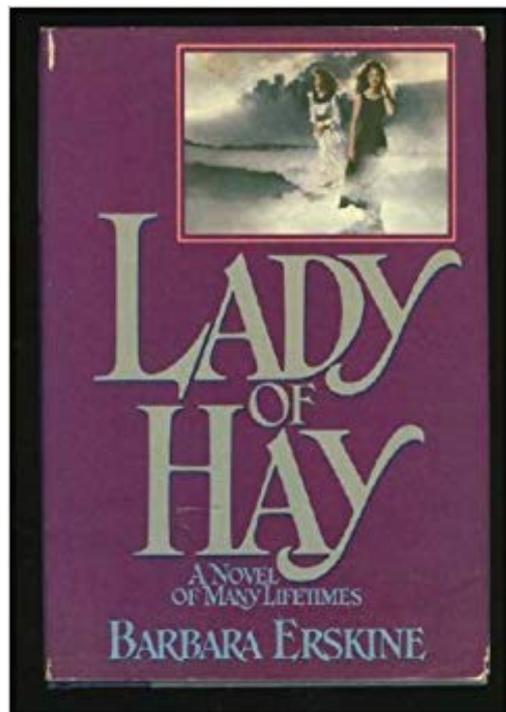


Lady of Hay *by* Barbara Erskine



DOWNLOAD LINKS (Clickable)



ISBN: 0385295391

ISBN13: 978-0385295390

Author: Barbara Erskine

Book title: Lady of Hay

Pages: 545

Publisher: Delacorte Press; First U. S. Printing edition (1986)

Language: English

Category: Genre Fiction

Size PDF version: 1114 kb

Size ePUB version: 1760 kb

Size FB2 version: 1738 kb

Other formats: docx mobi rtf lrf

British journalist Jo Clifford discovers her past life as a twelfth-century Welsh noblewoman and embarks on a personal odyssey that will reveal her own destiny



Reviews of the *Lady of Hay* *by* Barbara Erskine

Arcanefist

Like so many of the other reviewers, I started out loving this book, but then...

Let me say first that I LOVE books that tell two stories, one in the past and one in the present. One of my all-time favorites is Daphne DuMaurier's *House on the Strand*. When I discovered the same technique being used by Susanna Kearsley, I read every one of her books. (Kearsley's books are frequently compared to the *Outlander* series, but in my opinion, Kearsley's books are WAY better.) When I saw a review for one of Kearsley's books mention that it was 'reminiscent of *Lady of Hay*', I naturally decided to check it out for myself.

First, the cons: It really is too long. The last third of the book becomes a bit disjointed as the story line jumps between the past and the present more and more frequently. I found myself going from a state of suspense to find out what happens in the story to a state of boredom, hoping the author would just get on with it.

Certain aspects are simply not credible. NOBODY who is terrified of anyone or anything could possibly forget to bolt their door as many times as the main character. And when the main character needs a distraction, it's a little too much of a coincidence that she is given an unrelated assignment that puts her in immediate contact with another individual who happens to have experience with hypnosis and past life regressions. I also sincerely doubt that anyone who is terrified of someone could allow that individual to repeatedly hypnotize her involuntarily - the last time just by saying a sentence or two over the phone. Again, when she heard the villain's voice - why did she not just hang up?

Finally - and these are small points - having read a LOT about this period in history and some of the main players, I find it extremely unlikely that King John ever had cause to question the loyalty of William Marshall, as he briefly does when pursuing Matilda in Ireland. William served John (after having served all of his older brothers and his father as well if memory serves) and was granted the regency when John died with no heir, and nearly a millennium later, William is still known for his integrity. (Read Elizabeth Chadwick's *The Greatest Knight*.) Of course, John may have questioned the loyalty of those around him with or without just cause - because he was not a likable guy (to say the least). Also, in the Epilogue, the author gives two reasons as to why William De Braose may have fallen from King John's good graces, but fails to site one of the main reasons which I had heard proposed - that William was a witness to the murder of John's nephew Prince Arthur.

Now the Pros: if you can overlook the above-mentioned issues, the story is well formed. It managed to hold my interest in spite of the literary and historical meandering that takes place in the latter part of the book. I enjoyed the story in general, the author's style, and the history portrayed in the book. The descriptions of places and scenery in particular were very evocative.

One final comment: a number of reviewers commented on how "dated" the book is, as it is set in the 1980s. A number of reviewers commented on the fact that perhaps the main character's behavior (she repeatedly returns to someone who is abusing her) can be excused because of the time period in which the book was written. That one puzzled me. In spite of the fact that the "no means no" mentality was not apparent in the latter part of the last century as it is today, it is pretty common knowledge that people do return to their abusers, so the idea that this story could not take place with a "modern, liberated woman" was sort of preposterous. Other reviewers commented that the use of alcohol and drugs was 'so 1980s'. Wow...I guess these folks are unaware of the opioid abuse epidemic in this country today if they think such substance abuse is 'dated'.

I will definitely read more books by this author, but I may pay closer attention to the reviews before I choose.

Gravelblade

Barbara Erskine's novel *LADY OF HAY*, in part an historical novel about Maud (or Matilda) de Braose, who had the misfortune of living during the time of King John the Bad (1199-1216), is one of those novels with parallel plotlines.

In 1970s England, we meet 19-year-old Jo Clifford, who has an amazing ability as a subject in a regression hypnosis, when she relives the last, tortured moments of a 13th-century Norman-French woman, whose husband held a great deal of power in the Welsh Marches during the reign of Henry II (1154-1189), and his sons Richard the Lionheart (1189-1199) and King John.

The modern story then jumps 15 years, and we meet 35-year-old Jo Clifford, successful journalist, and as hard-headed as you expect a modern woman to be. She is given an assignment to investigate regression hypnosis, which is a technique that claims to access a person's memory of a past life. Jo initially pooh-poohs the idea, until she becomes a subject herself.

At that point, the medieval story takes off.

I am not alone in finding the medieval story more compelling, primarily because the stakes are so high, giving Ms. Erskine opportunities for building a spine of tension to hold up the story arc.

The modern part of the story was not interesting. The relationship between Jo Clifford and her on-again, off-again boyfriend Nick went round, and around, and around, and while true to life, this spinning of wheels meant that many opportunities for tension were lost.

Nick's brother Sam is cast as the mad scientist, and as a former scientist myself, I wish that Ms. Erskine had eschewed the cliches and dug deeper to have formed a more interesting character. Sam's motivation is not clear, except that he seems to have gone quite mad for no apparent reason. My question was how did we get from the concerned young man we glimpsed in 1970, to the out-of-control sadist in 1985? No satisfactory answer is given.

The modern story deserves 3 stars, the medieval story deserves 5 stars, so I am giving this novel 4 stars.

Related PDF to [Lady of Hay](#) by Barbara Erskine

1. [Clifford Visits the Hospital \(Clifford 8x8\) by Norman Bridwell](#)
2. [Good In Bed by Jennifer Weiner](#)
3. [Princess and the Dragon by Roberto Pazzi](#)
4. [Welsh Odyssey, A - in the Footsteps of Gerald of Wales by Michael Roberts](#)
5. [Embracing Heaven & Earth: A Personal Odyssey by Hal Stone](#)
6. [Lady Chatterley's Lover by Dame Judith Dench, D. H. Lawrence](#)
7. [Destiny's Lady by Maureen Peters](#)
8. [A Personal Odyssey by Thomas Sowell](#)
9. [Correspondence with Raffaolina Cerase, Noblewoman \(1914-1915\) \(Letters, Volume II\) by Padre Pio of Pietrelcina](#)
10. [American Jennie: The Remarkable Life of Lady Randolph Churchill by Anne Sebba](#)