

Antietam:

Like You've Never Walked It Before!

led by John Michael "Mike" Priest

Saturday, September 9, 2017



Following his crushing defeat of John Pope's hapless Army of Virginia at the Battle of Second Bull Run, Robert E. Lee elected to take his Army of Northern Virginia northward across the Potomac River in an effort to bring the ravages of war to Northern territory. In early September 1862, the Confederates began their invasion of Maryland, opening it with a complex operation to remove the threat to their supply line represented by the Federal garrison of Harpers Ferry.

While this series of movements was unfolding in the mountains, President Abraham Lincoln reluctantly returned Major General George B. McClellan to command of the Federal forces defending Washington. The result was a series of battles for the passes in South Mountain that, while Union victories, alerted Lee to his dangerous situation and permitted him to complete the Harpers Ferry operation successfully.

His foray into the North at an end, Lee gathered his army outside the village of Sharpsburg, Maryland and prepared to make a stand. McClellan leisurely approached and on 17 September began the bloodletting known to history as the Battle of Antietam (US) or Sharpsburg (CS). During the course of the Civil War's bloodiest day, names like the Cornfield, the Dunker Church, Bloody Lane and Burnside's Bridge were forever etched in America's consciousness. Tactically a draw, Antietam was a Union victory strategically. The war would go on, but Lincoln's issuance of the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation following Antietam would henceforth change its character in incalculable ways.

On Saturday morning, we will assemble at the Antietam National Battlefield Visitor Center and then set forth to cover the battle sequentially from north to south. We'll visit the **North Woods** and **East Woods areas** and witness first-hand how the rolling hills affected visibility and influenced the course of the battle. We will walk across the famed **Miller Cornfield**, the scene of indescribable carnage compacted into an area about 250 yards deep and 400 yards wide that changed hands repeatedly throughout the morning. Then, at the **West Woods**, we will walk through the thickets to the 15th Massachusetts line, and on to the **Dunkard Church**.

After a picnic lunch, we will resume our hike - through the fields from the **Mumma Farm** to **Roulette Lane** and the **Bloody Lane**, where, from about 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM, Union and Confederate soldiers fought a particularly vicious battle.

Next, at **Burnside's Bridge** we'll see where a small number of Georgian sharpshooters, protected by trees and boulders overlooking the bridge, held off repeated attempts to take the bridge by Union forces

commanded by Major General Ambrose Burnside. Fittingly, we will close the day at the **Antietam National Cemetery** with a tribute to those who fell contending for their respective causes.

Although **this tour will involve vigorous walking**, we'll never be far away from our support vehicles - so you can take a breather and catch a ride if you wish. Comfortable walking shoes are a must.

About Our Tour Leader

Mike Priest, a retired Washington County, Maryland high school history teacher, is an Antietam Battlefield Licensed Guide. He has written and/or edited 13 books and numerous articles on the American Civil War including: *Antietam: The Soldiers' Battle*; *Before Antietam: The Battle for South Mountain*; and *Into the Fight: Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg*. His latest book is *Stand to It and Give Them Hell: Gettysburg as the Soldiers Experienced it from Cemetery Ridge to Little Round Top, July 2, 1863*.

Saturday, September 9

8:30 AM
5:00 PM

Assemble in Parking Lot in front of Antietam Visitor Center
Arrive Back at Antietam Visitor Center

Registration Fee - \$150

What is Included in your Registration Fee:

- the guide services of John Michael Priest
- transportation to sites as indicated
- lunch
- refreshments and snacks during the tour
- map package

Enroll **Online** at WWW.CWEA.NET, or **Call 800-298-1861**, or **Mail in** the form below:

Name _____ Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone # (____) _____ E-Mail Address _____

Antietam: A Walking Tour Registration Fee - \$150

If You Must Cancel we will refund 100% of your fees paid.

Enclosed is Payment in amount of \$ _____
 Check Payable to CWEA Charge my MasterCard, VISA, Discover or AMEX

Card # _____ Ex Date _____

Security# (3 digit # on back of VISA, MC or DISC or 4 digit # on front of AMEX) _____

Signature _____

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