEY HEAD • PB

The Path to Power • 912 PAGES • FROM £28 || *Means of Ascent* • 544 PAGES • FROM £28

Master of the Senate • 1020 PAGES • FROM £32 || *The Passage of Power* • 736 PAGES • FROM £27

George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

PENGUIN • PB • 400 PAGES • FROM £10.99 • INTRODUCTION BY THOMAS PYNCHON

Hidden away in the Record Department of the sprawling Ministry of Truth, Winston Smith inwardly rebels against the totalitarian world he lives in, which demands absolute obedience. The Party controls him through the all-seeing telescreens and the watchful eye of Big Brother. In his longing for truth and liberty, Winston begins a secret love affair with fellow worker Julia but soon discovers the true price of freedom is betrayal.

Antal Zerb, *Journey by Moonlight*

PUSHKIN • PB • 304 PAGES • FROM £10.99 • TRANSLATED BY LEN RIX

Mihály has dreamt of Italy all his life. When he finally travels there on his honeymoon, he soon abandons his wife in order to find himself, haunted by old friends from his turbulent teenage days. Journeying from Venice to Ravenna, Florence and Rome, Mihály loses himself in Venetian back alleys and in the Tuscan and Umbrian countryside, driven by a desire to resurrect his lost youth among Hungary's Bright Young Things, and knowing that he must soon decide whether to return to a placid adult life or allow himself to be seduced into a life of scandalous adventure.



J. L. Carr, *A Month in the Country*

PENGUIN • PB • 128 PAGES • FROM £9.99 • INTRODUCTION BY PENELOPE FITZGERALD

A damaged survivor of the First World War, Tom Birkin finds refuge in the quiet village church of Oxgodby where he is to spend the summer uncovering a huge medieval wall-painting, immersed in the peace and beauty of the countryside. Now an old man, Birkin looks back on the idyllic summer of 1920, remembering a vanished place untouched by change, a precious moment he has carried with him through the disappointments of the years.

Stephen Graham, *The Gentle Art of Tramping*

BLOOMSBURY • HB • 208 PAGES • FROM £14.99

Originally published in 1926, *The Gentle Art of Tramping* is a guide for anyone who has dreamed of taking to the road with nothing more than a bag full of essentials and big ideas. It gives guidance on walking, on being open to discovery and on being kind – advice as relevant now as it was then.



Sybill Bedford, *A Visit to Don Otavio*

ELAND • PB • 320 PAGES • FROM £14.99

Mexico, through the eyes of Sybill Bedford, is a country of passion and paradox: arid desert and shrieking jungle, harsh sun and deep shadow, violence and sentimentality. In her frank descriptions of the horrors of travel – through bug-infested jungle, trapped in a broiling stationary train, or in a bus with a dead fish slapping against her face – she gains our trust. She stays in Don Otavio's crumbling ancestral mansion, living a life of provincial ease and observing with glee the intense life of a Mexican neighbourhood.

Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*

PENGUIN • PB • 1360 PAGES • FROM £22 • TRANSLATED BY M. A. SCREECH

In 1572 Montaigne retired to his estates in order to devote himself to leisure, reading and reflection. There he wrote his constantly expanding essays; he discusses subjects as diverse as war-horses and cannibals, poetry and politics, sex and religion, love and friendship, ecstasy and experience. The *Essays* are among the most idiosyncratic and personal works in all literature and provide an engaging insight into a wise Renaissance mind.

Nicholson Baker, *The Mezzanine*

GRANTA • PB • 144 PAGES • FROM £12

The Mezzanine is the story of one man's lunch hour. It addresses the big questions of corporate life: Why does one shoelace always wear out before the other? Whose genius lies behind the folding spout on the milk carton? Whatever happened to the paper drinking-straw? Nicholson Baker's hilarious novel documents the thoughts of an office worker as he day-dreams on the escalator.

OTHER SPRING READING

Jeremy Cooper, *Bolt from the Blue*

FITZCARRALDO EDITIONS • PB • 272 PAGES • FROM £14.99

In October 1985, Lynn moves to London to enrol at Saint Martin's School of Art, leaving her mother behind in a suburb of Birmingham. Their relationship is complicated, and their only form of contact is through the letters, postcards and emails they send each other periodically, while Lynn

slowly makes her mark on the London art scene. A novel in epistolary form, *Bolt from the Blue* captures the waxing and waning of a mother-daughter relationship over thirty-odd years.

Austin Duffy, *Ten Days*

GRANTA • PB • 272 PAGES • FROM £14.99

When Wolf's recently estranged wife Miriam dies from cancer, his entire world is turned upside down. Wolf and his daughter, Ruth, travel to New York from London to scatter Miriam's ashes in the Hudson River. During the ten High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur they meet Miriam's conservative Jewish family, who are adamantly against Miriam's choice of burial. *Ten Days* delves deep into the complicated love between a father and daughter and the bonds of marriage over older family ties.

Caroline Maclean, *Circles and Squares*

BLOOMSBURY • PB • 320 PAGES • FROM £11.99

Circles and Squares is a portrait of the Hampstead Modernists, threading together the lives, loves, rivalries and ambitions of a group of artists at the heart of an international avant-garde. In this peaceful, verdant London suburb, Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson have embarked on a love affair. Caroline Maclean captures the dazzling circle drawn into their orbit: among them Henry Moore, Paul Nash, Herbert Read and famed émigrés Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus, and Piet Mondrian, blown in on the winds of change sweeping across Europe.



Lucasta Miller, *Keats: A Brief Life in Nine Poems and One Epitaph*

JONATHAN CAPE • HB • 368 PAGES • FROM £19.99

Lucasta Miller takes Keats's best-known poems and excavates their backstories. In doing so, she reveals a complex individual, not the ethereal figure of his posthumous myth. The real Keats was a lower-middle-class outsider from a tragic and dysfunctional family, whose extraordinary energy and love of language allowed him to work his way into the heart of English literature; a free-thinker and a liberal at a time of repression; a man who delighted in the sensation of the moment.

Doireann Ní Ghríofa, *A Ghost in the Throat*

TRAMP PRESS • PB • 224 PAGES • FROM £14.99

In the 1700s, an Irish noblewoman, on discovering her husband has been murdered, drinks handfuls of his blood and composes an extraordinary poem that reaches across the centuries. In the present day, a young mother narrowly avoids tragedy in her own life. On encountering the poem, she becomes obsessed with finding out the rest of the story. The poem is *Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire* by Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill, famously referred to by Peter Levi as 'the greatest poem written in either Ireland or Britain during the eighteenth century'.

Julia Parry, *The Shadowy Third: Love, Letters and Elizabeth Bowen*

DUCKWORTH • HB • 386 PAGES • FROM £18.99

A sudden death in the family delivers Julia Parry a box of love letters. Dusty with age, they tell the story of an illicit affair between the brilliant twentieth-century novelist Elizabeth Bowen and a young academic called Humphry House – Julia's grandfather. *The Shadowy Third* exposes the affair and its impact by following the overlapping lives of three very different characters through some of the most dramatic decades of the twentieth century; from the rarefied air of Oxford in the 1930s, to the Anglo-Irish Big House, to the last days of Empire in India and on into the Second World War.

Max Porter, *The Death of Francis Bacon*

FABER • HB • 80 PAGES • FROM £8.99

Max Porter brings his rich facility for language and psychological insight to the final hours of the great painter Francis Bacon. In seven written pictures he translates the explosive final workings of the artist's mind.

Jane Smiley, *The Strays of Paris*

MANTLE • HB • 272 PAGES • FROM £18.99

Paras is a spirited young racehorse living in a stable in the French countryside. One afternoon she pushes open her stall and arrives quite by chance in the dazzling streets of Paris. She meets a German shorthaired pointer named Frida, two irrepressible ducks and an opinionated crow, and life among the animals in the city's lush green spaces is enjoyable for a time. But everything changes when Paras meets a boy, Étienne, and discovers an otherworldly part of Paris: the secluded, ivy-walled house where the boy and his great-grandmother live quietly and keep to themselves. As the cold weather of winter nears, the unlikely of friendships blooms between human and animals.



Francis Spufford, *Light Perpetual*

FABER • HB • 336 PAGES • FROM £18.99

A German rocket strikes London in 1944, and five young lives are atomised in an instant. Francis Spufford imagines what lives these children might have led, giving us snapshots of each over the course of the twentieth century.

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‘To say that I am enamoured with all things *Slightly Foxed* is an understatement. You are a haven, particularly in these uncertain times.’ S. Dicker