

ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

The Battle of Cedar Mountain, August 9, 1862

By Daniel Welch

Resources

If you can read only one book

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year.
Krick, Robert K.	<i>Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain</i> . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.

Books and Articles

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year. “Title,” in <i>Journal</i> ##, no. # (Date): #.
Block, Mike	“The Battle of Cedar Mountain,” in <i>Blue & Gray Magazine</i> 32, no. 2 (April 2016):188.
Stackpole, Edward J.	<i>From Cedar Mountain to Antietam</i> . Harrisburg, PA: The Stackpole Company, 1959.
Freeman, Douglas Southall	<i>Lee’s Lieutenants: A Study in Command: Cedar Mountain to Chancellorsville</i> , 3 vols. New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1942, vol. 2, chaps. 1-3.
Hennessy, John J.	<i>Return to Bull Run: The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas</i> . New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993, chaps. 1-3.
Martin, David G.	<i>The Second Bull Run Campaign July-August 1862</i> . Conshohocken, PA: Combined Books, 1997, chaps. 1-5.

Organizations

Organization Name	Description, Contact information including address, email
Friends of Cedar Mountain Battlefield	Friends of Cedar Mountain Battlefield is a community-based non-profit corporation dedicated to working cooperatively with landowners and local citizens to protect, restore, maintain, manage, interpret, and promote public awareness of the Cedar Mountain Civil War Battlefield and vicinity in Culpeper County, Virginia. Their website is: https://friendsofcedarmountain.org/

Web Resources

URL	Name and description
https://www.battlefields.org/visit/battlefields/cedar-mountain-battlefield	The American Battlefield Trust provides exclusive, free content on the battle and the organization's fight to preserve the battlefield.
https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/brandy-station-and-cedar-mountain-state-park	Brandy Station and Cedar Mountain battlefields in Culpeper County are among the most significant sites of the American Civil War. Now, an effort is underway to transform this pair of historic battlefields into Virginia's next state park.

Other Sources

Scholars

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Topic Précis

The Union forces posed a threat across Virginia in three fronts in the summer of 1862. The Army of the Potomac under McClellan remained on the Virginia peninsula following the Seven Days Battles, Burnside's force was operating in the Fredericksburg area and the newly formed Army of Virginia was moving southward under John Pope. In mid-July, confident that McClellan was not going to act, Lee sent Jackson north to meet Pope, weakening his Richmond defenses. This marked the beginning of Lee's first campaign that was solely his, and all indications were that it would be offensive in nature. Towards the end of July Lee reinforced Jackson bringing his command to 25,000 men, facing Pope with 50,000. Though Lee hoped for a quick offensive against Pope, Jackson was slow, careful, and cautious during this time, concerned about Federal forces concentrating near Fredericksburg. On August 8, Jackson began a move to strike Pope at Culpeper, Virginia. Confusion in orders slowed the Confederate advance. On August 9 elements of Federal cavalry began sparring with Confederate artillery which was in place on Cedar Mountain. Confederate and Union infantry were fed into the fighting as they reached Cedar Mountain. Arriving from the west the Confederates formed a line of battle, anchoring their right flank on the mountain while the Federals formed opposite their position, fields of corn separating the two lines. General Banks, the Federal commander whose troops had been moving into position during the day, believed he had a numerical superiority on the field. Despite direct orders from General Pope to not advance any farther than the position of his lead brigade, and to defend his position if attacked, Banks attacked the Confederates opposite him at about 5:00 p.m. By 6:00 p.m. the Federal attack had exploited a gap in the Confederate line at Crittenden Gate. The sound of this fighting reached Jackson on the Confederate right. What ensued became one of the more memorable moments of the battle and Jackson's growing legend. Reaching the point of the Federal attack Jackson rallied the disordered men. When Jackson had tried to draw his sword in that moment, he quickly realized it was rusted in its scabbard. Jackson unclipped his scabbard and sword from his belt and continued to rally his troops. Fresh Confederate reinforcements and rallying men responded to Jackson and threw back the Federal attack. As the Federals retreated, a general forward movement swept along the Confederate line and the Federal line collapsed. General Banks worked to evacuate his artillery and infantry back to a position near Culpeper. Although Pope came forward with reinforcements, in the growing darkness Pope decided to move back to the new line established by Banks. As late as 10:00 p.m. Confederate artillery and infantry were still pushing toward the Federals and engaging them where possible. Darkness, disorganization in the ranks, loss of field officers, and exhaustion eventually brought the Confederate pursuit to an end. The battle was over. Although Jackson and his men had won a tactical victory on the battlefield, it had come at a high cost of 1,338 casualties while, Banks suffered 2,353 casualties. By August 14, 1862, Lee had decided to leave the Richmond front, confident that McClellan's would do nothing. He took the rest of the Army of Northern Virginia with him as they moved northward against General Pope and the Army of Virginia once more, to meet again at the Battle of Second Manassas.
