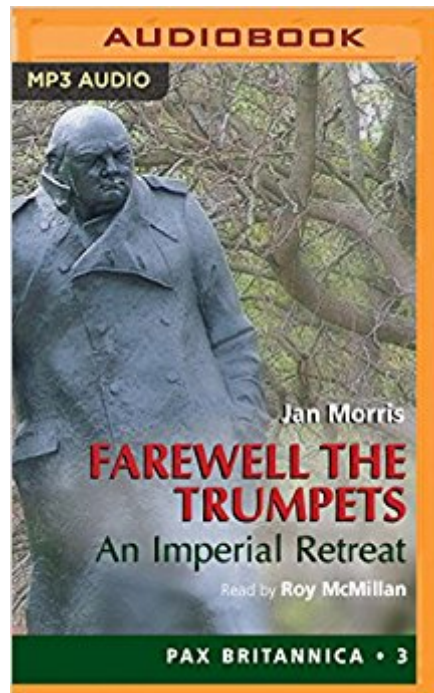




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Farewell The Trumpets: An Imperial Retreat (Pax Britannica)



Synopsis

The Pax Britannica trilogy is Jan Morris's masterly telling of the British Empire from the accession of Queen Victoria to the death of Winston Churchill. It is a towering achievement: informative, accessible, entertaining and written with all her usual bravura. This final volume charts the decline and dissolution of what was once the largest empire the world had known. From the first signs of decay in the imperial ambition in the Boer Wars, through the global shifts in power evident in the two World Wars, it offers a perspective that is honest, evocative and occasionally elegiac.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jan Morris served as an intelligence officer with the 9th Queen's Royal Lancers, studied at Oxford University, and was a reporter for the Times and the Guardian before launching into a successful career as a novelist, history author, and travel writer. Her other books include Last Letters from Hav, Fifty Years of Europe, Conundrum, Hong Kong, Oxford, The World of Venice, and Farewell the Trumpets.

This is the third in a trilogy on the British Empire by an author who is easy to read and filled with interesting information. For anyone who likes reading about British history. Highly recommended.

I highly recommend this title to others studying the British Empire. Very well written. Morris is a great writer. The condition of the book was in great shape.

awesomeOne of the best books I have ever read

I just completed the final volume of James Morris' trilogy. The writing is superb. Although not as good as volume one (Heaven's Command), this book is well worth keeping. As usual; my only quibble is that there are no pictures in the Harcourt set that I have. That takes away a star.

This is a fine ending to what is possibly my favorite series of books, Jan Morris' outstanding "Pax Britannica Trilogy." Although I suppose the book could be read in isolation, it will be greatly enhanced by having read the first two in the series, so if you haven't read them, stop now and go check out "Heaven's Command: An Imperial Progress." Okay. If you're reading on, I'll assume you've read the first two books. The third is more of the same: a similar structure, with subdivided chapters, and the book itself divided into three sections: Part One, THE GRAND ILLUSION: 1897-1918; Part Two, THE PURPOSE FALTERS: 1918-1939; and Part Three, FAREWELL THE TRUMPETS: 1939-1965. The chapters, as in the earlier books, showcase illuminating episodes in the Victorian British Empire: battles, personages, advances in technology, attitudes, etc. In this book, some of the highlights are the Boer War, the invasion of Tibet, Gallipoli, the R101 airship disaster, the move to Irish independence, and the end of the Raj in India. The book is excellent and highly recommended, though I think it pales a bit compared to its predecessors. Part of that is inevitable, due to the subject matter: imperial retreat is bound to be a more subdued affair compared to the excitements of imperial expansion. It is a bit sad, having journeyed with this country through its imperial prime, to see it all evaporating so quickly -- even as Morris makes us well aware of the injustness and cruelties of imperialism that made its demise a net good for the world. Still, one can feel for the confusion and dislocation of a people as their world collapses around them. Morris' writing remains strong and vivid in this book, but here too I think it is a bit more slack than in the previous entries -- there is a bit too much of the purple prose and embellishment that Morris would sometimes be criticized for in her later career. This is especially troubling as the book moves into territory more concrete and familiar to the modern reader: the World Wars, Winston Churchill, etc. Still, there are still many chapters that pack a tremendous punch, and rank among some of the best writing I've ever encountered. Still and all, it's an excellent book and I'd encourage anyone to read it. There are thrilling stories here -- as well as the most delightful footnote I've ever read (you'll know it when you see it). Give it a try -- you won't be disappointed.

This is, in my opinion, how an history book should be written. Jan Morris takes you through the last years of the victorian empire in a way no author has done before. She will transport you from South Africa to Iran, from Bombay to Dublin, with her unique style she will picture the historical events as you were seeing them happening before your eyes. She is particularly good at outlining personalities. You will feel like you know Lawrence of Arabia or Churchill personally, after you read about them in Jan Morris' book. Finally a book about the victorian empire that is not a simple sterile list of dates, places and warship names, finally a book that takes its time to go through the less investigated aspects of an age, giving you interesting and detailed account of how people lived, how soldiers felt about a battle and so on. I recommend this book to anybody who is interested in the history of colonies and victorian empire.

Jan Morris is a fascinating personality. She originally was a he, and he was a guardsman in the British army, an officer from a good family. He left the service, became a historian, and then went to Denmark or wherever, and came back a she. She now writes unusual, affecting, eccentric, entertaining books that are terribly British and a bit disorganized. The Pax Britannica trilogy is her life's work, near enough, though she's done other books that are very good. This one, however, is three volumes long, quite involved and very detailed. The series includes Heaven's Command, Pax Britannica, and Farewell the Trumpets. The first generally deals with the Empire in the 1840s on, the second follows things through the thirties, and the third follows the empire through its disbandment. As I said, Morris is eccentric. This means that though the books are sort of chronological, they aren't exactly sorted the way you would expect, and this isn't really a history of the empire or the era. Instead, it's an anecdotal collection of tales, incidents, and sketches, marvelously told. Sort of like the difference between going through a cafeteria once and a sumptuous buffet where you go back and forth, taking time with what you enjoy. I thoroughly enjoyed the books, though I would hesitate to recommend them to someone who wasn't clear on either geography, or at least some basic history of the British Empire. Since this isn't either of those, you need them to understand what she's talking about occasionally.

Even if you haven't read the other two volumes in the Pax Britannica trilogy, Farewell the Trumpets is a must-buy. It's worth it just to read the brilliant eulogy for Winston Churchill, where in one chapter Morris does better job of capturing this man and his place in history than lesser authors could do in a whole volume. My recommendation is to take your time and savor this book. Like Heaven's Command and Pax Britannica, Farewell the Trumpets is episodic in its presentation, each chapter a

self-contained nugget, so that you can enjoy dipping into it frequently.

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