

Forever England: The Life of Rupert Brooke

Mike Read



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Rupert Brooke, strikingly good-looking, effortlessly charming and prodigiously gifted, has become the tragic embodiment of the generation lost between 1914 and 1918. Upon the poet's tragic untimely death, Winston Churchill declared that 'we shall never see his like again', yet Brooke immortalised himself in his own poignant verse: If I should die, think only this of me:That there's some corner of a foreign field that is forever England. Brooke died serving king and country on the anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, St George's Day 1915, en route to fight at Gallipoli. As the tributes poured in and the war gathered momentum, the press heralded him as a hero - a focal point for the nation's grief. Already an acclaimed poet and dramatist in his youth, his romantic war poetry contrasts starkly with the work of some of his more disillusioned contemporaries. But the private letters of 'the handsomest man in all of England' reveal a far more troubled, and often misunderstood, individual... In this updated edition of Forever England, Mike Read, founder of the Rupert Brooke Society, explores the poet's fascinating life and legacy.From a tangled web of secret affairs, literary circles, mental illness and a previously unknown lovechild emerges the intriguing personality and enduring poetry of Rupert Brooke - the voice of a country torn apart by war.

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