

## Spring 1865: The Closing Campaigns of the Civil War

**Perry D. Jamieson**

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The South's defeat was inevitable when, on a chilly Sunday April 3 morning in 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis's prayers at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia, were interrupted when the church sextant handed him a letter from his secretary of war warning that Union forces would soon take the Confederate capital. A few hours later Davis fled, and on April 9, Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox.

Yet, as Perry D. Jamieson, senior historian emeritus of the US Air Force, observes as he writes about the final, bloody months of the war, April was among the cruelest. President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 15. Davis would not accept the idea that the Confederacy was done, even as thousands of his soldiers were deserting and those who remained lacked even minimal rations. Hostilities continued, and it was not until August 20, 1866, that President Andrew Johnson announced that the war was officially over.

Jamieson's focus is on the major battles in Virginia and the Carolinas, but he also addresses later battles to put down the remnants of the Confederate army in the Deep South and western territories. And he does it with detail and insight into the politics of the time to satisfy the most demanding Civil War buff.

THOMAS BEVIER (Summer 2015)

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