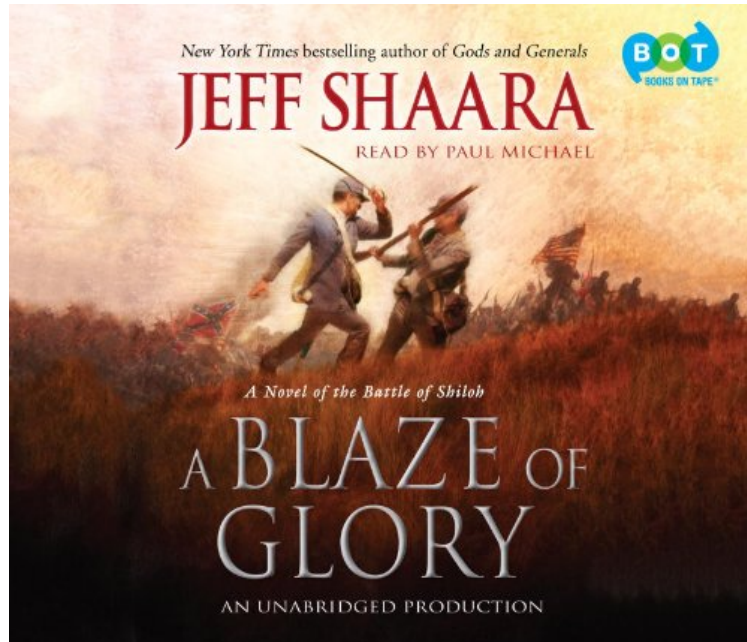


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## Blaze of Glory, a (Lib)(CD)

Jeff Shaara

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**Jeff Shaara : Blaze of Glory, a (Lib)(CD)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Blaze of Glory, a (Lib)(CD):

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Gripping.By MGMcdBy far, one of the most riveting novels by this author. Shiloh was a terrible battle by any account, as to fighting conditions and loss of life. This account, in my opinion, far excels The Red Badge of Courage for the portrayal of the awful conditions the fighting troops endured. It reminds me of the genre busting soldiers accounts of Viet Nam when those novels started coming out in the 1980's. This is very good historical fiction, although fiction doesn't quite fit since historians speculate mind sets, attitudes, etc. of historical actors, so it is not much of a stretch to merely animate them further with dialog. I have studied a lot of US History, and this I think really fleshes out the picture. I wish I were more eloquent, but this really makes accurate history accessible and exciting.Update: I also wanted to mention that while many historians don't spend much time on the western theater, John Keegan in his The American Civil War, makes a very compelling case that the western, which eventually expanded into the southern, south eastern, and finally merged with the eastern theater, was more strategically important since many of the battles in the eastern theater between Washington and Richmond only served to keep large parts of the armies tied up in mostly defensive actions. Lee eventually quit Richmond only after the union armies merged from north and south, and he had nowhere to go but west towards the Shenandoah, and he didn't get very far after that. So Shiloh really was a pivotal loss, and the dominoes started falling from there.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great story about Shilo battleBy Tom BetzThis is a well written story about the various people and events that became the Battle of Shilo in April 1862. Shaara brings his personable writing style to explaining the story of the battle and the background of those who fought for both sides. Shilo was a big turning point in the Civil War in the western states. I have been to Shilo twice, and having read other books on the battle this one brought the scenes to life. I had a better understanding of what went on for those two days. For the South the loss of Gen. Johnston was quite a blow. For the Union the battle brought the horror of battle to the thousands who were

assembled for this fight. It was a big loss on the first day with the Union being forced to retreat nearly out of the area, but at the end of the day the Southern Army pulled back to rest a bit after a full day of fighting. There will always be a debate about what might have happened if the Confederates had tried one more push before halting the fighting for the day. 16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Shaara Does it Again By SeattleBookMama As a retired history teacher, I read everything that Shaara writes. I began with his father's Pulitzer-winning *Killer Angels*, and have since followed the writings of Jeff Shaara. His research is meticulous, but at the same time, he does point out that he is writing fiction. I find fictional narrative is a strong way to replay history in a way that is engaging and can hold most readers' attention better than non-fiction (though I also recommend those who are serious about this subject to read McPherson and Foote, and maybe Sears if you want every known detail). What fascinated me here was the point of view. I have read other accounts in which Beauregard was a true southern hero, and he is held up as an outstanding role model. To see Shaara defrock him was very interesting. I also learned some things I did not know before (for example, that the state of Kentucky was so bitterly divided on the question of secession that there were dual state governments for a time, each claiming legitimacy). I have to take exception to the reader who felt that Bauer, the rank-and-file soldier, was some sort of cardboard cutout. One thing I always admire about Shaara's work is that he does not write only about the big names where documentation is easily found, but remembers that ultimately, it was the common foot soldiers who had it hardest and often paid most dearly. So many homesick young men had never been anywhere at all prior to enlisting, and had no idea what they were getting into. Shaara's use of Bauer, combined with his conversations and interactions with other rank and file members, provided a more human element. This is a strength, not a weakness. This novel is just the start of a three book trilogy, and I am waiting to see how the other battles will be dealt with, most especially Sherman's campaign in Georgia. The man is a genius with words, and he kept me up late some nights when I couldn't put the book down. Thank you, Mr. Shaara.

[An] exciting read . . . [Jeff] Shaara returns to the U.S. Civil War in this first book of a new trilogy. . . . This novel is meticulously researched and brings a vivid reality to the historical events depicted. Library Journal NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLERS Spring 1862. The Confederate Army in the West teeters on the brink of collapse. General Albert Sidney Johnston is forced to abandon the critical city of Nashville and rally his troops in defense of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. Hot on Johnstons trail are two of the Unions best generals: Ulysses Grant and Don Carlos Buell. If their combined forces can crush Johnstons army and capture the railroad, the war in the West likely will be over. Theres just one problem: Johnston knows of the Union plans and is poised to launch an audacious surprise attack on Grants encampment a small settlement in southwestern Tennessee anchored by a humble church named Shiloh. Drawing on meticulous research, Jeff Shaara dramatizes the key decisions of the commanders on both sides of the conflict and brings to life the junior officers, conscripts, and enlisted men who gave their all for the cause. With stunning immediacy, Shaara takes us inside the maelstrom of Shiloh as no novelist has before. Brilliant . . . riveting . . . a work to be embraced. Bookreporter Includes a preview of Jeff Shaaras next Civil War novel, *A Chain of Thunder*

Brilliant . . . riveting . . . a work to be embraced. Bookreporter [An] exciting read . . . [Jeff] Shaara returns to the U.S. Civil War in this first book of a new trilogy. . . . This novel is meticulously researched and brings a vivid reality to the historical events depicted. Library Journal Dynamic portrayals [of] Johnston, Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman. The Wall Street Journal A stunning achievement by an outstanding writer. Huntington News About the Author Jeff Shaara is the New York Times bestselling author of *A Chain of Thunder*, *A Blaze of Glory*, *The Final Storm*, *No Less Than Victory*, *The Steel Wave*, *The Rising Tide*, *To the Last Man*, *The Glorious Cause*, *Rise to Rebellion*, and *Gone for Soldiers*, as well as *Gods and Generals* and *The Last Full Measure* two novels that complete the Civil War trilogy that began with his fathers Pulitzer Prizewinning classic, *The Killer Angels*. Shaara was born into a family of Italian immigrants in New Brunswick, New Jersey. He grew up in Tallahassee, Florida, and graduated from Florida State University. He lives in Gettysburg. From the Hardcover edition. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. CHAPTER ONE SEELEY NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE February 22, 1862 Keep those men out of there! They will not pass! Seeleys words were harsh, loud, the men around him doing all they could to obey. The shotguns hung by each mans side, and the lieutenant felt a shaking nervousness, was not ready to give the order that would point the long guns at these civilians. Like him, most of these troopers had never fired their weapons at anything but crude targets. Now the targets were men, surging toward him through the darkness, pushing their way toward the gaping doorways of the supply depot, a massive warehouse close to the river. Seeley had positioned his six horsemen in an even line, to block the way of the crowd, but the crowd was a mob, desperate and mindless, their goal the precious food and bundles of supplies that lay in the warehouse. A few cavalry meant nothing at all, and quickly the mob pushed into them, some slipping past, between the horses. He felt his own frustration rising, could feel the tinderbox explosiveness of the mob, and he shouted out again, could not help the higher pitch, his voice betraying the fear. You will stand away! These are government stores! Close between him and the next man, a civilian shoved hard, jostling his horse, punching it. Get out of my way! Damn you! Seeley steadied the horse, his outrage more of instinct, protective of

the animal. He drew his saber, but the man ignored him, punched the horse again, and the saber rose high, came down hard against the mans shoulder, flat-sided, the man collapsing right below him. The civilian rolled over, crying out, shielding himself with one hand above his face. There was no blood, not yet, the lieutenant trying to get control, the horse calmer, the man crawling out through the horses legs. The lieutenant felt relief, did not want blood. He raised the saber again, mostly for show, but most of the mob ignored him, ignored all the horsemen, still pushed into the warehouse, spreading out in the dark. Behind him a lantern was lit, the glow filling the vast building with soft light reflecting off the mounds of boxes and barrels, bundles of cloth. More cavalymen galloped close, and he looked that way, hoped to see wagons, the armys own efforts to gather up the supplies, to move them out of this vulnerable place. But there were only men, a sergeant leading six more, and so Seeley was the only officer, was still in command, the sole authority. The horse jostled beneath him again, men still slipping by him in a rush, and he felt the saber in his hand, could not just assault these people, could not add to what was fast becoming a riot. But still . . . there were the orders, the strict need to guard what was piled up behind him. He steadied the animal with the reins, shouted toward the other horsemen, Formation here! Beside us! No one is to pass! We must protect the depot! The other cavalymen had already seen the futility of that, were as uncertain as he was. He wanted to shout again, but the mob was growing, more people coming down the side streets, noisy and energetic, women alongside men, shoving their way past, seeking anything they could carry. Some came past him the other way, from inside, weighed down by loot, by the very goods he was supposed to protect. He fought for it in his own mind, how to control these people, how to obey the orders he had been given, the responsibility for this one depot. Stop them! They must not pass! Seeleys anger was ripening into full fury, the frustration complete, his orders useless, the crowd still swarming around the line of horsemen. Some of the mob was already disappearing into the streets, satisfied for now with what they had grabbed, bundles and boxes and barrels of anything. Out past the depot he could hear splashes in the darkness, away from the lantern light, something heavy tossed into the river. He turned his horse, rode out from the others, tried to see the rivers edge, heard more splashes. Some of the civilians had made their way out the back side of the warehouse, were tossing their loot into the water. He could hear someone leading them, instructions barked out from a man he couldnt see. He knew it was one of them, a civilian, orders that carried far more weight than this lone lieutenant in a small column of cavalry. He spurred the horse, moved out around the corner of the building, was in darkness now, frightening, could see only a single speck of lantern light at the wharf. A few of the cavalymen followed him, the sergeant, curious, their formation breaking down. From the streets out beyond the warehouse, a new crowd came at them, word spreading throughout this part of the city, fresh passion, hot enthusiasm for the treasure, no matter what it might be. The lieutenant turned the horse again to the lamplight, saw his men looking toward him, fear in their eyes, and he caught sight of their weapons, holstered at their saddles. Close up this line! Draw your shotguns! Prepare to fire! Seeley saw their hesitation, shouted it again, the men obeying, the long guns sliding out from the holsters, tense, nervous glances toward the civilians. Behind him two men rolled a heavy barrel out of the warehouse, and he pointed the saber at them. Leave that be! We have orders to fire! You will leave this place! By order of Lieutenant Colonel Forrest, these supplies are the property of the army! Return to your homes! One man stopped, close to the horses, shouted back at him, You have no authority! We have seen your army! They ran through this city like a stampede of rats! Get out of our way! Another man moved out of the lamplight, held a bundle on his shoulder, pointed a finger at the lieutenant. We know youre going to burn our city! We heard all of that! Just to keep it from the Yankees! Well not be driven out of our homes by a bunch of cowards! I have a family! We need to eat! You get on out of here! Others in the crowd slowed, some seeming to notice him for the first time, and he welcomed that, a glimpse of acknowledgment, a small glimmer of calm through the flood of panic. Others were turning toward him, and he wondered if the threat from the weapons had drawn their attention. He took a breath, shouted out, No one will burn your city! The enemy is not close! But these supplies . . . Bah! Your own men ran through here like they was chased by the devil himself! Them Yankees are monsters! And you aint gonna do nothing to stop them! Well, were not gonna be cut down like cornstalks! A woman screamed toward him now, rage in her words, Weve got families . . . children! The Yankees are coming and you cant stop them! The moment of reason slipped away, and he could not respond, had no answers for the wild rumors, for their panic. The talk was past, and they resumed their movement, some back into the warehouse, more bundles and boxes hoisted up on shoulders, two men rolling another barrel out through the faint light, shoving it straight into the legs of his horse. Seeley held tight to the reins, gripped the saber hard, prepared again to strike, but something held him back, the civilians seeming to pull away, watching him, testing him. He shouted again, the high pitch of his voice rising above the anger from the mob. By order of Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest . . . He turned, looked down the row of horsemen, his face showing the final fear, the failure of his mission, no words strong enough to keep these panicked people from grabbing everything they could carry from the supply depot. Raise your weapons! We have our orders! He watched as the shotguns rose, clamped against their shoulders, the beautifully brutal weapon they carried, the perfect tool for the close-range fighting of cavalry. The targets were many and close, and he closed his eyes, a cold shiver all through him. God, I cannot do this. Please . . . do not force me to do this. The mob still paid no attention to the horsemen, and he glanced to one side, the soldier closest to him, the face of a boy, saw him cocking back the two hammers of the double barrels, felt his own stab of panic. Not yet! Wait for my orders! The mob

had slowed around them, some of them staring up at the twin barrels of the shotguns, some of the civilians realizing what might happen now. One man stepped close to him, well dressed, his hat down in his hands. You would kill us like dogs? Is that what this army is? What will God say to that? The civilian spoke in a low, deep voice, and the lieutenant fought to respond, struggled through the tight shaking in his throat. I have my orders . . . to stop anyone from looting the government stores. I will stop you . . . any way I can. The army must have these supplies. He paused, more faces watching him. Colonel Forrest is in command here. He has orders to protect the city as long as practicable. The enemy is moving this way, yes. But there is time. There is no need for panic! It was an explanation no one seemed to hear, the words more for his own horsemen than for the ugly fear of the civilians. There were more splashes at the rivers edge, and he wanted to call out, to stop the foolishness of that, heard the young soldier next to him, one of the new volunteers, untested, a boy with a mans weapon. Sir . . . theyre throwing everything away! Seeley looked out that way, but in the darkness there was nothing to see. At least here, in the lamplight, there was safety, some control over his own men. The crowd was thick in front of him, men still forcing their way into the warehouse, the darkness still filled with noise, meaningless shouts, more splashes. Another of the troopers spoke, the sergeant. What in blazes are they doin? The lieutenant thought of what he had already seen, great mounds of smoked and salted meat, bundles stacked along the various wharves along the river. What they cant carry, theyre floating off down the river. Food mostly. Theres plenty of beef and bacon here. Aint we supposed to stop em? The question infuriated him, a hard stab at his authority, the very job he was sent here to accomplish. The word rose in his brain, the only response he could think of. How? The young private lowered his shotgun from his shoulder, spoke again. But . . . wheres the stuff gonna float to? The river flows . . . that way. Seeley stared out through the darkness, suddenly realized the man was right. The panic and chaos of these people had given way to utter stupidity. Yes, this damn river flows north. Straight toward the Yankees. James Seeley had grown up in Memphis, the son of a banker, and like so many, had come to the cavalry responding to the call from Nathan Bedford Forrest, another businessman known well in the city. Forrests cavalry force grew quickly, their number increasing by companies of horsemen who rode northward from their farms and villages in Alabama and Mississippi. Others came southward, from the hotly controversial counties in Kentucky, where neutrality meant different things to different people, the state still struggling under the divisive weight of politics. As was happening throughout the newly organized Confederate armies, the horse soldiers brought little else to their new camps but their skill in the saddle, a skill that at least had set them apart from the eager young men who had settled into life in the infantry, or were quickly learning the art of firing a cannon. But even the men with their own horses had few weapons, and it had been Forrest himself who had secured arms for his own men, sabers and pistols, and then the double-barrel shotguns, weapons many of these men had never seen. The drill and the training had been rapid but the men had responded well, though few in the Confederate high command knew anything of Forrest. Like another cavalryman, John Hunt Morgan, Forrest began to be noticed by those who had reached the highest levels of the Confederate command, the men who were now generals, who labored under the weight of securing men and arms, and creating from scratch a fighting force that the Confederacy had to have if there was to be any hope of holding away the well-organized and well-equipped men in blue. Before wearing the uniform Seeley knew nothing of fighting, and very little of weapons. But the men first chosen by Forrest to lead the training had seen something of a leader in this man of barely twenty- two, and with so many of the new troops eager but utterly unprepared for life in the army, Forrest and his company commanders recognized the urgent need for leadership. Within short weeks, Seeley had risen to the rank of lieutenant, an event followed by a stream of enthusiastic letters home to his young wife and parents, who urgently waited for any kind of news from their fledgling soldier. It was no different anyplace the war had already spread, families both North and South full of passionate certainty that their magnificent army would bless them with a quick and total victory. On both sides, the citizenry had shown pride and enthusiasm for the drums and parades of new recruits, so many believing that whatever this war would become, there would be celebration and glory for all the young men who made the long march. Seeleys father had been among those, a man who knew nothing of the army. But the older man had still offered a lecture of caution that his son not shame the family, that the best measure of a man was his backbone for a stout brawl. Seeleys young wife, Katie, was less certain of that, and when the day came when Seeley marched off to join the grand parades, she had released his hand reluctantly, a short tearful kiss that tempered his lust for the Great Fight. There had been words, a final farewell from her that had settled into his heart with a nagging sadness. He would not accept that, not completely, that his wife did not want him to go at all, that this duty did not mean as much to her as it did to most everyone else. And so his letters home had begun immediately, and no matter how much joy he tried to communicate to them all, his promotion in particular, he could not hide from a frustrating uneasiness that she did not truly understand how important this was. Her message spread subtly through her letters, soft sadness, and he knew that all those things that mattered to the rest of family did not truly matter to her. No matter how heroic he might become, what kinds of trophies of war he might bring them all, his absence had already taken something from her, left a wound he didnt really understand. They had, after all, been married for only four months. In December 1861, Lieutenant Seeley had seen his first glimpse of the enemy whose very existence seemed to inspire so much hatred in the men around him, a hatred he tried to embrace, because it was the right thing to do. The fight had been at Sacramento, Kentucky, a brief affair that did little to turn the tide of the war. But there was more to

the results than the handful of casualties shared by both sides. With three hundred horsemen, Forrest had surprised and attacked a force of nearly five hundred Federal cavalry. By using a double-flanking tactic, combined with an all-out frontal assault, the Confederates had won the day, the shaken Federals able to stand their ground for only a short while. Seeley's only direct confrontation with a bluecoat was a brief glimpse of the man's back, a horseman springing from a cluster of brush who did not fight, but instead spurred his horse away in a rapid retreat. Seeley had not been close enough to the man to fire his weapon, but in the primary assault Forrest and many of the others had traded a good deal of fire with the enemy, much of it manic and badly aimed. The aftermath was glorious. It was after all, a victory. Seeley had been annoyed, knew that by dumb chance he had missed his first opportunity to cut down the hated Yankees. But that frustration had been tempered quickly by the sight of the first blood he had seen, a mortal wound that had brought down a Federal captain named Bacon. Seeley had not lingered close to the desperately wounded man, had watched some of the others, Forrest included, who had done all they could to make the man's final hours comfortable. He had been surprised at that, had expected the wounded Yankee to spit out viciousness toward his enemies, and them to do the same. When Bacon died, Seeley had thought of leading a cheer, but there was none of that from Forrest. Whether or not the engagement at Sacramento produced much practical advantage for either side, higher up the chain of command, Forrest and his horsemen caught the attention of officers on both sides, and for the first time west of the Appalachian Mountains, Federal commanders began to take Confederate cavalry and their audacious commander seriously.