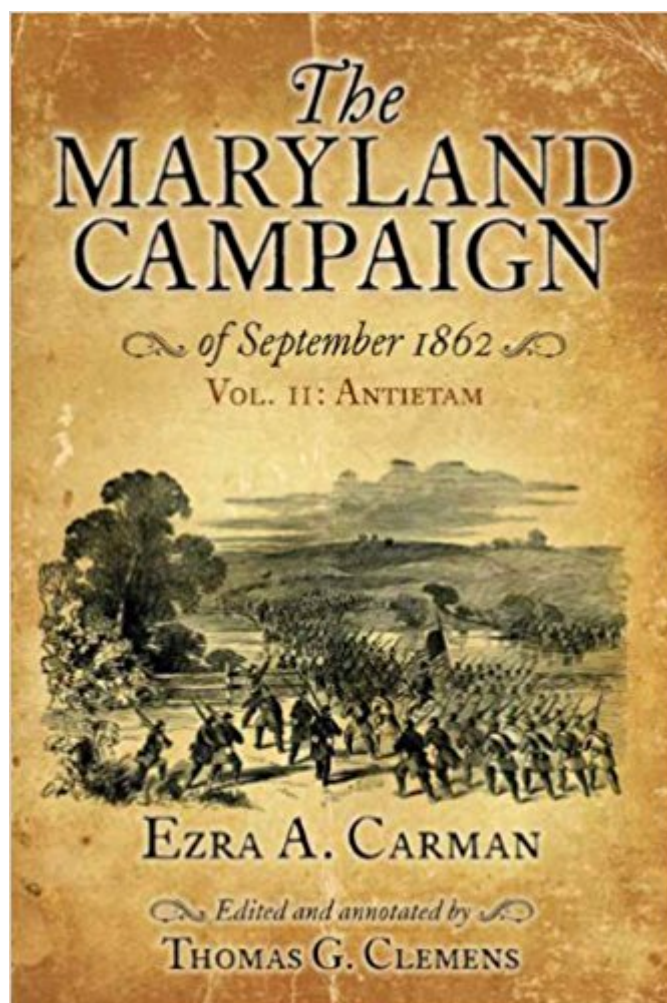


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# The Maryland Campaign Of September 1862. Volume II: Antietam



## Synopsis

Antietam is the eagerly awaited second volume of Ezra Carman's magisterial *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862*. Many authors have written about the climactic September 17 battle of the 1862 invasion of Maryland, but it is impossible to do so without referencing Carman's sweeping and definitive maps and 1,800-page manuscript. His work guides every Civil War historian and comprises the basis of the National Park Service's interpretive programs at Antietam. Indeed, even the basic layout of the National Park battlefield was based upon Carman's groundbreaking work. Carman had the advantage of not only participating in the battle as a colonel in the Union army, but knowing, corresponding, and conversing with hundreds of Northern and Southern soldiers from corps commanders all the way down to privates. Over the decades he amassed a vast collection of letters, maps, and personal memoirs from many key participants. He used this treasure trove of firsthand accounts to create his compelling narrative. No one has devoted more time and effort to understanding what happened at Antietam than did Ezra Carman, the campaign's first true historian. Unfortunately, Carman did not always note from where he obtained his information, making the authenticity and reliability of his work problematic. Editor Thomas G. Clemens, recognized internationally as one of the foremost historians of the Maryland Campaign, has spent more than two decades studying Antietam and editing and richly annotating Carman's exhaustively written manuscript. As Clemens discovered, Carman used his sources judiciously, and the stories he relates withstand scrutiny for accuracy and reliability. Carman's invaluable prose is augmented by his detailed maps of the dawn to nearly dusk fighting on September 17, which have never appeared in their original form in any book on the battle. Even more exciting are the newly discovered 19th century photographs authorized by Carman to document his work laying out the battlefield, a haunting visual record of how the battlefield appeared to Carman as he tried to unravel its mysteries. The result is *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862: Antietam*, the most comprehensive and detailed account of the battle ever produced. Jammed with firsthand accounts, personal anecdotes, detailed footnotes, maps, and photos, this long-awaited study will be read and appreciated as battle history at its finest. Indeed, we will never see such a study again.

**Authors:** Ezra Ayres Carman was born in Oak Tree, New Jersey, on February 27, 1834, and educated at Western Military Academy in Kentucky. He fought with New Jersey organizations throughout the Civil War. He died in 1909 on Christmas day and was buried just below the Custis-Lee mansion in Arlington Cemetery. Thomas G. Clemens earned his doctoral degree at George Mason University, where he studied under Maryland Campaign historian Dr. Joseph L. Harsh. Tom

has published a wide variety of magazine articles and book reviews, has appeared in several documentary programs, and is a licensed tour guide at Antietam National Battlefield. A retired professor from Hagerstown Community College, he also helped found and is the current president of Save Historic Antietam Foundation, Inc., a preservation group dedicated to saving historic properties.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 696 pages

Publisher: Savas Beatie; 1st Edition edition (September 19, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 161121114X

ISBN-13: 978-1611211146

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.6 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 17 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #659,616 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #31 in [Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Campaigns & Battlefields > Antietam](#) #6737 in [Books > History > Military > United States](#) #12385 in [Books > History > Americas > United States > State & Local](#)

## Customer Reviews

“Ezra Carman fought at Antietam, devoted the rest of his life to studying the battle, and his manuscript of the Maryland campaign and Antietam is unparalleled in Civil War historiography. Editor Thomas Clemens has applied scholarship, context, and analysis to Carman’s life work. A masterful performance all around.” (Stephen W. Sears, author of *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam*) “If the long-unpublished Ezra Carman manuscript is the Bible on the Maryland Campaign in general and the battle of Antietam in particular, then Tom Clemens’ edited and annotated version is the equivalent of Strong’s Concordance. The Maryland Campaign of 1862 (with a third concluding volume to follow) remains the unchallenged authority on Ezra Carman, and everyone interested in the subject needs to read these books.” (Ted Alexander, Chief Historian, Antietam National Battlefield) “Historians have long recognized and used the Carman manuscript as the most knowledgeable and reliable source on the Maryland Campaign and the Battle of Antietam. Based on his exhaustive research into Carman’s papers and other sources, Dr. Clemens has now

exponentially enhanced the manuscript's value and utility by demonstrating where Carman obtained his information, and where that information can be accessed today. Nothing will ever be of greater value to historians researching the Maryland Campaign. (Marion V. Armstrong, author of *Unfurl Those Colors!: McClellan, Sumner, & the Second Army Corps in the Antietam Campaign and Disaster in the West Woods*) "Ezra A. Carman knew more about Antietam than anyone. His manuscript is one of the most important works ever written on the battle, and Tom Clemens has made it better with a brilliant job of editing. (D. Scott Hartwig, author of *To Antietam Creek: The Maryland Campaign*) "The Maryland Campaign of 1862 offers a detailed blow-by-blow account of the action that raged outside the small western Maryland town of Sharpsburg and along the banks of Antietam Creek, told primarily through the recollections and firsthand accounts of those who fought in the massive bloodletting in 1862's September. As he did with *Volume 1 on South Mountain* (2010), Dr. Thomas Clemens brilliantly edited and annotated this portion of Ezra Carman's monumental manuscript, and in doing so demonstrates anew not only his great skill as a trained historian in analyzing Carman's interpretations and sources, but his own extensive knowledge of this decisive battle, which remains the bloodiest single day battle in American history. Quite simply, this volume belongs in the hands of anyone seeking a true understanding of Antietam. (John David Hoptak, Park Ranger, Antietam National Battlefield)

Ezra Ayres Carman was born in Oak Tree, New Jersey, on February 27, 1834, and educated at Western Military Academy in Kentucky. He fought with New Jersey organizations throughout the Civil War, mustering out as a brevet brigadier general. He was appointed to the Antietam National Cemetery Board of Trustees and later to the Antietam Battlefield Board in 1894. Carman also served on the Chattanooga-Chickamauga Battlefield Commission. He died in 1909 on Christmas day and was buried just below the Custis-Lee mansion in Arlington Cemetery. Thomas G. Clemens earned his doctoral degree at George Mason University, where he studied under Maryland Campaign historian Dr. Joseph L. Harsh. Tom has published a wide variety of magazine articles and book reviews, has appeared in several documentary programs, and is a licensed tour guide at Antietam National Battlefield. A retired professor from Hagerstown Community College, he also helped found and is the current president of Save Historic Antietam Foundation, Inc., a preservation group dedicated to saving historic properties.

All that expected and more. Volume I was just as good. And the Maps of Antietam was the best of

all.

The classic of The Maryland Campaign of September 1862 has long been considered a classic in military literature but something which has been missing in the document is annotations. Upon reading primary sources, there are some questionable things which have been written in these accounts, but with a good annotation, the errors are corrected and sources properly. Thomas G. Clemens has provided these annotations and are an excellent way to re-read this classic. Ezra Ayres Carman was born in Oak Tree, New Jersey and attended the Western Military Academy in Kentucky. During the Civil War, he fought with New Jersey units and faced some of the fiercest fighting throughout the war including the Battle of Antietam. After the war, he was appointed to the Antietam National Cemetery Board of Trustees and the Battlefield Board. Thomas G. Clemens has spent years studying the Maryland Campaign and gained his doctorate at George Mason University. He has written a myriad of magazine articles and has appeared in documentaries along with being a licensed tour guide at Antietam National Battlefield. Also, he is an instructor at Hagerstown Community College and also founded the Save Historic Antietam Foundation. Much of volume one deals with the Battle of South Mountain and the process of reaching the battlefield of Antietam. Without volume one, volume two does not make much sense but both works stand as classics. In order to appreciate the full context of Carman's work, both volumes need to be read and with Clemens' annotations aid the work in the best way possible. Thomas G. Clemens has performed a labor of love and his notes on the Battle of Antietam are quite extensive. Throughout the text, there are quite a few good historic maps and the text is also fueled with many good photographs of the field. The Battle of Antietam is one of the most terrifying experiences from the Civil War and is considered the bloodiest day in American history. In all of the works on the battle, there are few which do not mention the work done by Ezra Carman and since he was present at the battle, the primary source can be seen as more accurate than others. Without the words of Clemens, there could be some confusion on the part of the reader not quite familiar with the battlefield of Antietam or the rest of the Maryland Campaign. The Maryland Campaign of September 1862 Volume II: Antietam, stands on its own as a great work of Civil War literature, but is more appreciated with both volumes. I highly recommend this book to anyone who has an interest in the Maryland Campaign or is just interested in the Battle of Antietam. This in depth work by a Civil War veteran brings the horror of the battlefield to the reader and the annotations of Clemens bring academia to the work. These two volumes will be hailed as the greatest edition of Carman's work and a great addition to the annals of Civil War history. Matthew

This is an incredible Civil War book. Absolutely everything you wanted to know about the battle of Antietam, right down to regimental level. But... and this is a big but: what was absolutely necessary for me to enjoy this book was having "The Maps of Antietam" by Bradley M. Gottfried at my side. The maps in Maryland Campaign are not very clear or complete, in my opinion. Any book written on the regiment level needs detailed, crisp maps, and this book would not have been readable without Gottfried's map book. But with this reference available, the Clemens book is totally sensational. You actually feel like you're there - in the cornfields, the East Woods, the Sunken Lane... Carman is somewhat pro-Union in his bias, but what the heck, we won, didn't we..... All kidding aside, buy this, buy the Gottfried book with it, and there's NOTHING you don't know about Antietam!

Ezra Carman commanded the 13th New Jersey Volunteer Infantry at Antietam. After the war, he worked for the government becoming involved with the National Military Parks. In a sense, Carman never left Antietam, spending much of his life studying the Maryland Campaign of 1862. He corresponded with everyone he could find, walking the ground with veterans. Asking questions, requesting clarifications, matching different memories until a cohesive picture of the battle emerged. These endless hours made him, the historical expert for the Board created Antietam National Battlefield. Ezra Carman preserved his research in a 1,800 page handwritten manuscript and series of maps. While the maps were published in 1904, the manuscript was never published until a few years ago. The manuscript did not sit alone being ignored. Historians recognized Carman's work as the essential source for this campaign. Thomas Clemens, like Ezra Carman, spent most of his adult life at Antietam. After studying under Joseph L. Harsh, he lived and taught in the area giving him a "boots on the ground" understanding. While co-founding the Save Historic Antietam Foundation, he serves as a licensed Battlefield Guide and a National Park Service volunteer interpreter. Together, Carman and Clemens, possess a unique set of skills that might be impossible to duplicate. Carman participated in the campaign. His military experience provided insights into the thinking of participants as it deepened his understanding of what they told him. Clemens' training, professional experience and observation of the area links him to Carman. This unique book is the result of their working "together". This is the Battle of Antietam starting on the 16th and ending on the 17th. About 20 pages cover the two days following the battle and 40 pages cover the 16th. Savas Beatie announced third volume covering the end of the campaign. About 480 pages of text and 80 pages

of Appendix are devoted to the battle. Clemens' editing cleans up spelling, grammar and makes 19th Century prose readable without losing Carman's writing. The result is a very readable in spite of a very detailed battle history. In a sense, this is two books. Clemens' notes are the second book. He walks us through the manuscript explaining the reasons, sources and problems we encounter. These are page notes allowing the reader to follow the discussion without flipping hundreds of pages every couple of minutes. The level of detail is astounding and can only come from the veterans. The book presents an operational and tactical Antietam. Yes, this is a large book and very detailed. However, I did not find it a chore to read. I never bogged down in the details and always found a map in the right place at the right time. Those of us who read Civil War history owe Savas Beatie a debt of gratitude for bringing manuscripts that only historians could see to us.

If you're looking for an extremely detailed description of the Battle of Antietam this is it, down to the company level at times. I recommend reading the South Mountain volume as well to understand how the battle "plan" was determined in the weeks before. I would recommend having a separate period map handy to follow the troop movements page by page. Ezra Carman and Thomas Clemens have provided subject matter for many more off-road battlefield excursions in the future, and I have been visiting the battlefield for over thirty years so far.

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