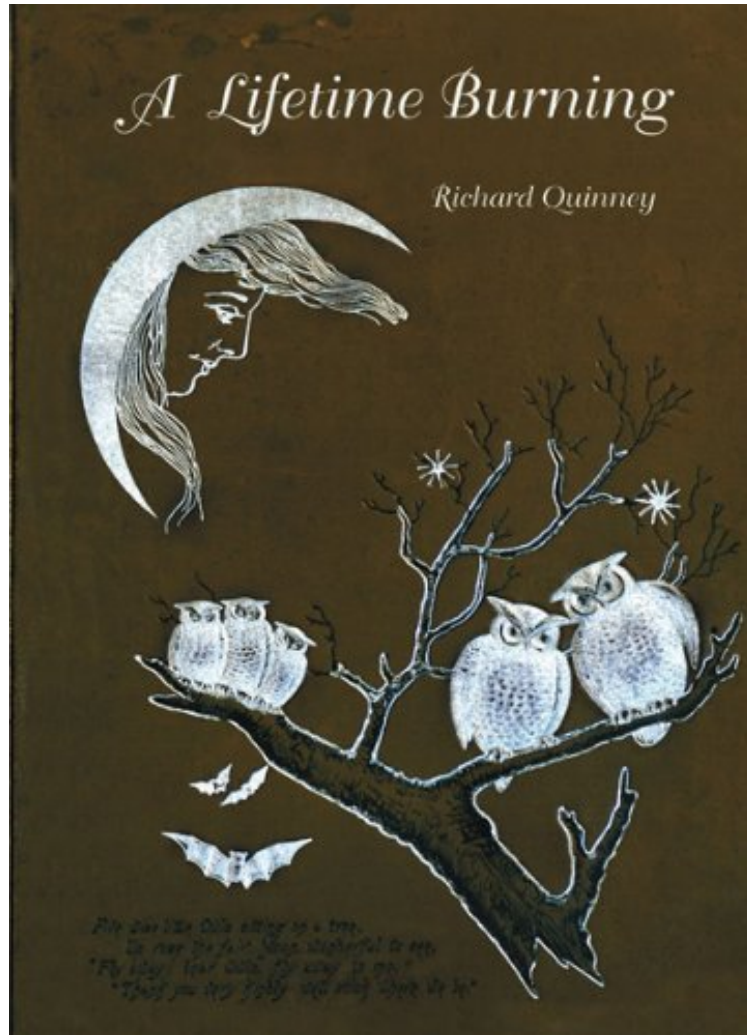


## A Lifetime Burning

*Richard Quinney*

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**Richard Quinney : A Lifetime Burning** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Lifetime Burning:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Like a bouquet that is meant to be savored whole and in parts; its sweet fragrances perfume the dissolving memoriesBy Midwest Book Review"A Lifetime Burning" is a beautiful collection of thoughts and reactions to the experience of saying goodby to beloved parents, a farmhouse of four generations, and a lifetime of memories. The author's musings are triggered by a process of emptying out the family farmhouse of all the trappings of four generations of life and use after his parents had both passed on. Delicately decorated with bits of paper nostalgia saved by his mother in a scrapbook from her childhood, "A Lifetime of Burning" is filled with utterances that touch the heart. No wisdom prepares us for the transience of life, nothing can

ease its impermanence. But the experience of learning to embrace the impermanence can teach all that is needed. That seems to be the message of many of the quotations, such as the following: "Being aware of impermanence, interdependence, and the reality of the present moment can lead us to the truth of no birth, no death. Arriving, as Thich Nhat Hanh instructs us, 'at the deep realization that all that exists has the nature of no birth and no death, no coming and no going, no being and non-being, no permanence and no annihilation.' A good place to be as we live our lives each day (p. 48)." "A Lifetime Burning" is like a bouquet that is meant to be savored whole and in parts; its sweet fragrances perfume the dissolving memories as they rise to an unknowable destination. Nancy Lorraine Senior Reviewer

Inspired by lines from T.S. Eliot's poem "East Coker," Richard Quinney contemplates in this memoir his family's artifacts and their final disposal when their generations-old farmhouse in southern Wisconsin must be vacated. In the attic were the spinning wheel, high chairs, baby beds, quilts, the cradle scythe, boxes of books, framed paintings and photographs, sets of dishes and silverware, and, spread on the floor, and the rosary beads that served the author's great-grandmother for a lifetime. The basement held the tools, sleds, milk cans, barn jackets, caps, canning jars, and the workbench. On the front porch were the emigration trunks that contained scrapbooks, photographs, farm ledgers, diaries, and souvenirs from trips to the West. The cupboards, dressers, and closets were filled with the material things—of parents and children—from the years of the living. Once valued and saved by his mother and father, and then passed on to Quinney, every object in the farmhouse holds a story and a memory. *A Lifetime Burning* asks how people are to let go of the material objects that once were important to the lives of their ancestors.

"The farmhouse is empty now. The accumulated effects of four generations have been cleared out of the house. A century and a half of life on this midwestern farm." - excerpt from *A Lifetime Burning* About the Author Richard Quinney continues to document the rise and fall, and possible preservation, of the family farm in Wisconsin. His autobiographical books include *Borderland*, *Where Yet the Sweet Birds Sing*, *Tales from the Middle Border*, *Of Time and Place*, *Things Once Seen*, and *Field Notes*. In the tradition of arts and craft production of quality books, he founded the independent press Borderland Books.