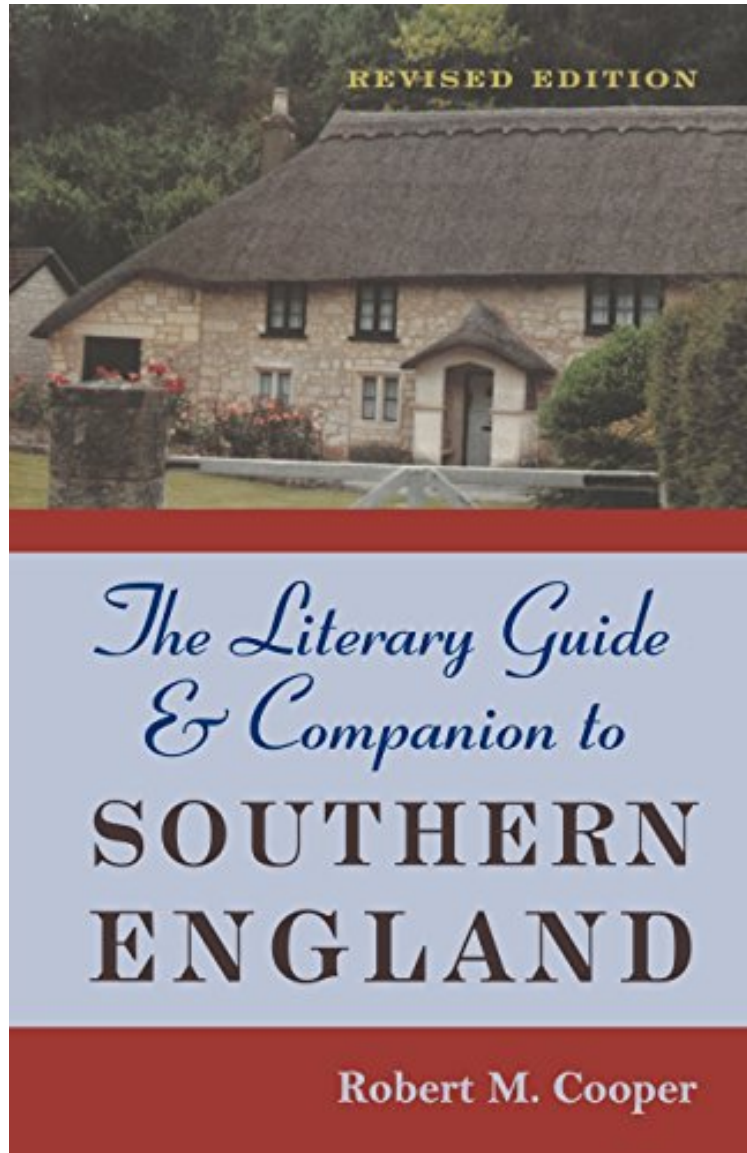


# The Literary Guide and Companion to Southern England Revised

*Robert M. Cooper*

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**Robert M. Cooper : The Literary Guide and Companion to Southern England Revised** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Literary Guide and Companion to Southern England Revised:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Specialized Travel Guide, Now Aging By James Ellsworth As Robert Kinder notes, the late John Cooper, Professor Emeritus of English at Rhodes College, knew English literature and he

loved literary travel throughout Britain to seek out sites where notable authors (classic and contemporary) had lived and worked...or vacationed and worked. Persons with similar interests will find this book of greatest interest; others less so. The literary information here is timeless. The travel information was last updated in 1998; however, readers planning a literary trip to Britain have the skills and the motivation to follow up on the pubs and hotels and restaurants, where they are mentioned, to check them out today. I tested some recommendations and they are still in business. Current reviews of food and accommodations can be found on line, at least some of the time. The author engaged a good map maker to draw orientation maps. Their purpose is in planning rather than guiding. The suggested routes are on the map and a few major places are indicated. There are general city maps, for example, of Canterbury, that locate places of interest to the literary traveler. The maps are informative without being cluttered. Ohio University Press has done good service in keeping these books in print. Professor Cooper is an engaging writer. A great many famous and lesser known places are noticed in the book and the anecdotes and information presented are well-selected. This is an invaluable book to use when planning a literary tour. Using the book works in two ways: the text is organized geographically and there is an excellent index that includes authors (in Upper Case Letters) as well as places and personages. Travelers who have in mind places they wish to visit can easily pick them out from the table of contents, organized by county. They can next determine if they have any interest in the literary sites associated with the place by reading the text. Fans of particular authors can start with the index and quickly find places associated with them. Throughout the book, significant buildings are pointed out, especially ones that have 'open days' for public visits. Supposing you are interested in Chaucer, Dickens and Somerset Maugham: as it happens all three are associated with places along a pilgrimage route from London to Canterbury and its cathedral. Shakespeare used a location on the route as a setting for Sir John Falstaff's battle with some highwaymen. Because of Canterbury's proximity to London, this section of the book will be of interest to many travelers. Maybe you have always wanted to visit Cornwall: literary sites are thinner on the ground but Professor Cooper points out Lands End, Polperro and Penzance. He describes St. Ives ('Kits, cats, sacks and wives...') and warns of its heavy congestion during the tourist season. Suggestions are made about other interesting places in Cornwall. The general reader will have some sense of what to expect should they decide to visit. Make another test: there are some ten pages about Bath and they are teeming with literary references and the experiences of authors who visited or lived there, not only Jane Austen but the likes of Sheridan, Dr. Johnson, Joseph Fielding and on and on. A fine literary walk, taking a good bit of time, is laid out stop by stop. The book takes an 'encyclopedic' approach: it is not a story of one or of a series of travels. One reads it entry by entry rather than sitting down of an evening and 'having a good read.' Persons expecting the latter might better look elsewhere. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. He has amazing details and writes well. By Carter Flagg As delightful and thorough a guide as you will ever hope to find. He has amazing details and writes well. 16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. The Perfect Companion for the Curious Traveler. By Peter D. Kinder. The late Prof. Cooper was my kind of tourist set loose in a car in England. He avoids the M roads and the A roads with single digits. He gives clear directions. He has an eye for the peculiar, the unique, the unsettling. But most of all, he's an enthusiast. He's read the greats and an astonishing quantity of not so great. He knew his Dickens and Kipling, although I wish he was still alive so I could tip him to something he didn't know about Kipling's sojourn in Rottingdean, Sussex, and its tangible connexion to today: Kipling's familiarity with England's first family of traditional songs, the Copper family. An American who hears Kipling's poetry in the settings of Peter Bellamy will have good reason to reappraise Kipling. I'm leaving for Kent this week. After reading Cooper, I'll only be bringing him and Ordinance maps along. I won't need anything else.

In a series of intriguing routes through the English countryside, Professor Robert Cooper notes those attractions that the casual tourist might unknowingly pass by, such as the house where Dickens wrote *A Tale of Two Cities*, or the windswept quay where John Fowles's *French Lieutenant's woman* walked. Maps and information about restaurants and accommodations give the traveler the opportunity of having pints of half and half where Jane Austen dined or visiting the pub where Blakes scuffle led to his trial for treason. This newly revised and updated edition of Robert Cooper's acclaimed handbook combines the utility of current travel information with the appeal of literary history, biography, and anecdote in a leisurely and flavorful guide to the broad sweep of southern England outside of London. A rich and reliable guide to the landscape that fostered one of our most cherished cultures, *The Literary Guide Companion to Southern England* is an indispensable resource for those who wish to experience literature firsthand.

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