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Robert Roberts

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Robert Roberts : The Classic Slum: Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Classic Slum: Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Interesting historical memoir By Anne I read this book trying to understand lives of working class people in Salford. I wanted to learn what school was like for children, what housing was like, and what the rhythm of daily life was like. I recommend this book to anyone interested in social history. It's

a good read. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Insightful. By Bryan P. Insightful. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Classic Slum, Classic Book By Mike DePue, OFSSuch a skillful blend of solidly researched socioeconomic history and autobiography! This is a witty, readable look at the industrial England of the common people in the early years of the 20th century. As the author says: "Born... in an area which, sixty years before, Frederick Engels had called the 'classic slum', I grew up in what was perhaps an ideal position for viewing the English proletarian caste system in all its late flower." (p. 13) Just a couple of important contentions made by the author: "The pre-1914 movements for her political emancipation, bourgeois in origin and function, meant very little to the lower working-class woman. In the end the consequences of [WWI], not the legal acquisition of female rights, released her from bondage... The events of 1914-18, then, did not start, but they accelerated significantly, a movement already well developed, one which would go some way to release... the working-class women of Britain. (pp. 201-202)" "The post-[WWI] decade, for all its great social shortcomings, was a far more humane and civilized time than the twenty years which preceded it." (p. 237) This book gives a "you are there" immersion into a time and place now gone and into a way of life in some ways admirable, in all too many ways deplorable. Since it's so well indexed, it goes on my shelves for future reference. Some of the index entries that might tempt you: Eating habits; Games, street; Pawnshops; Conjugal rights; Burial club; Cigarette cards; Vagrants; Respectability; Teeth.

"A vivid, unforgettable picture of the quality or lack of it of life in England among 'ordinary' people." Peter Stansky.

About the Author Robert Roberts was born in a Salford slum in 1905, the son of corner shopkeepers. After school he was an engineering apprentice for seven years and was then unemployed for three years, during which he studied languages and how to start a revolution. While a teacher he began to write stories, plays, BBC scripts and stories, several of which won him scholarships and awards. After sixteen years of hill farming, Robert Roberts started to teach in prisons and became an acknowledged expert on adult illiteracy. Until his death, he was a well-known lecturer on this subject, both in universities and on the BBC. His other books are *Imprisoned Tongues* and *A Ragged Schooling*.