



ELIZABETH HANBURY

Wickedly Captivating Historical Romance

Behind the Scenes – The Paradise Will

Warning!

In describing details from the book, I may ruin it for you by giving minor spoilers. Please don't read on if you don't want to be exposed to potential spoilers, such as plot points or romantic pairings!

- The love story in *The Paradise Will* is set against the stirrings of agricultural unrest which followed the end of the Napoleonic Wars. This unrest was part of a wider backlash against the excesses of the Prince Regent and the ruling classes he represented, growing industrialisation leading to loss of jobs and a growing demand for reform of the electoral system. These demands were to culminate in a bloody massacre of unarmed men, women and children at St Peter's Fields, Manchester in 1819, an event dubbed - with bitter reference to the triumph of Waterloo - as The Peterloo Massacre.
- Events in the book take place during 1818, when the unrest that began in the North and Midlands with the Luddites was reaching southern England. Seed drills and threshing machines were reducing the need for farm labour and large landowners were using the Enclosure Act to expand their farms, make huge profits and in turn invest in the new machinery. Agricultural workers, already poor, found themselves desperate and with no prospect of alternative work.
- The village of Tolpuddle in Dorset was the birthplace in 1833 of a Friendly Society of agricultural labourers - a group who came together to protest against the conditions being imposed on agricultural workers. The group was the forerunner of a Trade Union. The six members became known as the Tolpuddle Martyrs; they were eventually tried, found guilty and sentenced to transportation to Australia. The convictions were eventually overturned by huge protests and if these had not succeeded, all unions could have been considered illegal. Find out more at <http://www.tolpuddlemartyrs.org/>

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- Hawkscote Hall, the property Alyssa inherits from her uncle, General Tom Paradise, is loosely based on Athelhampton House in Dorset. You can find out more about Athelhampton at <http://www.athelhampton.co.uk/Welcome.html>
- Gil's property, Eastcombe House, is loosely based on Kingston Maurward House. The house is now an educational college, but you can find out more about Kingston Maurward at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingston_Maurward_House
- The Antelope hotel, where Alyssa and Letty have lunch, and where Piers stays while in Dorset, was one of the oldest coaching inns in Dorchester. The Oak Room at The Antelope hosted the famous '*Bloody Assizes*' held on 5th September 1685 by Judge Jeffreys. It closed during the 1990s, but its frontage now acts as the entrance to an arcade of shops and the Oak Room itself has been converted to a tea room.
- Judge Jeffreys lodged at 6 High West Street, Dorchester, which is now a restaurant called, appropriately, Judge Jeffreys!
- *The Paradise Will* is about a mischievous will, but all kinds of weird and wonderful wills have been written over the centuries. You can view the wills of some famous people online at the National Archives web-site at http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/search-results.asp?CatID=11&searchType=browsable&pagenumber=1&query=*&queryType=1
- All the characters in *The Paradise Will* are entirely fictitious, and the incidents are pure invention.

Happy reading!