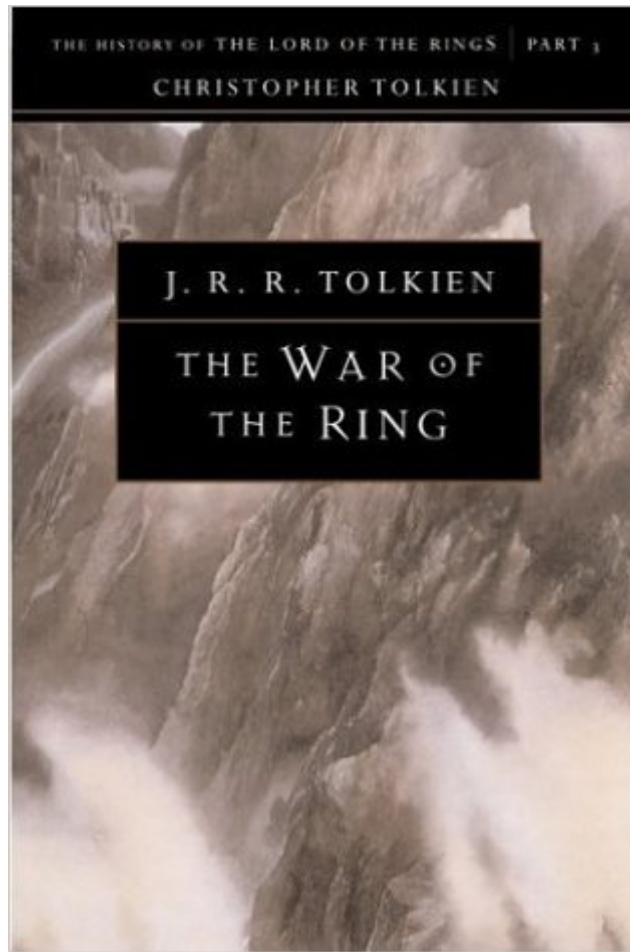


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The War Of The Ring: The History Of The Lord Of The Rings, Part Three (The History Of Middle-Earth, Vol. 8)



Synopsis

In *The War of the Ring* Christopher Tolkien takes up the story of the writing of *The Lord of the Rings* with the Battle of Helm's Deep and the drowning of Isengard by the Ents. This is followed by an account of how Frodo, Sam and Gollum were finally brought to the Pass of Kirith Ungol, at which point J.R.R. Tolkien wrote at the time: 'I have got the hero into such a fix that not even an author will be able to extricate him without labour and difficulty'. Then comes the war in Gondor, and the book ends with the parley between Gandalf and the ambassador of the Dark Lord before the Black Gate of Mordor. In describing his intentions for *The Return of the King* J.R.R. Tolkien said that 'It will probably work out very differently from this plan when it really gets written, as the thing seems to write itself once it gets going'; and in *The War of the Ring* totally unforeseen developments that would become central to the narrative are seen at the moment of their emergence: the palantir bursting into fragments on the stairs of Orthanc, its nature as unknown to the author as to those who saw it fall, or the entry of Faramir into the story ('I am sure I did not invent him, though I like him, but there he came walking into the woods of Ithilien'). The book is illustrated with plans and drawings of the changing conceptions of Orthanc, Dunharrow, Minas Tirith and the tunnels of Shelob's Lair.

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Customer Reviews

"The War of the Ring" - Tolkien's preferred title for "The Return of the King" - is the third of four volumes dealing with the history of the writing of "The Lord of the Rings." Like the other volumes in

the series, it features unpublished writings by Tolkien, supplemented, explained, footnoted, annotated and expounded upon by his son, Christopher Tolkien. If you're not a Tolkien fan, you need not apply. These incomplete and unfinished texts will only bore you. But if you're interested in seeing how the Professor developed the rich creation of Middle Earth, warts and all, this is a treasure trove of material. This book is part of the larger, 12-part History of Middle Earth series, which takes a close look at the creation of Tolkien's greatest achievement - Middle Earth itself - through early drafts, unpublished texts, and dead end writings. For ardent Tolkien readers, the series is a fascinating look at one of the great literary creations of the 20th Century, full of rich detail, writings never before seen, and stories only now being told. For more casual fans, it's text better left unread. Like the volumes that came before ("The Return of the Shadow" and "The Treason of Isengard"), we have the earliest versions of what would later become "The Lord of the Rings." Tolkien's troubles in bringing the story to a close, abandoned storylines, and alternate endings are all presented in incomplete prose. (Take a peak at the original end of Eowyn's character arc). The wealth of information is fantastic, and Christopher Tolkien goes to great lengths to examine each text, putting them in the context of the larger puzzle of his father's writings. The exploration of how "The Lord of the Rings" came about is fantastic - for those interested. Otherwise, it will bore.

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