

King Arthur and his Knights

by George Gibson

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Chapter One: Young Arthur

In the year 493, Uther Pendragon became King of Britain. He had a counsellor^① named Merlin. Merlin was also a magician^②.

When King Uther's son Arthur was born, Merlin said, "Your son must grow up away from the court. It is safer!"

Merlin gave the baby son to Sir Ector and his wife. They raised^③ him well.

When King Uther died in 509, Britain had no king. The country had many problems.

Merlin went to the Archbishop of Canterbury^④ and said, "Britain must have a king. We must find one. Call all the noblemen of the kingdom. Tell them to meet at the great church in London on Christmas Day. There, God will show us the new king."

On Christmas Day, all the noblemen were in the great church. Outside the church there was a big stone with a sword in it. These words were written on the big stone:

He who pulls the sword out of this stone is the true King of Britain.

① counsellor: 顾问。

② magician: 巫师。

③ raised: 抚养。

④ Archbishop of Canterbury: 坎特伯雷主教。

Chapter Two: The Sword in the Stone

Each nobleman tried to pull the sword out of the stone. No one was able to do it.

On New Year's Day, the sword was still in the stone. Arthur was there with Sir Ector. Arthur pulled the sword out of the stone without difficulty! This was the sign^① from God. All the noblemen were surprised. He was the new King of Britain.

Sir Ector said, "Arthur, you are now the king of Britain."

Arthur said, "Father, I don't want to leave you!"

Sir Ector said, "I'm not your real father. I don't know who you are. The magician Merlin brought you to us when you were born. I raised you like a son, and I love you. Now you are a king. God wants you to lead^② Britain. You must go and do your duty^③."

Merlin said to the noblemen, "This is King Uther's son and he is our new king!"

Young Arthur first became a knight. Then he became King of Britain.

① sign: 示意。

② lead: 统治。

③ do your duty: 履行职责。

Chapter Three: Britain has a King

Arthur was a young king. He was about twenty years old. He lived at Camelot. His first years as king were difficult. He fought against many enemies from other lands, particularly the Saxons. Some noblemen of his court caused trouble^①. They did not want to obey a young king.

King Arthur was very adventurous^②. He liked riding his horse and looking for adventures. He was courageous, loyal^③ and friendly. His people loved him.

One day, King Arthur was riding in the forest. He saw a fountain^④. Near the fountain there was a knight named Sir Pellinore.

"Stop!" said Sir Pellinore. "You cannot go past the fountain! You must fight with me first!"

King Arthur answered, "I'm ready to fight!" The two knights began fighting. First they fought with their lances. Then they fought with their swords.

During the fight, Arthur's sword broke. Sir Pellinore said, "I'm the winner!"

At that moment, Merlin appeared and said, "Pellinore, this knight is your king! King Arthur!" Sir Pellinore stopped fighting immediately.

① trouble: 麻烦。

② adventurous: 爱冒险的。

③ loyal: 忠诚的。

④ fountain: 喷泉。

Chapter Four: Excalibur

Arthur rode away with Merlin and said, "I broke my sword during the fight with Sir Pellinore. I am king because of that sword. I must have another sword."

"Come with me then," said Merlin.

Arthur followed Merlin to a lake of clear water. In the middle of the lake, Arthur saw an arm. The arm was holding a sword in a beautiful scabbard^①.

"Look!" said Merlin. "That is the sword and that is the Lady of the Lake. Ask her kindly and the sword is yours."

Arthur saw a beautiful lady in a boat on the lake. He asked her, "Can I have that sword?"

She answered, "Yes, you can have it. Take my boat and go and get it."

Arthur and Merlin went to the middle of the lake. There Arthur took the sword. He was very interested in it. He took the sword out of the scabbard and looked at it. It was a beautiful sword with jewels on it.

"Look, Merlin" he said, "the word Excalibur is written on it."

"Yes, Excalibur is the greatest sword in the world. But its scabbard is more precious."

'Why?' asked Arthur.

"It has a great magic power," said Merlin. "When you wear it, you never bleed^② I even if you are wounded^③. When you fight, you must always have the scabbard with you."

① scabbard: 剑鞘。

② bleed: 流血。

③ wound: 受伤。

Chapter Five: Arthur meets Guinevere

A lot of enemies tried to invade Britain: the Saxons, the Jutes, the Pitts and others.

A big army of Saxons attacked King Leodegrance in his castle. He was the King of Cameliard. Young King Arthur and his knights fought against these Saxons and won.

King Leodegrance was very thankful^① to Arthur. He invited him and his knights to a royal banquet^②. At the banquet, Arthur met the King's daughter, Princess Guinevere. Guinevere was young and very beautiful. Arthur fell in love with her. He wanted to marry her.

Merlin wasn't happy with Arthur's choice^③, but he accepted his king's decision.

King Leodegrance, Guinevere's father, was very happy about this marriage. "I am honoured^④ to give my daughter to our courageous king!" said Guinevere's father. "My gift to King Arthur is the Round Table, which belonged to his father, King Uther."

Arthur and Guinevere were married. There was an enormous^⑤ banquet. Everyone in the kingdom was happy.

Guinevere arrived at King Arthur's castle with her ladies and the Round Table. The enormous Round Table had places for 150 knights. Arthur called the best knights of Britain to sit at the Round Table. Only the bravest knights were part of Arthur's court.

① thankful: 感激的。

② a royal banquet: 王室宴会。

③ choice: 选择。

④ honoured: 荣幸的。

⑤ enormous: 巨大的。

Chapter Six: The five Kings

King Arthur and Queen Guinevere were very happy together. The people loved their beautiful queen.

Not long after their marriage, there was another invasion^① of Britain. The King of Ireland, the King of Denmark, and three other kings joined together. They wanted to conquer^② Britain with their strong armies.

"We must fight these five kings," said King Arthur. "We must protect Britain."

The knights of the Round Table were ready to fight against the enemy.

Before leaving Camelot, Arthur said to Guinevere, "Dear Guinevere, I don't want to leave you alone. Please come with me. I promise to protect you. Your lovely presence^③ gives me happiness and courage."

Guinevere smiled and said, "Arthur, I am happy to follow you."

Queen Guinevere rode next to King Arthur. King Arthur's army followed. After travelling for many days they did not meet the five kings.

Suddenly one night, the five kings attacked King Arthur's camp^④. They almost destroyed the camp. The noise of the battle woke up King Arthur. He, Guinevere, and the other knights rode away quickly. They crossed the River Humber and went to the forest.

Then they heard horses across the river. In the moonlight, they saw the five kings. The kings were riding towards them, and they were alone.

One knight said, "Let's attack them by surprise^⑤! They're alone! They

① invasion: 侵略。

② conquer: 征服。

③ presence: 仪态。

④ camp: 营地。

⑤ attack them by surprise: 突袭。

can't see us, but we can see them!"

King Arthur and his knights killed the five kings.

The enemy armies were confused^① without their leaders. They all left Britain. King Arthur and his knights were again victorious^②. They saved Britain from a dangerous^③ invasion.

① confused: 混乱。

② victorious: 胜利的。

③ dangerous: 危险的。

Chapter Seven: Lancelot

One of the knights of the Round Table was Lancelot. He came from France. Lancelot was very kind and generous. He often gave his things^① to the poor.

Lancelot served his king and queen well.

One day a strange girl came to the great hall of the castle. She said to Sir Lancelot, "Come with me! It's very important. I cannot tell you more. Please follow me."

Sir Lancelot followed the girl to the forest. They stopped at a church.

Lancelot entered the church. He saw twelve nuns^②. One nun said, "Sir Lancelot, we bring you this young man. He is loyal and courageous. Please make him a knight."

The young man looked honest. Lancelot agreed to make him a knight. However, Lancelot did not recognize^③ this young man. He was the son Lancelot had from Elaine, a lady he loved some years before. The young man's name was Galahad. Galahad's mother wanted him to be a knight, like his father.

The next day, Lancelot returned to Camelot with the young knight. King Arthur, Queen Guinevere and the knights of the Round Table were happy to meet Galahad.

When Sir Galahad sat down at the Round Table, his name appeared on the table. Everyone was amazed^④. Lancelot looked at Galahad carefully.

① things: 财产。

② nuns: 修女。

③ recognize: 认出。

④ amazed: 惊讶的。

Suddenly, he realized^① that Galahad was his son! Lancelot was very happy and proud^②.

① realized: 认识到。

② proud: 自豪的。

Chapter Eight: The Holy Grail^①

One day the knights were sitting at the Round Table. They were celebrating a religious holiday. Suddenly, there was a loud noise. Then there was a strong light. A green bowl covered with a cloth moved around the room. Invisible^② hands carried it. After a few moments, the green bowl disappeared^③.

"That was the Holy Grail!" exclaimed King Arthur. "That is where Christ's blood was kept after he was crucified^④."

The knights were amazed. They all wanted to see the Holy Grail.

Sir Gawain, a loyal knight, declared^⑤, "I want to look for the Grail for one year and one day."

"Yes, I want to look for the Grail too," said another knight.

All the knights wanted to travel to distant lands to find the Holy Grail. There was great excitement^⑥ at the Round Table.

King Arthur was very worried. He knew that the search^⑦ for the Holy Grail was dangerous. In fact, many knights died during the search. Others never returned to Camelot.

Only three knights found the Holy Grail. They were Galahad, Percival and Bors. All three had pure hearts. Only those with pure hearts saw the Holy Grail. The three knights travelled to distant lands. After many dangerous adventures, they found the Holy Grail.

① The Holy grail: 圣杯。

② invisible: 看不见的。

③ disappeared: 消失。

④ was crucified: 被钉再十字架上。

⑤ declared: 宣布。

⑥ excitement: 兴奋。

⑦ search: 寻找。

When they saw it on a silver table, they thanked God for this great happiness. After finding the Grail, Galahad and Percival died. But Bors returned to Camelot. He told everyone about his wonderful experience.

Chapter Nine: King Arthur goes to Aralon

King Arthur lived a long life, but it finished sadly. In the search for the Holy Grail, many of his knights left Britain. Other knights died. Arthur was alone.

In 537, King Arthur went to a distant land to fight. Sir Gawain and other loyal knights went with him. Before leaving Camelot, King Arthur spoke to a knight called Mordred. He said, "Mordred, I ask you to rule^① my land until I return. I know you are a loyal man."

King Arthur and his knights left Britain to go to war. But Mordred was not loyal. He wanted to take King Arthur's place. He wanted to be King of Britain!

So Mordred told everyone that Arthur was killed in the war, in France. Mordred became King of Britain! He was made King in Canterbury.

When King Arthur heard the news, he was furious. He returned to Britain immediately. He and his knights arrived in Dover.

Here he found Mordred and his army. They were waiting for him. There was a long, terrible battle. Only King Arthur and Sir Bedivere remained alive^②. Sir Gawain died in Arthur's arms. The King buried^③ him in Dover Castle.

Arthur fought a long battle against Mordred.

At the end of the battle, King Arthur took his spear^④ and killed Mordred. But Mordred's sword went through Arthur's helmet^⑤ and his head.

① rule: 统治。

② alive: 活着的。

③ buried: 埋葬。

④ spear: 矛。

⑤ helmet: 头盔。

The great king was dying! He still had to do one thing. He called Sir Bedivere and said, "I must give my sword Excalibur back to the Lady of the Lake. Take it to the lake. Then throw it far into the water."

Sir Bedivere went to the lake. He threw Excalibur far into the water. An arm came out of the water and caught the sword. Then it disappeared into the water.

Sir Bedivere returned to King Arthur. He told him about what he saw at the lake. Arthur was satisfied and said, "Thank you, my loyal friend. Now carry me to the lake."

At the lake, there was a boat waiting for Arthur. The Lady of the Lake was in it.

"Put me in the boat," said Arthur. Sir Bedivere obeyed and said, "What can I do without you, my king?"

Arthur answered, "My life is near the end. Pray^① for yourself. Prayers can do many things. Farewell^②! I am going to Avalon^③."

The boat moved away slowly. Sir Bedivere watched the boat on the lake until it disappeared.

① pray: 祈祷。

② Farewell: 再见。

③ Avalon: 西方乐土岛。

Track 1: Was King Arthur Only a Legend?

No, King Arthur was not only a legend. In the ninth century, a historian called Nennius wrote a book called *Historia Britonum*. It was a history of Britain, about the life of the Celtic leader, Arthur, and his knights.

Nennius wrote that Arthur was a great Celtic military leader of the 5th and 6th century. He fought against the Saxons, from the year 513 to 537. He and his men won many battles against the Saxons.

His people loved and remembered him for centuries after. There are lots of old ballads, songs, poems and his stories about Arthur and his knights.

In 1470, Sir Thomas Malory wrote about King Arthur and his castle, Camelot. His writings are a complete and accurate record of the king's life and times.

Today there are many books and films in different languages on this exciting subject. King Arthur is so famous that he is part of the Briten literary cycle.

Track 2: Before Arthur's Time

The first inhabitants of Britain were probably the Celts. They came from Germany in the third century BC.

The Roman general, Julius Caesar, invaded Britain in the year 54 BC. He had 25,000 soldiers and 2,000 horses. But he did not stay in Britain. He went to fight the Gauls in France.

In 43 AD, the Roman Emperor Claudius invaded Britain. This time the Romans stayed. Britain became a Roman province, called Britannia.

The Romans built roads, walls and towns. There are many Roman remains in Britain. Hadrian's wall is a good example. It was built by the Roman Emperor Hadrian in 122AD. He built it in the north of Britain to keep out the Scots. It is about 120 kilometres long. It took six years to build.

The Romans left Britain in 410AD. after 350 years.

During the fifth and sixth century, the Angles and the Saxons invaded Britain. The legendary King Arthur fought against these invaders and others.

These are two sides of a Roman coin. It was made to celebrate Claudius's victory in Britain. One side shows Emperor Claudius and the other shows him riding his horse. Notice the writing "De Britannia" on the coin.

Track 3: Knight

The knight was an important figure in the feudal system of the Middle Ages. A knight was a warrior. He defended his king, his country and his church. He was a strong, courageous figure. He protected women, children, the poor and the weak. He fought for justice. He was generous with everyone. This was the Code of Chivalry, which he obeyed. Knights usually came from rich and noble families. They started their training when they were very young, as pages. Then they became squires and finally knight. It was a great honour to become a knight. Knights formed a separate social class in their kingdom.

Knights wore fine clothes. Their armour was heavy. When a knight fought, he usually carried a shield, a lance, a long sword, a battle-axe and a knife. Each knight had a shield with a particular colour and design on it.

Track 4: Page, Squire, Knight

Page (受训骑士)

Age: from age 7 to the teen years

Duties: he learned to:

Serve and obey his superiors

Ride a horse

Use weapons

Play special games

Hunt with falcons and hawks

Squire (扈从)

Age: from the teen years to 21 years old

Duties: he learned to:

Fight in battle

Serve his lord

Assist his knight during a battle

Play Quintain, a battle sport

Knight (骑士)

Age: 21 years old

During an important ceremony, the squire was dressed in red and black. Here he receive knighthood. He promised to obey the CODE of Chivalry . Now he was a knight and he served his king, queen or lord.

Track 5: Castles

Long ago castles were built to protect people from enemies.

The first castles were made of wood. They were small and were built on hills. There was a high fence all around them.

Families lived in huts, in the field below. When the enemy attacked, they all ran to the castle.

With time, castles were made of rocks. They were much stronger and bigger than the first castles. They had very thick walls. It was difficult for the enemy to attack this type of castle. Castles were built to protect important places. They were built on mountains and near rivers and seas.

There are many old castles in the world today. Many are open to the public. It is interesting to visit old castles and see how people lived in the past.

Every castle had a dungeon.^① It was a cold, dark place for prisoners.

Many people lived and worked in a castle. There were noblemen with their families, warriors, servants, jesters and musicians. It was like a village.

^① **dungeon:** 地牢。

Track 6: Old Castles of Great Interest

1. Bamburgh Castle was built in 6th century in Northumberland. It was built on a high cliff. It is surrounded on three sides by the sea. Many films were made here.

2. Carlisle Castle was built at the end of the 11th century by William Rufus. It is near Scotland. At first, it was a wooden castle. In 1122, Henry I built walls of stone.

3. Dover Castle was originally a fort, built by the Celts. Then the Romans built a lighthouse, which you can still visit. Later, Bishop Odo of Bayeux built the great Dover Castle.

4. Edinburgh Castle was built in Edinburgh, Scotland. In the 7th century, King Edwin built a fortress⁴ on a big rock. Later, it became a great castle.

Track 7: The Round Table

What happened to King Arthur's Round Table? In the old castle in Winchester, there is an enormous round table. It is hanging on the wall. In 1485, William Caxton, the first English printer, said that this round table was King Arthur's. The names of 24 knights are painted on the table. King Arthur's place has no name on it. Instead, his picture is painted on it. Some of the knights mentioned on the table are: Sir Lancelot, Sir Galahad, Sir Pelinore, Sir Gawain, Sir Bedivere, Sir Ector and Sir Mordred.

Track 8: Where was King Arthur Buried?

At the end of the 12th century, the monks of an abbey in Glastonbury discovered a grave. On the tombstone of this grave there were these Latin words:

Hic Jacet Arthurus Rex Quondam Rexque Futurus

(Here lies Arthur, once King and King to be)

Was this King Arthur's grave? Before dying, Arthur said to Bedivere, "I am going to Avalon."

In a writing of the 12th century, the word Avalon meant "the island of apples." The name Glastonbury came from the name of a peasant, Glasteing. This peasant built a house near a big apple tree. Later, a church was built here. The name Glasteing became Glastonbury, near the River Severn. Today, Glastonbury is in the county of Somerset.

The Latin words, "Rexque Futurus" mean that King Arthur will perhaps return one day, if his people need him!

King Arthur today is the most recognizable book hero not only in British folklore, but also in the world literature. The young knight Arthur proved his right to be the king, when he pulled out the legendary sword Excalibur from the rock. This sword is a prototype of any magic weapon in the modern literature. The king's mentor, the wise wizard Merlin, also became the basis for hundreds of characters in the years to come. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this text for world culture. Even Sir John Tolkien took much from the Arthurian legends for his "Lord of the Rings". King Arthur is a Celtic hero, but the Knights of the Round Table belong to the German, Welsh, French people. This book is a must-read for classical literature and modern phantasy lovers. King Arthur today is the most recognizable book hero not only in British folklore, but also in the world literature. The young knight Arthur proved his right to be the king, when he pulled out the legendary sword Excalibur from the rock. This sword is a prototype of any magic weapon in the modern literature. The king's mentor, the wise wizard Merlin, also became the basis for hundreds of characters in the years to come. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this text for the world culture. Even Sir John Tolkien took much from the Arthurian legends for his "Lord of the Rings". King Arthur is a Celtic hero, but the Knights of the Round Table belong to the German, Welsh, French people. This book is a must-read for classical literature and modern phantasy lovers. King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table is a retelling of the Arthurian legends, principally Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*, by Roger Lancelyn Green. It was intended for a child audience. It was first published by Puffin Books in 1953 and has since been reprinted many times. In 2008 it was reissued in the Puffin Classics series with an introduction by David Almond (the award-winning author of *Clay*, *Skellig*, *Kit's Wilderness* and *The Fire-Eaters*), and the original illustrations by Lotte Reiniger. King Arthur's Knights is a Website providing information on King Arthur and the knights of the round table, focusing on Arthurian Legend, Tradition and Literature. King Arthur has become the ultimate symbol of light vs darkness and good vs evil. Was he real? Did the knights exist? It's up to you to decide. Arthur has come to represent a man who was the epitome of good against evil, light against darkness, and that eternal, never-ending struggle between right and wrong. Many of us only know of King Arthur, Sir Lancelot, and Queen Guinevere, but there were many other characters that were cornerstones to the legends and stories surrounding Camelot, the Round Table, and the Holy Grail.