

MY DIARY OF DOORSTEP DELIGHTS

Jillian Thorne

In this charming and evocative collection of exquisite watercolours and reflections arranged as month-by-month diary entries, Jillian Thorne shares her joy in the countryside and gardens and, in particular, in the flowers and plants they contain.

"As the year unfolds I find myself making pilgrimages to all those places that reveal their seasonal wonders. The sight of the first spring blooms has always made my heart feel like bursting. As I wandered freely here and there discovering the glories of each month and trying to capture their amazing forms with photographs, drawings or water-colours, I decided to record my thoughts and feelings so that these visual delights, sounds and scents would forever remain in my memory."

Jillian Thorne will be hailed as a modern Edith Holden: this is a new Country Diary for the twenty-first century, but yet one that reveals and revels in the timeless glories of the English landscape.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jillian Thorne was born and brought up in Wellington in Somerset and attended Bishop Fox's Grammar School for Girls at Taunton and the College of St Matthias at Bristol. After a thirty year career in Primary Schools in Kingston-Upon-Thames and Barnes in Surrey and Exeter and Kingskerswell in Devon she took early retirement to discover the essence of freedom and peace and to indulge her passion for wild flowers. This book is the fruition of her "attempts to capture their elusive and fragile beauty during those initial and blessed days".

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Halsgrove House,
Ryelands Business Park,
Bagley Road, Wellington,
Somerset TA21 9PZ
Tel: 01823 653777
Fax: 01823 216796
www.halsgrove.com
e-mail: sales@halsgrove.com

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Jillian Thorne

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Jan 1st
An explosion of fireworks signalled the beginning of a new year as Big Ben tolled its deep sonorous twelve chimes. Now there is so much to look forward to. The days are lengthening and new life is emerging. My resolution is to make sure that I don't miss any of its delights.

Jan 11th
The blue sky and sunshine beckoned me to my favourite garden at Durrington, to see what this January had so far produced. The overnight frost had melted into sparkling water droplets glazing the lawn and frosting the dainty branches of the trees. Winter jasmine grew by the gateway and early purple irises hugged the stone wall of the Great Hall, as if hiding from the cold. The first of the pale mauve and delicately wrapped petals of the early crocus had pushed through the grass under the cherries. A good covering of snowdrops had appeared through the crusty soil of the bank to display their drooping heads in reverence to yet another year!

June 18th
I thought I would make my way to East Portmouth on this glorious June day. The sweep of the road bending into the village of South Pool was picturesque, lined with cottages edged with flowers and cobblestones. As I rounded the corner there was a pink-washed cottage with a red rose climbing to the top of its gable end. A stream trickled by and an old lady was sitting outside her home enjoying the sun. Along the creek the tide was in and two white swans commanded the island by the bridge. Stepping stones crossed the stream, a pied-piper loped along the bank, swifts swooped low over the water and a ferry paddled by an old rowing boat. Under a honeycomb hanging wistfully over an old stone wall there was a pophole into a garden where two ducks were wandering over a daisy-stream lawn. What a fabulous existence they had! A yacht was moored in the deep water around the bend, the sky was clear and blue and the green fields sloped down to the edge of the water. Cattle were browsing, bees were humming, birds were twittering and water was lapping around the stones. What a fabulous existence I was enjoying at that moment!

I next drove along the narrow lane beside the creek and stopped where the road widened to fence a driveway. White and blue sail-boats with flags jangling on their masts rested calmly on the azure waters which were contrasted with the emerald wheat growing on the hillside beyond. Quite a cool breeze rippled the estuary. A man in navy blue was repairing his tender and two small rowing boats nudged each other from time to time. Eventually I reached Sunny Cove. The water was icy, but I needed three dips to keep cool. The flowers on the cliff were so pretty - white daisies, cerise cranesbill, blue scabious, honeysuckle and wild roses. A boat was moored off the beach all the afternoon, but eventually sailed away into the sunset.



Example of a double-page spread.



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