



No Law in the Land

Michael Jecks

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When King Edward II is told that his wife has defied him & remained in France with their son, the king flies into a rage. It is Sir Baldwin de Furnhill & his friend Simon Puttock, who have broken the news to him & are no longer in the king's favour. They return to their homes in Devon, but find that outlaws hold sway in the land.

No Law in the Land Details

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From Reader Review No Law in the Land for online ebook

James Krauss says

No Law in the Land was, as usual for Jecks, a wonderfully written book that keeps you wanting to keep reading. There was a lot of action and I can see a relationship to our own country in modern times. Jecks is maybe one of the best if not the best writers of medieval mysteries the is.

Becca-Rawr says

I sort of bought this book on a whim, something I do very rarely. However, I was pleased to find it was a rather good read, and the author is obviously knowledgeable in the subject. The book is far in a series, a fact I didn't know until halfway through the book, and perhaps I would have had more of a connection with the characters had I read the previous books.

I plan on picking up the rest of the series, :)

Michele says

This was not an easy read. It was not a book I read straight through, from start to finish, without interruptions from other books.

One of the problems of reading one book in the middle of a series is that you get enough of the backstory to make sense of some of the characters' actions, but not all. Of course, it wouldn't be practical to rehash all 26 previous books, just be aware that characters will refer to events in prior books, and you may be left hanging a little. Because I didn't know how all the people were connected, I had a hard time in the beginning keeping track of the storyline.

There are a lot of characters in this book, and some appear, then are dropped for a while. Each contributes a bit of information to the main storyline, but often with a different viewpoint. There are times when the storyline seems to backtrack, and repeat scenes from a different perspective, especially towards the end.

This book did give me a good sense of the history of an era I know little about, without beating me over the head with facts, facts and more facts. It's also interesting because I recently read a book about a modern day coroner in England (The Coroner) and it is neat to see how the job has evolved over hundreds of years.

Helle says

I may have mentioned in one of my other reviews of Jecks' Templar series, that I like it better when the focus is more on the mystery and less on the historical details. I am not saying I was wrong at the time (I believe it was #24), but I do believe that the balance between the two is perfect in No Law in the Land.

It's 1325 and times are difficult, relations are tense and England is torn between its King and Queen. Sir Baldwin de Furnhill and his good friend Simon Puttock are finally back on home ground in Devon, and are immediately confronted with the horrible slaughter of a group of travelers. They try not to get involved, but when Simon's family is threatened, it becomes personal.

This is a clever mystery in a fantastic setting, both in timeline and location. It is very well researched and well written: an excellent read.

Puzzle Doctor says

Not a traditional whodunit but all the stronger for it. A great historical crime series - full review at classicismystery.wordpress.com

Jim says

Another series of books that I enjoy. These are set in 14th Century Europe, mostly in England. Murder, political intrigue, history on every page, of course I enjoy them. This is just one in the whole series.

P.D.R. Lindsay says

This is Michael Jecks's newest novel in his Knight Templars series, involving Baldwin de Furnhill, knight and gentleman, and his friend, commoner, Simon Puttock. The series of murder mysteries has been very popular and the novels are a good solid read, full of action, adventure and a taste of another era. 'No Law in the Land' is a more violent story than the previous novels, very much a 'history as dirt, filth and man's inhumanity to man' novel. The title of the novel is a direct quote from a journal of 1325 in which the writer detailed most of the year's atrocities. Michael Jecks researches carefully and in an author's note he quotes chapter and verse of the actual violent facts and incidents he uses for 'No Law in the Land'. It's pretty bleak and sad to think we haven't improved much since the 14th century.

The year is 1325 and chaos reigns under a weak King Edward II. The King has a vicious temper and lives in fear of his powerful nobles. Anyone annoying him loses their land and rights. Recently he's been hounding a large number of his noblemen and gentlemen, trying to deprive them of their power. Stripped of their castle, manors and lands the armed knights and their armed retainers have to find ways to live. Many turned rogue and became outlaws.

Simon and Baldwin are heading home in disgrace after a trip to France on behalf of the King. They failed to persuade his Queen to return home with his son and heir. Back in Devon they come across a massacre which involves two monks, one of whom is the Cardinal's right hand man. The Cardinal is furious and Simon and Baldwin are forced to investigate. However the outlaw culprits are friends of the King's closet advisor, a singularly nasty Sir Hugh le Despenser, and cannot be touched. Simon and Baldwin decide to leave things alone, until Simon's daughter is kidnapped by the villains. After several battles, a siege and a castle storming all ends well for Simon and Baldwin.

For those who like action and adventure in their historicals Michael Jecks provides plenty of it. His characters have grown and developed during the series and his plots are believable, tightly written, and enjoyable. I'd cheerfully recommend 'No Law in the Land' as a good book to curl up and read, much better than the junk on T.V. Perhaps some enlightened TV producer will discover Jeck's novels and give us something worth watching for a change.

Irene says

can't wait for the next in the series

Leighbeth Winter says

Usually I'm a big fan of M.J.'s books, but this one, I found a bit difficult to stay focused. He keeps jumping back and forth from character/place to another character/place throughout the book. Wasn't till the last 130 pages that I found myself gripped by the characters and their predicaments.

Michael Jecks says

In this book Baldwin and Simon return to Devon, but on informing the King that they not only could not escort his wife back to England, but had to leave his son, the Prince of Wales, under her care in Paris, the King flies into a rage.

At home again, they discover that outlaws now hold sway over much of the county. Sir Richard, who was a knight from the King's own household, has turned to outlawry, and when a pair of clerics are found brutally murdered, Baldwin and Simon must investigate, no matter how dangerous it may be for them.

The fun for me is always to take actual events and make use of them. In this, the violence and shocking killings were taken from actual examples. It's still shocking to me to see how the country began to fall apart, and how a weak King could see his realm disintegrate so quickly under the hands of the clans of knightly families such as the Folvilles and Cotterills.

Mary says

The title is a direct quote from a 1325 journal which mentions the crimes, terrorism and atrocities described in this novel - and this series. Here Sir Baldwin de Furnhill and Bailiff Simon Puttock return from Paris with the news that King Edward II's wife and son, whom they were meant to fetch home, are voluntarily staying in France, and possibly plotting an invasion. Dismissed without reward or thanks :) they return home to Devon where all is not well. Shortly before their arrival a fairly large party of clerics, men, women and children had been found slaughtered in a woods just off the road to Exeter. Even the dogs were killed. No clues from the initial investigation. So Sir Baldwin and Simon go after the killers.

Christopher Taylor says

I enjoy the Templar books quite a bit, and although I'm reading them a bit out of order from the library as they become available, they are an interesting read each time. The slowly developing story of the misery and horror of King Edward II's reign is difficult to witness at times, particularly the evil of the Despenser family and the corruption across the land.

This isn't the strongest book in the series, and it spends so much time focusing on other characters and events that at times it's difficult to tell who is who or care much about the events. But it still was satisfying and the final mystery's revelation was strong and tragic.

Josh says

This is the second book by Michael Jecks that I have read. While I wasn't as enthralled as I was when I read the first, I did like many things about this book. It is a mystery, but 99% of the whodunit aspect is already known by the reader. There are one or two little surprises, but for the most part, the mystery is not the driving force of this book. How could it be when the reader knows who committed the crime and generally why? What is highly enjoyable about this book is how skillfully Jecks immerses the reader into the muck, grime, harshness, and difficult world that was the 1300s in England. He uses such great language and imagery that I always felt like I was in that little village or with the knights as they trudged along the countryside, exhausted and determined to solve the deaths of a group of travellers.

And that is what this story is about. A large group of travellers are brutally murdered and from there, a great deal unfolds. Jecks is able to deal with machinations in the king's castle, a fight for a leadership position in a local abbey, a knight who has turned to crime, and a journey home for some other knights.

Jecks has done a wonderful research job and has a great ability to write flowing sentences and paragraphs. The book wasn't a fast read for me and I wasn't turning the pages to find out who did it. I already knew that. What kept me going was seeing how Jecks unfolded the story and the immersion into this world. It's a good read for those interested in this world.

Patrick says

This is a serial book of the Knight Templar by Michael Jecks a very accomplished writer. I really enjoyed how he set the detective police well, knight procedure novel in the fifteenth century. The details are very accurate and the characters are compelling.

I would like to see more of the nasty truth and feel that the author pulls his punches when writing about the dark age. After all, the title itself did say No Law in Land, and he did admit to saying some of the things are so nasty and terrible that his readers would find it hard to believe. I think he would have been more excellent if he just went ahead and reveal more of the truths of what goes on during the dark age, because like I learn many times, people are dark most of the time.

Katrina Bergherm says

Odd...mystery story with knights and castles. Not a bad book but not great either.
