

# Why have I to write?

*Lindsey Erith*

The country of the mind is a freedom. Who knows what we may find? Of course it reveals what matters to the writer, which, ultimately, reveals us. As a child I was captured by the heroism and despair in history. I still resonate with the heroes who fixed my attention: Prince Rupert, Lord Nelson.

I'm at my happiest in conjuring up, imagining, a central character whom I set forth on the tide of events. I disclose who this human being is. My background of graphics and portrait work is the background to my interest in likeness and in character ( which are not, of course, quite the same thing). I conjure up the protagonist and setting and let events flow. Events are driven by the nature of the players in the game

The difficulties of health problems I have and the need to be there at all times with a epileptic first husband would have been jail, had I not the window through which to escape. A blank sheet of paper and my inept typing took my mind away from the (literally) painful reality. Whenever possible I emerged from my burrow and set about the Civil War re-enactments. No, I am not a military historian, but research of all sorts is the underpinning of what comes on the page.

It is not all deadly serious, folks. On one glorious occasion the press of pike were advancing in stalwart formation down a sharp slope, one pikeman lost control and zoomed off on his own, impaled his pike in a tree trunk and knocked himself out; next, the St John Ambulance team rushed in, under a white flag... pure Monty Python.

My central characters have to engage the reader, they must conjure him up; I do not go with the cardboard action men nor the introvert sufferers: I aim to lure the reader forward finding the central character attractive, interesting and, yes, that they want to read on.

Should you care to know me, I also write occasionally for the musical press.