



NORTHERN VIRGINIA: CROSSROADS OF CONFLICT

The Battles of Manassas, 1861-1862

(2 - Day Itinerary)

Manassas. Site of two of the most important battles of the Civil War. July 1861: the first large-scale battle of the War. Green troops on both sides meet face to face only to discover that war is no lark. A Confederate victory is achieved at the last minute through a combination of complacency, timing and a little luck. In August 1862, under new leaders named Lee and Jackson and riding a wave of summer victories, the Confederate army reaches it's zenith, inflicting a second costly defeat upon the Federal army and the war-weary North. Visit sites surrounding these great conflicts in Northern Virginia, along with the battlefield, itself a testimony to courage and bravery.

Sites

The itinerary is divided into two days, with Day 1 concentrating on First Manassas and Day 2 on Second Manassas. **The Battles of Manassas: 1861-1862** follows a chronological path. Tours should begin and end as noted below.

Note: All sites along Virginia Civil War Trails are motor coach accessible. Some sites are museums with admission charges, and are noted with a (\$) symbol. However, all Virginia Civil War Trails markers are accessible without paying admission charges.



Day 1: First Manassas

Begin your march as many Union soldiers did, from the Defenses of Washington. In the City of Alexandria, the site of a Union invasion in May 1861, the first Federal officer, Elmer Ellsworth was killed. The Defenses of Washington from that point on and included sites such as Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site. As one of the 68 forts protecting the Federal capital, this is the place to get oriented for a tour of Civil War fortifications in the Washington area. The fort includes a museum relating to Alexandria's war-time experience.

Tour other forts such as **Fort C.F. Smith**, a fortification built in 1863 to extend the Arlington defenses to the Potomac River and **Fort Ethan Allen**, built in 1861 to command approaches into Washington. Next, visit **Fort Marcy**, which boasted 17 guns and three mortars.

Continue on to **Falls Church**, a Union occupied town that saw military balloon ascensions at **Taylor's Tavern** by the famed Thaddeus Lowe. Visit **Cherry Hill Farmhouse**, occupied throughout the war by both Union and Confederate troops. Travel west from here as the Federal army did in the summer of 1861.

Along the way to your next site, stop for lunch in historic Middleburg, a quaint hamlet whose architecture harkens to its Civil War days.

At **Sky Meadows State Park (Mount Bleak)** (\$- parking), we begin to follow the march of the Confederates to Manassas. Beautiful vistas and the historic Mount Bleak home are highlights. Confederate General Thomas Jackson's troops camped here before leaving for the Battle of First Manassas. Then it's on to **Delaplane (Piedmont Station)**, where the soon-to-be-named "Stonewall"



Jackson's Confederate troops boarded trains on July 19, 1861, to travel to Manassas. Proceed onto the battlefield.

Manassas National Battlefield Park's (\$) main visitor center, located at the heart of the 1861 battlefield, offers a film, books and ranger help. The interior of the **Stone House** is usually open during the summer season. Also here is the **Stone Bridge** where defeated Union troops withdrew to after the battle.

Day 2: Second Manassas

Begin at **Catlett's Station**, where on August 22, 1862, Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart's cavalrymen attacked a Union supply depot, capturing, among other things, Federal commander John Pope's cloak, hat and dispatch book. Intelligence gathered here helped Stonewall Jackson plan his Second Manassas campaign. Then, head up to **Marshall (historic Salem)**. Jackson marched through here and was cheered silently on his way to the battle.

Continue on to the town of **The Plains**. Located on the Manassas Gap Railroad and the Warrenton Turnpike, The Plains was a busy place during the war with spies reporting the movements of the campaigning armies as they marched through. Continue on your march to the battlefield by passing through **Thoroughfare Gap**, a major route through the Bull Run Mountains and the site of dramatic Civil War events revolving around the 1862 battle.

At the **Manassas Museum** (\$), visitors can explore the history of Manassas and the surrounding area.

Stop for lunch in Manassas.

Nearby is the **Ben Lomond Manor House**. A county park surrounds this fine 1837 home, which housed troops who fought nearby at Manassas and may have been used as a hospital for Union soldiers, some of whom left their still visible names on the walls.

Next it's on to **Manassas National Battlefield Park** (\$). A visitor center oriented to the Second Battle is open seasonally at Stuart's Hill. Among the stops pertinent to the 1862 battle are the **Unfinished Railroad** cut where Stonewall Jackson's troops held the line in early fighting and New York Avenue, where monuments to two zouave regiments commemorate the destruction of the Union left by Longstreet's assault on the final day of the battle.

Last stop is the finale of the Campaign of Second Manassas, the **Ox Hill Battlefield of Chantilly**. Modern development surrounds a small but significant piece of the Sept. 1, 1862, battlefield but the tiny Ox Hill Battlefield Park is still worth visiting. Monuments to Union generals Phillip Kearny and Isaac Stevens, both killed that day, mark the field. ★

Sites Visited:

Day 1: First Manassas, July 1861

- ★ Alexandria
- ★ Fort Ward
- ★ Fort C.F. Smith
- ★ Fort Ethan Allen
- ★ Fort Marcy
- ★ Falls Church
- ★ Mount Bleak Farm
- ★ Piedmont Station
- ★ Manassas Battlefield

Day 2: Second Manassas, August 1862

- ★ Catlett's Station
- ★ Salem
- ★ The Plains
- ★ Thoroughfare Gap
- ★ Manassas Museum
- ★ Ben Lomond Manor House
- ★ Manassas Battlefield
- ★ Chantilly (Ox Hill)



For more information: