

PUBLICITY PROFORMA

KEN WORPOLE – WRITER AND SOCIAL HISTORIAN

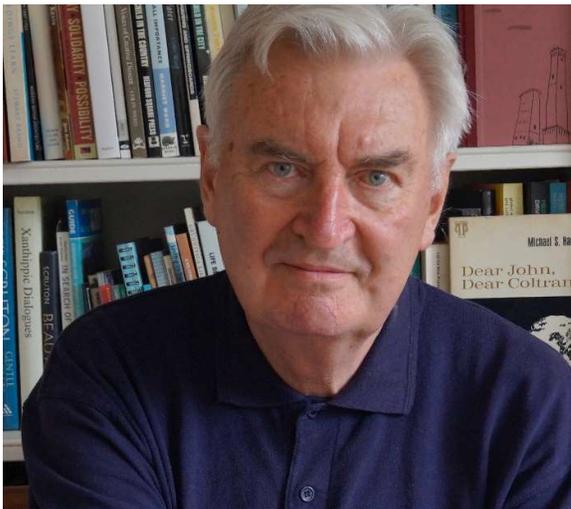
NO MATTER HOW MANY SKIES HAVE FALLEN. BACK TO THE LAND IN WARTIME BRITAIN

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Ken Worpole has written many books on architecture, landscape and public policy. He has written extensively about the Essex landscape and its 20th century social history in such books as *350 miles: An Essex Journey* and *The New English Landscape*. His most recent book, *No Matter How Many Skies Have Fallen* (2021), is a study of a wartime Christian pacifist community in Frating, Essex.

Ken's childhood years were spent in Leytonstone, Canvey Island and Southend, where he attended Southend High School for Boys.

Based on his new book, *No matter how many skies have fallen*, Ken tells the "lost" story of Frating Hall Farm. In March 1943, a working community was established for individuals, families as well as a temporary sanctuary for refugees and prisoners of war. Initially scorned by neighbours, they won respect for their farming achievements and established a touring theatre company, bringing new life to the villages and churches around them.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:-

In recent years, he has focused on recovering the social history of communication experiments in both town and country, drawing lessons for the creation of new residential and environmentally sustainable forms of settlement for an ageing population.

He is a former Senior Professor at the Cities Institute, London Metropolitan University, where he was a founder member of the Demos think tank and of Opendemocracy and has served on the Expert panel of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the UK Government's Green Spaces Task Force,

and as an adviser to the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment. In *The New Statesman*, editor Jason Cowley recently wrote that, “Worpole is a literary original, a social and architectural historian whose books combine the Orwellian ideal of common decency with an understated erudition.”

On “Lady Day” March 1943, a group of Christian pacifists took possession of a vacant farm in Frating, a hamlet on the Essex Tendring Peninsular. There, they established a working community, inspired by their association with *The Adelphi Journal*, where D.H.Lawrence, John Middleton Murry, Vera Brittain, Iris Murdoch, George Orwell and others, shared ideas for the future with European religious radicals such as Nicholai Berdyaev, martin Buber and Simone Weil.

Frating Hall Farm provided a settlement, livelihood and sanctuary and over time became a successful arable and livestock land-holding of more than 300 acres.

The book is based on the reminiscences of those who grew up on the farm, together with photographs, letters and organisational records, never before seen or published. The book is a kaleidoscopic history of a farm during its eleven-year occupation and an enquiry into the passionate religious and political ideals of the back-to-the-land movement in wartime and post-war rural England.