



# **The Chickamauga Campaign - A Mad Irregular Battle: From the Crossing of Tennessee River Through the Second Day, August 22 - September 19, 1863**

*David Powell*

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Chickamauga, according to soldier rumor, is a Cherokee word meaning “River of Death.” It certainly lived up to that grim sobriquet in September 1863 when the Union Army of the Cumberland and Confederate Army of Tennessee waged bloody combat along the banks of West Chickamauga Creek. Long considered a two-day affair, award-winning author David Powell embraces a fresh approach that explores Chickamauga as a three-day battle, with September 18 being key to understanding how the fighting developed the next morning. The second largest battle of the Civil War produced 35,000 casualties and one of the last, clear-cut Confederate tactical victories—a triumph that for a short time reversed a series of Rebel defeats and reinvigorated the hope for Southern independence. At issue was Chattanooga, the important “gateway to the South” and logistical springboard into Georgia.

Despite its size, importance, and fascinating cast of characters, this epic Western Theater battle has received but scant attention. Powell masterfully rectifies this oversight with *The Chickamauga Campaign—A Mad Irregular Battle: From the Crossing of the Tennessee River Through the Second Day, August 22 – September 19, 1863*. The first of three installments spanning the entire campaign, *A Mad Irregular Battle* includes the Tullahoma Campaign in June, which set the stage for Chickamauga, and continues through the second day of fighting on September 19. The second installment finishes the battle from dawn on September 20 and carries both armies through the retreat into Chattanooga and the beginning of the siege. The third and last book of the series includes appendices and essays exploring specific questions about the battle in substantially greater detail.

Powell’s magnificent study fully explores the battle from all perspectives and is based upon fifteen years of intensive study and research that has uncovered nearly 2,000 primary sources from generals to private, all stitched together to relate the remarkable story that was Chickamauga. Here, finally, readers will absorb the thoughts and deeds of hundreds of the battle’s veterans, many of whom they have never heard of or read about. In addition to archival sources, newspapers, and other firsthand accounts, Powell grounds his conclusions in years of personal study of the terrain itself and regularly leads tours of the battlefield. His prose is as clear and elegant as it is authoritative and definitive.

*The Chickamauga Campaign—A Mad Irregular Battle* is Powell’s magnum opus, a tour-de-force rich in analysis brimming with heretofore untold stories. It will surely be a classic must-have battle study for every serious student of the Civil War.

## REVIEWS

“Award-winning author David Powell has already made a name for himself with his two previous Chickamauga-related books. His latest monograph, *The Chickamauga Campaign—A Mad Irregular Battle*—the first of three volumes on the full campaign—sets the standard for Civil War battle studies. Powell’s monumental contribution is based upon some 2,000 sources and a deep familiarity with the

battlefield. The result is a clearly written and intimately detailed account of this complex engagement from its earliest roots through the night of September 19, 1863. The second installment will finish the fighting and carry readers to Chattanooga, while the third and final volume handles a variety of controversies, orders of battles with losses, and much more. No one will ever look at Chickamauga the same way again.”

— Lee White, Park Ranger, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park

“Extremely readable, heavily researched, and mammoth in scope, Dave Powell’s Chickamauga study will prove to be the most detailed treatment of the battle to date. Civil War buffs and historians alike will want these books on their bookshelves, where they will take their rightful place beside Tucker and Cozzens as seminal volumes on the battle.”

— Timothy B. Smith, author of *Champion Hill and Corinth 1862*

“David Powell has written a book of impressive detail. This exhaustively researched study puts the reader squarely in the middle of the battle of Chickamauga. He presents a balanced look at not only the fighting, but the myriad personalities who took part. This book is a must for any serious student of the campaign. I eagerly await the next two volumes that will complete this series.”

— Frank P. Varney, author of *General Grant and Rewriting of History: How the Destruction of General William S. Rosecrans Has Influenced Our Understanding of the Civil War*

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