

INTERPRETIVE SIGN:

General Reno's Probe East of Ox Road

Female narrator:

The chaotic fighting at Ox Hill lasted a little more than two hours and ended as a stalemate, although it did spoil Confederate plans to cut off the retreating Union forces from Washington and destroy Pope's army. But it was fierce fighting under horrific conditions, as noted in the writings of those who were there.

Second male narrator:

"During the afternoon, a violent thunderstorm set in, and a perfect hurricane blew at sunset. But the `pressive work was such that under the deluge of rain, the work of amputation was continued in the open air."

Ed Wenzel

"Many of the men wondered how they came out of the battle uninjured. One soldier of the 5th Louisiana

had a bullet splinter his musket stock as he took aim, had four balls rip through his clothing and had most of his pants blown off by a shell.”

Female narrator:

Some of the fighting on September 1, 1862, took place east of here, near Fair Oaks Mall. General Jesse Reno had a division there that was involved in a deadly battle described on the sign titled “General Reno’s Probe East of Ox Road.”

The 21st Massachusetts was seeking the enemy in a darkening woods. About 100 yards east of the woods and in heavy rain, they halted to dress their lines. Captain Charles Walcott later wrote about what happened.

Second male narrator:

“One of the deadliest volleys ever fired rolled upon us from our right and front, and in the sudden anguish and despair of the moment, the whole regiment seemed to be lying, bleeding on the ground.”

Female narrator:

Nearly 100 men fell in a single volley from Trimble's brigade. But Trimble's men then saw Hays' brigade being driven back, and they briefly pulled back as well. As you face the sign, that fighting took place in front of you and to your left.