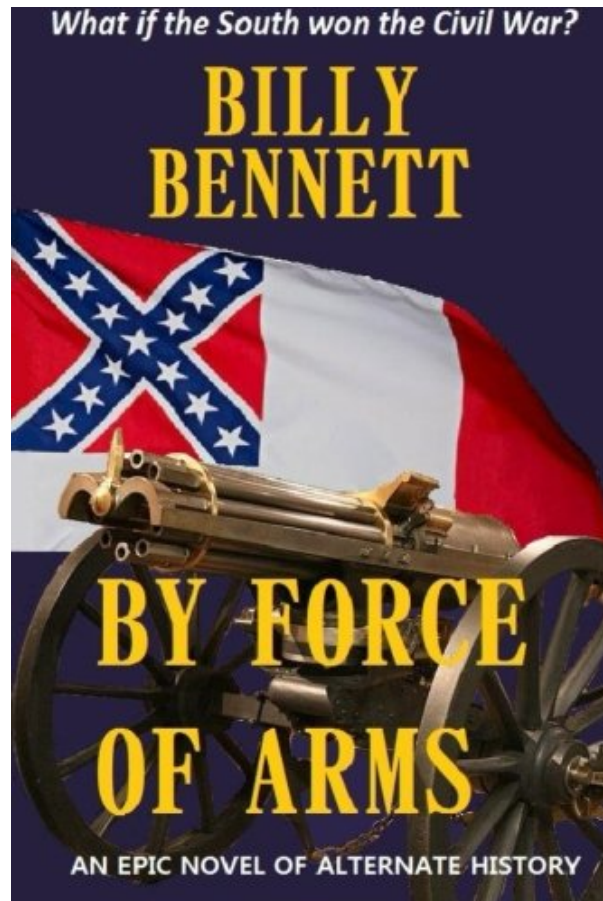


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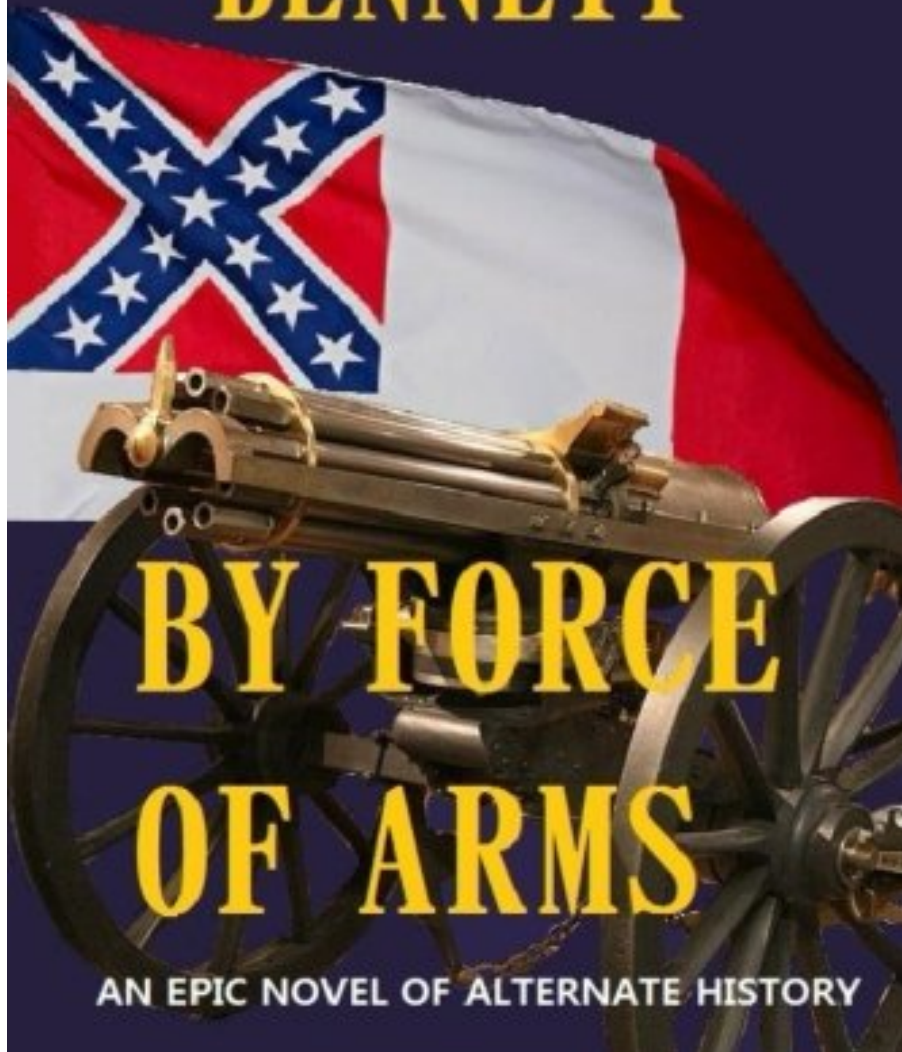


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North America 1869: It has been six years since the South won the Civil War on the bloody fields of Gettysburg. An icy peace has descended across the continent. In the economically devastated North, war hero William Tecumseh Sherman has just been elected President of the United States. He is determined to pick up where the North left off six years ago, and restore the Union no matter the cost. Using Confederate and French military involvement in Mexico as a pretext for war, Sherman lights the fuse that once again causes America to explode into the fires of battle. The fragile peace is shattered and armies in blue and gray once again slaughter one another on an epic scale. In the South, the aging Confederate President Robert E Lee once again summons his daring strategic mind, his audacious spirit and his last reserves of strength to once again lead the embattled Confederacy. But the weapons of war have grown evermore terrible. The introduction of breech loading rifles and lethal Gatling Guns has made the battle field deadlier and more horrendous than ever before in history. By Force of Arms is an epic novel of the Second American Civil War. From Ironclads battling in the Gulf of California to the horrors of trench warfare in Virginia, from black Buffalo soldiers fighting for the Union in the wild west to Confederate partisans in Missouri led by the notorious and daring outlaw Jesse James, By Force of Arms shows the most horrible war in American history through the eyes of those forced to fight it. With the fate of a nation, a continent and ultimately the world itself in the balance, both sides struggle to win the victory by force of arms.

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- 446 pages

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'Forced' of Arms

By Jagman

I enjoy alternate history books and especially about the Civil War. But this book is ludicrous. Every piece of luck, turn of fate, last minute re-inforcements, equipment advantage, leadership abilities, skill of foot soldier, artillerymen, cavalry and generalship belongs to the south. The northern leadership is always bumbling, stupid, drunk or incompetent. The book constantly raves about the advantage of the north in equipment, men, material, weapons and transportation abilities. But while talked about those advantages never appear in any of the battles. The south has gatling guns by the score, submarines, iron clads, cannons galore and their artillerymen are the best 'sharpshooters' the world has ever seen. The north can have a general up in an air balloon viewing all the battle field, yet he makes all the wrong moves. The south has generals who can only see whats around them, yet they make tactical decisions as if they had a satellite in space giving them real time views. John Wilkes Booth, the most famous actor of his era, can waltz into the White House, kidnap the President and no one recognizes him. In the battles the south is always in a defensive mode and the north marches right at them as they did at Fredericksburg. Every single battle is like that. The only 'advantage' the books shows for the north is the amount of men that get slaughtered in these suicide attacks.

I too have felt the battle at Gettysburg would probably have ended differently if Jackson had not been killed by his own men. But this book takes it way to far. The north did have more men, transportation, material and strong leadership at the top than the south did. And those advantages did make a difference in the out come of the war. A more balanced telling would have made this a good book. As written, it is a disappointment.

And I gave it two stars. One because I had to at least give it one star. The second star is actually for me because I read the entire book.....

49 of 57 people found the following review helpful.

**CAN ONLY BE READ BY FORCE**

By SHIPSHAPE

I love reading alternative history, as implausible as some of it may be. This book, needless to say, caught my eye and seemed like a good read; well I can't be right all the time. As stated in other reviews, the South has amazing luck, good fortune, the grace of the gods and a knack for always doing the correct thing and of course, they are all gentlemen.

I have to say that the book got rather boring and predictable; the South always got the better of the North and the commanders always "emptied their revolvers and drew their sabers" time and time again.

I got two-thirds of the way through and stopped, I no longer found it enjoyable to read. The number of books that I have not read to the end can be counted on one hand; this book has joined that small group.

I will only briefly mentioned how distracting it was to come across grammatical and errors of punctuation time and again; and of course there was the instance when President Grant was given papers to sign (Sherman is the President).

I have never written a review but felt I had to so, so that perspective buyers of this book are warned. This book had such potential, but alas, it was not meant to be.

28 of 32 people found the following review helpful.

President Sherman???

By William Henley

Possibly I should not be reviewing/rating this book since I did not actually read the whole book. I read the first few chapters and then skipped to the end to get an idea how the story came out. The basic premise established in the early chapters was so implausible that I didn't feel like plowing through the rest of the book.

The premise is: The South has won the Civil War, due to the battle of Gettysburg turning out differently, and the Confederacy has established its de facto independence, though the Union does not officially recognize it. That's not the implausible part. The part I can't swallow is: The story picks up in 1869, after former Union general William T. Sherman has been elected President of the Union on a platform of revenge against the Confederacy. Now one of the best known facts about the real-life Gen. Sherman is that he was the most non-political of generals. He despised politics and politicians (even Lincoln, at first, though he later came to respect him). After the Civil War, when offered the chance to run for political office, Sherman made the famous "Sherman Statement" of refusal; "If nominated I will not accept, if elected, I will not serve."

Okay, but that was following a Union victory in the Civil War. Is it possible that following a Union defeat Sherman would have felt differently about politics, that he would have tried for the Presidency feeling it was up to him to redeem the Union cause? Maybe. But I don't think he would have won. Not given his ineptitude at politics and at handling the press (he hated reporters and editors even worse than he hated politicians) and not considering that, if the Civil War had ended at Gettysburg, Sherman would not have been all that prominent among Union generals. Up to that point, Sherman was a reliable subordinate of Grant in the Western theater, but he didn't become a great public hero until he took independent command in the West, fought the campaign that resulted in the taking of Atlanta, and then led the "March to the Sea".

And Sherman may have been no politician, but he was a good general. If he had somehow become President and started a new war against the South, I don't see him making the idiotic mistake he does in the early

chapters of this book; concentrating Union forces around Washington, D.C. and in the far West, while leaving the long border between the Union and Confederacy undefended against a Confederate attack. I've read alternate-history books where I thought the premise was implausible, but kept reading anyway because the characters and story kept me interested. This was not one of those. There was nothing special about the author's characters or storytelling to overcome my objections to the premise.

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