



Village Diary

Miss Read

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The enchanting follow-up to Village School, Miss Read's beloved first novel, Village Diary once again transports us to the picturesque English village of Fairacre. Each chapter describes a month in the life of the village school's headmistress, Miss Read. As the villagers prepare for their country pageant, Fairacre welcomes many newcomers, such as the headstrong Amy, Mr. Mawne (whom the villagers would like to see the reluctant Miss Read marry), and the earnest new infants' teacher, Miss Jackson.

Village Diary Details

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Author : Miss Read

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Kelly Furniss says

Number two in the Fairacre series sees another humorous, relaxing and entertaining book.

As we go through the seasons in the school year we follow the events, villagers lives, gossip and worries and of course the changing countryside.

The characters are just wonderful and brought alive with humour and the illustrations.

A gentle book I would recommend.

Leaflet says

Just the world I want to visit when I'm tired of this one. It's hard not to make a few parallels to Tolkien's Shire. Mr Willet reminds me of Sam's Gaffer: "Proper twizzled up, I was after that row at the Parish Council. I went and earthed up my celery, on my own. That sorted me out a treat!" That virago, Mrs Pringle, is distantly related to the Sackville-Bagginses, and Arthur Coggs could be a Sandyman or a Pimple.

Polly says

I will never like Fairacre as much as Thrush Green, but these are still lovely, gentle books for when the world is too much with you (as it so often is for library youth staff during Summer Reading Club!).

Arpita (BagfullofBooks) says

This is another delightful book in the Fairacre series and touches upon daily goings on in a 1950's rural English setting. Though the storytelling is similar to it's pre-decessor in the series (Village School) the musings are fresh and original and always make me smile. Thankful to have discovered these books which always bring a few moments of serenity to my hectic day.

Shannon says

Soothing as a cup of hot chocolate; welcome anytime! Miss Read books don't have much plot beyond the local doings of the village of Fairacre and surrounds, but she writes with an eye to detail the blessings of life and the small ironies of human nature which abound everywhere! I think I have read all her books at least once and many of them, time and again. This was probably the third time around for me on this one, but it still has plenty of charm and precision insight to make the re-read worthwhile. For instance, I love the story of she she came by her cat, but even in this seemingly gentle tale, there is harshness all around. She doesn't linger on those aspects of country life which are less than uplifting, but she doesn't ignore them either!

Lady Clementina Finch-Farowmore says

Miss Read chronicles the happenings of an entire year at her school and Fairacre generally in a mammoth diary she has been gifted for Christmas, from classes and holidays at the school, to the village pageant and fair?life is eventful and full even away from the bustle of the city. Life in Fairacre is changing, with TVs and better connections to town and larger villages, village committees and activities that used to be the centre of life are losing their value, and indeed their popularity, only the older inhabitants or new residents in the village being interested anymore. But life goes on, as older skills are being lost, newer ones are being added. Alongside, (almost) all of Fairacre is matchmaking, having found Miss Read one they believe is a perfect match! I love Miss Read's descriptions of the village and of life there, one wants so much to live in Miss Clare's lovely home (though one realises before long that even she has her troubles, and just *how* hard keeping everything that immaculate and attractive is proving to be). And I also loved that life that Miss Read takes us into (though it isn't easy) when people actually did things, used things to the fullest, vegetables were grown and preserved for colder months, clothes were used to the fullest and put to other uses when they couldn't be used any more?not simply thrown, entertainments were of one's own making, costumes for pageants were made, put together, not simply bought?how much more satisfying and happy that life was. What a lovely and attractive picture of country life she draws for us and yet it is real, with life and death, pain and pleasure, fun and hardship all playing out as they usually do (and everyone always informed of all that was going on in one's life, one of its downsides, perhaps), and so a life of dreams, yet one that can actually be lived. A pleasant and beautiful read as always. Four and a half stars

QNPoohBear says

Miss Read chronicles a year in her village school. There's a new, unmarried man in the village and all the gossips have him walking down the aisle with Miss Read. She is not so interested. She has her hands full dealing with the new infants' teacher who is trained in all the modern methods and child psychology and finds herself chafing at the old-fashioned methods employed in the village school. Miss Read's old school friend Amy visits frequently only to bring Miss Read out into the great wide world, assuming the teacher is bored and lonely in the country. There's also the county play in which the villagers are chosen to play Romans vs. Ancient Britons. Miss Read must also deal with the cantankerous old Mrs. Pringle who cleans the school with lots of grumbling. Miss Read enjoys the simple pleasures of village life though and wouldn't change a thing. Babies are born, people die and progress changes things a bit but still the school carries on.

This book is better than the first because now I am familiar with the characters and the rhythm of village life. There's a lot of subtle humor in the story and more conflict to deal with. The new characters introduce more humor but my favorite is Mrs. Pringle, the drama queen. I can easily picture her the queen of the village. Miss Read has a lot of patience but she finally snaps in this book and I like her better for standing up for herself. The children are charming and more distinguishable by now. Joseph Coggs and his family illustrates the negative aspects to village life. I kept feeling bad for young Joseph and wishing his mother could take the kids and go away.

I can see this being a TV series on PBS because it bridges the gap between the idyllic 19th century preindustrial life and modern society.

Tracey says

Another charming instalment of life in Fairacre. Have really warmed to Miss Read's wit. Great to see how the characters are developing in the series.

Lydia Bailey says

Aww an old fave! Gobbled this up this week late in the evenings of stressful days. Old fashioned, a bit twee but I love it!

Rose Collins says

One of my favorites. Miss Read writes a monthly journal of the happenings in the school and village of Fairacre. The villagers try to bring together a new older gentleman in the village with Miss Read, much to her annoyance and irritation. Turns out Mr. Mawne is married, just had been separated temporarily from his wife. Other events include the hiring of a new teacher for the infant class, wonderful descriptions of how the seasons change the village landscape and holidays.

Ann says

Ugh why do I love these books so much??? Nothing actually happens in them! But they're just so charming!

Kelly says

Miss Read is as charming and profound as ever. Her descriptions of daily village life and the thoughts of her narrator are comforting and relatable. Since the main character is the school mistress, there are quite a few sections about the philosophy and practice of education, plus some great meditations on the nature of life in a small, rural community.

This is a very easy read, but not simplistic.

Margie says

Comfy and cozy, but I liked Village School better (#1 in the series).

Elizabeth says

I adored this book. It followed the months of the year in Fairacre during the early 1950's-- Miss Read's diary for the year. Miss Read is full of wisdom, wit, and she is also so much like many women of today. She worries about people gossiping about her, she worries about her finances, she is afraid of mice and rats haha. I love Miss Read and her village and want to jump inside this book!

Mimi says

I knew that this would be a soothing, quiet read (I think the in term is "up read") but I didn't realize how much I'd laugh out loud when reading it. Miss Read has a wonderful sense of humor and this epistolary (in diary form) novel has many wry observations.
