

# ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

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## John Pope

By **Michael Burns**, U.S. Air Force

### Resources

**If you can read only one book**

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year.
Cozzens, Peter	<i>General John Pope: A Life for the Nation</i> . Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year.   “Title,” in <i>Journal</i> ##, no. # (Date): #.
Cozzens, Peter E., and Robert I. Girardi, eds.	<i>The Military Memoirs of General John Pope</i> . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
Ellis, Richard N.	<i>General Pope and U.S. Indian Policy</i> . Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1970.
Gordon, George H.	<i>History of the Campaign of the Army of Virginia under John Pope in 1862</i> . Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Co., 1889.
Hennessy, John J.	<i>Return to Bull Run: The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas</i> . New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993.
Schutz, Wallace J., and Walter N. Trenerry	<i>Abandoned by Lincoln: A Military Biography of John Pope</i> . Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990.
Sutherland, Daniel E.	“Abraham Lincoln, John Pope, and the Origins of Total War,” in <i>Journal of Military History</i> 56, no. 4 (Oct 1992): 567–86.

## Organizations

Organization Name	Description, Contact information including address, email
Manassas National Battlefield Park	The National Park Service runs the Manassas National Battlefield Park located near Manassas Virginia. The Park is open daily from dawn to dusk. The Henry Hill Visitor Center is open daily 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except Christmas Day and Thanksgiving Day. The Brawner Farm Interpretive Center is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Stone House is open on weekdays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on weekends from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Park’s webpage on John Pope is <a href="https://www.nps.gov/people/john-pope.htm">https://www.nps.gov/people/john-pope.htm</a>
American Battlefield Trust	The American Battlefield Trust assists in the preservation of America’s battlefields and education related to those sites. Started as the Civil War Battlefield Trust, the organization has expanded to include American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War battlefields and online resources. Its purpose, according to its website, is to “inspire appreciation of America, its history, and its promise of liberty through an understanding of the wars fought on its soil, and of the sacrifices of earlier generations of Americans.” Its entry on John Pope is <a href="https://www.battlefields.org/learn/biographies/john-pope">https://www.battlefields.org/learn/biographies/john-pope</a> .

## Web Resources

URL	Name and description
<a href="https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/pope-john-1822-1892/">https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/pope-john-1822-1892/</a>	<i>Encyclopedia Virginia</i> is an online encyclopedia related to the history of Virginia. Its “John Pope” entry, by Peter Cozzens, is a brief overview of his life and provides a brief section on further readings.

## Other Sources

Name	Description, Contact information including address, email
<i>Handbook of Texas</i> Encyclopedia Entry	Cutrer, Thomas W., “Pope, John (1822–1892),” in <i>Handbook of Texas</i> . Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1952, <a href="https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/pope-john">https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/pope-john</a> .

## Scholars

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## Topic Précis

On arrival to take command of the Army of Virginia on June 26, 1862 Major General John Pope uttered his famous and divisive boast. Three months later he was relieved of command for his performance at the Battle of Second Bull Run. Despite the rightful condemnation of that period of his command, Pope’s career lasted over forty years, during which he had a greater role than most historians have recognized in the U.S. Army of the Civil War and Reconstruction era. Pope came from a storied family with political connections including to Abraham Lincoln, and was educated and graduated from West Point in 1842. After distinguished service in the Mexican American War, he was employed in the Corps of Engineers surveying borders and railway routes. At the start of the Civil War, he was appointed Brigadier General in 1861 and sent to the Department of the West. Here, he clashed with General Frémont. In 1862, he was involved in federal victories on the Mississippi River. Pope’s personal connection with the president and his victories along the Mississippi, as well as the appointment of General Halleck to General-in-Chief, led to his appointment as the commander of the new Army of Virginia. The army consisted of three corps all of which had been recently defeated by Stonewall Jackson that were led by generals who were senior to Pope, including Frémont. His subordinates disliked him as did officers of the Army of the Potomac and the dislike was returned. Pope was more popular with his soldiers because of his policies toward disloyal civilians. In August 1862, Robert E. Lee sent Stonewall Jackson to threaten Pope. After a clash at Cedar Mountain on August 9, Pope sought reinforcements from the Army of the Potomac and by August 28 he had concentrated his army at Manassas Junction where fighting occurred with Jackson. Arriving on the battlefield on August 29, Pope issued an order to arriving elements of the Army of the Potomac under Fitz John Porter and his corps commander Irwin McDowell to attack Jackson supported by diversionary assaults by Pope. His order was unclear and did

not explicitly order an attack by Porter and McDowell. These two generals realized that the balance of Lee's army under Longstreet had arrived to join Jackson and with the unclear order, chose not to attack the Confederates. Pope believed Jackson was still isolated. Assaults on the Confederates on August 30 failed, and a counterattack by Longstreet drove the Union forces from the field. Five days after his defeat at Second Bull Run, Lincoln relieved Pope of command. Pope was given command of the Department of the Northwest as part of the conflict between the United States and the Dakota people. Soon after his defeat Pope sought a court martial for Porter, blaming him for the defeat at Second Bull Run. Due to Pope's political connections, as well as Porter's inability to provide evidence of the presence of Longstreet's wing, the court-martial quickly found Porter guilty. For twenty-five years their dispute was an open fight. In 1887, a second court-martial exonerated Porter, and Pope turned to his writings to express his ire for Porter. Pope continued his management of U.S. extension against Native American, combining suppression of those opposing the army with enlightened treatment of those living on reservations. He continually criticized the government's reservation and treaty systems. He blamed white encroachment for hostilities between American Indians and the U.S. Army and argued for fairer treaties that provided tribes increased supplies, annuities, and guarantees, which never materialized. Realizing that his policies would never be implemented, Pope believed that "death alone [for Native Americans] appears to offer relief from an outrage which will be a stain on this government and this people forever." After his retirement, Pope wrote his memoirs for publication in *The National Tribune* in which he criticized his perceived enemies, including McClellan and Porter, between 1887 and 1891. During that time, he lost his wife, Clara, who died in 1888, and he moved into the Ohio Soldiers and Sailors Home in Sandusky, Ohio. He died in his sleep at the home on September 23, 1892, and was buried next to his wife at Bellefontaine Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri. Although Pope received a poor reputation due to his brash character and his terrible performance at Second Bull Run, he garnered significant respect from some of his contemporaries for his long service to the United States. While Pope will always be remembered for three days in August 1862, he took part in even larger developments than that single campaign that influenced the progress of the United States during the Civil War and Reconstruction.

## John Pope

Born	March 16, 1822
Died	September 23, 1892
Buried	Bellefontaine Cemetery, St. Louis, Mo.
Father	Nathaniel Pope
Mother	Lucretia Backus Pope
Career Milestones	Graduated, U.S. Military Academy at West Point, 1842   Mexican-American War, 1846–47   Mapped Gadsden Purchase, 1856   Appointed brigadier general of volunteers June 14, 1861   Capture of New Madrid, Mo., March 13, 1862   Capture of Island No. 10, Mo., April 8, 1862   Command of Army of Virginia, June 26, 1862   Battle of Second Bull Run, August 28–30, 1862   Relieved of command of Army of Virginia, September 6, 1862   Appointed command of Department of the Northwest, September 1862   Dakota Campaigns, 1863–1865   Command of District of the Missouri, February 3, 1865   Appointed governor of the Reconstruction Third Military District, April 1867   Command of the Department of the Missouri, April 30, 1870   Command of the Military Division of the Pacific, November 1, 1883   Retired, March 16, 1886

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