



The Steel

S.M. Stirling , David Drake

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For five years, the computer in Raj Whitehall's mind has been using him as its instrument to reunite the planet Bellevue as the first step in restoring technological civilization across the galaxy. Now, Raj's mission is to take on hordes of the Holy Federation and regain territories lost to the Civil Government for centuries. Civilization had been falling for a thousand years, since interstellar war isolated Bellevue from a universe in chaos. This was the last chance to reverse the fall. If Raj failed, the darkness could last fifteen thousand years.

The Steel Details

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Author : S.M. Stirling , David Drake

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Genre : Science Fiction, Military Science Fiction, War, Military Fiction, Fiction

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Scott says

This is such a great series. It's mostly primitive battles, with little "science fiction," but it's an interesting world, with interesting characters. Each book ends with a bit of a political cliff hanger, and this one is not exception. But it doesn't take anything from the book itself, which is once again very good. Looking forward to more in the series.

Bodicainking says

An further enjoyable and fast military yarn.

Rob Markley says

Excellent and fun mulitary scifi. It starts to get repetitive but then at the end everything makes sense

Cris says

I think Stirling is getting better at characterization.

Andreas says

The human galactic federation is in ruins, and the worlds have devolved to various levels of barbarism. On the planet Bellevue, which is at about the early nineteenth century in development, a young officer named Raj Whitehall and his friend venture into the catacombs under the capital. There, they find an ancient battlecomputer named Center. With Center's help, Raj must unite the planet and enable humanity to retake the stars. The story is at least somewhat based on that of the Byzantine general Belisarius.

The first seven novels are written by Drake and Stirling. The last one by Drake and Flint. David Drake writes very detailed outlines, while his collaborators write the actual text.

The first five novels are a set and deal with the conquest/unification of Bellevue. They are nowadays published in two volumes, known as Warlord and Conqueror:

- * The Forge
- * The Hammer
- * The Anvil
- * The Steel
- * The Sword

After finishing the conquest of Bellevue, the personalities of Center and Raj are imbued in computers that are sent to other worlds with launched asteroids. Basically this scenario has infinite permutations as human worlds at various levels of development can be written about. The first of these follow-up novels is:

- * The Chosen

It is a great singleton set on a world with early twentieth century technology. Finally there is the two volume story consisting of:

- * The Reformer

- * The Tyrant

Here, we take a serious step “back in time”, as the planet Hafardine is at about Roman Empire level in it’s technology. The Tyrant is rather different in style from the others due to being penned by Flint. However, his trademark dry humor meshes well with the overall thrust of the series.

This is great military SciFi, with excellent battlescenes and great characters, not to mention a dose of dry humor. Very highly recommended.

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