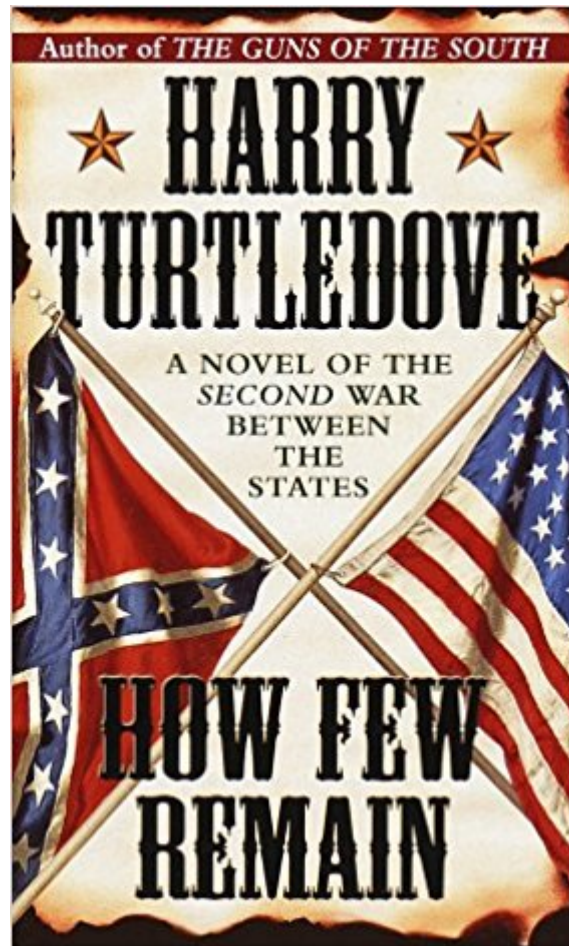




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How Few Remain (Southern Victory)



Synopsis

From the master of alternate history comes an epic of the second Civil War. It was an epoch of glory and success, of disaster and despair. . . .1881: A generation after the South won the Civil War, America writhed once more in the bloody throes of battle. Furious over the annexation of key Mexican territory, the United States declared total war against the Confederate States of America in 1881. But this was a new kind of war, fought on a lawless frontier where the blue and gray battled not only each other but the Apache, the outlaw, the French, and the English. As Confederate General Stonewall Jackson again demonstrated his military expertise, the North struggled to find a leader who could prove his equal. In the Second War Between the States, the times, the stakes, and the battle lines had changed--and so would history. . .

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In 1862, the Confederacy won the War of the Rebellion (not by interference of time travelers, as in Turtledove's *Guns of the South*, LJ 9/1/92, but by their own skillful military and diplomatic efforts). The defeated North has stewed for nearly 20 years. In this alternate history, the South exercises an opportunity to purchase Sonora and Chihuahua from the bankrupt Mexican Empire, having already wrested Cuba from Spain. James G. Blaine, now president of the United States, arrogantly seizes upon this pretext and invades with the aim of reunification. Lincoln has become an outcast of the Republican Party and preaches socialism while Custer is a frustrated and embittered colonel on the

frontier, Samuel Clemens a fiery newspaper editor in San Francisco, and Rosecrans the inadequate head of the Union Army. Turtledove is an accomplished professional at this sort of thing and has given us an entertainment that makes us think somewhat about why we are the way we are. Highly recommended for history, historiography, military, and popular fiction collections. ?Edwin B. Burgess, U.S. Army Combined Arms Research Lib., Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Turtledove calls his numerous novels "alternative history." He changed the result of the Civil War by giving General Lee AK-47s in *Guns of the South* (1992); in *Worldwar* (1996), World War II came to a screeching halt as the belligerents united against alien space lizards. This current novel extends the Civil War theme. The year is 1881. Lincoln, since losing the Civil War and then the presidency, is an itinerant socialist speech-maker. In the Confederate States of America, President James Longstreet buys northern Mexico, and the U.S. president declares war, the course of which operates through several historical figures. In San Francisco, antiwar newspaper publisher Samuel Clemens talks himself out of seditious trouble with William Sherman, while the British fleet reduces the city to rubble. The British/Canadian invasion of Montana is stopped by Teddy Roosevelt, yelling "bully" constantly, and by George Custer, whose brother Tom dies, reappears, and then is later referred to as dead. The War in Mexico goes worse for the bluecoats, as would be expected, since they face the dashing, slashing J.E.B. Stuart and his "camelry" --whether their mounts are dromedaries or Bactrians is unclear. At Louisville, Stonewall Jackson reprises his successes by repelling the Union attack and capturing Frederick Douglass, war correspondent. Turtledove is successful in the plausible, albeit theatrical, characterizations of these figures, and his imaginative curiosity will appeal to the what-if segment of the vast Civil War readership, although they might trip over Tom Custer's dead-or-alive act. Gilbert Taylor --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is the entry novel in Harry Turtledove's epic *America Empire* series that spans from this novel and carries through to the Second World War. *How Few Remain* and all the subsequent novels account a alternate history of how different the geo-political situation would have been if the South and succeeded winning the Civil War. Sometimes Turtledove can get a little long winded in his writing but he does well it mixing historical characters with fictional ones in weaving a large complex tale of how war would have become a constant had two America's faced off against each other. It depicts the dire conditions of black people in the south and how new political parties of extremes

could have risen during this alternate area of global turbulence.

Great alternate history, from, arguably, the greatest alternate history writer. I do have one gripe about Turtledove's writing. In fact, that gripe is the reason I'm writing this review. I think Turtledove has no idea how the common man talks among ourselves. It's my opinion that he, Turtledove, comes from the upper class and has little to no experience of other classes. He is wildly inaccurate in his depictions of the things on our minds. I still enjoy his books immensely, but cringe at the stilted dialogue of the common people in his books.

This book is a typical alternate reality / universe story line. Close to what one would see in a Star Trek episode. Basically it explores..."What if...the South had better weapons." If you are a Civil War enthusiast and wished things turned out differently OR maybe an alternate reality / universe fan then this book is for you.

This is an adroit reshuffling of the conventions of US historiography, starting with an amusing application of contingent-series causation to Lee's famously leaked (or in this case not leaked) battle plans at Antietam. Despite occasional passages of unnecessary explanation, the book is vividly written and satisfying to read. Not merely an entertainment, it succeeds in raising serious questions about American culture - if only in passing. Recommended especially for anyone who has not sampled "counter history" or who supposes that the form can't rest on careful reasoning and produce worthwhile insights. For best results, a good knowledge of textbook history is advisable.

So "what if" the South had won the War of Secession? Readers already familiar with Harry Turtledove's previous work, *Guns of the South*, can look forward to another novel set in a similar -- although not exactly the same -- alternate history timeline. *How Few Remain* picks up after a new country was born of a split between the USA and the Confederacy: the CSA. Now, as adolescent countries are wont to do, these bitter rivals have a new quarrel to occupy them as the CSA aims to purchase a hefty chunk of Mexico that will enable the young nation to realize its own version of Manifest Destiny, extending its territory to the Pacific. Egads, this will not set well with the arrogant and power-hungry USA, now will it, my fellow history students? HFR is written in what has become the typical Turtledove format of splitting the point of view between several characters -- some of which are real historical figures, although others are just the author's own figments. This makes for a good plot device to balance the narrative between "the noble and the common", giving us insights

into slice-of-life history as well as the larger arc of the war's progression. Readers will instantly be able to tell which historical characters are the author's pets and which he considers to be buffoons (*cough* Custer *cough*). A major highlight of this story format is the author's delightful take on Samuel Clemens, which showcases a brilliant wit that's uncharacteristic of this author...as if he'd really channelled Clemens to write that portion of the book. The downside of course is that it is often confusing (to me personally, anyway) to switch POV's so frequently; I often thought that a glossary of characters would have been useful. But you could chalk that up to early onset senility if it's convenient..One unmistakable theme in this book (that's hammered to the point of tedium) is that the USA is a proud and overreaching nation --basically, bullies on the world stage. In the space of the first half of the book, we (Northerners) already managed to display the worst sort of racism, condescension, and fascist attitudes that have (in our present-day reality) traditionally been attributed to the South. And is there any truth to that? Well, possibly. When you re-write history you can make any "truth" you want, but there's an undeniable authenticity to the racist tones of speech and thought uncovered in all the characters. It's perhaps a hallmark of their era, but highlighted and underscored more on the USA's side of things here. There are numerous hints throughout that the author apparently believes that, given the right circumstances, our country would have become an oppressive and genocidal tyrant to rival Nazi Germany; and he makes the case with logic and...glee, I do believe. Yes, there is a distinct element of revenge fantasy playing out in the narrative. Turtledove certainly enjoys subverting our established underdogs and winners, that much is certain. The narrative in HFR is looser and more fragmented than in the superior previous work *Guns of the South*, which is an outstanding example of the best of alternate historical fiction. Sidebars notwithstanding though, HFR is a solid piece of speculative history, written by somebody who obviously knows his subject well. In that sense, Turtledove proves himself to be a master of this era of American history: he plays with the possibilities and remixes them as a master chef might remix a favorite recipe to bring something new and delightful out of an old standby. It was a pleasure to observe how the nations collided, reacted, and mingled in this tale. This was what, in the end, elevated this book from three-star mediocrity to a four-star fandom. Well done.

Alternate history is not for everyone. Harry Turtledove starts with "what if". What if the Roman Empire had lived on another thousand years. What if the South had won the Civil War. I like it, my brother likes it; but unless you have a good grasp of the real history, alternate history could confuse your perception of historical characters and you would miss the irony, and you would lose the fun of disagreeing with Turtledove as to whether it would have turned out that way if the South had

won."How Few Remain" takes of through the Second War of Secession. The South won the first war of session and is now buying the states of Chihuahua and Sonora from Mexico to make the Confederacy coast-to-coast. England, France and Canada has sided with the South, but the North is still larger, more industrialized, and determined not to let the south expand. We recognize real many historical decisions and historical characters, some we go "yep, that's what he'd do," others we go "Harry! how could you think he'd do that?" To me that's the fun of it. Yes, it fiction... but it might not have been... if only.

Fascinating, fictional history on what occurred in the U.S. after the Confederacy won their independence from the United States.

This is a good alternative history story. I felt like things were quite slow and then there wasn't any clear climatic moment. I know the series continues and gets better (I've read the next 3 before this one), so it is a good read to get an introduction to this particular timeline. On its own, however, I just found it lacking in excitement.

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