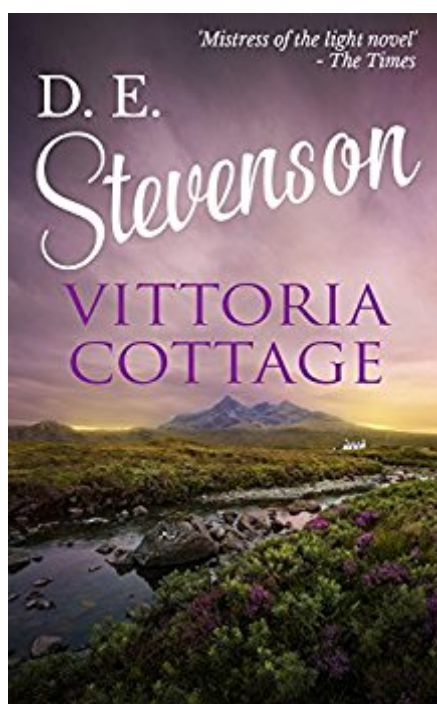


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# Vittoria Cottage (Drumberley Book 1)



## Synopsis

Since being widowed, Caroline Dering has been content to live her life solely for her children: her beloved son, James, due back soon from Malaya, and her daughters, Leda and Bobbie. Then the mysterious Robert Shepperton arrives in the village. At first, Caroline's gentle heart is simply touched by his obvious unhappiness; until gradually she finds her sympathy turning into love. But the visit of her lovely younger sister, Harriet, to Vittoria Cottage, throws Caroline into a turmoil â because Harriet also falls for Mr. Shepperton â | It was not until now, when she thought she had lost Robert, that Caroline discovered how much he meant to her â | she looked back and tried to determine exactly when her friendship for him had grown into love. But it seemed to Caroline that she had loved him always. She loved him in all sorts of different ways: she admired his character and enjoyed his humour, she felt an immense tenderness towards him and her heart beat faster when he was there. These feelings were so strong that they were difficult to disguise â | But with her beloved, glamorous sister Harriet evidently winning his friendship and admiration, what can be done â |? Vittoria Cottage is a charming Scottish romance. It is followed by Music in the Hills and Shoulder the Sky. Praise for D E Stevenson â "Consistently charming" â™ The Times â "Mistress of the light novel" â™ The Times. D. E. Stevenson (1892â "1973), Dorothy Emily Peploe (married name) was a Scottish author of more than 40 light romantic novels. Her father was the lighthouse engineer David Alan Stevenson, first cousin to the author Robert Louis Stevenson. Her books include: Anna and her Daughters; Vittoria Cottage; Music in the Hills, Shoulder the Sky; and Amberwell. Endeavour Press is the UK's leading independent digital publisher. For more information on our titles please sign up to our newsletter at [www.endeavourpress.com](http://www.endeavourpress.com). Each week you will receive updates on free and discounted ebooks. Follow us on Twitter: @EndeavourPress and on Facebook via <http://on.fb.me/1HweQV7>. We are always interested in hearing from our readers. Endeavour Press believes that the future is now.

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## Customer Reviews

Caroline Dering, who has accepted her widowhood in her typically placid way, moves contentedly through her days in Vittoria Cottage. Not even the escapades and frequent personality clashes of her young adult daughters can mar her serenity. Such moments do, however, intensify her longing for the return of her son James from a three-year tour of duty in Malaya. Robert Shepperton strolls into her life early in the story. He is somewhat of an enigma in the small, gossipy village, but the friendship between Robert and Caroline grows with disarming ease. However, not until her vivacious sister Harriet returns to Vittoria Cottage for R & R does Caroline realize that her feelings for Robert are deeper than she suspected. She watches helplessly as a friendship develops between Robert and Harriet. Set in post-war England and told with the usual D. E. Stevenson charm, the story leads naturally into its sequels, *Music in the Hills* and *Shoulder the Sky*.

This book is a sentimental favorite of mine. When I was growing up, D.E. Stevenson was one of my favorite writers. She is not someone who writes dazzling prose, but she knows how to tell a good story about realistic characters, and I think she does so with enormous kindness and insight. I loved this book in particular because one of the characters, Harriet Fane, has a niece who is young and selfish. Harriet gives her niece some spot-on advice about how to deal with adversity (the niece was engaged, and her fiance broke it off to marry someone else instead). It was good advice, but the niece ignored it. Later on in the story, Harriet runs into some adversity of her own, and she takes her own advice. I loved that. I even named my first cat after Harriet because it impressed me so much. Rereading the story decades later, I still enjoyed it very much. I don't think I'm alone. If you look at the Kindle books by D.E. Stevenson, you will notice that most of them are in the \$10 range. Demand drives the prices. Even though this is a woman who died in the 1970s and wrote generally about people a few decades before that, especially around World War II, her work remains relevant. She

was obviously someone who understood people. She was also religious and deeply spiritual, but not in a preachy or obnoxious sense. Her books are like comfort food. If you feel discouraged and sad, she's a good person to read. Reading her books is like someone sitting down with you and having a good visit.

I seem to be on a D E Stevenson kick these days. I have read, reread, and loved the two other novels in this series, *Music in the Hills* and *Shoulder the Sky*, but back in the bad old days of searching used book stores for her novels, this book was not to be found. Seems I'm not the only one who loves D E Stevenson. *The Cottage* is home of Caroline Dering, one of four sisters. She is a widow now with three children. Her husband was a whiny, unhappy, selfish wretch, but he had the decency to die early and leave her well off. Her son James, the light of her life, is off in Malaya fighting insurgents. Her spoiled daughters Leda and Bobbie treat her as if her only purpose in life is to serve them. Finally her famous sister, the actress Harriet Fane, yanks her out of this dull existence and brings her up to London for some fun. Her sister Jean married a rich American and is out of the picture. The most interesting sister IMHO, is Mamie Johnstone, married to a sheep farmer in the Scottish border country. She is mentioned, but doesn't make an appearance until the next two books, where she is a major character. I think Mamie Johnstone is one of the most fascinating female characters in all fiction. The groundwork is laid for the other two books, but it is complete in itself. A romance for the pretty young widow is the core of the story, and it is very satisfying indeed. I love D E Stevenson and am very happy to find her books becoming available in Kindle format. Someday I will find that my favorite of her novels, *The English Air*, is available for Kindle, and that will be a happy day. Anyone who wants to find out what life in England was like between the wars, during WWII, and immediately after, would do worse than to look to D E Stevenson for a pattern. She lived it, and she wrote about it brilliantly.

This first book in the Drumberley series is actually NOT set in Drumberley Scotland, but rather it is largely set in a small village in England. But it introduces us to many of the characters who will feature in the further books in the series, *Music in the Hills* and *Shoulder the Sky*. Like all books by D. E. Stevenson, the descriptions of the locations are a delight and the characters are real and multi-dimensional and the reader cares about them. We see England shortly after WWII ended, when rationing is still a major factor. Caroline, a widow who lives in Vittoria Cottage with her two unmarried daughters is expecting her beloved son, James, home from battle. It is a peaceful book about basically nice people living in an imperfect world and doing their best to carry on. If you have

encountered the magic of D. E. Stevenson (Dorothy Emily) before you will be delighted to discover this eBook reissue of one of her mid-career novels, and will rush to read this and move on to the rest of the series! A window back to a different time, often considered a simpler time, but we learn that all times have their own difficulties, and it isn't what happens to you that matters as much as how you deal with troubles! Highly recommended.

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