



Of Deadly Descent

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Where do you start looking for a missing ancestor

Without a name

With descendants with whom you share an inheritance?

At their last known address—The Argonne Forest, France, 1919.

In their previous adventure, Alexandra Campbell and her business partner, Brighamina Poulson, discovered a branch of Alex's family that was previously unknown. Because of wicked deeds in days gone by, a soldier in World War I who should have been part of Alex's family was lost. In fact, he was so lost, he didn't even know his own name!

Through a series of coincidences (and we all know there are no coincidences in genealogy!) they track their man from France to Oxford, and even give him a name. However, upon their arrival in Oxford, before they even contact the man's descendants, a member of the family is pushed under a bus right before their eyes! It soon becomes evident that the death was connected to the coming legacy. Who knew they were coming to Oxford with news of a fortune? What role does the mysterious Frenchman Etienne play in the dastardly doings? And what about Charles Lamb, a very eligible bachelor, also an heir to the estate?

Briggie is lost without her deer rifle and can't keep up on the box scores of her Kansas City Royals baseball team. She doesn't think much of Oxford, either, and is worried about the effect of this center of secular wisdom on Alex. She is even more worried about Charles Lamb.

Of Deadly Descent Details

Date : Published 1996 by Deseret Book

ISBN : 9781573451673

Author : G.G. Vandagriff

Format : Paperback 238 pages

Genre : Mystery, Lds, Lds Fiction, Christianity, Fiction, Cozy Mystery

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From Reader Review Of Deadly Descent for online ebook

Marci says

After solving Alex's family's first pedigree problem, Alex and her genealogy business partner, Briggie, go to France to continue the puzzle in the pedigree. They find a number of cousins and Alex serves once again as a catalyst for murder, which she must solve with Briggie's help and that of her boyfriend's father.

A new romantic interest is introduced, along with complicating factors that have to do with Alex's Mormon faith, neither of which I welcomed in this book series, mostly because I found them a distraction to the plot. I think the author is putting in too much by combining the psychological and spiritual journey of Alex Campbell with the genealogical/murder investigations of Alex and Briggie.

I really liked the setting in this one--I love Oxford, England, having spent a lot of time visiting relatives there, and also being on my own there. I visited France only briefly, but I really liked the towns we drove through and stayed in, and this was quite evocative of that pleasant time. I liked it that the author's writing style is smoothing out. I like the characters, so maybe my disagreement with including Alex's inner life is not justified--but only if I am the target audience.

Perhaps that is the key--these books are written specifically for the Mormon-genealogist-murder-mystery-lovers audience.

Peg says

I originally read this not realizing it was part of a series. I couldn't put my finger on the problem, but I was clearly uncomfortable with the characters and the quite unlikely plot. Having found out it was part of a series, I obtained and read the first one, Cankered Roots. That quickly explained a lot of things that didn't make sense in this book. I then quickly re-read this one in order to keep the flow of the storyline before jumping into the third work. Now all of a sudden, my previous discomfort was gone. The characters were now believable, and the storyline made more sense. There are a handful of works in a series that don't necessarily require one to read them in order. This one isn't one of those in my opinion, and the publisher would have done themselves a great service to make that more clear to the reader. Instead, on the back cover, they simply mention that Vandagriff is the author of Cankered Roots, not that Cankered Roots was the first in a series of which this is the second.

All that said, I am now enjoying this book much more.

Susan says

The story picks right up following "Cankered Roots". Alex and Briggie have been hired to follow the trail of Joe Cuendet and find his heirs. They learn that the Cuendet family has their own genealogist, Philippa, and make arrangements to meet her in Oxford. The day they arrive is also the day Philippa is murdered. Once again Alex and Briggie must solve the mystery using their research skills. Scarry moments as Alex learns the truth.

Rebecca says

Rated PG

Jeanette says

In this sequel to Cankered Roots, Alex and Briggie are in England to track down Alex's long lost cousins who don't know that they might be heirs to a rather large inheritance left by Alex's Grandfather. Shortly after arriving in England, Alex's new found cousins start turning up dead and of course, someone is after Alex as well.

I don't want to say this is the most enjoyable of the 3 novels by G.G. Vandagriff that I read because I don't know that I really enjoyed any of them. It was the one that had me rolling my eyes the least. Like Cankered Roots, the characters were poorly developed and flat. Only this time there were too many and I did not want to make the effort to try and keep track of all the characters when I did not really care about them. The ending was not very believable and the killer's motive was odd and weak. I found myself skimming over the parts when the characters started talking about religion, not because I have a problem with the topic but because it just did not fit in and made the story even more choppy.

I like a good mystery and while this one was clean, it was not very entertaining.

Laura says

Genealogy, premeditated murder, the Atonement and Oxford, England. An eclectic mix to be sure, but one that makes for a very satisfying reading experience. Alex Campbell and Brighamina Poulsen are partners in Root Search Inc. They are professional genealogists. They arrive in Oxford, England to find the legal heirs to an American meat-packing fortune accumulated by Alex's grandfather and her lately departed father. They are in pursuit of the mystery surrounding Alex's grandfather's origins. Alex's recently discovered English cousins may have a greater share in the family inheritance than she does.

I like the mix of genealogy and mystery in this series of books. Vandagriff does a nice job, I think, of blending concepts of faith, recognizable by LDS readers, with the elements of a basic who-done-it. In this particular episode in the adventures of Alex and Briggie, Alex, who is a fledgling in her newly found faith, begins to understand how the Atonement has meaning and application in her life. I found the passage where Alex comes to this precious understanding touching and nicely described by Vandagriff. It was a pleasant interlude in the middle of this tale of deception, greed, and madness.

Annabeth says

Too much like the first book, as in VERY CONFUSING. I read the first couple of chapters, could tell it was going to be a doozy, skipped to the last few chapters, and finished it up. Quick read! And I skipped the wife's cousin's dead neice's great-aunt's second marriage web. (kidding about those details. I don't even remember

who-done-it).

Kimberly Fields says

Of Deadly Descent takes Alex to new terrain-- Oxfordshire, England-- where she continues to work on uncovering her family history, and in the process, becomes entangled in another murder.

This was a worthy sequel to Cankered Roots. The new setting was interesting, as were the new characters. I did start to wonder just how many deep dark secrets one family can have, but I enjoyed the story nonetheless. A fun new genealogy mystery.

Trisha says

Synopsis:

Alex and Briggie go to France and then to Oxford, on the track of cousins Alex discovered in Cankered Roots who will possibly disinherit her. They scarcely arrive in Oxford before one of her cousins is killed. Was it murder? Did it have anything to do with their search? If so, who even knew they were coming? While trying to answer these questions, they uncover among her relatives a number of secrets someone would kill for. In the midst of her sleuthing, Alex attracts the attention of Charles Lamb, an impossibly handsome bachelor who is used to having women fall at his feet.

Terry says

If you enjoy mystery, tied in with history, you should enjoy any books written by this author. Plus her books are very clean. I always think that the sign of a good author is someone who can write a book that keeps the reader's attention without a bunch of smut and coarse language--anyone can do that stuff!

Kay says

I enjoyed the 2nd book in this series. It takes place in England and Alex and Briggie of Root Search Inc. go there to find and meet Alex's new found relatives. A murder occurs and they are again in danger as they find out more and more of Alex's genealogy. Once again I enjoyed the link to the LDS church.

Debbie says

This book was written by a friend of mine. I've had it on my shelf for a while. It was a fun distraction. Lots of twists and turns in the plot. If you are a genealogy buff you will particularly enjoy it. This is the sequel to "Cankered Roots".

Chrystal says

This book reminded me a little of Clue. I know this author may be a little on the amateur side, but she is still very clever, entertaining, and clean! I am getting more interested in the future of the Alex character and wish I had my own Briggie!

Mashell says

I really enjoyed this book. The mystery was intriguing and kept me guessing until the very end. This is actually book 2 of 3 in this series, written by an LDS author. The reason I gave it four stars is because there are parts where the author includes spiritual beliefs among some of the character's conversations. Even though her and I believe the same, I felt it detracted from the story. What I loved is that I didn't have the mystery figured out 1/2 way through.

Chris says

Wonderful setting! Fun mystery but the main character was not as likeable in this book
