



# Gettysburg Requiem: The Life and Lost Causes of Confederate Colonel William C. Oates

*Glenn W. LaFantasie*

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William C. Oates is best remembered as the Confederate officer defeated at Gettysburg's Little Round Top, losing a golden opportunity to turn the Union's flank and win the battle--and perhaps the war. Now, Glenn W. LaFantasie--bestselling author of *Twilight at Little Round Top*--has written a gripping biography of Oates, a narrative that reads like a novel and that reveals, for the first time, the compelling and sometimes astonishing dimensions of this remarkable individual.

Oates was no moonlight-and-magnolias Southerner, as LaFantasie shows. Raised in the hard-scrabble Wiregrass Country of Alabama, he ran away from home as a teenager, roamed through Louisiana and Texas--where he took up card sharking--and finally returned to Alabama, to pull himself up by his bootstraps and become a respected attorney. During the war, he rose to the rank of colonel, served under Stonewall Jackson and Lee, was wounded six times and lost an arm. Returning home, he became wealthy investing in land and cotton, married a woman half his age, and launched a successful political career, becoming a seven-term congressman and ultimately governor. LaFantasie shows how, for Oates and many others of his generation, the war never really ended--he remained devoted to the Lost Cause, and spent the rest of his life waging the political battles of Reconstruction. Yet in one of the final acts of his political career, Oates championed the cause of suffrage for black Americans, delivering an impassioned speech at his state's constitutional convention.

Here then is a richly evocative story of Southern life before, during, and after the Civil War, based on first-time and exclusive access to family papers and never-before-seen archives.

Finalist, Jefferson Davis Award, Museum of the Confederacy

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