





ALFRED WALLIS SKETCHBOOKS

Andrew Wilson

Cover thumbnail:

Grey Book 1942

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Front Image:

Two ships and steamer

sailing past a port – Falmouth

and St. Anthony lighthouse

1931 © Kettle's Yard

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These sketchbooks have an extraordinary story behind them, created as they were in 1942, Alfred Wallis's final year, when he lived in the Penzance poorhouse. They shine new light on his contribution to the development of modern art in Britain. A Cornish mariner and scrap metal dealer, he was self-taught and started to paint in around 1925 following the death of his wife three years earlier. A potent influence in the late 1920s for artists Winifred and Ben Nicholson and Christopher Wood, his simple and direct style communicated a truth of experience that also came to personify the overriding character of St Ives as an art community that valued his authenticity of expression. The legacy of his art continues to inspire artists today.

This book brings together the contents of three sketchbooks that Wallis filled with drawings. With an introduction by curator Andrew Wilson, it offers a remarkable insight into Wallis's art of memory made tangible.