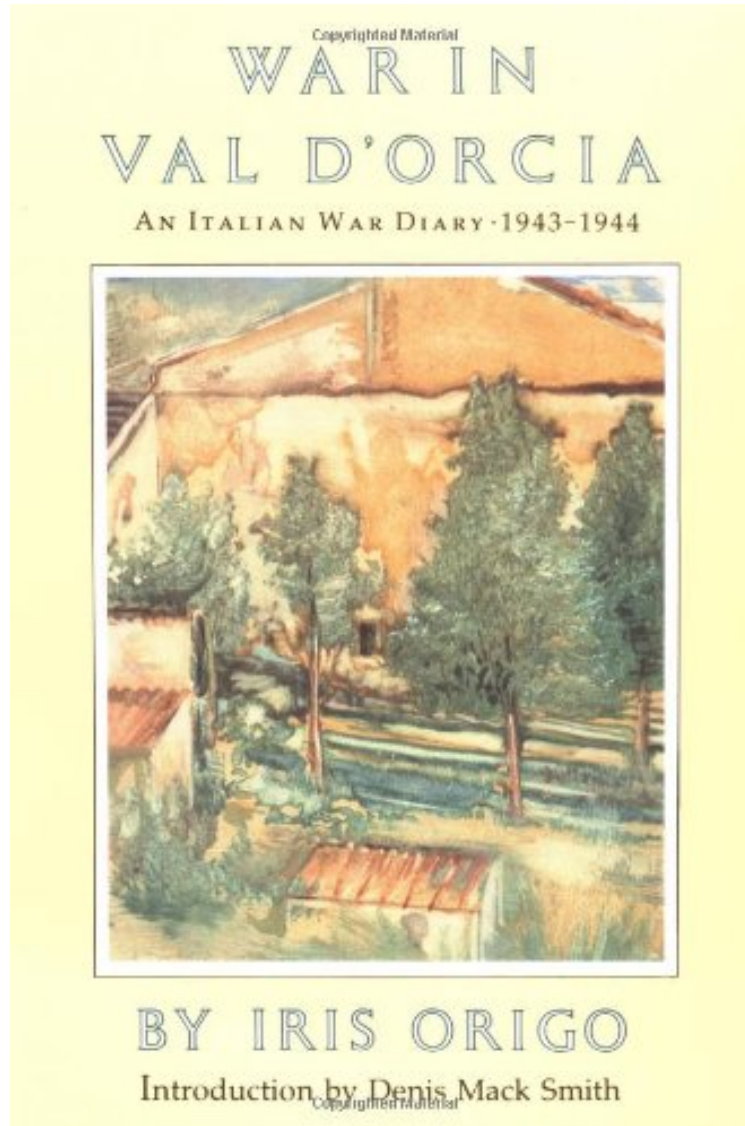


[Read free] War in Val D'Orcia: An Italian War Diary, 1943-1944

War in Val D'Orcia: An Italian War Diary, 1943-1944

Iris Origo

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Iris Origo : War in Val D'Orcia: An Italian War Diary, 1943-1944 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised War in Val D'Orcia: An Italian War Diary, 1943-1944:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A historical 'Must Read' for anyone planning a visit to TuscanyBy Taliasya2Recently in Tuscany, someone suggested I read this book. I ordered as soon as I got back to the states. It answered many of the questions I had asked of my guide, and makes me want to go right back and visit La Foce and De Medeci, which we passed more than once, not realizing what the were.Lady Origo's writing style is that of a well breed, well educated, privileged American woman. This portion of her diary of the last few years of WWII, describe a

life unimaginable, although after having just visiting the countryside where the events in this diary took place, I couldn't help but be drawn in. Although she is very descriptive in her writing, unless you have seen the countryside, driven the distances seen the abandoned farms, you cannot fully grasp what was endured. Clearly, her husband and she were well respected in the area, but even that could not save them. I also think Lady Origo had a 'spunk' that Americans in general had in the early part of last century that has been lost since. Not always an easy read, in part due to font style and size, and often untranslated phrases, if you have travelled to the area or soon will, it is definitely a good read that explains why so many buildings, farms and towns that had stood for centuries, are now abandoned, or built on to. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful personal account of WWII in Val D'Orcia By Mimi94 I bought this book because it was on a reading list for an upcoming trip to this area of Italy. It was fascinating to relive the tumultuous, tragic events of World War II in this area through the eyes of the writer as she detailed it in her personal diary. I loved reading the details of how she and her family helped those in need who passed through their farm, the very touching details of their own losses and their hopeful spirit as the war ended. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. a fabulous read By Kathleen This is an exceptional book which bears precious witness to the way WWII brought out both the good and bad--but mostly good--in people living or passing through a region of Tuscany. The author's factual, restrained account of the extraordinary events of the time and her part in them is beautiful and effective. Highly recommended. Here is an excerpt to whet your appetite: "The rounding-up of the Jews appears now to be completed--though no doubt many unfortunate women and children are still hidden. The Archbishop of Florence, Cardinal della Costa, has taken a courageous stand. When some of his nuns were arrested in consequence of having given shelter to some Jewish women in their convent, the Cardinal, putting on his full panoply, went straight to the German Command. 'I have come to you,' he said, 'because I believe you, as soldiers, to be people who recognize authority and hierarchy--and who do not make subordinates responsible for merely carrying out orders. The order to give shelter to those unfortunate Jewish women was given by me: therefore I request you to free the nuns, who have merely carried out orders, and to arrest me in their stead.' The German immediately gave orders for the nuns to be freed, but permitted himself to state his surprise that a man like the Cardinal should take under his protection such people as the Jews, the scum of Europe, responsible for all the evils of the present day. The Cardinal did not enter upon the controversy. 'I look upon them,' he said, 'merely as persecuted human beings; as such it is my Christian duty to help and defend them. One day,' he gave himself the pleasure of adding, 'perhaps not far off, *you* will be persecuted: and then I shall defend you!'"

A classic of World War II, here in its first American edition. War in Val d'Orcia is Iris Origo's elegantly simple chronicle of daily life at La Foce, a manor in a Tuscan no-man's land bracketed by foreign invasion and civil war. With the immediacy only a diary can have, the book tells how the Marchesa Origo, an Anglo-American married to an Italian landowner, kept La Foce and its farms functioning while war threatened to overrun it and its people. She and her husband managed to protect their peasants, succor refugee children from Genoa and Turin, hide escaped Allied prisoners of war--and somehow stand up to the Germans, who in dread due course occupied La Foce in 1944 and forced the Marchesa to retreat under a hot June sun. Fleeing eight impossible miles on foot, along a mined road under shell fire, with sixty children in tow, she sheltered her flock in the dubious safety of a nearby village. A few days later, official Fascism disappeared, and La Foce was ransacked by the retreating Wehrmacht. Here, as the restoration of La Foce begins, her book ends. Beyond praise and above mere documentary value, War in Val d'Orcia belongs to the literature of humanity.

Beyond doubt a minor masterpiece. --The Washington Post A welcome rediscovery, evoking a unique, strange moment in civilian/soldier wartime-history with spare, vital immediacy. --Kirkus Even the most casual acquaintance with Iris Origo cannot fail to produce the impression of a remarkable woman. --The New York Times Book A welcome rediscovery, evoking a unique, strange moment in civilian/soldier wartime-history with spare, vital immediacy. --Kirkus Even the most casual acquaintance with Iris Origo cannot fail to produce the impression of a remarkable woman. --The New York Times Book