

Patron: Lord Cobbold DL
Ivry, Lady Freyberg
Nicholas Cobbold OBE

THE VOICE FROM THE GARDEN

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I must declare an interest! I knew this book was coming and as a Cobbold family historian I awaited it, well loaded with high expectation. I was not disappointed. But, I hear you say, you would say that wouldn't you? Well, yes I would but my enthusiasm goes much further than that.

Certainly *The Voice from the Garden*, which is the story of Pamela Cobbold and Charles Hambro, is a family history extravaganza full of the apparently inevitable pains and pleasures that accompany us all from crib to coffin but it is much more; the heroine loved her man but she loved life too. The characters, all from wealthy backgrounds, whether trade or title, worked hard and played hard but privilege did not protect them from pestilence, the horror of war or the turmoil of financial markets.

Our players move between the City and Sweden; between Suffolk and Scotland with the influence of New York never far away. Lives are played out against the intense and extraordinary events of the first two decades of the 20th Century when, had it been a play, the scenery was always being moved and in no time the old order was replaced with an unfamiliar new.

I enjoyed this book. The style of writing suited me and it sped passed me like a good film, over before it had begun, leaving me satisfied but wanting more. There may be some who, in this age of quest for the lowest common denominator, are uncomfortable with its focus on wealthy people but that is never a reason not to write about them. Their story of life, love and social change asked to be told and the telling has been fairly and sensitively accomplished. In my view a 'must read' for all Cobbold and Hambro followers; but I did declare my interest!

Pamela Cobbold is #452 on the family tree.

Anthony Cobbold.

