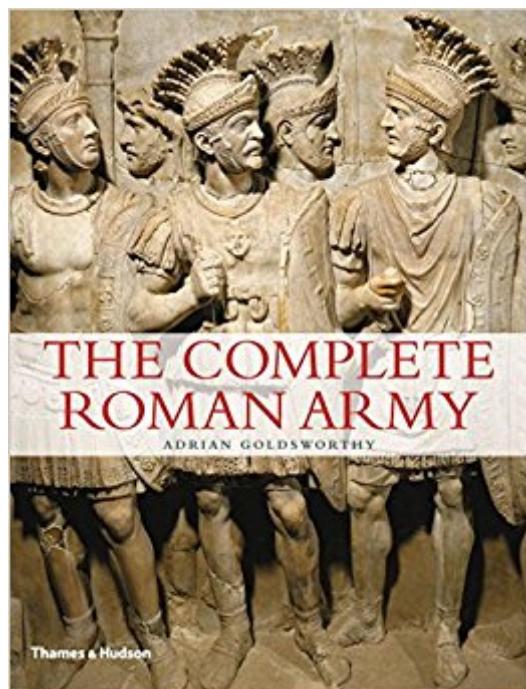


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The Complete Roman Army (The Complete Series)



Synopsis

“An outstanding general study of the Roman military system. . . . The best one-volume treatment of the subject now in existence.” Historian The Roman army was one of the most successful fighting forces in history. Its organization and tactics were highly advanced and were unequaled until the modern era. Spectacular monuments to its perseverance and engineering skill are still visible today, most notably Hadrian’s Wall and the siegeworks around the fortress of Masada. This book is the first to examine in detail not just the early imperial army but also the citizens’ militia of the Republic and the army of the later Empire. The unprecedented scope and longevity of Roman military success is placed in the context of ordinary soldiers’ daily lives, whether spent in the quiet routine of a peaceful garrison or in arduous campaign and violent combat. Key battles and tactics are described, and there are brief biographies of the great commanders. Drawing on archaeology, ancient art, and original documentary sources, this book presents the most convincing history ever published of the Roman army. 107 full-color and 147 black-and-white illustrations

Book Information

Series: The Complete Series

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Thames & Hudson; Reprint edition (September 30, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0500288992

ISBN-13: 978-0500288993

Product Dimensions: 7.7 x 0.7 x 10.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 57 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #172,082 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #72 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > Military History #269 in Books > History > Ancient Civilizations > Rome #4294 in Books > History > Military

Customer Reviews

“If you or someone you love has an interest in Rome, ancient history, or military history, this would make an excellent gift come Christmas.” - Portland Book Review

Adrian Goldsworthy is an English historian whose publications include *The Roman Army at War*:

100 BC-AD 200, The Complete Roman Army, Roman Warfare, The Punic Wars, and Cannae.

This is a sometimes dry but always fascinating review of what we know about the Roman military. While classical literary sources are used, the real meat comes from archeologists. Lots of glossy photos of monuments, relics, and re-enactors. The latter are the most humorous part of the book. Americans look at our Civil War re-enactors and get a chuckle - going back 1800 years to Roman times looks like an excuse for men wearing skirts and metal helmets in public. This is a serious work, one that ought to be on the shelf of every Hollywood movie writer and director, at least!

This book is an excellent reference work on the structure and operations of the Roman Army, mostly covering the period of the Principate through Hadrian. What separates this book from others for me is that it does not focus merely on history or campaigns...I have plenty of other books that do that. This book on the other hand discusses in much detail things like:- how a Roman fort is laid out- what the officers and soldiers ate- examples of duty rosters- what training new recruits went through- marriage and co-habitation- pay scales including details like deductions for food and clothing. These are just examples of the detail that I have not seen compiled quite so well in one book. Two negatives that I can think of and they are minor. Firstly, this is not a "scholarly" reference work and probably not suitable for graduate studies. Yet that may also be a virtue as it is the type of book that one can comfortably sit down and read straight through. Secondly, the author is obviously British and a significant amount of his examples, charts, and photos relate specifically to Britannia. Now since a lot of very good archaeology comes from that province, that too is not a serious flaw and the author does make an effort to incorporate material from throughout the Empire. A very worthy book for anyone interested in how the Roman Army actually worked!

Anything Goldsworthy writes about Roman history is worth reading.

This is the first book to buy if one is interested in the subject. Text and explanatory pictures/drawings are excellent and well coordinated. Of particular value to me is the author's continual observations in the text about what is conjecture or controversial - comments about the probabilities of knowing specific things from 2000 years ago. Organized into relatively short sections emphasizing something in particular - more or less in chronological order. Have had an interest in Roman history since taking a class some 50+ years ago at U. of Michigan. The content of this book fills in well with other references and prepares for further learning.

Adrian Goldworthy's *The Complete Roman Army* gives a pretty complete coverage of the Roman legions during their heydays during the late Republican and early Imperial periods. It reflects on the gradual evolution of the Roman army as it developed from a semi-professional civilian army of the Senate to a permanent professional forces under the Caesars. The book gives a pretty complete coverage of this army. The information given is clear and written with clarity. There's enough to provide the needed information and no more. It's refreshing that there is no overkill of information that will only result in clutter for a book like this. The balance of the information given is just right. The book comes loaded with well drawn illustrations, nice photos, maps and diagrams that gives a clear and understandable images to accompany the text. As one previous reviewer wrote, it truly is one of the best single volume reference book on the Roman legions during its heydays. And that is what this book is, a reference guide to the Roman legions. Anyone seeking a quick answer to any questions on the Roman legions, this is the book to touch on. I have loaned out this book to people who are not historically minded but like to read Roman historical fictions like Simon Scarrow's *Cato/Macros* series for example. For readers of such series, this book is almost tailor made for them. On the down side, this book is pretty expensive for a casual reader to buy and it doesn't go into much detail during the decline of Rome. But I don't think that was the real intent of the author. Overall, an excellent effort by Adrian Goldworthy who wrote a really accessible reference book on the Roman legions during its heydays and make it interesting and informative enough that even veteran readers like myself or a novice who is only interested in fictional history, can both enjoy this book.

As a reader of history, I must say that I enjoyed this subject very much. I am just now getting into this era and reading all bio's that I can find on the various Caesars, but I read this one first to get an idea of how the army was organized and their make up and I was not disappointed. Adrian Goldsworthy is becoming by far my favorite author for historical events. I have read several of his works and he has done an outstanding job in this edition. It helped me to understand how the Roman Army operated and helped me to understand a lot about them. I would recommend this book to anyone who like me is just starting to read about this period of history, you will not be disappointed.

This book is a fine introduction, done in a scholarly way which allows the reader to understand the sources for its conclusions (which sources, after a couple of millennia, are not as complete as could

be desired). It has very helpful illustrations. It is a good read, too. Highly recommended for anyone desiring to understand the ancient world, a world which led to where we are today.

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