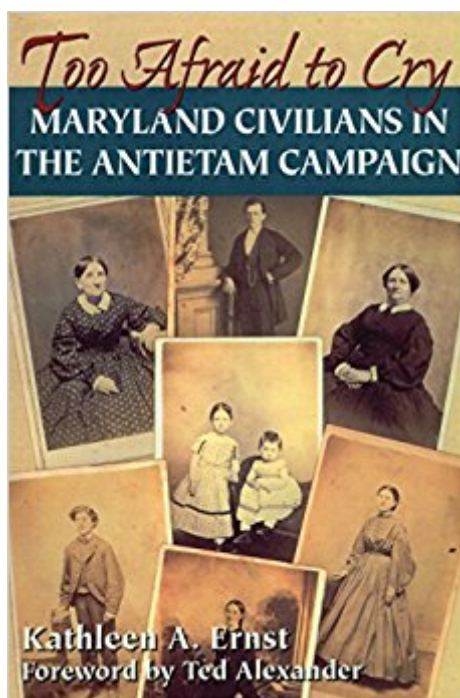


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# Too Afraid To Cry: Maryland Civilians In The Antietam Campaign



## Synopsis

Now Available in Paperback First study of the Antietam campaign from civilians' perspectives Many never-before-published accounts of the Battle of Antietam The battle at Antietam Creek, the bloodiest day of the American Civil War, left more than 23,000 men dead, wounded, or missing. Facing the aftermath were the men, women, and children living in the village of Sharpsburg and on surrounding farms. In *Too Afraid to Cry*, Kathleen Ernst recounts the dramatic experiences of these Maryland citizens--stories that have never been told--and also examines the complex political web holding together Unionists and Secessionists, many of whom lived under the same roofs in this divided countryside.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Kathleen A. Ernst, a Maryland native, is a graduate of Antioch University and the author of numerous articles in magazines such as *Civil War Times Illustrated* and *America's Civil War*. She lives in Wisconsin.

Wow! Another book that tells of the dread and horrors that the Civil War brought to the civilians, and it is done as perfectly as one could ever hope. It is written in a lively manner and was very hard to put down. Based totally on facts, using diary and journal accounts, the writer brings the reader right in to the middle of the Maryland conflict, from the trepidation the citizens felt weeks before the battle at Sharpsburg/Antietam as the Rebs entered their border state, through the battle itself, and finally

how they dealt with the after affects of the worst one day battle ever fought on American soil. We here in the 21st century cannot fathom what our ancestors went through - what they felt...the aptly titled "Too Afraid to Cry" will give the reader at least a tiny idea of what life was like for the folks living in Maryland in the early Fall of 1862. Wow is right!

Seldom do we get a chance to read about civilians and their stories through out the Antietam Campaign. This book gives us a great look at just what the hardships Maryland civilians had to endure. Authors Kathleen Ernst and Ted Alexander have assembled an interesting book that features Confederate and Union early concentrations, skirmishes and battles around the Sharpsburg and Frederick areas that bring to life civilian response. Popular families such as the Prys, Pipers and Millers living in the area of Sharpsburg during the battle are covered along with many others that explain the ordeals and horrors these families faced while war was at their doorstep. Interesting and facinating the text explains the unknown hardships that civilians had to face while battles took place and how also many tried to survive after the bloody engagements. One can not just read about the battle and get a full perspective on the campaign without considering reading about the civilians and I highly recommend this book! 5 STARS!

Comprehensive and personal take on civilians and soldiers surrounding our nation's bloodiest day. Shows the negative and positive aspects of people and their human nature under great duress. Well written.

Good

Once you start it you can't put it down, and I've heard the same from those who borrowed it from me. It's a different perspective of the 1862 Maryland Campaign.

This book was really interesting. It tells the story of how the war affected the civilians in the towns overrun with two armies.

History books are undeniably one of the big niche markets in print media; the American Civil War in particular. Of the many I've tackled over the years, some are as well written and researched, but few make the narrative "come alive" like this one. Generally, you find dry campaign overviews, replete with chronologies for whatever battle, and/or Gen So-n-So, followed by the inevitable "armchair

quarterback" critique. The other big trend is the dissection of an ever more specific sub topic. Thankfully, there are notable exceptions, this fine volume being one of them. "Too Afraid to Cry" is written from "the bottom up", so to speak. It starts and ends from the individual citizen or soldier's perspective. What Gen So-n-So did might be noted to provide context, but the focus is always on making clear the hell that war is, and the hell these Western Maryland people lived through. This stuff tends to get whitewashed in Civil War literature. Nowhere else will you read about how nearly EVERY house in Sharpsburg was ransacked, even with owners present! Consciously or not, the history establishment in this country helps to perpetuate the idealized facade of the Civil War as a "quaint" little conflict. Dozens of scenes in this book, like 5 yr old Ollie contemplating a growing pile of amputated limbs, or a farmer's civil rights being trampled, along with his property (that wasn't stolen!), don't sit well on the moral chassis of the Civil War Muscle Car they want to sell you. Then you turn the page and find that after more than a decade of legal wrangling, the ruined farmer ended up with a dime on the dollar for the damage claims he filed (if he was lucky), and moreover, that Uncle Sam didn't really give a flip... This is the perspective that "Too Afraid to Cry" gives you, and this is why I like this book so much. It's a refreshing switch from the sanitized, prepackaged norm. A double shot of Civil War reality, straight up!

The author and I must have been twins separated at birth, because her biography sounds like a more successful version of mine!!, too, was born outside Maryland, but grew up in Frederick. I lived in the village of Middletown and was, from birth, imbued with deep respect for, and fascination with, the Civil War. The Battle of Antietam took place almost on my doorstep, and I was always fascinated with the town of Sharpsburg. The battle engulfed this small, ancient, and beautiful western Maryland town far longer and deeper than the fighting would suggest. What happened inside all those stone houses and churches? How did the town survive to become such an important place of pilgrimage? Who was fighting whom OFF the battlefield? Maryland's position as a border state, and a slave state, had profound implications for its citizens. The author tells us the story of the people just looking for a better life, not driven to rage by unbending, blind commitment to abstract principles. At times, this story will move you to tears. Using the Sharpsburg fabric as an image within Maryland's larger tapestry, the author takes on these questions with the skill of ANY history scholar. Exhaustively researched, and beautifully rendered, here is the story of how people with everything to lose survived the Civil War by living each day pragmatically, as if it could be the last. Marvelous work, recommended for all serious Civil War enthusiasts and local historians.

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