

In volumes 10 and 11 of *The History of Middle-earth* Christopher Tolkien recounts from the original texts the evolution of his father's work on *The Silmarillion*, the legendary history of the Elder Days or First Age, from the completion of *The Lord of the Rings* in 1949 until his death. In Volume 10, *Morgoth's Ring*, the narrative was taken only so far as the natural dividing-point in the whole, when Morgoth destroyed the Trees of Light and fled from Valinor bearing the stolen Silmarils. In *The War of the Jewels* the story returns to Middle-earth, and the ruinous conflict of the High Elves and the Men who were their allies with the power of the Dark Lord. With the publication in this book of all J.R.R. Tolkien's later narrative writing concerned with the last centuries of the First Age, the long history of *The Silmarillion*, from its beginnings in *The Book of Lost Tales*, is completed; and the enigmatic state of the work at his death can be understood.

A chief element in *The War of the Jewels* is a major story of Middle-earth now published for the first time, a continuation of the great 'saga' of Túrin Turambar and his sister Niënor, the children of Húrin the Steadfast: this is the tale of the disaster that overtook the forest people of Brethil when Húrin came among them after his release from long years of captivity in Angband, the fortress of Morgoth. The uncompleted text of the *Grey Annals*, the primary record of the War of the Jewels, is given in full; the geography of Beleriand is studied in detail, with redrawings of the final state of the map; and a long essay on the names and relations of all the peoples shows more clearly than any writing published hitherto the closeness of the connection between language and history in Tolkien's world, and provides much new information, including some knowledge of the language of the divine powers, the Valar.