

Shelby Foote

Quotes

*Writing, War, Thinking, Book, Men, People, Years, Believe, Want, History,
Firsts, Memories, Hard Times, Used, Time, Home, Typewriters, Way, Needs,
Bored*

Before the war it was always the United States *are*, after the war it was the United States is... it made us an is.

~Shelby Foote

The Civil War defined us as what we are and it opened us to being what we became, good and bad things... It was the crossroads of our being, and it was a hell of a crossroads.

~Shelby Foote

If you want to study writing, read Dickens. That's how to study writing, or Faulkner, or D.H. Lawrence, or John Keats. They can teach you everything you need to know about writing.

~Shelby Foote

People make a grievous error thinking that a list of facts is the truth. Facts are just the bare bones out of which truth is made.

~Shelby Foote

When you grow up in a totally segregated society, where everybody around you believes that segregation is proper, you have a hard time. You can't believe how much it's a part of your thinking.

~Shelby Foote

A university is just a group of buildings gathered around a library.

~Shelby Foote

As a Southerner I would have to say that one of the main importances of the War is that Southerners have a sense of defeat which none of the rest of the country has.

~Shelby Foote

I think making mistakes and discovering them for yourself is of great value, but to have someone else to point out your mistakes is a shortcut of the process.

~Shelby Foote

I abhor the idea of a perfect world. It would bore me to tears.

~Shelby Foote

Longevity conquers scandal every time.

~Shelby Foote

North was only a direction indicated by a compass--if a man had one, that is, for otherwise there was no north or south or east or west; there was only the brooding desolation.

~Shelby Foote

A rich man's war and a poor man's fight.

~Shelby Foote

A fact is not a truth until you love it.

~Shelby Foote

I used to write sonnets and various things, and moved from there into writing prose, which, incidentally, is a lot more interesting than poetry, including the rhythms of prose.

~Shelby Foote

I don't want anything to do with anything mechanical between me and the paper, including a typewriter, and I don't even want a fountain pen between me and the paper.

~Shelby Foote

Most of my inspiration, if that's the word, came from books themselves.

~Shelby Foote

Grant was something rare in that or any war. He could learn from experience.

~Shelby Foote

Writing is very hard work and knowing what you're doing the whole time.

~Shelby Foote

A combination of all that was best in the gladdest days of the departing year.

~Shelby Foote

And I really do think that the difficulty of research makes it more real to you than punching a thing to find out how many men were killed at this particular action.

~Shelby Foote

And I'm a slow writer: five, six hundred words is a good day. That's the reason it took me 20 years to write those million and a half words of the Civil War.

~Shelby Foote

Getting close to books, and spending time by myself, I was obliged to think about things I would never have thought about if I was busy romping around with a brother and sister.

~Shelby Foote

Of all the passions of mankind, the love of novelty most rules the mind. In search of this, from realm to realm we roam. Our fleets come loaded with every folly home.

~Shelby Foote

I took five years on the first volume, five years on the second volume, and ten years on the third volume.

~Shelby Foote

I never cared what kind of grade I got.

~Shelby Foote

My second book, Follow Me Down had some success, got good critical notices, went into a second printing and things like that, but Shiloh was by far the most successful of those first five novels.

~Shelby Foote

I've never known, at least a modern historical instance, where the truth wasn't superior to distortion in every way.

~Shelby Foote

I prize the Depression, for instance, because I learned the value of things in the Depression that a way people who don't have to worry about such things never learned to prize it really, I believe.

~Shelby Foote

If you want to study writing, read Dickens

~Shelby Foote

I began the way nearly everybody I ever heard of - I began writing poetry. And I find that to be quite usual with writers, their trying their hand at poetry.

~Shelby Foote

I've never shown anybody a draft of anything.

~Shelby Foote

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