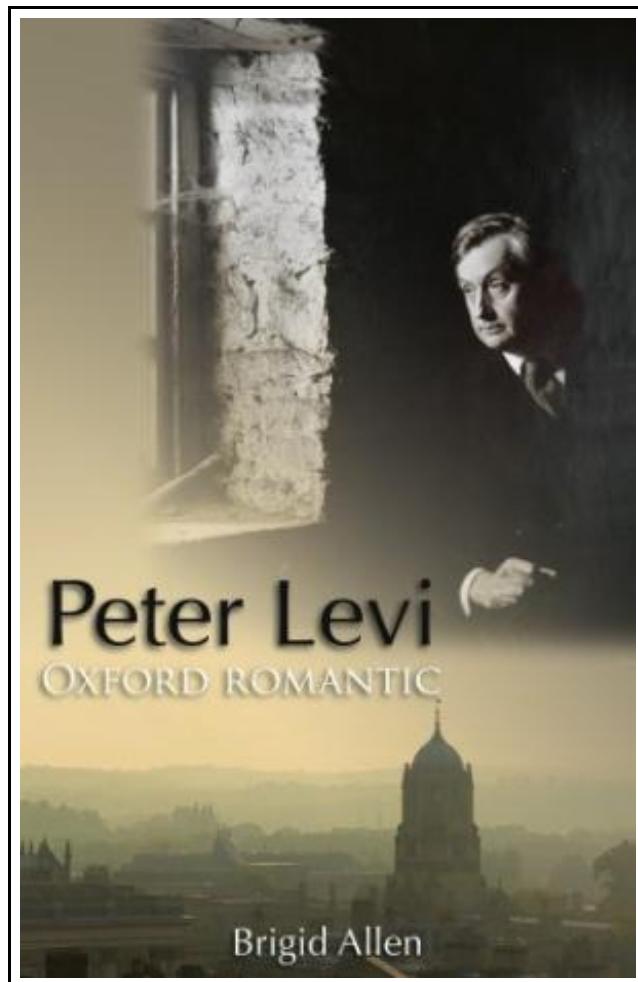


## Peter Levi: Oxford Romantic



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Signal Books Ltd. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Peter Levi: Oxford Romantic, Brigid Allen, Peter Levi (1931-2000) was one of the most romantic and complicated of twentieth-century Oxford characters. Although descended on his father's side from Jewish carpet-merchants in Constantinople, he was brought up a Catholic and was a Jesuit from late adolescence until he left to marry at the age of 45. Part-way through his training for the priesthood, Levi joined the small Jesuit intellectual elite as an undergraduate at Campion Hall, Oxford. Already a compulsive poet, he made literary friends and experimented with hard, bright lyrics on a variety of themes. His first collection, *From the Gravel Ponds*, was Poetry Book Society choice for spring 1960. From then onwards he maintained an uneasy balance as a Jesuit, tolerated for his literary activities but always subject to disciplinary correction. When, in 1963, his seniors declared that he had broken so many rules that he could not be ordained that year, he persuaded them to let him visit Greece. That summer he fell in love with the country and formed lasting friendships with several Greek poets. As classics tutor at Campion Hall from 1965 to 1977, he was an intriguing figure to many undergraduates. Intolerant of Oxford damp, he was allowed to spend winters in Greece. From 1967 onwards he passionately supported the resistance to the junta; twice banned from Greece, he later made a television documentary about the evils of the regime. After leaving the Jesuits he wrote autobiographical works, translations, thrillers and elegiac verse, supplementing his literary earnings with casual tuition. Elected Oxford Professor of Poetry in 1984, he used his lectures to convey his enthusiasm for the work of other poets, from Shakespeare to Pasternak, Larkin, Lowell and his defeated electoral rival and former pupil James Fenton....

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