

ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

Fitz John Porter

By **Brian Burton**

Resources

If you can read only one book

| Author | <i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year. |
|--------------|--|
| Anders, Curt | <i>Injustice on Trial</i> . Zionsville, IN: Guild Press, 2002. Although not a full biography, this is the most thorough study of the entire Porter case from Second Bull Run through the Schofield Board's hearings and decision. |

Books and Articles

| Author | <i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year. "Title," in <i>Journal</i> ##, no. # (Date): #. |
|-------------------|---|
| Cozzens, Peter | <i>General John Pope: A Life for the Nation</i> . Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000. This is the best biography of Porter's foe of more than 20 years. |
| Eisenschiml, Otto | <i>The Celebrated Case of Fitz John Porter</i> . Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950. This is the only book that purports to be a full biography of Porter, it still concentrates on the case. |
| Hennessy, John J. | <i>Return to Bull Run</i> . New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993. This is still the best book available on the Battle of Second Bull Run. |

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| Jermann, Donald R. | <i>Fitz-John Porter, Scapegoat of Second Manassas</i> . Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2009. This is an in-depth analysis of the charges by a career soldier. |
| Rafuse, Ethan S. | “Fitz John Porter, The Campaign of Second Manassas, and The Problem of Command and Control in the 19 th Century,” in <i>The Blue & Gray Education Society Monograph #7</i> (June 1998). This is an interesting study of some of the reasons Porter got into trouble in the Second Bull Run campaign. |

Organizations

Web Resources

Other Sources

Scholars

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|--------------|----------------------|
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Topic Précis

Born in Portsmouth New Hampshire, Fitz John Porter (1822-1901) was a graduate of West Point, served in the Mexican-American War and then served in the Army of the Potomac in the Peninsula Campaign and then as a Major General commanding V Corps at the Battle of Second Bull Run. In 1862 Porter was court-martialed for failing to obey orders at the Battle of Second Bull Run and cashiered from the army. This punishment was delivered partly as a stab at Porter’s close friend Major General George B. McClellan and partly to improve the reputation of Major General John Pope, the commanding officer at Second Bull Run, after the defeat there. Porter worked at a variety of jobs from 1862-1884 but focused his attention on clearing his name. He worked at various government posts in New York from 1884 until he retired in 1897. A Board of army officers held a hearing in 1878-1879 which exonerated Pope and he was pardoned by President Chester A. Arthur in 1883. In 1886 a relief bill was passed in Congress and signed by President Grover Cleveland making Porter legally free of the judgement of his court martial. In 1886 he was reappointed Colonel of Infantry and two days later he resigned from the army. He died in Morristown New Jersey in 1901.
