



Colonel Julian and Other Stories

H.E. Bates

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Colonel Julian and Other Stories was Bates's first collection following World War II, containing stories he wrote between 1941 and 1951.

The *New York Times* called the collection 'distinguished...Mr. Bates avoids the sensational or the melodramatic; through an unerring selection of the exact gesture or thought or act or incident, he reveals the very essence of his characters' thwarted personalities.'

The title story 'Colonel Julian' sees an eighty-three-year-old veteran of service in India now hosting pilots in his mansion. Here the old generation meets the new. The Colonel is fond of a young pilot, but also bewildered: by his enthusiasm so different from his own business-like relationship with war, by his lack of perspective on his role in a larger military strategy, and by an apparent absence of ethics.

'The Bedfordshire Clanger' sees the welcome return of Uncle Silas after a ten year hiatus. Bates has Silas regaling his young nephew with a typical tall tale, this one involving a buxom landlady and disappointing meal with a pudding that is 'hard as a hog's back' called the Bedfordshire Clanger, but with a conclusion in which Silas, from then on, is 'never in want fur the nicest bit o' pudden in the world.'

The collection also features bonus story 'For Valour', where the narrator, on a visit to an old airfield some years after the war, meets a café owner who shows him the medals she received after her pilot son was killed over Arnhem, and tells tales of countless soldiers, and now travellers, who continue to pass by.

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