



# Counting Sheep: A Celebration of the Pastoral Heritage of Britain

*Philip Walling*



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Sheep are the thread that runs through the history of the English countryside. Our fortunes were once founded on sheep, and this book tells a story of wool and money and history, of merchants and farmers and shepherds, of English yeomen and how they got their freedom, and above all, of the soil. Sheep have helped define our culture and topography, impacting on everything from accent and idiom, architecture, roads and waterways, to social progression and wealth.

With his eye for the idiosyncratic, Philip meets the native breeds that thrive in this country; he tells stories about each breed, meets their shepherds and owners, learns about their past - and confronts the present realities of sheep farming. Along the way, Philip meets the people of the countryside and their many professions: the mole-catchers, the stick-makers, the tobacco-twisters and clog-wrights. He explores this artisan heritage as he re-discovers the countryside, and finds a lifestyle parallel to modern existence, struggling to remain unchanged - and at its heart, always sheep.



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