

Evelyn Waugh: A Biography

Christopher Sykes

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Helen Feb 01, 2010 Helen rated it 4 of 5 stars Shelves: 2010, male-author, nonfiction It's difficult to review a biography, really, so I'll keep this brief. Sykes has the advantage of having known Evelyn Waugh while he was still alive, and is therefore able to illustrate many events of his life with personal anecdotes as opposed to merely relying on facts which anybody could discover if they put their minds to it. In spite of this, Sykes is not blind to Waugh's faults; he is not afraid to criticise his works, or indeed the man himself, which makes for a well balanced picture of him. Fortunately not too much time is spent on describing Waugh's time at war; the main focus throughout is his novels and his personal life, and so we are not left with hundreds of pages describing every single campaign he was involved in. Sykes tells only what is necessary to understand the person he is writing about. The only issue I have with this biography is that the early years are somewhat glossed over, as Waugh's autobiography covers this time period. This means that for someone like me (who hasn't yet read A Little Learning, but fully intends to one day), there are gaps in the tale. Evelyn Waugh clearly led an interesting life, though, and this biography certainly does him justice.



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