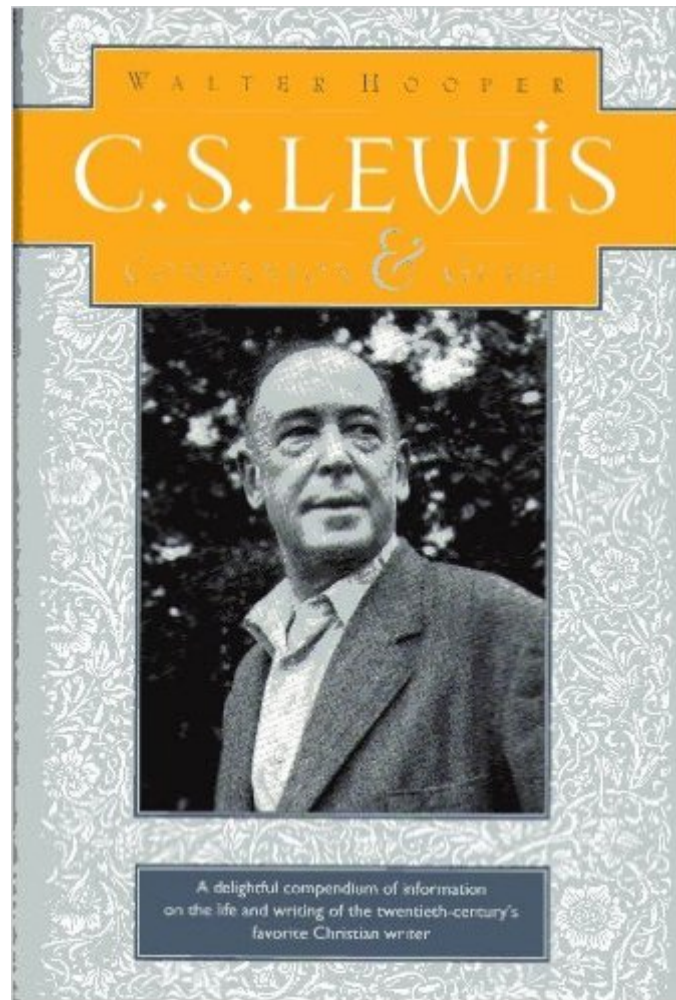


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C. S. Lewis: A Companion & Guide



Synopsis

Designed to deepen the appreciation and understanding of new Lewis readers and longtime enthusiasts alike, this comprehensive companion provides invaluable biographical, textual and historical insight into C. S. Lewis's remarkable personal, spiritual and intellectual legacy. Walter Hooper, an eminent C. S. Lewis scholar and one of the trustees of the C. S. Lewis estate, has created an accessible, organized, all-in-one resource that features: A complete chronological biography that traces Lewis's life from his childhood in Belfast and war experience in France to his brilliant academic career at Oxford and Cambridge, through his religious conversion, the publication of each of his books, and his late marriage and widowhood. A Who's Who listing of Lewis's family, teachers, pupils, spiritual mentors and friends, including Dorothy L. Sayers, J. R. R. Tolkien, and the "Inklings," a circle of friends with whom Lewis gathered for some 30 years to share compositions and "enjoy a golden age of talk about poetry, language, myth and imagination." A What's What guide to the significance of places and things, from The Book of Common Prayer to the Cherbourg House preparatory school where a young Lewis "ceased to be a Christian." A Key Ideas exploration of Lewis's thoughts on everything from enchantment, reason, imagination and joy to democratic education, myth and the masculine and feminine. Giving thoughtful attention to each of Lewis's writings, and filled with telling detail, the C. S. Lewis Companion and Guide offers Lewis readers unparalleled access to the life and life's work of an extraordinary man.

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Customer Reviews

C. S. Lewis would doubtless have scoffed at the idea of a reference book about himself, just as he disapproved of university courses devoted to modern authors on the sensible ground that "helps" to reading them are not needed and come between the writer and his audience. Nonetheless, students and "fans" of the great Christian apologist and literary scholar now are offered two thick compendia on his life and work. Each has its virtues and faults, and both are worthwhile investments - though not a substitute for the straight, unfiltered Lewis. The "Companion and Guide", reviewed here, is the production of one man, who has devoted almost his entire adult lifetime to editing and writing about Lewis. The rival "C. S. Lewis Readers' Encyclopedia" is a composite work whose contributors range from giants in the field to eager amateurs. When he first met C. S. Lewis in June 1963, Walter Hooper was an American schoolteacher who had dropped out of studying for the Episcopal priesthood and never gotten started as a graduate student in literature. Instantly star-struck, he volunteered to help with secretarial chores. Within a few months Lewis was dead of a heart attack, and this 32-year-old foreigner, whose academic credentials consisted of a master's degree in education and who had never published a word on any Lewisan topic, improbably became the great man's de facto literary executor. Within a year he had edited the first collected edition of Lewis' poems, and he has worked at the same stand ever since. The double meaning of the present volume's title is no accident. The book is a companion and guide to readers of Lewis' work, but Lewis has also been, metaphorically, a lifetime companion and guide to Walter Hooper.

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