

The Battle Of Cedar Mountain August 1862 - An Epic Encounter of the Civil War

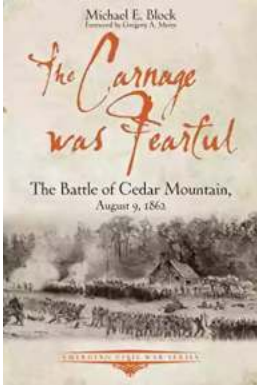


The Battle of Cedar Mountain, fought on August 9, 1862, was a significant engagement during the American Civil War. This particular battle has often been overlooked in the grand narrative of the Civil War, overshadowed by other more famous battles like Gettysburg or Antietam. However, the Battle of Cedar Mountain was a pivotal moment in the war, demonstrating the tenacity and bravery of both Union and Confederate forces and setting the stage for future confrontations.

The Setting

The battle took place near Cedar Mountain in Culpeper County, Virginia. The area was characterized by rugged terrain and dense forests, providing natural cover

for soldiers on both sides. The Confederate Army, led by General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, was strategically positioned along the Rapidan River, ready to face the approaching Union forces.



The Carnage was Fearful: The Battle of Cedar Mountain, August 9, 1862 (Emerging Civil War Series) by Michael Block (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
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The Opposing Forces

The Union Army, commanded by Major General Nathaniel Banks, consisted of around 8,000 soldiers. They were relatively inexperienced compared to their Confederate counterparts but were determined to make a significant impact in the Confederate heartland. On the other side, General Jackson had approximately 16,000 Confederate troops under his command, battle-hardened and fiercely loyal to their cause.

The Battle

As the Union forces advanced towards the Confederate positions, they faced relentless resistance from the Confederate artillery and infantry. Terrain obstacles and the well-entrenched Confederate soldiers made it challenging for the Union

troops to break through. However, they continued their assault with unwavering determination.

The battle raged on for several hours, with both sides suffering heavy casualties. The Confederate counterattacks, led by General Jackson himself, managed to repel some Union advances. Despite their numerical disadvantage, the Union soldiers fought valiantly, refusing to yield to the Confederate onslaught.

The Turning Point

As twilight approached, a critical turning point occurred in the battle. Union Brigadier General Samuel W. Crawford launched a surprise attack with the 13th New Jersey Infantry Regiment, catching the Confederates off guard. This unexpected maneuver temporarily broke the Confederate lines, creating a gap in their defenses.

Sensing the opportunity, the Union forces pushed forward, attempting to exploit the breach. However, darkness and exhaustion hindered their progress. Confederate reinforcements under General A.P. Hill arrived just in time to stabilize their lines, preventing a complete Union breakthrough.

The Aftermath

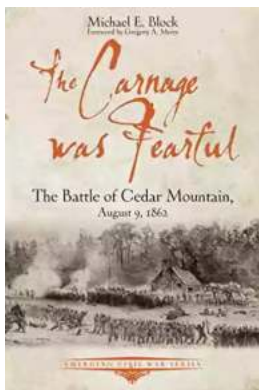
The Battle of Cedar Mountain resulted in heavy casualties on both sides. The Union Army suffered approximately 2,400 casualties, including over 300 soldiers killed in action. The Confederates, on the other hand, lost around 1,300 men.

Although the Union failed to achieve a decisive victory, their tenacity and resilience demonstrated that they were a formidable force. The Battle of Cedar Mountain also solidified Stonewall Jackson's reputation as a skilled military leader.

Ultimately, the Battle of Cedar Mountain set the stage for future conflicts in the region, including the Second Battle of Bull Run weeks later. It highlighted the importance of strategic positioning, troop morale, and the unpredictable nature of war.

The Battle of Cedar Mountain was a dramatic and crucial moment in the Civil War. While often overlooked, its impact on the course of the war cannot be underestimated. This engagement demonstrated the courage and resilience of both Union and Confederate soldiers, solidifying their determination to fight for their respective causes.

As we commemorate the Battle of Cedar Mountain, let us not forget the sacrifices made by those brave men on that fateful day in August 1862.



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In early August 1862, Confederate Maj. Gen. Stonewall Jackson took to the field with his Army of the Valley for one last fight—one that would also turn out to be his last independent command.

Near the base of Cedar Mountain, in the midst of a blistering heat wave, outnumbered Federal Infantry under Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks attacked Jackson's army as it marched toward Culpeper Court House. A violent three-hour battle erupted, yielding more than 3,600 casualties. "The carnage was fearful," one observer wrote.

The unexpected Federal aggressiveness nearly won the day. Jackson, attempting to rally his men, drew his sword—only to find it so rusted that it would not come unsheathed. "Jackson is with you!" he cried, brandishing the sword still in its scabbard.

The tide of battle turned—and the resulting victory added to the Stonewall mystique.

Civil War history typically breezes by the battle of Cedar Mountain, moving quickly from the Seven Days' Battles into the Second Bull Run Campaign, but the stand-alone battle had major implications. It saw the emergence of the Federal cavalry as an effective intelligence collector and screening force. It also provided Confederate Maj. Gen. A.P. Hill's first opportunity to save the day—and his first opportunity to raise Jackson's ire. Within the Federal army, the aftermath of the battle escalated the in-fighting among generals, led to recriminations and finger-pointing over why the battle was even fought.

Some called it out-right murder.

Most importantly, the defeat at Cedar Mountain halted a Federal advance into central Virginia and provided the commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, Gen. Robert E. Lee, an opportunity to take the fight away from Richmond and toward Washington.



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