



## Excellent Women

By Barbara Pym

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### Excellent Women By Barbara Pym

*Excellent Women* is probably the most famous of Barbara Pym's novels. The acclaim a few years ago for this early comic novel, which was hailed by Lord David Cecil as one of 'the finest examples of high comedy to have appeared in England during the past seventy-five years,' helped launch the rediscovery of the author's entire work. Mildred Lathbury is a clergyman's daughter and a spinster in the England of the 1950s, one of those 'excellent women' who tend to get involved in other people's lives - such as those of her new neighbor, Rockingham, and the vicar next door. This is Barbara Pym's world at its funniest.

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## Excellent Women By Barbara Pym Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

An unqualifiedly great novel from the writer most likely to be compared to Jane Austen, this is a very funny, perfectly written book that can rival any other in its ability to capture the essence of its characters on the page. Mildred Lathbury, the narrator of Pym's excellent book is a never-married woman in her 30s--which in 1950s England makes her a nearly-confirmed spinster. Hers is a pretty unexciting life, centered around her small church, and part-time job. But Mildred is far more perceptive and witty than even she seems to think, and when Helena and Rockingham Napier move into the flat below her, there seems to be a chance for her life to take a new direction.

#### Review

[One of] the finest examples of high comedy to have appeared in England during the past seventy-five years. (Lord David Cecil)

A startling reminder that solitude may be chosen and that a lively, full novel can be constructed entirely within the precincts of that regressive virtue, feminine patience. (John Updike, *The New Yorker*)

Reading Barbara Pym is . . . a wonderful experience, full of unduplicable perceptions, sensations, and soul-stirrings. (*Newsweek*)

#### About the Author

**Barbara Pym** (1913 - 1980) was an English novelist whose comedy-of-manners novels of village life looked deeply at the relationships between men and women. Her *Quartet in Autumn* was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize.

### Users Review

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