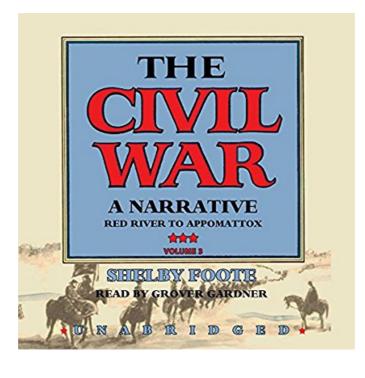
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assuring Lincoln's reelection, together with the certainty that the war will be fought (not negotiated) to a finish. These events are followed by Hood's bold northward strike through middle Tennessee while Sherman sets out on his march to the sea, to be opposed at its end by the ghost of the Army of Tennessee. Hood is wrecked by Thomas in front of Nashville-the last big battle -- and Savannah falls to Sherman, who presents it to Lincoln as a Christmas gift. Meantime, Early has threatened Washington, Price has toured Missouri, Farragut has damned the torpedoes in Mobile Bay, Forrest has raided Memphis, and Cushing has single-handedly sunk the Albemarle. And Sherman heads north through the Carolinas, burning

Columbia en route, while Sheridan rips the entrails out of the Shenandoah Valley. Lincoln's second inaugural sets the seal on these hostilities, invoking 'charity for all' on the Eve of Five Forks and the Grant-Lee race for Appomattox. Here is the dust and stench of war, a sort of Twilight of

the Gods, with occasional lurid flare-ups, mass desertions, and the queasiness that accompanies the risk of being the last man to die. Then, penultimately. Lee at Appomattox, the one really shining figure in this last act. Davis's flight south from fallen Richmond overlaps Lincoln's death from Booth's derringer, and his capture at Irwinville comes amid the surrender of the last Confederate armies, east and west of the Mississippi River. The epilogue is Lincoln in his grave: and Davis in his posthumous existence. 'Lucifer in Starlight.'So ends a unique achievement -- already recognized as one of the finest histories ever fashioned by an American -- a narrative of over a million and a half words which recreates on a vast and brilliant canvas the events and personalities of an American epic: The Civil War -- This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title. Read more See all Editorial Reviews

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