

# Broken Road

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The long-awaited final volume of Patrick Leigh Fermor's epic travelogue takes him through Rumania and Bulgaria, along the Black Sea coast to Istanbul, and on to the Greek monastery island of Mount Athos. Still unfinished at his death in 2011, it has been sensitively completed, using extracts from his 'Green Diary', by Colin Thubron and Artemis Cooper, and does not disappoint: Fermor's powers of evocation are as magical as ever.

Following his walk across Europe, Patrick Leigh Fermor (1915-2011) lived and travelled in the Balkans and Greek Archipelago. He joined the Irish Guards and during the occupation of Crete led the party that captured the German commander. He was awarded the DSO and OBE. Like many really good things, it's hard to say why *The Broken Road*, the final volume of Patrick Leigh Fermor's account of his walk from Holland to Constantinople, is so satisfying. But it is

- \* Mail on Sunday
- \* His award-winning biographer Artemis Cooper and travel writer Colin Thubron have painstakingly and sensitively worked on Paddy's draft of the final leg of his epic journey and ghosted a wonderful account of his swashbuckling journey . . . It conjures up a life that's unimaginable in more cautious modern times and is beautifully written
- \* Daily Mail
- \* In magnificent prose [Patrick Leigh Fermor] describes liaisons with countesses in crumbling castles, changing landscapes, now lost forever, and the delight of a young man with nothing but himself and his quest for adventure. Travel writing at its most sublime
- \* Daily Express
- \* Its rich depictions and liquid language make this a masterpiece to savour
- \* Sunday Express
- \* Offers a fascinating glimpse of a lost time and talent
- \* Financial Times, Books of the Year
- \* Glorious . . . Artemis Cooper and Colin Thubron created *The Broken Road* . . . but the author is arguably more present in their loving editorial hands . . . than in any of his other books. There is also that infectious enthusiasm for the road and the lived experience, for spoken language, oral knowledge and for everything Byzantine and Greek
- \* Daily Telegraph, Books of the Year
- \* My favourite book this year was the final, unfinished and posthumous volume of Patrick Leigh Fermor's walking trilogy . . . it is every bit as masterly as *Between the Woods and the Water*
- \* Observer, Books of the Year
- \* Offers a fascinating glimpse of a lost time and talent
- \* Financial Times, Books of the Year
- \* His epic journey's erudite conclusion will not disappoint his many fans
- \* Saga
- \* Glorious . . . Artemis Cooper and Colin Thubron created *THE BROKEN ROAD* from a rejected essay on walking (15 times the size requested of Paddy), some failed drafts and a pair of flimsy travel journals. But the author is arguably more present in their loving editorial hands . . . than in any of his other books. There is also that infectious enthusiasm for the road and the lived experience, for spoken language, oral knowledge and for everything Byzantine and Greek
- \* Daily Telegraph, Best Books of the Year
- \* The third unfinished volume of Leigh Fermor's enchanted journey through Mitteleuropa is here at last
- \* TLS Books of the Year
- \* The perfect present for anyone with wanderlust
- \* Good Housekeeping
- \* A scintillating continuation of the prodigious walk that took the young Leigh Fermor right into the heart of magically different pre-war Europe and beyond . . . his journey is complete, his world task accomplished, with the whole undertaking as thick in marvels as Aladdin's cave
- \* Irish Times
- \* The final volume confirms the trilogy as one of the 'masterpieces' of English travel writing
- \* Week
- \* For readers of the other two books, to see the odyssey at last (almost) concluded, will naturally be irresistible. For everyone else there is the discovery of a unique writer
- \* Sunday Express
- \* This final leg, through Romania and Bulgaria rounds off a classic trilogy
- \* i
- \* What a poignant and somehow fitting finale for a legendary procrastinator. It was certainly worth the wait
- \* National
- \* His literary executors have topped, tailed and polished with such sympathy and

skill that their interventions cannot be detected. This is pure Paddy: these are his feelings, perceptions and responses, his the observations, his the descriptions, consummate in a phrase, acute and intense when extended to paragraph or page; this is his style yet it is in many ways a youthful text, its core the adventure of a very young man, its embellishments the experience, curiosity and wisdom of his older self \* Evening Standard \* There is plenty to enjoy, so much so that the reader often forgets to wonder how much is true, and how much the revisionist work of an inventive and poetic mind . . . the pleasure lies in its combination of erudition, exuberant speculation, lively anecdote and meticulous, picture-painting language . . . Gorgeous imagery, granted, yet it is in Leigh Fermor's disarming cameos that *The Broken Road* excels \* Sunday Times \* A road trip that is as illuminating as it is incomplete made by a traveller, warrior and jewelled stylist \* Independent \* The Mount Athos diary - untampered with by his older self - reminds us what an extraordinary young man he was . . . This early style is more immediate, more youthful; a pleasure to read in a wholly different way from the later magnificence \* Financial Times \* The first two volumes were a joy to read, not least for Leigh Fermor's ability to recapture in later life the intense excitement of being a young man lighting out. The latest book offers similar joys . . . Also evident are another of the joys of the earlier books - the pyrotechnics of his writing. Exuberance is expressed in heightened suggestions . . . it captures the joy of the open road, the fresh view he gives of Europe as it began to show the stresses that led to world war, and the glimpses of a long-lost life and innocence \* Observer \* This is a picaresque essay, a virtuoso tapestry of anecdote in the author's best tradition \* Country Life \* I set off along *The Broken Road* laden with expectations that I would have to make allowances. Yet almost from the off, I realised that I would have no use for these. Here was a wealth of descriptions that only Leigh Fermor could have conjured up . . . In a stroke of brilliance, Thubron and Cooper have included the separate diary that Leigh Fermor kept of the month he spent exploring Mount Athos in Greece immediately after leaving Istanbul. So, the Athos diary, aglow with rich experience, finally brings the journey to its rightful end in the spiritual heart of the country that was to prove, though the young author did not yet know it, Leigh Fermor's "real love and destination" \* New Statesman \* The pages are filled with brilliant evocations of his life on the road, none richer than the time he spent in a Romanian broth . . . It is a fitting epilogue to 20th-century travel-writing and essential reading for devotees of Sir Patrick's other works \* The Economist \* A fitting conclusion to his masterpiece . . . This book is momentous \* Mail on Sunday \* It is magnificent. Cooper and Thubron have done an immense service in bringing the book to publication, for it unmistakably stands comparison with its remarkable siblings. The prose has the glorious turbulence and boil of the first two books, and the youthful magic of his 'dream-odyssey' is still potent \* Robert MacFarlane, The Times \* The editors have done a fine job \* Literary Review \* Colin Thubron and Artemis Cooper have put this book to bed with skill and sensitivity . . . Friends and fans, acolytes, devotees and disciples can all rest easy. It was worth the wait -- Justin Marozzi \* Spectator \* This is a major work. It confirms that Leigh Fermor was, along with Robert Byron, the greatest travel writer of his generation, and this final volume assures the place of the trilogy as one of the masterpieces of the genre, indeed one of the masterworks of post-war English non-fiction -- William Dalrymple \* Guardian \* Nobody could do the job better than the book's editors. Colin Thubron is a travel writer of Leigh Fermor's calibre, Artemis Cooper is his masterly biographer . . . It contains wonderful passages of purest Leigh Fermor . . . Time and again he gives us vivid

glimpses of encounters along the way - priests and peasants, the squalors of the back country, high life in Bucharest - and this virtuoso display is embedded as always in his astonishing range of learning . . . full of fun, kindness, easy learning, sophistication and innocence . . . a gently fitting conclusion to his tumultuous masterpiece -- Jan Morris \* Mail on Sunday \*

#### Other Books

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