

● **Summersdale Revivals Press Release** ●

Here's the *original* Brits-moving-to-France-and-renovating-property-book!
A bestseller in 1935, now reissued – but, were things all that different, even then?

PUBLICATION DATE: 4th MAY 2009



Perfume from Provence

by
Lady Fortescue

ISBN: 978 1 84024 739 8 Paperback 320 pages £7.99 May 2009

"The hand-shaking in Provence is most exhausting. My hand was shaken at least sixty times a day, shaken in greeting, in parting, and on every possible pretext, by every variety of hand in every possible condition of dirt ..."

Here's the original story of a British couple falling for France, moving there and renovating a property and a garden! When *Perfume from Provence* was first published in 1935 with charming illustrations by E H Shepard (illustrator of the Winnie-the-Pooh books), Lady Fortescue soon had a best-seller on her hands!

So – 54 years before the publication of Peter Mayle's "A Year in Provence" and even longer before TV programmes such as "A Place in the Sun" – were things all that different back then ...?

With the pound sterling being at an all time low and the depressed economy of 1930s Britain (sound familiar?), Sir John and Lady Fortescue opted to emigrate to the warm climate and the cheaper cost of living of the South of France. (A dream still shared by modern-day Francophiles.) They found a stone house amid olive groves, high in the hills above Nice. Almost at once they were bewitched by the landscape and especially their garden – delightful terraces of vines, wild flowers, roses and lavender – and the charming, warm-hearted and wily Provençals.

Lady Fortescue's witty account of the trials and tribulations of restoring and extending a house, dealing with stonemasons, craftsmen, gardeners and builders in a foreign language – as well as adapting to a new way of life – will also sound familiar to many 21st century expats!

Perfume from Provence is a charming and surprising read with broad appeal – but particularly for those who love gardens and the south of France.

Author, Lady Fortescue (1888 – 1951) was an actress who rubbed shoulders with Jerome K. Jerome and George Bernard Shaw. When she married Sir John Fortescue, the king's librarian and archivist, she gave up her career on the stage and formed a successful fashion and interior design business. **Winifred Fortescue** later began writing articles for *The Times* and *Punch*, and inaugurated a woman's page for *The Morning Post*. She wrote seven books, of which *Perfume from Provence* was the first.

Notes to Editors:

- *Perfume from Provence* is published by Summersdale as part of their Revivals Series (re-issues of popular travelogues, biographies, memoirs and nostalgia titles.) It will be available through all good bookshops and internet booksellers or by telephoning Summersdale. Summersdale will reissue Lady Fortescue's follow-up book, *Sunset House*, in Spring 2010.
- **To request a review copy of *Perfume from Provence*** please contact Elly Donovan on: 01243 771107 or email elly@summersdale.com



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