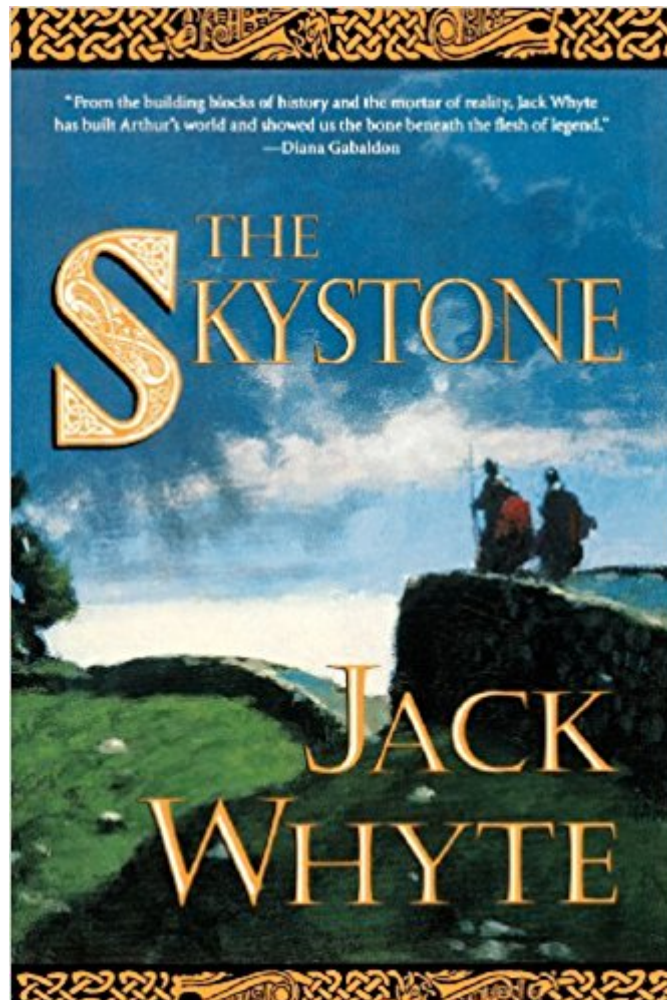




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The Skystone (The Camulod Chronicles, Book 1)



Synopsis

This first novel in Jack Whyte's riveting Arthurian series tells how the story of Camelot may have actually come to be. We all know the story—how Arthur pulled the sword from the stone and how Camelot came to be. But how did it really happen? The Roman citizens of Britain faced a deadly choice: leave to live in a corrupt Roman world, or stay amidst the violence of the warring factions of Picts, Celts, and invading Saxons. For Publius Varrus and Caius Britannicus, there is only one answer. They will stay, try to preserve the best of Roman life, and create a new culture from the wreckage. In doing so, they will plant the seeds of a legend. For these two men are Arthur's great-grandfathers and their actions will shape a nation...and forge the sword known as Excalibur.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

During the days of the decaying Roman Empire, the legions of Britain struggle to preserve the ancient principles of loyalty and discipline—virtues embodied in the Roman general Caius Britannicus and his friend Publius Varrus, an ex-soldier turned ironsmith. Whyte re-creates the turbulence and uncertainty that marked fifth-century Britain and provides a possible origin for one of the greatest artifacts of Arthurian myth—the legendary sword Excalibur. Strong characters and fastidious attention to detail make this a good choice for most libraries and a sure draw for fans of the Arthurian cycle. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“From the building blocks of history and the mortar of reality, Jack Whyte has built Arthur’s world, and showed us the bone beneath the flesh of legend.”
—Diana Gabaldon
“Jack Whyte is a master storyteller . . . Wyte breathes life into the Arthurian myths by weaving the reality of history into them.”
—Tony Hillerman
“I loved the book. It was an extraordinary story, totally original and clearly there is a lot more excitement to come in the upcoming volumes.”
—Rosamunde Pilcher

I have read all of the Camulod Chronicles at least twice already but never tire of them. Jack Whyte is a master storyteller, mixing historical fact with his original fiction in such a way that, when all is said and done, you will never believe any other version of the Excaliber/Camelot/King Arthur saga. I’m venturing back into Camulod for the third time now and loving every minute of it.

This is the first in a long series about the transition in Britain from the Roman occupation to England (the conquest by the Angles and Saxons) during the supposed Arthurian romantic age. Called the *Camalod Chronicles* (pronounced Camelot), it very closely portrays life in that period based on close research. On the other hand, it is a history of why England became the romantic and chivalrous country it is now because of the legend of King Arthur and subsequent egalitarian concepts. In other words, it is a portrayal of why the U.K. might have led the way in modern political models from an imagined historical basis. Most of all, this is just a really good novel. The characters are both believable and compelling, even the villains. The conflict (not necessarily action) is constant and interesting. The writing is excellent in all aspects. There is certainly a tendency toward philosophy, which some may construe as too many heavy discussions on life, humanity, and religion, but I found this all very interesting and within the bounds of why the plot develops as it does. In short, this is a great beginning to what I think is a wonderful explanation on what happened in Britain after the Roman Empire fell, and what might have led to the age of Arthur and the romantic period of chivalry. No matter what, it’s a great series.

In the first of this series, we are introduced to Publius Varrus and his friend Caius Britannicus. An exciting and engaging story, it begins just before the fall of the Roman Empire in Britain. Caius and Publius become fast friends in this book. Caius talks about his dream to Publius where people can live peacefully in a communal setting. Although it takes Publius a long time before he joins his friend in the Colony, as they call it. Caius is a charismatic leader and soldier and Publius is a master smith

and soldier. Moving at a steady pace, this book is a marvel of storytelling.

I wasn't sure I would like this book because it takes a couple chapters to really get into it. BUT once I got into the story I just can't put this series down. Wonderfully written!

If you have any interest in historical fiction regarding the period of time just before Rome abandoned Britain this will wet your whistle. This story is setting up the Arthurian legend from Jack Whyte's perspective, and it's a great new take on the tale and how it might have played out in those chaotic times. The reader gets a glimpse of the various factors feeding the demise of Rome, but gets an accurate picture of how absurd that might have seemed to many people living at the time under the comfort of Rome's seemingly unlimited power. The attention to historical detail in the setting, technologies, cultural examples, etc. is exciting for any history buff. Definitely a great read-

A great book if you want the feel for what Dark Age Britain must have been like. If you are looking for a tie in to the legend of King Arthur, you have a long way to go. The author has done a phenomenal job bringing to life Dark Age Britain, just before the fall of the Roman Empire. You truly feel that you are there. However, while the author drops a few hints, here and there, about the origins of the sword Excalibur, and the origins of the city of Camelot, 90% of the book's focus is actually on Dark Age Britain, or more specifically, Roman Britain just before the fall of the Roman Empire. If you are looking for a well researched book of historical fiction on this period of history, you have found your "sword in the stone." If you are looking for a book of historical fiction on the origins of the King Arthur legend, you will be disappointed.

The beginning book is an eight series volume series that deals with Britain which Rome begins to withdraw the legions. The characters are well developed and their plans to develop their protected community progresses through all eight books. A Roman General and Roman Senator whose family has lived in Britain for three generations begins the process as he is far-sighted and sees the crumbling of Rome. Of course Arthur plays a part in the plans. The generations long feud between the Britannicus family and the Senecas adds an element building tension and danger. All eight books of the series are worth reading. The first book begins with the making of the sword later called Excalibur. The disappointment is that the eighth and final book ends the saga when Arthur comes of age. However, the basic story line is how some people of Britain develop a community they can defend once the Roman legions have been withdrawn.

The tale of King Arthur seems as myth. This sets up the story within the framework of historical facts. Fascinating!!!!!!

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