

ANTIETAM

ANTIETAM THE LOST ORDER

DONALD R. JERMANN



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To my wife, Florence

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Introduction

When the Confederates under Gen. Robert E. Lee invaded Maryland in September 1862, the invasion force passed squarely between the main Union army under Gen. George B. McClellan in Washington and the large Union garrison at Harpers Ferry. General Lee decided to take a risk and divide his army into four parts, first surround and then capture the Harpers Ferry garrison, and then reunite his army before McClellan knew what was going on.

By a fantastic set of circumstances, a copy of Lee's secret plan fell into McClellan's hands. McClellan then knew exactly what Lee's intentions were, where each of the pieces of Lee's divided army was, and where all of them were going. This provided McClellan with an unparalleled opportunity to destroy Lee's army before the pieces could reunite. When McClellan read Lee's plan, he exclaimed, "Here is a paper with which if I cannot whip Bobbie Lee, I will be willing to go home."

From the time McClellan read the plan, the clock became king. There were only so many hours available to him before Lee's army reunited and the opportunity to destroy it in detail, and possibly end the war in 1862, was gone for good. This book covers those hours. As it turned out, it was a photo finish.

The area of conflict is shown in map 1.

Map 1
Perspective Map



Area of Conflict 

