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Sword Song: The Battle For London (Saxon Tales Book 4)



Synopsis

The fourth installment of Bernard Cornwell's New York Times bestselling series chronicling the epic saga of the making of England, like Game of Thrones, but real (The Observer, London) is the basis for The Last Kingdom, the hit television series. The year is 885, and England is at peace, divided between the Danish kingdom to the north and the Saxon kingdom of Wessex in the south. Warrior by instinct and Viking by nature, Uhtred, the dispossessed son of a Northumbrian lord, has land, a wife and children and a duty to King Alfred to hold the frontier on the Thames. But a dead man has risen, and new Vikings have invaded the decayed Roman city of London with dreams of conquering Wessex... with Uhtred's help. Suddenly forced to weigh his oath to the king against the dangerous turning tide of shifting allegiances and deadly power struggles, Uhtred and Alfred's sharpest sword must now make the choice that will determine England's future.

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Customer Reviews

Sword Song is the 4th in the 7 volume Saxon series. I always wondered what was happening in the world after the Roman Empire collapsed. The series tells of England, the kings, castles, wars

between kings and invasion by Vikings in the years 878 to about 925. Lots of violent wars but apparently that was how the world was then. I highly recommend it to anyone who likes historical novels. Apparently this series has been made into a hit series on UK television. I can understand why. The only downside is that the names of villages and towns are as they actually were in those days and now they are so different it is difficult to know exactly what areas in the British Isles the story is taking place. I gave up on trying to keep all that straight and just enjoyed the series.

Another good Cornwell story. Well thought story line and characters continue to be believable. This is the first of this series I found to be somewhat predictable though. It could be a quirk of this book or it could be that I'm getting the rhythm of this series more than I did in the first three books. Whether I could predict the outcome or not this is well written, entertaining and a quick read. I really like Cornwell books and think he is a fine author. I wanted to keep turning the pages right to the very end. I highly recommend the book and hope you'll start with book 1 and read all the way through for the most enjoyment. This is inexpensive entertainment. Buy it.

Great NEW characters come to life as we continue our very strange trip through Saxons, Britons, Danes, Vikings and just plain folk. I love historical fiction and this series meets my needs. The story line in the first 4 books flows great.....you pick up the next book and it takes right off.....no time gaps...which I LOVE. Cornwell does an great job of keeping the characters consistent. As I flow through the story line each character grows and develops yet I have yet to be surprised by the changes.....the character growth makes sense and it consistent with each person. I truly feel like I am in the audience listening to Uhtred tell his tale. Those Rangersons sure know how to tell a yarn.....

Oh my LORD Bernard you haven't written one book that I don't love and yes I got your movie also all of Sharpe movies to and books. You have a mind that is amazing and I am grateful for it. I even got my brother-in-law and sister-in-law hooked on you. Thank you for the best adventures we could ever have. 10 stars and GOD BLESS. Debi Allen

These books are generally excellent but far from, I guess you could say, cheerful. There are very few really likable characters. Modern historians do not treat the Christians of this period as very admirable people and these books tend to make them quite unattractive. For instance, Alfred is really a jerk and it is a wonder, as one reviewer pointed out, that Uhtred doesn't just kill him.

However, this would be really problematic for the author as the details of Alfred's death are well-known. What is equally true is that the pagans, who have tended to get a better press lately, come off no better. They are, many of them treacherous and vile, just as bad as their enemies. Only the powerless tend not to do anything vile. The narrator/protagonist is about as bad as anyone. His greatest virtue in this reader's eyes is that he doesn't try to mask his actions under a guise of piety or loyalty to a ruler. What he cares about is his reputation, mainly as a warrior and that he dies with his weapon in his hand. However, the action scenes and the plots and treachery that swirl from page to page make the series fascinating. Also, the author makes one aware that the armies of the time were divided between the almost useless militias and the professional soldiers that made up the fighting force of the great leaders.

Each book gets better. I absolutely love the characters, the story line, the way it is written and most of all the history of the time. Generally have read English history of a later period, but now I have fallen in love with time in history. Thank you Mr. Cornwall.

I have been enjoying the entire Saxon Tales series. This is not my favorite of the series, but it is still lots of fun. I tend to skim through most of the battle scenes, so I did a lot of skimming, but the story is still engaging and it is interesting to learn about the history of the England and the Vikings. It has been doing some work of fiction.

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