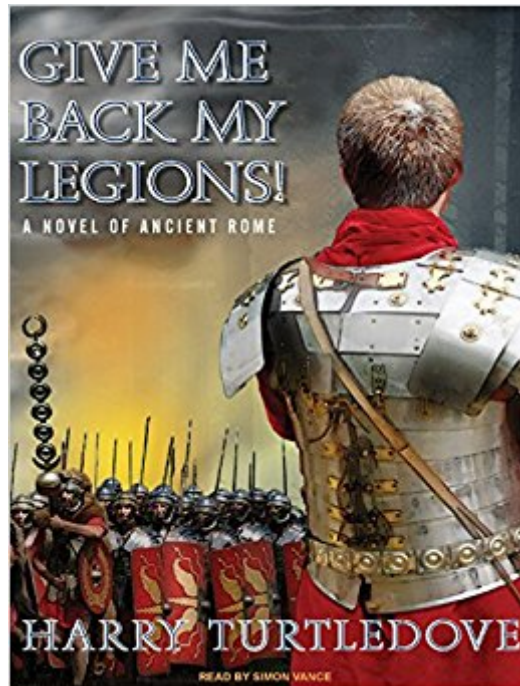




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Give Me Back My Legions!: A Novel Of Ancient Rome



Synopsis

Publius Quinctilius Varus, a Roman politician, is summoned by the Emperor, Augustus Caesar. Given three legions and sent to the Roman frontier east of the Rhine, his mission is to subdue the barbarous German tribes where others have failed and to bring their land fully under Rome's control. Arminius, a prince of the Cherusci, is playing a deadly game. He serves in the Roman army, gaining Roman citizenship and an officer's rank, and learning the arts of war and policy as practiced by the Romans. What he learns is essential for the survival of Germany, for he must unite his people against Rome before they become enslaved by the Empire and lose their way of life forever. An epic battle is brewing, and these two men stand on opposite sides of what will forever be known as the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest-a ferocious, bloody clash that will change the course of history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Alternate history icon Turtledove probes the intrigues and battles surrounding Roman Emperor Augustus Caesar's attempts to control uprisings in Germanic lands circa A.D. 9. Caesar appoints Publius Quinctilius Varus, formerly a successful governor of Syria, to become the new governor of Germany, and Varus sets off bolstered by three legions from the overextended Roman army. Sure that he is headed for further glory, Varus is unaware that crafty Prince Arminius, who serves in the Roman army but secretly seethes in indignation at Rome's plans to make Germany another conquered territory, is planning a massive revolt. Turtledove rotates through many points-of-view, from Caesar to slaves and soldiers, to give a panoramic look at the epic battle of Teutoburg Forest,

laced with telling details of ancient military life and strategy and lightened with humorous interludes. The fantastic action scenes and taut narrative make this a fine addition to the ancient Roman battles canon. (Apr.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

"Turtledove's searing account clears the cobwebs off this ancient and nearly forgotten disaster, and brings it to vivid and startling life for modern [audiences]." ---Michael Curtis Ford, bestselling author of *The Ten Thousand*

Turtledove does an outstanding job of showing how events are viewed by several different characters and how the events affect them. You can't go wrong with Turtledove. I personally have almost 90 of his hard covers in my library and order in advance everything the man puts on paper.

A very well written novel of a mostly forgotten event in history. Excellent perspective from the view points of everyone involved. He covered everyone from the Governor to the lowest slaves. A very well written and enjoyable novel. Just wish the history books I read of Rome were this detailed.

Give Me Back My Legions!, by Harry Turtledove. This is historical fiction, without any elements of alternate history or science fiction. I liked it much better than most of the reviewers did. The story kept moving, and built up the sense of impending doom. Little details stand out. Stirrups had not been invented, so getting on a horse, and staying on one in battle, was a lot harder.

Correspondence addressed to older people was written with large letters so they could read it. There were no glasses. Slavery was practiced by both cultures, but there were different attitudes. A Roman master was more likely to beat his slave, but a German was more likely to kill his. German society was freer: Taxes were a Roman innovation for them. However, Germany was a more violent space. Quarrels were settled by the sword rather than by lawsuits. Having finished the novel, I am now reading _The Battle That Stopped Rome: Emperor Augustus, Arminius, and the Slaughter of the Legions in the Teutoburg Forest_. This has happened many times in my life: I read a novel with some particular historical setting, then I read non-fiction to learn more about the period. I have learned a lot history this way. It started about 45 years ago with _Lest Darkness Fall_. I was a teenager when I read it, and I must confess that part of my motivation then was to learn what the Empress Theodora complained about :-)>

I've been amazed at Mr. Turtledove's recent prodigious output and I think this book exposes his secret: repetition. This book takes an interesting chapter in military history and fictionalizes it, something I often enjoy, so I came into this as a pretty receptive reader. It is decently written, but really contains only enough for a short story or novella. The characters are flat and do not develop at all. The insights are repeated ad infinitum. Romans look down on Germans, but their Greek slaves look down on them. Do we need to be reminded once per chapter? Augustus rules with an iron first from afar, we are told once per chapter. The Romans are a formidable foe in the open field, Arminius muses, every time he sees them march or make camp or dismount or mount. It has all the repetition of Greek epics with none of the poetry. You could make a fine drinking game by spotting the repetitions, as long as you don't read too fast. If Turtledove at his best is a minor artist in his genre (military and historical fiction and fantasy), then this book feels like a cheap poster print. Copy and paste and get it done.

Although I have enjoyed many of Harry Turtledove's books, this one left me a little short. The story took way too long to develop. The characters' development wasn't as believable or very deep which I have come to enjoy from his other books. A subject matter where I am very interested in and one I know a lot about, I find that story should have moved a little faster and more focus on the destruction of the Legions.

Because it's history, we already know the ending. Very little action--except for the beginning and towards the end, mostly focuses on the characters and their motives.

bit slow

good read

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