



Books of 1983

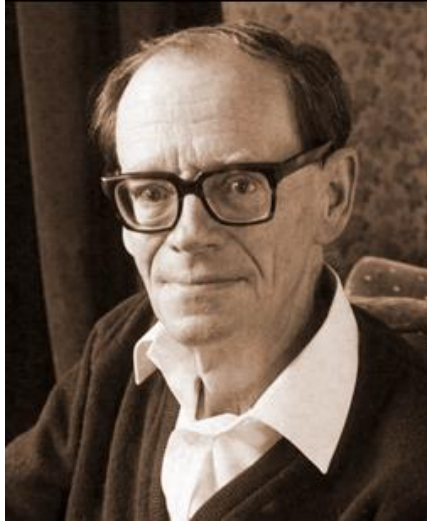
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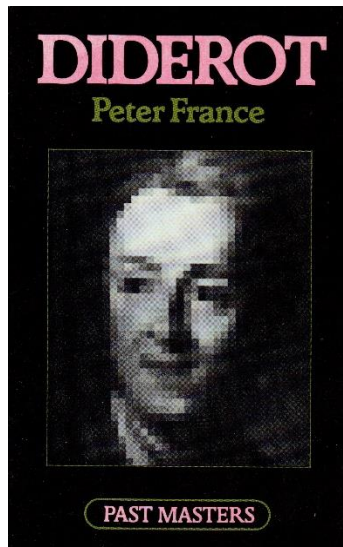
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Books of 1983

Contribution to 'Books of the Year', *Sunday Times*, 11 December 1983, 39



MOST OF ALL I enjoyed *Still Life* by Richard Cobb. Like virtually everything I have read by this author, this personal memoir of his childhood in Royal Tunbridge Wells is fresh, direct, original and beautifully written; the style is inimitable and to me utterly delightful.



BOOKS OF 1983

Anything that stimulates interest in the writings of Diderot performs a service to both thought and feeling. His achievement is admirably summarised in Peter France's *Diderot* in the Past Masters series.¹



Finally, I am only too happy to recommend a new selection of Turgenev's letters, well translated and edited by A. V. Knowles.² Turgenev is one of the best letter-writers of the nineteenth century; everything in this collection throws light on the man, the writer and his Russia.

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¹ This series, directly inspired by IB's approach to the history of ideas, was created by Henry Hardy for Oxford University Press in 1980, with Keith Thomas as General Editor. In 1995 it was expanded to form the Very Short Introductions series.

² See also IB's '**The Gentle Genius**', his review of Knowles's selection, *New York Review of Books*, 27 October 1983, 23–33.