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Transcript



[Episode 2: A Very Bloody Affair](#) from PBS (Public Broadcasting Service, 1990) 68:03.

transcript

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David McCullough At the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., the poet Julia Ward Howe awoke from a spectacular dream. That day she had heard a New England regiment singing on parade and had fallen asleep with the song, John Brown's Body, ringing in her head. Now in the dark, she got up and scribbled out the words with a pencil stub. She sold her poem to the Atlantic Monthly for four dollars. It became the anthem of the Union.

JULIA WARD HOWE Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored. He has loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword. His truth is marching on.

THE CIVIL WAR EPISODE TWO

David McCullough By 1862, Russia had emancipated the serfs. In France, Victor Hugo published *Les Misérables*. Jean Bernard Foucault measured the speed of light. In America, the United States passed the first national income tax to pay for war. The Gatling gun was invented and war itself was changing. The shocking casualties of Bull Run and Wilson's Creek were dwarfed by battle after battle. And now, there were new questions. Would the North strength be offset by incompetence and low morale? Would England side with cotton in the South? Who would control the Mississippi? For a year, the nation, now two nations, had torn itself apart. From a bloodless duel over a man-made island in Charleston Harbor, the war had spread along a thousand mile line. From Manassas, Virginia to Shanghai, Missouri and beyond. As 1862 began, over a million men were massing for war. In a fierce struggle for Tennessee, the people of Clarksville on the Cumberland found themselves prisoners in their own homes. Far north of any fighting, the people of Deer Isle, Maine suffered too, with sad news from places most of them had never heard of. By the end of the war, the little town of Winchester, Virginia had changed hands 72 times. Sam Watkins, a Confederate private, would see his first big battle in April on the banks of the Tennessee. Elisha Hunt Rhodes, a clerk from Providence, Rhode Island, would celebrate his 20th birthday in a Union camp. Union General George McClellan, the idol of his troops, would fashion a mighty army and lead it south towards Richmond where Robert E. Lee was waiting. "The struggle of today," Lincoln told Congress, "is not altogether for today. It is for a vast future also." Now in this, its second year, the war was becoming a struggle over the future of freedom.

SHELBY FOOTE Writer

Shelby Foote It really is one those, uhm, one of those watershed things. It was a huge chasm between the beginning and the end of the war. The nation had come face-to-face with, ah, a dreadful tragedy and we reacted the way a family would do with the dreadful tragedy. Ah, it was almost inconceivable that anything that horrendous could happen. You must remember that casualties in the Civil War battles were so far beyond anything we can imagine now. If we had 10 percent casualties in a battle today it would be looked on as a bloodbath. They had 30 percent in several battles. And one after another you see.

1862 A Very Bloody Affair

Elisha Hunt Rhodes This afternoon, seeing the general alone in the office, I stepped up to him and said, "General, I want to go home." "Want to go home and for what?" he replied. As I could not think of an excuse I blurted out, "I want to see my mother." "Is she sick?" he asked. "No," I replied, "I hope not." He then asked me, "How long since I left home and if I was ever away for so long a time before?" I told him, "I had been in the service seven months and never been away from home alone before." "Well," said the general, "you have been a good boy and you shall have a furlough for 10 days." Elisha Hunt Rhodes.

Sam Watkins I always shot at privates. It was they that did the shootin' and killin'. And if I could kill or wound a private, why my chances were so much the better. I always looked on officers as harmless personages. Sam Watkins.

David McCullough The commander of Sam Watkins' Company H was Captain William R. Johnston. His immediate superior was Colonel George Maney of the First Tennessee. From there, the Confederate chain of command ascended through Colonel William H. Stevens of the Second Brigade to General Benjamin Cheatham, commander of the Second Division of General Leonidas Polk's First Army Corps then to General Albert Sidney Johnston, commander of the Army of the Mississippi. Above that to War Secretary, George W. Randolph. Finally, to Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America. For one Union soldier, the chain of command ascended from President Lincoln, Secretary of War, Simon Cameron, and General McClellan, commander of the Army of the Potomac to General Erasmus Keyes, commander of the Union Fourth Corps. General Darius N. Couch of Couch's Brigade to Colonel Frank Wheaton, commander of the Second Rhode Island Volunteers and finally to Private Elisha Hunt Rhodes.

Elisha Hunt Rhodes January 31, 1862. Mud. Mud. Mud. I'm thinking of starting a steamboat line to run on Pennsylvania Avenue between our office and the Capitol. Will the mud never dry so the army can move?

George Templeton Strong Of all the detestable places, Washington is the first. Crowd, heat, bad quarters, bad fare, bad smells, mosquitoes, and the plague of flies transcending everything within my experience. Beelzebub surely reigns here and Willard's Hotel is his temple. George Templeton Strong.

Shelby Foote Throughout Lincoln's presidency and this is true to most presidents, he was fairly running crazy about office secrets especially at the start when his campaign managers had promised jobs to a great many people who came to collect them. And one man saw him one day and he looked particularly worried and the man said, "What's the matter, Mr. President?" And Lincoln said,

"There's too many pigs for the teats."

Politics

David McCullough Abraham Lincoln's problems were not confined to fighting rebels alone. The President's unwieldy cabinet included former conservative Whigs, free-soil Whigs, and Union Democrats. Four had been his rivals for the Republican presidential nomination nearly all were privately sure they could do a better job than their chief. Secretary of State William H. Seward hoped to replace Lincoln. Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase wanted to replace Seward. Mary Todd told her husband to get rid of both of them. Instead, Lincoln fired War Secretary, Simon P. Cameron, a Pennsylvania boss so corrupt said Lincoln, that the only thing he wouldn't steal was a red hot stove. The new Secretary of War was Edwin M. Stanton, an able, ruthless war Democrat from Ohio, who worried about what he believed to be Lincoln's painful imbecility. On one thing, the cabinet was agreed: General George McClellan was not moving fast enough against the Confederates. "The Army," Secretary of War Stanton said, "has got to fight or run away. The champagne and oysters on the Potomac must be stopped."

George McClellan Dear Ellen, I can't tell you how disgusted I am becoming with these wretched politicians. They are most despicable set of men. Seward is a meddling, officious, incompetent little puppy. The president is nothing more than a well-meaning baboon. George McClellan.

David McCullough The president pored over military books, asked officers for advice, and in exasperation suggested that if General McClellan does not want to use the Army, I would like to borrow it for a time. Finally, he ordered McClellan to move on Manassas Junction and then proceed over land to take Richmond. But McClellan would not move and took to his bed with a fever. McClellan did not want to fight the vast Confederate Army, he had convinced himself, now occupied Northern Virginia. Instead, he proposed to float his army to Fortress Monroe, at the tip of the finger of land between the James and York Rivers. Then race up to peninsula to seize the Confederate capital.

[sil.]

David McCullough Impatient for any action, Lincoln agreed. McClellan would move in mid-March. It has been eight months since the Northern Army had crawled back into Washington after Bull Run.

Joseph Medill February 9th, 1862. Dear Mr. President, General McClellan has almost ruined your administration and the country. He is a do-nothing. He is thinking of the presidency in '64. He is placating the rebels. That's what ails him. Depend upon it. Joseph Medill.

Abraham Lincoln What shall I do? The people are impatient. Chase has no money and tells me he can raise no more. The general of the Army, McClellan, has typhoid fever. The bottom is out of the tub. What shall I do?

George McClellan Washington. Dear Ellen, I went to the White House shortly after tea where I found the original gorilla about as intelligent as ever. What a specimen to be at the head of our affairs now. George McClellan.

David McCullough In the midst of all his troubles, the President delighted in his sons. The oldest, Robert, was away at Harvard, but Willie, 11, and eight-year-old, Thomas, known as Tad, had the run of the White House. Willie was studious, liked to compose verse and memorize railroad timetables. He'd raised a boy's battalion from among his schoolmates and invaded cabinet meetings with his troops. In February, he developed what the doctor called bilious fever. His parents sat up night after night to nurse him. On February 20th, Willie died. For three months, Mary Lincoln veered between loud weeping and silent depression and start to communicate with her dead child through spiritualists.

Mary Todd Lincoln If I had not felt the spur of necessity urging me to cheer Mr. Lincoln, whose grief was as great as my own, I could never have smiled again.

David McCullough The war left Lincoln little time to mourn. He was soon back working 18 hours a day.

Ironclads

As she came plowing through the water, she looked like a huge half-submerged crocodile and her prow, I could see the iron ram projecting straightforward.

David McCullough The Confederacy had begun the war with no navy whatsoever. But by the fall of 1861, Confederate engineers were bolting iron plates to the hull of the steam frigate, Merrimack, building a warship more powerful than anything the Union had. News of the monster quickly reached the north. Secretary of War Stanton feared she would steam up the Potomac and shell the White House. There was probably only one man in America who could stop the Merrimack, and he was mad at the Navy. The Swedish-born inventor, John Ericsson was proud, vain, and cranky, and felt he had been cheated out of payment for services to the government years before. But when Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, begged him to do something to stop the Merrimack, Ericsson came up with an extraordinary design. His ship would have only two guns to the Merrimack's 10. But they would be mounted on a revolving turret. And though his vessel would be made entirely of iron, Ericsson assured everybody that the sea shall ride over her and she shall live in it like a duck. Professional Navy men dismissed the plan, but Lincoln overruled them. In just 100 days later, on January 30th, 1862, Ericsson's ship slid into Manhattan's East River. He called her the Monitor and there had never been anything like her. The single vessel contain 47 patentable inventions.

We ran first to the New York side and then to Brooklyn and then so back and forth across the river like a drunken man on a sidewalk. We found she would not answer her rudder at all.

David McCullough Once at sea, water spilled in. Ventilators failed. The ship filled with gas, her crew began to faint, but the Monitor kept limping south. Four hundred miles away off the coast of Virginia, the Merrimack was waiting. Saturday, March 8th was wash day for the Union fleet in Hampton Roads, Virginia. Laundry was drying on the rigging of the Union warships when the Confederate, Merrimack, headed straight for the USS Cumberland. The Cumberland opened fire but the shots bounced harmlessly off the Merrimack's side. The Confederate ship rammed the Cumberland then stood in so close, their muzzles almost touched. The Cumberland sank in shallow water. The Merrimack went on to set the USS Congress afire. Drove the USS Minnesota around then drew back for the night. For one day, the Confederate Navy ruled the sea. At one o'clock that morning, the crew of the battered Minnesota saw a strange looking ship crawl up alongside them in

the darkness.

Close alongside the Minnesota, there was a craft such as the eyes of a seaman never looked upon before. An immense shingle floating on the water with a gigantic cheese box rising from its center. No sails, no wheels, no smokestack, no guns. What could it be? The Monitor had arrived. The next morning the epic battle of ironclads began.

[sil.]

David McCullough Hull to hull, the two ships hammered away at each other so close they collided five times as the men inside, half blind with smoke loaded and fired.

[sil.]

David McCullough After four and a half hours, the Merrimack drew off. It was her only fight. Two months later, rather than surrender their ship, the Confederates blew her up when they were forced out of Norfolk. Both sides set to work building more ironclads while Europe watched in worried fascination. From the moment, the two ships open fired that Sunday morning, every other navy on Earth was obsolete.

Lincolmites

General Grant habitually wears an expression as if he had determined to drive his head through a brick wall and was about to do it.

David McCullough The year 1862 would introduce two great forces into the war, unspeakable slaughter and Ulysses S. Grant. While McClellan hesitated in Washington, Grant, back in the field after months of desk duty, won two crucial victories out west. Launching simultaneous attacks by land and water, he took first Fort Henry on the Tennessee River. Then Fort Donelson on the Cumberland, where he issued an ultimatum to the Confederate commander. No terms except unconditional and immediate surrender

[sil.]

David McCullough The Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers were now in Union hands. The Confederates have been driven from Kentucky. Dozens of southern towns were now occupied by Union troops. In less than a year, Grant had gone from clerk to Union hero. News stories described him coolly, smoking under fire. An admirer shipped him barrels of cigars. A delighted northern public now thought they knew what the initials in his name stood for. They called him "unconditional surrender Grant." But before Grant's men marched into Fort Donelson, Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest slipped out of it, with 1,000 men. "I did not come here for the purpose of surrendering my command," he said. And led his troops, 75 miles through the snow to safety. Grant and the Union Army would meet Bedford Forrest again. After the Confederate defeat at Fort Donelson, the female academy in Stewart College at nearby Clarksville, Tennessee were converted to hospitals.

Nanny Haskins Sunday, the news came, such panic-stricken people were never before seen. The wounded were being brought up. The citizens were runnin'. There were already two hospitals here

which were filled with the sick. And they, poor fellows, crawling out from every piece, walkin', going on horseback and wagons. Nanny Haskins.

David McCullough The Union Army was right behind the wounded. They met no resistance. A white flag flew above tiny Fort Defiance, west of town when Mayor Smith came out to inform the Union Commander that the Confederate Army had retreated to Nashville. Farmer John Barker wrote in his diary that there were nothing but Lincolmites throughout the county. And uneasy federal occupation of Clarksville began.

SHELBY FOOTE Writer

Shelby Foote Early in the war, some, ah, a Union squad closed down on a single ragged Confederate, and he, obviously, didn't know any slaves, he couldn't have much interested in, in the Constitution or anything else. And said, "What are you fighting for anyhow?" they asked him. And he said, "I'm fighting because you're down here." Which is pretty satisfactory answer.

The Peninsula

David McCullough On April 4th, George McClellan at last began to move for Richmond. One hundred and twenty-one thousand five hundred men, 14,592 horses and mules, 1,150 wagons, 44 batteries of artillery, ambulances, pontoon bridges, tons of provisions, tents, telegraph wire. It took 400 boats, three weeks to land it all at Fortress Monroe on the Virginia Coast.

A. M. Stewart The whole region seems literally filled with soldiery. One of the finest armies ever marshaled on the globe, now wakes up these long stagnant fields and woods. General McClellan is here and commands in person. Reverend A. M. Stewart.

George McClellan I am to watch over you as a parent over his children. And you know that your general loves you from the depths of his heart. It should be my care to gain success with the least possible loss.

David McCullough But at Yorktown, less than 20 miles away, the Confederates waited, vastly outnumbered, but determined to defend their homes and hurl back the invaders. For the North, it was slow going. Roads said to be bone dry were bogs. Union officers forced to rely on store-bought maps lost their way. Finally on April 5th, the advanced guard reached Yorktown where the Confederates had taken over the building used by Lord Cornwallis' headquarters during the Revolutionary War.

David McCullough There were just 11,000 southern troops dug in, not even a tenth of McClellan's force. But the Confederate commander was John Bankhead Magruder, a showy Virginian who loved amateur theatricals. He now outdid even himself to fool McClellan into believing that his small force was enormous, Magruder kept up a sporadic, wildly scattered artillery barrage, and paraded one battalion in and out of a clearing in an endless circle until it seemed to Union observers, a mighty host.

[sil.]

Edmund Patterson Corporal Edmund Patterson, 9th Alabama. This morning, we were called out by

the long road and had been traveling most of the day, seeming with no other view than to show ourselves to the enemy at its many different points of the line as possible. I'm pretty tired.

David McCullough "It seems clear that I shall have the whole force of the enemy on my hands," McClellan telegraphed Lincoln, "probably not less than 100,000 men and possibly more." McClellan called for reinforcements. General Joseph E. Johnston, the overall Confederate commander, could not believe his luck. "Nobody, but McClellan," he said, "could have hesitated to attack."

Abraham Lincoln Once more, let me tell you. It is indispensable to you that you strike a blow. I have never written to you or spoken to you in greater kindness than now, nor with fuller purpose to sustain you, but you must act.

George McClellan The President very coolly telegraphed me that he thought I had better break the enemy's lines at once. I was much tempted to reply that he'd better come and do it himself. George McClellan.

I don't see the sense of pilin' up earth to keep us apart. If we don't get at each other sometime, when will the war end? My plan would be to quit ditchin' and go to fightin'.

David McCullough But McClellan chose to dig in.

[sil.]

David McCullough As he settled in for a siege of Yorktown, Union General Phil Kearny took to calling his commander, the Virginia creeper.

Shelby Foote During the Peninsula campaign, ah, McClellan has worked in his way up the York James Peninsula and he came to stream. And he and his staff was sitting there, wondering how deep it was if they had to march across it. And, ah, Custer who was a junior officer on his staff, just graduated from West Point, a captain, I think, rode out into midstream, sat his horse and turned around in the saddle and said to McClellan, "This is how deep it is, General."

Our Boy

I have seen him in the watch fires of a hundred circling camps. They have built him an altar in the evening dews and damps. I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps. His day is marching on.

A man's conceit dwindles when he crawls into an unteased shirt, trousers too short and baggy behind, coat too long at both ends and a cap as shapeless as a feedbag. A photograph of anyone of them, covered with yellow dust or mosaics of mud, could ornament any mantle, north or south as a true picture of our boy.

David McCullough North and south, the average soldier was five feet eight inches tall and weighed 143 pounds. His chance of dying in combat was one in 65; of being wounded, one in 10; one in 13 would die of disease. The average age of a soldier was 25. The minimum age for enlistment was 18. But recruiting officers were not particular. Drummer boys as young as nine signed on. There were

more than 100,000 soldiers in the Union Army who were not yet 15 years old. William Black was not yet 12 when he enlisted, shot in the left arm during battle. He was thought to be the youngest combat soldier wounded in the war.

A. M. Stewart Almost every known trade, profession or calling has its representatives in our regiment. Tailors, carpenters, masons and plasterers, molders, and glass blowers, paddlers, and rollers, machinists, and architects, printers, bookbinders, and publishers, gentlemen of leisure, politicians, merchants, legislators, judges, lawyers, doctors, preachers. Some malicious fellow might ask the privilege of completing the catalogue by naming jailbirds, idlers, loafers, drunkards, and gamblers. But we beg his pardon, and refused the license. All the appliances of home life which are possible are being introduced into our encampment. A weekly newspaper, a photographic establishment, a temperance league and a Christian association. We have a post office, letterbox, postmaster, and mail carrier. Our boys write vastly more letters than they receive. You can hardly imagine the eagerness with which the mailman has looked for, the delight on a reception of a letter. The sadness sometimes even to tears with which those who are disappointed turn away. Reverend A. M. Stewart.

David McCullough For the enlisted men, army life meant periods of tedium, punctuated by moments of extreme terror. It also meant long absences from family and home.

Benjamin Stubbs July, 1862. Tupelo, Mississippi. Dear sisters, I would be the gladdest person in the world to see you and talk with you awhile for I see nobody here but men and they appear to be very sour company. I think that I can enjoy myself at home better than anywhere else in the world. Benjamin Stubbs.

David McCullough For those officers who took their families with them to camp, life was somewhat better.

[sil.]

George Templeton Strong There has been a great battle indeed in the southwest, a conflict of two days, closely fought in with veering fortune and by great armies. It seems-

Shiloh

George Templeton Strong -entitled to a place among the first class battles of history. George Templeton Strong.

[sil.]

It was Fall in early April, the trees were leafed out and the roads were meandering cow pass. Nobody knew north from south, east from west. They'd never been in combat before, most of them, especially on the southern side. So, it was just a disorganized murderous fistfight of 100,000 men slamming away at each other.

David McCullough In early April, as McClellan continued to sit in front of Yorktown, 42,000 Union troops under General Ulysses S. Grant were encamped on the west side of the Tennessee River near Pittsburg Landing. Grant's invasion of Tennessee have practically cut the state in two.

And now, he was waiting for Don Carlos Buell's Army of the Ohio to join him. Their combined forces were then to plunge into the heart of Mississippi. But Buell was late and at Corinth, Mississippi, 22 miles away, the commander of the western department of the Confederate Army, Albert Sidney Johnston, saw no reason to wait. Their armies were still evenly matched, and he would attack and end Grant's invasion. "Tonight we will water our horses in the Tennessee," Johnston told his staff officers in the morning of April 6. The Confederates quietly moved toward the Union lines.

Leander Stillwell It was most beautiful morning. It really seem like Sunday in the country at home. The boys were scattered around camp, polishing and brightening their muskets and brushing up and cleaning their shoes, jackets, and trousers for inspection. Private Leander Stillwell.

David McCullough At the head of one Union division was William Tecumseh Sherman who had shaken off the melancholy that had sent him home the previous year. His Ohioans were encamped on a hill not far from a little log built Methodist church called Shiloh when the 6th Mississippi attacked.

And I saw men in gray and brown clothes running through the camp. And I saw something else too, something I'd never seen before, a godly sort of thing with red bars, a rebel flag.

Sam Watkins We were crowding 'em, one more charge and their lines waiver and break. They retreat in wild confusion. We were jubilant, and the officers could not curve the men to keep them in line. Sam Watkins.

David McCullough The battle extended along a three-mile front. The worst fighting was in the center where the rebels came on and on like "maddened demons," a Union soldier said.

Shelby Foote The generals didn't know their jobs; the soldiers didn't know their jobs. It was just pure determination to stand and fight and not retreat. And the bloodiness of it was just astounding to everyone. It also corrected a southern misconception which had said, one good southern soldier is worth 10 Yankee hirelings. We'd find out that wasn't true by a long shot.

David McCullough In the peach orchard, the federals lay flat beneath the blossoming trees, firing as the rebels came. Soft pink petals raining down on the living and the dead. By late morning, thousands of untried federal troops had seen enough. Most did not stop running until they reached the river, where almost 5,000 men cowered beneath the bluff. "We are sweeping the field," General Johnston told his second in command, Beauregard. "And I think, we shall press them to the river." Grant's back was to the Tennessee. There was no sign of Buell and nowhere else to go. But a thin federal line held in the center, Illinois and Iowa farm boys mostly, prone along a sunken road. Their commander, Benjamin Prentiss, understood the deadly seriousness of Grant's order to maintain that position at all cost. The Confederates launched a dozen massive assaults against what became known as the Hornet's Nest. Albert Sidney Johnston, himself, led the last charge.

Shelby Foote Ah, he came out of it with ah, a bits of his clothing, nicked all up, one boot sole shot in half and he flapped this. On, on horseback then he said, "They didn't tripped me up that time," and very soon after that they, they saw him reeled in the saddle and realized that he was hurt and someone said, "General, are you wounded?" And he said, "Yes, and I fear seriously." And he was shot behind the knee, in the femoral artery, I suppose, and bled to death. They saw blood coming

out of his boot. And he could have been easily saved with a tourniquet, but he had sent his, his surgeon off to take care of some federal prisoners.

[sil.]

Sam Watkins Advancing a little further, we saw General Albert Sidney Johnston, surrounded by his staff. We saw some little commotion among those who surrounded him, but we did not know at the time that he was dead. The fact was kept from the troops. Sam Watkins.

David McCullough The command of the Western Army now passed to General Beauregard.

Shelby Foote Ah, I often said that Johnston was looked on by many people at the time of Shiloh and especially before Shiloh while he was holding that line up in Kentucky as the South's number one field soldier. Jefferson Davis feared him as(ph) add and when he lost Albert Sidney Johnston, he said, "I realized our strongest pillar had been broken."

David McCullough Meanwhile, the center of the Union line bent back on itself, but would not break. The Confederates trained 62 cannon at point-blank range and opened fire. The Hornet's Nest exploded in a hail of splintered trees and shattered men. At 5:30, Prentiss and the 2,200 survivors of his division surrendered. They had held up the southern advance for nearly six hours and it was growing dark. Beauregard wired Jefferson Davis that he had won a complete victory. "I had General Grant just where I wanted him," he said, "and could finish him up in the morning."

[sil.]

David McCullough Everywhere wounded men lay in agony. Neither army had yet devised a system for gathering or caring for them on the field. Scores of wounded collapsed and died drinking from a mudhole near the peach orchard, staining the water red. It began to rain and flashes of lightning showed hogs feeding on the ungathered dead.

Some cried for water, others for someone to come and help them. I can hear what those poor fellows crying for water. God heard them where the heavens opened and the rain came.

David McCullough Grant spent that night beneath a tree rather than listen to the screams of the wounded men in his headquarters. It was there that Sherman found him. "Well, Grant," he said, "we've had the devil's own day, haven't we?" "Yes," said Grant, "Lick 'em tomorrow though."

Never to me was the sight of reinforcing legions so welcomed as on that Sunday evening when Buell's advanced column deployed on the bluffs of Pittsburg Landing.

David McCullough During the night, Buell's army finally arrived. The Union men marched to shores, a band played Dixie. At dawn, the Union force, now 70,000 strong drove into Beauregard's 30,000. The Confederates fell back, counterattacked, fell back again, and began to withdraw. The Union held the field. Covering the Confederate retreat was Nathan Bedford Forrest, who now turned to lead one last cavalry charge, headlong into the pursuing Northern Army.

Shelby Foote And he landed square in the main body of the Union troops. He was surrounded by one gray uniform and a sea of blue. And, ah, they began to holler, "Kill him! Kill the goddamn

rebel! Knock him off his horse." And one soldier did, ah, stick his, ah, rifle out in the far side and pull the trigger and lifted far as clear the saddle with the impact of the bullet, and Forrest, meantime, was slashing with his saber. His horse was kickin' and turnin', and Forrest sought him around and got him clear and took off, and they were shooting after him, so he reached down and grabbed one Union soldier and swung him up behind him on the crop of the horse to use as a shield. And when he got out of range, he threw the man off and rode back to join his command. That was the last shot fought in the Battle of Shiloh.

David McCullough The ground Grant said was so covered with dead that it would have been possible to walk across the clearing in any direction. Stepping on dead bodies without a foot touching the ground.

[sil.]

When the grave was ready, we placed the bodies therein too deep. All the monument reared to those brave men was aboard upon which I cut with my pocket knife the words "125 Rebels."

[sil.]

David McCullough Two thousand four hundred and seventy-seven men were killed at Shiloh. There were 23,000 casualties overall, more than all the American casualties in all previous American wars combined. And it was only the beginning.

Shelby Foote Shiloh had the same number of casualties as Waterloo, and yet when it was fought, there were another 20 Waterloos to follow. And Grant, shortly before Shiloh, said, "I consider this war practically over. They're ready to give up." And the day after Shiloh, he said, "I saw that it was gonna have to be a war of conquest if we were to win." Shiloh did that, and it sobered the nation up, softened all for into the realization that they had a very bloody affair on their hands, and it called for a huge reassessment of what this thing was gonna be.

David McCullough Years afterward, a Union veteran said, "The most a soldier could say of any fight was, 'I was worse scared than I was at Shiloh.'" Shiloh is a Hebrew word meaning "place of peace."

[sil.]

Henry Adams April 11th, 1862. I firmly believe that before many centuries more, science will be the master of man. The engines, he will have invented, will be beyond his strength to control. Someday, science shall have the existence of mankind and its power, and the human race commits suicide by blowing up the world. Henry Adams.

The Arts of Death

David McCullough The armies that U.S. Grant and George McClellan led were the best-equipped in history. The productive capacity and technical ingenuity of the North were now focused on weapons. And the Civil War would see the first railroad artillery, the first land mines and telescopic sites, the first military telegraphs. In 1862 alone, 240 patents were issued for military weapons. Lincoln was fascinated by new weaponry. He personally tested new rifles and ordered up 10 Union

repeating guns, forerunners of the machine gun. But he passed up a scheme to manufacture canoe-shaped footwear for walking on water and tactfully declined a herd of war elephants offered by the king of Siam.

Shelby Foote All had many crazy ideas, ah, along with some good ones, ah, who's one plan to use two cannon, each with a cannonball and the two cannonballs connected by a chain, and you would fire the two cannons at the same time and the balls would go out and the chain between them would just cut a swath through everything in the way. The trouble was one cannon, of course, went off before the other one which resulted that the ball went around in a circle from other cannon.

David McCullough The most important innovation of the whole war was the rifled musket along with the French refinement. Captain Claude Monet's new bullet, an inch-long lead slug that expanded into the barrel's rightful grooves and spun as it left the muzzle. The mini ball could kill at half a mile and was accurate at 250 yards, five times as far as any other one-man weapon. The age of the bayonet charge had ended, though most officers did not yet know it when the war began. And some had still not learned it when the war was over.

Shelby Foote It was brutal stuff. The reason for the high casualties is really quite simple. Their weapons were way ahead of the tactics. The rifle itself, it threw a 53-caliber soft lead bullet at a low muzzle velocity and when it hit, ah, the reason there were so many amputations, you got hit here, it didn't clip your bone the way the modern steel jacketed bullet does. You didn't have any bone from here to here; they had no choice but take your arm off. And you'll see pictures of the dead on the battlefield with their clothes in disarray as if someone had been going or rifling their bodies. That was the men themselves tearing their clothes up to see where the wound was, and then you're perfectly well, if they would got shot they die.

[sil.]

Ulysses S. Grant April 25th, 1862. Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee. Dear Julia, I'm no longer boss. General Halleck is here and I'm truly glad of it. I hope the papers will let me alone in the future. If the papers only knew how little ambition I have, I started putting down this rebellion and getting back once more to live quietly and unobtrusively with my family. I think they would say fewer falses. Ulysses S. Grant.

David McCullough Ulysses S. Grant's reward for the costly Union victory at Shiloh was to be removed from field command. Grant's superior was General Henry Wager Halleck, a calculating administrator who was jealous of Grant's success and anxious to get rid of his chief rival. After the Battle of Fort Donelson, he spread rumors Grant was drinking. After the fearful losses at Shiloh, he had Grant reassigned. Grant decided to quit but his friend William Tecumseh Sherman talked him out of it. "You could not be quiet at home for a week," he said, "when armies are moving." Grant and Sherman were both Ohio boys and West Pointers who were fond of cigars, scorned pomp and politics, and had fared poorly in civilian life. Grant enjoyed Sherman's rapid fire brilliance and was grateful for the dispatch with which he carried out every order. Sherman admired his friend's cool temper, his steadiness in the midst of crisis, in what he called Grant's simple faith in success. They trusted each other.

William Tecumseh Sherman I'm a damn sight smarter than Grant. I know more about organizations, supply and administration, and about everything else than he does. But I'll tell you where he beats

me and where he beats the world, he don't care damn for what the enemy does out of his sight, but it scares me like hell. William Tecumseh Sherman.

[sil.]

Frederick Douglass Any attempt now to separate the freedom of the slave from the victory of the government, any attempt to secure peace of the Whites while leaving the Blacks in chains, will be labor lost. The American people and the government at Washington may refuse to recognize it for a time, but the inexorable logic of events will force it upon them in the end. That the war now being waged in this land is a war for and against slavery. Frederick Douglass.

David McCullough Letter by letter, speech by speech, month after month, Frederick Douglass tirelessly lobbied the government in Washington, urging Lincoln to emancipate the slaves. But the president still insisted the war was being fought for Union, and publicly avoided Douglass and the debate.

Our servant friend tell us the North is fighting for Negroes. Our Union friend says they're not fighting for the Negroes but for the Union. Very well. Let the Whites fight for what they want, we Negroes fight for what we want. Liberty must take the day, nothing shorter. We care nothin' about the Union. We've been in it, slaves over 250 years.

[sil.]

William Tecumseh Sherman Whatever nation gets the control of the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri Rivers, will control the continent. William Tecumseh Sherman.

David McCullough Out west, Union naval strategy was straightforward, seized control of the Mississippi and cut the Confederacy in two. On April 7th, Union gun boats and 2,000 troops took the Confederate fortress of Island Number Ten near New Madrid, Missouri, leaving the river open as far south as Memphis.

[sil.]

David McCullough Two months later, Memphis fell.

[sil.]

David McCullough On the night of April 24th, a 60-year-old flag officer, David G. Farragut, started north up to Mississippi, intent on capturing New Orleans. But first, he had to get by the heavy guns at Forts Jackson and St. Philips, 70 miles below the city. When the moon rose, the Confederates opened fire and sent blazing rafts drifting into the Union fleet.

[sil.]

David McCullough The first vessel was hit 42 times. Farragut's own flagship was set on fire. But somehow, the entire fleet made it past the forts. New Orleans surrendered the next day. Farragut had the American flag raised over city hall.

Mary Chesnut New Orleans gone, and with it the Confederacy, are we not cut in two? That Mississippi ruins us, if lost. Mary Chesnut.

James Jackson To blow Mississippi, I don't know how the war will be decided if England and France don't interfere and stop the war, and if the Confederacy has to gain her independence by fighting. I'm afraid she will have to give it up for there are so few provisions in this portion of the Confederacy. James Jackson.

David McCullough In the following months, Farragut's fleet gained control of the Southern Mississippi as far north as Baton Rouge and Natchez. But the North did not possess the whole river, the Confederate's stronghold at Vicksburg still held.

Republics

Mary Chesnut Republics, everybody joined, everybody putting their mouths(ph) and nothing sacred. All confusion and babble, Republics can't carry on war, "Hurrah, for a strong one-man government." Mary Chesnut.

[sil.]

David McCullough From the southern White House in Richmond, Jefferson Davis struggled to keep the war effort on track. Southern industry grew, driven by necessity. The Confederate Government founded on the principle of decentralization, found itself controlling everything, from the forging of cannon at the big Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, to the daily output of the women who spun cloth for uniforms in their parlors. In Charleston, Mary Chesnut's circle knit socks for Stonewall Jackson's entire brigade. Women wove boots from palmetto fronds and save their yarn from which to distill niter for gunpowder. Southerners grew poppies to yield opium and made coffee from corn and peas; hypodermic needles from thorns; rope from Spanish moss. But the Confederate Army was shrinking. The term of enlistment for the earliest volunteers was up in the Spring. Most men plan to go home. In April, at the insistence of Jefferson Davis, the Confederate Congress passed two laws; one extended all enlistments for the duration, the other required all able-bodied White men between 18 and 35 to serve for three years. It was the first National Draft in American history.

Joseph E. Brown The Conscription Act at one fell swoop strikes down the sovereignty of the states, tramples upon the constitutional rights and personal liberty of the citizens, and arms the President with imperial powers. Governor Joseph E. Brown of Georgia.

Mary Chesnut Mrs. Davis is being utterly upset. She is beginning to hear the coppin' and faultfindin' to which the President is subjected. There must be an opposition in a free country, but it is very uncomfortable. Mary Chesnut.

Sam Likens Veterans were especially resentful because potential draftees, who owned 20 slaves or more, could be exempted. A law was made allowing every person who owned 20 Negroes to go home. It gave us the blues. We wanted 20 Negroes. There was raised the howl of rich man's war, poor man's fight. From this time on till the end of the war, a soldier was simply a machine, a conscript. All our pride and valor had gone and we were sick of war and curse the Southern Confederacy. Sam Likens.

David McCullough Nearly half the Southerners, eligible for the new draft failed to sign up.

On to Richmond

Chaplin M. Stewart April 21st, 16 days have now been spent in this place. Our grand Army has again come to a halt. Under the dry pine leaves where we encamp, a great seaashes(ph) army of wood ticks have wandered. Few are so happy, as not defined half a dozen of these villainous bloodsuckers sticking in the flesh every morning. Chaplin M. Stewart.

David McCullough The firing from the Confederate lines was of little consequence, not amounting to over 10 or 12 artillery shots each day. A number of these being directed at the huge balloon which went up daily from General Fitzjohn's headquarters.

[sil.]

When about 100 feet above the ground, the rope broke, and the general sailed off toward Richmond at a greater speed than the Army of the Potomac is moving. He had sufficient comrades to pull the valve rope and gradually descended about three miles from camp.

[sil.]

David McCullough On the Peninsula, General George McClellan's huge army sat in front of the smaller rebel force at Yorktown for almost a month. It rained, two out of every three days. Hundreds fell ill.

George McClellan I feel that the fate of a nation depends on me, and that I have not one single friend at the seat of government. George McClellan.

David McCullough McClellan had moved more than 90 federal guns to Yorktown by May 3rd. Some so massive that it took 100 horses to haul them up along hastily constructed timber highways called "corduroy roads." McClellan finally decided to act and carefully planned a massive bombardment for May 5th. But on the night of the third, General Magruder's Confederate batteries suddenly intensified their fire. McClellan braced for an attack, but the next morning, the Confederates had vanished. Disbelieving federal troops edged into the deserted southern camps, Magruder had packed up his show and moved on. But McClellan declared it a Union victory.

George McClellan The success is brilliant. And you may rest assure that its effects will be of the greatest importance. There shall be no delay in following up the rebels.

[sil.]

David McCullough The Union men now cautiously followed the rebel army west towards Richmond.

Elisha Hunt Rhodes May 20. Richmond is just nine miles off. The Negroes are delighted to see us, but the Whites look as if they would like to kill us. Elisha Hunt Rhodes.

[sil.]

From McClellan's lines, you could hear the bells of Richmond tolling. You could hear the church bells and the public clock striking. He was that close.

David McCullough A worried Jefferson Davis now prepared for a siege of Richmond. Relying more and more on the advice of his close military adviser, Robert E. Lee. When Davis asked where Lee thought the South's next defensive line should be drawn once Richmond fell, Lee said, "Richmond must not fall. It shall not be given up." Still, George McClellan refused to attack. Though his army still outnumbered the rebels, he remained convinced the opposite was true. One observer noted that McClellan had a particular faculty for realizing hallucinations. He demanded another 40,000 men.

Edward M. Stanley If he had a million men, he would swear the enemy had two millions and then he would sit down in the mud and yell for three. Edward M. Stanley.

[sil.]

David McCullough With the year half gone, the Union's grand strategy had stalled. The western campaign began by U.S. Grant had ground to a halt in North Mississippi, and McClellan's mighty forces were paralyzed in front of Richmond. There was worst to come, the killing that would soon break out in Virginia would continue all year and come to a climax along a tiny creek in Western Maryland, called the Antietam.

[sil.]

Frederick Douglass We talk of the irrepressible conflict and practically give the light to our talk. We wage war against slaveholding rebels, and yet protect and augment the motive which is move the slaveholders to rebellion. We strike at the effect and leave the cause unharmed. Fire will not burn it out of us. Water cannot wash it out of us, yet this war with the slaveholders can never be brought to a desirable termination until slavery, the guilty cause of all our national troubles, has been totally and forever abolished. Frederick Douglass.

To be continued A Film by KEN BURNS Produced by KEN BURNS and RIC BURNS Written by GEOFFREY C. WARD and RIC BURNS with KEN BURNS Edited by PAUL BARNES BRUCE SHAW TRICIA REIDY Narrated by DAVID McCULLOUGH Voices SAM WATERSTON Abraham Lincoln JULIE HARRIS Mary Chestnut JASON ROBARDS Ulysses S. Grant MORGAN FREEMAN Frederick Douglass PAUL ROEBLING Joshua L. Chamberlain, etc. GARRISON KEILLOR Walt Whitman, etc. GEORGE BLACK Robert E. Lee ARTHUR MILLER William T. Sherman CHRIS MURNEY Pvt. Elisha Hunt Rhodes CHARLEY McDOWELL Pvt. Sam Watkins HORTON FOOTE Jefferson Davis GEORGE PLIMPTON George Templeton Strong PHILIP BOSCO Horace Greeley, etc. TERRY COURIER George McClellan JODY POWELL Stonewall Jackson, etc. STUDS TERKEL Benjamin F. Butler With DEREK JACOBI PAMELA REED JEREMY IRONS RONNIE GILBERT KURT VONNEGUT M. EMMET WALSH GENE JONES HOYT AXTON JEROME DEMPSEY JOHN HARTFORD LARRY FISHBURNE WALT MACPHERSON SHELBY FOOTE COLLEEN DEWHURST BETSY APPLE LATANYA RICHARDSON CAROL CRAVEN BRADFORD WASHBURN MARISSA COPELAND JESSE CAR HALO WINES WENDY TILGHMAN DAVID MARKS JOE MATTY'S and LIBRARY OF

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JESSE CARR Guitar, Recorder, Vocals MOLLY MASON Guitar, Bass PEGGY JAMES Violin
YONATAN MALIN Flute PETER AMIDON Banjo PETER ECKLUND Coronet DON BROOKS
Guitar, Mandolin RUSS BARENBERG Harmonica And THE OLD BETHPAGE BRASS BAND
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