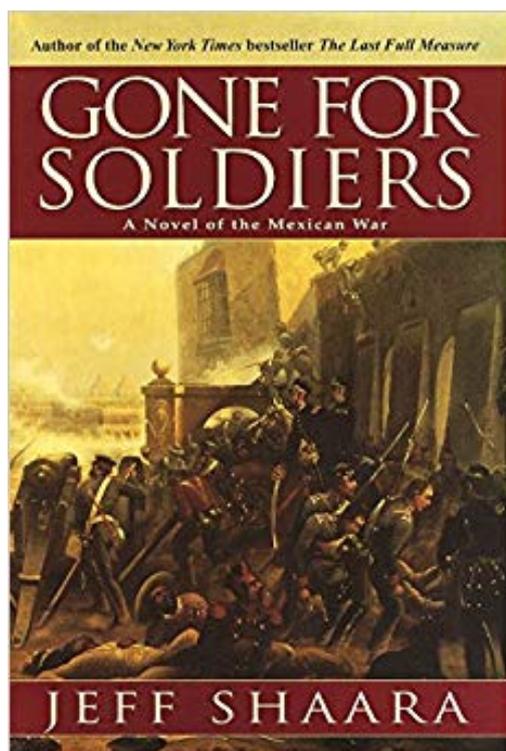


Gone for Soldiers: A Novel of the Mexican War by Jeff Shaara



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With his acclaimed New York Times bestsellers *Gods and Generals* and *The Last Full Measure*, Jeff Shaara expanded upon his father's Pulitzer Prize-winning Civil War classic, *The Killer Angels*-- ushering the reader through the poignant drama of this most bloody chapter in our history. Now, in *Gone for Soldiers*, Jeff Shaara carries us back fifteen years before that momentous conflict, when the Civil War's most familiar names are fighting for another cause, junior officers marching under the same flag in an unfamiliar land, experiencing combat for the first time in the Mexican-American War. In March 1847, the U.S. Navy delivers eight thousand soldiers on the beaches of Vera Cruz. They are led by the army's commanding general, Winfield Scott, a heroic veteran of the War of 1812, short tempered, vain, and nostalgic for the glories of his youth. At his right hand is Robert E. Lee, a forty-year-old engineer, a dignified, serious man who has never seen combat. Scott leads his troops against the imperious Mexican dictator, General Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana. Obsessed with glory and his place in history, Santa Ana arrogantly underestimates the will and the heart of Scott and his army. As the Americans fight their way inland, both sides understand that the inevitable final conflict will come at the gates and fortified walls of the ancient capital, Mexico City. Cut off from communication and their only supply line, the Americans learn about their enemy and themselves, as young men witness for the first time the horror of war. While Scott must weigh his own place in history, fighting what many consider a bully's war, Lee the engineer becomes Lee the hero, the one man in Scott's command whose extraordinary destiny as a soldier is clear. In vivid, brilliant prose that illuminates the dark psychology of soldiers and their commanders trapped behind enemy lines, Jeff Shaara brings to life the haunted personalities and magnificent backdrop, the familiar characters, the stunning triumphs and soul-crushing defeats of this fascinating, long-forgotten war. *Gone for Soldiers* is an extraordinary achievement that will remain with you long after the final page is turned.



Reviews of the **Gone for Soldiers: A Novel of the Mexican War** by Jeff Shaara

Gholbirdred

Mr. Shaara's narrative about the War in Mexico emphasizes two things.....First, this is the place that Lee, Longstreet, Grant, Jackson, Pickett, Johnson and Beauregard learned about War. Second, and equally important, this is where General Winfield Scott tutored them in Battlefield Leadership. While all of them exhibited incredible bravery and brains the emphasis on 40 year old Captain Lee shows him to be in a league all his own. If you don't know much about the Mexican/American War this is a wonderful primer. It covers why James K. Polk wanted territorial expansion, how the war intensified the slavery issue, the major battles including the storming of Chapultepec Castle and why many Mexican's, even today, believe the cause of this war was simply the insatiable expansionist ambition of the American People.

Siralune

I bought this after reading J. Shaara's two books on the American Revolution, which I recommend highly. He captivated me again and taught me so much that I was so unaware of about this early war of our nation's history. He revealed Scott and Lee to be the amazing and admirable men one expects in heroes and leaders. He also laid out the stark difference between totalitarian and republic forms of government. I'm thankful that throughout his narrative, he showed the flaws of these great men and the flaws of our nation's history, even while giving the credit due to our country and the people who lead and shaped her.

Cogelv

As a historian and retired professor of Mexican history, Mr. Shaara's depiction of the Mexican American War left a lot to be desired. However, while it IS an interesting read, he left me with hope that he'd write more about the Batallon de San Patricio, the Irish-american volunteers that deserted the US forces and joined the Mexican cause, and though he does pay some lip service, he left this reader wondering if someone else not familiar with the event of Manifest Destiny, probably thinks he made it up. Also, the storming of Chapultepec "Castle" left a lot to be desired, that is he has Santa Ana speak of the cadets that took part in the defense of the then Mexican military academy, and does not even give some credence to the Ninos Heroes, the six boys, ages 13 - 18 who died in the battle. Overall it is a brutal depiction of war, just like he did in "The Final Storm", his description of the battle ground, and what the soldiers and officers endured. the politics of the time, though I am still wondering why he just focused on Lee and Scott, and not expand on Taylor and Grant, who played an even greater role prior to, during, and after the US Civil War...

Uaha

I am a big fan of all the Shaara books, father and son. I was very interested in this book because I'm planning to pen a couple of novels of this era myself, and looked to see what Jeff had written. It's certainly entertaining, for a military history buff, like me, but it felt a little "contrived." For instance, Jeff relates many incidents and conversations among the principals (R.E. Lee, Winfield Scott, etc)

that had to have been "imagined" or at least re-created and embellished. How, for example, does he know what Lee was thinking, while he was trapped under a log, hiding from Mexican soldiers? He describes the experience in excruciating detail including the debris that fell into one of Lee's eyes. The text also gets very ponderous from time to time. I would have preferred more narrative of battles and engagements over the descriptions of Scott's officer meetings around the campfire or of Scott experiencing his first Catholic mass in a Mexican cathedral. Sometimes, too, the text seems a little rushed, as if Shaara was racing for a deadline and his next book. Really, I did enjoy it, but it was not Jeff's best effort, in my humble opinion.

Kifer

I really enjoy the manner in which Jeff Shaara develops these historic figures giving them a voice that we as students of history do not have when reading history books. The Mexican War is one that I am not that familiar with, but I found it very interesting that so many of the key players in this war entered the Civil War as enemies. It is an easy read.

Skilkancar

i really enjoy these fictional histories where stories are told through the thoughts & words of participants in those events even though who knows what these people really thought & said during those events; shaara does very good job focusing on lee & scott mainly but deals with many mexican war participants who were famous during the civil war like longstreet, grant, jackson, joe johnston & of course from the mexican side santa anna; if some of this is accurate, it is amazing how egos get in the way of fighting a battle or war; by the way, i am not a big favorite of what america did in this war, it was a big land grab against a weaker power & not something we as americans should be proud of

Warianys

It's a book that starts out slowly but builds quickly until you can't put it down. I knew little about the Spanish American War and thought I could care less. Yet, it's the soldiers that you meet that make you care. Lee, Johnston, Meade, Grant and many more. You realize that this is where many got their real life training for the Civil War.

It is poignant and even sadder that Lee and various others who carry themselves with such distinction defending the US flag in such a little time go right to trampling it and the very Union they were fighting for in Mexico. I would like to go back in history and ask them why.

Aside from Polk's doctrine of Manifest destiny what did Lee or Longstreet or Grant think that they were fighting for? It almost needs a sequel. It was a book with much to be wondered at the past, where we are now and how do we proceed in the future with the land we won from Mexico.

Highly recommended!

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