



The Reign of Arthur: From History to Legend

Christopher Gidlow

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Did King Arthur really exist? The Reign of Arthur takes a fresh look at the early sources describing Arthur's career and compares them to the reality of Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries. It presents, for the first time, both the most up to date scholarship and a convincing case for the existence of a real sixth-century British general called Arthur. Where others speculate wildly or else avoid the issue, Gidlow, remaining faithful to the sources, deals directly with the central issue of interest to the general reader: does the Arthur that we read of in the ninth-century sources have any link to a real leader of the fifth or sixth century? Was Arthur a powerful king or Dark Age general co-ordinating the British resistance to Saxon invaders? Detailed analysis of the key Arthurian sources, contemporary testimony and archaeology reveals the reality of fragmented British kingdoms uniting under a single military command to defeat the Saxons. There is plausible and convincing evidence for the existence of their war-leader, and, in this challenging and provocative work, Gidlow concludes that the Dark Ages hypothesis of Arthur, War-leader of the Kings of the Britons, not only fits the facts, it is the only way of making sense of them.

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