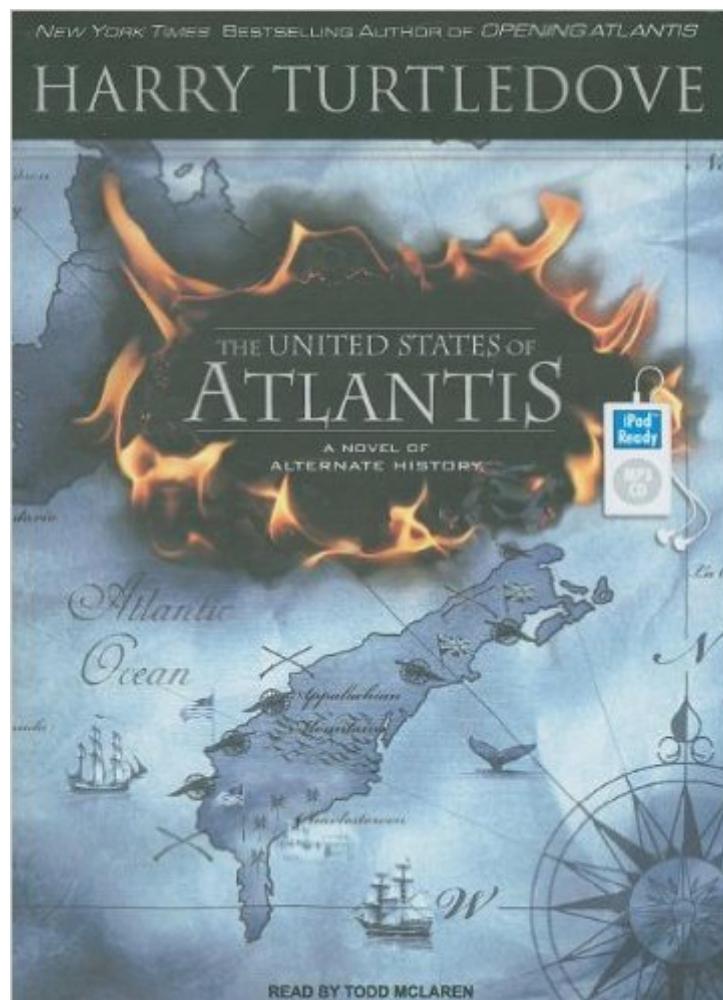


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The United States Of Atlantis: A Novel Of Alternate History



Synopsis

England has driven the French from Atlantis, giving King George leave to tighten his control over the colonies. The Redcoats have seized the continent's eastern coastal towns, depriving the Atlanteans of the markets where they sell their goods as part of a strategy to bend the colonists to their will. Instead, England's tactics have only strengthened the Atlanteans' resolve to be free. As leader of the revolutionaries, Victor Radcliff will make the English pay for each and every piece of land they dare to occupy, and will stop at nothing to preserve the liberty of his people as a new nation is born--a nation that will change the face of the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

With England desperate to recoup the costs of its recent wars, it imposes trade taxes and restrictions on its colonies in Atlantis. The locals object and their objections explode into conflict when the redcoats attempt to disarm a local militia. England is the greatest power in the world and the colonies lack anything resembling an army. The council guiding Atlantis (a minicontinent between Europe and America) calls on Victor Radcliff, highest ranking colonial from the previous war against the French, to general its forces. Radcliff wants nothing more than to stay home on his farm but his duty calls. He and his assistant, escaped slave Blaise, do what they can to create an army from short-term volunteers--then turn them loose on the world's greatest fighting machine. Author Harry Turtledove writes two distinct types of alternate history--stories where

something went distinctly differently from our own history, changing everything (e.g., Lee's plans for Gettysburg were never lost and the south wins the civil war) and stories where the actual events of our own history are replayed in a fantasy world (Turtledove has written stories of the civil war and World War II in worlds with mages and dragons). THE UNITED STATES OF ATLANTIS is of the second type. Victor Radcliff plays George Washington, balancing the demands of the founding fathers with those of his troops--and his own very human needs. Unlike the George Washington of our own history, Victor Radcliff is not a slave owner and does not really favor the practice of slavery. He's also not dogmatically opposed to it and certainly doesn't want to risk the fate of the revolution he's leading on efforts to emancipate the slaves. Blaise has other priorities.

The second book in the Atlantis trilogy, and the first full-length saga that story contains. It opens with our pal Victor Radcliff running an errand with his trusty sidekick Blaise. They get into town somewhere and we hear that the British are taxing Atlantean merchants unreasonably, and before you know it, there's a war on. Now I'm not saying I wanted to spend chapters on end watching Radcliff sit around in a rocking chair, but . . . What's the rush? We've got a whole novel here, why not watch the colonial grievances against London develop? Why not watch characters sift through the pros and cons of each side's argument before arriving at well-reasoned opinions on which side to support? That's not going to bore us here; that's a good, intelligent way to develop your story. It can be done well. Can be, hell--it IS done well. It's a staple of more Revolutionary War fiction than I can count, and it's often the best part of those works of fiction. But no. There's a war on. A bunch of Atlantean politicians prevail upon Radcliff to command their forces. He fights the British in--oh, one of those Atlantean towns or other; I never really bothered much with remembering which is which, but I want to say New Hastings--and gets thrown back after making a puckish fight because the Royal Navy has bigger guns than he does. The war goes badly for a while and Radcliff and his army get chased around their turf. They send Thomas Paine to British Terranova to try to convince Terranovan colonists to join the fight; and, like most Turtledovean bit-players who get sent elsewhere because they've learned something so compelling that OF COURSE it will lead to offstage turmoil . . . nothing happens with him.

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