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GROWING WILD ON EXMOOR

Molly Richards

Growing Wild on Exmoor is about a family of six children, close together in age, growing up on a remote Exmoor farm between the two world wars. The family was often without structure and out of control. Molly Richards recalls vividly her alcoholic father; her mother who he worshipped and resented, and the firm presence of her grandparents, especially Grannie Richards – a better sheep farmer than Molly's father; so much the outdoors woman that Molly never saw her do a domestic thing, not even wash a cup.

As well as being a compelling and poignant personal memoir, the book describes many of the practicalities of farming life and offers fascinating glimpses into a way of life that is gone for ever – village schools, sheep-shearing, harvest homes, cream-making and a visit to the 'Likeness Taker'.

The narrative is supported by many photographs of Molly's family and local scenes and events, to make *Growing Wild on Exmoor* one of the most remarkable reminiscences of genuine country life to have appeared in decades.



Molly Richards has always enjoyed being part of a farming community, not least because she is related to many of the Exmoor families farming in North Devon and West Somerset. A published poet, she approached the age of eighty thinking that she would like to try other kinds of writing. She joined a creative writing class, where she was encouraged to write about her childhood. She has now put all her fragmented memories together in *Growing Wild on Exmoor*. The book was written, she says, 'With pleasure, pain and, in parts, black humour.' Molly now lives in Minehead.



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FEATURE CHAPTERS AND GALLERY – GROWING WILD ON EXMOOR



Circa 1913 Harvest Home at Oareford.



1913 Oare Harvest Home.



1920s Blackmore Gate monthly auction



Author's parents, circa 1924.



1911 Back row from left: Grandfather Richards, Irch Richards (bridegroom), Ada Richards (bride), Mr Woollacott. Front row: Grannie Richards and Mrs Woollacott.



Example of a double page spread.



1920s Open air service, Culbone Church.