

Thomas Merton

THE
SEVEN
STOREY
MOUNTAIN

The autobiography of a young man
who led a full and worldly life, and
then, at the age of 26, entered
a Trappist monastery.

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perience."* EVELYN WAUGH

\$3.00

Praise for
THE SEVEN STOREY
MOUNTAIN

EVELYN WAUGH:

"I regard this as a book which may well prove to be of permanent interest in the history of religious experience. . . . No one can afford to neglect this clear account of a complex religious process. Mr. Merton writes in an easy colloquial manner which should prove popular to countless readers."

CLIFTON FADIMAN:

"I found *The Seven Storey Mountain* more than merely interesting, because it deals, as do so few modern autobiographies (or indeed books of any sort), not with what happens *to* a man, but with what happens *inside* him—that is, inside his soul. It should hold the attention of Catholic and non-Catholic alike."

GRAHAM GREENE:

"It is a rare pleasure to read an autobiography with a pattern and meaning valid for all of us. *The Seven Storey Mountain* is a book one reads with a pencil so as to make it one's own."

CLARE BOOTHE LUCE:

"It is to a book like this that men will turn a hundred years from now to find out what went on in the hearts of men in this cruel century."

MSGR. FULTON J. SHEEN:

"The autobiography of Thomas Merton is a Twentieth Century form of the *Confessions of St. Augustine*."

(SEE BACK FLAP FOR DESCRIPTION OF BOOK)

THE SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN

is the autobiography of a young man who led a full and worldly life and then, at the age of 26, entered a Trappist monastery. Thomas Merton, already known as a poet, tells his life story from his birth in 1915 to his present existence as a monk. His book was written in the monastery at Gethsemani, Kentucky. *The Seven Storey Mountain* is the extraordinary testament of an intensely active and brilliant young American who decided to withdraw from the world only after he had fully immersed himself in it. Merton uses the seven-tiered mountain (Dante's image of Purgatory) as a symbol of the modern world.

In every sense a man of his times—the period between the two wars—Thomas Merton spent his childhood in America and France. His father was English; his mother, an American Quaker. At twenty, an orphan, he left England for America and enrolled at Columbia. Concerned over the social and economic injustices of modern life, he joined a young Communist group. Later he worked at a Catholic settlement house in Harlem. It was several years after his conversion that he entered the Trappist order.

Frater M. Louis, as he is called in the Order, tells his story with wit, intensity, and exuberance. Part of the interest of the book is provided by the fact that he writes from a monk's cell, with knowledge and authority, of modern artists like Picasso, Joyce, and Duke Ellington. The later section of the book forms a fascinating account of the daily life of a Trappist.

Thomas Merton has published three volumes of poetry, *Thirty Poems*, *The Man in the Divided Sea*, and *Figures for an Apocalypse*. He received the Catholic Press Association award for poetry in 1948.

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The Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani, Kentucky



Trappists at work in the fields
(The author is second from the left)



The Cloister: Monks in procession

Merton

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