

# Interview Questions by Book ‘em NC (for *Alaina Claiborne*)



## **Why did you choose England as the backdrop for your book? What was it about that region and the 19th century that captivated you?**

I’ve always wanted to visit England but have only been as close as their northern neighbor, Scotland. That hasn’t stopped my fascination with the country, from a historical standpoint. Growing up I wanted to be more English, like most of my ancestors. I would have proper tea parties, speak as they do, and even adopted a few of their customs. I’ve since relaxed some of that behavior, but after years of engraining England into my mind, it seemed like a good fit to base a book there. Now I’m obsessed with Scotland rather than England, but that’s another story.

As for the time period—it’s not present-day. Yes, it doesn’t take much to captivate me with any time period during or before the 19th century. So much chance occurred at the turn of the century, and if I had been there, I would have wished to go back a hundred years. If you transported me back in time to the 18th or 19th century, I’d fit in quite nicely.

## **Was Tristan Sheffield's vocation of finding people who don't want to be found based on anyone you've known? Did you have to research ways in which people could be located long before modern technology?**

I don’t know any spies or special agents, but what a wealth of information they would have been! There was a bit of research involved, but basically what it came down to was playing it out. Here’s Tristan and he has a problem to solve—he has to find the bad guys. How does he do that? To answer that question, I simply had to take away all possible methods that involve modern technology. After that, you’re not left with much except for a lot of leg work, letters, and reports. I imagine they weren’t in great moods when they found people.

## **Will Tristan and Alaina return in future books?**

Absolutely! They will both appear in the other British agent novels. I originally didn’t plan on a series, but I enjoyed Charles and Devon so much that I knew they needed their own stories. It pleases me not to have to say goodbye to Tristan and Alaina.

## **How would you describe your writing style?**

Diana Gabaldon described it best: “Writing successfully is a matter of figuring out how your own brain works and doing that—not trying to adopt someone else’s methods.”

I, like many new authors, are works-in-progress—our styles are still developing. I’m certainly getting closer, but I’m still figuring out my own methods.

**What advice would you give to new authors?**

This answer ties into question four and Diana’s advice—it’s also a recent lesson learned. I have purchased a dozen or so how-to writing books over the years and guess what—I’ve read only one. The others are in the library donation pile. Reading books about someone else’s writing style (or how they think you should write) isn’t going to help an author develop their own unique style. The only way to do that is to write.

The second piece of advice I have for new authors—find a good editor. Whether you’re self-publishing or preparing a book for submission to a traditional publisher, you need an editor. Trust me, no matter how much you think you know about editing, or the English language, you don’t (yes, once upon a time that was me too). Agents and publishers alike enjoy tossing poorly edited manuscripts in the “I’m not even going to bother” pile.

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## The Author

Award-winning author MK McClintock writes historical romantic fiction about courageous and honorable men and strong women who appreciate chivalry. Her stories of adventure, romance, and mystery sweep across the American West to the Victorian British Isles, with places and times between and beyond. With her heart deeply rooted in the past, she enjoys a quiet life in the northern Rocky Mountains.

Website: [www.mkmclintock.com](http://www.mkmclintock.com)