

# Beyond Battles: Overlooked History for World Builders

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# Shewstone Publishing

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# Introduction

- History is the interpretation of past events.
- History changes in two ways:
  - Additional facts are discovered, often through new techniques.
  - Historians introduce new perspectives.
- If history always makes you feel proud or comfortable, you're doing it wrong.

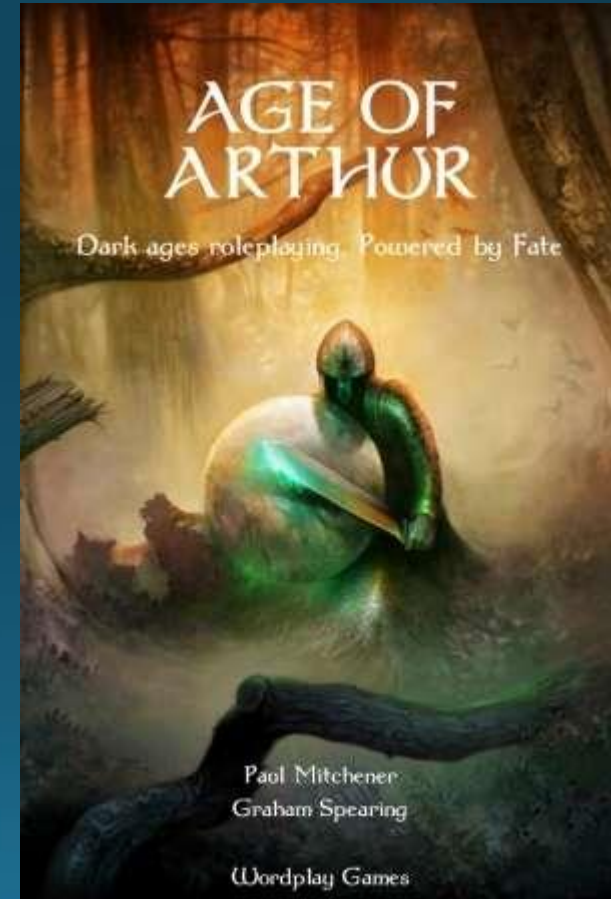
# Agenda

- The Legend of King Arthur
- Clerical Necromancy
- The Tudor Taming of the Nobility

# The legend of King Arthur

- Britain fell into chaos after the Romans departed.
- Arthur united the Britons.
- The Britons resisted a violent invasion by Angles and Saxon.
- They lost half the island but saved the other half.

Makes a great  
RPG setting!

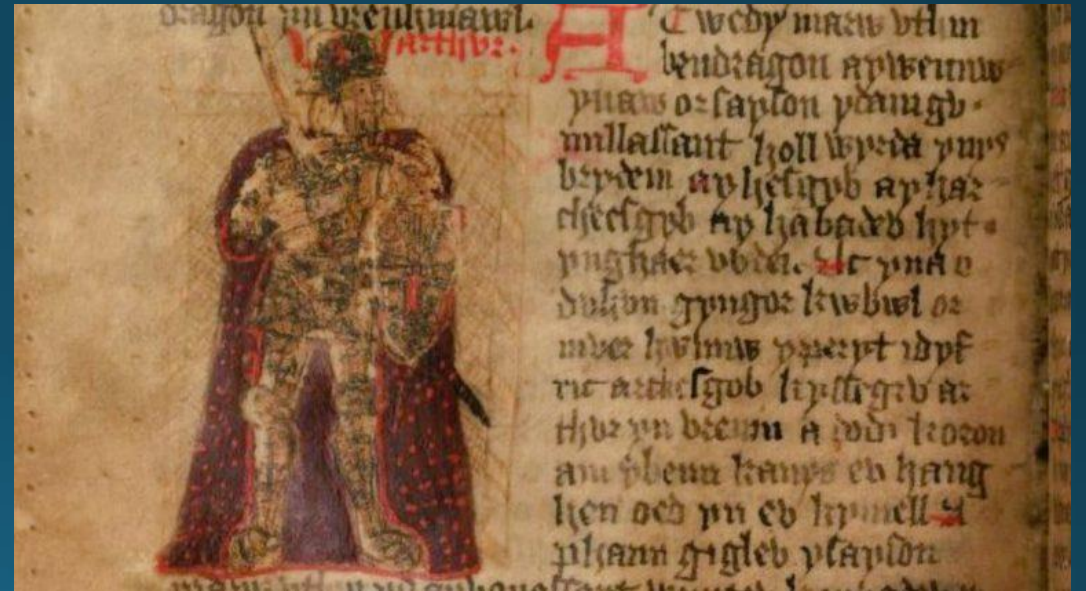


<https://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/111752/Age-of-Arthur>

# Written form of the legend

History of the Kings of Britain  
(*De Gestis Britonum*, later  
*Historia regnum Britanniae*) by  
Geoffrey of Monmouth

- Written around 1136.
- Modern historians don't accept it as factual.



# Recent Archeological Evidence

*Secrets of the Dead, Season 17, Episode 3*  
"King Arthur's Lost Kingdom"



- No widespread destruction.
- Angles and Saxons settled gradually.
- No battlefields or mass graves found.
- About 2% of graves show evidence of violent injury / death.

<https://www.pbs.org/video/king-arthurs-lost-kingdom-6dpt6t/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglo-Saxon\\_settlement\\_of\\_Britain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglo-Saxon_settlement_of_Britain)

# The truth about King Arthur?

- We have no idea.
- Beware of outdated history books.
- The legend is more relevant to world-builders than the truth.
- The legend was taught as fact in my high school history class.



# Clerical necromancy

- It's not about summoning armies of the restless dead.
- Started in medieval monasteries, moved into Renaissance universities.
- Laws and attitudes toward magic changed over time.

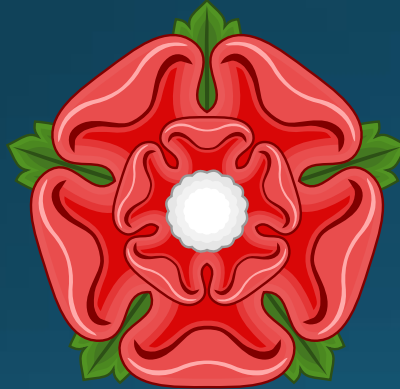


# The Tudor taming of the nobility

The Wars of the Roses, 1455-1485



House of York



House of Lancaster



# Henry VII Tudor and Lady Margaret Beaufort



# Henry VII's playbook



- Back-dated his accession by one day.
- Banned private armies.
- Resumed enforcing outdated laws.
- Predatory lending.
- Allowed titles to die out.

# Size of the English lay peerage by rank

Lay title	1485	Elizabethan 1558-1603	2021
Duke (non-royal)	6	1; none after 1570	10
Marquis/Marchioness	3	2-3	34
Earl/Countess	14	About 20	43
Viscount/Viscountess	7	2-3	18
Baron/Baroness or Lord/Lady	?	About 35-40	37

Sources:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peerage\\_of\\_England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peerage_of_England)

Wagner, John. *Historical Dictionary of the Elizabethan World: Britain, Ireland, Europe and America*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013. Print.

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