



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

Iris Origo

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

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 Turrin, 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.

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