

Golden Duck Advance Information

The Oaken Heart

Margery Allingham

Foreword by Ronald Blythe

- * New, illustrated edition of a wartime favourite.
- * Includes previously unpublished diaries, letters and photos.
- * Fully annotated with extensive local research.
- * Introduction by Margery Allingham's biographer, Julia Jones.
- * Wealth of illustration from archives and private collections.

Ronald Blythe, author of *Akenfield*, describes *The Oaken Heart* as 'This astonishing book'.

The Oaken Heart was written during the 'noisy, bomb-filled winter' of 1940–1941 and published almost as soon as it was received in May 1941.

Margery Allingham was living in the Essex village of Tolleshunt D'Arcy. She recorded the events and emotions of that extraordinary time exactly as she and her neighbours experienced them. In so doing she believed she was writing for hundreds of small rural communities up and down the country. People are now in their eighties were children then. Some of them remember Allingham and have contributed to this book.

The Oaken Heart was hugely successful on first publication. 'She speaks for England' said her U.S. publisher. Since 1941 however, the very immediacy and urgency of Allingham's writing has proved an obstacle for later generations. Our frame of reference is very different from the period of the Battle of Britain and the London Blitz. This edition is extensively illustrated with period photographs and has been fully annotated. Local contributions have been invaluable.

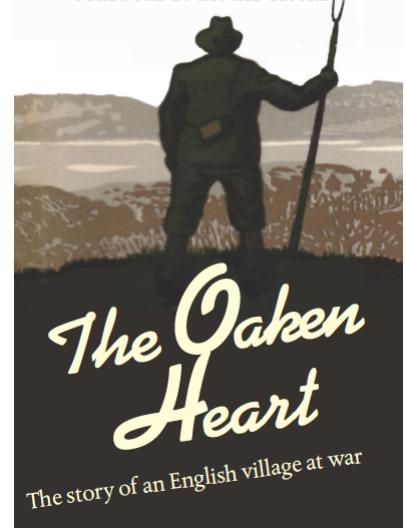
Margery Allingham is usually remembered for her detective novels and as the creator of Albert Campion. This edition is published in partnership with the Margery Allingham Society. Allingham was an acute social commentator who had been trained to observe since childhood. 'I must always be watching and noting and putting things into communicable form.'

The Oaken Heart, Allingham's only non-fiction title, is 'unusual & pleasurable, informative and surprising' – Ronald Blythe.

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Margery Allingham

FOREWORD BY RONALD BLYTHE



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