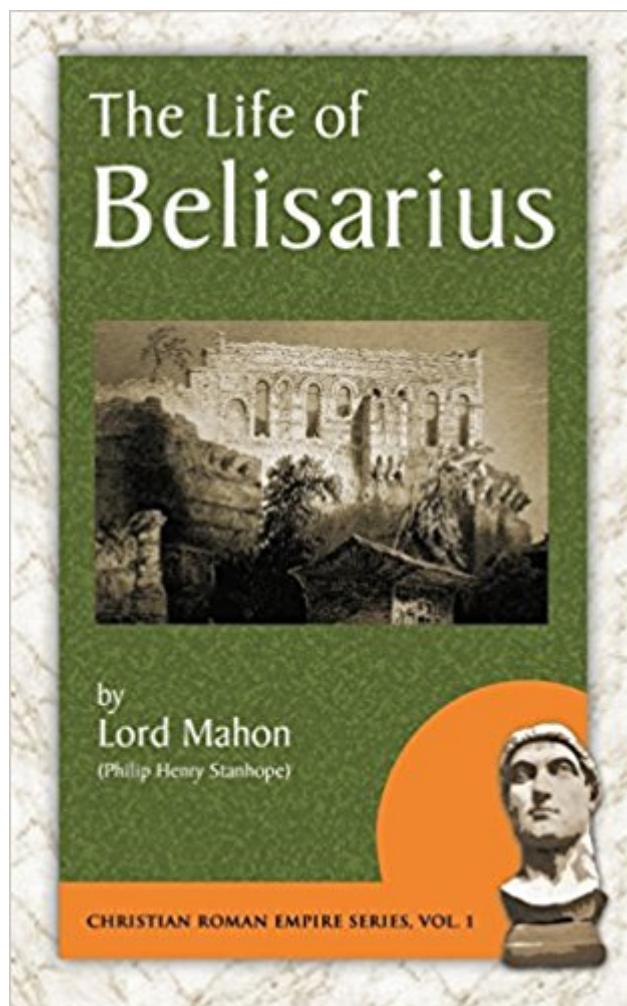


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The Life Of Belisarius (Christian Roman Empire)



Synopsis

Long out of print, this volume chronicles the remarkable career of Belisarius (A.D. 505(?) - A.D. 565), the last great general of Imperial Rome. Rising from obscure beginnings, Belisarius became the right-hand man of the emperor Justinian I in his 6th century bid to reconquer the lost western provinces of the Roman Empire. In an epic sequence of campaigns, Belisarius destroyed the Vandalic kingdom in North Africa and the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy but ultimately, the exhausted resources of the weakened empire and intrigues of the imperial court in Constantinople resulted in the undoing of the man and much of his work. Lord Mahon's detailed, well-researched, and referenced biography of Belisarius is the only work in existence which focuses so authoritatively on this fascinating historical figure. This reprint of the 1848 second edition has been re-formatted and typeset and includes editorial annotations which help bring Mahon's work up-to-date, along with a supplemental reading list of ancient and contemporary works in English which were not available in Mahon's day. This edition also features Mahon's original detailed table of contents, his full references (including text in Latin and Greek) set conveniently as chapter endnotes, and a map of the Mediterranean world. The Life of Belisarius belongs in the collection of any library with a collection in classics, late Roman/Byzantine studies, or military history. Likewise, it is a useful addition to the bookshelves of Byzantinists and researchers of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, and as a supplementary text for a Late Antiquity/Early Medieval Europe course.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Lord Mahon (Philip Henry Stanhope, Fifth Earl of Stanhope) was born in 1805. Founder of the National Portrait Gallery (UK), Lord Mahon's primary interest was history and antiquity. Aside from his Life of Belisarius, his published works include: History of the War of Spanish Succession; History of England from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Versailles; and Life of William Pitt.

The writing style was a pleasure in itself, a gift from a golden age of literacy. Would our present-day elites be capable of constructing such sentences...Having read beforehand other reviewers' concerns about Lord Mahon's scholarship vis a vis what we know 200 years later, I was not bothered by possible historical inaccuracies. As for his presumed 19th Century British prejudice, I found his editorial interjections interesting, amusing, and often hilarious. Very much worth the read for those interested in Byzantium AND in 19th Century British elites' unabashed attitudes about our world then.

Belisarius is probably the greatest General of all of Rome's great military geniuses. He warred successfully with the Persians, regained all of North Africa and Italy for the emperor Justinian. This man is worth an HBO series. His death came after he saved Constantinople from certain doom with a hand full of veteran soldiers and the untrained street mobs of the imperial city. They trained them into Roman legionnaires virtually over night to stop a barbarian invasion. Then in the end, in a fit of jealousy, Justinian blinded him and imprisoned him leaving there till he died.

This was a fine read. One comes away really respecting and admiring the last great Roman general. For me, I appreciate the perspective it gives me that sometime life is simply not fair, but that the strong / righteous / overcomers must simply keep on going anyway. One of the take-aways historically for me was to see the crumbling of a once mighty empire in its waning years. Very sobering when one considers what could happen to America in the future. JDM

I gave this review 5 stars because the book itself is outstanding and many of the criticisms on here are asinine. However, do not, under any circumstance, order the hardcover edition from Kessinger Publishing. It is an abomination that looks like it was put together from a (crummy) laser printer in someone's basement. Many of the pages aren't even legible --and I mean that seriously: you literally cannot read the text on many pages in the first half of the book. I'm returning my copy to and they need to stop selling books from this publisher. Just because someone sets up a publishing company reprinting public domain books in their mom's garage doesn't mean needs to sell their

garbage.

The history does a great job of portraying the life & loyalty of Belisarius to Justinian I's service. Bias of the author's time period is clear. Language is understandable despite clear OCR scanning 'best guess' language that noone bothered to correct in the e-book version.

BEST reference to guide oneself thru a very interesting career & consequently the river of history!!!!Hope readers will use it many times over!

I became intrigued with this little known historical figure after reading the massive Gibbons book. Although Lord Mahon wrote long ago i found his style easy to follow and, as this work is a straight historical piece, I believe he was impartial in his reporting and research. The Life of Belisarius itself would make a great movie. It has all the elements needed; a heroic and loyal figure, a decadent royalty, palace intrigue, adulterous relationships and warfare. All of this under crumbling empire and religion distorted by evil men. For history buffs I highly recommend it.

Interesting.

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