



Opposing the Second Corps at Antietam: The Fight for the Confederate Left and Center on America's Bloodiest Day

By Marion V. Armstrong

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With a tally of more than five thousand killed, twenty thousand wounded, and three thousand missing, the Battle of Antietam made September 17, 1862, the deadliest day of combat in American history. In *Opposing the Second Corps at Antietam*, Antietam scholar Marion V. Armstrong Jr. completes his magisterial study of Antietam begun in *Unfurl Those Colors!* by examining Robert E. Lee's leadership at the climactic battle in the Confederate invasion of Union territory.

Eminent Civil War historians consider Antietam the turning point of the war. Hoping to maintain the initiative they had gained at the Second Battle of Bull Run, Confederate leaders looked to a stunning victory on Northern soil to sour Northern sentiment on the war as well as to coax European powers to recognize the fledgling Confederacy. Having examined McClellan's command and role at Antietam in *Unfurl Those Colors!*, Armstrong now recounts in riveting detail Lee's command decisions and their execution in the field, drawing on a superlative collection of first-person accounts by Confederate veterans to narrate the cataclysmic struggle between Lee and McClellan.

Armstrong sets the stage with a lively recap of the political and military events leading up to the early fall of 1862 and foreshadowing the conflagration to come on September 17. Each chapter then traces a critical section of the battle, the fight for the West Woods and the bloody engagement of the Sunken Road. Armstrong augments this collection with an exceptional set of maps, which will be valued by scholars, readers, and visitors to the battlefield. These unique maps delineate troop movements in intervals as brief as fifteen minutes, bringing to life the fluid, mutable lines that characterize the glory and horror of Antietam.

Either together with *Unfurl Those Colors!* or as a stand-alone account of the

Confederate side of the battle, *Opposing the Second Corps at Antietam* provides the fullest possible understanding of the experience of Confederate soldiers at Antietam.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Fully complementing each other, the maps and battle narratives of the companion studies *Unfurl Those Colors!* and *Opposing the Second Corps at Antietam* together comprise the literature's clearest and most complete tactical history of the West Woods and Sunken Road phases of the Antietam battle. These volumes should be regarded as essential components of the 1862 Maryland Campaign bookshelf."

—*Civil War Books and Authors*

"*Opposing the Second Corps at Antietam* is an excellent companion to *Unfurl Those Colors*. Armstrong masterfully recounts the key engagements of the battle at a level of detail no other scholar has done, a task made difficult by the scarcity of Confederate sources. Historians, battlefield trampers, and enthusiasts will welcome his deep analysis."

—Thomas G. Clemens, editor of *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862: Volume 1, South Mountain* and *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862: Volume II, Antietam*

"Marion V. Armstrong's *Opposing The Second Corps At Antietam: The Fight For The Confederate Left And Center On America's Bloodiest Day* is a masterful tactical study as only he can do. This is an essential book for any Antietam library."

—Ted Alexander, author *Antietam: The Bloodiest Day* and *Historian, Antietam National Battlefield*

About the Author

Marion V. Armstrong Jr. is the author of *Unfurl Those Colors: McClellan, Sumner, and the Second Army Corps in the Antietam Campaign*. He is a retired US Army reserve officer and teaches history at Middle Tennessee State University.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marla Mestas:

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