

In this clip, from the film "Gettysburg," General Armistead (whose friends called him "Lo") leads his Confederate brigade toward the center of the Union line during "Pickett's Charge."

Reaching a stone wall at the "Angle," Armistead and his men have gone farther than any other Confederate soldiers that day (July 3, 1863). With great courage, he'd stuck his sword through his hat and encouraged his "Virginians" to move forward with him.

Reaching the place known today as the "High Water Mark of the Confederacy," Armistead and his men did all they could - but it was not enough. They were soon overwhelmed by Union forces.

Michael Shaara tells the story in his 1974 book, *The Killer Angels* (at page 315):

*...Armistead came up to the stone wall, and the blue boys were falling back. He felt a moment of incredible joy. A hot slap of air brushed his face, but he was not hit; to the right a great blast of canister and all the troops to his right were down, but then there was another rush, and Armistead leaped to the top of the wall, balanced high on the stones, seeing the blue troops running up the slope into the guns, and then he came down on the other side, had done it, had gotten inside the wall, and men moved in around him, screaming.*

*And then he was hit, finally, in the side, doubling him. No pain at all, merely a nuisance. He moved toward a cannon the boys had just taken. Some blue troops had stopped near the trees above and were kneeling and firing; he saw the rifles aimed at him. Too weary now. He had made it all this way; this way was enough. He put an arm on the cannon to steady himself. But now there was a rush from the right. Blue troops were closing in.*

*Armistead's vision blurred; the world turned soft and still.*

Armistead was hit again. His wounds - three in all - were not mortal, but he would die anyway (on the 5th of July).

Captain Henry Bingham, a Union officer, spoke with the downed Confederate General who inquired about his good friend, General Hancock (from the Union's side).

Hancock, too, was wounded. (He did not die but lived to oppose the execution of Mary Surratt and to become the Democratic Presidential candidate in 1880. He lost to James Garfield.)

Armistead, according to his attending physician - Dr. Daniel Garrison Brinton - was exhausted and had:

*suffered much from over exertion, want of sleep, and mental anxiety within the last few days.*

After "intense suffering," Armistead died in the summer kitchen (scroll down to view pictures and a video) of the George Spangler Farm where Union troops had a field hospital. The attending physician wrote that his death:

*was not from his wounds directly, but from secondary fever [likely caused by infection] and prostration.*

Pickett's Charge had not only failed, it resulted in huge casualties. Lee's strategy - to push ahead, into Union territory - had not ended as he'd hoped.

The momentum of the civil war - and its ultimate result - turned against the Confederacy at the battle of Gettysburg.

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**[Lee and Longstreet at Gettysburg - End of First Day](#)**

**[Lee Reprimands Jeb Stuart at Gettysburg - End of Second Day](#)**

**[Chamberlain and Kilrain at Gettysburg - "Killer Angels" Monologue](#)**

**[Battle of Gettysburg - Union Charge](#)**

**[Pickett's Charge - Plan of Attack](#)**

**NOTE:** Lewis Addison ("Lo") Armistead was portrayed, in the film "Gettysburg," by Richard Jordan who died (of a brain tumor) before the film was released. The movie is dedicated both to him and to Michael Shaara (author of *The Killer Angels*) who died in 1988.

Credits:

Clip from the 1993 film "Gettysburg," based on *The Killer Angels* (a book by Michael Shaara), online courtesy

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**Directed by:**

Ronald F. Maxwell

**Produced by:**

Moctesuma Esparza

Robert Katz

**Screenplay by:**

Ronald F. Maxwell

**Starring:**

**Martin Sheen** - General **Robert E. Lee**

**Tom Berenger** - Lieutenant General **James Longstreet**

**Jeff Daniels** - Colonel **Joshua Chamberlain**

**Stephen Lang** - Major General **George Pickett**

**Joseph Fuqua** - Major General **J.E.B. Stuart**

**George Lazenby** - General **Johnston Pettigrew**

**James Patrick Stuart** - Colonel **Edward Porter Alexander**

**Musical Score by:**

Randy Edelman

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/General-Armistead-During-Pickett-s-Charge>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/General-Armistead-During-Pickett-s-Charge>