

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA'S CLOUDS HILL REPRINT

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

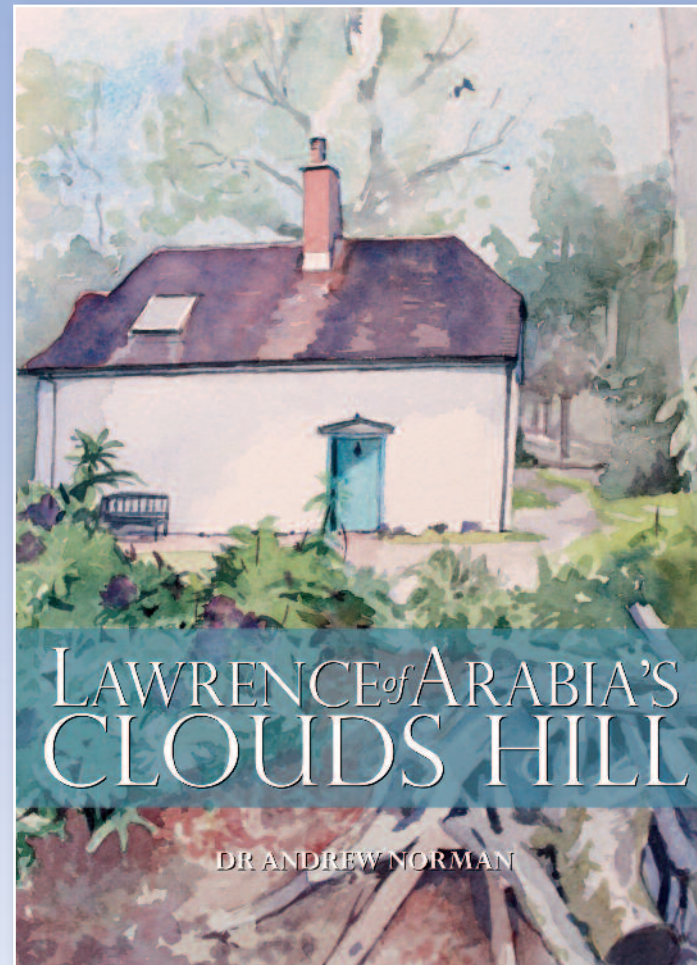
Andrew Norman was born in Newbury, Berkshire, UK in 1943. Having been educated at Thornhill High School, Gwelo, Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Midsomer Norton Grammar School, Somerset, and St Edmund Hall, Oxford, he qualified in medicine at the Radcliffe Infirmary. He has two children, Bridget and 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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Bovington in the 1930s, the Red Garage right foreground.



Above: Clouds Hill, prior to the rendering and whitewashing of its walls, a tiled roof having replaced the original thatch.



The Lawrence effigy.




Left: Lawrence and the Brough, 1932.

Below: Clouds Hill, the Music Room, 1935.



CLOUDS HILL AND LAWRENCE'S FIRST SIGHT OF IT



PROLOGUE

Clouds Hill is a cottage, set in the heart of rural Bovington, near the home of T. E. Lawrence. It is a small, simple, but comfortable, and well-kept cottage. It is a double-page spread from a magazine, featuring a photograph of Clouds Hill and a short article about Lawrence's first sight of it. The article is written in a first-person perspective and includes a small photograph of Lawrence and another person. The text is arranged in two columns, with the photograph of Clouds Hill on the left and the text on the right. The title is at the top, and the sub-headline 'PROLOGUE' is below it. The article is dated '1935' and is signed 'Private T. E. Shaw'.



Private 'T. E. Shaw' (Lawrence) with Private Warner at Bovington Camp, photographed by Private Arthur Russell.