

## Tom Fort

### Author / Journalist

Tom Fort was education at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. On leaving Oxford he went to work as a reporter at the *Slough Observer* and the *Slough Evening Mail* before joining the BBC in 1978 where he worked in the BBC Radio newsroom in London for 22 years.

He took early retirement in 2000, just before the publication of his social history of lawns and lawn-mowing, *The Grass is Greener*. He lives in South Oxfordshire with his wife and two of his children.



## Agents

Caroline Dawnay

Assistant

Eleanor Horn

EHorn@unitedagents.co.uk

## Publications

### Non-Fiction

Publication Details	Notes
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**CASTING  
SHADOWS**

2020

HarperCollins

Peer into the secret, silent world of the freshwater fish and explore evolution of the art and industry of fishing in Britain's rivers and streams. From cunning Neolithic traps, intricate Roman nets and quarrellous Victorian societies to the evolution of angling and eventual gentrification of river access, this history spans thousands of years and ends with a poignant call to protect the underwater world from the horrors of industrial fishing and farming. Meanwhile, another thread of the narrative weaves in the lives of the fishes themselves: the incredible struggles of the Atlantic salmon and secretive eel; the pike, a lean and camouflaged predator; the carp, huge and stately, begetter of obsessions; the exquisite spotted brown trout and its silver cousin, the grayling. Lives built on and around fishing have largely faded from Britain, but fishermen and conservationists are working tirelessly to prevent the same fate befalling the fishes.

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**THE VILLAGE  
NEWS**

2017

Simon & Schuster

The village was the first model for communal living. Towns came much later, then cities. Later still came suburbs, neighbourhoods, townships, communes, kibbutzes. But the village has endured. Across England, modernity creeps up to the boundaries of many, breaking the connection the village has with the land. With others, they can be as quiet as the graveyard as their housing is bought up by city 'weekenders', or commuters. The ideal chocolate box image many holidaying to our Sceptred Isle have in their minds eye may be true in some cases, but across the country the heartbeat of the real English village is still beating strongly - if you can find it. To this mission our intrepid historian and travel writer Tom Fort willingly gets on his trusty bicycle and covers the length and breadth of England to discover the essence of village life. His journeys will travel over six thousand years of communal existence for the peoples that eventually became the English. Littered between the historical analysis, are personal memories from Tom of the village life he remembers and enjoys today in rural Oxfordshire.

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**CHANNEL SHORE**

2015

Simon & Schuster

The English Channel is the busiest waterway in the world. Ferries steam back and forth, trains thunder through the tunnel. The narrow sea has been crucial to our development and prosperity. It helps define our notion of Englishness, as an island people, a nation of seafarers. It is also our nearest, dearest playground where people have sought sun, sin and bracing breezes. Tom Fort takes us on a fascinating, discursive journey from east to west, to find out what this stretch of water means to us and what is so special about the English seaside, that edge between land and seawater. He dips his toe into Sandgate's waters, takes the air in Hastings and Bexhill, chews whelks in Brighton, builds a sandcastle in Sandbanks, sunbathes in sunny Sidmouth, catches prawns off the slipway at Salcombe and hunts a shark off Looe. Stories of smugglers and shipwreck robbers, of beachcombers and samphire gatherers, gold diggers and fossil hunters abound.

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<b>A303: HIGHWAY TO THE SUN</b> 2012 Simon & Schuster	<p>The A303 is more than a road. It is a story. One of the essential routes of English motoring and the road of choice to the West Country for thousands of holidaymakers, the A303 recalls a time when the journey was an adventure and not simply about getting there.</p> <p>Tom Fort gives voice to the stories this road has to tell, from the bluestones of Stonehenge to Roman roads and drovers paths, to turnpike tollhouses, mad vicars, wicked Earls and solstice seekers, the history, geography and culture of this road tells a story of an English way of life.</p>
<b>DOWNSTREAM</b> 2008 Centry	<p>DOWNSTREAM is a celebration of rivers: an exploration of what they mean to us and an account of what we owe to them.</p>
<b>AGAINST THE FLOW</b> 2010 Century	<p>A journey through Eastern Europe</p>
<b>UNDER THE WEATHER</b> 2006 Century	<p>Tom Fort travels around Britain experiencing some of its extremer climates and some of its more typical with a view to explaining what we make and have made of the British weather and what it has made of us.</p>
<b>THE BOOK OF EELS</b> 2002 HarperCollins	<p>From the Sargasso Sea to the mudflats of Bridgewater and the reedy marshes of North Italy, the history and habits of one of the strangest creatures on Earth.</p>
<b>THE GRASS IS GREENER</b> 2000 HarperCollins	<p>Our love affair with the lawn.</p>
<b>THE FAR FROM COMPLEAT ANGLER</b> 1995 HarperCollins	<p>A collection of fishing writings. Illustrated by Charles Jardine.</p>