



Hammer of the Scots

Jean Plaidy

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Published in North America under the title Hammer of the Scots

The news of Henry III's death reached his son Edward on the long road home from the Holy Land. Now he was England's King and a man fit for his destiny.

Through all the years of his reign, through stark personal tragedy and chill forebodings as his son grew into a weak, corrupted prince, Edward I strove to weld a nation united from England and Scotland and Wales.

When the mighty Wallace raised the Scots in arms and the Welsh Llewellyn strove for power, Edward stood firm to his resolve, still knowing in his heart how much would be lost when his crown passed down to his dissolute son...

Hammer of the Scots Details

Date : Published May 12th 1983 by Fawcett (first published 1978)

ISBN : 9780449200469

Author : Jean Plaidy

Format : Mass Market Paperback 326 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Plantagenet, European Literature, British Literature

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From Reader Review Hammer of the Scots for online ebook

J.P. Ashman says

Review to follow

English says

Had this in my audible account for so long thought I ought to read it. Although I pretty much know about Edward Longshanks already it was interesting to read a novel about him, written with a primary focus on his relations with his family.

It has been said that Edward loved his many daughters more than he loved his only son by his first wife to survive into adulthood: the future Edward II.

The writing was rather repetitive in places, and those looking for a more detailed account of the major events of Edward's reign might want to look elsewhere (like a history book), but generally good.

Bettie? says

Edward Longshanks

historical fiction

pub 1979

autumn 2011

edward I

series

Plantagenet

No, I am not reading this series in order!

You know that period of history where every woman ever born (well almost *shrugs in mock amusement*) was called Matilda, or derivative thereof, here we have the era of the Eleanors... every female from the foulest midden born to the loftiest throne is named thusly. Boring? well yes, however it is still not as boring as modern pop music, now is it!

What a lot of difference in what was acceptable, fictional history wise, in 1979 and that which is deemed de rigeur nowadays (Philippa Gregory notwithstanding). This is painfully too familiar in tone.

However, lighten up, this is Edward I and he is a loving conscientious family man who ::Meant:Well::

Louise says

Jean Plaidy fashions Edward I as an ideal family man. While he doesn't do the dishes, he loves his daughters by Eleanor of Castile more than their son, a rarity for his time. Despite his political needs, he is sympathetic to his daughter's pleas, sometimes allowing them to delay their marriages or chose their partners.

The story is told in chapters, most of which are somewhat independent vignettes that hold together chronologically. While the title emphasizes Edward's role via Scotland, I would say that family life, family matters and marriages account for the bulk of the text.

Edward is idealized here. It shows his fits of temper, but they blow away. Edward's love of his daughters is emphasized but how this favoritism may have affected the future Edward II is ignored. The expulsion of the Jews is mentioned but the confiscation of their property and their actual departure is not described. While the oppressive treatment of the Scots by English administrators and soldiers is described, Plaidy does not show any links to Edward.

Scotland, though, does provide exciting reading. The chapters on William Wallace are the most dramatic. The complexity of the warrior to warrior relationship of Wallace and Edward I is touched on. The Wallace Plaidy creates is not much different than Mel Gibson's Wallace (Braveheart (Special Collector's Edition)), but the dynamic with England is far different. Plaidy presents the English side of the conflict and shows some Scots (some in Wallace's own family) in support of or in acceptance of the unified island concept.

As with Plaidy novels, the dialog tells a lot of the story. The dialog of the time is stilted with affectionate family members expressing rank and distance in their words.

Christine Cazeneuve says

Enjoyed this book on King Edward I. Edward I was truly an interesting King as he tried so hard to please everyone and rule well. He loved/adored his wife Queen Eleanore and she loved him back. They had a wonderful family and he had to deal with William Wallace (Braveheart) as well as the troublesome son Edward II. Although he was weak when dealing with his somewhat demanding daughters he was an admirable King none-the-less. I adore Jean Plaidy's writing and am on to Book 8!

Beorn says

To my mind this book is what you would get if you commissioned Hello or OK! magazines to write a glossy account of history. It's too realistic, gritty and believable historical fiction what low-fi American renaissance fairs are to historiography and accuracy.

The dialogue is never happier than sounding like it was lifted straight from a Hallmark made-for-TV movie; pompous and melodramatic at a pretty transparent attempt at what some readers mistake for "historically accurate" language which is actually just a snooty thespian invention.

At the risk of sounding like an accidental chauvinist, this feels like history as told by a clucking group of women gossiping rather than anything that particularly enthralls you with a ground level earthy believable realism.

It's kind of like being stuck at a family event surrounded by numerous aunts, sisters and female cousins all nattering away and finding the life being sucked out of you slowly.

I can understand why this sort of historical fiction is popular as it is middle-of-the-road, inoffensive and has virtually no battle scenes or fights let alone blood, guts or anything particularly stronger than a primetime BBC adventure series.

I suppose it does fill a particular niche in the historical fiction market, ie female readers who don't necessarily want a book to be all about romance, but I for one find this kind of bland storytelling to be repellent and nowhere near as addictive, galvanizing or adrenalizing as any number of other historical fiction books I've read.

I will concede that the author is a very capable & talented writer for her field, it's purely that her style of attack leaves me bored and apathetic.

If you want uneventful gossipy oestrogen-soaked historical fiction with none of the intrigue of war or conflict, feel free to rush out and get this.

If you want historical fiction with bite, suspicion, intrigue, bloodshed or heart racing action, look anywhere but here.

Adéla says

Suchý výtah z wikipedie doplněný neskutečnými hloupými dialogy ala harlékynka.

Penny says

This is a rather old-fashioned historical account that has a little too much romance and simpering women for my taste!! The general story was good, giving an overview of Edward I's life which is what I wanted. The book is mainly about the women of his court his mother Eleanor, his wife Eleanor and his daughters - yes the first is another Eleanor!!

I would have preferred less description of the women and their loves and more political intrigue and plotting. By the end of this book you feel Edward was a lovely man who loved his 2 wives and all his children and always tried to do his best by them. I'm sure books from a Welsh or Scottish point of view would have different ideas of him.

Definitely not of the standard of a Penman but has some interesting moments.

I listened to this as an audio book.

K.L. says

Re-read. I enjoyed Edward I, although I felt that she had squashed too much info into one book, especially considering the length of his reign and all the important events that happened during it. A trilogy would have been a better bet for his story, and we didn't get enough of Eleanor of Castille!!

Zoe says

I had to force my self to get through this one. My biggest issue was the amount of repetition of sentimental drivel. Once, is fine, twice is even ok ... but it felt every other page was littered with the stuff and it all felt like padding just so the book would reach an adequate number of words.

On top of that the writing/timeline was all over the place and during most of it I was just bored. Edward I

should not be boring.

I've only read 2 books by Jean Plaidy but I'm getting the impression the female characters all fit into one of two roles: 'strong-willed' (indulged pig headed brats) or docile with a hidden strength (meek unless asked not to support their husbands/fathers).

I'm aware it's historical fiction but my suspension of disbelief is tried by the number of deliriously happy marriages. Of every single marriage in this (and the previous) book, only one is notably unhappy and the other is 'tolerable' for the 'strong-willed' Joanna of Acre.

While the Queen Provence was readable and to some extent enjoyable this was just a big ball of tedium.

BAM The Bibliomaniac says

2018 Reading Challenge: book tied to my ancestry

Jean Plaidy is the queen of European historical fiction. She's often overly dramatic, but she knows how to tell a story. In *The Hammer of the Scots* we learn about Edward I's reign from his ascent to the throne, the conquest of Wales, the battle for Scotland against William Wallace, and finally his death.

Edward leads a rich, rewarding family life with his wife, Eleanor and his many daughters; but it's his lack of sons that is troubling. The only one to live to maturity is the one history knows as Edward II, a flamboyant immature coward who plays favorites and soon brings the great country to ruin.

The great King's darling is his eldest daughter, Eleanor, who is pampered with her own household. She is kept at her father's side until her twenties. But no child is as fiery as Joanna of Acre, who was born on crusade and reared at her grandmother's court in Castile until age seven.

As stated most of the book focuses on royal family life, but Edward's calculated possession of the country of Wales is summarily discussed in the first half of the book. In fact it was a mission of his to unite the three parts of the island before he died, which he failed to do because of Wallace's insurrection.

When it comes to Wallace's story, one gravitates to the movie *Braveheart*, which took much narrative license; however, it was still powerfully told. Plaidy's version of events gives an alternative account and is just as poignant as the film. This is told in the last fourth of the book.

The only weakness I found in the book was in the relationship between the king and his son and namesake. That was fairly ignored until his death scene. It's often mentioned that the king is disappointed in young Edward, but there is no interaction. That should have been developed, so the platform is better set for the next book in the series.

I always enjoy a Plaidy read. She has written about the English, Scottish, French, Spanish, and Italians. As stated she's a little florid in her speech, but she gives the reader a fresh perspective on history.

Marlene says

A well told version of the reign of Edward Long Shanks and his struggles to unite a kingdom and subdue the Scots and Welsh. I love this period of history but this is a sad story of a great king whose whole life's work was ruined by his heir.

Alison Hodgson says

Steady historical fiction. Didn't grip me but I learnt a lot about Edward 1!

Zuzana says

This one was a drag. I might take a break from this series.

Denise says

The 7th part of Plaidy's Plantagenet Saga brings us the rule of Edward I, mostly remembered as a strong king whose prosperous rule saw England and Wales united and whose ambition to bring Scotland under English rule led to the apprehension and execution of the Scottish rebel William Wallace. A rather idealized portrait of a king also known for a terrible temper, the expulsion of the Jews from English soil and a few other unsavoury events which are only hinted at in these pages, the book instead focuses chiefly on Edward as a family man. Seen through the eyes of his mother, wives and daughters, he is pictured as a loving husband and doting father. While I enjoyed the novel, I would have liked to see a stronger emphasis on Edward as a warrior and ruler than as husband and father - a bit too much dialogue and too little action to really do the subject justice.
