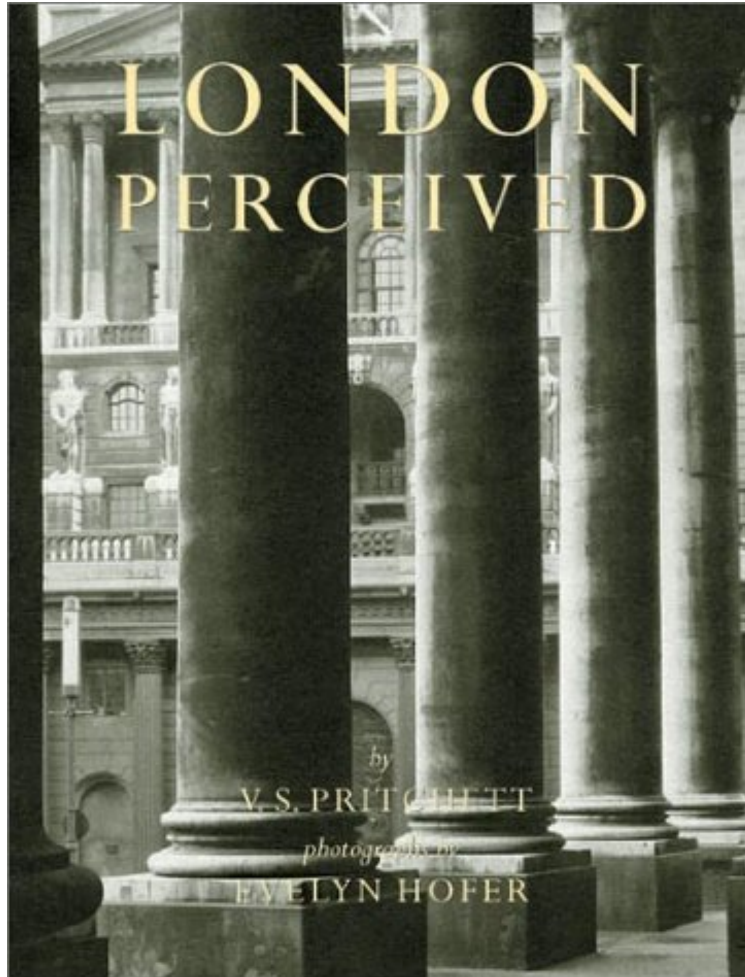


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## London Perceived

*V. S. Pritchett, Evelyn Hofer (photographer)*  
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**V. S. Pritchett, Evelyn Hofer (photographer) : London Perceived** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised London Perceived:

23 of 23 people found the following review helpful. Cultural Archeology At Its Best By C. Ebeling Forty-one years ago, V.S. Pritchett went looking for what makes London itself. He wrote this before McDonald's arrived, just before the Beatles and 007 put it on the world's pop map, just as cranes were setting out the beams for glass and steel skyscrapers. Much has happened in the interim, but what Pritchett found explains not only its past but its future. He makes neat work of reconciling the many ironies in a place that reinvents itself every so often without much of a plan, but which also hangs onto traditions, ways of being and a passion for order. This is a tour of neighborhoods, but also of centuries and the historical events and personages that have contributed to the city's enduring character. It moves seamlessly between the concrete image and the abstract idea. Pritchett's prose is crystalline, his insights spooky at

times (he describes those new skyscrapers as having a "smashable impermanence" to them). The photographs by Evelyn Hofer are haunting. There will always be a London. This should be required reading for visitors to that city.<sup>4</sup> of 5 people found the following review helpful. London Re-thought By E. J. Petersen This is NOT a travel book. Hofer's photography is iconic, worthy of a special show at the Tate. You will never happen across her vistas walking or driving around London on your own. She has a Dickensian point of view, and an antiquarian sensibility that would scare away the creator of a standard travel brochure. V.S. Pritchett will not be found in that brochure either. You may have caught him once or twice in the "New Yorker," but not in the "Saturday Evening Post." His take on London is not so much a perception as it is a meditation. He is in touch with what we all see in London. And his historic perspective is encyclopedic. He evokes the Blitz in the style of an experienced screenwriter. But his real genius lies in his "meditations," his reaction to what he has seen over the years, and in what he imagines his dramatis personae think about it all. Read it on the plane over the Atlantic, then go see for yourself. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Charles K. Very good copy of this book. Good vendor.

London of the mind, the heart, and the eye is displayed, discussed and dissected with eloquence and understated wit in this classic collaboration uniting the unfailingly elegant prose of V. S. Pritchett and the consistently revealing photographs of Evelyn Hofer. Here is a pithy and knowledgeable distillation of the London experience - a panorama of its history, art, literature, and daily life. Here is the city that Londoners know, a paradox of grandeur and grime, the locus of bustling markets and tranquil parks, of the ancient and modern, of palaces and pubs, of docks and railroad depots. As Pritchett observes, "If Paris suggests intelligence, if Rome suggests the world, if New York suggests activity, the word for London is experience. This points to the awful fact that London has been the most powerful and richest capital in the world for several centuries. It has been, until a mere fifteen years ago, the capital of the largest world empire since the Roman and, even now, is the focal point of a vague Commonwealth. It is the capital source of a language now dominant in the world. Great Britain invented the language: London printed it and made it presentable." Great Londoners of the past stalk these pages - Wren, Pepys, Defoe, Hogarth, Dickens, and of course, that consummate Londoner, Samuel Johnson, who said, "No, Sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life, for there is in London all that life can afford." And here, too, are the faces of the people inhabiting London today - milkmen and master mariners, dockers and shopkeepers, messengers, Chelsea pensioners, and, inevitably, the London bobby. There is, as well, an analysis of the Londoner himself, enigmatic and enduring, with his remote but insistent respect for law, royalty, and ritual, his affection for argument, his toleration of eccentrics. This new paperback of the original 1962 edition offers a loving tribute to a great city's past and present.

About the Author V. S. Pritchett, one of England's leading novelists and literary critics, was born in Ipswich in 1900. He began his career as a newspaper correspondent and soon after was embraced by serious readers of literature. He has published novels, travel books, and volumes of criticism.