

INTERPRETIVE SIGN:

Aftermath: The Invasion of Maryland

Female narrator:

Union casualties at Ox Hill are uncertain because some are believed to be included in the totals from Second Manassas. Historians believe at least 1,000 Union troops were killed, wounded or captured. The Confederates counted 516 casualties in the battle of Ox Hill.

Ed Wenzel:

It was the place where Lee tried to bring battle again to destroy Pope. It didn't work out, and he immediately went forward with his Maryland Campaign, the tactics that he had been thinking about all along, taking the war to the Union in Maryland."

Male narrator

After Ox Hill, General Pope realized his army was still in danger, and he ordered the Union retreat to continue

toward Alexandria and toward the defensive forts that were guarding the city of Washington. Pope's army pulled back during the early morning hours on the day after the Battle of Ox Hill.

Mike Henry

"Pope was not up to the task, I think it's fair to say. He was a political appointee. A decent man, but not up to Lee's expertise, not up to the challenge, as Lee proved very quickly."

Ed Wenzel

"In a period of 90 days, from June to September 1862, Robert E. Lee had driven the Union army from the gates of Richmond and into the fortifications of Washington. Here in Fairfax County, between Ox Hill and Chantilly, rested Lee's entire army, the Army of Northern Virginia. The Confederacy was at the flood tide of its power and poised to invade the north, a move that Lee hoped would bring European recognition and support and that could have changed the course of the war."

Female narrator:

Lee could not threaten Washington. At the beginning of the war, troops that gathered in the Capital City had little to do, so they had been put to work building a ring of forts around the capital. 68 forts and 93 batteries were constructed -- most of them on private land. Washington had become the most fortified city in the world.

Male narrator:

This was the peak of Confederate military success in the Civil War. Three months earlier, Lee had been put in charge of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in the summer of 1862.

Ed Wenzel:

"And where were they? He was fighting off General McClelland on the outskirts of Richmond. And in 90 days, Lee had turned the tables completely on the Union government. He had driven McClelland's army

off the peninsula, a second Union army had been formed, Lee had split his force, had moved northward, had engaged Pope's army at Cedar Mountain, had flanked him again at Second Manassas, had battled him at Second Manassas, and in the attempt to cut him off as he was retreating from Second Manassas, they collided again at Ox Hill. Ox Hill is the end of the Second Manassas Campaign. "

Female narrator:

Sixteen days after Ox Hill, there were 23,000 casualties at Antietam. The confrontation at Antietam on September 17, the single bloodiest day in American military history, was strategically a Union victory. It drove Lee's Army of Northern Virginia back into the Old Dominion. It changed the course of the war and led to the issuance of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.

Male narrator:

Civil War preservationists stepped forward in the 1980s to protect this plot of about five acres of land. The site now is owned and maintained by the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Female narrator:

We hope you enjoyed your tour of Ox Hill Battlefield Park. Thank you for visiting, and we invite you to see more of the 400-plus park sites managed by the Fairfax County Park Authority.