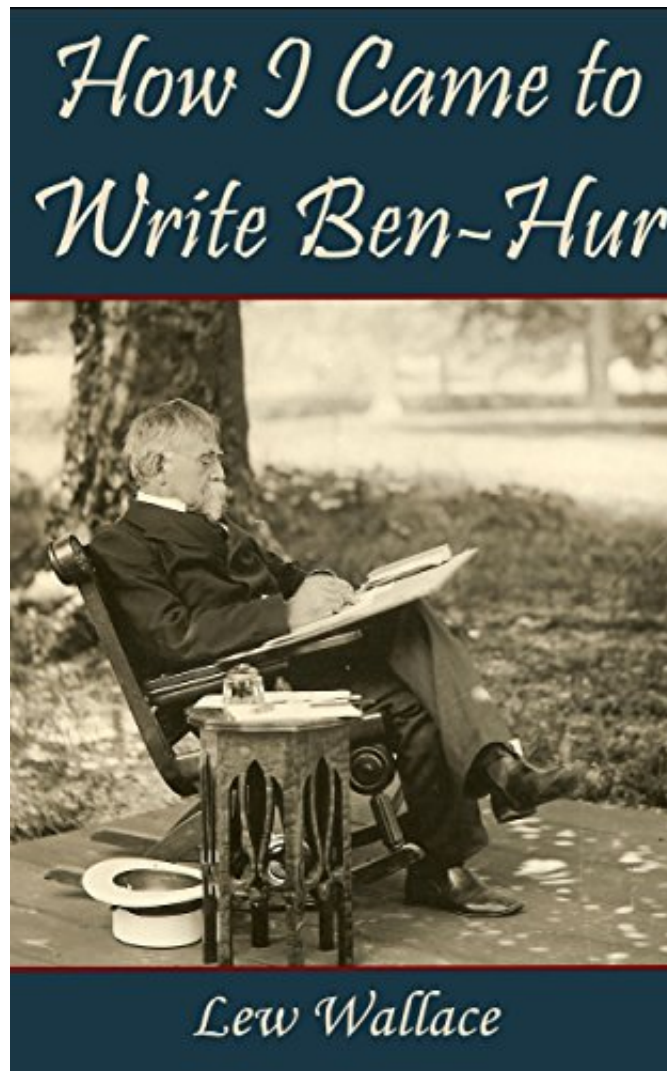


How I Came to Write Ben-Hur

by

J. Samuel Walker



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Synopsis

There are a lot of urban legends about how why General Lew Wallace wrote his religious epic novel Ben-Hur. The fact is, he was not an atheist setting out to prove Christianity wrong. He did not write Ben-Hur on a bet. The truth is this: after a conversation on the train with noted agnostic Robert Ingersoll, Wallace was prompted to explore the religion he had always vaguely believed in. In this ebook, the words of Lew Wallace himself, excerpted from his autobiography, explain how and why he wrote Ben-Hur.

Sort review

About the Author Feder obtained his B.A. in anthropology in 1973 from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He obtained his M.A. in anthropology in 1975 from the University of Connecticut and his Ph.D. from the same institution in 1982. He has taught in the Department of Anthropology at Central Connecticut State University since 1977 where he is now a full professor. His primary research interests include the archaeology of the native peoples of New England and the analysis of public perceptions about the human past. He is the founder and director of the Farmington River Archaeological Project, a long-term investigation of the prehistory of the Farmington River Valley. He is the author and co-author of several books including: *Human Antiquity: An Introduction to Physical Anthropology and Archaeology* (with Michael Park; now in its fifth edition; McGraw-Hill); *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology* (about to appear in its seventh edition; McGraw-Hill); *The Past In Perspective: An Introduction to Human Prehistory* (about to appear in its fifth edition; Oxford University Press); and *Linking to the Past: A Brief Introduction to Archaeology* (now in its second edition; Oxford University Press). Finally, he is the author of *A Village of Outcasts: Historical Archaeology and Documentary Research at the Lighthouse Site* (Mayfield Publishing). When he's not digging in the dirt or writing books, he likes to hang out with his one wife, two kids, and four very bad cats.

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How I Came to Write Ben-HurBy General Lew WallaceAn excerpt from Lew Wallace: An AutobiographyPrepared by the staff of the General Lew Wallace Study & MuseumThe text contained herein, including grammar and punctuation, is consistent with the original publication in Lew Wallace: An Autobiography (New York: Harper & Brothers 1906).‘How came I to write Ben-Hur?’The question has been put to me so often, and in the same form, that the world shall have an answer; although I confess it not a little difficult, seeing the different aims the interrogation may take.The very beginning of the book lies in a quotation from St. Matthew:‘Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship him.’Far back as my memory goes of things read by or to me, those lines took a hold on my imagination beyond every other passage of Scripture. How simple they are! But analyze them, and behold the points of wonder!The saying that they came from the east is altogether unsatisfactory. How many were they? And oh, the star! the star!It was a speaking star, for we are left to infer it told them a king was born to the Jews, and that they must go find and worship Him; and when, doubtless, they asked where He was, they were bid follow it, for it was the King’s star. So, too, it could not have been set in the heavens, else it could not have led them; for one may go round the globe, and up and down from pole to pole, without ever getting under the far pin-point of light called the north star.Then when, after months and possibly years of journey to and fro, on ship or horse or camel, bearing presents of value - they could not have walked - how did they know their journey at last finished? And when they entered a cave near an obscure hamlet, Bethlehem by name, and beheld a speechless baby in swaddling-clothes, and nowise different in appearance from other babies, who told them it was He they were seeking? What, a king in a stable-manger!But they did not laugh; they stopped there and worshipped the little boy, and gave Him their gifts. Was the mother astonished, or was she looking for them?In 1875 - the date is given from best recollection - when I was getting over the restlessness due to years of service in the War of the Rebellion, it occurred to me to write the conceptions which I had long carried in my mind of the Wise Men. A serial upon the subject would admit of any number of illustrations, and might be acceptable to one of the magazines.

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Randy, "This little book is very interesting as General Wallace explains This little book is very interesting as General Wallace explains the process and mindset he had in writing this classic book."

ADM Cosh, "Five Stars. So great to read in the author's own word how Ben-Hur came to be!"

William Russo, "Five Stars. A grand description of how Lew Wallace wrote his immortal tale."

Henry Zecher, "Excellent. Wonderful story of how Wallace to write one of the classic books of modern history, still available in print, and the source of one of the greatest movies of the century."

The book by J. Samuel Walker has a rating of 5 out of 5.0. 6 people have provided feedback.

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Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced typesetting: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Sticky notes: On Kindle Scribe

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