

Charlemagne Father Of A Continent

The Matter of France, the legendary history of Charlemagne, had a central but now largely unrecognised place in the multilingual culture of medieval England. From the early claim in the *Chanson de Roland* that Charlemagne held England as his personal domain, to the later proliferation of Middle English romances of Charlemagne, the materials are woven into the insular political and cultural imagination. However, unlike the wide range of continental French romances, the insular tradition concentrates on stories of a few heroic characters: Roland, Fierabras, Otinel. Why did writers and audiences in England turn again and again to these narratives, rewriting and reinterpreting them for more than two hundred years? This book offers the first full-length, in-depth study of the tradition as manifested in literature and culture. It investigates the currency and impact of the Matter of France with equal attention to English and French-language texts, setting each individual manuscript or early printed text in its contemporary cultural and political context. The narratives are revealed to be extraordinarily adaptable, using the iconic opposition between Carolingian and Saracen heroes to reflect concerns with national politics, religious identity, the future of Christendom, chivalry and ethics, and monarchy and treason. Phillipa Hardman is Reader in Medieval English Literature (retired) at the University of Reading; Marianne Ailes is Senior Lecturer in French at the University of Bristol.

A comprehensive survey of the origins, development, and influence of the most important monastic order in the middle ages.

A new interpretation of Charlemagne, examining how the Frankish king and his men learned to govern the first European empire.

The most important study of Charlemagne in a generation, this biography by distinguished medievalist Alessandro Barbero illuminates both the man and the world in which he lived. Charles the Great—Charlemagne—reigned from a.d. 768 to a.d. 814. At the time of his death, his empire stretched across Europe to include Bavaria, Saxony, parts of Spain, and Italy. With a remarkable grasp of detail and a sweeping knowledge of Carolingian institutions and economy, Barbero not only brings Charlemagne to life with accounts of his physical appearance, tastes and habits, family life, and ideas and actions but also conveys what it meant to be king of the Franks and, later, emperor. He recounts how Charlemagne ruled his empire, kept justice, and waged wars. He vividly describes the nature of everyday life at that time, how the economy functioned, and how Christians perceived their religion. Barbero's absorbing analysis of how concepts of slavery and freedom were subtly altered as feudal relations began to grow underscores the dramatic changes that the emperor's wars brought to the political landscape. Engaging and informed by deep scholarship, this latest account provides a new and richer context for considering one of history's most fascinating personalities.

Constantine: Religious Faith and Imperial Policy brings together some of the English-speaking world's leading Constantinian scholars for an interdisciplinary study of the life and legacy of the first Christian emperor. For many, he remains a "sign of contradiction" (Luke 2:34) whose life and legacy generate intense debate. He was the first Christian emperor, protector of the Church, and eventually remembered as "equal to the apostles" for bringing about the Christianization of the Empire. Yet there is another side to Constantine's legacy, one that was often neglected by his Christian hagiographers. Some modern scholars have questioned the orthodoxy of the so-called model Christian emperor, while others have doubted the sincerity of his Christian commitment, viewing his embrace of the faith as merely a means to a political end. Drawing together papers presented at the 2013 symposium at Stockton University commemorating the 1700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan, this volume examines the very questions that have for so long occupied historians, classicists, and theologians. The papers in this volume prove once again that Constantine is not so much a figure from the remote past,

but an individual whose legacy continues to shape our present.

It is 741. After subduing the pagan religions in the east, halting the march of Islam in the west, and conquering the continent for the Merovingian kings, mayor of the palace Charles the Hammer has one final ambition—the throne. Only one thing stands in his way—he is dying. Charles cobbles together a plan to divide the kingdom among his three sons, betroth his daughter to a Lombard prince to secure his southern border, and keep the Church unified behind them through his friend Bishop Boniface. Despite his best efforts, the only thing to reign after Charles's death is chaos. His daughter has no intention of marrying anyone, let alone a Lombard prince. His two eldest sons question the rights of their younger pagan stepbrother, and the Church demands a steep price for their support. Son battles son, Christianity battles paganism, and Charles's daughter flees his court for an enemy's love. Based on a true story, *Anvil of God* is a whirlwind of love, honor, sacrifice, and betrayal that follows a bereaved family's relentless quest for power and destiny.

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Carolingian historical texts have long stood at the base of our modern knowledge about the eighth and ninth centuries. The ninth century gave birth to a new revival of secular biography, which has come to be recognized as one of the brightest bands in the spectrum of Carolingian historical writing. This collection brings together, for the first time in one volume, the five royal/imperial biographies written during the Carolingian period. Thomas F. X. Noble's new English translations of these five important texts—Einhard's *Life of Emperor Charles*, Notker's *Deeds of Charles the Great*, Ermoldus Nigellus's *Poem in Honor of Louis*, Thegan's *Deeds of Emperor Louis*, and the *Life of Louis* by "the Astronomer"—are each accompanied by a short introduction and a note on "Essential Reading." Offering details on matters of style, sources used by the author, and the influence, if any, exerted by the text, Noble provides a context for each translation without compromising the author's intended voice. By "reuniting" these five essential medieval texts in an English translation, this volume makes these voices accessible to scholars and non-experts alike throughout the Anglophone world.

From ancient Rome to the current Internet age, this sweeping history of ideas explores how different epochs wrestled with the issue of truth and lies. From the ancient Greeks and Romans to the modern era, how have people determined what is true? How have those with power and influence sought to control the narrative? Are we living in a post-truth era, or is that notion simply the latest attempt to control the narrative? The relationship between truth and power is the key theme. Moving through major historical periods, the author focuses on notable people and events, from well-known leaders like Julius Caesar and Adolf Hitler to lesser-known individuals like Procopius and Savonarola. He notes distinct parallels in history to current events. Julius Caesar's publication of his *Gallic Wars* and *Civil Wars* was an early exercise in political spin not unlike what we see today. During the English Civil War and the Enlightenment, pamphleteering coupled with the new power of the printing press challenged the status quo, as online and social media does in our time. And "fake news" was already being used by German chancellor Otto von Bismarck in nineteenth-

century Europe and by the "yellow journalism" of American newspaper magnates William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer near the turn of the twentieth century. The author concludes optimistically, noting that we are debating and discussing truth more fiercely today than in any previous era. The determination to arrive at the truth, despite the manipulations of the powerful, bodes well for the future of democracy.

On August 9, 378 AD, at Adrianople in the Roman province of Thrace (now western Turkey), the Roman Empire began to fall. Two years earlier, an unforeseen flood of refugees from the East Germanic tribe known as the Goths had arrived at the Empire's eastern border, seeking admittance. Though usually successful in dealing with barbarian groups, in this instance the Roman authorities failed. Gradually coalesced into an army led by Fritigern, the barbarian horde inflicted on Emperor Valens the most disastrous defeat suffered by the Roman army since Hannibal's victory at Cannae almost 600 years earlier. The Empire did not actually fall for another century, but some believe this battle signaled nothing less than the end of the ancient world and the start of the Middle Ages. With impeccable scholarship and narrative flair, renowned historian Alessandro Barbero places the battle in its historical context, chronicling the changes in the Roman Empire, west and east, the cultural dynamics at its borders, and the extraordinary administrative challenge in holding it together. Vividly recreating the events leading to the clash, he brings alive leaders and common soldiers alike, comparing the military tactics and weaponry of the barbarians with those of the disciplined Roman army as the battle unfolded on that epic afternoon. Narrating one of the turning points in world history, *The Day of the Barbarians* is military history at its very best.

Historians typically single out the hundred-year period from about 1050 to 1150 as the pivotal moment in the history of the Latin Church, for it was then that the Gregorian Reform movement established the ecclesiastical structure that would ensure Rome's dominance throughout the Middle Ages and beyond. In *Before the Gregorian Reform* John Howe challenges this familiar narrative by examining earlier, "pre-Gregorian" reform efforts within the Church. He finds that they were more extensive and widespread than previously thought and that they actually established a foundation for the subsequent Gregorian Reform movement. The low point in the history of Christendom came in the late ninth and early tenth centuries—a period when much of Europe was overwhelmed by barbarian raids and widespread civil disorder, which left the Church in a state of disarray. As Howe shows, however, the destruction gave rise to creativity. Aristocrats and churchmen rebuilt churches and constructed new ones, competing against each other so that church building, like castle building, acquired its own momentum. Patrons strove to improve ecclesiastical furnishings, liturgy, and spirituality. Schools were constructed to staff the new churches. Moreover, Howe shows that these reform efforts paralleled broader economic, social, and cultural trends in Western Europe including the revival of long-distance trade, the rise of

technology, and the emergence of feudal lordship. The result was that by the mid-eleventh century a wealthy, unified, better-organized, better-educated, more spiritually sensitive Latin Church was assuming a leading place in the broader Christian world. Before the Gregorian Reform challenges us to rethink the history of the Church and its place in the broader narrative of European history.

Compellingly written and generously illustrated, it is a book for all medievalists as well as general readers interested in the Middle Ages and Church history.

A biography of Francis I, the last Holy Roman Emperor and first Emperor of Austria, as well as a history of his times. The first biography in English of this mysterious, complex, and powerful personality whom Metternich and Radetzky called their master.

The “fascinating” #1 international bestseller of a quest across centuries by two intrepid women to reunite the pieces of a powerful, ancient chess set (Los Angeles Times Book Review). A fabulous, bejeweled chess set that belonged to Charlemagne has been buried in a Pyrenees abbey for a thousand years. As the bloody French Revolution rages in Paris, the nuns dig it up and scatter its pieces across the globe because, when united, the set contains a secret power that could topple civilizations. To keep the set from falling into the wrong hands, two novices, Valentine and Mireille, embark on an adventure that begins in the streets of Paris and leads to Russia, Egypt, Corsica, and into the heart of the Algerian Sahara. Two hundred years later, while on assignment in Algeria, computer expert Catherine Velis finds herself drawn unwillingly into the deadly “Game” still swirling around the legendary chess set—a game that will require her to risk her life and match wits with diabolical forces. This ebook features an illustrated biography of Katherine Neville including rare images from her life and travels.

Charles, King of the Franks or Charlemagne (748 - 814), as later generations would know him by, would, in 800, become the first king of the Western Christian Empire. His rule resulted in the consolidation of a Christian Europe, and a reform of the Church in Gaul, in addition to the establishment of Christianity in Germany. His life and deeds are perhaps most famously recorded by Einhard, a French biographer and close confidant to the King. They were also recorded by Notker the Stammerer, a German monk. Notker's version includes a number of interesting monastic tales and is thought to be less accurate than Einhard's version. The source text for this edition is: *Early lives of Charlemagne*, by Einhard (770-840) and Notker (840-912); translated by Arthur James Grant (1862-1948), London: Chatto and Windus 1922. Illustrations from artwork through-out the centuries depicting Charlemagne and his exploits are also included in this edition.

*Includes maps of each conqueror's empire and pictures depicting the conquerors and other important people and places. *Discusses legends and controversies surrounding the lives, deaths, and legacies of the conquerors. *Includes a Bibliography for further reading. The most famous man of the Middle Ages was probably Charlemagne, and few would argue that he was also the most important man during those centuries. Upon

the death of his father, Pepin the Short, in 768, Charlemagne became King of the Franks, and he proceeded to create one of the largest European empires since the collapse of Rome. Through his conquests across Western Europe and Italy, Charlemagne became the first Holy Roman Emperor after a famous imperial coronation by Pope Leo III. In becoming the first Holy Roman Emperor, Charlemagne essentially established the new order on the European continent, thereby directly influencing how European politics and royalty proceeded in the coming centuries. As if to demonstrate how large he loomed in life, Charlemagne was numbered Charles I in Germany, France, and the Holy Roman Empire. Charlemagne is also viewed as having brought about the Carolingian Renaissance, a revival of art, religion, and culture through the Catholic Church that predated the Italian Renaissance by centuries. The Carolingian Renaissance helped establish a uniform European culture, helping Charlemagne earn the title "Father of Europe." In a world fascinated by men like Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar, Genghis Khan is one of history's greatest and most famous conquerors. No man, before or since, has ever started with so little and gone on to achieve so much. From a noble family but raised in poverty that drove him to the brink of starvation, Genghis Khan rose to control the second-largest empire the world has ever known (the largest being, arguably, the British Empire of the 18th and 19th centuries), and easily the largest empire conquered by a single man. And while many empires disintegrate upon the death of an emperor, like Alexander the Great's, Genghis Khan's empire endured and was actually enlarged by his successors, who went on to establish dynasties that in some cases lasted for centuries. Though history is usually written by the victors, history was largely written by those who Genghis Khan and Saladin vanquished. And while that meant Genghis Khan became widely reviled, it had the opposite effect on Saladin. Saladin is widely considered one of the greatest generals in history and one of the most famous leaders of the Middle Ages, but he remains a paradox, both in personal and in historical terms. A military genius, he first served other generals and was overshadowed, late in life, by his greatest rival, Richard I of England. He was far more admired by his Christian enemies, who extolled his chivalry, than some of his Muslim rivals, who fought him for control of Egypt and Syria in the 12th century. His Christian enemies continued his name long after it was forgotten in the Middle East, only to spark a revival of his reputation in Arab culture in the 20th century. Revered as the flower of Arab culture, he was really a Kurd who nearly destroyed it. Taught to Egyptian children as a native born Egyptian hero, he was, in fact, Egypt's conqueror, the man who destroyed its native dynasty and suppressed the local Shi'ite sect. The Greatest Conquerors of the Middle Ages chronicles the amazing lives and conquests of the three men, while examining their empires and their enduring legacies. Along with pictures of important people, places and events, you will learn about Charlemagne, Saladin and Genghis Khan like you never have before.

Following THE CRY OF THE ICEMARK, a huge success in England and critically acclaimed in the U.S., the next epic adventure in The Icemark Chronicles. Many years have passed since Queen Thirrin and her allies defended the Icemark against a brutal invasion. But now General Bellorum is back, along with his bloodthirsty spawn--twin sons even more vicious than him. Thirrin and Oskan also have a family: two girls and three boys. But darkness lurks within the House of Lindenshield: Medea, the couple's cold-hearted fifteen-year-old daughter, is just coming into her magical powers, and she

may be the downfall of the kingdom. It's up to her brother, Charlemagne, crippled by polio as a child, to return from exile and rescue the land he loves.

Scholar, ecclesiastic, teacher and poet of the eighth century, Alcuin was a person of deep Christian faith, tenacious in his loyalty to orthodox Catholic theology. He had a seminal influence upon his own generation and those that came after him. Although he remained a Northumbrian Christian at heart, the part of his life about which most is known was spent on the Continent. He never lost contact with his homeland; but his most significant and lasting work was evidently accomplished in Europe and his influence on the early medieval Western Church was an abiding one. This book examines his life and career in England and on the continent; it also considers his legacy as a churchman and a leading political figure. This volume prefigures a forthcoming work on Alcuin's intellectual legacy, 'Alcuin : A Study of his Theology' (due for release, April 2013). This rich study is intended for the general reader as well as for those studying, teaching or researching this period of early medieval history and theology in schools and universities.

A sweeping biography of Charlemagne brings to life his physical appearance, family life, ideas and actions, and the events of his reign and provides an in-depth analysis of what it meant to be ruler of an empire that stretched across Europe.

Charlemagne's Early Campaigns is the first book-length study of Charlemagne at war. The neglect of this subject has truncated our understanding of the Carolingian empire and the military success of its leader, a true equal of Frederick the Great and Napoleon. When the legendary Frankish king and emperor Charlemagne died in 814 he left behind a dominion and a legacy unlike anything seen in Western Europe since the fall of Rome. Johannes Fried paints a compelling portrait of a devout ruler, a violent time, and a unified kingdom that deepens our understanding of the man often called the father of Europe.

*Includes pictures *Includes medieval accounts *Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading The Carolingian Dynasty, which carved out a major empire in Europe from 750-887, ushered in an important period in the Early Middle Ages. The Carolingians were in their time seen as the successors of Ancient Rome in the West, and while they sought to reestablish the glory of antiquity, they're remembered today for effectively founding the states that would become France and Germany. The Carolingians are also credited with creating the first Renaissance, the Carolingian Renaissance, centuries before the Italian Renaissance. Many of the great Latin classics survive today because of copies made during this period. In addition, the revisions made to written script at this time made texts easier to read, so much so that most of those changes remain in the modern system of writing. The Carolingians lived at a moment in time where they saw that antiquity was seen as worth preserving, but they also sought to adapt it to the times, setting the groundwork for many aspects of what would become the modern world. Nobody was more important in bringing this about than Charlemagne, the most famous man of the Middle Ages, and likely the most influential. Upon the death of his father, Pepin the Short, in 768, Charlemagne became King of the Franks, and he proceeded to create one of the largest European empires since the collapse of Rome. Through his conquests across Western Europe and Italy, Charlemagne became the first Holy Roman Emperor after a famous imperial coronation by Pope Leo III. In becoming the first Holy Roman Emperor, Charlemagne essentially

established the new order on the European continent, thereby directly influencing how European politics and royalty proceeded in the coming centuries. As if to demonstrate how large he loomed in life, Charlemagne was numbered Charles I in Germany, France, and the Holy Roman Empire. Charlemagne is also viewed as having brought about the Carolingian Renaissance, a revival of art, religion, and culture through the Catholic Church. This helped establish a uniform European culture, helping Charlemagne earn the title "Father of Europe." After World War II, when France and Germany were looking for common ground, Charlemagne would often be held up as a unifying force between peoples who had so often been enemies. The Carolingian Empire: The History and Legacy of the Frankish Rulers Who Unified Most of Europe and Established the Holy Roman Empire in the Middle Ages profiles the rulers who helped bring about modern Europe, and the history of their empire. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about the Carolingians like never before.

The Early Middle Ages, which marked the end of the Roman Empire and the creation of the kingdoms of Western Europe, was a period central to the formation of modern Europe. This period has often been drawn into a series of discourses that are more concerned with the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries than with the distant past. In *The Modern Origins of the Early Middle Ages*, Ian Wood explores how Western Europeans have looked back to the Middle Ages to discover their origins and the origins of their society. Using historical records and writings about the Fall of Rome and the Early Middle Ages, Wood reveals how these influenced modern Europe and the way in which the continent thought about itself. He asks, and answers, the important question: why is early-medieval history, or indeed any pre-modern history, important? This volume promises to add to the debate on the significance of medieval history in the modern world.

Fifteen introductory but challenging essays on the key aspects of the age of Charlemagne written by many of the top scholars of early medieval Europe.

The English called him Charles I. The Germans referred to him as Karl der Grosse. In Latin he was known as Carolus Magnus. Today he is best known by his French name—Charlemagne. It means Charles the Great, which is no surprise, for this Frankish king went down in history as the ruler who united the European continent. Charlemagne's passion for Christianity along with his skill as a military leader set him apart from the other leaders of his era. By drawing on these qualities, he converted the masses to Christianity as quickly as he brought them under his rule. As time went on, Charlemagne's massive kingdom just kept expanding further and further.

Explore world history in a brief, balanced, highly readable overview that examines common challenges and experiences that unite the human past and identify key global regional patterns over time with *THE ESSENTIAL WORLD HISTORY*. This brief overview of world history covers political, economic, social, religious, intellectual, cultural, and military history integrated into a chronologically ordered synthesis to help you gain an appreciation and understanding of the distinctive character and development of individual cultures in society. You can use the book's global approach and its emphasis on analytical comparisons between cultures to link events together in a broad comparative and global framework that places the contemporary world in a more meaningful historical context. Important Notice: Media content referenced within the product description or the product text may not be available in the ebook version. Revisiting one of the great puzzles of European political history, Jennifer R. Davis examines how the Frankish king Charlemagne and his men held together the vast new empire he created during the first decades of his reign. Davis explores how Charlemagne overcame the two main problems of ruling an empire, namely how to delegate authority and how to manage

diversity. Through a meticulous reconstruction based on primary sources, she demonstrates that rather than imposing a pre-existing model of empire onto conquered regions, Charlemagne and his men learned from them, developing a practice of empire that allowed the emperor to rule on a European scale. As a result, Charlemagne's realm was more flexible and diverse than has long been believed. Telling the story of Charlemagne's rule using sources produced during the reign itself, Davis offers a new interpretation of Charlemagne's political practice, free from the distortions of later legend.

At Waterloo, some 70,000 men under Napoleon and an equal number under Wellington faced one another in a titanic and bloody struggle. In the end, as John Keegan notes, contemporaries felt that Napoleon's defeat had "reversed the tide of European history." Even 190 years later, the name Waterloo resounds. Italian historian Alessandro Barbero's majestic new account stands apart from previous British and French histories by giving voice to all the nationalities that took part. Invoking the memories of British, French, and Prussian soldiers, Barbero meticulously re-creates the conflict as it unfolded, from General Reille's early afternoon assault on the chateau of Hougoumont, to the desperate last charge of Napoleon's Imperial Guard as evening settled in. From privates to generals, Barbero recounts individual miracles and tragedies, moments of courage and foolhardiness, skillfully blending them into the larger narrative of the battle's extraordinary ebb and flow. One is left with indelible images: cavalry charges against soldiers formed in squares; the hand-to-hand combat around farmhouses; endless cannon balls and smoke. And, finally, a powerful appreciation of the inevitability and futility of war. To be published on the 190th anniversary of Waterloo, *The Battle* is a masterpiece of military history.

Noted teachers and scholars William J. Duiker and Jackson J. Spielvogel present a balanced, highly readable overview of world history that explores common challenges and experiences of the human past and identifies key patterns over time. Thorough coverage of political, economic, social, religious, intellectual, cultural, and military history is integrated into a chronological framework to help students gain an appreciation and understanding of the distinctive character and development of individual cultures in society. This approach, with organization around seven major themes (Science and Technology, Art and Ideas, Family and Society, Politics and Government, Earth and the Environment, Religion and Philosophy, and Interaction and Exchange), helps students link events together in a broad comparative and global framework, thereby placing the contemporary world in a more meaningful historical context. Available in the following options: *WORLD HISTORY*, Eighth Edition (Chapters 1—30); Volume I: To 1800 (Chapters 1—18); Volume II: Since 1500 (Chapters 14—30). Important Notice: Media content referenced within the product description or the product text may not be available in the ebook version.

The essays in this collection present a textured picture of the medieval world and offer models for how to reflect fruitfully on medieval sources.

Charlemagne was the first emperor of medieval Europe and almost immediately after his death in 814 legends spread about his military and political prowess and the cultural glories of his court at Aix-la-Chapelle.

An authoritative biography of the greatest ruler of the medieval period. The Emperor Charlemagne is an ideal book for readers of Tom Holland, Dan Jones and Helen Castor. On Christmas Day, 800, Charlemagne was crowned 'Emperor of the Romans' by Pope Leo III. Originally inheriting one half of his father's Frankish kingdom, by the time of his death in 814 he had put down rebellions in his own provinces, conquered the Lombards, fought against Saxons, Avars and Slavs in the east, clashed with Muslims in Spain, negotiated with the papacy and

the Byzantine Empire, and united much of western and central Europe for the first time since the classical era of the Roman Empire. Under his guidance the Carolingian Renaissance flourished, with his capital of Aachen becoming a centre of learning and artistic genius. The legacy of Charlemagne on European history and culture is monumental. Yet, within thirty years of his death, his empire had fragmented. Who was this legendary ruler? How had he managed to rule these vast domains? And why has his legacy continued to influence Europeans to this day? E. R. Chamberlin's masterful biography of Charlemagne demonstrates the sheer force of will that this charismatic leader was able to command as he created a realm to rival the Byzantines in the east. Through the course of the book Chamberlin brings to life how Charlemagne forged his empire, and uncovers the people, the religious and political controversies, the social and agricultural conditions, and the changes in warfare that took place over one thousand years ago. The Emperor Charlemagne is an engrossing biography of one of the most legendary figures in history, and first embodiment of the ideal of European unity.

The fates of a diverse set of characters intertwine in this novel set in Gorbachev's Russia. But perhaps the greatest protagonist of them all is the Russian public, as they emerge from one dismal reality and hurtle unknowingly towards another. These essays take advantage of a new, exciting trend towards interdisciplinary research on the Charlemagne legend. Written by historians, art historians, and literary scholars, these essays focus on the multifaceted ways the Charlemagne legend functioned in the Middle Ages and how central the shared (if nonetheless fictional) memory of the great Frankish ruler was to the medieval West. A gateway to new research on memory, crusading, apocalyptic expectation, Carolingian historiography, and medieval kingship, the contributors demonstrate the fuzzy line separating "fact" and "fiction" in the Middle Ages.

With Renaissance Lives, Theodore K. Rabb revives a tradition of writing that was often practiced by the historians of that astounding era: to tell the story of an age by examining the lives of those who lived it. Rabb's subjects are all people who felt change gather speed around them: from Titian and Galileo to Catherine de' Medici and John Milton. In their stories we see, above all, the powers of ideas to liberate, to enthrall, to provoke, and to resolve conflict. Renaissance Lives shows us the struggle — with its grave disappointments but also its extraordinary achievements that accompanied the creation of the world we recognize as our own.

"King and Emperor takes on the compelling suspense of good detective work as well as good history."—The Wall Street Journal Charles I, often known as Charlemagne, is one of the most extraordinary figures ever to rule an empire. Driven by unremitting physical energy and intellectual curiosity, he was a man of many parts, a warlord and conqueror, a judge who promised "for each their law and justice," a defender of the Latin Church, a man of flesh and blood. In the twelve centuries since his death, warfare, accident, vermin, and the elements

have destroyed much of the writing on his rule, but a remarkable amount has survived. Janet Nelson's wonderful new book brings together everything we know about Charles I, sifting through the available evidence, literary and material, to paint a vivid portrait of the man and his motives. Building on Nelson's own extraordinary knowledge, this biography is a sort of detective story, prying into and interpreting fascinating and often obdurate scraps of evidence, from prayer books to skeletons, gossip to artwork. Charles's legacy lies in his deeds and their continuing resonance, as he shaped counties, countries, and continents; founded and rebuilt towns and monasteries; and consciously set himself up not just as King of the Franks, but as the head of the renewed Roman Empire. His successors—even to the present day—have struggled to interpret, misinterpret, copy, or subvert his legacy. Janet Nelson gets us as close as we can hope to come to the real figure of Charles the man as he was understood in his own time.

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