Diodorus Siculus, Greek historian of Agyrium in Sicily, ca. 80–20 BCE, wrote forty books of world history, called Library of History, in three parts: mythical history of peoples, non-Greek and Greek, to the Trojan War; history to Alexander’s death (323 BCE); history to 54 BCE. Of this we have complete Books I–V (Egyptians, Assyrians, Ethiopians, Greeks) and Books XI–XX (Greek history 480–302 BCE); and fragments of the rest. He was an uncritical compiler, but used good sources and reproduced them faithfully. He is valuable for details unrecorded elsewhere, and as evidence for works now lost, especially writings of Ephorus, Apollodorus, Agatharchides, Philistus, and Timaeus.

The Loeb Classical Library edition of Diodorus Siculus is in twelve volumes.

My Personal Review:
Alexander the Great, was born on or around July 20, 356 B.C.E., and is my favorite personality to read about in history. To me he is the whole package general, statesman, conqueror, and philosopher. The smartest man who ever lived, Aristotle, tutored him. Alexander conquered more of the known world than any other figure in history, accomplishing all this before he dies at the ripe old age of 33. Some people called him conqueror and violent overlord. Some other called him civilizer and even God! All of them yet, called him "The Great". He was the first man in modern history that took this name, "The Great"! Even as a young boy, he shows great promise.
Diodorus a Greek historian who lived from 80-20 BCE wrote 40 books of world history. He is an uncritical compiler who used good sources and produced them faithfully. His work is one of the oldest works available and is based on eyewitness accounts. He does a better job than most in explaining the battle scenes, and seems to be more balanced in his admiration and criticism of Alexander than any of the other early biographers. I love his Bucephalus Story, and I recount it here so you get a flavor of the promise this young Alexander shows.

The legend begins with Philoneicus, a Thessalian, bringing a wild horse to Philip for him to buy. None of the hands was able to handle it, and Philip grew upset at Philoneicus for bringing such an unstable horse to him. Alexander, however, publicly defied his father and claimed that he could handle the horse. The bet between Philip and Alexander was that if Alexander could ride the horse, Philip would buy it, if not, Alexander would have to pay the price of the horse, which was 13 talents, an enormous sum for a boy of Alexander’s age to have.

Alexander apparently noticed that the horse had been shying away from its own shadow, and so he led it gently into the sun, so that its shadow was behind it, all the while stroking it gently and whispering into its ear, (Alexander seems to be the original horse whisperer). Eventually the horse let Alexander mount him, and Alexander was able to show his equestrian skill to his father and all who were watching. The incident so impressed Alexander’s father, King Philip that he told the boy "Look thee out a kingdom equal to and worthy of you, for Macedonia is too little for thee". He named the horse Bucephalus, which means Ox head, and rode it across Asia, founding a city in its honor in India after its death. This story gives you an inkling about the man.

This book is a necessary read for students of Alexander, I also recommend Plutarch's and Arrian's work, and from contemporary writers, J. F. C. Fuller and Tarn. Most of Alexander's greatest military traits are in the area of military logistics and to understand his genius in this area I highly recommend reading, "Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army," by Donald W. Engels.

As a retired U. S. Army Major, I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in ancient warfare, and history.

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