The First World War destroyed empires, created numerous new nation-states, encouraged independence movements in Europe’s colonies, forced the United States to become a world power and led directly to Soviet communism and the rise of Hitler. Diplomatic alliances and promises made during the First World War, especially in the Middle East, also came back to haunt Europeans a century later. The balance of power approach to international relations was broken but not shattered. It took the Second World War to bring about sufficient political forces to embark on a revolutionary new approach to inter-Shelby Foote, the historian whose incisive, seasoned commentary -- delivered in a drawl so mellifluous that one critic called it "molasses over hominy" -- evoked the Civil War for millions in the 11-hour PBS documentary in 1990, died on Monday at a Memphis hospital. He was 88 and lived in Memphis. His death was reported by his wife, Gwyn, The Associated Press said. Mr. Foote's books carried a great plot, and as academic historians increasingly saw themselves as social scientists armed with the tools of quantitative analysis, he turned to Shakespeare for metaphors and to colloquialisms for literary impact.