



## **SHELBY D. FOOTE**

### **CLASS 8-42**

After graduating from Officer Candidate School, LT Shelby Foote served as an artillery instructor at Camp Shelby, Mississippi and later served as a CPT with Battery A, 50th Field Artillery, 5th Infantry Division in the British Isles.

After leaving military service he burst onto the literary scene with novels such as *Follow Me, Down* (1950), *Love in a Dry Season* (1951) and *Shilo* (1952), that simultaneously praised and criticized his Southern homeland and soon caught the eye of some of the culture's leading literary lights.

Foote soon took his career in a radical, new direction: between 1954 and 1974, he composed the three-volume, 1.2 million-word *The Civil War: A Narrative*, for which he is best known. Three years after finishing *The Civil War*, he published *September, September* (1977), a novel that was transformed into *Memphis*, a TV movie).

In spite of these achievements, Foote remained relatively unknown before his role in Ken Burns' *The Civil War*, a PBS documentary series first broadcast in 1990 which made him a cultural icon. Since that event, Foote has become widely viewed as an authority on the Civil War, and more generally, as a representative of an era and region whose place continues to be central to our country's understanding of itself. Foote died in 2005 at the age of 88 in Memphis.