

After the War Is Over

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The International bestselling author of *Somewhere in France* returns with her sweeping second novel—a tale of class, love, and freedom—in which a young woman must find her place in a world forever changed.

After four years as a military nurse, Charlotte Brown is ready to leave behind the devastation of the Great War. The daughter of a vicar, she has always been determined to dedicate her life to helping others. Moving to busy Liverpool, she throws herself into her work with those most in need, only tearing herself away for the lively dinners she enjoys with the women at her boarding house.

Just as Charlotte begins to settle into her new circumstances, two messages arrive that will change her life. One, from a radical young newspaper editor, offers her a chance to speak out for those who cannot. The other pulls her back to her past, and to a man she has tried, and failed, to forget.

Edward Neville-Ashford, her former employer and the brother of Charlotte's dearest friend, is now the new Earl of Cumberland—and a shadow of the man he once was. Yet under his battle wounds and haunted eyes Charlotte sees glimpses of the charming boy who long ago claimed her foolish heart. She wants to help him, but dare she risk her future for a man who can never be hers?

As Britain seethes with unrest and post-war euphoria flattens into bitter disappointment, Charlotte must confront long-held insecurities to find her true voice . . . and the courage to decide if the life she has created is the one she truly wants.

After the War Is Over Details


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From Reader Review After the War Is Over for online ebook

Jody McGrath says

I didn't read the first book, but this is a complete stand alone novel. It is about Charlotte, a thirty something year old woman living after WWI. She is working for an office that helps poor families, especially those who have returning veterans who cannot find work. She is a strong advocate for this and the rights of women. Everyone thought when the war was over things were going to be great, but Charlotte sees that the war is still being fought everyday, it is just a different war.

I thought the book was quite good. It seemed to suffer a bit from undecided plot lines. It would go in a direction for awhile and then that thread would just go on a back burner. There was also a strange filler chapter about a trip to the beach that made no sense at all.

All that being said, I thought the book was quite enjoyable. It would probably be 3.5 stars but I decided to go with four because it was a quick read!

Amy says

A surprisingly sweet post-war love story. I would've liked more conflict and tension, and perhaps another point-of-view character to broaden the story's scope, but overall this was a gentle, character-driven tale of one woman's life in post-war England, with her unfulfilled yearnings for love and for a chance to make the world a better place. There was some mild language and sensuality which may offend more conservative readers, but on the whole it was a clean novel and enjoyable read.

Anna says

World War I is over, but for many peace comes with new worries and despair. Jobs are scarce and for those working, the pay is barely enough to keep a roof over their head and food on the table. Too many soldiers are returning with what we now classify as PTSD. Charlotte Brown, an Oxford educated woman, works at the constituency office helping the less fortunate. She writes a weekly column that speaks of the injustices inflicted upon the poor and forgotten. Despite Charlotte being a woman ahead of her times, she still yearns for love and family. Unfortunately the man she desires is a man of wealth and title, whom Charlotte believes is well above her "class" status. Can she be happy as a single woman helping those in need? Will she find love? Will there be a happy ending for Charlotte?

I really enjoyed the bits of history in the story. My one issue with the story was that Charlotte came off as too perfect and proper, but I did find her character befitting of the time period.

Aerykah says

I really hesitated to give this book even 3 stars... because there is some sexual content that I absolutely *do not* approve of! And there is some bad language too, though most would likely consider it mild.

These 3 stars, however, are for the rest of the book. It was quite interesting and, I thought, pretty well written. I have always enjoyed reading about the times surrounding the world wars, and the added aspect of PTSD fascinated me (that interests me in any time period, but especially in a historical setting). The family dynamics, relationships, and social issues... also interesting to read about.

As I mentioned before, though, there was some bad language throughout the book. And also a couple of scenes that I did not like at all. One was a kissing scene that was described overmuch. And the other, while not a full fledged sex scene, very nearly ended up that way and still went very far beyond propriety. Those issues made me want to give this book a 1- or perhaps 2-star rating, but I did go ahead and give it 3 stars because the rest of the book was actually quite good.

So consider yourself warned. In spite of my rating, I absolutely do *not* recommend this book!

Also, the narrator was rather annoying and sometimes made it difficult to distinguish between characters. But she wasn't unbearable... so there's that.

Terri says

Review also found at <http://kristineandterri.blogspot.ca/2...>

I received a copy of this book from the publisher William Morrow Paperbacks via Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review. It was just released yesterday.

I will start out by saying that this is a story for true fans of historical fiction. Readers who do not favour this genre may not enjoy this story as it is not a fast moving one where a lot occurs. Those who enjoy reading about the hardships of post WWI England will on the other hand appreciate this novel.

This book features a character who while somewhat stiff and boring holds strong convictions of how she thinks things should be. Be it the place and rights woman have or should have in society to the treatment (or lack thereof) of war veterans and their families. Her position in her workplace and her articles in the local newspaper serve as an outlet for her concerns with the direction of post war England.

Also included in the story is a love story. A very understated one. At first I wasn't sure if there was one but it eventually played out for the reader. This is where I return to my comment that this is a read for the true historical fiction fan. Some may find the love story too understated however I would disagree. I found it a little bit refreshing that it did not overwhelm the story or Charlottes journey. While a sucker for a good romance I thought the subtly was well written and appropriate for the story.

I am going to hold back on too much detail about this book. I will just say that I truly enjoyed it and will be seeking other works by Robson. I thought I had read that there was a first book to this one somewhere. If that is the case I will be seeking it out. Also if it is true it in no way impedes the enjoyment of this one

Tara Chevestt says

I really enjoyed the first book, Somewhere In France, as it followed the privileged Lily as she became an

ambulance driver during WWI, tried to escape her titled and overbearing parents and live life like everyone else, while also falling in love with an "unsuitable" man.

I was looking forward to this book. It follows Lily's strong-minded "bluestocking" former governess after WWI.

I like Charlotte, I do, but honestly, the book is really really boring. There seems to be no plot, no real goal beyond getting her in some way or form with the man she loves, and yet I wouldn't call this a romance either. We merely follow Charlotte as she lives her life. Charlotte goes to work, is irritated by her coworker. Charlotte goes to a carnival-type thing and enjoys a fun weekend. Charlotte writes a series of articles for the paper--this was cool, but didn't go anywhere really. Through Charlotte, in a few pages, we learn of the Police strikes. And suddenly out of the blue, the man she loves declares he's willing to heal his war wounds but only if she'll nurse him in a cottage, just the two of them.

And then it just gets predictable. I made it to 70% and finally just stopped. I didn't care about Edward. His character was not bad, just not interesting, not appealing. I didn't feel connected. I wasn't feeling the romance here. I think I'd have preferred the romance to have been with the newspaper editor. If it had taken that route, I would have cared.

And as for the all the things that occur before that...if the stories go nowhere, what was the point to begin with? Take Norma's near rape for example. What's the lesson in that? Don't wear shorter dresses? The men can't control themselves?

Take it somewhere, make it important to the story somehow, or just leave it out, and if you don't have anything important, if you don't have a plot, well, don't write a story!

I see some reviewers saying they appreciate the suffragette storyline... Um, where is it? So she casts a college vote in the beginning... nothing else happens that screams suffrage. If it does, it's in the last 30% all at once.

Full review: <http://www.bookbabe.blogspot.com/2015/...>

Lyuda says

After reading and loving *Somewhere in France* I couldn't wait to read this book -Charlotte and Edward's story. The story takes place right after the war when badly wounded Edward came home to recuperate while Charlotte returned to Liverpool to continue her pre-war work in the constituency office of Miss Rathborne, the suffragist. The war is over but poverty, lack of jobs, untreated physical and mental conditions followed returning soldiers home. Oxford educated "modern woman" Charlotte sees the devastation everyday while working with families of these soldiers. Wanting to give a voice to these people, she turns to writing a series of articles about the plight of returning war heroes and their families. Economic and social struggles in the post-war England play a major theme in the book relegating romance to the back burner. We see the budding of the romance between Charlotte and Edward through a series of flashbacks to pre-war and war time. The instant attraction they felt during their first meeting when Edward interviewed Charlotte for the post of his sister's governess, the continuation of this feeling throughout the war. And after the war, when Edward's condition was deteriorating, Charlotte was the only one who he thinks could help him. The author did a commendable research and the story is brimmed with authenticity. The pace, the writing reminds me of

some of the early 20th century female writers I read. If you enjoy historical fiction, try this book. It's light on romance but a fascinating historical read.

Jaclyn says

After the War is Over is Robson's follow-up to the excellent *Somewhere in France*. To be clear, it isn't essential that you read *Somewhere in France* before this one; however, I do think readers who have read the previous book will get a better appreciation of *After the War is Over*.

After the War is Over is set in England after the first world war (obviously). During the war, Charlotte Brown served as a nurse, something that she was able to do as a university educated young woman. Now that the war is over Charlotte is more than content returning to her old job in Liverpool, helping those that have suffered from the war.

As Charlotte gains satisfaction in her new life, she's pulled back into the past by her best friend Lily (subject of *Somewhere in France*), who's brother has come back from the war a changed man.

Edward Neville-Ashford, Earl of Cumberland, has returned home wounded both in body and spirit. He's lost a leg and it's clear that he's not the same, care-free young man he once was. Each time Charlotte encounters him she tries to talk to him, help him, but to no avail. Needing to move on from her girlhood infatuation, Charlotte distances herself from the Neville-Ashford family. Unfortunately for the contentment that Charlotte has found, she is pulled once again into this family's circle when Lilly asks for help with her brother. While Charlotte wants to help, she is more than aware that it is going to interfere with the success that she has found.

After the War is Over was an excellent read, although I will admit that it was a little different from what I was expecting. I thought there would be a stronger romance element, but what the novel provides is a very good sense of the turbulent atmosphere in the post-war era, especially for women.

I found it compelling that Robson decided to focus on women in the post-war era. So many war novels focused on how men came home broken after the war. Yes, this was part of *After the War Was Over*, but ultimately this book was about women during this period. In many ways Charlotte was restricted by her gender and you sense this in every aspect of her life, especially in her interactions with her friends at the boarding house where she resides.

Readers are treated to a lot of day-to-day activities of these woman, and perhaps these descriptions could be labeled dull. However, I really felt that this book offered a realistic and less romanticized version of women in during this period. The role of women during the war is often discussed in the classroom, but there are few popular titles where it has been so predominately explored, and I appreciate that fact in this book. For example, near the beginning of the novel Charlotte learns that she has received the right to vote, not the vote as we know it today, a by-election for Oxford University, but the satisfaction that Charlotte feels for jumping through all the hoops to actually cast her vote is palpable. It was these little details that made *After the War is Over* such a powerful read for me.

The area that didn't fall into place as expected was the romance aspect of the novel. It was quite clear from the book jacket that there was something going on between Charlotte and Edward; however, it really didn't play as strong a role as I would have expected it to. Really, it wasn't until closer to the end that readers saw

Charlotte and Edward interact with each other. The bulk of their interactions were related in flashbacks when Charlotte was employed by Edward as Lily's governess. Personally, I felt that there was a lot of material that could have been used to a stronger advantage in the romance department. I really would have liked the romance to have taken a more central role to the plot, but then again, I am a romance reader, so take that with a grain of salt.

After the War is Over is a compelling and interesting novel. It tackles a period that receives a lot of attention, and it does it in a way that I think will resonate with female readers. There's no battle scenes, but readers are taken to the front lines of women's fight for independence and their daily lives. I loved the powerful simplicity of *After the War is Over* and I think that anyone who enjoyed *Somewhere in France* will also love this one as will readers who enjoy character-driven historical fiction. Another highly recommended read.

Review originally published at The Book Adventures.

*Review copy provided by the publisher via Edelweiss.

Sandi *~The Pirate Wench~* says

Setting: Post World War I

Steam Factor: Mild

Charlotte Brown, is determined to leave the War after serving as a military nurse for four years and begin a new life.

The other women who live at her boarding house, as well as a budding friendship with a newspaper editor, has kept her busy.

But when a former student invites Charlotte to her wedding, she is drawn back into her old life.

Edward Neville-Ashford has returned from the War a shell of the man Charlotte originally fell in love with, but her work with traumatized veterans should enable her to help Edward heal and find the strength to fight for the love they once had.

While the author did a good job at capturing the atmosphere of post-WWI England with the changing social and political climate, and the rebuilding of the country in the aftermath of The Great War...I didn't enjoy this one as much as her first book.

I found the characters rather boring, and the whole story-plot just seemed to drag on and on.

I had put it down several times, thinking it was just my mood.

After picking it back up and finally finishing it with a "tad" bit of skipping..it still failed to grab me, and I felt I should have left well enough alone at the end of the first book.

But still..I've enjoyed this author's prose, and look forward to her next book:

Eliza Crewe says

Overall just plain dull. The main character's biggest flaw is that she is too good a person, only good things ever happen to her, and (spoiler alert) it all wraps up happily ever after without much fuss.

Ellen says

After World War I, the social fabric of England was changed, with women having worked jobs men had before the war, and class divisions questioned. Charlotte is a young, forward looking woman, a nurse during the war, intent on writing about the plight of soldiers as well as the poor. Having been a governess to Lilly, and falling for her aristocratic brother, Charlotte looks to find meaning in her life. I have read a lot of historical fiction, and found this story absorbing.

Sarah Kiley says

I would give this 2.5 stars if I could. I wanted to like this book. Alas, it simply wasn't to be. I really enjoyed Jennifer Robson's first book, *Somewhere in France*, so I was excited to find *After the War is Over*. Then I started to read it. The plot drags and quite frankly, the reader is never left in any doubt as to how this book will end. Furthermore, the main character Charlotte, is frankly, irritating in her perfection. I found myself wanting to stomp on her spectacles. I'm still looking forward to this author's next book, but I wouldn't recommend this one.

Elizabeth of Silver's Reviews says

Charlotte graduated from an elite college, became a governess, worked as a nurse during the war, worked in an office with a female boss who was a suffragist, and then became a journalist.

Charlotte's job as a governess turned out to be quite unpleasant, but she did meet a man she could never forget.

but wasn't able to marry him because of her class.

AFTER THE WAR IS OVER goes back and forth between Charlotte's younger years as a governess and then her present-day situation. I do enjoy books that move into the past and then come to the present, but the book dragged.

The cover pulled me in, but the book's content was not that enjoyable for me.

There was too much about social status and not enough of a plot even though the book was mainly about Charlotte's life. The writing style was good, but the lack of an interesting plot had me plodding through to see what happened. 3/5

This book was given to me free of charge and without compensation by the publisher in return for an honest

review.

Sarah says

2.5 stars. A meandering plot which never really goes anywhere peppered with uninteresting characters (though this excludes Charlotte who is actually a strong and admirable protagonist). I usually love historical fictions set in this time period, and while this was clearly very well researched and did include some interesting observations, some of the persistent attempts to imitate the language of the time period irritated me (especially when it was used out of character dialogue). I found the plot moved very slowly and it didn't grab me at any point - I struggled through waiting to be caught up in the time period, the romance or the struggle the characters were enduring, and didn't feel massively connected with any of it.

With all that said, I thought Robson did a good job in representing the struggle to recover in England following WW1, and particularly the difficulty for women in the workplace. Her details were exact, and while some elements didn't necessarily add much to the plot they were entertaining enough for their historical relevance. Not really my cup of tea but I think others could enjoy this more.

Melinda says

Robson's reminiscent description of post-War England is well done along character development.

Charlotte is an admirable liberal woman – university educated (Oxford graduate) only child of a vicar, nurse, intelligent and fiercely independent, a woman most would emulate. She's also a people pleaser, a woman wanting to make a greater impact in the world and those around her and this is where Charlotte hits a crossroads of sorts as she discovers the woman she is and her authentic desires. As you learn of Charlotte you discover she is a woman clearly ahead of her time with endless potential.

Robson reveals Charlotte's layers slowly and the more you learn of this intriguing woman the more you appreciate her quiet cerebral manner. Ambitious – she takes on women's rights, contributes a weekly column addressing the injustices individuals and families face during wartime. When she reunited with Edward she begins to question herself and her hearts desires. A coming of age story of a thirty something woman finally discovering and admitting her wants and needs in a time where the world is on the cusp of great change.

Robson masterfully address the fragile subject matter of 'shell shock' and its lingering presence. The perfect amount of romance combined with Charlotte's back story creates a charming narrative of an incredibly gifted woman in a difficult period of time.

A satisfying story with accurate depictions of WWI, suffrage, police strikes and the plights of family, affecting account of wartime in general.
