

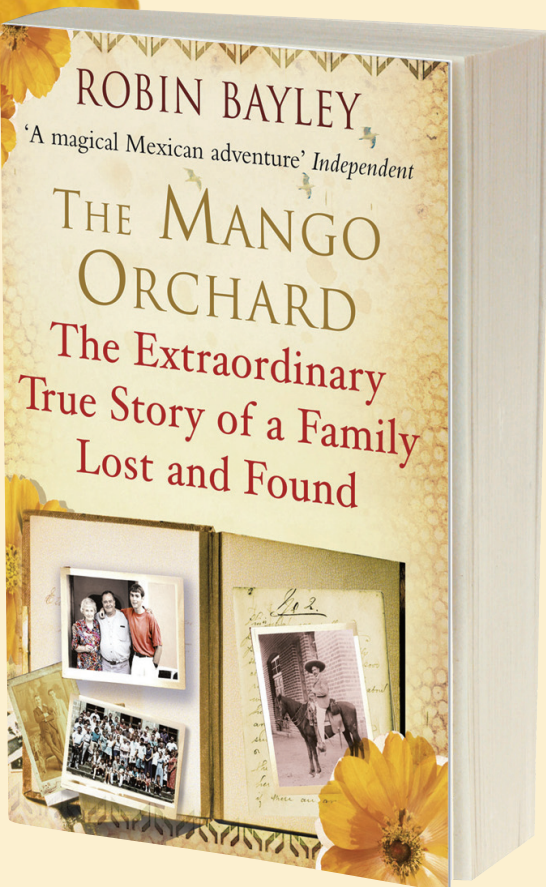
THE MANGO ORCHARD

Reading Guide

Paperback published 07/04/2011
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‘A magical Mexican adventure...Bayley unpicks the story of his ancestor’s adventures with much skill and persistence. He has a fine ear for dialogue with a Tarantino-style, comic-book delivery, and the ending, in which he tries to reconcile his elderly grandmother to the truth about her father, is genuinely affecting’

The Independent



Synopsis

As a child, Robin Bayley was enchanted by his grandmother’s stories of Mexican adventures: of bandits, wild jungle journeys, hidden bags of silver and a narrow escape from the bloody Mexican Revolution. But Robin sensed there was more to these stories than anyone knew, and so he set out to follow in the footsteps of his great-grandfather.

The Mango Orchard is the story of parallel journeys, a hundred years apart, into the heart of Latin America. Undaunted by the passage of time and a paucity of information, Robin seeks out the places where his great-grandfather Arthur ‘Arturo’ Greenhalgh travelled and lived, determined to uncover his legacy. Along the road Robin encounters witches, drug dealers, a gun-toting Tasmanian Devil and an ex-Nazi diamond trader. He is threatened with deportation, offered the protection of Colombian guerrilla fighters and is comforted by the blessings of los santos. He falls in love with a beautiful Guatemalan girl with mystical powers and almost gives up his quest, until a sense of destiny drives him on to western Mexico and the discovery of much, much more than he had bargained for.


About Robin Bayley

Robin Bayley was born in a shooting lodge in the middle of a North Yorkshire moor. He grew up in Sheffield and after college, moved to London where he worked in advertising and children’s TV. He has also worked as a teacher in Colombia and was once cast as a drug smuggler in a Bollywood feature film. He now works as a full-time writer and lives in London. *The Mango Orchard* is his first book.

www.themangoorchard.com

‘This is a fine romance, in every sense of the word’

The Times



‘Arthur’s colourful story, and the journey that Bayley takes to uncover it, would be the envy of the *Who Do You Think You Are?* programme.... The book... is an absorbing mixture of past and present. Part biography, part family history and part travel diary, *The Mango Orchard* is at once a history lesson, cultural investigation and offers an easy and satisfying read throughout...highly entertaining’

Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine

Read About

- As a child, Robin Bayley was enchanted by his grandmother’s stories of her father’s Mexican adventures; of bandits, wild jungle journeys, hidden bags of silver and his narrow escape from the bloody Mexican Revolution. What inspired you as a child?
- How do you think Arturo and Robin’s different modes of transport influenced their travelling experiences?
- After his adventures in Mexico, Robin’s great grandfather, Arturo, returned to a quiet life in Edwardian England. He left behind a lover and an illegitimate daughter, whose offspring – a century later – multiplied into a vast and thriving family of 300 souls. How important is the family tree and the idea of genealogy in the book?
- In the process of drawing together the missing pieces of his family’s history, Robin learns about the role his great grandfather had played in the factory strike which helped to trigger the Mexican Revolution. What great world events have you or your ancestors been a part of and how did they alter your or their lives?
- Robin sold his London flat and abandoned a successful media career to retrace his great grandfather’s footsteps. Discuss the theme of giving up everything and following your dreams and the relationship between following your intuition and destiny
- How has the book changed the way you think about Mexico or Latin America?

Recommended books about Latin America, travel and families

The Fruit Palace – Charles Nicholl

Jupiter’s Travels - Ted Simon

A Sense of the World - Jason Roberts

Caramelo - Sandra Cisneros

The House of the Spirits - Isabel Allende

The Oatmeal Ark – From the Western Isles to a Promised Sea – Rory MacLean

Star of the Sea - Joseph O’Conner

Blood River - Tim Butcher

For more information visit www.themangoorchard.com

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