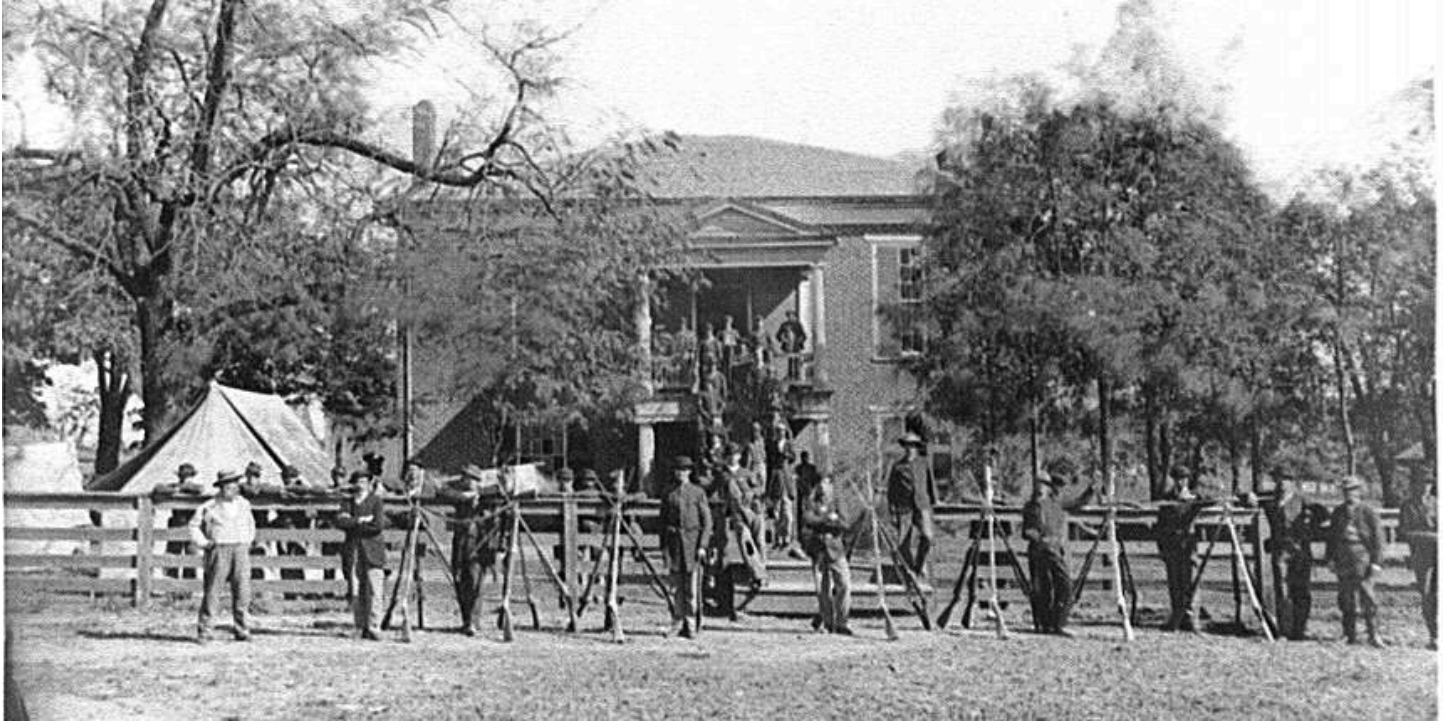


Surrender at Appomattox Court House



"It would be useless and therefore cruel," Robert E. Lee remarked on the morning of April 9, 1865, "to provoke the further effusion of blood, and I have arranged to meet with General Grant with a view to surrender."

The two generals met shortly after noon on April 9, 1865, at the home of Wilmer McLean in the village of Appomattox Court House, Virginia. Lee's surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia to Ulysses S. Grant, general-in-chief of all United States forces, hastened the conclusion of the Civil War.

In the weeks following, other Confederate forces surrendered, and Confederate President Jefferson Davis was captured. On April 14, 1865, just over four years after the bombardment of Fort Sumter that triggered the fighting, President Abraham Lincoln became one of the more than 1 million Civil War casualties (including more than 600,000 dead), and the bloody fighting that began in the corn fields of Manassas, Virginia in July 1861 finally came to a close.

After the surrender, former soldiers slowly returned home. One young Southerner despaired of seeing her husband again, when he turned up in Richmond ragged, but recognizable. Remembering the difficult years during and after the war she summed up her experience:

We had nothing on which to begin life over again, but we were young and strong, and began it cheerily enough. We are prosperous now, ...little grandchildren cluster about us and listen with interest to grandpapa's and grandmamma's tales of the days when they "fought and bled and died together." They can't understand how such nice people as the Yankees and ourselves ever could have fought each other. "It doesn't seem reasonable," says Nellie...who is engaged to a gentleman from Boston, where we sent her to cultivate her musical talents, but where she applied herself to other matters, 'it doesn't seem reasonable, grandmamma, when you could just as easily have settled it all comfortably without any fighting. How glad I am I wasn't living then! How thankful I am that 'Old Glory' floats alike over North and South, now!'

And so am I, my darling, so am I!

Share your Experience...

Writing Prompt: Has there ever been a time when you worked hard for something you really cared about and failed? Describe this experience. How did this make you feel?

Read & Respond...

Directions: *In small groups read, "Surrender at Appomattox Court House". Then discuss the following questions and write down your thoughts in the space provided.*

1. What does it mean to "surrender"?
2. How do you think the Confederates felt? Why?
3. How do you think the Union felt when Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House? Why?
4. In what ways are the feelings of the Confederates be similar to your own? (Review your response to the writing prompt...)