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Our History of the 20th Century As Told in Diaries, Journals and Letters

Travis Elborough

Keynote

In Travis Elborough's expertly curated collection of diaries, letters and journals, the great and the good rub shoulders with the obscure, the unsung and the everyday to bring us a unique top down and bottom up history of Britain during the twentieth century.

Description

What better way to understand Britain during the twentieth century than through the eyes of those who experienced it at first hand? Travis Elborough's compilation offers brilliantly candid and intimate insights not only into the headline-grabbing events but also the domestic and personal moments of those who lived through it.

The book draws on over one hundred diarists. They include the great and the good – from Beatrice Webb to Tony Benn, from A. C. Benson to Alan Bennett, from Virginia Ironside to Hanif Kureishi – as well as many less-well-known individuals such as Gladys Langford and Kathleen Tipper, whose writings for the Mass Observation Project offer brilliant glimpses into what the man or woman on the street really made of the stuff of history at the time.

From the Easter Rising to the arrival of email, from the Boer War to New Labour, here are responses to the death of Princess Diana, the resignation of Margaret Thatcher, the Moon landing, the Beatles and much more.

Praise for Travis Elborough:

'One of Britain's finest pop culture historians.'
Guardian

'Elborough is an English nostalgist in the mode of John Betjeman ... as a cultural commentator he is a terrific companion.'
Sunday Times

'Travis Elborough is becoming a latter-day Alan Bennett.'
Spectator

'Elborough has the passion of a true enthusiast.'
Mail on Sunday

'Elborough is a charming, funny and frequently fascinating guide.'
Telegraph

Sales Points

- From the Boer War to the founding of Google, via the Easter Rising in Ireland, the Moon landing, the Beatles and everything in between
- A brilliant way to gain a comprehensive overview of an eventful century
- Includes entries from Paul McCartney, V. S. Naipaul, Alan Bennett, Virginia Woolf and Siegfried Sassoon, as well as from unknown diarists, some of whom have never been published before
- Travis Elborough is an acclaimed author and cultural commentator – he has co-edited two anthologies of diaries, *A London Year* and *A Traveller's Year*

Reviews

- 'A wonderfully curated collection of intimate diary voices: rich in their variousness, compelling in their impact, and cumulatively giving us a fresh and thought-provoking version of twentieth-century Britain.' - David Kynaston

Author Biography

Travis Elborough has co-edited two previous anthologies of diaries, *A London Year* and *A Traveller's Year*. A freelance writer, author and cultural commentator for nearly two decades, his other books include *The Long-Player Goodbye*, a hymn to vinyl records; *Wish You Were Here*, a survey of the British beside the seaside and most recently *A Walk in the Park: The Life and Times of a People's Institution*.