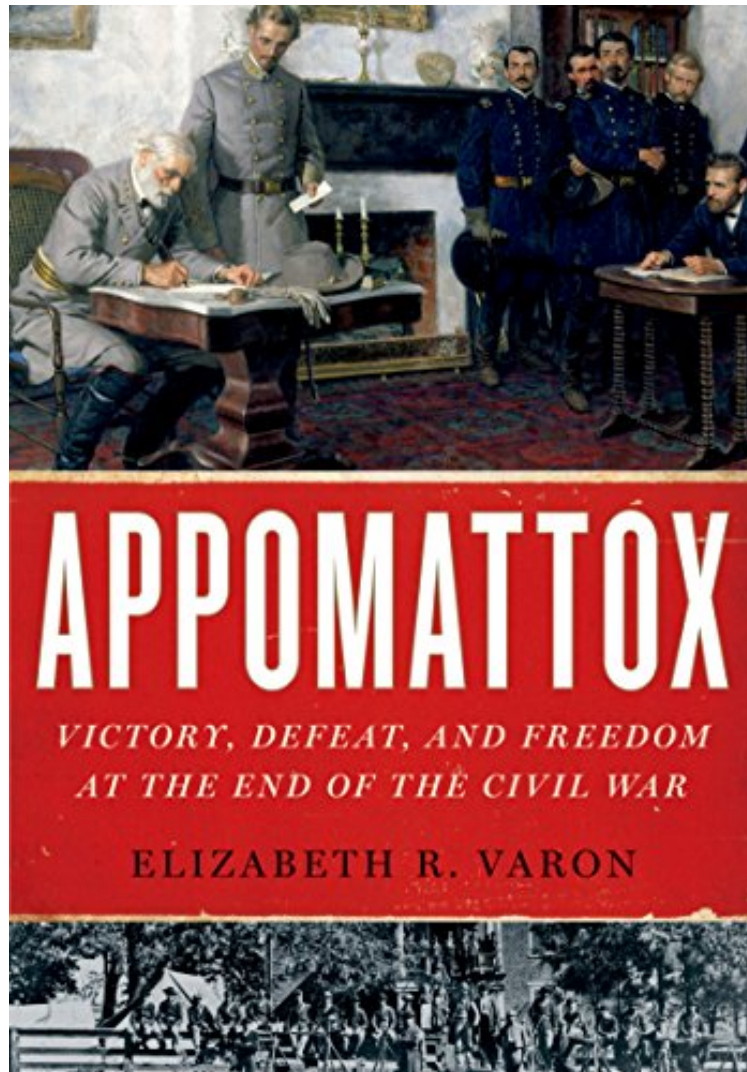


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Appomattox: Victory, Defeat, and Freedom at the End of the Civil War

Von Elizabeth R. Varon

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Von Elizabeth R. Varon : Appomattox: Victory, Defeat, and Freedom at the End of the Civil War before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Appomattox: Victory, Defeat, and Freedom at the End of the Civil War:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A basic overviewVon William PeynsaertCivil war buffs will enjoy this book. Not an essential book, but well written. Elizabeth

Varon is a good historian.

Kurzbeschreibung Winner, Library of Virginia Literary Award for Nonfiction Winner, Eugene Feit Award in Civil War Studies, New York Military Affairs Symposium Winner of the Dan and Marilyn Laney Prize of the Austin Civil War Round Table Finalist, Jefferson Davis Award of the Museum of the Confederacy Best Books of 2014, Civil War Monitor 6 Civil War Books to Read Now, Diane Rehm Show, NPR Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox Court House evokes a highly gratifying image in the popular mind -- it was, many believe, a moment that transcended politics, a moment of healing, a moment of patriotism untainted by ideology. But as Elizabeth Varon reveals in this vividly narrated history, this rosy image conceals a seething debate over precisely what the surrender meant and what kind of nation would emerge from war. The combatants in that debate included the iconic Lee and Grant, but they also included a cast of characters previously overlooked, who brought their own understanding of the war's causes, consequences, and meaning. In Appomattox, Varon deftly captures the events swirling around that well remembered-but not well understood-moment when the Civil War ended. She expertly depicts the final battles in Virginia, when Grant's troops surrounded Lee's half-starved army, the meeting of the generals at the McLean House, and the shocked reaction as news of the surrender spread like an electric charge throughout the nation. But as Varon shows, the ink had hardly dried before both sides launched a bitter debate over the meaning of the war and the nation's future. For Grant, and for most in the North, the Union victory was one of right over wrong, a vindication of free society; for many African Americans, the surrender marked the dawn of freedom itself. Lee, in contrast, believed that the Union victory was one of might over right: the vast impersonal Northern war machine had worn down a valorous and unbowed South. Lee was committed to peace, but committed, too, to the restoration of the South's political power within the Union and the perpetuation of white supremacy. These two competing visions of the war's end paved the way not only for Southern resistance to reconstruction but also our ongoing debates on the Civil War, 150 years later. Did America's best days lie in the past or in the future? For Lee, it was the past, the era of the founding generation. For Grant, it was the future, represented by Northern moral and material progress. They held, in the end, two opposite views of the direction of the country-and of the meaning of the war that had changed that country forever. Pressestimmen Winner, Library of Virginia Literary Award for Nonfiction Winner, Eugene Feit Award in Civil War Studies, New York Military Affairs Symposium Winner of the Dan and Marilyn Laney Prize of the Austin Civil War Round Table Finalist, Jefferson Davis Award of the Museum of the Confederacy Best Books of 2014, Civil War Monitor 6 Civil War Books to Read Now, Diane Rehm Show, NPR "Varon's work is a balanced inquiry into the meanings of the Appomattox peace for Northerners and Southerners, whites and blacks, men and women... Appomattox is equally adept at illuminating the war's meaning on the home front and in political halls... [Varon] successfully resurrects the true April 1865 event as one fraught with anxiety, passion, and, above all, political conflict." --North Carolina Historical "[A] compelling new account of the war's end... Rather than emphasizing the finality of military defeat, Varon stresses the uncertainty of the subsequent days, weeks, and months." --Sarah Bowman, Civil War Monitor "A very fine account... In the end, as Varon so ably demonstrates, Appomattox did not end a war. It just closed the phase of that contest characterized by armed conflict. The much older war would go on. In some ways, it is not over yet." --William C. Davis, History Book Club "Excellent and thought-provoking... Varon... treats Appomattox as a major event in American history, worth extensive analysis, but also as a very engaging human story." --James E. Sefton, Civil War Book "Elizabeth Varon successfully argues in her groundbreaking book that the seeds for the post-Civil War world started before the ink had dried on the surrender agreement signed by Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee at Appomattox Court House... A careful construction and analysis of the meaning of Appomattox to many different people." --James Percoco, Civil War News "A careful, scholarly consideration of how the ambiguities surrounding the defeat of the South resolved into the bitter eras of Reconstruction and Jim Crow." --Kirkus s "In this powerful analysis of the substantive and symbolic meanings of the surrender at Appomattox, Elizabeth Varon shows how that iconic moment has shaped a range of perceptions of the Civil War and its consequences. Grant and Lee emerge with new richness and complexity in this important book, one of the best to appear during these years of the war's sesquicentennial anniversaries." --James McPherson, author of Battle Cry of Freedom "In lively prose, Elizabeth Varon demonstrates that much of what we think we know about Lee's surrender to Grant in April 1865 is misleading, embellished, or just plain wrong, but even more important, she portrays the ending of the Civil War less as a moment of innocence than as long process, begun before the ink on the surrender signatures had dried, in which white and black Americans of all regions and varying political stripes shrewdly contested the meaning of the war." --Chandra Manning, author of What This Cruel War Was Over "In a short space, Elizabeth Varon has not only given us a graceful narrative of the epochal surrender at Appomattox, but has also awakened us to the bitterly-contested meanings of that surrender. The war that ended at Appomattox did not subside into a happy story of fraternal reconciliation, but into an ongoing struggle between those who believed the war had brought a new age of freedom and equality into existence, and those who fought to keep the South's feudal past upon its throne. We will not be able to look at Appomattox, or

the legacy of the Civil War, in simplistic terms again." --Allen C. Guelzo, author of *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion*"Elizabeth Varon's elegant meditation on the complex legacy of the Appomattox surrender combines finely grained social history with penetrating analysis of one of the great mythic moments in American history. Closing out the Civil War, Lee and Grant's fateful meeting ushered in a harmonious reunion of a country destined for greatness. Or did it? Varon's meticulous unpacking of the layers of falsehood surrounding the myth lays bare a painful truth-that there was no unified vision of what peace might bring to a troubled and still bitterly divided nation." --Joan Waugh, University of California, Los Angeles"Based on exceptionally thorough research, Elizabeth Varon's study meticulously dissects the sentimental, romantic version of the Appomattox story, which portrays it as an apolitical, magnanimous event. Varon shows convincingly that Robert E. Lee and other Confederates made the Army of Northern Virginia's surrender the opening shot in the battle over Reconstruction, and that the seeds of Reconstruction's failure were sown at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865." --Michael Burlingame, author of *Abraham Lincoln: A Life*"Varon probes deep into the psyches of Lee and Grant and analyzes them with fresh eyes to understand what kind of nation they envisioned emerging from the wreckage of war... Varon also delves into the letters, diaries, and memoirs left by the men of the two armies who fought each other during those last desperate days... In her clear, confident, yet elegant, prose, Varon gives renewed life to many of the players in the last act of America's greatest tragedy." --Gordon Berg, Civil War Round Table of the District of Columbia"We are always looking for books that enable us to see the Lees in a new way. Elizabeth Varon's new book, *Appomattox: Victory, Defeat, and Freedom at the End of the Civil War* does just that... A compelling tale." --Paul Reber, Executive Director, Stratford Hall"Varon is effective in dispelling the various myths that have sprung up over the surrender itself, including the fabled meeting under an apple tree, which never happened. Using a wealth of primary and secondary sources, the work is excellent in never treating either North or South as monolithic. The author thoroughly discusses the roles of African Americans in both sections, and gives the political opponents in both regions their say." --K.L. Gorman, Minnesota State University, Mankato, CHOICE"Elizabeth Varon's elegant narrative, provocative argument, and skillful use of sources make this work an interesting addition to the historiography of the Civil War Era." --Southern Literary "A compelling account of the courses taken by Grant and Lee and a superb look at how the public in both sections endeavored to understand what had happened-and what it portended for the future." --Ethan S. Rafuse, *America's Civil War*KurzbeschreibungWinner, Library of Virginia Literary Award for NonfictionWinner, Eugene Feit Award in Civil War Studies, New York Military Affairs SymposiumWinner of the Dan and Marilyn Laney Prize of the Austin Civil War Round TableFinalist, Jefferson Davis Award of the Museum of the ConfederacyBest Books of 2014, Civil War Monitor6 Civil War Books to Read Now, Diane Rehm Show, NPRLee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox Court House evokes a highly gratifying image in the popular mind -- it was, many believe, a moment that transcended politics, a moment of healing, a moment of patriotism untainted by ideology. But as Elizabeth Varon reveals in this vividly narrated history, this rosy image conceals a seething debate over precisely what the surrender meant and what kind of nation would emerge from war. 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