

main a village boy. After meeting Diana, John decided he would try to make himself worthy of her. To improve his education he read all the books he could get from his uncle's secondhand shop, he studied at night, and finally, to better his standing, asked his Uncle Reuben to take him on at the newspaper, a more respectable position than his Uncle Luke's secondhand shop, and one leading to a future.

Diana and John met secretly, for her parents did not think John a fitting companion for their daughter. John hoped to marry Diana, but Diana felt deep in her heart that marriage was impossible—yet she would not release John.

Diana's mother, hoping for a society marriage and knowing that John was dangerous, sent Diana off to Switzerland to finish her education before her presentation at court. John got a job on a London newspaper, but he always longed to return to the country.

In London, Diana felt the attraction of city gaiety and of life with the idle privileged and realized that luxury meant more to her than the sort of life she would have if she married John. With Diana wanting the excitement of London and John longing for life in the country—even if they could overcome the differences of class and money, could they ever find happiness together?

*Diana* is the sort of story in which the reader becomes fond of the characters and deeply concerned for their happiness.

DIANA will be on sale in the publisher's edition to non-Guild members at \$4.50. The Guild edition will be available at the members' exclusive price of only \$2.00.



All About

## Diana

by  
R. F. DELDERFIELD



When and where did the novel *Diana* begin? I imagine more than thirty years ago, when I turned the last page of Blackmore's magnificent *Lorna Doone*. Literary influences have no time schedule; often a seed may lie dormant for half a lifetime, but if it is strong enough it will survive and suddenly begin reaching for the surface. This is how *Diana* first saw the light.

John Leigh, the city-bred country boy who tells the story, is a twentieth-century Jan Ridd, but instead of slaying Doones to rescue his fair lady, he tilts at a phalanx of snobberies, prejudice, and almost impenetrable wads of banknotes—the defenses of her stockbroking family, who settle in his rural Eden and play at being squires. This is the story of his fight for Diana Gayelorde-Sutton, the wild, restless, unpredictable, yet utterly lovable only child of these latter-day feudal barons.

In some ways *Diana* may be labeled old-fashioned. I hope it is, for it was intended so. For myself, I am sick to my stomach of the so-called "realism" in post-war fiction, of the necessity, it seems, to explore all the darkest and dreariest recesses of the characters' minds and drag out all the bacteria that are breeding there. To me, literature is the artist's mirror to the most colorful aspects of life, and I like to project the world as a place where one would like to remain forever, not leave by the shortest possible route.

There are really two heroines in this book—Diana and "Sennacharib." Sennacharib is the name the adolescent lovers give to the few square miles of unspoiled Devon countryside in which they meet, fall in love, grow up, and worship. It is the link between them, a magic