



Mariah's Quest

Sally Laity , Dianna Crawford

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Journey back to 1753 Baltimore, where Mariah Harwood is sold as an indentured servant to Colin Barclay. Her handsome new master just may be her ticket to paradise, but Mariah soon has her hands full as Colin plots to seduce her without being trapped into a commitment. Then when Colin is blinded in battle, Mariah must search within for qualities other than beauty to secure a marriage proposal. But how much will she sacrifice to garner true love?

Mariah's Quest Details

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From Reader Review Mariah's Quest for online ebook

Arlena says

Author: Sally Laity, Dianna Crawford

Published By: Barbour Books

Age Recommended: Adult

Reviewed By: Arlena Dean

Book Blog For: GMTA

Rating: 5

Review:

"Mariah's Quest" by the two authors..Sally Laity and Dianna Crawford was a beautiful Christian historical romance. I found "Mariah's Quest" a very well written romance of Mariah...as she grows up..from England she comes to the American colonies...only to be sold and really learns to rely on God. The setting of this novel was a historical setting during the Revolutionary War era. "Mariah's Quest" starts out ..."with Mariah being sold into bond to a handsome young man(Colin) and taken to his families plantation" and this wonderful novel will continue to give the reader a some marvelous dialog read. Be ready for Mariah to becomes a tutorer to Colin's three sisters...Colin then goes on a long trip to sell horses for his family...he goes to England and returns bringing her a engagement ring for Mariah. ... then with war starting up...now, not wanting to tell anymore...I want you to pick up "Mariah Quest" to see what all is happening in this excellent read that will only keep your interest until the very end. The real question will be answered...Will Mariah and Colin finally find a 'authentic love' that will prevail for them? I really enjoyed how these authors entered the history into this novel..."a war with a young George Washington" ..along with plantation owners, slaves...the French and Indian War and also indentured servants. Be ready for plenty of drama, history, suspense and romance in this novel. The characters were all well developed after some time and you will see emotions especially with Mariah, the three sisters and definitely the Ms. Cora Barclay. I am sure you will see the why, what and who during the read.

"Mariah's Quest" offered a definitely air of a Christian historical romance read that I would definitely recommend as a excellent read. It is my understanding that this novel was a second in a series and I am certainly looking forward to Book 3.

Rebekah Measmer says

I am fascinated by history, and enjoy historical fiction as one of my favorite genres. For this reason, I picked up this book without reading the synopsis. As an avid reader, I like to take chances and decided to take a chance on this book. Unfortunately, I was sorely disappointed in the starring character as well as the juvenile romance depicted.

While the author did have some decent chapters with picturesque descriptions, the overall plot fell short of being truly enthralling and definitely lacked depth. If you don't mind wishy-washy characters and predictable plots, this is the book for you.

The ending did redeem some of the characters' shallow and altogether unlikable qualities, although it seemed to have been thrown together and not is thought out as it could've been.

Erin says

Find this and other reviews at: <http://flashlightcommentary.blogspot....>

Fellow readers, I have turned a corner. For the first time, I am awarding Laity and Crawford less than four stars. I'm sorry ladies, I really am, but a generous three is all I can muster for Mariah's Quest. The book didn't pack the same punch as your previous collaborations. Consider this a warning folks, there be spoilers ahead.

Let's start with the blurb. Mariah is depicted as a scheming young woman with her eye on an advantageous marriage and freedom from her indentured status. I can agree with that, but the blurb also states "her pursuit won't be as easy as she planned." Huh? Where does that come from? Colin spends their first day together devising a means by which to keep her in his family home thereby increasing his access to the lady in question and limiting his competition for her affection. The single hurdle to their romance takes shape in the formidable mistress of the house, Cora Barclay, but we'll come back to her later. My point is the blurb offers a much overblown exaggeration of the situation.

The blurb also describes our heroine as "reckless." Again I find I am scratching my head. Colin and Mariah are alone for maybe two pages of the entire book and Mariah spends most of that ink worrying over her reputation. She frets over walking into the woods with Colin without an escort, nearly jumps out of her skin during their only real kiss and worries how their being alone in the Barclay home will be perceived by the neighbors. By definition, reckless means marked by a lack of proper caution or careless of the consequences. Mariah Harwood doesn't fit the mold, a borderline prude maybe, but certainly not reckless.

If Colin Barclay wasn't a fictional character I would encourage him to file a slander suit. The Barclay heir never actually tries to make Mariah his mistress. He privately flirts with the idea on a couple of occasions, but from the beginning he is half in love with the English rose. No joke, the two spend only a handful of private moments together before he proposes. Proposes friends. As in for better or worse, till death do us part, joined together in the eyes of God, holy matrimony. Doesn't sound much like a country playboy to me, but what do I know.

I'm already tiptoeing around the romance so I'll just say it. Laity and Crawford may have seen sparks flying, but I sure didn't. Colin is obviously interested in Mariah but the first time he leaves her side he goes prowling the local assembly with his cousin. He comes back to Mariah with a ring but it didn't seem like appropriate behavior for a besotted lover. Of course, Mariah isn't much better. She flirts with the attentions of various men in Colin's absence, most notably the Barclay's horse trainer. Maybe I am off base here, but the pair seem infatuated with rather than genuinely attached to one another.

Our lovers aren't the only two who seem to suffer from inconsistent characterization. Cora Barclay is right there with them. The Barclay matriarch comes out swinging, making it clear that any dalliance between Colin and Mariah will not be tolerated, not even if Mariah ends up with child. In 1753 that is nothing short of brass. Unfortunately, Cora soon loses her nerve, merely tolerating Mariah's presence and accepting her inability to remove the girl from the Barclay home and her son's affections. For the most part anyway. She makes a halfhearted attempt at shaming Mariah in front of the Barclay peers and there is a lovely moment when she shouts her displeasure at Mariah's ineptitude as her son's mistress. Not to fear though, by the day of the wedding Cora is singing Mariah's praises from the hilltops. Can someone please explain to me where this character comes from? I don't get it. Unless she suffers from some sort of personality disorder. Then it all makes perfect sense.

Under usual circumstance, I praise Laity and Crawford for the skill in which they integrate history into their plots. Not this time. It takes half the book for the the characters to get into events in the Ohio River Valley and by the time we realize Colin, Tuck and Nate actually saw action, the battles are over and the wounded have returned home. Having waited two thirds of the novel for anything of historic significance to happen, I felt entirely cheated.

In my review of Rose's Pledge, I commented on what I felt to be recycled material. Mariah's Quest isn't as blatant as its predecessor, but it isn't without issue. Little Amy, the youngest of the Barclay clan, spends an inordinate amount of time in the stables among the horses and is less than thrilled with more feminine pursuits of the day. These are traits she shares with Emily Haynes of the Freedom's Holy Light series. Taking this into consideration I believe the Barclay and Haynes families would enjoy one another. Both have large land holdings, profit from the raising of horse flesh and neither mistress of the house is particularly impressed by their son's choice of indentured bride.

Was I impressed? Decidedly not. Do I regret reading the book? No, but I really expected a lot more from it. Will I read the third installment? Probably. I really want to believe that Mariah's Quest was a fluke accident, a rare misstep by two authors I genuinely appreciate.

Recommended to fans of The Midwife of Blue Ridge and the Freedom's Holy Light series.

Ronnda Pagan says

Mariah the second daughter and sister to Rose was happy to have the handsome young man and heir to Barclay Bay plantation had made a large bid for her. She wanted so much to marry him but as the bond servant she had to prove that she was worthy of teaching his younger sisters the skills needed to become ladies of wealth and influence like their mother. Mariah learned the hard way that beauty is only skin deep and to win the hearts of both mother and son it would take a change of heart from being self- centered to serving others. Her transformation of vain glory to giving of herself as a servant of God was a incredible journey. Also, she was able to teach the young ladies how to be mindful of self- respect around those who may need reminded of their actions. Her biggest challenge was to show the mother how to humble one's self in time of crisis when the son came home injured from the battle with the Indians and the French.

Victor Gentile says

Sally Laity & Dianna Crawford in their new book, "Mariah's Quest", Book Two in the Daughters Of Harwood House series published by Barbour takes us to Maryland in the turbulent 1753.

From the back cover: Bound to serve...longing to love.

Mariah Harwood, one of three indentured sisters, stands on a Baltimore auction block in 1753. The dashing young gentleman who buys her may be her ticket to marriage, wealth and freedom. Once in Colin Barclay's possession, Mariah grows to realize her pursuit won't be as easy as she planned.

Colin Barclay is as charming and rash a Mariah is reckless. He willingly outbids the other men for Mariah's indenturement papers, but as he claims the grateful beauty, her overbearing sister dampens his anticipation by making him solemnly promise to deliver Mariah untouched to his family's plantation. Undeterred, Colin welcomes the challenge of seducing Mariah—no strings attached.

But best-laid plans soon go awry when Colin is wounded in battle. As he faces a world of bitterness, Mariah finds she needs more than charm to win his heart. Can she summon the inner beauty and faith to prove her love?

It is always amazing to me that one set of parents can produce three children that are very different from each other in terms of temperament and viewpoints. Mariah is not like her two sisters; not in looks, not in her faith and not in her character. Can you imagine selling yourself into servanthood to pay off your father's debt? Mariah's sister Rose thought so and the three sisters came from England to America to do so. Rose's story was told in book one, "Rose's Pledge", now it is Mariah's turn. I like history and "Mariah's Quest" is loaded with it. There are Plantation owners and slaves, the French And Indian War and indentured servants. One of the themes I enjoyed was can God change our selfish personalities so that we can give ourselves to the needs of others? The answer, of course, is yes but the thrill ride that this story turns out to be has some real surprises before we find out that answer. "Mariah's Quest" is a great read, filled with drama, romance, history and suspense. I recommend this book highly. I am greatly looking forward to book three in the series.

If you would like to listen to interviews with other authors and professionals please go to www.kingdomhighlights.org where they are available On Demand.

To listen to 24 hours non-stop Christian music please visit our internet radio station www.kingdomairwaves.org

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from Barbour Publishers. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 : "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

Betty says

Mariah's story is just as action-packed as Rose's story

Even though Mariah comes off sounding like a spoiled brat at the beginning of the story, she matures nicely. I especially liked how Mistress Barclay and Mariah sparred throughout. Although she didn't have as rough a time as Rose, she was a strong woman from the beg Be it showed.

Kristi says

At the end, I could see this book as being a good christian romance. It explains the change of view of Mariah as she goes from a selfish, gold-digging husband seeker to a young woman who is willing to put her life into God's hands.

However, I didn't think the romance was developed enough. Being unmarried, I don't believe in love at first sight and it seems foolish the whole relationship began of how beautiful and handsome they each thought they were. There was no depth. My type of romance have more of an emotional depth them. A progression of realistic emotional turmoil. They each would consider to put aside their infatuation for the other by seeking another, yet always realize no one is as handsome or as beautiful. Really?

Everything felt too surface leveled. I personally struggled to get through this book, but I have unfortunately

been influenced by romance novels that aren't as wholesome and christian as this was. I'd say for a clean romance read, this series would be worth the read. I won't add it to my personal library, but I'm still willing to read the whole series. The concept of the story is amazing. I just felt there was a lot more potential in developing the relationships deeper.

Also, I like the addition of twelve discussion questions at the end. It helps point out several great principles that the author was hoping to teach in the novel.

Lisa Johnson says

Title: Mariah's Quest

Author: Sally Laity and Dianna Crawford

Pages: 317

Year: 2012

Publisher: Barbour

Note: I received a complimentary copy for an honest review of this book. The opinions shared in this review are solely my responsibility. Other reviews can be read at <http://seekingwithallyurheart.blogspot....> Also follow me on Twitter @lcjohnson1988

Mariah finds herself on the auction block in America after a six week journey across the ocean from England. She, along with her two sisters, is being auctioned as indentured servants. How did things come to this? Mariah's older sister, Rose, sold their possessions and her labor to try to pay off their father's debt. The other two sisters didn't want Rose in America alone so they also volunteered their labor. Mariah, however, has plans well beyond that of an indentured servant. She is coming to America to find a rich, handsome husband.

Colin is a young man in town on business for his father. He rides past the auction block and sees a beautiful, young woman dressed in a fine dress being auctioned as a servant. He is drawn to her at once and enters the bidding. He successfully purchases Mariah's indentured papers for a time of service of four years. Colin also has plans for Mariah beyond serving as a companion to his mother or perhaps a tutor for his younger sisters. Will Mariah be amenable to his attentions?

Colin brings Mariah home to his family's plantation in Virginia. His mother is none too pleased to have her there. Her son will marry someone from his own class with a dowry and should not be deterred from this goal. She agrees to give Mariah a trial period as tutor for her young girls. Mariah does well in this endeavor, but expects quite a lot as a supposed servant. She continues to plot how she can spend more time with Colin to get him to like her while Colin does the same. Colin appears vain and arrogant. Mariah appears manipulative, shallow, and selfish. While Colin is away, she contemplates other men who she might pursue in order to get a marriage proposal.

Once Colin returns, he no longer wants Mariah around. He realizes he doesn't really know her that well and she is only after his money and position, so he thinks. He also understands how the Lord uses each situation for good. Mariah finally realizes all her schemes and manipulations won't get her what she really wants. She surrenders herself fully to the will of God and gains immediate peace and relief of pain. She can genuinely enjoy others' happiness and not be envious. Can Colin and Mariah resolve their differences? Even if they do, will his mother ever agree to a marriage between the two of them?

My rating is 3 stars.

Judy says

Mariah's Quest by Sally Laity and Dianna Crawford

Daughters of Harwood House Book Two

Three young women arrive by ship from Bath, England to the shores of Baltimore, Maryland in 1753. To save their father from debtors prison, the eldest agreed to sell herself as an indentured servant. Her two sisters agreed to come along. Lily because she only knew Rose as her mother figure and Mariah had visions of a wealthy husband. It was agreed they would all be sold together....funny how things don't turn out as you imagine. The greedy ship captain sells them separately. This is the story of Mariah Harwood.

Colin Barclay happened past the auction block when the most beautiful woman was being auctioned off, how could he not buy her? And he did. He brings her to his parents plantation and his mother seems pleased until she finds out that the beautiful girl is not a local belle but a bond servant. She is convinced to take Mariah in as a tutoress for his three sisters under the condition that Colin is to stay away from her, she only wants her children marrying well.

Mariah is on the vain side and not surprised the handsome man has chosen her. She is not strong in the faith like her sisters and for all her outward beauty, Mariah is lacking in inward beauty. Through some tough life lessons and humbling situations will she finally sink low enough to look up to God?

This was a really good read. You get to ride to war with a young George Washington and deal with slavery. At times it's an emotional ride between Mariah's shallowness, Mistress Barclay's uppityness and the war. But it was all brought together for an ending that had me wiping my eyes while trying to read the last few chapters. Book one in the series is called Rose's Pledge. As there are three sisters, there will most likely be a third book in the series as well.

**Received through NetGalley for review.

<http://justjudysjumbles.blogspot.com/...>

MLOW says

4—

Patricia says

Honestly, I was not very cited about reading about self-absorbed Mariah in book 2 of the series and had wanted to move right on to book 3. However, book two turned out to be a great story. Now for book three!

Marian Baay says

In Rose's Pledge, book one in the Harwood House trilogy, we already met Mariah Harwood. She's the most beautiful of her sisters Rose and Lilly. Rose was very worried about Mariah being bought by a handsome young man.

This book starts at the auction and we get to read Mariah's story.

Mariah is a selfish young woman who came with her sisters to the colonies in hopes to find a wealthy young man to marry. When wealthy Colin Barclay laid eyes upon beautiful Mariah he only wants to buy her because of her beauty. While traveling to his parents plantation he fantasizes about Mariah becoming his mistress.

Colin's mother is not pleased with his purchase. They have enough servants. She suspects that Colin bought her to become his mistress. So, on Mariah's first day, Mrs. Barclay makes it clear that she will never agree upon a marriage between Colin and Mariah, even if she gets pregnant. Mariah doesn't want to be Colin's mistress. She only wants to be his wife—that seems very unlikely now.

Colin really wants Mariah and he's thinking about an opportunity to be alone with her, but that proves to be almost impossible.

When Colin has to go on a business trip for a couple of months, he promises Mariah they will get married when he comes back. Mariah can't tell anyone that she's secretly betrothed to Colin. When Colin finally comes home they want to make wedding plans. But then his best friend Tuck comes by with bad news. They have to join the militia and fight against the French. Colin has to leave again and gets injured in battle. Everything changes. Colin and Mariah have to search their hearts if there's still hope and love for each other.

This was a nice and easy read. I'm sure lovers of romance will enjoy this book a lot. The book is very different from the first book in this series—where the first book took place in the wilderness, this book takes place on a beautiful plantation.

I'm looking forward to reading Lilly's story in the last book in this series.

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley and was not required to write a positive review.

Rhonda says

4 STARS

I was afraid that I wouldn't like Mariah but I do. She grew up and I was impressed with her. Now there is Lily's story to read hopefully soon.

Mariah was sold into bond to a handsome young man and taken to his family's plantation. He did promise her older sister that she would be safe.

Colin did not have good intention in mind first but he was taken with her beauty. He told his mother that he was thinking of his sister's and their wish to be taught at home instead of away to school.

Mariah played music instruments, spoke French, had lovely handwriting, and good to sums. So Mariah was soon the teacher for 3 young ladies the youngest 8.

Mrs. Barclay did not like her and made sure that Colin did not spend much time at all alone with her. Even sending her son on a long trip selling their horses and going to England to buy more stock for their horses.

Colin while over in England looked up Mariah's father and let him know the girls made it safely to America and bought an engagement ring for Mariah that her father even made. He also went with her father to hire a lawyer to handle his suing the estate for payment of jewelry that he made for them. Mariah was a vain and self centered at first with dreams of marrying rich but as she faced trials she grew and turned more to prayer.

You do get to see and hear from Rose and her family a few times and finally hear a little about Lily.

I was fascinated from the glimpse of George Washington when he was younger. also learned a little more what life was like at the times.

This was a good uplifting book to read this Sunday afternoon. Did not want to put the book down.

Now I really want to see what happens to Lily. Find out if their father and brothers are doing okay and what's

been going on with them next.

I was given this ebook to read in exchange of honest review from Netgalley.

07/01/2012 PUB Barbour Publishing, Inc.

Donia says

This novel had potential but sadly the story had too many flaws for my tastes. The story concept was good but here are some things that were wrong. First, the demeanor of the characters was all wrong for 1750's. Example: Amy the eight year old daughter of an elite plantation owner WOULD NOT have been allowed to ride astride a horse and wander around playing in the mud. Secondly, all of the rich plantation owner's daughters would have had a full time nanny who would have kept them in check or she would have been punished. When Mariah came on the scene she should have replaced a nanny not been the first one.

Mariah - everything about her was out of whack. She should have been a bit humble. She was brazen and behaved like a tart not a young woman well schooled as it was stated.

Had Colin and Mariah been a bit more slow to come to their romance it might have worked. Mariah would have been much much more worried about the consequences of of being an indentured servant; much less forward and concerned about being tossed out on her ear or being sold to become some man's toy. Being an indentured servant was not a game. It was harsh and didn't work out well for many if not most.

Miss Pippi the Librarian says

The Harwood sisters came to America to become indentured servants to save their father's livelihood back home in England. The eldest Rose was sold to a backwoodsman as a cook. Mariah sold to an elegant young man named Colin Barclay. He fancied her looks and invested his money without a thought as to what he would do with her when he brought her back to his parent's plantation. Colin's parents are not thrilled, but they offer the position of governess to Mariah. Mariah isn't thrilled to be working, but being a governess is better than manual labor and she got to stay close to Colin.

Mariah and Colin's tale stretches through a long length of time. They learned valuable life lessons about outward appearances, society, faith, and inner beauty. The tale could have been longer because of the lengthy timeline. The war aspects brought a new twist to the end of the novel, which offered excellent steps to finalizing the book and growth of the characters.

Lily's tale is the final story for Harwood House. I look forward to hearing how Lily's life went. The storyline stayed true to Mariah, just as the first piece stayed focused on Rose.

Time Period: Colonial, 1753

Location: Maryland, United States

Reviewed from a NetGalley copy. Thank you, Barbour Books!
