

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA'S CLOUDS HILL

Dr Andrew Norman

When T.E. Lawrence joined the Royal Tank Corps at Bovington in Dorset in spring 1923, he was a disillusioned and damaged individual and anxious to discard his previous persona of 'Lawrence of Arabia'. By chance, he came across a former woodman's cottage, then in disrepair, and set about making it a home. At first he regarded 'Clouds Hill' merely as a pied-à-terre, but subsequently described it as 'an earthly paradise'.

It was here that he slowly recovered his health and strength (though his recovery was not without incident), made enduring friendships with Thomas and Florence Hardy, fellow 'tankies' from Bovington, and artists and men of letters who travelled to Dorset to seek him out. At Clouds Hill he recaptured the joy of living, established his library of books, listened to the music of Sir Edward Elgar on his gramophone, and sped along the lanes on his now famous motorcycle 'Boanerges', until the day on which he made his last, fateful journey.

Andrew Norman explores the personality of this endlessly fascinating figure – a giant of history yet a significantly flawed man – and the impact that this peaceful corner of England had on his unquiet soul.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

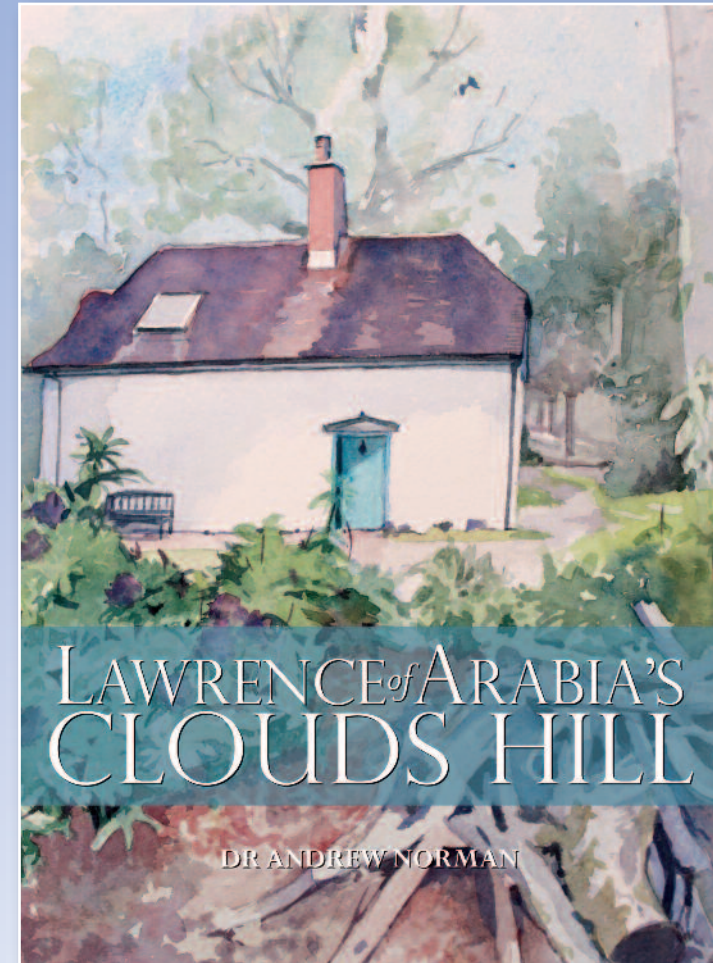
Andrew Norman was born in Newbury, Berkshire, UK in 1943. Having been educated at Thornhill High School, Gwelo, Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Midsomer Norton Grammar School, Somerset, and St Edmund Hall, Oxford, he qualified in medicine at the Radcliffe Infirmary. He has two children, Bridget and Thomas, by his first wife.

From 1972-83, Andrew worked as a general practitioner in Poole, Dorset, before a spinal injury cut short his medical career. He is now an established writer whose published works include biographies of Thomas Hardy, T. E. Lawrence, Sir Winston Churchill, Sir Francis Drake, Adolf Hitler, Agatha Christie, Enid Blyton, Charles Darwin, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Robert Mugabe. Andrew was remarried to Rachel in 2005.

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