

ENGLAND
YOUR ENGLAND



IN THE SAME SERIES

I. Why I Write

II. Politics and the English Language

III. The Prevention of Literature

IV. Politics vs. Literature

V. Shooting an Elephant

England
Your England

GEORGE ORWELL



RENARD PRESS

RENARD PRESS LTD

Kemp House
152–160 City Road
London EC1V 2NX
United Kingdom
info@renardpress.com
020 8050 2928

www.renardpress.com

England Your England first published as part of *The Lion and the Unicorn: Socialism and the English Genius* in 1941

This edition first published by Renard Press Ltd in 2022

Edited text © Renard Press Ltd, 2022

Extra Material © Renard Press Ltd, 2022

Cover design by Will Dady

Extra Material edited by Tom Conaghan

Printed in the United Kingdom by Severn



ISBN: 978-1-913724-68-9

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

All rights reserved. This publication may not be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise – without the prior permission of the publisher.

CONTENTS

<i>England Your England</i>	7
PART I	9
PART II	14
PART III	31
PART IV	46
PART V	58
PART VI	67
Note on the Text	77
Notes	79
A Brief Biographical Sketch of George Orwell	91

ENGLAND
YOUR ENGLAND

I

AS I WRITE, highly civilised human beings are flying overhead, trying to kill me.

They do not feel any enmity against me as an individual, nor I against them. They are ‘only doing their duty’, as the saying goes. Most of them, I have no doubt, are kind-hearted, law-abiding men who would never dream of committing murder in private life. On the other hand, if one of them succeeds in blowing me to pieces with a well-placed bomb, he will never sleep any the worse for it. He is

serving his country, which has the power to absolve him from evil.

One cannot see the modern world as it is unless one recognises the overwhelming strength of patriotism, national loyalty. In certain circumstances it can break down, at certain levels of civilisation it does not exist, but as a *positive* force there is nothing to set beside it. Christianity and international Socialism are as weak as straw in comparison with it. Hitler and Mussolini rose to power in their own countries very largely because they could grasp this fact and their opponents could not.

Also, one must admit that the divisions between nation and nation are founded on real differences of outlook. Till recently it was thought proper to pretend that all human beings are very much alike, but in fact anyone able to use his eyes knows that the average of human behaviour differs enormously

from country to country. Things that could happen in one country could not happen in another. Hitler's June purge,* for instance, could not have happened in England. And, as western peoples go, the English are very highly differentiated. There is a sort of backhanded admission of this in the dislike which nearly all foreigners feel for our national way of life. Few Europeans can endure living in England, and even Americans often feel more at home in Europe.

When you come back to England from any foreign country, you have immediately the sensation of breathing a different air. Even in the first few minutes dozens of small things conspire to give you this feeling. The beer is bitterer, the coins are heavier, the grass is greener, the advertisements are more blatant. The crowds in the big towns, with their mild knobby faces, their bad teeth and gentle manners, are different

from a European crowd. Then the vastness of England swallows you up, and you lose for a while your feeling that the whole nation has a single identifiable character. Are there really such things as nations? Are we not forty-six million individuals, all different? And the diversity of it, the chaos! The clatter of clogs in the Lancashire mill towns, the to and fro of the lorries on the Great North Road,* the queues outside the labour exchanges,* the rattle of pin tables in the Soho pubs, the old maids hiking to Holy Communion through the mists of the autumn morning — all these are not only fragments, but *characteristic* fragments of the English scene. How can one make a pattern out of this muddle?

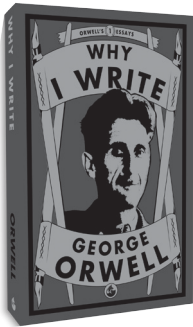
But talk to foreigners, read foreign books or newspapers, and you are brought back to the same thought. Yes, there *is* something distinctive and

recognisable in English civilisation. It is a culture as individual as that of Spain. It is somehow bound up with solid breakfasts and gloomy Sundays, smoky towns and winding roads, green fields and red pillar boxes. It has a flavour of its own. Moreover it is continuous, it stretches into the future and the past; there is something in it that persists, as in a living creature. What can the England of 1940 have in common with the England of 1840? But then, what have you in common with the child of five whose photograph your mother keeps on the mantelpiece? Nothing, except that you happen to be the same person.

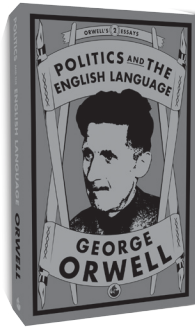
And above all, it is *your* civilisation, it is *you*. However much you hate or laugh at it, you will never be happy away from it for any length of time. The suet puddings and the red pillar boxes have entered into your soul. Good or evil, it is yours, you belong to it, and this side of



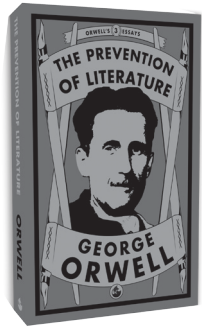
ALSO AVAILABLE
IN THE *ORWELL'S ESSAYS* SERIES



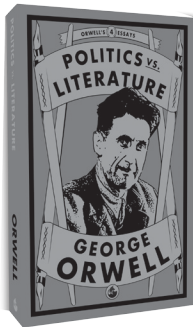
ISBN: 9781913724290
48pp • Paperback • £5



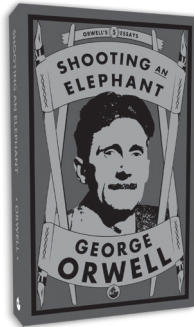
ISBN: 9781913724306
60pp • Paperback • £5



ISBN: 9781913724313
64pp • Paperback • £5



ISBN: 9781913724320
64pp • Paperback • £5

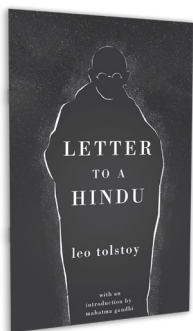


ISBN: 9781913724665
48pp • Paperback • £5

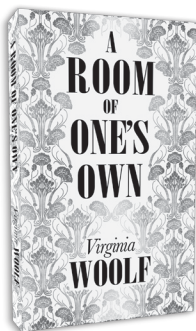
DISCOVER THE FULL COLLECTION AT
WWW.RENARDPRESS.COM



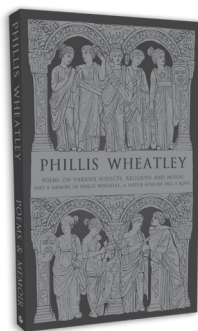
OTHER CLASSIC NON-FICTION FROM
RENARD PRESS



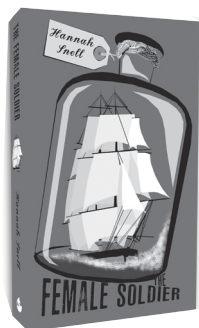
ISBN: 9781913724016
48pp • Pamphlet • £5



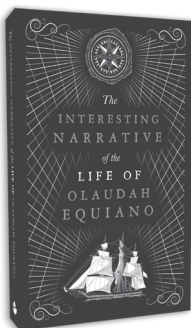
ISBN: 9781913724009
160pp • Paperback • £7.99



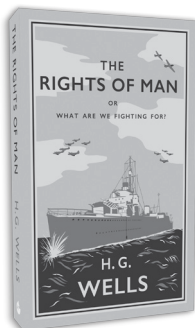
ISBN: 9781913724146
128pp • Paperback • £8.99



ISBN: 9781913724047
64pp • Paperback • £6.99



ISBN: 9781913724733
224pp • Paperback • £7.99



ISBN: 9781913724702
128pp • Paperback • £5.99

DISCOVER THE FULL COLLECTION AT
WWW.RENARDPRESS.COM