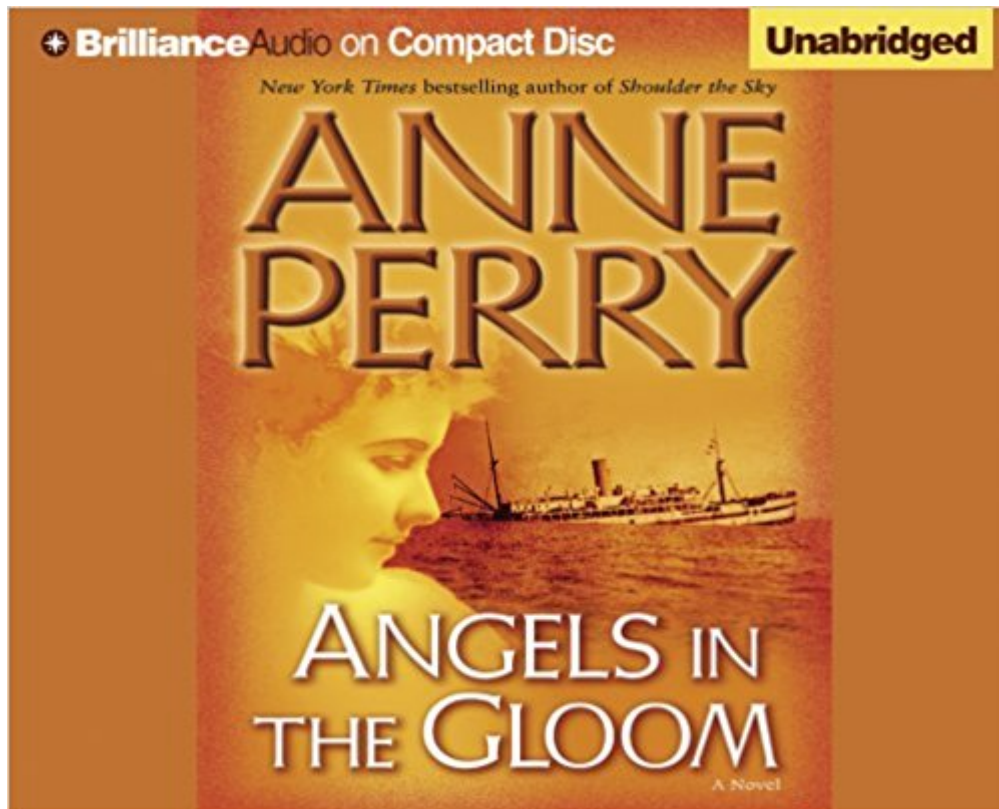




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# Angels In The Gloom (World War One Series)



## Synopsis

Angels in the Gloom is an intense saga of love, hate, obsession, and murder that features an honorable English family—brothers Joseph and Matthew Reavley, and their sisters, Judith and Hannah. In March 1916, Joseph, a chaplain at the front, and Judith, an ambulance driver, are fighting not only the Germans but the bitter cold and the appalling casualties of the Battle of Somme. Scarcely less at risk, Matthew, an officer in England's Secret Intelligence Service, fights the war covertly from London. Only Hannah, living with her young children in the old family home in tranquil Cambridgeshire, seems safe. Appearances, however, are deceiving. By the time Joseph returns home, rumors of spies and traitors are rampant in Cambridgeshire. And when the body of a savagely murdered weapons scientist is discovered in a village byway, the fear that haunts the battlefields settles over the town—along with the shadow of the obsessed ideologue who murdered the four siblings' parents on the eve of the war. Once again, this icy, anonymous powerbroker, the Peacemaker, is plotting to kill. Perry's kaleidoscopic new novel illuminates an entire world, from the hell of the trenches to a London nightclub where a beautiful Irish spy plies her trade; from the sequestered laboratory where a weapon that can end the war is being perfected to the matchless glory of the English countryside in spring. Angels in the Gloom is a masterpiece, steeped in history and radiant with truth. It warms the heart even as it chills the blood.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. This powerful and intense third novel in Perry's WWI series (after 2004's *Shoulder the Sky*) continues the Reavley family's anguished search for the "Peacemaker," a shadowy figure responsible for their parents' murders two years earlier, and now intent on Anglo-German world domination as a means toward world peace. After Chaplain Joseph Reavley is badly wounded in Flanders attempting to rescue fellow Brits under fire, he returns home to bucolic St. Giles for rehabilitation, but finds the village consumed by issues raised by the war. Perry's deeply held antiwar feelings are again apparent in this moving story in which "the searing scarlet of grief" destroys families of loved ones lost in the service, and the local vicar questions fundamental beliefs in the wake of mounting casualties. When Theo Blaine, a scientist working on a secret weapon to end the war, is mysteriously slain, the town is torn apart by fears of a spy in their midst. Joseph's brother, Matthew, an intelligence expert, must work with seductive Irish double agent Detta Hannassey to determine the extent of Germany's knowledge of Britain's war strategies, despite his revulsion for her duplicity. A climactic U-boat hunt and naval battle conclude this stirring work. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The third entry in Perry's World War I series moves from the horror of the trenches to the English countryside, where chaplain Joseph Reavley, wounded at the front, has returned to recuperate under his sister's Hannah's care. Still fresh is his grief for their parents, both killed by the mysterious Peacemaker, who, in the guise of seeking an end to the conflict, is sabotaging Britain's war effort. The murder of a scientist whose work might have ensured Allied success leads Joseph (and his brother, Matthew, who works for British intelligence) on a twisted trail that they hope will lead to the Peacemaker. As in previous books in this series and in her Victorian detective series, Perry creates a meticulously detailed backdrop, whether home front or frontlines, while leaving plenty of room for her characters to contemplate issues of honor, loyalty, and love: Will Joseph return to the front or minister to the bereft at home? Will Matthew's growing affection for Irish double agent Detta Hannassey interfere with his mission? The characters, familiar now after two books, grow stronger and richer here, as Perry illuminates the emotional and physical character of war and asks the inevitable question, At what cost peace? Stephanie Zvirin Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Historical fiction always brings such depth to understanding. ANNE PERRY never disappoints.

Angels in the Gloom continues the saga of the Reavley family and the deaths of their parents, the mystery of a treaty that could have changed the course of history, and graphic scenes of WWI front lines. This book centers on Joseph Reavley, a chaplain, who is wounded and is sent home to recover. We see the homelife in WWI England, and the horror of attacks in London. Mrs. Perry is an expert in the history of the Victorian Era and the era of WWI. Everything is succinct and not a word frivolously wasted. This new series is as satisfying as her other works. Makes me think of Wilfred Owens' poetry about England at war - touches the heart and puts you in the trenches with the poor soldiers and the staff. One hopes Mrs. Perry doesn't forget Monk and Pitt series - while developing this excellent series.

All of the WWI books are well written and very thought provoking. While each one can stand alone reading them in sequence makes for an all too terrible glimpse into this most ridiculous war.

After reading the previous two novels in this series by Anne Perry, I knew that I had to keep going, despite the general grimness and despair of the setting. After all, reading about life in the trenches of Belgium during World War I is not exactly a cheerful topic. But under the careful plotting of Anne Perry, best known for her ongoing mystery series set in Victorian England, I knew that I was in for some serious storytelling, and a mystery that would be certain not to leave me going eh! at the end. The year is now 1916, and for three long years, Captain Joseph Reavley has been trying to give what comfort and aid to the men that serve with him in the British army. Forbidden to carry arms as a chaplain himself, he does what he can to save lives, and often risks his own to rescue the injured in the devastated no-man's-land beyond the trenches. But during one such rescue, he's badly wounded, enough to send him back home to convalescence. Back home in the Cambridgeshire village that he grew up in, Joseph is continually reminded of the grim accident that resulted in the death of his parents. Carefully, he tries to gain some sort of meaning and balance back into his life, under the caring watch of his sister Hannah and her three children. Hannah has plenty of problems of her own, coping with the fact that her husband, a naval commander, serving aboard a destroyer at sea. We see through their eyes the terrible toll that the war is taking on the families around them, even in this pastoral setting. Sons and husbands and brothers are missing or wounded or dead. The local vicar, Hallam Kerr, is quickly losing his faith and can't comfort anyone, always turning up on Joseph's doorstep in a blithering wreck. After only a few days home, Joseph has a dead body turn up nearby, shattering whatever peace he's managed to find. Theo Blaine, a young scientist working at The Establishment, where a mystery weapon that will win the war for the Allies, is found brutally

killed. His body has been badly mauled with a hay fork, and he is found by his wife, Lizzie, after the couple had an argument. There are very few leads, but everyone suspects that it must have been a German spy. Old tensions and rivalries spring up the village. Which in turn leads to the other main plot of the story. Joseph and Hannah's brother Matthew is a member of the Intelligence Services in London. He's managed to find a double agent, Detta Hannasey, and he's trying to uncover who is behind tampered supplies from the Americans, and ruthlessly using Detta to uncover who is behind it all. The fact that Detta is a lovely and attractive young Irish woman doesn't hurt either, and despite his best efforts to distance himself, Matthew keeps finding himself attracted to her. Even more shocking, Detta might have a connection with the mysterious Peacemaker, who seeks an Anglo-German alliance that will bring the world under the control of a domineering Kaiser. And who was responsible for the murder of John and Alys Reavley... How all of this resolves itself is the main focus of the novel. Of course, we get to learn little more about who is the Peacemaker, but that plotline is a bit overshadowed this time. Instead, the two plots weave together nicely with plenty of real life details and introspection. Not only can Perry catch the mood of the time and place, she manages to keep the mental attitudes right for the times. Hannah finds the new role of women fitting into men's work and roles during the war frightening to face; Joseph questions his reputation for heroism and bravery, and Matthew has to decide how much and how far he will use another human being, a woman, to further the Allied win. This delicate dance of morality comes through in people's speech and their thoughts, but Perry is wise enough not to let the story bog down too far. Another excellent touch is the use of real events. There is the Battle of Jutland to climax the novel, an aerial bombing of London from German zeppelins, the Easter Uprising in Dublin, and other little snippets that give the story a solid base in history. It's an excellent touch that really helps to move the story along, and the feel of the war that changed the world forever. My only real complaint about this entry in the series is that the villain is revealed in a sort of deus ex machina fashion, and there wasn't enough clues or foreshadowing given to let the reader figure it out -- suddenly, the killer is revealed and I was left thinking Huh? Where did that come from? Other than that, it's an excellent read. Several characters from previous novels appear, most notably Richard Mason from *Shoulder the Sky*, but alas, Judith, the fourth Reavley sibling isn't here at all. That's a pity, as she's one of the best characters that Perry has created. Summing up, this one is worth the effort to get through, despite all of the grim details and at times, slow pace. It's a novel that not just re-creates a time of great suffering and courage, but also strives to put the reader inside of the character's heads. It's pretty obvious from this one that Perry feels strongly about this series, and it does have a beginning and end in sight, unlike her other mystery series. If the reader can handle the somewhat gory

sequences that appear, it's a fine read, and certain to stir some serious thoughts in the reader's mind. The trade paperback edition has an excerpt from the next book in the series, *At Some Disputed Barricade*. As with all of the books in this series, it's really necessary to read them in order, as many characters and events appear in the earlier volumes, and little space is given to backing things up and explaining. Four stars overall.

Anne Perry has hit her stride in the third volume of her First World War series with *"Angels in the Gloom"*. She has concocted an intricate narrative that covers enormous ground, managing to enlist a vast array of characters in the process. No need to recap the story here, as others commenting here have done it well. What is important is the fine quality of research she has done on this period, and the way she is able to incorporate this into her plot. When she writes well, it can be stunning, and she keeps the reader turning the pages. What holds her back from being a really five star writer is a certain propensity for repeating herself. Too many times she uses the same descriptive adjectives to depict a recurring situation. For instance, in *"Shoulder the Sky"* several characters return to London after absences at the front lines in France. They all notice that there are now far more cars than horses in Piccadilly. A nice observation, but we don't need to read it several times in a row. She needs a better editor, one that would pick up on these details. I make a point of this, because it makes me think she writes in haste. She is far too good a writer to allow this type of oversight. I like her atmospheric touches, and her sensitivity to nature. Her battle scenes are not easy to read, but she is often at her best in these passages. In sum, this is an engrossing story, worth the effort, even with the excesses.

This is a great series. Once you start the first book, you will be hooked until you finish them all. Totally creates the WWI cultures in England and Europe with well developed lead characters. There are several mysteries woven throughout the series that helps to keep it interesting and moving along. A recommended series by a great author.

This is a great book but it's too rambling and repetitive! I loved all the parts of his little town and all the people in it. Joseph's family is wonderful, and I wish English villages were still like they used to be!

I have enjoyed this series of stories by Anne Perry

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