



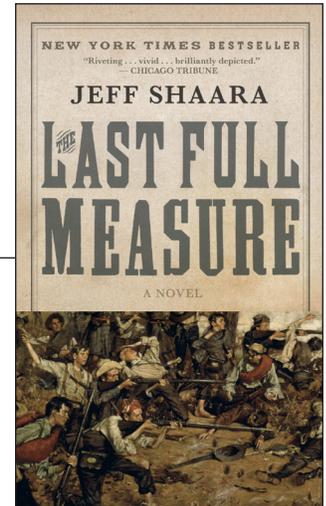
The Last Full Measure

A Novel of the Civil War

by Jeff Shaara

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Reading Level:12.3



• about this book •

introduction/plot summary

The Last Full Measure by Jeff Shaara is the third of a trilogy of books about the American Civil War. The first of the three, *The Killer Angels*, was written by Jeff Shaara's father, Michael Shaara. It recounted the Battle of Gettysburg and won the Pulitzer Prize. The second book, entitled *Gods and Generals*, depicted the events leading to the Civil War and beyond to the Battle of Gettysburg. The third book, *The Last Full Measure*, details the events following the Battle of Gettysburg through the end of the conflict and Robert E. Lee's death, Ulysses S. Grant's physical decline, and Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain's revisiting of his battle at Little Round Top before the 50th anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg. The three books make an excellent and comprehensive chronological account of America's most personal war, but may also be taken separately on their own accords.

The Last Full Measure, in general, follows the notion that Ulysses S. Grant was the only commander of the Army of the Potomac who understood what it took to conclude the war. Grant proceeded on the idea that in order to end the conflict he needed to ignore the capture of Richmond and instead utilize his superior numbers and defeat Robert E. Lee specifically, no matter what the cost in lives. As father of this brutal plan, however, Grant is portrayed contrary to the popular notions that he was a brusque, warmongering alcoholic. Instead, readers get a complex portrait of Grant as a man who, despite his personal failures and the bloody task assigned to him, was humble, sensitive, and sadly resigned to what he must do to preserve the Union.

On the other hand, the extended portrait of Robert E. Lee continues the character arc begun in *The Killer Angels*. Lee is presented as a commander whose judgment is subtly impaired by his declining health, and whose effectiveness as a commander is weakened as he is alienated from his troops by their ideological worship of him as a mythological symbol of their underdog pride. He fights for the South, but principally for his home state of Virginia. His deeper motives, and the contradiction of the battle for Southern freedom versus the institution of slavery, were examined in depth in *Gods and Generals*.

Both Grant and Lee are bedeviled in their maneuvering by the ineffectiveness of their respective subordinates, breakdowns in communication during the chaos of battle, and the inability of the officers to coordinate. Both men move according to a larger plan, but the conflicts between the two armies seem always to be determined by small pieces of good and bad luck and the vagaries of fate.

Overall, *The Last Full Measure* is divided into an introduction that sets the stage for the events to follow and presents the cast of characters along with their individual histories and motivations; four separate sections that are each introduced

by passages from Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*; and an Afterword detailing the fates of the major figures in the book. Each of the novel's 58 chapters are presented from the individual viewpoints of the book's major characters, specifically, but not entirely limited to, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain.

The book depicts the final years of the war as it grinds to its conclusion. Shaara's overall thesis in his introduction is that the Battle of Gettysburg changed the face of war.

Until now, the war has been mostly from the old traditions, the Napoleonic method, the massed frontal assault against fortified positions. It has been apparent from the beginning of the war that the new weaponry has made such attacks dangerous and costly, but old ways die slowly, and commanders on both sides have been reluctant to change. After Gettysburg, the changes become a matter of survival. If the commanders do not yet understand, the men in the field do, and the use of shovels becomes as important as the use of muskets. The new methods—strong fortifications, trench warfare—are clear signs to all that the war has changed, that there will be no quick and decisive fight to end all fights. (3-4)

In a larger, literary sense, in examining the story of the American Civil War, as it unfolds over three separate novels, *Gods and Generals* serves as the rising action, *The Killer Angels* is the bloody climactic turning point, and the impersonal slaughter in *The Last Full Measure* is the devastating falling action in which there is no final resolution. The end of *The Last Full Measure* suggests the misguided horrors of Reconstruction began with the assassination of President Lincoln, and the legacy of America's conflict is that the Union is preserved but the world will be ushered into the horrifying age of modern warfare.

Part One: Chapters 1-6: July–December, 1863

The novel begins ten days after the loss at Gettysburg. Lee watches from a rise as his depleted army is trapped against the banks of the Potomac river, swollen by rain. Meade has not pursued them, and their retreat has been protected by J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry. Meade's delay has given Lee time to fortify a defensive position, and this causes Meade to delay more. A makeshift bridge is constructed and the Southern army escapes into Virginia to continue the war. By August, Lee's army is safely camped south of the Rapidan river. Lee reflects upon the loss at Gettysburg and the fact that there will be no more replacements sent to fill the positions left by the commanders who died: Armistead, Barksdale, Garnett, Pettigrew, and others. The papers blame Lee for the defeat and he has sent a letter of resignation to Jefferson Davis. Davis has replied that he will not accept Lee's resignation because no one commands the respect of the men like Lee. Lee considers the confidence of his army and accepts Davis' judgment.

Meanwhile, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain has returned to Maine to recuperate from his foot wound and a bout with malaria. He is surprised to find that he is famous for his exploits at Little Round Top during the Battle of Gettysburg. He rests, but is soon recalled to duty, spurring the anger of Fannie, his wife. Before he leaves, his stern father, who has always held Chamberlain's academic pursuits in contempt, silently lets his son know he is proud of his accomplishments as a soldier. Chamberlain returns to his unit and is informed by his commander, General Griffin, that he has been given command of the Third Brigade. While honored, Chamberlain comes to understand the demands of command as he is forced to oversee the execution of deserters as an example to the rest of the men. By October, Chamberlain's troops arrive at Bristoe Station, Virginia. Word has come of the new fighting out west, the Union defeat at Chickamauga. As Chamberlain's men cross Broad Run they are attacked from the rear by a weak force of A.P. Hill's men. Before he can turn his troops to face the attack, the Federal II Corps, which had been concealed in a railroad cut unseen on Hill's right flank, opens fire. Hill's troops are slaughtered and Griffin revels in the Confederates being caught in "A perfect trap!"

Lee considers the carnage, is disgusted that his commander has made such a costly mistake. He now has to absorb the loss of two thousand men in less than an hour.

Meade continues to pursue Lee slowly, and Lee is forced to destroy his own railroad tracks to prevent the North from using them to resupply. The naval blockade around Southern ports is taking its toll, and the Southern army is experiencing the debilitating effects of its diminishing supply sources. Lee prepares a defensive position at Mine Run and receives word from his cavalry officer J.E.B. Stuart that Meade's flank is exposed. Lee prepares an attack, but by the time they move, Meade has pulled out and the opportunity is lost. In the resulting lull, Lee is called to Richmond to meet with Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States of America. They discuss the campaign out west, how Braxton Bragg had the Federals entirely contained in

Chattanooga, but had foolishly weakened his army by sending Longstreet to Knoxville to fight General Burnside. Lincoln had sent General Ulysses S. Grant to Chattanooga because earlier he had successfully engineered the containment of Vicksburg. In Chattanooga, Grant punched through the Confederate stranglehold, supplied his starving army, then lead them in a bold attack uphill against entrenched Confederate forces, completely routing them and pursuing their retreat into Georgia.

Davis offers Lee command of the Army of Tennessee. Lee feels he is better suited where he is and Davis, fearing for the safety of Richmond, relents. Davis replaces Bragg with Joe Johnston instead. A few days before Christmas, Lee returns to lead the Army of Northern Virginia.

Part Two: Chapters 7-23: March—June, 1864

Grant travels to Washington, D.C. to meet with President Lincoln. He receives a hero's welcome for his efforts in Chattanooga, but is uneasy with the attention from the crowds. Lincoln seems personable and sincere, and is weary of ineffectual generals who are more concerned with their political images than with winning. He likes Grant's humility and his effectiveness. He creates the position of Lieutenant General, gives Grant control of the Army of the Potomac and promises he will allow Grant to command without interference from Washington. They discover that each holds dear the principles the country was founded upon and the goal of preserving the Union. Grant returns to the army and assumes command from Meade. He gives control of the campaign against the Army of Tennessee in the West to his trusted friend General William Tecumseh Sherman and informs Meade that the new target of the war will not be Richmond, but General Lee himself. Grant's plan is for Sherman to defeat Joe Johnston in the West and capture Atlanta, severing the railroad supplies from there. In Virginia, General Butler would pressure Richmond and advance to the railroad supply at Petersburg, while General Sigel would threaten the farmlands of the Shenandoah Valley. Grant assigns fiery Phil Sheridan to make more effective use of Federal cavalry, and Grant, staying as far from Washington as possible, will accompany Meade's army. Grant enters the Wilderness with the plan to continue marching towards Richmond until Lee is forced to attack his superior numbers.

Lee realizes he cannot confront Grant directly, and Grant's old friend, Southern General James Longstreet, informs Lee that Grant will not go away. Lee decides to face Grant in the tangled brush of the Wilderness where he had previously defeated Joe Hooker. But Lee is hampered in his progress through the Wilderness by inaccurate maps and Stuart is unable to locate the enemy as well. A small Federal advance force emerges from the woods directly into the clearing where Lee, Hill, and Stuart are conferring. The Union force, unsure of how large the Confederate force they have encountered is, and seemingly unaware of the importance of the men they have surprised, withdraw and the Confederates rejoice in their luck. Ewell sends a report back confirming that he has encountered the enemy but before Lee can order him not to attack without first knowing the strength of the enemy, Grant attacks.

During the attack, Grant is frustrated at Meade's hesitancy despite the fact that his enemy is much smaller. The battle rages for most of the day, with neither side gaining an advantage. It is only the confusion of the thick brush that prevents Grant from splitting Lee's army. The land also prevents Lee from coordinating his attack, and by night, the armies are deadlocked but the wounded left on the field between the two armies are horribly consumed by brush fires started from the battle.

The next day, Federal General Winfield Hancock mounts a focused offensive and begins to drive Lee back, but he is hampered by the brush and Longstreet arrives in time, driving him back. Longstreet then coordinates an attack on Hancock's flank via an abandoned railroad cut and succeeds in driving the Federals back a bit before the landscape foils his advance. Longstreet is riding towards the front when he is shot in the throat by Confederate troops lost in the confusion of the Wilderness. In the afternoon, Lee attacks Hancock's position, his men advancing through a raging fire. But Hancock's army is soon reinforced and drives the Confederate advance back where they are consumed by the flames. Lee is informed that Longstreet will survive and receives word from General John Gordon that Ewell had known the enemies' right flank was exposed and had not attacked. On Gordon's word, Lee orders a surprise night offensive. The attack is a limited success with darkness and, yet again, the confusion of the Wilderness, hampering the advance.

Grant moves his great army south, hoping to beat Lee to Spotsylvania and gain further ground towards Richmond. When they arrive at Spotsylvania, they find Lee has already established a defensive perimeter. Grant sends Colonel Upton's men to the center of Lee's position to break them in half. Upton succeeds, and opens a gap that he futilely holds for an hour, but no support comes. Grant is angered at the incompetence of his commanders, counting himself among them, and vows not to fail again.

Meanwhile, Phil Sheridan moves his cavalry towards Richmond, and J.E.B. Stuart rides with his men to stop him. Stuart mistakenly believes he has stopped Sheridan's advance towards Richmond, but realizes too late that Sheridan does not want Richmond, he wants Stuart. While leading an attack against Sheridan, J.E.B. Stuart is shot in the abdomen and killed.

Lee enjoys a great defensive position in front of Spotsylvania. He is well entrenched, and his line is easily defensible, with the center bulging forward in a semi-circle called "The Mule Shoe." But Lee is informed that Grant is moving East. His men, having already spent a demoralizing cold night in the rain, begin to move the artillery out when the position is attacked in force on all sides, with Hancock coming directly up the center of "The Mule Shoe." The men cannot resist because the tide of Union soldiers is too great, and their guns do not fire from being wet in the rain. Grant takes the position, but is soon driven off by Gordon's men. The two armies remain close, within a few feet of each other on either side of a barricade.

Chamberlain has returned to his troops after another bout with malaria, and Grant moves south again towards Richmond. Lee fortifies a defensive position on a high knoll overlooking the North Anna river. Grant skirts the position and heads southeast, moving closer towards Richmond. Lee attempts to interfere with the progress, but Sheridan has successfully secured a crucial crossroads and Grant arrives at Cold Harbor.

Grant attacks Lee's position with new troops, but the ground, muddy from heavy rains, slows them and they are slaughtered. Grant, furious at his generals, rides to the front and sees they tried to send men across an open field with no cover. On his way to the rear, Grant watches a wounded soldier die. He decides the only way to defeat Lee is to stretch his defenses and strangle his supply line by cutting him off from Richmond and capturing the railway center at Petersburg. Carrying the burden of 50,000 casualties since the beginning of his campaign, Grant crosses the James river towards Petersburg.

Part Three: Chapters 24-55: June 15, 1864—April 14, 1865

Lee is deluged with requests for support from both Richmond and Petersburg and has his hands full protecting the Shenandoah Valley from Sigel's replacement, David Hunter. Lee, familiar with Hunter's barbarism in Mexico, sends cantankerous General Jubal Early to repel Hunter's advance and to continue on to threaten Washington. Early drives off Hunter, but Grant sends the Sixth Corps to defend Washington, and Early's force is too weak to be a threat. In Petersburg, Southern General P.G.T. Beauregard successfully defends the city from overwhelming forces, and Federal General Hancock's arrival has little effect due to confusing battlefield orders. Despite the Federal failure to take the city, the communication line between Petersburg and Richmond is severed, and Lee is given the priority task of defending Petersburg, "... the last great lifeline of their country."

Chamberlain feels the failed assault of Petersburg is a result of a lack of initiative by Federal commanders. He watches as Lee's men arrive and begin filling in the defensive positions. His unit is ordered forward and is positioned in clear view and range of the enemy artillery. He is ordered to attack, and tries to coordinate with General Cutler, but is rebuffed with arrogance. During his charge, the promised support from Cutler and others never arrives. While rallying his troops, Chamberlain is shot through both hips. As he slips into unconsciousness, he sees the men he rallied moving forward, but not the eventual failure of the attack.

Grant realizes the attack failed because Meade is not giving coordinating orders to all his commanders. Lincoln arrives and reports he has been renominated, but is opposed by a party supporting peace. He keeps his promise to allow Grant to command without interference, but stresses that victory is crucial. Chamberlain is taken to Annapolis to recover. Fannie, his wife, joins him there. Chamberlain is informed that he was believed killed and was promoted, posthumously, by Grant to Brigadier General for meritorious effort and gallant conduct.

In the West, Johnston has been replaced by John Bell Hood, and Grant is glad because he knows Hood will foolishly try and face Sherman's superior numbers directly and will be defeated. Grant's men are entrenched about 400 yards from the defensive perimeter of Petersburg. General Burnside proposes a plan to allow a unit of coal miners from Pennsylvania to tunnel underneath the Confederate defenses and ignite a dynamite charge. In the ensuing chaos, his unit of black volunteers will lead an assault and break the perimeter. Despite the fact that they had been training for the assault, Grant orders the inexperienced black unit to instead support a white unit of veterans who will go in first. This proves costly because the veteran units, untrained in the logistics of this unusual assault, rush blindly ahead and become trapped in the crater left by the explosion. The black troops push forward and also become trapped. The Confederates, enraged by the

presence of black troops, slaughter all the soldiers in the hole. The losses total around 4,000 men. Grant is furious when he learns that General Burnside chose an inept man to lead the assault by drawing names out of a hat and resolves to soon relieve him of command.

Lee receives word that Hood has lost Atlanta to Sherman. General Ewell is defending Richmond with a small amount of Home Guard, but the Federal threat there has been small. Lee understands that they do not really want Richmond, but the small attacks have forced him to send more men there to help with defense, and his own line is severely stretched over 26 miles. The federal advance has moved West and taken the Weldon Railroad, cutting off yet another Confederate supply line to Petersburg. Lee's main hope is that Jubal Early still controls the fertile Shenandoah Valley and the supply line from the Virginia Central Railroad. But the federal commander David Hunter is replaced by Phil Sheridan's cavalry. Lee considers suggesting they abandon Richmond, and is frustrated that he must sit still while Grant's enormous army surrounds him.

By November, 1864, Grant sees his plan to stretch Lee out is working. In the Shenandoah Valley, Sheridan's cavalry defeats Early and begin methodically destroying the valley's ability to send Lee supplies. Grant then receives word that Lincoln has been reelected and knows now the war will continue to the end.

Lee also receives the news of Lincoln's reelection and knows there will be no early peace. Longstreet has returned, but his right arm is paralyzed. Lee sends him to help defend Richmond. Lee's goal now is to defend the last supply line to Petersburg, the Southside Railroad below the Appomattox River. By early December, he receives word that Hood has also been defeated at Nashville and the Federals control another crucial railroad hub. Many Confederates are deserting for food, and the besieged civilians of Petersburg supply what they can to serve Lee's army a Christmas dinner.

The armies have settled in for the winter, and Grant receives word that Sherman has captured Savannah for Christmas. Sherman is secretly ordered to move North, hiding his movements by forgoing supply lines and supplying himself as he goes from the land. His march North is reported in the papers as barbaric, that he is raping the land. Grant hears this and considers that they have all become barbaric to achieve their objectives, even the Southerners. The South has employed the use of mines to defend Richmond and Savannah and mines kill with brutal anonymous efficiency. Grant understands this is yet another way that war has changed.

In February a delegation of Southern politicians meet with Lincoln to discuss their terms of surrender, but still insist on secession. Lincoln refuses their terms and orders Grant to ignore any more peace offerings and to concentrate only on defeating Lee's army.

Lee, desperate for supplies, men, and experienced commanders, sends for Johnston and by March, many of the scattered forces of the Confederates have come together under him. Their plan is to trap Sherman in the swamp lands of the Carolinas and hurt him enough to draw Grant away to help. Lee has spread his defenses around Petersburg over 40 miles. General George Pickett arrives and is chilly towards Lee. He blames Lee for the devastation of his troops at Gettysburg. Lee, in return, feels Pickett has lost the will to command, but he is desperately needed. Lee receives word that Sherman has captured the Port of Wilmington and Johnston can do little to stop his force of 100,000 men.

General John Gordon suggests a plan to Lee to execute a lightning night raid on one of Grant's forward battery positions called Fort Stedman. Then, using captured Federal guns to support their advance, isolate Grant's left flank, and force him to pull back to City Point so Lee will be able to shorten his defensive lines. The plan begins well, and Fort Stedman is quickly captured, but en route to capture the next forts, Gordon's men get lost in the dark and the Federals quickly reinforce and drive them off. The failed assault costs the Confederates 4,000 men.

Sheridan has defeated Early in the Shenandoah valley, capturing most of his army, and cutting off more Confederate supply and communication links. Grant plans to send him West to prevent Lee from escaping, joining up with Joe Johnston's men, and prolonging the war. Sherman arrives, and he and Grant dine with Lincoln. Afterwards, Sherman confesses that he has changed his opinion of Lincoln, now respects him for being a forward thinker instead of a "bumpkin." Grant acknowledges that Lincoln is the only leader with the forethought to recognize that, after the war, the South will require forgiveness instead of punishment. He informs Sherman of his final plan to end the war.

At the end of March, Chamberlain, still recovering from his hip wounds, returns to command the First Brigade, First Division, Warren's Fifth Corps. They follow Sheridan's cavalry West and arrive at Gravelly Run. A large portion of Lee's army is entrenched across the creek. Chamberlain's men take the Confederate forward position and he notices how haggard the prisoners look. During battle

he ignores the officer's manual to stay 150 yards behind the line and rallies his men to repulse a Confederate charge. General Griffin arrives and informs him they must take White Oak Road and force the Rebels to fall back to defend the Southside Railroad, Petersburg's last line of supply. Chamberlain's 1,700 men must take the position from 4,000 heavily entrenched Confederates and hold out long enough for support to arrive and Griffin to get his artillery in position. They charge and soon the fighting is hand to hand. Fresh Confederates arrive and they are driven back. Chamberlain is thrown from his horse and knocked unconscious. He awakens and Griffin informs him that the men are holding the line, but the Confederates are reinforcing on their right. He returns to the fight and finds himself so far forward that he is surrounded by the enemy. He is so unrecognizable, covered in mud and blood, that he convinces them he is a Confederate officer and leads them in a charge towards his own men where they are captured. Griffin arrives with his artillery and the Confederates retreat to another, stronger defensive position. The Federal opportunity to flank Lee is gone, and Chamberlain realizes now they must assault him directly rather than surround him to cut off the Southside Railroad supply.

Though Lee's men retreat, they still control crucial positions along the White Oak Road. Pickett has linked up with Fitz Lee's cavalry, held Sheridan off at the Five Forks crossroads and now enjoys a strong defensive position. But Lee feels that Pickett failed in an opportunity to defeat Sheridan's cavalry. Lee figures Grant has 80,000 men, double his own force, and Johnston can barely muster 13,000 men to face Sherman's force of 60,000. Longstreet is wasted holding Richmond with a small force, and Lee needs him desperately. He sends word to Pickett to hold Five Forks and protect the Southside Railroad "... at all hazards."

Chamberlain and General Griffin join Sheridan to assault Pickett's strong defenses at Five Forks, the right flank of Lee's army. A mistake on the map causes General Crawford to march forward, missing Pickett's line on the right. Sheridan encounters Chamberlain in the confusion and, impressed by his aggressiveness, orders him into Pickett's flank. Following Sheridan's orders, Chamberlain takes control of General Gwynn's men, who are without orders. He orders them forward and they begin firing into General Sheridan's men, who are in the wrong place. Sheridan is furious, but Chamberlain stands up to him and prevails as the Union soldiers take the Rebel works. The fight breaks down into more confusion and Chamberlain organizes the men near him and leads them to victory. The Confederates retreat directly into Crawford's men, who have swung left to correct their mistake, and Lee's right flank is crushed.

By April 2, Longstreet has rejoined Lee, leaving Richmond's defense again to Ewell and a small force of Home Guard. The defeat at Five Forks stretches Lee's lines even further, making them vulnerable to any point Grant wishes to attack. Lee's camp is threatened in an unexpected attack that breaks their line. General A.P. Hill rides forward to investigate and is killed by two lost Federal soldiers. Grant is attacking all along the line and Lee is forced to order the evacuation of Petersburg and move North across the Appomattox river. Lee's objective is to gather the scattered remnants of his forces at the railroad depot at Amelia Court House, 45 miles away. There, they can resupply and take the railroad South to link up with Joe Johnston, Ewell, and the rest of Longstreet's men. He plans to move them towards North Carolina and force Grant to pursue, then strike him when he is vulnerable. The march to Amelia is brutal on Lee's starving army, and only the thought of food keeps them moving.

Grant pursues Lee. He receives word that Richmond has been taken, that it was abandoned and nearly deserted. He is informed that Lee has set up defenses at Amelia, but he chooses to circle around Lee and cut off his escape rather than fight.

By April 6, Lee needs to reach Danville to both feed his army and use the railroad to escape, but Sheridan's cavalry is blocking his path. Lee cannot break Sheridan's line and heads South, hoping to either circumvent Sheridan and reach Danville, or escape on the only part of the Southside Railroad not in Federal hands. He receives word that the new quartermaster has sent their food to Farmville, only 18 miles away. Lee finds himself in a race with the Federal cavalry for Farmville, his last hope. He is attacked from behind by Sheridan's cavalry, and a mistake by Ewell results in his capture and 8,000 Confederates are cut off and lost. The front of Lee's line reach Farmville, and Lee plans to burn the High Bridge over the Appomattox river behind them to slow Grant. But Grant's pursuit is too close and the men assigned to burn the bridge fail. As the Confederates are lining up for their first meal at Farmville, the trains pull away to avoid capture by the advancing Federals. Grant sends a request for Lee's surrender, but Lee decides to try and meet the trains at the next station, Appomattox.

Chamberlain, riding with Grant's army in pursuit of Lee, receives orders to march through the night and meet Sheridan's army at Appomattox by sunrise.

On April 8, Lee arrives at Appomattox at midnight, only to find Sheridan's cavalry already there. He feels they can break the cavalry and prepares to attack at dawn.

The next morning, Chamberlain arrives as Sheridan's men are engaged and Sheridan orders him to, "Smash 'em to hell!" He leads his men forward and they break through, only to find nearly all southern resistance gone.

On April 9, Lee accepts Grant's request for surrender and they arrange to meet at Appomattox Court House. Grant, impressed by constant reports of his bravery, chooses Chamberlain to receive the surrendered arms of Lee's men. On April 12, as Lee's men surrender their arms, Chamberlain orders his men to "Carry Arms," in a show of respect. General Gordon respectfully returns the salute. Lee observes the surrender of his army and orders his men to also accept the terms.

On April 14, back in Washington, Lincoln is pleased and invites Grant to attend the theater with him that evening. Grant declines, dining with his wife instead. He receives word that Lincoln has been assassinated and Grant understands that the last great hope for post war healing has died.

Part Four: Chapters 56-58: September 1870—Spring 1913

Lee returns to become President of Washington College. On September 28, 1870 he sits to dinner with his family and suffers a stroke. On October 12, 1870, he passes away.

By 1885, after his unsuccessful presidency, Grant is stricken with throat cancer. He endeavors to finish his memoirs for his publisher and friend, Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) who visits him frequently. The legacy he strives to convey in his writing is for lasting peace.

In 1913, Chamberlain returns to the battlefield at Gettysburg one final time to attend the 50th anniversary of the battle. He visits Little Round Top alone, missing his wife Fannie who has died. He falls ill before he can attend the reunion and returns to Maine. He dies in 1914, six months before the outbreak of World War I, as armies all over the world encounter the newer, efficient technology of war.

• discussion and writing

for activity/discussion/comprehension

The following assignments are designed to appeal to all types of teaching and learning styles, but are particularly constructed with Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences in mind. They can be mixed and matched or adapted for use in any combination.

verbal-linguistic

- A. Assume the role of a newspaper reporter from either Washington or Richmond. Prepare an interview of questions you would ask Lee or Grant following the war. Use material from the book as a basis for their answers. Compose a newspaper article reporting on the conclusion of the war for either a Washington or Richmond audience.
- B. Write a script dramatizing the surrender at Appomattox. Try and capture and express the emotions of all present.

mathematical

- A. Logically sequence Grant's defeat of Lee. Use numbers, percentages, and/or maps to support your reasoning.
- B. Graph federal and Confederate losses per battle in the novel. Use information given or research your own.
- C. Compose a detailed Venn Diagram using the Federal and Confederate armies, Lee and Grant, or any two pieces of data from the novel. Use the results to compose an essay discussing the similarities and/or differences of your subject.

kinesthetic

- A. With a partner, assume any of the following roles: Lee and Grant, Lincoln and Davis, Chamberlain and Gordon, Julia Grant and either Fannie Chamberlain or Mary Lee, or an original pairing from the novel. Debate or discuss the war or specific battles from your character's viewpoints.
- B. On a large floor map, recreate the cities and states in which the novel's events occurred. Sherman's battles should be included. Use students to represent Federal and Confederate forces and recreate, in order, the progression of the war from Gettysburg to Appomattox.

visual/spatial

- A. Create a trivia, strategy, or card game that will help students remember the characters in the novel or review for a test.
- B. In any medium, illustrate, sketch, paint, or sculpt a detailed key scene or scenes from the novel.

musical

- A. Compose a ballad related to people or events in the novel. Research music from the Civil War era for inspiration.
- B. Select a battle or event from the novel. Imagine you are a filmmaker and composer. Storyboard the event(s) you would film and score the scene(s). Find or compose musical selections that capture or evoke the emotions that would be present in your film.

interpersonal

- A. Explore the Civil War via Gordon's Conflict Management Process (below). Split the class into groups. Assign each group the following tasks to research and discuss.

Compare results:

1. Identify and define the MAJOR conflict of the war.
2. Brainstorm possible solutions.
3. Discuss and debate the potential solutions
4. Select the best or most practical solution.
5. Develop a plan, implement the solution.
6. Accept suggestions from the class to modify the solution.

intrapersonal

- A. Students should find the meanings of each of the following values: ALTRUISM, HUMILITY, COURAGE, JUSTICE, DETERMINATION, LOYALTY, EMPATHY, INTERDEPENDENCE, DIGNITY, MERCY, TOLERANCE, COMPASSION, RESPECT, FAITHFULNESS, HONOR, BARBARISM.
Students then select characters from the novel and report on how they embody one or more of the values. Consider the female characters and their roles as well.
- B. Before reading the novel, students can read the descriptions of the characters in the introduction and select one they feel is most like them. They are to keep a journal as they read recording their feelings about and reactions to what occurs to their character or what their characters do.

naturalist

- A. Have the class create a Civil War museum. Groups or individuals can create displays that instruct viewers about items, places, or events. Students can act as guides for other classes.
Each display should include:
 - A definition or explanation.
 - An explanation of its relevance to people, places, or events.
 - A discussion of the display's connection to today's society.
- B. Students or groups can select a battle and explain or report on how the following affected the battle's outcome: TIME, ENVIRONMENT, PARTICIPANTS, ACTION, MOTIVES. Groups or individuals can then discuss or compare common elements.

for composition/discussion topics

1. Compare/contrast the characters and strategies of Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant. Consider the outside forces affecting them as well.
2. Discuss and support your opinion of what the three major events were that determined either the Southern loss or the Northern victory.
3. Write an essay explaining the roles of Lincoln and Davis and their impact on the outcome of the war according to the novel.
4. Which character from the novel is most/least admirable? Support your decision with specific examples from the novel.
5. Discuss how the presence of the black soldiers in the war differed from the whites. Include consideration of how their motives for fighting may be different, how they were used and regarded, and the consequences they would face if captured.

6. Compare and contrast the roles of Julia Grant, Fannie Chamberlain, and Mary Lee in their husband's lives and their relationship to the war.
7. Examine and discuss the moral dilemmas faced by characters in the novel. Support your ideas with specific examples from the novel of civilized men performing barbaric acts.

→ beyond the book

additional Resources

In his Acknowledgments on pages xiii to xv, Jeff Shaara lists his sources which students can utilize for additional insight.

A compelling, funny, controversial examination of the lingering effects of the American Civil War, and fascinating little known facts can be found in:

Horwitz, Tony. *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*. New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, Inc., 1998.

Horwitz's book is an excellent exclamation point on any study of the Civil War, as well as a great starting point for further exploration of many of the themes the conflict embodied.

The internet offers supplemental material on the Civil War too numerous to mention. However, it should be noted that sites with web addresses ending in .edu or .org are the most reliable.

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