

mary wesley the camomile lawn

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Mary Wesley's novel *The Camomile Lawn* is a compelling exploration of love, loss, memory, and the enduring impact of history on personal lives. Set against the backdrop of World War II and its aftermath, the story intricately weaves the lives of multiple generations of characters, revealing how their experiences are shaped by the tumultuous events of the 20th century. This article delves into the themes, characters, narrative structure, and literary significance of Wesley's acclaimed work, providing a comprehensive understanding of what makes *The Camomile Lawn* a timeless classic.

Overview of Mary Wesley and The Camomile Lawn

Who was Mary Wesley?

Mary Wesley (1912–2002) was a celebrated British author known for her witty, insightful, and often poignant novels. Her literary career blossomed later in life; she published her first novel at the age of 70, which quickly gained critical acclaim. Wesley's writing is characterized by its vivid portrayals of human relationships, nuanced characters, and a keen sense of humor. Her works often explore themes of love, aging, and the complexities of family life.

Introduction to The Camomile Lawn

Published in 1984, *The Camomile Lawn* is Wesley's most renowned novel. It is notable for its rich narrative that spans several decades, capturing the lives of the Taverner family and their friends. The novel's title refers to a specific area of the family's estate, symbolizing continuity, change, and the natural cycles of life. Wesley skillfully combines elements of historical fiction with an intimate family saga, resulting in a story that is both grand in scope and deeply personal.

Thematic Exploration

Memory and the Passage of Time

Memory plays a central role in *The Camomile Lawn*. The narrative is structured around the recollections of the characters, often reflecting on their youth during the war and how those experiences influence their present lives. Wesley emphasizes that memories are fluid, sometimes distorted by time, yet they remain vital to understanding oneself.

Love and Relationships

The novel examines various forms of love—romantic, familial, and platonic—and how they evolve over time. Wesley portrays love as complex and often intertwined with loss and regret. The relationships between characters such as Colonel Harry Taverner, his children, and their friends highlight the enduring human desire for connection.

War and Its Aftermath

Set during and after World War II, the story explores the profound effects of war on individuals and communities. Wesley captures the emotional scars, the upheaval of social norms, and the resilience of those who endured it. The war acts as both a literal and symbolic backdrop, representing chaos and the potential for renewal.

Nature and the Environment

The natural landscape, especially the garden and the titular camomile lawn, symbolizes growth, change, and continuity. Wesley's poetic descriptions of nature serve as metaphors for the characters' emotional states and life cycles.

Characters and Their Development

The Taverner Family

The central characters are members of the Taverner family, whose lives are interwoven across generations.

- **Harry Taverner:** The patriarch, a former soldier and a man of steadfast principles. His experiences during the war influence his outlook on life and family.
- **Clara Taverner:** Harry's wife, whose resilience and nurturing nature provide stability to the family.
- **Hugh Taverner:** Their son, whose personal struggles and romantic entanglements drive much of the novel's emotional depth.

- **Magnolia Taverner:** Hugh's sister, whose independent spirit and relationships reflect changing social norms.

Supporting Characters

The novel also features a cast of friends, lovers, and servants, each contributing to the multifaceted portrayal of life in wartime and post-war Britain.

- **Pauline:** Hugh's love interest, representing youthful innocence and the complexities of desire.
- **Gus:** A gardener, whose connection to the land and nature underscores the novel's themes of growth and renewal.
- **Other friends and neighbors:** Their interactions highlight community bonds and societal changes.

Character Arcs

Throughout the novel, characters undergo significant development, often confronting their pasts, reassessing relationships, and seeking meaning in their later years. Wesley masterfully portrays these transformations, emphasizing that life is a continual process of learning and adaptation.

Narrative Structure and Literary Devices

Multiple Perspectives and Nonlinear Timeline

The Camomile Lawn employs a multi-voice narrative, shifting perspectives among different characters. The story is also non-linear, with flashbacks and memories interwoven with present-day events. This structure allows Wesley to explore how past experiences influence current realities.

Symbolism and Motifs

Key symbols include:

- The camomile lawn: representing continuity, healing, and the cycles of life.
- The garden: a metaphor for personal growth and the nurturing of relationships.
- The land and nature: emphasizing resilience and the passage of time.

Use of Nature and Setting

The detailed descriptions of the Cornish landscape serve as more than mere scenery; they mirror characters' inner worlds and evoke a sense of nostalgia and permanence amid change.

Historical Context and Its Influence

World War II in Britain

The war's impact on Britain was profound, affecting social structures, gender roles, and personal identities. Wesley captures these upheavals with authenticity, illustrating how war reshaped the lives of ordinary people.

Post-War Society and Change

The novel explores the societal shifts following WWII, including changing attitudes toward class, marriage, and gender equality. Wesley's portrayal of these changes reflects her keen awareness of historical developments.

Historical Accuracy and Artistic License

While Wesley's depiction of wartime Britain is rooted in historical fact, she balances realism with storytelling, ensuring the narrative remains engaging and emotionally resonant.

The Literary Significance of The Camomile Lawn

Reception and Critical Acclaim

Upon publication, the novel received widespread praise for its lyrical prose, intricate characterizations, and evocative portrayal of wartime Britain. It is considered a significant contribution to British literary fiction.

Themes Resonating Across Generations

The universal themes of love, memory, and change ensure that *The Camomile Lawn* remains relevant to contemporary readers, emphasizing the enduring nature of human experience.

Adaptations and Cultural Impact

The novel was adapted into a successful television series, further cementing its place in popular culture. The adaptation highlighted Wesley's vivid storytelling and the novel's visual richness.

Legacy of Mary Wesley

Wesley's late-blooming literary career and her ability to capture the intricacies of human relationships have inspired many writers. *The Camomile Lawn* stands as a testament to her literary talent and her insight into the human condition.

Conclusion

Mary Wesley's *The Camomile Lawn* is a masterful work that deftly captures the complexities of love, memory, and resilience across generations. Through its rich characters, evocative settings, and layered narrative, the novel offers a profound meditation on how personal histories intertwine with larger historical events. Wesley's storytelling, marked by her lyrical prose and keen psychological insight, ensures that *The Camomile Lawn* remains a beloved classic in British literature. Its exploration of life's cyclical nature, set against the enduring backdrop of the natural world, makes it a compelling read for anyone interested in the enduring power of human connection amid change and upheaval.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of Mary Wesley's novel 'The Camomile Lawn'?

The novel explores themes of family, war, love, and the passage of time, focusing on how these elements shape the lives of the characters across multiple generations.

How does 'The Camomile Lawn' depict the impact of World War II on its characters?

The novel vividly portrays the disruptions, losses, and emotional scars caused by World War II, highlighting how the war influences relationships, decisions, and the characters' perspectives on life and love.

What role does setting play in 'The Camomile Lawn'?

Set primarily on the Cornish coast, the seaside landscape provides a picturesque backdrop that symbolizes both stability and change, reflecting the characters' personal journeys and

the passage of time.

Why is Mary Wesley considered a significant author in contemporary fiction?

Mary Wesley is celebrated for her witty, engaging storytelling, her ability to explore complex family dynamics, and her unique perspective on morality and societal norms, which resonate with modern readers.

Are there any adaptations of 'The Camomile Lawn'?

Yes, 'The Camomile Lawn' was adapted into a successful television series in 1992, which brought the story to a wider audience and highlighted its enduring themes.

How does Mary Wesley's writing style in 'The Camomile Lawn' differ from other historical or family dramas?

Wesley's writing is known for its witty, sharp dialogue, vivid characterizations, and a nuanced exploration of moral ambiguities, making her work stand out among other family sagas.

What is the significance of the camomile lawn in the novel?

The camomile lawn symbolizes innocence, resilience, and the enduring nature of memory, serving as a central motif that ties together the characters' histories and personal growth.

Additional Resources

Mary Wesley and The Camomile Lawn: A Timeless Tale of Love, War, and Resilience

Introduction

Mary Wesley, renowned for her compelling storytelling and evocative prose, left an indelible mark on British literature with her novel *The Camomile Lawn*. Published in 1984, the book is celebrated for its intricate character development, vivid portrayal of wartime Britain, and its exploration of themes such as love, loss, and the passage of time. As a writer who began her literary career relatively late in life, Wesley's work exemplifies a unique blend of wit, wisdom, and poignancy, making *The Camomile Lawn* a quintessential read for those interested in historical fiction and character-driven narratives.

Understanding Mary Wesley: Life and Literary Journey

Early Life and Background

Mary Wesley was born in 1912 in England, into a family with a rich literary and artistic heritage. Her early life was marked by privilege, yet she experienced personal tragedies, including the death of her father and the upheaval of World War II, which profoundly influenced her worldview and writing. Wesley's life spanned nearly a century, and her experiences navigating societal changes provided her with a deep well of insights into human nature.

Late Literary Debut and Career

Unlike many authors who publish early in their lives, Wesley's literary debut came in her sixties, with her first novel *Jumping the Queue* published in 1973. Her later start did not hinder her success; instead, it allowed her to bring a wealth of life experience into her writing. Over the next two decades, she authored numerous novels, characterized by their wit, keen observations, and richly drawn characters. Her reputation grew steadily, culminating in her most acclaimed work, *The Camomile Lawn*.

Writing Style and Themes

Mary Wesley's writing is distinguished by its elegant prose, sharp wit, and compassionate portrayal of her characters. She often explored themes such as:

- Memory and nostalgia: Reflecting on the past and its influence on present identities.
- Love and relationships: From romantic entanglements to familial bonds.
- War and its aftermath: Particularly the impact of World War II on British society.
- Resilience and survival: Characters overcoming adversity with wit and perseverance.

Her narrative style balances humor with tragedy, creating stories that are both entertaining and deeply reflective.

The Camomile Lawn: An Overview

Plot Summary

The Camomile Lawn spans several decades, focusing on the lives of a group of cousins and their families in Cornwall. The story unfolds against the backdrop of World War II, capturing the upheaval and emotional toll of wartime, and transitions into the post-war years, highlighting societal change and personal growth.

The novel's central narrative revolves around the summer of 1939, as the characters prepare to leave for the war, and then follows their lives through the war years and beyond. The title refers to the lawn where the camomile plants are cultivated—a symbol of resilience and the enduring nature of life amidst chaos.

Key characters include:

- Hester: A strong-willed woman whose life is marked by love and loss.
- Leo: Her brother, whose military service and personal choices influence his destiny.
- Grace: A cousin with a complicated romantic history.
- Cal, Pip, and other family members: Each with their own stories of love, betrayal, and resilience.

The narrative weaves their stories together, revealing how wartime and personal history shape their identities.

Major Themes and Motifs

- The Passage of Time: The novel explores how characters change over decades, grappling with memories and regrets.
- War and Its Impact: The upheaval of WWII serves as both a literal and metaphorical backdrop, affecting relationships and personal trajectories.
- Resilience and Renewal: Despite hardships, characters find ways to rebuild their lives, symbolized by the enduring camomile lawn.
- Nature and Symbolism: The recurring motif of the garden and plants reflects growth, resilience, and the cyclical nature of life.

Historical Context and Significance

Set during a tumultuous period in British history, *The Camomile Lawn* offers a nuanced portrayal of the societal shifts wrought by war. Wesley's depiction of Cornwall provides an idyllic yet realistic setting, emphasizing the contrast between natural beauty and human conflict. The novel's detailed historical context lends authenticity and depth, making it both a compelling family saga and a reflection on national identity.

Critical Reception and Literary Significance

Reception at the Time of Publication

Upon its release, *The Camomile Lawn* was praised for its elegant prose, compelling characters, and evocative sense of place. Critics lauded Wesley's ability to blend historical detail with personal stories, creating a rich tapestry that resonated with readers.

Notable reviews highlighted:

- Wesley's mastery in capturing the nuances of human emotion.

- The novel's vivid portrayal of Cornwall as a character in itself.
- Its insightful exploration of how history and personal memory intertwine.

Legacy and Influence

The *Camomile Lawn* has remained a beloved classic in British literature, inspiring adaptations, including a successful television series in 1992. Wesley's portrayal of resilient characters navigating love and loss has influenced subsequent writers in the genre of historical family sagas.

Her work is often studied for its:

- Sophisticated narrative technique.
- Rich character development.
- Exploration of themes relevant across generations.

Wesley's late-blooming literary career serves as an inspiration, demonstrating that impactful storytelling can emerge at any age.

Adaptations and Cultural Impact

Television Adaptation

The 1992 BBC television adaptation of *The Camomile Lawn* brought Wesley's story to a wider audience. The series was praised for its fidelity to the novel, its lush cinematography of Cornwall, and its stellar cast. It introduced Wesley's nuanced characters to viewers unfamiliar with her work, cementing her status as a significant figure in British cultural history.

Influence on Literature and Popular Culture

Wesley's portrayal of wartime Britain and her focus on personal resilience have influenced authors and filmmakers. Her depiction of Cornwall's landscapes has contributed to the region's cultural identity and literary tradition. The novel's themes continue to resonate, especially in contemporary discussions about memory, trauma, and recovery.

Conclusion: The Enduring Legacy of Mary Wesley and *The Camomile Lawn*

Mary Wesley's *The Camomile Lawn* is more than just a historical novel; it is a meditation on

the resilience of the human spirit amid chaos and change. Wesley's storytelling, characterized by its elegance and emotional depth, captures the complexities of love, war, and memory with grace and insight. Her work remains a testament to the power of storytelling to preserve history, evoke emotion, and inspire resilience.

In an era where narratives often focus on immediate gratification, Wesley's novel reminds us of the enduring nature of human relationships and the importance of reflecting on our shared histories. As a late-blooming author, her success underscores that life's most meaningful stories can be written at any age, making her legacy all the more inspiring for readers and writers alike.

In sum, Mary Wesley and *The Camomile Lawn* exemplify the enduring power of literature to explore the depths of human experience, weaving together personal and collective histories into a tapestry that continues to resonate across generations.

Mary Wesley The Camomile Lawn

mary wesley the camomile lawn: The Camomile Lawn, by Mary Wesley (2 Cassettes).

Mary Wesley, Sian* Phillips,

mary wesley the camomile lawn: The Camomile Lawn Mary Wesley, 2013-11-12

International Bestseller: A novel of youthful love and loss and "a powerful evocation of the war years" in England (The Guardian). On a hot August evening in 1939, cousins Oliver, Calypso, Polly, Walter, and Sophy spent one last night together, celebrating the end of summer, at the home of their aunt and uncle. Now, forty years later, as the motley cast of characters drive to the funeral of one of their own, they recall how important that night truly was—and all that came after. From Oliver, whose desperation to prove himself in war ended up as his downfall, to Calypso, whose flirtations landed her in an unlikely marriage with even less likely results, to Sophy, whose secrets from that night haunted her for the rest of her life, each of them recalls the twisted paths of love and betrayal they walked as the country came apart around them under the coming shadow of World War II. Mary Wesley masterfully interweaves tragedy and humor in this "extraordinarily accomplished and fast-moving" novel, presenting a tale of both the world at large and the dalliances, allegiances, and losses of her expertly crafted characters (Financial Times).

mary wesley the camomile lawn: Mary Wesley's The Camomile Lawn Paul Eddington,

Felicity Kendal, 2008

mary wesley the camomile lawn: The Camomile Lawn Mary Wesley, 2016-09-27

Escape to the Cornish cliffs in the dizzying heat of August 1939, where five cousins are making the most of the last summer of their youth. Oliver is just back from the Spanish Civil War and world-weary at only nineteen. Calypso is gorgeous, utterly selfish and determined to marry for money. Polly and Walter, brother and sister, play their cards close to their chests. Then there's little Sophie, who nobody loves. Soon the world will be swept into war again and the five cousins will enter a whirligig of sex, infidelity, love and loss, but for now they have one last, gaspingly hot summer at the house by the cliffs with the camomile lawn. A beloved bestseller from an author ahead of her time, *The Camomile Lawn* is a waspishly witty, devil-may-care delight.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: Mary Wesley Omnibus Mary Wesley, 1992

mary wesley the camomile lawn: The Collected Novels Volume One Mary Wesley,

2018-11-27 Three touching contemporary British novels of love, loss, and humor from the international bestselling "virtuoso" (The Times, London). *Jumping the Queue*: This masterpiece of wit, humor, and psychological suspense tells the story of a middle-aged widow who has had it with

life. She puts her papers in order, gives away her pet goose, packs a picnic lunch, and heads to the beach to drown herself—only to meet a criminal on the run who has the same idea. Together they set out on adventure in this novel about the hidden costs of love and death. *The Camomile Lawn*: In this international bestseller, several cousins reunite after forty years to lay one of their own to rest. Together they recall their last carefree summer—and one hot August night in 1939 before the war began. They also reflect on the chaos that followed . . . and how it changed their lives forever.

Harnessing Peacocks: Single mother Hebe juggles numerous lovers while working as a manor house chef to pay for her son's schooling. When her two worlds collide, a secret from the past leads to a final showdown with a man who's in search for his lost love in this captivating and sensual novel.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *Not That Sort of Girl* Mary Wesley, 2013-11-12 From the bestselling author of *The Camomile Lawn* comes the “amusing” story of a widow reflecting on her past as she looks toward a new future (Publishers Weekly). Rose Peel had never loved her husband. Their marriage had simply made sense, being built on honor and respect and mutual needs. But love was not a part of their union—for Rose has always kept that part of herself for Mylo Cooper, whom she was forbidden to marry. Upon the death of her husband, Rose suddenly finds herself free after almost fifty years of marriage. But as she reflects on her life—her passionate adoration of Mylo, the promises she made to her husband, the lies they both told each other, the tragedies she survived, and the joy she shared—she finds herself unsure of her next step, or what she truly wants. A finalist for the Sunday Express Book of the Year Award, *Not That Sort of Girl* is an unforgettable and emotional triumph of Wesley's one-of-a-kind insight and vivid characterization.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *Jumping the Queue* Mary Wesley, 2013-11-12 A “quirky, sad, and very funny” novel about suicide, matricide, and an unlikely love, from one of England's best-loved authors (The Guardian). Determined to end it all after the death of her husband, Matilda Poliport's carefully laid plans to kill herself are derailed when she comes to the rescue of another potential bridge jumper—a notorious young man on the run for having murdered his mother. Faced with the choice of either turning him in to the police or continuing on with her suicide attempt, Matilda makes the obvious decision and takes Hugh Warner home to stay with her while they both sort out what to do next. As Hugh and Matilda find surprising comfort in each other, secrets about Matilda's deceased husband are revealed, leaving Matilda to face some very uncomfortable facts about her life. And as the pair plot to help Hugh escape the law, they will both need to face the truth about themselves and how far they are willing to go for each other. This “virtuoso performance of guileful plotting, deft characterizations, and malicious wit” showcases the talents of Mary Wesley at her caustic and comical best (The Times, London).

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *Entranced by Story* Hugh Crago, 2014-04-24 We live in a world of stories; yet few of us pause to ask what stories actually are, why we consume them so avidly, and what they do for story makers and their audiences. This book focuses on the experiences that good stories generate: feelings of purposeful involvement, elevation, temporary loss of self, vicarious emotion, and relief of tension. The author examines what drives writers to create stories and why readers fall under their spell; why some children grow up to be writers; and how the capacity for creating and comprehending stories develops from infancy right through into old age. *Entranced by Story* applies recent research on brain function to literary examples ranging from the *Iliad* and *Wuthering Heights* to *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, providing a groundbreaking exploration of the biological and neurological basis of the literary experience. Blending research, theory, and biographical anecdote, the author shows how it is the unique structure of the human brain, with its layering of sophisticated cognitive capacities upon archaic, emotion-driven functions, which best explains the mystery of story.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *The Camomile Lawn* Mary Wesley, Carole Boyde, 1989

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *Making an Exhibition of Myself: the autobiography of Peter Hall* Peter Hall, 2000-03-01 The story of a railway worker's son who became one of the most powerful, outspoken and charismatic figures in European theatre. Sir Peter Hall has been director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, artistic director of Glyndebourne, and director of Britain's

National Theatre from 1973 to 1988. He has directed over 150 productions of plays, operas and films, and now runs his own acclaimed theatre company.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: A Circular Walk Around Lamorna and the Merry Maidens ,

mary wesley the camomile lawn: Part of the Furniture Mary Wesley, 2013-11-12 A smart, sharply written novel from a talent whose “fresh and original” works made her one of England’s most beloved authors (The New York Times). Abandoned by her mother and betrayed by the men she thought she loved, Juno Marlowe is alone. So alone that when the air raid sirens ring out, she has nowhere to hide until a kind but frail man offers to take her in for the night. Her sad story inspires him to write her a letter of introduction to his family—a caring gesture that will turn out to mean more than she could have imagined. With nowhere to call home, she seeks out the man’s father, Robert Copplestone, who lives on a quiet Cornwall estate where Juno is able to earn her keep by helping him tend to his animals. And she soon finds that the strong, handsome widower is more of a friend than she’s ever had and more like family than anyone she’s ever known. But when Juno’s fractured past catches up with her, the fragile and unlikely bond Robert and Juno have formed may be in danger of breaking under the strain. This “heartwarming story of May-December love” is a gentle look at the folly of humanity, weaving a tale of friendship, love, and healing (Publishers Weekly). “An elegant, satisfying entertainment.” —Kirkus Reviews

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *The forgotten French* Nicholas Atkin, 2013-07-19 This electronic version has been made available under a Creative Commons (BY-NC-ND) open access license. It is widely assumed that the French in the British Isles during the Second World War were fully fledged supporters of General de Gaulle, and that, across the channel at least, the French were a ‘nation of resisters’. This study reveals that most exiles were on British soil by chance rather than by design, and that many were not sure whether to stay. Overlooked by historians, who have concentrated on the ‘Free French’ of de Gaulle, these were the ‘Forgotten French’: refugees swept off the beaches of Dunkirk; servicemen held in camps after the Franco-German armistice; Vichy consular officials left to cater for their compatriots; and a sizeable colonist community based mainly in London. Drawing on little-known archival sources, this study examines the hopes and fears of those communities who were bitterly divided among themselves, some being attracted to Pétain as much as to de Gaulle.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *Departure Lounge* Robert Laurence, 2014-02-25 The mid-Eighties. No cell phones, no email, no caller ID, no GPS. It was easier then to pass without notice, to be out of touch, to get lost. The Berlin Wall still stood, as did the World Trade Center, and Michael Reid embarks on what even he concedes to be a spate of obsessive travel: Scandinavia, the Persian Gulf, South Asia, back home to the Ozarks, then off again to Greece, Eastern Europe and Egypt. Along the way, he writes letters about what he’s seeing and what he’s thinking to three friends: Anna Browning, a mathematician in Tallahassee, who thinks of Michael less fondly than he thinks of her; Richard Randolph, Michael’s baseball-watching pal, who leads a comfortable—perhaps too comfortable—life as a law professor in Albuquerque; and Marie Cochran, a middle-school social studies teacher in rural New Mexico, who is Michael’s on-again-off-again lover. These three all know Michael, but they don’t know each other. And, against the background of Michael’s travels and his letters, their lives become curiously, even mysteriously, intertwined, changed in ways that Michael himself can’t imagine.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *The Hidden Places of Cornwall* Peter Long, Joanna Billing, 2002 The book is printed in full colour and includes detailed directional maps, eye-catching photographs and is packed with details of places to eat, drink and stay. All the main tourist attractions are included, as well as less well-known places in this beautiful county.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *The Power of Words* (3) Stilovsky, Schrodinger, 2020-05-26 Literature of all kinds plays such an important place in our lives whether it’s biography, classics, crime or poetry. In this non-fiction volume you will find a mine of facts which will fascinate all who love books. Felix Schrödinger and Pyotr Stilovsky have compiled in this, the sixth volume of the

series, a compendium of information that will appeal to all who love language and especially those who seek out knowledge for its own sake.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *Harnessing Peacocks* Mary Wesley, 2013-11-12 A young single mother funds her son's education in a most unusual way in this "delightfully lighthearted" novel from a beloved bestselling author (Kirkus Reviews). Ever since a pregnant and unmarried Hebe was forced to leave her grandparents' home in disgrace, she has put the needs of her son, Silas, first. Paying his tuition to an elite prep school comes before everything, and she will do whatever it takes to make ends meet—even offering some quite singular services to the sons and sons-in-law of the wealthy women she cooks for. But Hebe's plans soon go awry when her son winds up in an uncomfortable situation with the family of a school friend, her lucrative side business of is awkwardly interrupted—and her hopefully forgotten past reappears at the most inconvenient time . . . A delightful look into the love between mothers and sons, friends and relatives, lovers and spouses, *Harnessing Peacocks* is a warm and witty look at relationships that will amuse as it inspires.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *A Sensible Life* Mary Wesley, 2013-11-12 This "engaging and memorable novel," set in post-WWI England and France, takes a wise, witty look at love, growing up, and class differences (Publishers Weekly). For the British families who vacation there, the shore town of Dinard, France, is a getaway from the ills of modern life. But when Flora Trevelyan visits with her self-absorbed parents in 1926, it's not an escape she finds—instead, it's a doorway into a different world, a different life, that she never knew existed. As the years pass, Flora embarks on a journey of discovery, from falling for three very different young men to understanding the follies of an upper class society of which she will never quite be a part to uncovering the difference between true friends and fair-weather companions. Along the way, her own life and those of her new acquaintances will be upended, and as the shadows of World War II fall over Europe, Flora will have to decide what kind of person she wants to be—and whether being sensible makes sense. Praised by the *Daily Telegraph* as "delicious," Mary Wesley's sharply humorous coming-of-age story weaves a tale of an unloved, neglected child who turns into a fiercely independent woman, both an entertaining romp and an astute glimpse into British society between the two World Wars.

mary wesley the camomile lawn: *Daily Lives of Civilians in Wartime Twentieth-Century Europe* Nicholas Atkin, 2008-08-30 Expert contributors write on the experiences of civilians who lived through occupation and bloodshed in the First World War; the Russians who lived or died during the the devastating civil war in 1917-1922, leading eventually to the terrors of Stalinism; the Spaniards of many factions who fought against each other in bloody civil wars; the ordinary people of France, Germany, Britain, Italy and other countries who faced the hardship and horrors of the Second World War; and the ethnic- and religious-based fighting and atrocities, often targeted at civilians, in the former Yugoslavia from 1991 into the twenty-first century. Carefully selected sources for further research help users find additional information on civilian life during these events. Expert contributors write on the experiences of civilians in the many wars of twentieth-century Europe. Among the events discussed are the Europeans who lived through occupation and bloodshed in the First World War; the Russians who lived and died in the devastating civil war in 1917-1922, leading eventually to the terrors of Stalinism; the Spaniards of many factions who fought against each other in bloody civil wars; the ordinary people of France, Germany, Britain, Italy and other countries who faced the hardship and horrors of the Second World War; and the ethnic- and religious-based fighting and atrocities, often targeted at civilians, in the former Yugoslavia from 1991 into the twenty-first century. Carefully selected sources for further research help users find additional information on civilian life during these events. Chapters including vivid accounts of civilians' roles and experiences through wars in twentieth-century Europe are supplemented by recommended print and online resources for further study, a glossary defining important terms and concepts, and a timeline putting events into a chronological context.

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