

THE DEAF DOCTOR

A Memoir of a 1950s Cotswold Childhood

Marian Eason

In 1959 Sheila Willcox won her third successive Badminton Horse Trials – a feat still unique in its annals. The horse who partnered her in this victory was called “Airs and Graces”. Eighteen months earlier he had been but a novice five year-old showing promise out hunting. His name then was “Cresta Run”, and he had been bred and brought on on the farm by Vivian, Marian Eason’s mother. This is his story too.

In *The Deaf Doctor* Marian Eason tells of the fifteen years after the Second World War, so like the 1930s, before the ‘60s spelt ineradicable change, recalling now obsolete values and customs, together with many farming practices no longer in use. She caters for a wide readership – those with local knowledge and a long experience of country matters, and those to whom rural ways are unfamiliar.

An account of her father’s life is included too, that of *The Deaf Doctor*, from his birth in Cheshire in 1915 until 1960. It tells of his boyhood, his youth, his war service as a doctor (some of it in the Far East), his entomological pursuits and his early career as a farmer on the farm of this book.

Seen through the eyes of a small girl living on a remote Cotswold hill farm we read the story of its shaping in the hands of its new owners; of the people, some eccentric, who lived in the area, and who became a part of the daily life of the farm, and of others who visited.

Sometimes amusing, sometimes sad, this is an elegy for a lost era, and a social comment on the tough times endured by many then who were unsettled and unsure, even irreparably damaged, by the upheavals of wartime. A tale of men and machinery, the animals, the countryside and all those living and working on the bleak and beautiful Cotswold Hills. A time when “values” and “value” held real meaning.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marian Eason, born in Birmingham in 1950, came to live on the farm in Gloucestershire at the age of one. This county has been her home ever since, where she lives with her art-dealer husband, Simon Waters. Her son, William, is an aspiring journalist. She read for the Bar, and has also worked in publishing, assisting with the production of the standard work, *The Master of the Horse*, and as a freelance picture researcher. She has also contributed to the *American Chronicle of the Horse* as well as numerous British equestrian publications.

Brought up with horses, she has been a keen supporter and follower of the North Cotswold Hounds for over fifty years, and has competed successfully, still showing horses and competing in dressage.

Although the farm is now sold she owns another grass farm in nearby Warwickshire, and is thus still involved with agriculture, and with the countryside and the people who work in it.

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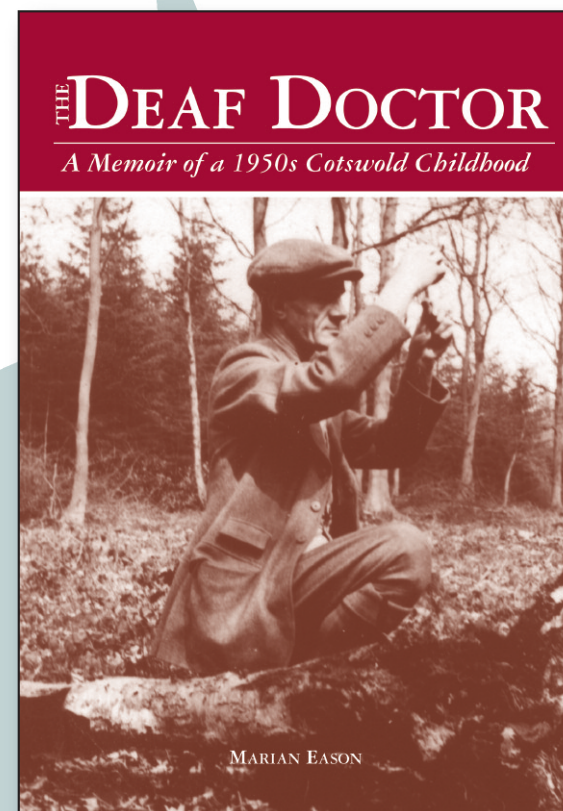
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