

A 2019 BGES Civil War Field University Program:
The Maryland Campaign Part 3:
The Battle of Antietam

The attack at South Mountain alarmed Robert E. Lee, and he determined to end the raid and return to Virginia. Stonewall Jackson on Schoolhouse Ridge encouraged Lee to hang tight that the garrison of Harpers Ferry would surrender on the morrow (16th). Bolstered by Jackson's encouraging news, Lee brought Longstreet to Sharpsburg and, with elements of Jackson's command, he began to position himself on high ground overlooking Antietam Creek.

McClellan had carried the South Mountain range, and then he inexplicably slowed to a crawl while VI Corps Commander, William B. Franklin, inexplicably failed to move to Harpers Ferry's relief. By the afternoon of September 16, he had deployed the Federal I and XII Corps from Keedysville to move to the vicinity of the Hagerstown Pike north of Sharpsburg, and he sent the IX Corps to the south toward the fords and a lower bridge crossing Antietam Creek. The next day would dawn, and when the sun set the bloodiest single day in U.S. military history had occurred. Join us for the wrap-up of this epic campaign with two of the nation's leading experts on it. A long walking tour through sacred fields. These are the guys to do it with!

Friday, October 25, 2019

6:00 PM. Check in at headquarters hotel for meet, greet, and to pick up your reading books. An opening lecture will discuss the effect of Special Orders #191 on the campaign thus far. We will recap the fighting and maneuvers at and after South Mountain, and then the successful reduction of Harpers Ferry. Now the two armies faced each other across the rolling hills and the valley of the Antietam north, east, and south of Sharpsburg. Dinner is on your own.

Saturday, October 26, 2019

8:15 AM. Perhaps no part of this program is more tactical. You will be walking practically the entire day, and the two days will hardly seem enough to cover the entire battlefield, but we will. We first will go to the Pry House to discuss in detail McClellan's plan of assault. Lee is holding good ground, but his back is to the Potomac River. We then will follow the route of the Federal I and XII Corps to their stepping off points in the North Woods on the Joseph Poffenberger farm.

At earliest dawn, the I Corps stepped off, as you will do, through the cornfield and the East Woods. We will go back and forth with Hay, Doubleday, and Ricketts as 12,000 fall in the 40-acre cornfield on the David Miller farm. We also will consider the fighting qualities of Walker's, Lawton's, and Hood's hard-hitting counterattacks. As we expend the I Corps, we will pick up and bring the ill-fated Joseph K.F. Mansfield's XII Corps up and into the caldron. Shortly after that, elements of Sumner's II Corps under Uncle John Sedgwick slams into the conflagration from the XII Corps left, and together they cross above the cornfield and move into the West Woods north of the Dunker Church. We fight out the Confederates who Lee is feeding into the battle as they arrive on the field—and we fight out the remainder of the day with McLaws, G.T. Anderson, and Walker on the Reel Farm Ridge and Hauser's Ridge. We then will return to the hotel. This evening we will have a dinner and a Q&A session with the historians. Lunch and dinner are included.

Sunday, October 27, 2019

8:15 AM. As the fighting in the I, XII, and II Corps sector fades out, the left of Sumner's Corps under French has found rolling hills that lead to the Confederate center lodged in a sunken farm road in the center of the battlefield. The position initially looks vulnerable because we know what happened there, but for a few hours the Confederates under Daniel Harvey Hill have a commanding and strong entrenchment. Attack after attack fails before an element of the Confederate line breaks under the unremitting fire in their flank and a misunderstood order. As the line is enveloped, the Confederates fall back through yet another cornfield behind their now compromised position, but the Federals do not press and miss the opportunity to split Lee's army in half.

One of the most overlooked portions of the battlefield is the action at the middle bridge and the strong Federal pressure on the outskirts of Sharpsburg—indeed, the fight for Cemetery Hill also threatens to split Lee's army, but the assault is beaten back. We are left with the fighting then that starts near Burnside Bridge. Here from the assaults against Robert Toombs' entrenched rebels we will stay to allow Burnside's men to take the bridge and then finish out the day with the fighting that spreads across the fields to the very outskirts of Sharpsburg. Lee sees his line collapsing but is relieved by the arrival of A.P. Hill's Light Division, which arrives and slams into Burnside's western flank late in the day. Lee remains in place one more day, but McClellan is not coming, and on the 19th Lee withdraws. We will wrap in the peace and quietude of the National Cemetery. A great series with great historians concluded. Lunch included.

About the Faculty:

Tom Clemens has been studying the Maryland Campaign for nearly 30 years, and he edited and annotated the 1,800-page manuscript of the campaign written by the official historian: Ezra Carman. He earned his doctoral degree at George Mason

University, where he studied and was advised by the legendary historian Joseph Harsh. Recently, Clemens proved that McClellan's headquarters was never at the Pry House. He is the longstanding president of the highly respected Save Historic Antietam Foundation.

Scott Hartwig retired in 2014 after a 34-year career in the National Park Service. He was fundamental in the growth of Gettysburg's on-site interpretation and living history programming and the design of all aspects of the new Gettysburg museum/visitor center. He was co-writer for the Telly Award winning park educational broadcasts *Gettysburg: The Soldiers' Battle* & *Gettysburg: The Face of Battle*. He has authored numerous articles, essays, and books on Civil War subjects, and he has appeared on the History Channel, Discovery Channel, and Pennsylvania Cable Network. He is the author of *To Antietam Creek: The Maryland Campaign from September 3 to September 16*, and he is currently working on the second volume, tentatively titled, *I Dread The Thought of the Place: The Battle of Antietam*, which covers the battle and end of the Maryland Campaign.

Hotel Information:

This program will be based in Frederick, Maryland. The hotel will be posted on this site. The headquarters hotel room block will likely be in the \$100 a night range and it will be close to I-70. If you are a betting man or woman, it will be the Hampton Inn on Buckeystown Pike.

Transportation:

The servicing airports are Washington Dulles [IAD], Washington-Baltimore International (BWI), and Washington National (DCA). Traffic is awful around Washington and on I-495, I-270, and I-70. We strongly recommend that you time your travel to arrive before 3 PM. Traffic becomes a problem around 3 PM and remains so until after 7 PM.

Recommended Reading:

You will be provided with a reading book and maps upon arrival. The following books are suggested to enhance your readiness for the program. Amazon.com has a program to support non-profits IF YOU SIGN UP to support Blue and Gray Education Society (EIN 54-1720582) at [AmazonSmile](#). When you sign up there rather than the normal Amazon site, one-half of one percent of your purchase price will be provided to BGES as a donation from Amazon. This will apply not only on this purchase but others you may make at other times.

Ezra A. Carmen & Thomas Clemens: [*The Maryland Campaign of 1862, Volume 2: Antietam*](#)

Bradley Gottfried: [*The Maps of Antietam : An Atlas of the Antietam \(Sharpsburg\) Campaign, including the Battle of South Mountain, September 2-20, 1862*](#)

Joseph L. Harsh: [*Taken at the Flood: Robert E. Lee and Confederate Strategy in the Maryland Campaign of 1862*](#)

Stephen Sears: [*Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam*](#)

Registration Form

The 1862 Maryland Campaign Part 3:

The Battle of Antietam

A BGES Civil War Field University Program

Presented by Thomas Clemens and Scott Hartwig

October 25-27, 2019 from Frederick, Maryland

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Registration includes two lunches, welcoming reception, one dinner, a reading book with maps, the academic program, support of two professional historians, tour director, and transportation appropriate to the registration, which will be limited to three vans: 29 people. We also will provide snacks, bottled water, and a limited selection of sodas.

_____ Registration \$525

_____ Current BGES member \$475

_____ Teacher/full time student with identification \$425

_____ I am not a member but would like to join so that I can get the member's rate, or I am a member who is past due to renew. Please accept my donation of:

\$_____ (must be \$75 or more, which is tax deductible)

_____ I am sending a deposit of \$150 plus full payment for any memberships.
Total enclosed is \$

I will pay the balance due before the event.

_____ Check enclosed

Charge my (circle one) MC VISA AMEXP Discover \$_____

Exp: _____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____

Mail to BGES Seminars, PO Box 1176, Chatham, VA 24531 or fax credit cards to 434-432-0596. You may also register online at www.blueandgrayeducation.org.