

Slightly Foxed Ltd

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Slightly Foxed

READERS' CATALOGUE • WINTER 2023



'I am a fairly new *Slightly Foxed* subscriber, book purchaser and fan of the podcast. I describe *SF* to book-loving friends as "an outpost of civility and humanity in a dark world".' T. Green, CA, USA

'*Slightly Foxed* gives so much pleasure to so many readers worldwide, bringing forgotten works back to life, as well as giving all of us reading lists for a lifetime.' M. Metcalfe, Oxfordshire, UK

OUR IMPRINTS

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITIONS (FORMAT: 170 X 110MM)

These classic memoirs, each published in a limited and hand-numbered hardback pocket edition of 2,000 copies, are perfectly designed to curl up with – neat, sturdy little books, just the right size to hold in the hand. More important still, they're wonderful reads – hitherto forgotten memoirs that bring alive a particular moment, that allow you into someone else's world and make you feel you have actually known the writer. Elegantly bound in cloth, with coloured endpapers, silk head- and tailband and ribbon marker, these charming volumes are compulsively readable and irresistibly collectable.

PLAIN FOXED EDITIONS (FORMAT: 170 X 110MM)

Bound in duck-egg blue cloth, with a silk ribbon marker, gold blocking and a paper belly band, the Plain Editions are reissues of our most popular SF Editions. They come in the same neat hardback format as the original Editions but are unnumbered. They will happily fill any gaps in your collection, as well as forming a delightful series of their own.

SLIGHTLY FOXED PAPERBACKS (FORMAT: 170 X 110MM)

Our popular paperbacks are perfect for slotting into a pocket or bag, and make charming presents. We won't be reissuing titles in this format so do stock up now.

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUBS (FORMAT: 220 X 155MM)

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 WINTER

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 65

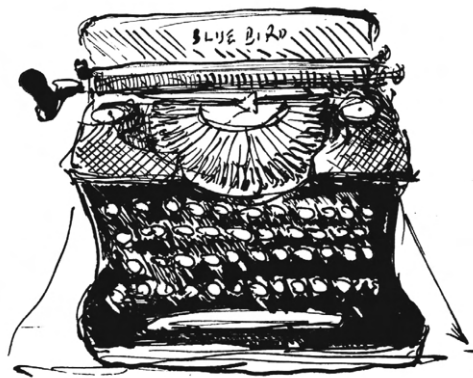
Nicholas Fisk

PIG IGNORANT

‘I believe we all have a certain time in our lives that we’re good at. I wasn’t good at being a child.’ The epigraph from Victoria Wood to this endearingly honest memoir says it all. In it the best-selling children’s writer Nicholas Fisk lays bare his teenage soul as he beckons us into the world of late 1930s suburbia where he grew up.

On the surface it’s a comforting place of ‘horse-drawn milk-floats, lorries delivering Corona soft drinks, postmen with conical hats peaked in front and behind, and “Wallsie”, the Walls Ice-Cream man, pedalling his freezer-box trike’. But underneath it’s all embarrassment and uncertainty for the third-person narrator Nick (real name David Higginbottom) as he searches for an identity, from the kid who’s jeered at by bullies as a ‘Muvvers’ darling’ to the shy, gangling young adult affecting to smoke a pipe because the girl he fancies doesn’t like cigarettes.

Though *Pig Ignorant* is lightly written, inevitably the big subjects – sex and death – lurk beneath the wry humour, as Nick gets his first job with a theatrical agency and finds his faltering way into Soho jazz clubs where he moonlights as a guitarist. Soon there are girls, idealized and distant in this world before the Pill, impossible to understand and sexually dementing. Death comes in the form of the Blitz, the ‘clamped-down dark of the blackout’, the night when the family home is nearly hit, and the day when Nick sees the ghastly dust-whitened face of an elderly man who is pulled out of the rubble. *Pig Ignorant* ends with another rite-of-passage, Nick’s call-up into the RAF. It’s a brilliant book, the story not only of the making of a man but also of the making of a writer.



**PUBLISHED 1 DEC 2023 • CLOTH-BOUND HARDBACK • ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES NUNN
LIMITED EDITION OF 2,000 • 170 X 110 MM • 160 PAGES • FROM £18**

FORTHCOMING SF EDITION NO. 66

Joanna Rakoff, *My Salinger Year*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 66 • FROM £18

In the winter of 1996, 23-year-old Joanna Rakoff moved to New York City and took a job as assistant to a colourful, old-style literary agent whose wood-panelled office on Forty-Ninth Street was still stuck in the era of the typewriter, the Dictaphone and the photocopier. One of the Agency’s chief clients was J. D. Salinger, and when Rakoff was given the task of dealing with the steady stream of fan mail to the famously reclusive novelist she found herself becoming emotionally involved. Instead of sending the usual form letter, she started writing back. In this deliciously funny coming-of-age memoir, set against the backdrop of 1990s New York and the eccentric world of the Agency, she describes what happened next. **PUBLISHED 1 MAR 2024**

NEW PLAIN FOXED EDITION

Helene Hanff, *84, Charing Cross Road*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 240 PAGES • FROM £18

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. **PUBLISHED 1 DEC 2023**

ALSO AVAILABLE

In hard times, both literal and metaphorical, there’s nothing like a good book to give a sense of comfort and relaxation. Our editions are designed to do just that – a collection of classic but momentarily forgotten memoirs that light up the recent past in a way no history book can, and put our own troubled times into perspective.

In the following pages you’ll find listings for all available titles from the original Slightly Foxed Edition series grouped together with others on a loosely similar theme that we have published as one-off special releases or reissued as Plain Foxed Editions or SF Paperbacks. To follow there’s our Foxed Cubs list of classic historical, adventure and nature novels for younger readers, after

which 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.

DRAWN FROM LIFE

E. H. Shepard, *Drawn from Memory & Drawn from Life*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NOS. 44 & 45 • 192 & 224 PAGES • ILLUS. • PAIR FROM £36

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 *The Wind in the Willows*, grew up in London as the 19th century faded into the 20th.

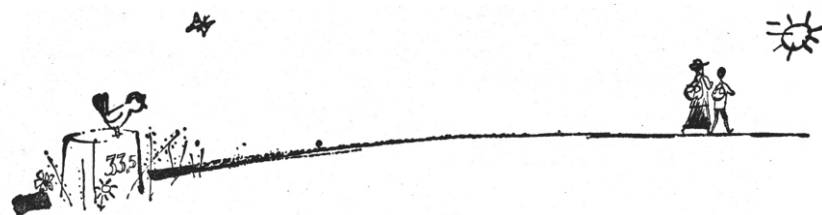
In *Drawn from Memory*, he tells, in words and enchanting pictures, the story of his happy middle-class childhood, beginning in 1887, the year of the Golden Jubilee when Ernest was 8 and already determined to be an artist like his father. *Drawn from Life* opens with the tragic death of his mother when 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.



Erich Kästner, *When I Was a Little Boy*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 40 • 216 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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 life in a close-knit, hardworking family, set against the backdrop of the ancient city with its baroque



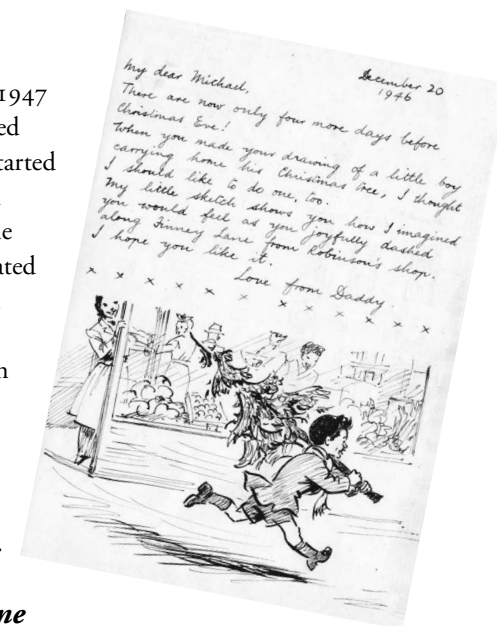
buildings, its parades before the Kaiser, its trams and glittering shops. *When I Was a Little Boy* is an affecting picture of both Erich's childhood and the city he never ceased to mourn.

Charles Phillipson, *Letters to Michael*

SLIGHTLY FOXED OCCASIONAL BOOKS

HB • 324 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £20

Between the spring of 1945 and the autumn of 1947 Charles Phillipson wrote a series of 150 illustrated letters to his young son Michael, who had just started school. These delightful, quirky letters, designed to whet Michael's appetite for reading, were done when Charles – a considerable artist who illustrated a number of children's books – had already been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, but they are full of the lightness and humour he still found in everyday situations, and full of encouragement for Michael's own efforts. Preserved by his wife and son after his death in 1974, these *Letters to Michael* give a most touching picture of the relationship between a father and his young son.



Edward Ardizzone, *The Young Ardizzone*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 216 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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.





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

PLAIN FOXED EDITION

208 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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.



The first prayer. 'Please, God, let Miss Ratcliffe be dead before we get to Dancing Class'

Gwen Raverat, *Period Piece*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 320 PAGES

ILLUS. • FROM £18

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'.

WRITING LIFE

Roger Hudson, *An Englishman's Commonplace Book*

SLIGHTLY FOXED OCCASIONAL BOOKS • 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.

Rosemary Sutcliff, *Blue Remembered Hills*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 208 PAGES • FROM £18

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.



Hilary Paynter

All seven of Rosemary Sutcliff's celebrated Roman and post-Roman historical adventure novels, with their original illustrations, are available in a highly collectable, limited, numbered Slightly Foxed Cubs edition. See p. 26

James Lees-Milne, *Another Self*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 256 PAGES • FROM £18

A deeply religious child, Lees-Milne spent much of his childhood wandering dreamily in the grounds of his parents' medieval manor house, Wickhamford Manor in Worcestershire. It gave him a nostalgia for the past and a love of historic buildings which would lead to his later distinguished career with the National Trust. Droll, shy and sexually ambivalent, Lees-Milne wrote that he 'always felt an outsider in every circle'. It was this, combined with his eye for detail and highly developed sense of the ridiculous, that made him such a wonderful comic writer. John Betjeman compared the impact of *Another Self* to that of Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall*.



Michael Holroyd, *Basil Street Blues*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 29 • 368 PAGES • FROM £18

Well-known for his frank biographies of such controversial figures as Augustus John and Lytton Strachey, Michael Holroyd teases out the story – or rather stories – of his own distinctly problematic family in this delightful and original book.

The lonely only child of divorced parents, young Michael spent much of his childhood with his squabbling paternal grandparents, 'Old Nan' the family nanny, his unmarried tennis-playing Aunt Yolande and her dogs. His volatile father, always busy with his own commercial and amorous enterprises, and his glamorous Swedish mother with her succession of exotic husbands, had only walk-on parts in his life. With the passage of time things changed, and in the 1970s, when his career as a biographer had begun to take off, he found himself trying to cheer his ageing parents – now both struggling to get by on tiny pensions – by asking them to give him an account of their early lives. But nothing in their attempts matched up – even the date of his own birth. It was only a decade later, after both his parents had died, that he was overcome by a desire to discover more, to find the 'connecting story' which his fragmented childhood had so lacked. The result is a very personal detective story, subtle, funny and poignant.

Anne Fadiman, *The Wine Lover's Daughter*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 57 • 204 PAGES • FROM £18

'Aside from his books, he loved nothing – and no one – longer, more ardently, or more faithfully than he loved wine . . . they both sparked conversation, they both were a lifetime project, they both were pleasurable to shelve, they were the only things he collected.'

The Wine Loving Father might be a more apt title for this affectionate but clear-eyed memoir in which the American writer Anne Fadiman remembers her convivial and amusing father Clifton, successful author, critic, columnist, publisher and MC of the popular NBC radio quiz show *Information Please*. A complicated self-made Jew from Brooklyn with a passion for wine, Clifton moved in the best literary circles and was heaped with honours by the time he died in 1998, but he never felt he was quite good enough. Not just a book for wine buffs, but one that evokes the atmosphere of a whole era of American life.

Jan Morris, *Conundrum*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 46 • 200 PAGES • FROM £18

'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. I remember the moment well, and it is the earliest memory of my life.' In 1972 James Morris booked a return ticket to Casablanca and underwent what would now be called gender reassignment surgery. Soon afterwards Jan Morris wrote a book about what it had felt like to live – or try to live – for forty odd years with the absolute conviction that she was a woman trapped in a man's body, and how this agony had finally been resolved. Although Morris was not the first person to undergo this operation, she was probably the best known and apparently the least likely. After Oxford, and service in Intelligence during the Second World War, James Morris became a daring foreign reporter who scooped news of the first ascent of Everest in 1953. During the 1950s and '60s Morris also produced a succession of brilliant travel books. And Morris was married with four children – a partnership of complete trust and openness which survived to the end. How James finally became Jan is an extraordinary story, and her memoir *Conundrum* is a gripping and thought-provoking read.

Richard Cobb, *Still Life*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 55 • 224 PAGES • FROM £18

The historian Richard Cobb, famous for his brilliant books on France and the French Revolution, his inspirational teaching and his unconventional behaviour, grew up in the 1920s and '30s in the quiet and deeply conventional town of Tunbridge Wells. Yet Cobb loved that small world with its middle-class confidence and soothing predictability – it was, he writes, 'a society in which a rather frightened child could feel secure'. In this unusual memoir he recreates it in entrancing detail as he experienced it between the ages of 4 and 13. Arriving at the Central Station, with its wooden staircase advertising 'Carter's Little Liver Pills', he leads us through the town and into the lives of the characters among whom he grew up, each minutely observed and remembered, from the mysterious Black Widow, seen always in deep yet unexplained mourning, to Baroness Olga, the town's only victim of the Russian Revolution, with her tight-fitting cloche hat and jade earrings. At home his mother entertains her tweed-and-Jaeger-clad Bridge-playing friends while down the road in their large, dank Victorian mansion his extraordinary cousins the Limbury-Buses live their lives according to an unchanging regime of walks, rests and meals which are timed to the minute. 'Strange and wonderful,' wrote Hilary Spurling in the *Observer* when the book was first published. And indeed it is. Buy with *A Classical Education*, see below



Richard Cobb, *A Classical Education*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 64 • 224 PAGES • FROM £18

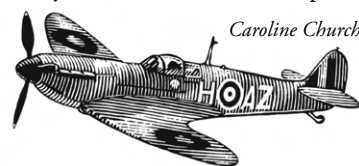
Everything about the historian Richard Cobb was unexpected and original, especially his writing. *A Classical Education* is no exception, a memoir that's more like a psychological thriller,

told in Cobb's exquisite and inimitable style. Cobb and his friend Edward (surname withheld) were given the 'classical education' of the title at their public school, Shrewsbury, where they became friendly enough to visit one another's homes in the holidays. But whereas Cobb came from an exemplarily safe and conventional middle-class family, Edward's was entirely the reverse. Enough to say that his nicknames for his parents were Moloch and Medea. The result was a shocking murder, on which Cobb looks back with wonder and dismay when he meets Edward again fourteen years later. *A Classical Education* is a book you won't be able to put down.

Luke Jennings, *Blood Knots*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 63 • 224 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

As a child in the 1960s, Luke Jennings was fascinated by the rivers and lakes around his Sussex home. Within their depths he sensed strange and mysterious worlds. In this beautiful and original memoir he describes how his passion for fly fishing gradually took hold, with the help of books from the library and the encouragement of his two boyhood heroes – his father, who had been awarded the Military Cross for bravery in the war, in which he had been and Robert Nairac, a charismatic figure who first befriended him as a teacher at his public school.



As one might expect from an author who is, among other things, the dance critic of the *Observer* and the author of the *Killing Eve* novels, these two themes of fishing and friendship are woven together to produce a book of unusual subtlety that's about a great deal more than fishing.

Graham Greene, *A Sort of Life*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 224 PAGES • FROM £18

Graham Greene said that writing this memoir of his early years 'was in the nature of a psychoanalysis. I made a long journey through time and I was one of my characters.' Certainly the younger self that emerges is as complex and intriguing as any of those he created in his novels. *A Sort of Life* takes him through Oxford, early married life and conversion to Catholicism, to the point where, against all advice, he gives up his safe job on *The Times* in order to write. This extraordinary memoir is, to quote Frances Donnelly's introduction, 'an act of great intimacy', taking us through all the false starts and griefs that fired the engine of Green's desire to write, and laying out the issues and themes which would dominate his later great novels.

Hilary Mantel, *Giving up the Ghost*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 232 PAGES • FROM £18

When Dame Hilary Mantel died, many readers of her novels learned more about her life and her heroic struggle with the serious medical condition from which she suffered for many years without a diagnosis. Nowhere is this more vividly or more movingly described than in her own powerful and haunting memoir. *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 became, full of courage, insight and wry humour.

ROGUES & REBELS

Diana Petre, *The Secret Orchard of Roger Ackerley*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 33 • 272 PAGES • FROM £18

'For God's sake someone take that child out of the room. I can't stand the way she watches me,' Diana Petre's mother Muriel is reported as saying. Diana was indeed watching, and it was this watchfulness, this ability to stand back and observe, that produced *The Secret Orchard of Roger Ackerley*, an utterly unselfpitying and often very funny account of what must be one of the oddest childhoods on record.

Diana and her older twin sisters grew up in Barnes, South London, in the care of an elderly housekeeper, their mother having abandoned them shortly after Diana's birth in 1912. She didn't reappear again until 1922, with disastrous results for all concerned. She called herself Mrs Muriel Perry, but her true name and identity were mysterious. Her birth was never registered and she had carefully removed the relevant information from her passport. 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 Diana's mother finally revealed in characteristically brutal fashion, he was their father, Roger Ackerley, a director of the fruit-importing company Elders & Fyffes and popularly known as 'the Banana King'. Down the road in Richmond, unbeknownst to the girls, he lived with a retired actress who called herself 'Mrs Ackerley' and his three further children.



One of the things that makes *The Secret Orchard* so gripping is that it is constructed like a detective story, in which Diana asks questions, follows clues and pores over documents in an attempt to unravel the truth. As she herself was at pains to emphasize, this book is, among many other things, a love story. Muriel may have been a difficult, unstable character and a disastrous mother, but she was always loyal to Roger. It seems greatly to Diana's credit that she was able as an adult to appreciate the poignancy of their relationship and bring their extraordinary story so vividly to life on the page.

Christopher Robbins, *The Empress of Ireland*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 51 • 384 PAGES • FROM £18

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 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-

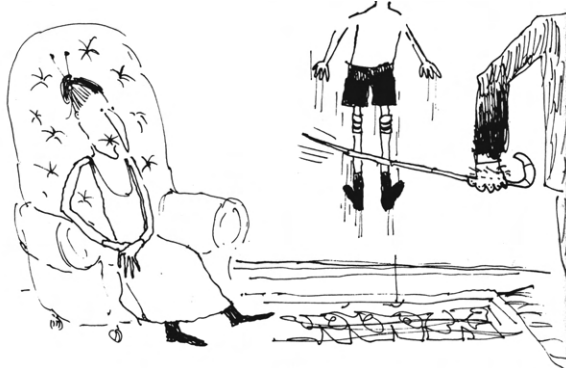
suited, Robbins began to realize that he had indeed entered a fantasy world. The film was never made of course, Robbins was never paid and the script was never finished. But in *The Empress of Ireland* he produced a comic masterpiece, a picture of a wickedly unapologetic old rogue it's impossible not to like.

Roald Dahl, *Boy*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 48 • 184 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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. 22



Laurie Lee, *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 54 • 240 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

When Laurie Lee set out on foot from his home in the Gloucestershire village of Slad one midsummer morning in 1935 he was 19 and off to see the world with only his violin for company. So began a year of wandering that eventually took him from the north to the south of Spain, a country in which life had barely changed since the Middle Ages but which was now on the brink of a bitter civil war. The adventure that began as a romantic dream ended somewhat ignominiously, but it inspired Lee to produce this brilliant and darkly haunting account of a vanished Spain, and return to fight on the Republican side not long after. Buy with *Cider with Rosie*, see p. 17

Jessica Mitford, *Hons and Rebels*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 52 • 320 PAGES • FROM £18

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.

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.

QUIETLY HILARIOUS

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 cripplingly 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 very funny.

Jennie Erdal, *Ghosting*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 43 • 304 PAGES • FROM £18

'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 that were seriously and admirably 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.



Diana Holman-Hunt, *My Grandmothers and I*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 288 PAGES • FROM £18

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.

Colin Clark, *The Prince, the Showgirl and Me*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 61 • 256 PAGES • FROM £18

During the 1950s an unusual event took place at Pinewood Studios: the filming of *The Prince and the Showgirl*, a light comedy starring Sir Laurence Olivier and Marilyn Monroe as the two leads. This unlikely combination proved to be a disaster – Marilyn failed to turn up on time and could barely act or remember her lines, while Sir Laurence was completely out of his depth with her and her very un-British entourage. The film appeared and sank without trace, but fortunately Colin Clark, a cheeky young man working on set as a general dogbody, was there to record the agonies of its making in this sharp and hilarious diary.

Eric Newby, *Something Wholesale*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 41 • 256 PAGES • FROM £18

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 and War in the Apennines*, see p. 23



Ysenda Maxtone Graham,

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

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 272 PAGES • FROM £18

'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.

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

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 200 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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.

AN OLD RURAL ORDER

Laurie Lee, *Cider with Rosie*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 53 • 272 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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. Buy with *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning*, see p. 14



Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise* and *Over to Candleford & Candleford Green*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NOS. 58 & 59 • 328 & 400 PAGES • FROM £18 PER TITLE

Flora Thompson wrote the much-loved trilogy known as *Lark Rise to Candleford* in the grim days before and during the Second World War, and perhaps it was this that made the memories of her country childhood shine so brightly. She grew up as the daughter of a builder's labourer in a poor Oxfordshire hamlet in the last years of the nineteenth century, yet she instinctively knew how to write, and these three books are a unique record of a rural world that would soon disappear for ever.

The first book sees Flora – or Laura as she called her childhood self – growing up in the hamlet of Juniper Hill, the 'Lark Rise' of the title. From the annual killing of the pig to the flowers in the cottage gardens, and the memories of the older residents, the life of the hamlet is recalled in magical detail, a close-up, child's-eye view of a small, self-sufficient world.

In *Over to Candleford* life begins to open out for Flora when she goes to visit her father's relations in the local market town where she makes particular friends with her uncle Tom, a liberal thinker and respected craftsman, who shares with her his love of books and his talent for attracting interesting and often eccentric people.

Back at home and now in her teens, Laura is restless and undecided about her future, until news comes of a vacancy for an assistant at the Post Office in a nearby village. *Candleford Green* is an enchanting picture of Flora's new life in this colourful community and of Dorcas Lane, her redoubtable – and unforgettable – employer. 'You are going to be loved by people you've never seen and never will see,' a gypsy tells Flora. It was a prophecy that turned out to be true. Her beautiful memoir has never gone out of fashion and is as consoling today as it was in the dark times in which it was written.

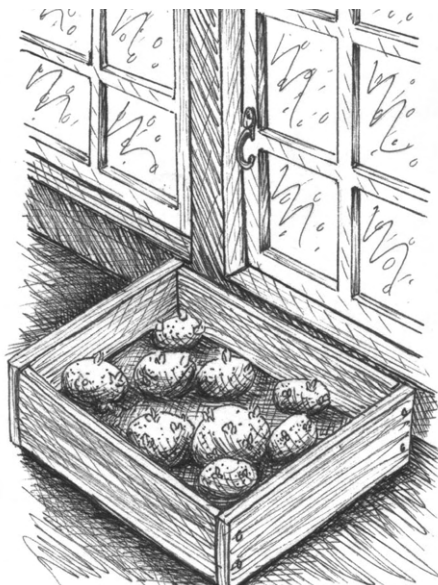
Adrian Bell, *A Countryman's Spring Notebook*

SLIGHTLY FOXED OCCASIONAL BOOKS

224 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

This seasonal selection from the weekly column Bell wrote from 1950 to 1980 for the *Eastern Daily Press* catches beautifully the arrival of Spring in the East Anglian landscape he loved and knew so well. Each essay is a little masterpiece, a fleeting moment captured with a painterly eye and the down-to-earth observation of the farmer Bell became after he left his fashionable life in Chelsea shortly after the First World War. Read one every morning and it will set you up for the day.

Surprisingly, very few have since been reprinted, but now they can be enjoyed again in this seasonal selection by Richard Hawking, with charming illustrations by Beth Knight.



Adrian Bell, *Corduroy*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 288 PAGES • FROM £18

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.



John Moore's Brensham Trilogy

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'I have written a book which gives me much pleasure. It is a kind of full-length portrait of a small country town – this small town – between the wars. The sort of life that will never come back.' So John Moore wrote to T. H. White in the summer of 1945.

That book was *Portrait of Elmbury*, the first volume in the trilogy based on his home town that Moore wrote shortly after the Second World War, following it in 1946 with *Brensham Village* and in 1948 with *The Blue Field*. Together the three books paint a picture of a lost rural world which is powerfully nostalgic yet unsentimental.

Born in 1907, Moore grew up in Tewkesbury at a time when such small English market towns had a sturdy and independent life of their own. Mass travel, mass media and the changes brought about by two world wars would gradually destroy this self-contained society, but in

Portrait of Elmbury Moore caught and preserved it and its inhabitants in captivating detail, from the wild and drunken inhabitants of the slums in Double Alley to Miss Benedict, the disapproving barmaid at the Shakespeare (the town had 28 pubs and a population of 5,000).

Brensham Village moves the story onward to the 1930s and from Elmbury to a small village nearby. Now 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 fishing, ferreting and bird's-nesting for Moore and his friends.

The final volume, *The Blue Field*, set in 1948, focuses on a single farm and the life of its owner, the wild and intractable William Hart, master wagon-maker and defender of individual liberties against increasing interference from the State. He is the man responsible for the field of blue linseed, grown in defiance of the War Agricultural Executive Committee, which flowers one summer morning on Brensham Hill.

Though Moore wrote many more books and spent time in London, he always returned to Tewkesbury – for him a place where somehow 'emotion seemed larger, pleasures were keener, sorrows sharper, the tragedy more profound and the comedy more riotous' – and it is for his wonderful Brensham trilogy that he is best known.



A WORLD AT WAR



Richard Hillary, *The Last Enemy*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 39
224 PAGES • FROM £18

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.

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

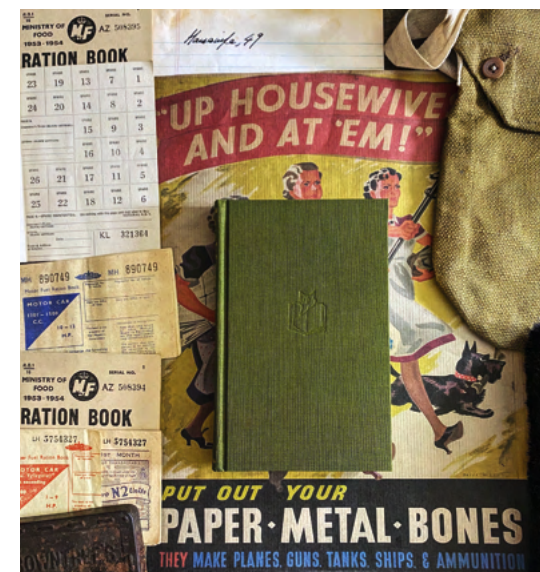
PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 416 PAGES • FROM £18

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, which she kept at the end of long working days, 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.

Nella Last's War: *The Second World War Diaries of Housewife, 49,* Richard Broad and Suzie Fleming (eds.)

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 60
392 PAGES • FROM £18

In 1937 the social research group Mass Observation set about creating a record of everyday life in Britain by recruiting 500 volunteer diarists. One of these was Nella Last, a housewife living in Barrow-in-Furness with a husband and two grown-up sons, one a trainee tax-inspector and the other in the army. So far, so seemingly ordinary, but there was nothing ordinary about Nella. Her account of life in wartime Britain is not only an unrivalled piece of social history but also the portrait of a woman you feel could have run the country, given half a chance.



George Clare, *Last Waltz in Vienna*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 56 • 408 PAGES • FROM £18

In February 1938, the grand Konzerthaus in Vienna was in full, glorious swing; bands were playing, there was dancing and singing and plenty of beer. It was the first ball ever attended by the 17-year-old Georg Klaar, and he stayed until the very last waltz. But on 11 March, lorries

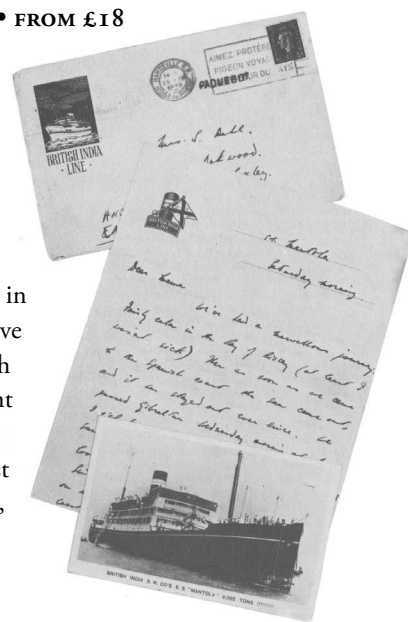
began thundering into the streets, filled with uniformed men waving swastikas and shouting 'Death to Jews'. Austria was now betrayed and had been annexed by the German Third Reich. Barely four years later, Georg Klaar had become George Clare and was serving in the British army, and his parents had been rounded up and taken to Auschwitz. Only with hindsight can George discern the complex reasons for his family's destruction, and for the whole appalling waste of war. This is a profoundly moving, honest and compassionate memoir, remarkably devoid of self-pity, though not of anger.

Roald Dahl, *Going Solo*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 49 • 236 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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'. Buy with *Boy*, see p. 14



Katrin FitzHerbert, *True to Both My Selves*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 62 • 392 PAGES • FROM £18

By the time she was 14 Katrin FitzHerbert had lived in nearly thirty different places and attended fourteen schools – an unusual childhood, and the more so because it gave her two separate identities, one formed in Hitler's Germany, the other in post-war England. In *True to Both My Selves* she tells the gripping story of her family, and of growing up as the child of a half-English mother and a German father, a man she idolized but who was a committed member of the Nazi Party. With great courage and honesty she describes how she moved from a childhood dedicated to the ideals of National Socialism to face her past and make the final choice 'between England and Papa'.

Christabel Bielenberg, *The Past Is Myself*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 384 PAGES • FROM £18

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.

Anthony Rhodes, *Sword of Bone*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 320 PAGES • FROM £18

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.

John Hackett, *I Was a Stranger*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 320 PAGES • FROM £18

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.

Eric Newby, *Love and War in the Apennines*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 47 • 360 PAGES • FROM £18

'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.

Buy with *Something Wholesale*, see p. 16

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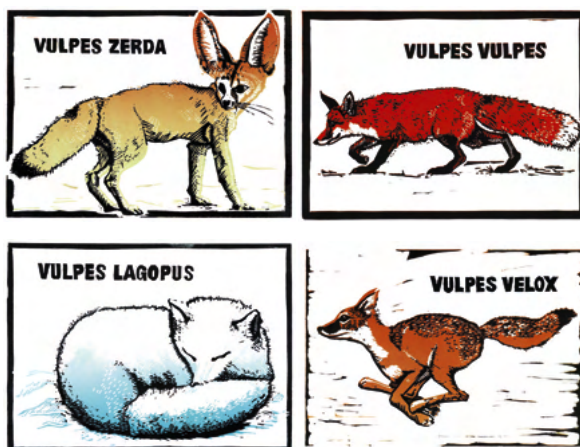
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ROSEMARY SUTCLIFF

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 Bearers* (winner of the Carnegie Medal) – between 1954 and 1959, and *Frontier Wolf*, the fourth but chronological third, in 1980. The four books are only loosely interconnected, but together they portray the ebbing away of imperial power from Britain. The three final novels 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.

Though Sutcliff was writing primarily for children, she never talks down to her readers, and adults too find these novels gripping. Her protagonists are flesh-and-blood people with understandable human dilemmas, and it's they who drive the plots. All the books are based on historical fact, but it is Sutcliff's imaginative brilliance that gives reality to a far-off period that left its mark on almost every aspect of British life.

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THE EAGLE OF THE NINTH

248 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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

216 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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

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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 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

264 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

The shadow of the approaching Dark Ages hangs over this tale. 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.

DAWN WIND

248 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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. 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

228 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

Sixteen-year-old Bjarni Sigurdson, a young Norwegian living in the Viking settlement of Rafnglas, is exiled for five years by the chief, Rafn Cedricson, for the hot-tempered murder of

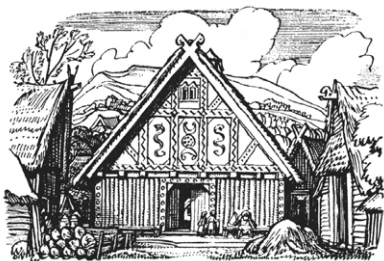
a priest, so breaking an oath Cedricson had sworn to his foster-brother to protect Christians within his lands. Bjarni joins a merchant ship sailing for Dublin from where, robbed of his possessions but with a new companion, a stray hound he calls Hugin, he embarks on a career as a mercenary in the wars 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

216 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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.



‘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.

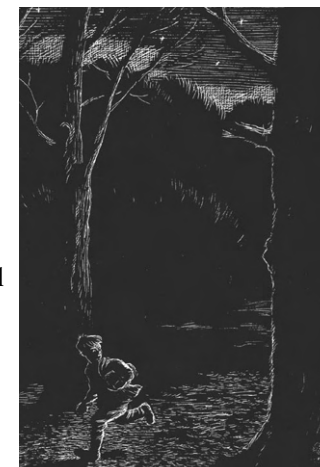
BB was both a writer and an illustrator, and his charming original illustrations decorate these books. But above all he was a countryman, whose intimate and unsentimental knowledge of animals, birds and plants, as well as his gifts as a storyteller, make these books unique.

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.

BRENDON CHASE

288 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

Faced with the end of the holidays and the prospect of school, who hasn't dreamt of running away to the woods to live in the wild? 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. First published in 1944, *Brendon Chase* has a wonderful cast of pre-war English village characters, none of whom believe the boys will make it past teatime. Needless to say, the boys outwit them all with remarkable resourcefulness. This is one of the great children's books, a bewitching blend of adventure, natural history, high jinks and skilled bushcraft.



THE LITTLE GREY MEN & DOWN THE BRIGHT STREAM

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In *The Little Grey Men*, the last gnomes in England – Dodder, Baldmoney, Sneezewort and Cloudberry – are living contentedly in Warwickshire, in a burrow beneath the roots of an ancient 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, despite his brothers' warnings. Two years later, Baldmoney and Sneezewort decide they must look for him, but Dodder at first refuses to go, and with heavy hearts the two set off upstream in their boat the *Dragonfly*. So begins a heroic quest to find their missing brother, before the four gnomes are finally reunited.

In *Down the Bright Stream*, the four gnomes are woken from a long winter sleep to find their world collapsing. The 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 more on the Folly in search of a new home, sailing downstream towards the big river and the sea.



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RONALD WELCH

Ronald Welch's fourteen Carey novels, written between 1954 and 1972, follow the fortunes of a Welsh land-owning 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, 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, is a master of the precise detail that brings history alive for younger readers. His novels are brilliant reads – fast paced, colourful and imaginative, with entirely believable characters who take part in all the great events of their times, from the plots against Elizabeth I to the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny.

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KNIGHT CRUSADER*

THE CRUSADES (1095–1492) • 256 PAGES

Young Philip d'Aubigny, son of a rich Crusader family who have stayed on in the Holy Land after the First Crusade, finds himself caught up in the fight against Saladin, during which he is captured and encounters the legendary Emir himself. Finally, in a series of hair-raising adventures, he escapes to take possession of the family's Welsh estate.



BOWMAN OF CRÉCY*

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR (1337–1453) • 192 PAGES

This is the story of one of Edward III's campaigns. Sir John Carey is on his way to the wars in France when his life is saved by an unlikely hero, Hugh Fletcher, head of a band of outlaws. Sir John adopts Hugh and his men as part of his army and they follow him to France, where their courage and skill as longbowmen are crucial in the defeat of the French at the Battle of Crécy.

SUN OF YORK

THE WARS OF THE ROSES (1455–85) • 232 PAGES • FROM £18

Set during the final years of the Wars of the Roses, *Sun of York* tells the story of Owen Lloyd, a young and impoverished aristocrat who is determined to reverse the family's fortunes. Owen distinguishes himself in battle and contributes to the victory of the Yorkist King Edward IV. This is a brilliant coming-of-age novel which fits perfectly into the Carey series.

**Only available as part of a full set*

THE HAWK*

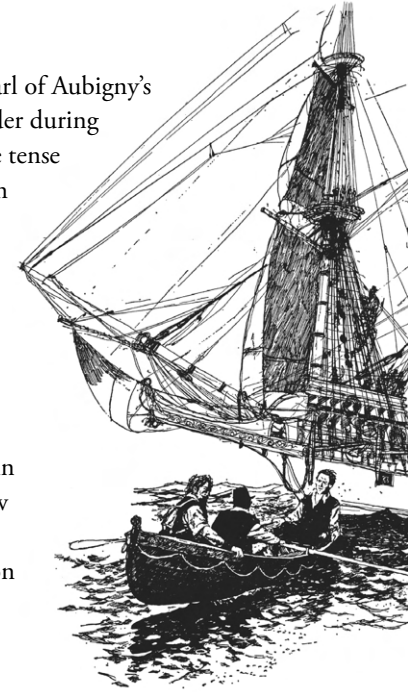
ELIZABETH I (1558–1603) • 224 PAGES

Harry is a naval officer aboard one of his father, the Earl of Aubigny's merchant ships running between London and Santander during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Relations with Spain are tense and Harry finds himself called on to save the ship from seizure by the Spanish, and to help scupper a plot to assassinate the Queen.

THE GALLEON*

ELIZABETH I (1558–1603) • 192 PAGES

After killing a man in a duel, penniless Carey cousin Robert Penderyn escapes reprisal by joining his uncle's merchant ship sailing for Santander. England and Spain are engaged in a trade war, and the English never know when they will fall foul of the port authorities or the Inquisition. Returning after months in a Spanish prison Robert becomes involved in foiling a Catholic plot to put Mary Queen of Scots on the English throne.



FOR THE KING*

THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR (1642–51) • 224 PAGES

It's 1642 and the country is riven by civil war. Home-loving Neil Carey reluctantly sets out from the family's Welsh estate to fight on the Royalist side in the regiment his father has raised. Neil has always lived in his older brother's shadow, but he acquits himself courageously in battle, and when he is captured by the Roundheads at Marston Moor, his life is saved by his own honesty.

CAPTAIN OF DRAGOONS

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM (1704) • 224 PAGES • FROM £18

Charles Carey is a Captain in the Duke of Marlborough's army – a moody, quick-tempered and charismatic figure who is also a brilliant swordsman. Having discovered that there is a traitor in the camp, Charles is sent to spy in France on a mission that ends with his imprisonment in the Bastille. But he escapes in time to take part in Marlborough's decisive victory at Blenheim.



MOHAWK VALLEY

THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR (1756–63) • 224 PAGES • FROM £18

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. Alan grows in moral stature as he deals with a dishonest bailiff, learns the ways of the forest, overcomes hostilities and renders invaluable service to General Wolfe during the capture of Quebec.

**Only available as part of a full set*

ESCAPE FROM FRANCE

REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE (1789–99) • 192 PAGES • FROM £18

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 château 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.

CAPTAIN OF FOOT*

NAPOLEONIC WARS (1803–15) • 224 PAGES

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, 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.



THE ROAD TO WATERLOO

NAPOLEONIC WARS (1803–15) • 88 PAGES • FROM £16

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.



NICHOLAS CAREY

THE CRIMEAN WAR (1853–56) • 224 PAGES • FROM £18

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.

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ENSIGN CAREY

THE INDIAN MUTINY (1857) • 200 PAGES • FROM £18

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.

TANK COMMANDER*

THE FIRST WORLD WAR (1914–18) • 232 PAGES

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.



**Only available as part of a full set*

'I just wanted to let you now that *The Eagle of the Ninth* and *The Silver Branch* arrived safely. I have both on Kindle, but the pleasure of holding and smelling and, in time, reading these two volumes is immeasurable.'

M. Lyons, ACT, Australia

'Just finished *The Little Grey Men* and am now reading *Down the Bright Stream*, both on Slightly Foxed's recommendation. I love them both!

I think *Brendon Chase* will be next . . .'

EllieMae32 via Instagram

'The Carey novels are fantastic – I first read them in the mid '60s and purchased the complete set from you a few years ago. They are now about to be read to my granddaughters. Thank you.'

M. Turmezei, Oxfordshire, UK

BOOKS FEATURED IN *Slightly Foxed* ISSUE 80

NB This list only contains in-print books featured in this issue. For a full bibliography, please see the issue or visit the website. For second-hand books, please contact the office.

Edwin A. Abbott, *Flatland*

Article by Samuel Saloway-Cooke • PENGUIN • PB • 160 PAGES • FROM £10.99

Jane Austen, *Emma*

Article by Daisy Hay • VINTAGE • PB • 592 PAGES • FROM £10.99

J. L. Carr, *A Day in Summer*

Article by Ursula Buchan • QUINCE TREE PRESS • PB • 219 PAGES • FROM £12

Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Penguin Complete Sherlock Holmes*

Article by Christopher Rush • PENGUIN • PB • 1136 PAGES • FROM £20.99

Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier*

Article by Noonie Minogue • PENGUIN • PB • 256 PAGES • FROM £10.99

Myles na Gopaleen, *The Best of Myles*

Article by William Palmer • HARPERCOLLINS • PB • 400 PAGES • FROM £14.99

Diane Johnson, *Le Divorce*

Article by Rachel Cooke • VINTAGE • PB • 320 PAGES • FROM £17.99

Philip Larkin, *A Girl in Winter*

Article by Nigel Andrew • FABER • PB • 256 PAGES • FROM £11.99

Caroline Moorehead, *Dancing to the Precipice: Lucie de la Tour du Pin and the French Revolution*

Article by Patrick Welland • VINTAGE • PB • 528 PAGES • FROM £18.99

Christopher Neve, *Unquiet Landscape*

Article by Jonathan Law

THAMES & HUDSON • PB • 248 PAGES • FROM £12.99

Georges Simenon, *Pietr the Latvian & Maigret and Monsieur Charles*

Article by Robin Blake

PENGUIN • PB • 176 PAGES EACH • FROM £10.99 EACH



OTHER WINTER READING & PRESENT IDEAS

The Winter Spirits: Ghostly Tales for Frosty Nights

LITTLE BROWN • HB • 464 PAGES • FROM £18.99

These twelve haunting stories, centred around Christmas or Advent, playfully reimagine the beloved season for a modern audience. Drawing on festive traditions from around the world, *The Winter Spirits* is your ultimate companion for frosty nights and guide to Christmases past.

Agatha Christie, *Midwinter Murder:*

Fireside Mysteries from the Queen of Crime

HARPERCOLLINS • HB • 256 PAGES • FROM £16.99

Featuring beloved detectives Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple, this compendium of short stories is full of winter mysteries: dangerous gifts, poisoned meals and enigmatic guests.



Kate Young & Ella Risbridger (eds.),

The Dinner Table

HEAD OF ZEUS • HB • 744 PAGES • FROM £27

In this beautiful anthology of deliciously moreish food writing, Kate Young and Ella Risbridger present you with their ultimate fantasy dinner party. *The Dinner Table* brings together authors, cooks and poets including Laurie Colwin, Salman Rushdie, Audre Lorde, Helen Fielding and Nigella Lawson, discussing bread, fridge-raid suppers, wedding feasts and much, much more.

Jane McMorland Hunter, *Beside Companion for Food Lovers:*

An anthology of mouthwatering literary morsels for every night of the year

BATSFORD • HB • 448 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £24.95

This appetizing anthology of food in literature includes fiction and non-fiction, prose and poetry, with a smattering of recipes for good measure. In addition to Elizabeth David, Madhur Jaffrey and Anthony Bourdain, it features literary greats Charles Dickens, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Maya Angelou, as well as treats from Jane Austen, Sam Selvon and M. F. K. Fisher.

Diana Henry, *Roast Figs, Sugar Snow: Food to warm the soul*

OCTOPUS • HB • 208 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £24

Revised and refreshed nearly 20 years after its first publication with new recipes and a foreword by Nigel Slater, Diana Henry's classic cookbook is full of comforting delights from cold-weather climes. These recipes will bring warmth to your heart as well as your home.

Philip Rhys Evans, *Wonders and Absurdities 2023*

COUNTRY DOCTOR BOOKS • PAMPHLET • 28 PAGES • FROM £11

This year's edition of the Country Doctor's commonplace book is available once again with its reliable compilation of humour, comment, wit, delight and nonsense.

Laurie Lee, *Collected Poems*

PENGUIN • HB • 208 PAGES • FROM £22

Laurie Lee's evocative poetry expresses a deep connection to nature, tracking the changing seasons, war, relationships and places, informed by his experiences. These timeless and poignant poems, gathered in one volume for the first time, include unseen verses from Lee's archives.

Thomas Gray, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*

BODLEIAN LIBRARY • HB • 88 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18.99

Thomas Gray's famous poem was praised by Samuel Johnson, reprinted many times in Gray's lifetime and recited by generations of school children. Commemorating the 250th anniversary of the poet's death, this edition reproduces exquisite wood engravings by Agnes Miller Parker.

Stephen Moss, *The Owl: A Biography*

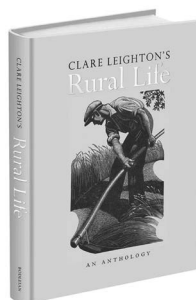
SQUARE PEG • HB • 208 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £16.99

This beautifully illustrated guide to these charismatic birds uncovers the secret life of owls, exploring their fascinating lives from hatching to hunting via the folklore they inspire.

Clare Leighton, *Clare Leighton's Rural Life*

BODLEIAN LIBRARY • HB • 192 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £32

Clare Leighton was one of the most prolific and respected wood engravers of her time. This anthology is the perfect introduction to the artist's life and work, reflecting Leighton's lifelong fascination with the countryside of Britain and North America and the people who worked the land.



Ella Ravilious, *Eric Ravilious: Landscapes and Nature*

THAMES & HUDSON • HB • 144 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £16.99

Eric Ravilious was a designer, painter, printmaker and illustrator best known for his depictions of the English landscape. Subjects include weather, plants, animals and birds, and man in the landscape, showcasing Ravilious's love of machinery and the human presence within nature.

Weird Walk: Wanderings and Wonderings through the British Ritual Year

WATKINS PUBLISHING • HB • 284 PAGES • FROM £21.99

From the spring equinox sunrise at Pentre Ifan to making merry at the Chepstow wassail, this hauntological gazetteer guides the reader to enchanted places and through seasonal rituals. By walking the landscape of Britain, we can reconnect to our shared folklore and to nature.

Philip Matyszak, *Lost Cities of the Ancient World*

THAMES & HUDSON • HB • 288 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £27

This compendium of forgotten cities, illustrated throughout with important artefacts, ruins and maps, brings to life ancient sites and settlements across the world. From the sunken city of Ropotamo in the Black Sea to the deep cave dwellings of Derinkuyu in Turkey, Philip Matyszak explores the trials, tribulations and triumphs of those who built them.

Claudia Acott Williams, *Cecil Beaton: The Royal Portraits*

THAMES & HUDSON • HB • 240 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £37

Offering a fresh appraisal of Beaton's portraits of the British royal family, Claudia Acott Williams explores not only the finished images but the sittings in which they were created, revealing the ways in which Beaton collaborated with his subjects, and his central role in shaping the public face of the House of Windsor.



James Stourton, *Heritage: A History of How We Conserve Our Past*

APOLLO • HB • 496 PAGES • FROM £42

James Stourton explores the elements of British culture that have been deliberately preserved: works of art, iconic buildings, and the countryside. *Heritage* is a story of crisis and profound change in public perception, but also one of hope and regeneration for the future.

Elizabeth Bingham, *Kneelers: The Unsung Folk Art of England and Wales*

VINTAGE • HB • 144 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £22

Kneelers is a celebration of folk art over the past ninety years: the design and craft of church kneelers. Elizabeth Bingham traces kneelers, their stories and designs from their spectacular beginnings in the 1930s to the present-day congregations who are keeping the tradition alive.

Irene Vallejo, *Papyrus*

HODDER • PB • 464 PAGES • FROM £14.99

Classicist Irene Vallejo traces the enthralling 6,000-year history of books and reading. This is the story of the book's journey from the oral tradition to scrolls to codices, and how that transition laid the very foundation of Western culture.

Andrew Pettegree, *The Book at War: Libraries and Readers in an Age of Conflict*

PROFILE BOOKS • HB • 480 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £32

Since the advent of modern warfare, authors and readers have gone to war. From travel guides and scientific papers to Biggles and Anne Frank, books, too, found their way to the frontline. Andrew Pettegree traces the ways in which books have shaped, and been shaped by, conflict.

Jerry White, *The Battle of London 1939–45*

VINTAGE • PB • 448 PAGES • FROM £14.99

The Blitz transformed life in the capital beyond recognition, marking a time of almost constant anxiety, disruption, deprivation and sacrifice for Londoners. Jerry White paints a fascinating portrait of daily life in London through the voices of people who lived it.

Adam Sisman, *The Secret Life of John le Carré*

PROFILE BOOKS • HB • 208 PAGES • FROM £18.99

Secrecy came naturally to John le Carré and some secrets he fought fiercely to keep. Following

his death, what had been withheld can now be revealed. Adam Sisman uncovers a hidden perspective on the life and work of the spy-turned-author, meditating on the relationship between biographer and subject. 'Now that he is dead,' Sisman writes, 'we can know him better.'

D. J. Taylor, *Orwell: The New Life* LITTLE BROWN • HB • 608 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £32

This new biography draws on a wide range of previously unseen material – newly-discovered letters and recollections of the dwindling band of people who remember Orwell – to produce a definitive portrait of this complex, driven and self-mythologizing man.

Michael Palin, *Great-Uncle Harry* CORNERSTONE • HB • 336 PAGES • FROM £24

Michael Palin investigates the tragic death of his grandfather's brother, Harry. The result is a compelling account of an ordinary man who led an extraordinary life; a blend of biography, history, travelogue and personal memoir that is Palin at his finest.

Sylvia Whitman & Adam Biles, *The Shakespeare and Company*

Book of Interviews CANONGATE • HB • 256 PAGES • FROM £22

The iconic Shakespeare and Company Bookshop in Paris has long been a meeting place for literary folk, and owner Sylvia Whitman and literary director Adam Biles have often interviewed visiting writers. Packed with warmth, sensitivity and humour, this selection of the best of these conversations celebrates great writers and works of recent years.

Rumer Godden, *China Court*

MANDERLEY PRESS • HB • ILLUS. • FROM £20.99

When Tracy Quin returns to her adored family home, her grandmother's recent death has set in motion events that threaten Tracy's future and the very existence of China Court. This is the story of five generations of the Quin family and their lives at their beautiful country house.

Nora Ephron, *Heartburn: 40th Anniversary Edition*

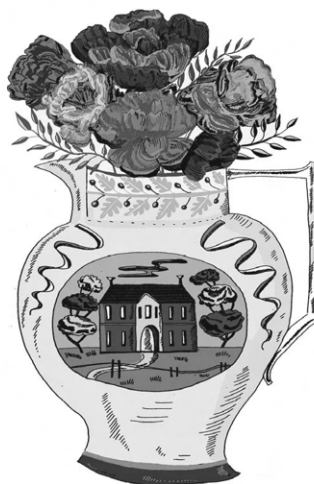
VIRAGO • HB • 192 PAGES • FROM £16.99

Cookery writer Rachel discovers that her husband is having an affair. Between trying to win back Mark and wishing him dead, Rachel offers us some of her favourite recipes. *Heartburn* is a timeless tale of love, betrayal, loss and, most satisfyingly, revenge.

Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar: The Illustrated Edition*

FABER • HB • 272 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £16.99

Celebrated for its darkly comic and razor-sharp portrait of 1950s society and its intimate and honest depiction of mental ill-health, *The Bell Jar* continues to resonate with readers today. Beya Rebai's vibrant illustrations bring this new edition of Plath's classic semi-autobiographical novel to life.



Italo Calvino, *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller*

VINTAGE • HB • 288 PAGES • FROM £18.99

You go into a bookshop and buy *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller* by Italo Calvino. You like it. But, alas, there is a printer's error in your copy. You return to the shop for a replacement but it is a totally different story. You try to track down the original but end up with another narrative. This remarkable genre-defying novel traces many different tales but the real hero is you, the reader.

Louis de Bernières, *Light over Liskeard*

VINTAGE • HB • 304 PAGES • FROM £22

From the author of *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, *Light over Liskeard* pokes fun at modern mores and delves into what we should really treasure in our precarious lives. Sometimes we must look to the past to survive the future.

Marcel Proust, *Swann in Love*

PUSHKIN PRESS • PB • 256 PAGES • FROM £14.99

When Charles Swann first lays eyes on Odette de Crecy, he is indifferent to her beauty but their paths continue to cross and the seeds of desire begin to flourish. A witty and poignant stand-alone novella from Proust's masterpiece, it is the perfect introduction to the great novelist.

Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

HARPERCOLLINS • PB • 152 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £14.99

Quentin Blake turns his artistic talents to Dickens's much-loved festive story. New colourful illustrations guide the reader through miserly Scrooge's redemptive journey to find the meaning of Christmas.

E. T. A. Hoffmann, *The Nutcracker*

LITTLE PENGUIN CLOTHBOUND CLASSICS • HB • 208 PAGES • FROM £11.99

An irresistible tale of magic and mystery begins with a handsomely decorated, enigmatic nutcracker. Ancient curses, battles with the Mouse King, and a visit to the Kingdom of Dolls perfectly set the stage for Christmas.

George Mackay Brown, *Seasons Greetings from George*

GALILEO • HB • 64 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £14.99

From the 1960s to the 1980s, George Mackay Brown wrote poems which were printed on Christmas cards sent by friends. He also designed cards himself, commissioning art and including original compositions. This book reproduces these delightful cards and transports readers to the shores of Orkney at Christmastime.



Slightly Foxed

The independent-minded quarterly that combines good looks, good writing and a personal approach. *Slightly Foxed* introduces its readers to books that are no longer new and fashionable but have lasting appeal. Good-humoured, unpretentious and a bit eccentric, it's more like a well-read friend than a literary magazine.

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Ysenda Maxtone Graham lifts up her voice • Robin Blake snoops about with Simenon • Rachel Cooke enjoys a French lesson • Samuel Saloway-Cooke feels somewhat flat • Daisy Hay delights in *Emma* • William Palmer goes down the pub with Myles • Ursula Buchan remembers *A Day in Summer* • Christopher Rush has a nasty moment on Dartmoor • Sam Leith does his best to grow up, and much more besides. To buy books featured in this issue, see p. 34

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Slightly Foxed is celebrating its 20th year and the 80th issue of *The Real Reader's Quarterly*, so we've decided to mark the occasion with a 2024 calendar featuring some more of the seasonal *Slightly Foxed* covers that readers have come to love. It's a handsome, spiral-bound decorative wall calendar printed on sturdy paper with a board backing, and we feel it will raise the spirits and look good in any room. It would make a charming present for anyone who loves *Slightly Foxed*, or indeed for anyone who hasn't yet come across it.

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Daniel Macklin
Slightly Foxed Issue 37

2024 WALL CALENDAR



CHRISTMAS CARDS



Clockwise from top left

NO. I, A CHEERING GLASS

NO. II, DECORATING THE TREE

NO. III, PREPARING THE BIRD

NO. IV, TOASTING THE SNOWMAN

NO. V, WRAPPING THE PRESENTS