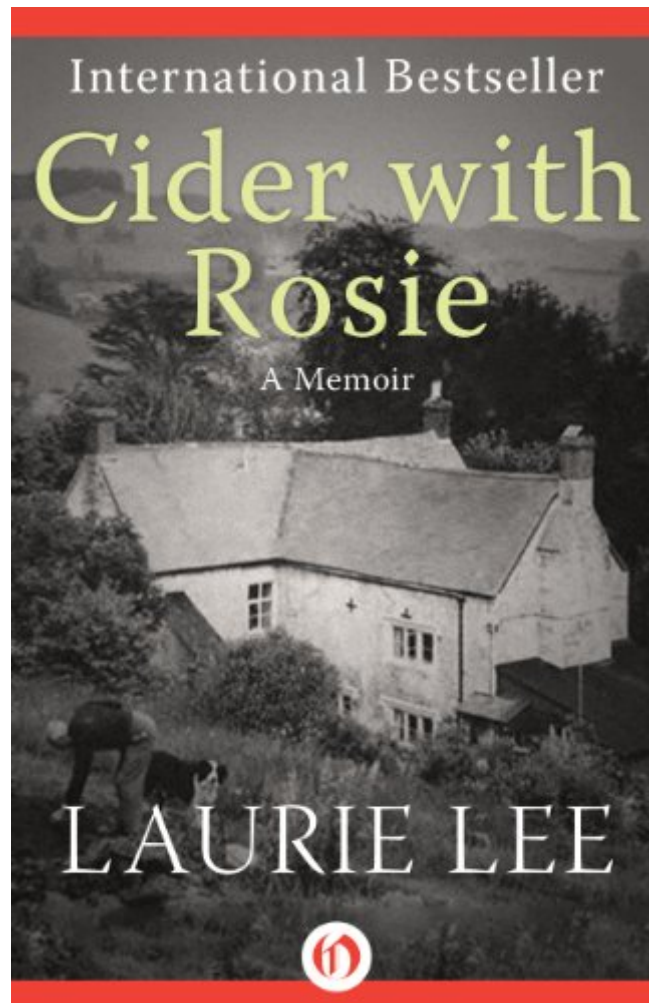


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Cider With Rosie: A Memoir (The Autobiographical Trilogy Book 1)



Synopsis

This international-bestselling memoir of childhood in post-World War I rural England is one of the most endearing portraits of youth in all literature. Three years old and wrapped in a Union Jack to protect him from the sun, Laurie Lee arrived in the village of Slad in the final summer of the First World War. The cottage his mother had rented for three and sixpence a week had neither running water nor electricity, but it was surrounded by a lovely half-acre garden and, most importantly, it was big enough for the seven children in her care. It was here, in a verdant valley tucked into the rolling hills of the Cotswolds, that Laurie Lee learned to look at life with a painter's eye and a poet's heart—qualities of vision that, decades later, would make him one of England's most cherished authors. In this vivid recollection of a magical time and place, water falls from the scullery pump—sparkling like liquid sky. • Autumn is more than a season—it is a land eternally aflame, like Moses's burning bush. Every midnight, on a forlorn stretch of heath, a phantom carriage reenacts its final, wild ride. And, best of all, the first secret sip of cider, the juice of those valleys and of that time, leads to a boy's first kiss, so dry and shy, it was like two leaves colliding in air. • An instant classic when it was first published in 1959, *Cider with Rosie* is one of the most endearing and evocative portraits of youth in all of literature. The first installment in an autobiographical trilogy that includes *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning* and *A Moment of War*, it is also a heartfelt and lyrical ode to England, and to a way of life that may belong to the past, but will never be forgotten.

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Customer Reviews

CIDER WITH ROSIE has two things going for it, what it tells and how it tells it. Author Laurie Lee (1914 - 1997) wrote this memoir of his childhood in a rural English village in 1959, restoring to memory something ancient that had been lost, how villages used to get on before progress intervened. His family moved to tiny Slad, in Gloucestershire, in the Cotswolds region, when he was three. It was a large family--four older half-siblings, plus Lee and his three siblings--and their mother. Their father essentially abandoned the family there in a crumbling old house that flooded with every rain, though he occasionally sent support. Like all the villagers, the Lee clan lived without plumbing or electricity or motor vehicles, in a social structure that reached back, he says at one point, to the Stone Age. The family was poor, but it survived rather happily, and Lee enjoyed a full range of delights, from boyhood roughhousing to church outings, all at the eight miles per hour pace of a horse drawn vehicle. The village unit was a balanced one, one that absorbed eccentricities and the occasional crime, with a way of life made purposeful under the watchful eye of the church and the local Squire. Just as Lee comes of age, it changes dramatically, with the arrival of cars, the death of the Squire, the slipping grip of the church on its parishioners, and, in the family, the loss of the older sisters to marriage. Lee documents all of this in language that captures the child's worldview and wonder. The first chapter is a three-year-old's kaleidoscopic impressions of his environment, which grow more sharply into focus as Lee ages. It is very immediate, and it is as if the village as it was had never entered the twentieth century. Lee writes lyrically, but also honestly.

When I opened the email last month, it was clear I'd missed out. According to Amazon's Daily Deal blurb Laurie Lee's Cider With Rosie was a real instant classic when it was first published in 1959 [and] one of the most endearing and evocative portraits of youth in all of literature. Now because I worked for several years in a book store, I'm at Cider With Rosie least familiar with many more titles and authors than I've read. So one would think I'd at least heard of this Laurie Lee who learned to look at life with a painter's eye and a poet's heart "qualities of vision that, decades later, would make him one of England's most cherished authors". Of course, I had to remedy this oversight, so one-click order I did and was soon settled into a memoir of one of England's beloved sons I hadn't even known existed. But after the first chapter, I

admit I didn't know if it was love or hate. Three-year-old Laurie sits on the floor of his new home amidst the chaos of moving a family of seven into a new cottage in the village of Slad. Little Laurie was surrounded by a cæglass fishes, china dogs, shepherds and shepherdesses, bronze horsemen, stopped clocks, barometers, and photographs of bearded men. His sisters and mother bustle in and out of the house; his brothers help unload the handcart. Lee's prose was over-rich, I thought "awash in adjectives and adverbs; drowning in lists. I almost put the memoir aside. But after another chapter, Lee grew on me. His rich narrative seemed to mirror the lush countryside and the hub-bub that was his home. I settled into those lists and that descriptive prose.

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