

Words of Mercury by Patrick Leigh Fermor. Edited by Artemis Cooper.
John Murray 2004.

The Violins of St Jacques by Patrick Leigh Fermor.
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Patrick Leigh Fermor is one of the finest writers of the twentieth century. To those ignorant of his writings that may sound like an incredible claim, but devotees will shout loud their agreement. Fermor started his literary career writing about an extraordinary walk that he made from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople before the outbreak of the Second World War. Two volumes were published, *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water*, describing two thirds of the journey, and the final volume has been eagerly awaited for the last several decades!

For those wanting to savour the best of Paddy Leigh Fermor, and make contact with his amazing life, *Words of Mercury* is a wonderful anthology of the best of his writings on Travel, Greece, People, Books and Miscellanea (Ms Cooper calls this section Flotsam!) I would defy anyone who dips into *Words of Mercury* not to wish immediately to purchase one or several of Fermor's books.

The Violins of St Jacques, first published in 1953, is a small but magical story set in the Caribbean, showing to the full all of Fermor's skills as a creative writer and natural observer. An intensely satisfying read, this would be a perfect place to start after *Words of Mercury*.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh