



The London Cabbie

Alf Townsend

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Forty years ago Alf Townsend passed The Knowledge - after 14,000 miles on a moped round central London. Since then he has covered millions of miles in his taxi. This book includes a selection of his extraordinary and hilarious tales of everyday life as a cabbie, in which we meet Mr Whippy and Violent Pete, Bread Roll Mick and the Motorway Mouse, Claude the Bastard and the mysterious Mr X. Alf also examines the history of cab-driving in the capital - including the variety of taxis that have been used - and even tries to shed some light on the most ancient and obscure Hackney Carriage laws that are still on the statute book. (Do you know why a taxi is so tall? So a passenger can get on board wearing a top hat: it's true...). Concluding with a look at the seamy side of night work, the rise and rise of the mini-cab, and what the future may hold for the London cabbie, Alf Townsend's book will be entertaining reading for all Londoners, and anyone else who has travelled in the back of a black cab.

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