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desde 1950





Título:

Autor: Precio: \$160.00

Editorial: Año: 2010

Tema: Edición: 1ª

Sinopsis ISBN: 9780199572830

Defoe's Journal of the Plague Year is an extraordinary account of the devastation and human suffering inflicted on the city of London by the Great Plague of 1665. Purporting to be an eye-witness, Defoe's fictional narrator recounts in vivid detail the rising death toll and the transformation of the city as its citizens flee and those who remain live in fear and despair. Above all it is the stories of appalling human suffering and grief that give Defoe's extraordinary fiction its compelling historical veracity. The lively Introduction relates the Journal to Defoe's best-known work, Robinson Crusoe, and draws on recent research into the publishing environment of the first edition. It considers the portrayal of London, depicted by Defoe as it was before the Great Fire, and to the book's device of fiction masquerading as fact. This edition also includes comprehensive explanatory notes, a map of Defoe's London, and a complete topographical index that enables the reader to track the Journal's complex references to London's streets, churches, alleyways, and prisons both before and after the Great Fire of 1666.

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