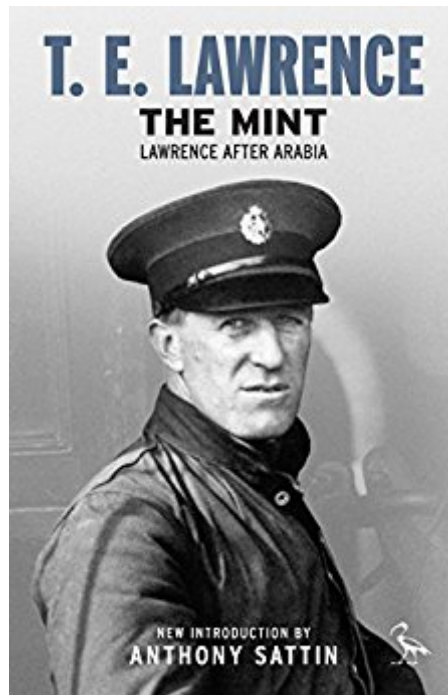




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The Mint: Lawrence After Arabia (Tauris Parke Paperbacks)



Synopsis

In 1922, his dreams of an independent Arabia shattered, T.E. Lawrence enlisted in the RAF under the assumed name John Hume Ross. Though methodical and restrictive, life there seemed to suit Lawrence: "The Air Force is not a man-crushing humiliating slavery, all its days. There is sun & decent treatment, and a very real measure of happiness, to those who do not look forward or back." With poetic clarity, Lawrence brings to life the harsh realities of barracks life and illuminates the strange twilight world he had slipped into after his war experiences. For anyone interested in the life of one of the 20th century's most enduring heroes and his life beyond the well-documented Arab revolt, *The Mint* is essential and compelling reading.

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Customer Reviews

Have studied T. E. some and found this book is very enjoyable

even though this took place in the 20s, I related to it being x navy, and unless you are an x service man you may find the cursing a bit hot

The Mint by T.E. Lawrence is a treasure. It is the little iron sided box of a book that he promised a friend he would make of his notes on joining the R.A.F. Lawrence chose to hide from his fame in the only place he now felt comfortable, the military ranks of fighting men. But there was no fighting now, the war was over and it was on to new things. The new thing that captured Lawrence's interest was the creation of the British Royal Air Force. He did not want to be the man in charge, sitting in an office somewhere directing it all, looking down on the action, he wanted to be in the middle of it all with the men who would do the job. In his own words: "Events killed the longer book; so you have the introduction, set out at a greater length." He was found out. There was a media frenzy. The great Lawrence of Arabia was living as an ordinary man in the ranks under an assumed name. It was way more attention than Lawrence or the budding R.A.F. could stand so Lawrence disappeared again. He hid out in the tank corps for two years before he could sneak back into the R.A.F. Reading the Seven Pillars of Wisdom leaves you hungry to know more of the man and this tiny bit is all he was willing or able to give up of himself, after already giving so much in the First World War and the writing of the Seven Pillars of Wisdom. Lawrence meant it to become a book on the work of flying, but instead it is a book about men in the service, filled with Lawrence's insights of life in the ranks. It is not about the glory, but about the men. The training, endless drills and boredom are broken by little joys and defeats that happen almost between the lines. This book is not about battle, but living to do battle. It is about ordinary men who are warriors and a great warrior who preferred their company. The book's greatness comes from the man who wrote it, it is Lawrence, who always saw the ordinary in greatness and the greatness of the ordinary.

It is easy and dramatic to assume that Lawrence as he was at the end of Seven Pillars was the way he would remain to the end of his short life. But The Mint denies this effectively. Lawrence set out to remake himself, and to some degree was successful, though his fellow recruits were as alien to him as the Arabs had been. The book challenges the idea that recovery is a binary: that one is either finally healed or still broken. Instead, it shows him as both: wholly healed, and permanently marked. The book spends the first two thirds in the difficult life of the Depot. When it emerges from that dank darkness, as it does after only the briefest explanation of his time out of the RAF, it is different, full of slow appreciation without apprehensions. It is good, very good, to read Lawrence when he is happy. We don't have much of it, partly because he just found it easier to write about sorrows. But here it can be found. Near the end, when he describes a day on the motorcycle that killed him, there is nothing dark or desperate about the ride - just sheer joy in life.

The "real" T.E. Lawrence story of after Lawrence Of Arabia fame.PLEASE READ "Seven Pillars Of Wisdom" BEFORE you dare read "The Mint"!!!

This is a close and personal look at how it was in the RAF, the way they spoke and the way they lived in the barracks. Interesting

Great book, which I bought for a great price!

hard to find, good read

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