



All My Road Before Me: The Diary of C.S. Lewis 1922-1927

By C. S. Lewis

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The life of the young Lewis was filled with contemplations quite different from those of the mature author. This early diary gives readers a window on the world of his formative years. Edited and with an Introduction by Walter Hooper; Index; photographs.

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All My Road Before Me: The Diary of C.S. Lewis 1922-1927 By C. S. Lewis Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1720456 in Books
- Published on: 1991-07
- Ingredients: Example Ingredients
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x 6.25" w x 1.75" l,
- Binding: Hardcover
- 508 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

As an Oxford undergraduate, Lewis set up house with Janie King Moore, a woman 26 years his senior who was separated from her husband, and her daughter Maureen. Lewis's liaison with "Mrs. Moore," which he kept secret from his father, was probably sexual, according to Hooper, Lewis's biographer and personal secretary. This diary, a disarming self-portrait of Lewis as sensual, self-assured atheist and clandestine family man will chiefly interest scholars and hardcore Lewis devotees. Mostly a humdrum, skeletal recital of household chores, conversations and the academic grind, the journal's tedium is relieved by soaring passages on nature's beauty, thumbnail sketches of Lewis's friends and quick comments on his wide-ranging reading, from Beowulf to Hardy, Nietzsche, Jung and Havelock Ellis.

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From Library Journal

This is a detailed account of Lewis's twenties, during which, while living with Mrs. Janie Moore and her daughter Maureen, he struggled to win a fellowship at Oxford. Though cut by one-third, it may still prove tedious to all but Lewis's most devoted followers. Written at least partly for the entertainment of Moore (identified as "D"), the diary dwells on Lewis's friends, books, and reactions to the surrounding landscape, rarely on the inner circumstances that would soon prompt his conversion to Christianity. Lewis's diary does, however, furnish a vivid picture of post-World War I Oxford and helps explain the easy erudition he brought to such works as *The Allegory of Love*. Owen Barfield's foreword is helpful, but Hooper's notes are virtually useless.

- *Charles C. Nash, Cottey Coll., Nevada, Mo.*

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From Kirkus Reviews

Lewis's private account of his undergraduate years at Oxford, edited and introduced by his literary executor and former personal secretary. In 1922, Lewis was completing his studies of philosophy and the classics at University College, Oxford, and looking for some means of advancement in the academic world. Still an atheist, he had already fought as an infantry officer in France and established a reputation as a scholar of great promise. His diary records all the usual routines of a man in his situation--notations on books, debates with tutors and classmates, examinations--set against the backdrop of a domestic life shared with Janie King Moore, his companion and (probable) lover. Some 30 years his senior, Moore was the mother of one of Lewis's classmates who had been killed in the war. Lewis kept his relations with her secret from his family and colleagues (possibly out of a fear of blackmail from her estranged husband), and they lived precariously on his student allowance, moving frequently from house to house as their money gave out. In 1925, Lewis was elected a Fellow of Magdalen College. This confirmed his academic status and eased his finances, but his career was still far from assured, and the picture that emerges from his journals is one of great uncertainty tempered by youthful optimism. Always gregarious, Lewis had already formed a large circle of friends, who are portrayed vividly and effectively throughout. Editor Hooper organizes his material admirably, supplying annotations and several pages of biographical outlines, as well as a brief and readable introduction. Despite the omissions (about a third of the manuscript was cut), the narrative is smooth and comprehensible. An agreeable depiction of a writer's private life, but limited in scope. Essential reading for Lewis fans, it may strike the general reader as too parochial. -- Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

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