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Slightly Foxed

READERS' CATALOGUE • WINTER 2022



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OUR IMPRINTS

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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. 61

THE PRINCE, THE SHOWGIRL AND ME

THE DIARIES OF COLIN CLARK

'MM doesn't really forget her lines. It is more as if she had never quite learnt them – as if they are pinned to her mental noticeboard so loosely that the slightest puff of wind will send them floating to the floor . . . This is very disconcerting to the other actors . . .'

It's Tuesday, 14 August 1956, and through a combination of chutzpah and some useful contacts (he is after all the son of Lord Clark of *Civilisation*), Colin Clark, fresh from Oxford, has got himself a job. He's now a 'gofer' or general dogsbody on the Pinewood Studios set of *The Prince and the Showgirl*, a light comedy starring Sir Laurence Olivier (abbreviated in the diary Colin is beady keeping to SLO) and Marilyn Monroe (MM).

It's been clear almost from the moment Marilyn and her new husband, the playwright Arthur Miller, stepped off the plane at Heathrow, shortly to be followed by Marilyn's acting coach Paula Strasberg, that this ill-advised project is going to be a car crash. 'SLO probably thought the whole thing would be a bit of a lark,' writes Colin. 'He could have fun, make money and add considerably to his glamour.' Sadly, nothing could be further from the truth.

Poor SLO is increasingly grim-faced as MM fails to turn up on time, can't remember her lines and when she does can barely speak them without consulting Paula – or worse, making long-distance calls to Paula's husband, the guru of 'Method' acting Lee Strasberg in New York – a terrible affront to SLO's dignity as he is supposed to be in charge. As for SLO, he's out of his depth with this very un-British crowd, and Marilyn herself is a



troubling enigma – impossible to deal with, unable to act, yet possessed of some indefinable magic that makes her irresistible on screen when the 'rushes' come through, often upstaging SLO himself. For him she's the ultimate dumb blonde, though there are hints from Colin, who like most men on the set has fallen in love with her, that she's brighter than she seems.

Colin is in a brilliant, fly-on-the-wall position to record all this since he knows SLO personally as a family friend yet is so junior that his presence is barely noticed when crises occur and important decisions are being made. There are some delicious cameo appearances too in this tragicomedy: Arthur Miller, smug and self-important, 'grinning like an amiable crocodile' at the side of his trophy wife; MM's publicity man, the appalling Arthur P. Jacobs ('close-cropped black hair, pugnacious, bad-tempered, puffy face') who keeps Colin waiting outside the Savoy hotel for an hour and a half and finally emerges without a word of apology; and, pouring oil on troubled waters, saintly Dame Sybil Thorndike, already in her seventies, who turns up promptly and professionally at 6.15 every morning while Marilyn is still in bed.

The Prince and the Showgirl did eventually get made and sank without trace. Some years later Colin met Billy Wilder, director of *Some Like It Hot*, at a party and mentioned that he too had worked with Monroe. 'Then you know the meaning of pure pain,' Wilder growled. Colin's hilarious account of it, however, is pure pleasure.

PUBLISHED DECEMBER 2022 • CLOTH-BOUND HARDBACK
LIMITED EDITION OF 2,000 • 170 X 110 MM • FROM £18 • 240 PAGES

NEW PLAIN FOXED EDITION

Edward Ardizzone

THE YOUNG ARDIZZONE

There can be few author-illustrators whose books are remembered – and still read – with such affection as those of Edward Ardizzone. And affection is the keynote of this charming memoir, which brings alive in words and pictures the comfortable Edwardian world in which Ardizzone grew up.

The author of the ever-popular *Little Tim* and *Lucy* books (and illustrator of many more) 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. Having settled them in the remote Suffolk village of East Bergholt she returned to the Far East for three years, leaving them in the care of their maternal grandmother, a much-loved but somewhat alarming figure whose sudden inexplicable outbursts of temper could turn her face almost



literally black with rage. Thereafter, like many colonial children, the young Ardizzones led a somewhat peripatetic existence, punctuated by visits from their mother – once with a surprise new brother and sister in tow. But they grew up with a full complement of cheerful young bachelor uncles, great-aunts and eccentric family friends – all beautifully and often poignantly captured in Ardizzone's deceptively simple prose and delicately humorous drawings. This book is a must for fans of Ardizzone, young and old, and a perfect introduction for those who haven't yet discovered him.

PUBLISHED 1 DECEMBER 2022 • 208 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18



FORTHCOMING

SF EDITION NO. 62

Katrin Fitzherbert, TRUE TO BOTH MY SELVES

By the time she was 16 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'.

PUBLISHED 1 MARCH 2023 • 384 PAGES • FROM £18

Adrian Bell, A COUNTRYMAN'S SPRING NOTEBOOK

Another treat for lovers of Adrian Bell to put alongside *A Countryman's Winter Notebook*, which we published last year (see below). This second 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.

PUBLISHED 1 MARCH 2023 • 224 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18



Preliminary drawing for
A Countryman's Spring Notebook, by Beth Knight

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 other available titles from the original SF 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.

RECOMMENDED WINTER READS

Adrian Bell, *A Countryman's Winter Notebook*

SLIGHTLY FOXED OCCASIONAL BOOKS • HB • 256 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

For all those who have loved Adrian Bell's trilogy describing his life between the wars on a Suffolk farm, there is now an additional treat. From 1950 to 1980 Bell wrote a popular column for his local paper, the *Eastern Daily Press*, 1,600 atmospheric little essays which vividly catch

the fleeting moments that made up his life in the rural Suffolk he loved and knew so well.

Surprisingly, very few have since been reprinted, but now they can be enjoyed again in this seasonal selection by Richard Hawking, with an introduction by Bell's son Martin and charming illustrations by Beth Knight. This is the first of four little seasonal books of Bell's writings.

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.

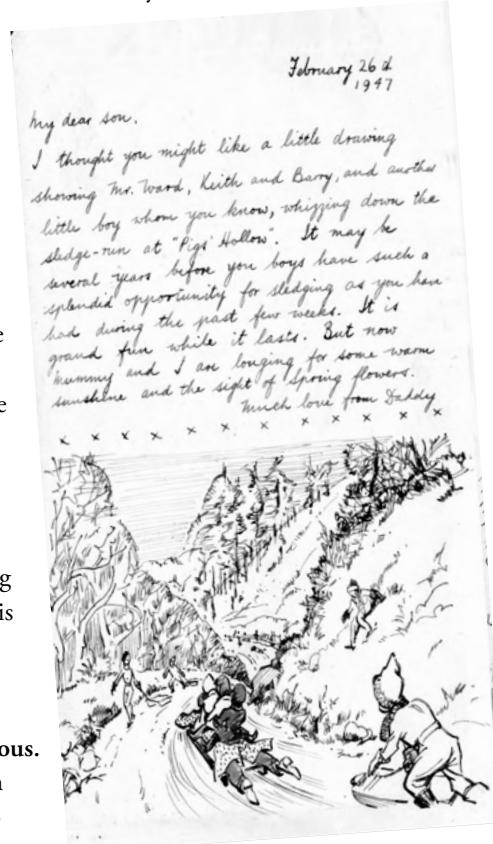
Charles Phillipson, *Letters to Michael*

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.

'These sweetly simple records of an ordinary suburban life render everything about it miraculous. The sheer quality of a devoted father shines from every detailed line, written and drawn . . . I keep



returning to this magical collection, each time with renewed wonder that the letters survived – but also with a strange sadness that these days there is so little inclination to write any letters at all, let alone ones as happy and touching as these.' Bel Mooney, *Daily Mail*

Gavin Maxwell, *The House of Elrig*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 31 • 256 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £18

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 – undoubtedly one of the greatest nature books ever written. 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.

Gavin was only four months old when his father – the son of an often notorious line of Scottish landowners – was killed in 1914, and thereafter the most important people in his life after his three older siblings were his mother and her sisters. All equally eccentric, they had grown up in regal splendour at Alnwick Castle, against which background they seemed perpetually in revolt – one entirely devoted to good works, another running a 'high-pressure chicken-farm' and later 'the largest fur rabbit farm in the world', and a third becoming a serious research zoologist. She it was who fostered the children's curiosity about the natural world and set Gavin on his life's path.

But the most powerful influence on this complicated, sensitive small boy was the wild moorland country around his home and the creatures that inhabited it. He evokes it in loving detail, along with the suffocatingly grand and philistine upper-class society into which he would unsuccessfully attempt to fit. As was 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, and the power of his longing and the ecstasy of each return fuel this haunting book.

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



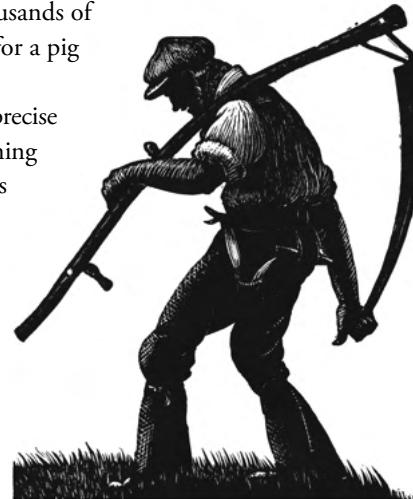
be brutal too. *Cider with Rosie* is not just a rosy picture of a rural past, but a magical evocation of growing up in a lost world that still rings emotionally true. Buy with *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning*, see p. 16

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'. 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, *The Cherry Tree*

SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 38

256 PAGES • FROM £18

In *The Cherry Tree* Bell makes a happy marriage and settles down with his wife Nora on their own small farm. The picture of their young married life is a cheerful one as they share the work of the farm, explore the countryside in their pony and trap, and furnish the house with bits and pieces picked up in the Stambury junk shops. But *The Cherry Tree* also records in poignant detail the dying days of an old order before mechanization took over completely, and the growing agricultural depression which would change for ever the face of the countryside and the lives of their country neighbours. In this final book of his famous trilogy 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 Collection
Corduroy, The Cherry Tree, A Countryman's Winter Notebook & A Countryman's Spring Notebook

SF Subscribers: UK & Ireland

£69; overseas £77 *SAVE £11

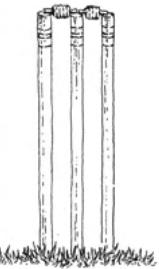
Non-Subscribers: UK & Ireland

£77; overseas £85 *SAVE £3

John Moore's Brensham Trilogy

'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.

Special Offer: The Brensham Trilogy
Portrait of Elmbury, Brensham Village & The Blue Field

SF Subscribers: UK & Ireland

£51; overseas £57 *SAVE £9

Non-Subscribers: UK & Ireland

£57; overseas £63 *SAVE £3



Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise*
SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 58
328 PAGES • FROM £18

Flora Thompson, *Over to Candleford & Candleford Green*
SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITION NO. 59
400 PAGES • FROM £18

Flora Thompson wrote the much-loved trilogy that came to be 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.



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.

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. 17

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.

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



A WORLD AT WAR

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

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.

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.

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.



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 below

ROGUES & REBELS

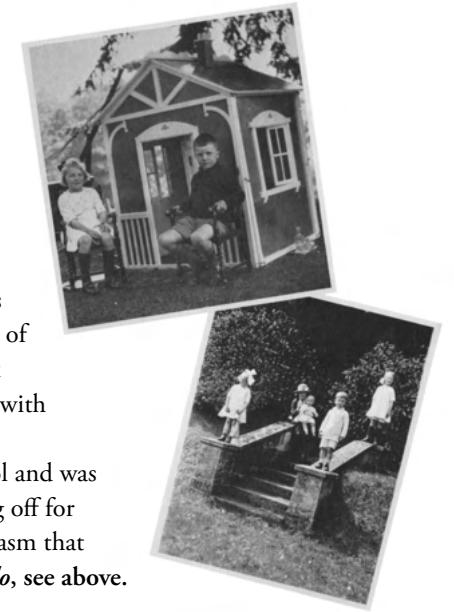
Roald Dahl, *Boy*

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 above.



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.



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. 9

Diana Petre, *The Secret Orchard of Roger Ackerley*

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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. 13

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.



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 hilarious.

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 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.

WRITING LIFE

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, 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.

Anne Fadiman, *The Wine Lover's Daughter*

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

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 Fadiman, 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. This is not just a book for wine buffs, but one that evokes the atmosphere of a whole era in American life.

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.



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.

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.

Dodie Smith, *Look Back with Love*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 272 PAGES • FROM £18

Best known for her first novel *I Capture the Castle*, for the evergreen *The Hundred and One Dalmatians*, and for *Dear Octopus*, her 1938 play set at a family reunion, Dodie did not publish this account of her early life until 1974 when she was 78.

Brought up among her mother's family since her father had died when she was a baby, Dodie spent her childhood surrounded by doting adults. It was the jolliest environment imaginable – the Furbers adored seaside trips, motorcar outings, fairgrounds, circuses, jokes, charades and musical soirées. Above all they loved the theatre, and it was through her bachelor uncles' involvement in amateur dramatics that she conceived her passion for the stage.

Her memoir gives a wonderful picture of this large extended family and of life at that time in the 'basking Sunday afternoon charm' of Manchester's Victorian suburbs. And of the funny, complicated, creative little girl who would later say of herself, 'I think I'm an oddity really, but I do my very, very best to write well' – which in *Look Back with Love* she certainly did.

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.



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*.

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 she 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 he also produced a succession of brilliant travel books. And he 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 which casts fascinating light on the fevered debates of today.



Hilary Mantel, *Giving up the Ghost*

PLAIN FOXED EDITION • 232 PAGES • FROM £18

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. *FORTHCOMING* PUBLISHED 1 MARCH 2023

DRAWN FROM LIFE

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.



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.



Ernest 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.

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'.

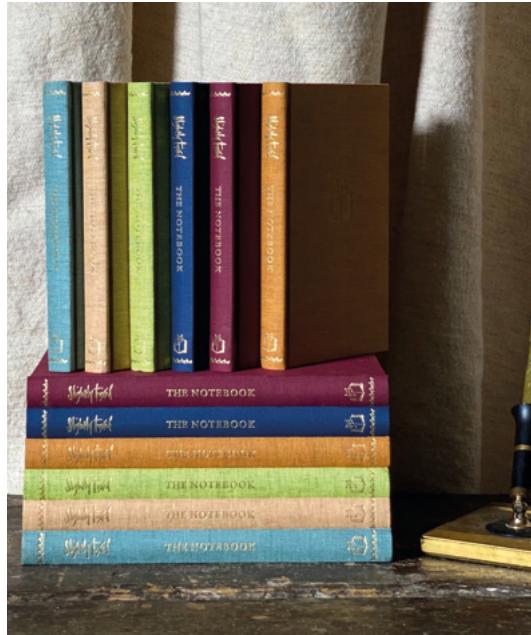


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ROSEMARY SUTCLIFF

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 the fourth, *Frontier Wolf*, which comes third in the chronological story, in 1980. The four books are only loosely interconnected, 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 Sutcliff'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.



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THE EAGLE OF THE NINTH

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 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, invalidated 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 £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

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 224 PAGES • FROM £18

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 £18

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.



DAWN WIND

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 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 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

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 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

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUB • 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.

THE LITTLE GREY MEN & DOWN THE BRIGHT STREAM

SLIGHTLY FOXED CUBS • 224 & 200 PAGES • ILLUS. • PAIR FROM £36

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 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 £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 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* 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 £51; Rest of the World from £57 *save <£9



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.

The original editions, published by Oxford University Press and illustrated by some of the best book illustrators of their day, are now almost impossible to find and fetch prohibitive prices. We're delighted to make these wonderful books available again, with their original illustrations, in an elegantly designed and highly collectable series.

Single titles: UK & Eire from £18; Rest of the World from £20

Sets of three: UK & Eire from £51; Rest of the World from £57 *save <£9

Full set of fourteen titles: UK & Eire from £278; Rest of the World from £306

THE CRUSADES – THE FIRST WORLD WAR

THE CRUSADES
(1095–1492)

Knight Crusader

*Only available as part of a set

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. (256 PAGES)

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR
(1337–1453)



Bowman of Crécy

*Only available as part of a set

This is the real 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. (192 PAGES)

THE WARS OF THE ROSES
(1455–1485)

Sun of York

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. (232 PAGES)



ELIZABETH I
(1558–1603)

THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR
(1642–1651)

THE BATTLE OF
BLENHEIM (1704)



The Hawk

*Only available as part of a set

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. (224 PAGES)



The Galleon

*Only available as part of a set

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. (192 PAGES)

For the King

*Only available as part of a set

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. Sensitive and small in stature, Neil has always lived in his older brother's shadow, but he acquires himself courageously in battle, and when he is captured by the Roundheads at Marston Moor, his life is saved by his own honesty. (224 PAGES)

Captain of Dragoons

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. (224 PAGES)



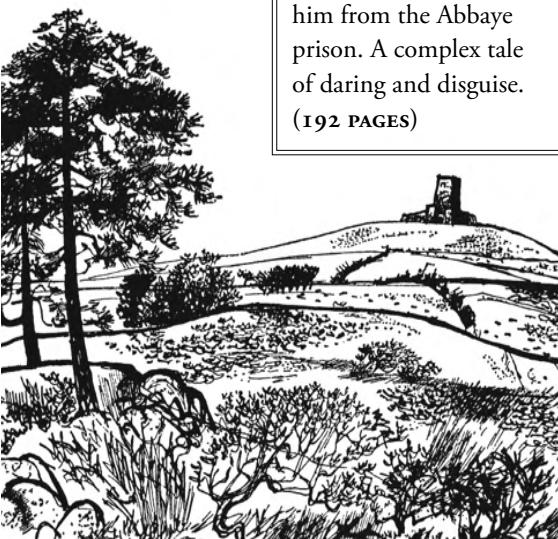
THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR
(1756–1763)

REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE
(1789–1799)

NAPOLEONIC WARS
(1803–1815)

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)



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 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. (192 PAGES)

Captain of Foot

*Only available as part of a set

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. (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

THE INDIAN MUTINY
1853–1857

THE FIRST WORLD WAR
1914–1918

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)

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)**



BOOKS FEATURED IN *Slightly Foxed* ISSUE 76

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

Elizabeth Gaskell, *Cranford*

PENGUIN CLOTHBOUND CLASSICS • HB • 304 PAGES • FROM £16.99

The small rural town of Cranford is a community that runs on co-operation and gossip, at the heart of which are the daughters of the former Rector: Miss Deborah Jenkyns and her sister Miss Matty. But domestic peace is continually threatened in the form of financial disaster, imagined burglaries, tragic accidents and the reappearance of long-lost relatives.

Jenny Uglow, *Elizabeth Gaskell*

FABER • PB • 704 PAGES • FROM £16.99

Elizabeth Gaskell wrote some of the most enduring novels of the Victorian age. This biography traces her youth in rural Knutsford, her married years in tension-ridden Manchester and her wide network of friends in London, Europe and America. She emerges as an artist of complexity, shrewdly observing the political, religious and feminist arguments of nineteenth-century Britain. High-spirited, witty and passionate, she enjoyed social and family life but she was also distracted by her need to write down the truth of what she saw.



Enid Blyton, *Five on Kirrin Island Again*

HODDER • PB • 208 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £8.99

Julian, Dick, Anne, George and Timmy the dog find adventure wherever they go. Uncle Quentin has locked himself away on Kirrin Island – what is he up to and why won't he let anyone visit? Then the Famous Five discover that a suspicious stranger is watching Uncle Quentin's every move. Can they warn Uncle Quentin in time? This edition features the original cover art and illustrations by Eileen Soper.

Anthony Hope, *The Prisoner of Zenda*

MACMILLAN • HB • 208 PAGES • FROM £11.99

The Prisoner of Zenda is a swashbuckling adventure set in the mythical kingdom of Ruritania. Englishman Rudolf Rassendyll closely resembles the King of Ruritania, and to foil a coup by his rival to the throne, he is persuaded to impersonate him. However, Rassendyll's role becomes complicated when the real king is kidnapped, and he falls for Princess Flavia. A strong sword arm can carry the day in Ruritania, and Rassendyll and his allies fight to rescue the king. But if he succeeds, our hero and Flavia will have to choose between love and honour.

Annie Proulx, *Barkskins*

FOURTH ESTATE • PB • 736 PAGES • FROM £11.99

Barkskins tells, blow by axe blow, how seventeenth-century Europeans felled the wilderness, displaced the First Nations and founded the New World on timber. Two penniless Frenchmen,

René Sel and Charles Duquet, arrive in New France. Bound to a feudal lord, a *seigneur*, they become woodcutters – barkskins. René suffers extraordinary hardship and is oppressed by the forest he is charged with clearing. He's forced to marry a Mi'kmaw woman and their descendants live trapped between two cultures. Whereas Duquet, crafty and ruthless, runs away from the *seigneur*, becomes a fur trader and sets up a timber business.

Richard Powers, *The Overstory*

VINTAGE • PB • 640 PAGES • FROM £11.99

A group of strangers, each summoned in different ways by the natural world, is brought together to save it from catastrophe. An artist inherits a hundred years of photographic portraits, all of the same doomed American chestnut. A hard-partying undergraduate electrocutes herself, dies, and is sent back into life by creatures of air and light. A hearing- and speech-impaired scientist discovers that trees are communicating with one another. Moving through history and across landscapes, this novel unfurls our potential to destroy or restore the planet.

Suzanne Simard, *Finding the Mother Tree*

PENGUIN • PB • 368 PAGES • FROM £12.99

Professor Suzanne Simard shares the secrets of a lifetime spent uncovering truths about trees: their co-operation, healing capacity, memory, wisdom and sentience. She was working in the forest service in British Columbia when she first discovered how trees communicate underground through an immense web of fungi, at the centre of which lie the Mother Trees: the mysterious, powerful entities that nurture their kin and sustain the forest. Though her ground-breaking findings were initially dismissed, they are now firmly supported by data.

Oliver Rackham, *Trees and Woodland in the British Landscape*

WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON • PB • 272 PAGES • FROM £18.99

Oliver Rackham's classic is both a comprehensive history of Britain's woodland and a field-work guide that presents trees individually and as part of the landscape. From prehistoric times, through the Roman period and into the Middle Ages, he describes the changing character, role and history of trees. He concludes this definitive study with a section on the conservation and future of Britain's trees, woodlands and hedgerows.

Isabella Tree, *Wilding*

PICADOR • PB • 384 PAGES • FROM £11.99

Isabella Tree tells the story of the 'Knepp experiment', a pioneering rewilding project in West Sussex that uses free-roaming grazing animals to create new habitats for wildlife. Part memoir, part account of the ecology of our countryside, *Wilding* is above all a story of hope. Extremely rare species, including turtle doves, nightingales, peregrine falcons, lesser spotted woodpeckers and purple emperor butterflies, are now breeding at Knepp, and populations of other species are growing.



Roger Deakin, *Wildwood: A Journey Through Trees*

PENGUIN • PB • 416 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £11.99

From the walnut tree at his Suffolk home, Roger Deakin embarks upon a quest that takes him through Britain, across Europe, to Central Asia and Australia, in search of what lies behind our enduring connection with wood and trees. Meeting woodlanders of all kinds, he lives in shacks and cabins, travels in search of the wild apple groves of Kazakhstan, goes coppicing in Suffolk, swims beneath the trees of the Haut-Languedoc and hunts bush plums in the outback.

Geoffrey Fletcher, *The London Nobody Knows*

THE HISTORY PRESS • PB • 144 PAGES • FROM £11.99

Geoffrey Fletcher's London in the Sixties was not the big landmarks, but rather 'the tawdry, extravagant and eccentric'. He wrote about parts of the city no one ever had before. This could be an art nouveau pub, a Victorian music hall, a Hawksmoor church or even a public toilet in Holborn in which the attendant kept goldfish in the cisterns. He was drawn to the corners of the city where 'kids swarm like ants and there are dogs everywhere'.



A. P. Wavell, *Other Men's Flowers: An Anthology of Poetry*

PIMLICO • PB • 448 PAGES • FROM £18.99

Published during the dark days of the Second World War, Lord Wavell's anthology of English poetry – enhanced by his own introduction and annotations – was to be found in many kitbags taken across to France on D-Day. He was simply pleasing himself, recalling the poetry that he had first read and learned by heart in youth; in doing so, he has pleased every generation since 1944, for this book has never gone out of print.

David Lack, *The Life of the Robin*

PALLAS ATHENE • PB • 304 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £14.99

The robin was hardly understood when David Lack – Britain's most influential ornithologist – started his scientific observations. It was Lack who established that robins sing to defend their territory; that males will fight to the death but will also feed injured opponents; that couples will court and mate but then ignore each other. This book is a landmark in natural history, not just for its discoveries, but because of its approachable style, sharpened with an acute wit.

Damon Runyon, *Guys and Dolls and Other Stories*

PENGUIN • PB • 288 PAGES • FROM £11.99

'Of all the high players this country ever sees, there is no doubt but that the guy they call the Sky is the highest . . . He will bet all he has, and nobody can bet any more than this.' Slick, upbeat and funny, these stories set on Broadway inspired the popular musical and film *Guys and Dolls*. The people most at home in this world are gangsters and horseplayers, no matter where they are from. It's a transient world, too; the trajectory of the lives in it is downwards – and they all know it.

Shirley Hughes, *The Shirley Hughes Collection*

BODLEY HEAD • HB • 352 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £21.99

There's a wealth of treasure for children of all ages to enjoy in this collection, beginning with simple rhymes and stories and moving on to some of Hughes's classic picture books, featuring well-loved characters such as Dogger, Alfie and Annie Rose. There's also a selection of stories for older readers, including 'The Lion and the Unicorn' and 'Enchantment in the Garden'.



Oscar Wilde, *Stories for Children*

O'BRIEN PRESS • HB • 80 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £15.99

This beautifully illustrated collection of Oscar Wilde's favourite children's tales includes 'The Happy Prince', 'The Selfish Giant' and 'The Nightingale and the Rose'.

T. H. White, *The Sword in the Stone*

HARPERCOLLINS • PB • 368 PAGES • FROM £8.99

When the wizard Merlyn comes to tutor Sir Ector's sons, Kay and the Wart, studying becomes much more exciting. After all, who wouldn't enjoy being turned into a fish, or a badger, or a snake? But the Wart is destined for greater things and Merlyn's magical teachings are only the beginning. This is the extraordinary story of a boy who goes on to become King Arthur.

OTHER WINTER READING

Kate Atkinson, *Shrines of Gaiety*

DOUBLEDAY • HB • 448 PAGES • FROM £22

London in 1926 has become the focus for a delirious new nightlife. In the clubs of Soho, peers of the realm rub shoulders with starlets, foreign dignitaries with gangsters, and girls sell dances for a shilling a time. The queen of this glittering world is Nellie Coker, ruthless but also ambitious to advance her six children, including the enigmatic Niven whose character has been forged in the Somme. Success breeds enemies, and Nellie's empire faces threats, for beneath the dazzle of Soho's gaiety there is a dark underbelly, a world in which it is very easy to become lost.

George Saunders, *Liberation Day*

BLOOMSBURY • HB • 256 PAGES • FROM £20.99

'Love Letter' is a tender missive from grandfather to grandson during a dystopian political situation in the not-too-distant future. 'Ghoul' is set in a Hell-themed section of an underground amusement park in Colorado. In 'Mother's Day', two women who loved the same man come to a reckoning in the middle of a hailstorm. And in 'Elliott Spencer', our 89-year-old protagonist finds himself brainwashed, a victim of a scheme in which people are reprogrammed and deployed as political protesters. The nine stories in this collection encompass joy and despair, oppression and revolution, bizarre fantasy and brutal reality.

Elizabeth Strout, *Lucy by the Sea*

VIKING • HB • 304 PAGES • FROM £16.99

In March 2020 Lucy's ex-husband William pleads with her to leave New York and escape to a coastal house he has rented in Maine. Lucy reluctantly agrees, leaving the washing-up in the sink and expecting to be back in a week or two. Weeks turn into months, and it's just Lucy, William and their complex past together in a little house nestled against the sea. From the celebrated author of *My Name Is Lucy Barton* and *Oh William!*

Anne Youngson, *The Six Who Came to Dinner*

DOUBLEDAY • HB • 272 PAGES • FROM £14.99

A vengeful dinner-party hostess serves more than just a roast to her six guests; the village cleaning lady who holds everyone's house keys opens a car boot to find some unexpectedly dead contents; driven to distraction by his new young wife a man resorts to two grisly acts in a reimagining of a famous Irish ballad. Ripping away the polite façade of small communities, these stories of love, lies and revenge reveal the turbulent emotions and frustration that can lead seemingly good people to do bad things.

John le Carré, *A Private Spy: The Letters of John le Carré, 1945–2020*

VIKING • HB • 704 PAGES • FROM £32

A Private Spy chronicles not only John le Carré's own life but also the turbulent times to which he was witness. Beginning with his 1940s childhood, it includes accounts of his National Service and his time at Oxford. It describes his entry into MI5 and the rise of the Iron Curtain, and the flowering of his career as a novelist in reaction to the building of the Berlin Wall. At the heart of the collection is the writer: engaging with readers, publishers, film-makers and actors, with politicians and public figures. We find him writing to Alec Guinness to persuade him to take on the role of George Smiley, and later arguing the immorality of the War on Terror with the chief of the German internal security service.

Max Hastings, *Abyss: The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962*

WILLIAM COLLINS • HB • 576 PAGES • FROM £32

The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis was one of the most perilous events in history, when mankind faced a looming nuclear collision between the United States and the Soviet Union. This graphic new history tells the story from the viewpoints of national leaders, Russian officers, Cuban peasants, American pilots and British disarms, blending eye-witness interviews, archive documents and diaries, White House tape recordings and top-down analysis.

Brigid Keenan, *Diplomatic Baggage*

BLOOMSBURY • PB • 320 PAGES • FROM £11.99

When *Sunday Times* fashion journalist Brigid Keenan married the love of her life in the late Sixties she had little idea of the journey they would make around the world together. He was a diplomat, and Brigid found herself in locales ranging from Kazakhstan to Trinidad. How do you throw a buffet dinner during a public mourning period in Syria? Where do you track down

dog fat in Almaty? And how do you entertain guests in a Nepalese chicken shed? Negotiating diplomatic protocol, difficult teenagers, homesickness, frustrated career aspirations, witch doctors and giant jumping spiders, Brigid determinedly muddles through – with no shortage of mishaps on the way.

Ronald Blythe, *Next to Nature: A Lifetime in the English Countryside*

JOHN MURRAY • HB • 480 PAGES • FROM £27

Ronald Blythe lives at the end of an overgrown farm track deep in the rolling countryside of the Stour Valley, on the border between Suffolk and Essex. His home is Bottengoms Farm, a yeoman's house once owned by the artist John Nash. From here, Blythe has spent almost half a century observing the slow turn of the agricultural year, the church year and village life in a series of rich, lyrical rural diaries. Beginning with the arrival of snow on New Year's Day and ending with Christmas carols sung in the village church, *Next to Nature* invites us to witness a simple life richly lived.

George Mackay Brown, *Christmas Stories*

GALILEO • HB • 192 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £16.99

George Mackay Brown's voice is rooted in the ancient myths of Orkney and his stories echo the legends that have become woven into the fabric of the islands. In his latter years he was commissioned every Christmas by the *Glasgow Herald* and the *Tablet* to write an original seasonal short story. They appear here in book form for the first time.



Oliver Darkshire, *Once Upon a Tome*

BANTAM PRESS • HB • 256 PAGES • FROM £16.99

Welcome to Sotheran's, one of the oldest bookshops in the world, with its weird and wonderful clientele, suspicious cupboards, unlabelled keys and poisoned books. Some years ago, Oliver Darkshire stepped into the hushed interior of Henry Sotheran Ltd on Sackville Street (est. 1761) to interview for their bookselling apprenticeship. Sotheran's sings a siren song to eccentrics and the alluring smell of old books proved irresistible.

Once Upon a Tome is the colourful story of life in a treasure trove of literary delights and a love letter to the world of antiquarian bookselling.

Angela Harding, *Wild Light: A Printmaker's Day & Night*

SPHERE • HB • 192 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £27

'I find great inspiration in the way morning, evening or bright midday light changes the way we see the things around us. The bouncing light of a cloud-filled storm sky can change a seascape through a palette of blues, greys and turquoises. The cool summer moonlight that crosses my back garden sends long shadows that change the mood of the garden from homely

to unfamiliar. This book is a collection of illustrations from those moments when an encounter with nature has been highlighted by the time of day or the time of night.' Angela Harding

Sarah Langford, *Rooted: Stories of Life, Land and a Farming Revolution*

VIKING • HB • 368 PAGES • FROM £18.99

Sarah Langford had left her country roots behind to live and work in the city as a barrister. But when she found herself moving back to an agricultural life in the countryside, she saw farmers dealing with very different problems to those faced by her grandfather. As Sarah looked to them to teach her about the land, she found a new generation of farmers on a path of regenerative change. Intimate and moving, these stories shine light on the human side of modern farming, and show us how land connects us all, not only in terms of global sustainability but in our relationships with our health, our communities and our planet.

John Lewis-Stempel, *Nightwalking: Four Journeys into Britain after Dark*

DOUBLEDAY • HB • 128 PAGES • FROM £11.99

As the human world settles down each evening, nocturnal animals prepare to take back the countryside. Leading readers on four walks through the four seasons, nature writer and farmer John Lewis-Stempel reveals a world

bursting with life normally hidden from view. Out beyond the cities it is still possible to see the night sky full of stars or witness a moonbow, an arc of white light in the heavens. It is time for us to leave our lairs and go tramping, to join our fellow creatures of the night.



Katherine Rundell, *The Golden Mole and Other Living Treasure*

FABER • HB • 208 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £16.99

A swift flies two million kilometres in its lifetime – that's far enough to get to the moon and back twice over, and then once more to the moon. A giraffe was once given to the King of France; she marched through the streets, dressed in the finest couture raincoat Paris could produce. A pangolin keeps its tongue furled in a pouch by its hip, a Greenland shark can live five hundred years, and a wombat once inspired a love poem. *The Golden Mole* is a lavishly illustrated bestiary of some of the world's most extraordinary animals.

Ludwig Bemelmans, *Hotel Splendide*

PUSHKIN • HB • 192 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £11.99

Ludwig Bemelmans uncovers the fabulous world of the luxury New York hotel where he worked as a waiter. With affection and barbed wit, he records the everyday chaos that reigns behind the façades of the gilded dining-room and banquet halls. He sketches the hierarchy of hotel life and its fascinating inhabitants: from the ruthlessly authoritarian maître d'hôtel Monsieur Victor to the kindly waiter Mespoulets and Frizl the homesick busboy. Bemelmans's tales of a bygone era are illustrated with his own charming line drawings.

Katherine Cecil Thursten, *The Fly on the Wheel*

MANDERLEY PRESS • HB • 336 PAGES • FROM £20.99

Isabel Costello waltzes into the small Irish town of Waterford and is immediately thrust into a world of gossip, duty and obligation. Illicit love and feminist desires determine the course of Isabel's introduction to Waterford society, with dramatic and tragic consequences. *The Fly on the Wheel* became an instant bestseller on both sides of the Atlantic when it was originally published in 1908.

Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Winter in the Air*

FABER • PB • 272 PAGES • FROM £11.99

Decades after her divorce, a woman returns to the village of her tumultuous marriage. Another waits anxiously in a café before eloping to Paris. A murder raises fears of blackmail. Sylvia Townsend Warner is a tragicomic chronicler of the heart's entanglements, from marriages and affairs to widowhood, and a champion of outsiders. Witty and subversive, her stories meld tradition and transgression, with secret sins as much a feature of English life as eccentric aunts, country houses and parish churches.



Jeremy Lee, *Cooking: Simply and Well, for One or Many*

FOURTH ESTATE • HB • 416 PAGES • ILLUS. • FROM £32

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