

A Local Habitation: Life and Times, Volume One 1918-40

Richard Hoggart

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Richard Hoggart's book, The Uses of Literary, established his reputation as a uniquely sensitive and observant chronicler of English working-class life. In this vivid first volume of autobiography he describes his origins in that milieu. Orphaned at an early age, Hoggart grew up in a working-class district of Leeds, in an intimate world of terraced back-to-backs, visits from the local Board of Guardians, clothing checks and potted-meat sandwiches. With affectionate insight he recreates the family circle - a loving grandmother, one domineering and on gentle aunt, and a bibulous, melancholy uncle - and recalls his early schooling, the friends he made and the mentors he admired. Hard-working and articulate, Hoggart did well enough at grammar school to go on to Leeds University. This volume ends as, having earned a higher degree and travelled in Nazi Germany, he prepares to leave Yorkshire, via the Army, for the world beyond. Wry, compassionate, exact, A Local Habitation is a classic recreation of working-class England between the wars.



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