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New book *Let Us Die Like Brave Men* looks at what led to the last words of Civil War soldiers

Wealthy plantation owners and hardscrabble farmers, educated scions of prominent families and illiterate boys, legendary generals and buck privates - at the onset of the Civil War, their backgrounds were as divided as the nation, but by war's end they all shared a common destiny. They offered what Abraham Lincoln called "the last full measure of devotion" to the cause for which they fought.

Although the Confederate cause was defeated and discredited, modern readers can still respect the valor and honor with which many of the Confederacy's soldiers met their end.

Author Daniel W. Barefoot examines the lives and deaths of 52 Confederates, concentrating on their last words, in his new book *Let Us Die Like Brave Men: Behind the Dying Words of Confederate Warriors*. The experiences of these 52 men reveal the scope and the cost of the Civil War.

James F. Jackson died less than a month after Fort Sumter surrendered, yet he was not a soldier. He was an innkeeper in Alexandria who tried to prevent Union soldiers from taking the Confederate flag off his roof, prophetically declaring, "The flag will come down over my dead body." Those words, however, were not his last. When the Union officer who held Jackson's flag shouted, "Behold my trophy," Jackson stepped in front of him with a shotgun and replied, "Behold mine."

Teenage Private Charlie Jackson was left sleeping when his company struck camp to march into the Battle of Shiloh. He was left behind on orders of the company commander, who also happened to be Jackson's father. When he woke, Jackson raced to join his unit just in time for the battle, in which he was mortally wounded. With his dying breath, he told his father to let the company know that "there's a little boy in heaven who will watch them and pray for them as they go into battle."

Another young soldier, his name lost to history, died in a Union hospital after the Battle of Sharpsburg.



With his last words, he recited a prayer with the man who held his hand as he died - President Lincoln.

In contrast, Stonewall Jackson and Jeb Stuart were Confederate heroes who established international reputations before dying of wounds sustained in battle. Both men's last words reflected not on military glory, but on their devout faith. Jackson said, "Let us cross over the river and rest under the shade of the trees," while Stuart's last words were, "I am going fast now; I am resigned; God's will be done."

The stories behind these final words take the reader from Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg to the high seas where Confederate raiders fought the Union navy.

"Though these soldiers fell tragically and prematurely," Barefoot writes in his preface, "their last words serve as an uplifting example to all Americans who cherish the time-honored ideals of bravery, self-sacrifice, and duty."

Daniel W. Barefoot is the author of nine previous books. He is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of North Carolina, a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Law, and a former state legislator. He lives in Lincolnton, North Carolina.

Title: *Let Us Die Like Brave Men: Behind the Dying Words of Confederate Warriors*

Author: Daniel W. Barefoot

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