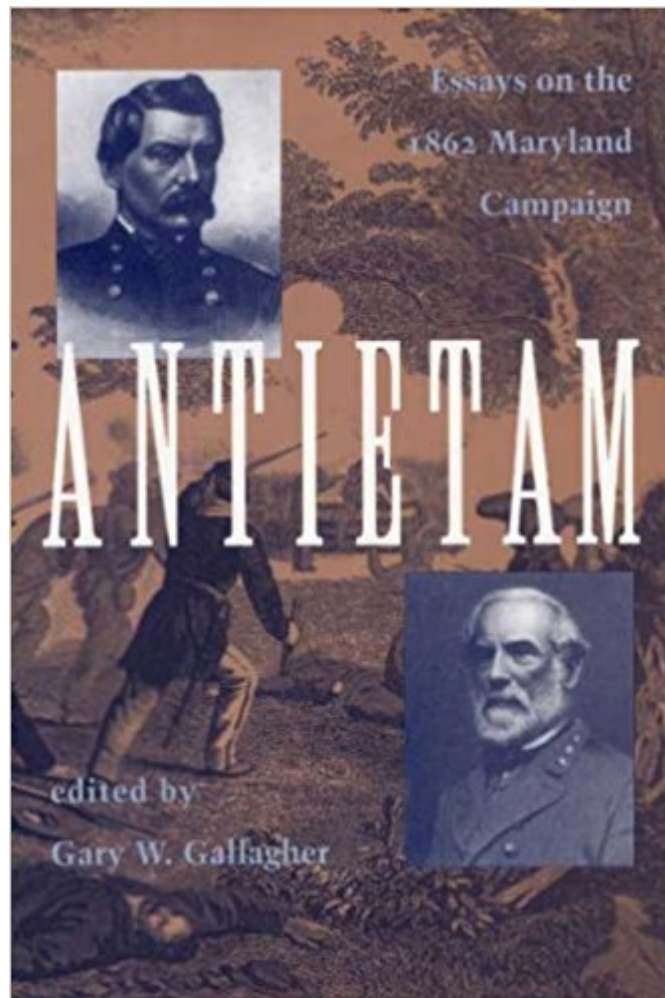




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# Antietam: Essays On The 1863 Maryland Campaign



## Synopsis

The relative importance of Civil War campaigns is a matter for debate among historians and buffs alike. Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and Atlanta have their advocates. Gettysburg certainly maintains its hold on the popular imagination. More recently has come the suggestion that no single campaign or battle decided the war or even appreciably altered its direction. If any one battle was a dividing line, Antietam is a solid contender. In no other campaign were the political, diplomatic, and military elements aligned so favorably for the Confederacy. Yet Lee's retreat after the terrible battle in September 1862 changed everything. Great Britain had second thoughts about intervention; Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation; and Lee's army, while victorious on other fields, proved not to be unbeatable. Across the years, Antietam remains the worst one-day slaughter in American history. The ghastly losses in the Cornfield, the West Woods, and the Sunken Road still appall the reader. Lee's gamble against disaster and George McClellan's inexplicable refusal to press his advantage remain puzzlements.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gary W. Gallagher is professor of history at the University of Virginia. He is a contributing editor of The Kent State University Press publications *Struggle for the Shenandoah: Essays on the 1864 Valley Campaign* (1991); *The First Day at Gettysburg: Essays on Confederate and Union Leadership* (1992); *The Second Day at Gettysburg: Essays on Confederate and Union Leadership*

(1993); and *Three Days at Gettysburg: Essays on Confederate and Union Leadership* (1999).

I have always found any of Gary Gallagher's work product to be beneficial. My only problem is "" title listing as the "1863 Maryland Campaign." Oops!

Book is great! Service was even better!!!!

I've been a big fan of Gary Gallagher's work ever since I started studying the Civil War, and this book did not disappoint. His work is never just a story of a battle, or battles. You come away understanding more about why the events happened where and when they did, and what the real consequences were for the victor as well as the vanquished.

A quick read, but one that raised some interesting views of both the importance of the battle of Antietam Creek and the events that occurred around and during it. I particularly enjoyed the review of the actions of Ambrose Burnside which leaves a more favorable impression of his generalship during the battle. The essay regarding George McClellan goes a way to explaining (but not totally) this enigmatic and contradictory general.

After reading Murfin, Sears, Priest, and various magazine articles, I thought I would go a little deeper into the wheres and whys of September 1862. What a treat! Dennis Frye is the authority on Harper's Ferry (who's fault? Miles, McClellan, or Franklin?) Robert Krick must have been a rebel because it seems as if he was right in their midst, and standing next to R. E. Lee at that, as they crossed the Potomac. As for A. Wilson Greene, he knows and has studied McClellan with the best of historians. George Brinton McClellan could have ended the war on several occasions but instead prolonged it and then patted himself on the back. And finally, Gary Gallagher shows us "a season of opportunity...in perspective" splendidly.

I agree with the previous reviewer. This book hits home and goes deeper into the background of the causes and conflicts arising from the Maryland Campaign of 1862. Take this book with you when you visit Antietam National Battlefield. You will come away with a better understanding of what took place before and after America's Bloodiest single day battle. Highly recommended!

As Civil War histories go, this one falls on the upper end of the middle of the pack. The articles are,

overall, well-written and well-presented. Although better histories of the 1862 campaign do exist (see James McPherson, "Antietam: Crossroads of Freedom"), this is a good collection of essays. This may be a bit petty to mention, but the book is square (as opposed to rectangular), and does not fit well on a bookshelf.

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