After the War is Over

by Jennifer Robson



About the Book

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.

Discussion Guide

1. Although Charlotte is the Oxford-educated daughter of an upper-middle-class clergyman, she seems certain that there is a huge gulf in status between her and Edward. Do you feel that was truly the case? Or is this more a reflection of her

own feelings of inadequacy?

2. Why do you think Charlotte is so devoted to her work? Do you admire her for her tenacity, or do you pity her for neglecting her personal happiness?

3. Do you agree with Charlotte?s decision to keep her friendship with John Ellis purely platonic?

4. How do you think you would have coped with the difficulties of the post-war period? Would you have been able to set them aside, as does Norma? Or would you be more like Meg and Rosie, and find it impossible to forget?

5. What did you think of the inclusion of Eleanor Rathbone, a real-life historical figure, in the novel? Do you like it when writers blend history with fiction in this manner? Or do you prefer the characters in a novel to be entirely fictitious?

6. Were you surprised that it takes so long for Edward?s friends and family to realize that he needs help? Do you think this is typical of veterans who suffered from psychological trauma at that time?

7. Do you feel that the gains made by women during the war were entirely lost in the post-war period? Do you think the war helped to accelerate change in any measurable way?

8. If you could choose to be poor and happy in the Britain of 1919, or wealthy and unhappy, which would you choose? And why?

9. Do you feel that Edward will be able to maintain his sobriety? Or will his experiences during the war forever haunt him?

10. Charlotte and Lilly each took action during the war in their roles as nurse and WAAC. Which of the two women is most changed by her experiences? Which role do you think you would have taken on if given the choice?

Author Bio

Jennifer Robson is the *Globe & Mail* and *Toronto Star* #1 bestselling author of seven novels, among them THE GOWN and SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE. She holds a doctorate in British history from the University of Oxford and lives in Toronto, Canada, with her husband and children.

Critical Praise

?Continuing with the skill and grace she exhibited in her bestselling debut SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE, Jennifer Robson returns with mastery once more to the World War I era...Robson does more than personalize the unfathomable; she evokes true beauty by showing the hope and courage in rebuilding lives and the promise of a world born anew. This is a moving and memorable book.?

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