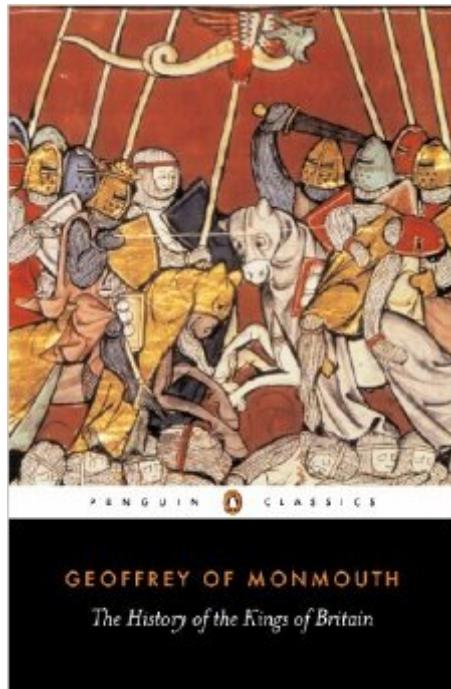


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The History Of The Kings Of Britain (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

Traces the story of the realm from its supposed foundation by Brutus to the coming of the Saxons some two thousand years later. This title portrays legendary and semi-legendary figures such as Lear, Cymbeline, Merlin the magician and the most famous of all British heroes, King Arthur.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In *The History of the Kings of Britain*, Geoffrey of Monmouth presents a detailed history of the Britons, beginning with Brutus in the twelfth century B.C. and ending with Saxon invasion in the seventh century A.D. Through the main characters of his book, Brutus, Belinus and Arthur, Geoffrey illustrates Britain's glorious past, recalling the events in chronological sequence and providing detailed descriptions of every event, especially those strategic to the building of Britain. While Geoffrey's source has yet to be proved, in his own introduction, Geoffrey claims to follow a reliable and ancient source given to him by a friend. The lack of evidence to support this claim, coupled with the supernatural elements incorporated into *The History of the Kings of Britain*, makes it difficult for the modern reader to place complete trust in the text as a historical account of Britain's history. The text is, however, rich in historical value as from his writing, one can deduce much about the political structure of Britain in that time frame, as well as the sociological makeup of the nation. The emphasis on politics, war and international relations, form a rough picture of Britain's power system, and the lengthy stories revolving around his characters give the reader insight on the lives of the British nobility. *The History of the Kings of Britain* deserves as much credit (if not more) for its literary value as its historical one. While Geoffrey considers himself a historian, his artistic talents, fluency

and extensive use of vocabulary bring his accounts to life, turning the text into an enjoyable literary piece. Especially in key passages (in particular those concerning Arthur), Geoffrey makes very fine and detailed points, often narrating lively.

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