



## The Mad Monk of Gidleigh

*Michael Jecks*

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## **The Mad Monk of Gidleigh** Michael Jecks

Alone in his isolated, windswept chapel on the edge of Dartmoor, his only companions moor men and poverty-stricken serfs, who could blame the young priest, Mark for seeking affection from Jane, the local miller's daughter? But when Jane's body is found brutally stabbed, Mark is the obvious suspect—and the discovery that Jane was pregnant seems to confirm his guilt. Called in to investigate, Sir Baldwin Furnhill and Simon Puttock soon begin to have their doubts. Could it not have been one of Jane's many admirers who murdered her in a fit of jealousy? Or her father, the miller, who is acting in an increasingly disturbed manner? And what exactly is the local Baron trying to hide? In their search for the truth, Furnhill and Puttock unwittingly place themselves and their families in the greatest danger they have ever faced.

## **The Mad Monk of Gidleigh Details**

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Author : Michael Jecks

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## From Reader Review The Mad Monk of Gidleigh for online ebook

### Jim Corbiere says

Finished reading " The Mad Monk of Gidleigh " by Michael Jecks. The next in the Knights Templar series. Once again a great read. Nothing like a good mystery, Especially one that takes place in the 1300s. A woman is found murdered in Dartmoor in 1323. A young miller's daughter who was pregnant. The father of her unborn child is a priest named Mark. After finding her body he runs away, surely he must be guilty! Sir Baldwin, Keeper of the King's Peace and his friend the Bailiff Simon Puttock are called to investigate. Their case is not as simple as it seems with suspects that are high in nobility people who are allied with the Despencers ( you need to know history to know why this is relevant ). So many people could have done it but who and why? Was Mark guilty or was someone else?

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### Linda Murray says

One of a series,the early books have a more interesting storyline than the later ones which deal more with affairs of state. As always there is a long list of characters,and considerable repetition which can be tedious,however worth reading.

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### Reid Michaels says

Good read as all the Templars have been, but a little long and convoluted.

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### LJ says

THE MAD MONK OF GIDLEIGH (Hist. Mys-Baldwin Furnshill/Simon Puttock-England-1323) - VG  
Jecks, Michael – 14th in series  
Headline, 2002, UK Hardcover – ISBN: 0755301684

First Sentence: In the darkened room, the man's shattered body gave a final convulsive jerk.

Sir Baldwin Furnshill, Keeper of the King's Peace, and Bailiff Simon Puttock must leave their families and travel to the village of Gidleigh. The beautiful daughter of the town's miller has been found dead, the young monk, by whom she was pregnant, the obvious suspect. This wouldn't have involved Simon but that a miner has also died, and that is under his jurisdiction.

Upon their arrival at Wonson Manor, they find Sir Ralph is the new owner and his son Esmon in charge of a band of mercenary soldiers. Tension in the village increases as truths are exposed and more die.

Jecks is one of the better historical writers. There is excellent attention to period detail and a very strong sense of time and place.

All the characters are fully dimensional and well drawn. I like that the two protagonists' lives have changed through the series. They come through as real people with great strengths and realistic weaknesses and

consequences. They are not the only characters who change, others do as well.

The story is very well plotted. Just when I thought I knew where it was going, it turned. I particularly liked that the point was made that small actions can have big consequences.

This was another very good book in an excellent series and I'm happy to know I've many more books to go.

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## **Elizabeth Livingstone says**

### **Brilliant**

The journey of our two heroes, their characters never fail to keep me engrossed

The different mixture of backgrounds made it feel real

Looking forward to our heroes next adventure and how the Bailiff will like travelling in a foreign country

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## **Nan says**

Sir Baldwin and Bailiff Simon are in it again, up to their necks with the twists and turns of this medieval mystery series.

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## **Leta says**

Much later in the West Country series. A large cast of characters, most of whom are required to choose between the abstract of justice and the concrete of angering the local knight. And set in a time when rape was a perk for his psycho son.

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### **Carmen says**

Another good read by Michael Jecks. I really love his characters and plot. By reading his books, I discover so much about the culture of the middle ages. It is a pleasant way to learn. But I also find out how much the world has stayed the same. There are still people who suffer, still people who do the right thing, and still people who hurt others. It is not a "modern day" event.

In this story, Baldwin accidently kills a man. He feels very wronged, because he killed him because he was given the wrong information. So he decides to go on a pilgrimage to Spain. We have seen so much in the news about the Santiago Way, it is eerie to think people are still doing it, still hoping for absolution.

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### **Mavis Hewitt says**

Good one, probably the best I've read, so far, slightly more complex plot, and I didn't spot some of the twists, might have if I'd had thought about it, but wanted to keep reading & find out what happened, (another late night/early morning)

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### **Sue Law says**

I've enjoyed all the previous books in Jecks' Templar series but it took me three goes to get past page 100 in this one. The second half of the book saved it from being a 2 star, but nowhere near the usual overall standard.

A young unmarried woman is found dead after a miscarriage and the father of her unborn child (the curate of the local chapel) is the chief suspect. But why is the lord of the local manor so fanatically determined to bring the priest to secular justice?

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### **Sandy says**

Really learned alot about the Tinnens on Dartmoor, and as I live here ...  
Good who-done-it.

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### **Cate says**

moderately good read--started out very slow, but picked up and was actually quite interesting by the end. Amazing to think that things were so very unstable in the middle ages--talk about impossible to actually investigate a murder. It's more like "guilty by popular consent" rather than innocent until proven guilty. And the role of the church and its power in those times is beyond my comprehension.

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### **Kathy Moberg says**

Terrific book in a favorite medieval mystery series. Lots of action, gripping narrative and many secrets. Great

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sense of time and place. And wow -- what a collection of unsavory characters for our heroes to sort through!

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### **Michael Jecks says**

This book was enjoyable for me on several levels. First, it was the very first book which I wrote and which I was convinced was taut and action-packed while still remaining within the publisher's contracted 100,000 words. All my previous books had been a bit longer. And then, I spotted one red herring I hadn't tied up. It took a lot more action scenes, a fire, siege, and plenty of deaths (including that of one of my favourite characters) before I managed to finish it - at 150,000 words! But it isn't a long read, it's tight and works well for me.

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### **Nathan Stevens says**

I wasn't sure what this was all about at the start, but it turned into a pretty fun whodunnit! The characters were well constructed and I ended up invested in their safety by the end which is a mark of a good build-up.

I was hoping for a bit more of the historical context but the characters brought some of the history in without long pointless explanations about their historical roles which I was grateful for.

All in all a fun if a bit sexist romp through a 14th century detective story

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### **Puzzle Doctor says**

Fantastic and moving historical mystery. Full review at [classicmystery.wordpress.com](http://classicmystery.wordpress.com)

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### **M.J. Perry says**

I bought this book last year to read on a plane home from Ireland, and never had the opportunity to open it. Today I'm home ill and could not face the thought of reading anything school or work related and so picked up this rather long (500 pages) mystery.

At first I had trouble getting into. In his desire to ensure the reader has sufficient grasp of Medieval history, Jecks gives so much detail it distracts from the story. However, eventually the twists and turns of plot, and the development of the characters leads the reader to pursue the story to the end.

The primary murder causing the story to unfold is that of a young woman named Mary. Not long after learning of her death I thought I had her murder solved, and although the facts that I had determined were correct, their outcome was not. It is a book full of intrigue, abuse of power, betrayal, mutiny and most of all surprises. Even the very last page contains a surprise.

One of the other unusual characteristics of this particular novel involves the reader in trying to determine the hero. The two men, Simon and Baldwin, are nothing alike, and yet each is so committed to justice that they work in such tandem that I would often need to check who was speaking.

I think it is worth persevering through the first few chapters of the book to get to a very exciting resolution to the mystery--however, those chapters can be work.

I think another indication of its quality is the fact that I read it in just over half a day.

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### **Mirjam says**

The Mad Monk of Gidleigh is an awesome Knights Templar mystery. The book is filled with murder, betrayal, adultery and fights. The story has lots of twists and surprises until the very last pages of the book. As usual the characters introduced in this book are well-worked out. In The Mad Monk of Gidleigh Sir Baldwin and Simon have a corrupt knight and his awful son to deal with. Powerful people with even more powerful connections. But they are determined to do what they always do. Find the real culprit and see justice done.

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### **TC says**

Really 2.5. Am ok medieval murder mystery but not particularly well written or enthralling

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### **Mary says**

This long running medieval mystery series follows Sir Baldwin Furnshill and Bailiff Simon Puttock, former Knights Templar, as they solve actual crimes that happened during the famine-stricken and corrupt reign of Edward II. Thoroughly researched, the plotting, action and characterization are vibrant and well done. This one concerns a lonely monk in a tiny chapel who falls for the miller's daughter. No problems until she is found dead with a broken neck and having suffered a miscarriage. Suspicion falls on the monk who flees. Enter Sir Baldwin and Simon. Of course there is more to this crime than meets the eye; soon another death reveals the reign of terror the local Aristocracy has been waging on their serfs.

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