

Sissinghurst An Unfinished History

Describes one of Britain's most beautiful, elegant and famous gardens and the life of the gardener responsible, who was a poet, a best-selling author and inspiration and friend to Virginia Woolf.

From cocoa farming in Ghana to the orchards of Kent and the desert badlands of Pakistan, taking a practical approach to sustaining the landscape can mean the difference between prosperity and ruin. *Working with Nature* is the story of a lifetime of work, often in extreme environments, to harvest nature and protect it - in effect, gardening on a global scale. It is also a memoir of encounters with larger-than-life characters such as William Bunting, the gun-toting saviour of Yorkshire's peatlands and the aristocratic gardener Vita Sackville-West, examining their idiosyncratic approaches to conservation. Jeremy Purseglove explains clearly and convincingly why it's not a good idea to extract as many resources as possible, whether it's the demand for palm oil currently denuding the forests of Borneo, cottonfield irrigation draining the Aral Sea, or monocrops spreading across Britain. The pioneer of engineering projects to preserve nature and landscape, first in Britain and then around the world, he offers fresh insights and solutions at each step.

A network of complex currents flowed across Jacobean England. This was the England of Shakespeare, Jonson, and Bacon; the era of the Gunpowder Plot and the worst outbreak of the plague. Jacobean England was both more godly and less godly than the country had ever been, and the entire culture was drawn taut between these polarities. This was the world that created the King James Bible. It is the greatest work of English prose ever written, and it is no coincidence that the translation was made at the moment "Englishness," specifically the English language itself, had come into its first passionate maturity. The English of Jacobean England has a more encompassing idea of its own scope than any form of the language before or since. It drips with potency and sensitivity. The age, with all its conflicts, explains the book. This P.S. edition features an extra 16 pages of insights into the book, including author interviews, recommended reading, and more.

In the eighteenth century, as wars between Britain, France, and their allies raged across the world, hundreds of thousands of people were captured, detained, or exchanged. They were shipped across oceans, marched across continents, or held in an indeterminate limbo. *The Society of Prisoners* challenges us to rethink the paradoxes of the prisoner of war, defined at once as an enemy and as a fellow human being whose life must be spared. Amidst the emergence of new codifications of international law, the practical distinctions between a prisoner of war, a hostage, a criminal, and a slave were not always clear-cut. Renaud Morieux's vivid and lucid account uses war captivity as a point of departure, investigating how the state transformed itself at war, and how whole societies experienced international conflicts. The detention of foreigners on home soil created the conditions for multifaceted exchanges with the host populations, involving prison guards, priests, pedlars, and philanthropists. Thus, while the imprisonment of enemies signals the extension of Anglo-French rivalry throughout the world, the mass incarceration of foreign soldiers and sailors also illustrates the persistence of non-conflictual relations amidst war. Taking the reader beyond Britain and France, as far as the West Indies and St Helena, this story resonates in our own time, questioning the dividing line between war and peace, and forcing us to confront the untenable situations in which the status of the enemy is left to the whim of the captor.

The celebrated garden at Sissinghurst, created in the 1930s by Vita Sackville-West and her husband Harold Nicolson, has an unsurpassed romantic atmosphere. This book records the garden in all its seasons and moods, as well as the hosts of special plants and the inventive planting schemes.

In 1937, Adam Nicolson's father answered a newspaper ad—"Uninhabited islands for sale. Outer Hebrides, 600 acres. . . . Puffins and seals. Apply."—and thus found the Shiant Islands. With a name meaning "holy or enchanted islands," the Shiant Islands for millennia were a haven for those seeking solitude, but their rich, sometimes violent history of human habitation includes much more. When he was twenty-one, Nicolson inherited this almost indescribably beautiful property: a landscape, soaked in centuries-old tales of restless ghosts and Bronze Age gold, that cradles the heritage of a once-vibrant world of farmers and fishermen. In *Sea Room*, Nicolson describes and relives his love affair with the three tiny islands and their strange and colorful history in passionate, keenly precise prose—sharing with us the greatest gift an island bestows on its inhabitants: a deep engagement with the natural world.

The interwoven biographies of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell and the houses they lived in. What can we learn from a commemorative house? What biographical narratives emerge as we travel through the spaces of another's home? This new study unveils the revelatory potential of the house museum to inform and enrich our understanding of the lived past of its former inhabitants. It focuses on the emotionally textured interiors of Charleston and Monk's House, the literary/artistic house museums of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell, seeking out traces of their shared biography. Fresh perspectives unfold on Woolf's and Bell's sisterhood and their continuous artistic exchange, as we shadow their daily lives through the richly painted rooms and atmospheric gardens of their former Sussex homes. Discover these celebrated artists in a different light - animated, moving, handling the tools of their related arts and brought vividly to life through the tangible fabric of their past living.

Biografie van de Engelse schrijfster (1892-1962) en ontwerpster van de tuinen van Sissinghurst Castle in Engeland. Since before recorded history, people have congregated near water. But as growing populations around the globe continue to flow toward the coasts on an unprecedented scale and climate change raises water levels, our relationship to the sea has begun to take on new and potentially catastrophic dimensions. The latest generation of coastal dwellers lives largely in ignorance of the history of those who came before them, the natural environment, and the need to live sustainably on the world's shores. Humanity has forgotten how to live with the oceans. In *The Human Shore*, a magisterial account of 100,000 years of seaside civilization, John R. Gillis recovers the coastal experience from its origins among the people who dwelled along the African shore to the bustle

and glitz of today's megacities and beach resorts. He takes readers from discussion of the possible coastal location of the Garden of Eden to the ancient communities that have existed along beaches, bays, and bayous since the beginning of human society to the crucial role played by coasts during the age of discovery and empire. An account of the mass movement of whole populations to the coasts in the last half-century brings the story of coastal life into the present. Along the way, Gillis addresses humankind's changing relationship to the sea from an environmental perspective, laying out the history of the making and remaking of coastal landscapes—the creation of ports, the draining of wetlands, the introduction and extinction of marine animals, and the invention of the beach—while giving us a global understanding of our relationship to the water. Learned and deeply personal, *The Human Shore* is more than a history: it is the story of a space that has been central to the attitudes, plans, and existence of those who live and dream at land's end.

The familiar industrialisation of northern England and less familiar de-industrialisation of the south are shown to have depended on a common process. Neither rise nor decline resulted from differences in natural resource endowments, since they began before the use of coal and steam in manufacturing. Instead, political certainty, competitive ideology and Enlightenment optimism encouraged investment in transport and communications. This integrated the national market, intensifying competition between regions and altering economic distributions. Despite a dysfunctional landed system, agricultural innovation meant that the south's comparative advantage shifted towards the farm sector. Meanwhile its manufactures slowly declined. Once industry clustered in the less-benign northern environment, technological changes in manufacturing accumulated there. This book portrays the Industrial Revolution as deriving from economic competition within unique political arrangements.

"Public Gardens Management: A Global Perspective" provides essential information about public gardens and what is involved in designing, managing, and maintaining one. Although suitable as a textbook, its audience will include anyone with direct or peripheral responsibility for administration or supervision of a complex organization that requires scientific knowledge as well as public relations and business acumen. It may also prove useful for homeowners, for there is no fundamental difference between growing plants in a public garden or a home garden, a fact reflected in the extensive reference citations. The topic is multidisciplinary and as old as the beginning of human civilization when the concept of mental and physical restoration was realized by early man while he/she was in a natural but well-ordered garden environment. Thus began the art of garden making. Many volumes have been written on every applicable subject discussed in this and similar publications. Indeed the voluminous literature on history, design, horticulture, and numerous related subjects is nothing short of overwhelming. Accordingly, anyone involved in management of public gardens, whether as a director or area supervisor, and irrespective of the type and size of such facility, would have to have familiarity with various aspects of garden organization and administration. However, despite the enormous number and diversity of such publications there are very few books that deal with the multiplicity of the topics in such a manner as to be practical in approach and cover most relevant and unified issues in a single book. These volumes provide the essential background information on plants, animals, management, maintenance, fundraising and finances, as well as history, art, design, education, and conservation. They also cover a host of interrelated subjects and responsible organization of such activities as creating a children's garden, horticultural therapy, conservatories, zoological gardens, and parks, hence, administration of multidimensional public gardens. Nearly 500 full color plates representing illustrations from gardens in more than 30 countries are provided to assist and guide students and other interested individuals with history and the fundamental issues of public garden management. The 15 chapters begin with the need for public gardens, types of public gardens, historical backgrounds, as well as design diversity. Numerous quotations are included from many garden lovers, landscape architects, philosophers, and others. The author's primary aim in writing this book was based on the confidence that a relevant reference, between the encyclopedic nature of some and the specific subject matter of others, could be used to provide fundamental information for management of public as well as private gardens. The boundary between botanical and zoological gardens and parks is no longer as distinct as it once was. In part it is because a garden is not a garden without plants and in part it has become apparent that for all practical intents and purposes all animals need plants for their survival. Visitors of zoological gardens expect to see more than just animals; zoos are landscaped grounds. Moreover, most communities find it financially difficult to simultaneously operate a botanical garden or an arboretum as well as a zoological garden and city parks. A number of public gardens are currently referred to as "botanical and zoological garden." Population density and the public's desires and expectations, as well as financial requirements, are among the reasons for some major city parks, such as Golden Gate in San Francisco, Central Park in New York City, and Lincoln Park in Chicago which integrate botanical or zoological divisions as well as museums and recreational facilities. While this book attempts to provide basic principles involved in public garden management, it does not claim to be a substitute for broader familiarity. Many historic houses that open to the public in England and Wales - particularly those owned by the National Trust - preserve their contents rather than restore them to a particular period. The former owners of these houses often retained objects from various periods and this layering of history produces interiors that look aged and patinated. Although the reason for this preservation and lack of fashionable renewable can be attributed to declining economic fortunes in the twentieth century, there are many examples of families practising this method of homemaking over a much longer period. Taking National Trust properties as its central focus, this book examines three interlocking themes to examine the role of historic textiles. Firstly it looks at houses with preserved contents together with the reasons for individual families choosing this lifestyle; secondly the role of the National Trust as both guardian and interpreter of these houses and their collections; and finally, and most importantly, the influence of textiles to contribute to the appearance of interiors, and their physical attributes that carry historical resonances of the past. The importance of preserved textiles in establishing the visual character of historic houses is a neglected area and therefore the prominence given to textiles in this project constitutes an original contribution to the study of these houses. Drawing upon a range of primary sources, including literature produced by the National Trust for their sites, and documentary sources for the families and their houses (such as diaries, letters and household accounts), the study takes a broad approach that will be of interest to all those with an interest in material culture, heritage, collecting studies and cultural history.

In the last two decades, historians have increasingly sought to understand how environments, 'built' and otherwise, architectural surroundings, landscapes, and conceptual 'places' and 'spaces' have affected the nature and scope of political power, cultural production and social experience. The essays in this collection expand upon this already rich field of inquiry by combining an analytical approach sensitive to questions of gender with an exploration of ideas of political space. The volume demonstrates how the gendered and political meanings of space—be that space domestic or public, rural or urban, real or imagined, or a combination of all these and more—are fashioned through the movement of historical actors through space and time. Whether in delineating the

gendered and politicized space of the pulpit; the sickroom; the Irish farmyard; the London suffrage atelier; the domestic space created by the wireless; the lesbian 'scene' of rural Canada; the eighteenth-century ladies' 'closet'; or the public space within the 'public history' of historic houses, the volume demonstrates how the meanings of these spaces are not fixed, but are challenged and reformulated. This book was originally published as a special issue of *women's History Review*.

This book examines the centrality of the countryside to women's work, creativity, and aspirations in early-twentieth-century England.

A dazzling new biography of Vita Sackville-West, the 20th century aristocrat, literary celebrity, devoted wife, famous lover of Virginia Woolf, recluse, and iconoclast who defied categorization. In this stunning new biography of Vita Sackville-West, Matthew Dennison's *Behind the Mask* traces the triumph and contradictions of Vita's extraordinary life. His narrative charts a fascinating course from Vita's lonely childhood at Knole, through her affectionate but 'open' marriage to Harold Nicolson (during which both husband and wife energetically pursued homosexual affairs, Vita most famously with Virginia Woolf), and through Vita's literary successes and disappointments, to the famous gardens the couple created at Sissinghurst. The book tells how, from her privileged world of the aristocracy, Sackville-West brought her penchant for costume, play-acting and rebellion to the artistic vanguard of modern Britain. Dennison is the acclaimed author of many books including a biography of Queen Victoria. Here, in the first biography to be written of Vita for thirty years, he reveals the whole story and gets behind 'the beautiful mask' of Vita's public achievements to reveal an often troubled persona which heroically resisted compromise on every level. Drawing on wideranging sources and the extensive letters that sustained her marriage, this is a compelling story of love, loss and jealousy, of high-life and low points, of binding affection and illicit passion – a portrait of an extraordinary, 20th-century life.

Adam Nicolson tells the story of England through the history of fourteen gentry families - from the 15th century to the present day. This sparkling work of history reads like a real-life *Downton Abbey*, as the loves, hatreds and many times of grief of his chosen cast illuminate the grand events of history. We may well be 'a nation of shopkeepers', but for generations England was a country dominated by its middling families, rooted on their land, in their locality, with a healthy interest in turning a profit from their property and a deep distrust of the centralised state. The virtues we may all believe to be part of the English culture - honesty, affability, courtesy, liberality - each of these has their source in gentry life cultivated over five hundred years. These folk were the backbone of England. Adam Nicolson's riveting new book concentrates on fourteen families, from 1400 to the present day. From the medieval gung-ho of the Plumpton family to the high-seas adventures of the Lascelles in the eighteenth century, to more modern examples, the book provides a chronological picture of the English, seen through these intimate, passionate, powerful stories of family saga. Drawing on a wealth of unpublished archive material, here is a vivid depiction of the life and code of the gentry. 'The Gentry' is first and foremost a wonderful sweep of English history, shedding light on the creation of the distinctive English character but with the sheer readability of an epic novel.

The Poetics and Politics of Gardening in Hard Times illuminates the ways in which the garden as a real and imagined space, and gardening as a practice or ethic, is changed under extreme conditions of economic and environmental austerity.

Step inside the world's most famous garden and understand the strength of its attraction since it was bought and transformed by writer Vita Sackville West and diplomat Harold Nicholson in the 1930s. This unforgettable garden of rooms is influential today for its design, its exuberant planting, and its effect on visitors as a complete garden experience. Author Tim Richardson explores its power and its magic, explaining the nuances of its evolution and shows how we can all enjoy it today.

A fascinating account from award-winning author Adam Nicolson on the history of Nicolson's own national treasure, his family home: Sissinghurst. Sissinghurst is world famous as a place of calm and beauty, a garden slipped into the ruins of a rose-pink Elizabethan palace. But is it entirely what its creators intended? Has its success over the last thirty years come at a price? Is Sissinghurst everything it could be? The story of this piece of land, an estate in the Weald of Kent, is told here for the first time from the very beginning. Adam Nicolson, who now lives there, has uncovered remarkable new findings about its history as a medieval manor and great sixteenth-century house, from the days of its decline as an eighteenth-century prison to a flourishing Victorian farm and on to the creation, by his grandparents Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson, of a garden in a weed-strewn wreck. Alongside his recovery of the past, Adam Nicolson wanted something else: for the land at Sissinghurst to live again, to become the landscape of orchards, cattle, fruit and sheep he remembered from his boyhood. Could that living frame of a mixed farm be brought back to what had turned into monochrome fields of chemicalised wheat and oilseed rape? Against the odds, he was going to try. Adam Nicolson has always been a passionate writer about landscape and buildings, but this is different. This is the place he wanted to make good again, reconnecting garden, farm and land. More than just a personal biography of a place, this book is the story of taking an inheritance and steering it in a new direction, just as an entrepreneur might take hold of a company, or just as all of us might want to take our dreams and make them real.

In this book Christopher Legoe, Bill Hayward and Richard Heathcote tell the story of Australia's most intact 20th-century house museum, bequeathed by the Haywards to the people of South Australia and the nation. It includes a gallery of marvellous images by contemporary photographer Mick Bradley that truly create a portrait of this unique place.

Peter Timms leads us on a journey through his adopted city of Hobart, Australia's smallest, most southerly, least prosperous, but arguably most beautiful state capital. He reveals a city in transition, shaking off its dark and troubled past to claim its special place in the contemporary world; going boutique, nice and slow', as one overseas visitor notes. From Hobart's convict legacy, its spectacular natural setting, heritage architecture and climate, to crime-rates, economic hardship and the recent disfigurements of the developers, Timms brings a wealth of fresh insights, exploring the city with a mixture of affection, admiration, frustration and sadness, interviewing a wide range of residents along the way. Those who have experienced Hobart as tourists will be surprised and intrigued by the lively, complex society this book reveals. Those who live here will surely discover their city anew.

The Author's Effects: On the Writer's House Museum is the first book to describe how the writer's house museum came into being as a widespread cultural phenomenon across Britain, Europe, and North America. Exploring the ways that authorship has been mythologised through the conventions of the writer's house museum, *The Author's Effects* anatomises the how and why of the emergence, establishment, and endurance of popular notions of authorship in relation to creativity. It traces how and why the writer's bodily remains, possessions, and spaces came to be treasured in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as a prelude to the appearance of formal writer's house museums. It ransacks more than 100 museums and archives to tell the stories of celebrated and paradigmatic relics--Burns' skull, Keats' hair, Petrarch's cat, Poe's raven, Bronte's bonnet, Dickinson's dress, Shakespeare's chair, Austen's desk, Woolf's spectacles, Hawthorne's window, Freud's mirror, Johnson's coffee-pot and Bulgakov's stove, amongst many others. It investigates houses within which nineteenth-century writers mythologised themselves and their work--Thoreau's cabin and Dumas' tower, Scott's Abbotsford and Irving's Sunnyside. And it tracks literary tourists of the past to such long-celebrated literary homes as Petrarch's Arqua, Rousseau's Ile St Pierre, and Shakespeare's Stratford to find out what they thought and felt and did, discovering deep continuities with the redevelopment of Shakespeare's New Place for 2016.

A fascinating depiction from award-winning author, Adam Nicolson, of a family and a quarrel with a king that would tear that family apart. The Rough Guide to Kent, Sussex and Surrey Make the most of your time on Earth with the ultimate travel guides. World-renowned 'tell it like it is' travel guide. Discover Kent, Sussex and Surrey with this comprehensive and entertaining travel guide, packed with practical information and honest recommendations by our independent experts. Whether you plan to shop in medieval Rye, laze on the dune-backed beach of West Wittering or marvel at the soaring interior of Canterbury Cathedral, The Rough Guide to Kent, Sussex and Surrey will help you discover the best places to explore, eat, drink, shop and sleep along the way. Features of this travel guide to Kent, Sussex and Surrey: - Detailed regional coverage: provides practical information for every kind of trip, from off-the-beaten-track adventures to chilled-out breaks in popular tourist areas - Honest and independent reviews: written with Rough Guides' trademark blend of humour, honesty and expertise, our writers will help you make the most from your trip to Kent, Sussex and Surrey - Meticulous mapping: practical full-colour maps, with clearly numbered, colour-coded keys. Find your way around Hastings, Brighton and many more locations without needing to get online - Fabulous full-colour photography: features inspirational colour photography, including the sweeping green hills and country lanes of the South Downs Way and the distinctive, unmissable conical 'hats' of typical Kent oast houses of Sissinghurst. - Time-saving itineraries: carefully planned routes will help inspire and inform your on-the-road experiences - Things not to miss: Rough Guides' rundown of Canterbury, Chichester, Broadstairs, and Alfriston's best sights and top experiences - Travel tips and info: packed with essential pre-departure information including getting around, accommodation, food and drink, health, the media, festivals, sports and outdoor activities, culture and etiquette, shopping and more - Background information: comprehensive 'Contexts' chapter provides fascinating insights Kent, Sussex and Surrey, with coverage of history, religion, ethnic groups, environment, wildlife and books, plus a handy language section and glossary - Covers: Canterbury and around; North Kent; East Kent; The Kent Weald; The Sussex High Weald; East Sussex Downs; Brighton; West Sussex; Surrey You may also be interested in: The Rough Guide to Norfolk and Suffolk, The Rough Guide to The Cotswolds, The Rough Guide to Bath, Bristol and Somerset About Rough Guides: Rough Guides have been inspiring travellers for over 35 years, with over 30 million copies sold globally. Synonymous with practical travel tips, quality writing and a trustworthy 'tell it like it is' ethos, the Rough Guides list includes more than 260 travel guides to 120+ destinations, gift-books and phrasebooks.

Queering the Interior problematizes the familiar space of 'home'. It deploys a queer lens to view domestic interiors and conventions and uncovers some of the complexities of homemaking for queer people. Each of the book's six sections focuses on a different room or space inside the home. The journey starts with entryways, and continues through kitchens, living spaces, bedrooms, bathrooms, and finally, closets and studies. In each case up to three specialists bring their disciplinary expertise and queer perspectives to bear. The result is a fascinating collection of essays by scholars from literary studies, geography, sociology, anthropology, history and art history. The contributors use historical and sociological case studies; spatial, art and literary analyses; interviews; and experimental visual approaches to deliver fresh, detailed and grounded perspectives on the home and its queer dimensions. A highly creative approach to the analysis of domestic spaces, Queering the Interior makes an important contribution to the fields of gender studies, social and cultural history, cultural studies, design, architecture, anthropology, sociology, and cultural geography.

Intrepid travel historian Justin Marozzi retraces the footsteps of Herodotus through the Mediterranean and Middle East, examining Herodotus's 2,500-year-old observations about the cultures and places he visited and finding echoes of his legacy reverberating to this day. The Way of Herodotus is a lively yet thought-provoking excursion into the world of Herodotus, with the man who invented history ever present, guiding the narrative with his discursive spirit.

Gender History Across Epistemologies offers broad range of innovative approaches to gender history. The essays reveal how historians of gender are crossing boundaries - disciplinary, methodological, and national - to explore new opportunities for viewing gender as a category of historical analysis. Essays present epistemological and theoretical debates central in gender history over the past two decades Contributions within this volume to the work on gender history are approached from a wide range of disciplinary locations and approaches The volume demonstrates that recent approaches to gender history suggest surprising crossovers and even the discovery of common grounds

The sequel to the bestselling *Silvertown*, which tells the story of Aunt Daisy, and all the other Aunt Daisies -- the locals of the old East End.

Follow these Writers...in KENT Ever wished you had a knowledgeable friend who could help you find out more about the places that inspired your favourite writers? This book is that friendly guide around Kent, along main roads and off beaten tracks, along country lanes and coastal paths. Whether you are on holiday in Kent or lucky enough to live in the Garden of England, dip into this book to find out more about the colourful writers, Men of Kent and Kentish Men (not forgetting some very significant Maids of Kent and Kentish Maids) who have been inspired by this beautiful county. Enjoy your travels!

This interdisciplinary collection considers public and popular history within a global framework, seeking to understand considerations of local, domestic histories and the ways they interact with broader discourses. Grounded in particular local and national situations, the book addresses the issues associated with popular history in a globalised cultural world, such as: how the study of popular history might work in the future; new ways in which the terms 'popular' and 'public' might inform one another and nuance scholarship; transnational, intercultural models of 'pastness'; cultural translatability; and the demand for high-quality work on new technologies and history. A wide range of international contributors consider a broad selection of locale and media, from American television and Canadian heritage to the representation of history in contemporary Chinese culture. They consider the way in which the study of public or popular texts invoke multiple historiographies, and demonstrate our need to think about public and popular aspects of the past in new, 'emerging' locales, such as China, Eastern Europe and South America. This book was originally published as a special issue of the journal *Rethinking History*.

"Adam Nicolson writes popular books as popular books used to be, a breeze rather than a scholarly sweat, but humanely erudite, elegantly written, passionately felt...and his excitement is contagious."—James Wood, *The New Yorker* Adam Nicolson sees the Iliad and the Odyssey as the foundation myths of Greek—and our—consciousness, collapsing the passage of 4,000 years and making the distant past of the Mediterranean world as immediate to us as the events of our own time. *Why Homer Matters* is a magical journey of discovery across wide stretches of the past, sewn together by the poems themselves and their metaphors of life and trouble. Homer's poems occupy, as Adam Nicolson writes "a third space" in the way we relate to the past: not as memory, which lasts no more than three generations, nor as the objective accounts of history, but as epic, invented after memory but before history, poetry which aims "to bind the wounds that time inflicts." The Homeric poems are among the oldest stories we have, drawing on deep roots in the Eurasian steppes beyond the Black Sea, but emerging at a time around 2000 B.C. when the people who would become the Greeks came south and both clashed and fused with the more sophisticated inhabitants of the Eastern

Mediterranean. The poems, which ask the eternal questions about the individual and the community, honor and service, love and war, tell us how we became who we are.

The Smell of Summer Grass is based partly on the long out of print 'Perch Hill'. It is the story of the years spent in finding and building a personal Arcadia, sometimes a dream, sometimes a nightmare, by writer Adam Nicolson and his wife, cook and gardener, Sarah Raven.

"A charming portrait of an ancient and beautiful house in Kent [and] a poignant and amusing portrait of the English class system." —Simon Winchester From lavish palace for Elizabethan nobles to dreary jailhouse for eighteenth-century prisoners of war, from well-manicured country house for a string of landed families to weed-choked ruin, Sissinghurst, in Kent, has become one of the most illustrious estates in England—and its future may prove to be just as intriguing as its past. In the 1930s, English poet Vita Sackville-West and her husband, Harold Nicolson, acquired land that had once been owned by Vita's ancestors. Together they created elaborate gardens filled with roses, apple trees, vivid flowers, and scenic paths lined with hedges and pink brick walls. Vita, a gardening correspondent for the Observer and a close friend of Virginia Woolf, opened Sissinghurst to the public. But the thriving working farm began to change after her death. Her son Nigel instituted sweeping changes, including transferring ownership of the estate to Britain's National Trust in 1967 to avoid extensive taxation. For author Adam Nicolson, the grandson of Harold and Vita, Sissinghurst was always more than a tourist attraction; it was his home. As a boy, Nicolson hiked the same trails that Roman conquerors walked centuries before. With wistful imagination, fascination with natural beauty, and connection to the land, Nicolson has returned home to restore Sissinghurst's glory. His journey to recreate a sustainable and functioning farm, despite resistance from the National Trust, makes for a compelling memoir of family, history, and the powerful relationship between people and nature.

From 1946 to 1957, Vita Sackville-West, the poet, bestselling author of *All Passion Spent* and maker of Sissinghurst, wrote a weekly column in the Observer describing her life at Sissinghurst, showing her to be one of the most visionary horticulturalists of the twentieth-century. With wonderful additions by Sarah Raven, Vita Sackville-West's *Sissinghurst* draws on this extraordinary archive, revealing Vita's most loved flowers, as well as offering practical advice for gardeners. Often funny and completely accessibly written with colour and originality, it also describes details of the trials and tribulations of crafting a place of beauty and elegance. Sissinghurst has gone on to become one of the most visited and inspirational gardens in the world and this marvellous book, illustrated with drawings and original photographs throughout, shows us how it was created and how gardeners everywhere can use some of the ideas from both Sarah Raven and Vita Sackville-West.

From an acclaimed social and architectural historian, the tumultuous, scandalous, glitzy, and glamorous history of English country houses and high society during the interwar period As WWI drew to a close, change reverberated through the halls of England's country homes. As the sun set slowly on the British Empire, the shadows lengthened on the lawns of a thousand stately homes. In *The Long Weekend*, historian Adrian Tinniswood introduces us to the tumultuous, scandalous and glamorous history of English country houses during the years between World Wars. As estate taxes and other challenges forced many of these venerable houses onto the market, new sectors of British and American society were seduced by the dream of owning a home in the English countryside. Drawing on thousands of memoirs, letters, and diaries, as well as the eye-witness testimonies of belted earls and bibulous butlers, Tinniswood brings the stately homes of England to life as never before, opening the door to a world by turns opulent and ordinary, noble and vicious, and forever wrapped in myth. We are drawn into the intrigues of legendary families such as the Astors, the Churchills and the Devonshires as they hosted hunting parties and balls that attracted the likes of Charlie Chaplin, T.E. Lawrence, and royals such as Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson. We waltz through aristocratic soiré, and watch as the upper crust struggle to fend off rising taxes and underbred outsiders, property speculators and poultry farmers. We gain insight into the guilt and the gingerbread, and see how the image of the country house was carefully protected by its occupants above and below stairs. Through the glitz of estate parties, the social tensions between old money and new, the hunting parties, illicit trysts, and grand feasts, Tinniswood offers a glimpse behind the veil of these great estates -- and reveals a reality much more riveting than the dream.

Six decades after Virginia Woolf's death, landscape designer Jo Bellamy has come to Sissinghurst Castle for two reasons: to study the celebrated White Garden created by Woolf's lover Vita Sackville-West and to recover from the terrible wound of her grandfather's unexplained suicide. In the shadow of one of England's most famous castles, Jo makes a shocking find that will lead her on a perilous journey into the tumultuous inner life of a literary icon.

It is the gentry that have made England what it was and, to a degree, still is. England was a country dominated by its middling families, rooted on their land, in their locality, with a healthy interest in turning a profit from their property and a deep distrust of the centralised state. This riveting new book concentrates on fourteen families with a time-span from 1400 to the present day; *The Gentry* presents a convincing argument on what has created the distinctive English character but with the sheer readability of an epic novel.

A bestselling author's passionate memoir about restoring life to one of the world's greatest gardens Sissinghurst Castle is a jewel in the English countryside. Its chief attraction is its celebrated garden, designed in the 1930s by the poet Vita Sackville-West, lover of Virginia Woolf. As a boy, Adam Nicolson, Sackville-West's grandson, spent his days romping through Sissinghurst's woods, streams, and fields. In this book, he returns to the place of his bucolic youth and finds that the estate, now operated by Britain's National Trust, has lost something precious. It is still unquestionably a place of calm and beauty but, he asks, where is the working farm, the orchards, the cattle and sheep? Nicolson convinces the Trust to embrace a simple idea: Grow lunch for the two hundred thousand annual visitors. Sissinghurst is a personal biography of a place and an inspiring story of one man's quest to return a remarkable landscape to its best, most useful purpose.

Nicolson is an entertaining and charming writer and this book will capture fans of Michael Pollan, Alice Waters, and Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*.

In *Seize the Fire*, Adam Nicolson, author of the widely acclaimed *God's Secretaries*, takes the great naval battle of Trafalgar, fought between the British and Franco-Spanish fleets in October 1805, and uses it to examine our idea of heroism and the heroic. Is violence a necessary aspect of the hero? And daring? Why did the cult of the hero flower in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in a way it hadn't for two hundred years? Was the figure of Nelson—intemperate, charming, theatrical, anxious, impetuous, considerate, indifferent to death and danger, inspirational to those around him, and, above all, fixed on attack and victory—an aberration in Enlightenment England? Or was the greatest of all English military heroes simply the product of his time, "the conjurer of violence" that England, at some level, deeply needed? It is a story rich with modern resonance. This was a battle fought for the control of a global commercial empire. It was won by the emerging British world power, which was widely condemned on the continent of Europe as "the arrogant usurper of the freedom of the seas." *Seize the Fire* not only vividly describes the brutal realities of battle but enters the hearts and minds of the men who were there; it is a portrait of a moment, a close and passionately engaged depiction of a frame of mind at a turning point in world history.

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