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Apostle of Union: A Political Biography of Edward Everett by
Matthew Mason (review)

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stops not on the standard driving tour. This guide takes visitors along the route of Longstreet's afternoon offensive against the Union left flank, examining the famous engagements at Little Round Top, the Wheatfield, Devil's Den, and the Sherfy Peach Orchard before culminating atop Cemetery Ridge. Like the first day of the battle, the second day's action contained numerous moving pieces, back and forth fighting, and chronologically overlapping incidents. This provides a challenge to any field guide, discerning how best to organize and describe events. The authors do a creditable job in helping first-time visitors understand each phase of the battle as it unfolded, especially through their use of maps (averaging one per chapter). Even so, I would have preferred even more maps than they offered or perhaps additional notes that pointed to the best map to use at certain points of their tour. Some parts required a more thorough reading to comprehend. The authors' description of the Rose Wheatfield, for instance, became problematic when descriptions of the combat did not match the closest map provided.

A real strength of this battlefield guide lies in the fact that each chapter was split between a battle narrative and the history of the battlefield after the war, including the erection of monuments by the veterans. The authors took pains to emphasize the battle for memory when veterans debated in post-war years, and they also pointed out the damage inflicted upon the topography by unwise tourism endeavors. Finally, the authors included several informative sidebar appendices, including a detailed walking tour of the Wheatfield, a discussion of Joshua Chamberlain's role in expanding the memory of Little Round Top, and an analysis of the famous "Rebel Sharpshooter" photograph taken at Devil's Den.

Overall, *Don't Give an Inch* offers an accessible, highly informative, and well-rounded picture of the events of July 2 at the southern end of the battlefield. It is a highly recommended Gettysburg guide.

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Matthew Mason. *Apostle of Union: A Political Biography of Edward Everett*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016. 434 pp. Cloth, \$39.95. ISBN 978-1-4696-2860-8.

People familiar with the events of November 19, 1863, know Edward Everett was the featured orator at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. However, whereas Lincoln's Gettysburg Address has been justly recognized as one of the finest speeches in U.S. history, Everett's words have been forgotten. Nowadays, people are unlikely to recognize even his name. Matthew Mason finds this troubling. In *Apostle of Union*, Mason offers a compelling argument that Everett's career as a pro-Union zealot may have had more to do with northern victory than previously believed.

To Mason, Everett was much more than a forgotten orator at Gettysburg. More than anything, he represented a cluster of middle ground politicians who sought to keep the Union together at any price. Mason calls Everett an "apostle of Union," a title that deliberately plays off Charles B. Dew's popular book, *Apostles of Disunion*, the story of the southern secession commissioners. By focusing on Everett's career, Mason reimagines antebellum politics with a new paradigm, rejecting the idea that prewar politics was merely a two-sided contest between the North and the South. Rather, it was a three-way struggle between "Northern sectionalists, Southern sectionalists, and committed Unionists" (9). Mason begins his book by describing Everett's "Unionist gospel" speeches and the local reactions to them (2). These speeches are a reminder, says Mason, that Everett and his fellow Unionists spent years cultivating their political ideas and that, initially, they did not ally with the extremists of either section.

Mason successfully illuminates the twists and turns of Everett's career, which, upon first glance, can appear confusing. In his first speech, as a U.S. Representative from Massachusetts, Everett defended slavery, which caused his critics to complain he was too eager to placate slaveholders. Later on, as Governor of Massachusetts, Everett "built up a track record of antislavery action," causing other critics to assume he was a Northern sectionalist (114). Later still, as U.S. Minister to Great Brit-

ain, he refused to advocate on behalf of slaveholders, putting him out of step with his predecessors. Everett moved from assignment to assignment. In 1852, he became Secretary of State, and after that, he was elected U.S. Senator by the Massachusetts General Court. Strangely, he missed an important vote during his tenure—perhaps the most important vote of the decade—the one that resulted in the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Due to public criticism for missing that vote, he resigned from the Senate.

Mason believes the key to understanding Everett is to recognize his role as an ardent party and nation builder. After Everett's resignation from the Senate, he entered "into perhaps the most significant and enjoyable era of his varied career," which involved a national speaking tour to help raise money for the preservation of Mount Vernon (210). During the multi-year excursion, Everett tried to harness the tide of Unionism, and by 1860, the Constitutional Union Party tapped him to become their

party's vice presidential nominee. When the Civil War broke out, Everett merely continued his Unionist proselytizing. He used his Unionism to sway foreign opinion—particularly in Great Britain—he led fundraisers for Southern Unionists, and he orated at Gettysburg.

Mason urges readers not to underestimate Edward Everett's influence. To him, the North may have won because, at some point, the moderate Unionists chose to ally with the radical antislavery activists, and Everett had much to do with cementing that alliance. Mason concludes, "Both the overall size of that Unionist side and the strength it offered to the antislavery side when joined during the Civil War had a lot to do with the thoughtful and dedication exertions of Edward Everett" (321).

A short review cannot do justice to this magnificent volume. It is highly recommended for both a general and an academic audience.

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