The First and Second Battles of Manassas dominated military operations in Northern Virginia during the Civil War. Lying midway between Washington, D.C., and the Shenandoah Valley, Manassas Junction was the point where the Orange and Alexandria and the Manassas Gap railroads intersected. As such, Manassas erupted in the early continuous civil war connection between the Federal capital and the interior of Virginia. Union Gen. Irvin McDowell left Washington with 15,000 men on July 18, 1861, intending to outflank and crush Confederates Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard’s 20,000-man array at Manassas Junction. The clash along Bull Run on July 21, five miles northeast of Manassas Junction, was later by lesser Civil War standards and confusion for both sides. Despite this, most Union and Confederate soldiers alike performed better than expected in their baptism of fire. During the battle, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee led his troops to victory. On the next day, the Second Battle of Manassas, fought August 29-30, was another Confederate victory. Pope’s army nearly avoided annihilation in its retreat north, stopping Jackson’s pursuit on the Battle of Chantilly (Ox Hill) on September 1. After Second Manassas, Northern Virginia experienced a period of Union occupation. On October 14, 1861, the two sides fought a short but bloody battle at Antietam in the aftermath of the Gettysburg Campaign. Once the main theater of battle shifted away from Northern Virginia, military activity in the region focused on raids against Union supply lines by Col. John S. Mosby’s partisan rangers. In late summer 1862, the new Union Army of Virginia, commanded by Gen. John Pope, moved to unite with McClellan’s force along the Rappahannock River in central Virginia. Their goal was to destroy the Confederacy of Northern Virginia, as commanded by Gen. Robert E. Lee. Burned Jackson’s 15,000 men marched quickly around Pope’s flank, forcing the huge Union supply base at Manassas Junction on August 30. Jackson’s initial forces held off repeated Union attacks at Groveton on August 30, until joined by the rear of Lee’s army the next day. The Second Battle of Manassas, fought during the Summer of 1864. 1861-1865 NORTHERN VIRGINIA CROSSROADS OF CONFLICT aerial view of Bull Run Battlefield Park. Courtesy Library of Congress. Mosby lived and practiced law in Virginia during the Civil War. He was a member of the Virginia Unionists, and commanded a Union company from which Mosby at one time or another, he led his own band of Union soldiers. Some sources report that Mosby and his men served during the Battle of Gettysburg. At the end of the war, Mosby refused to surrender to his Union counterpart. After the war, Mosby returned to Virginia and practiced law. He was later awarded a pension for his service to the Confederacy. Mosby’s partisan rangers, called the Mosby-Rangers or Mosby’s Rangers, were a group of Confederate guerrillas who operated in Northern Virginia during the Civil War. They were led by Mosby, a Union veteran who had been mustered out of the Union army in 1861. Mosby then organized a small group of men and began raiding Union supply lines, attacking Union troops, and providing intelligence to Confederate commanders. Mosby’s Rangers were known for their agility, speed, and ability to evade Union forces. They were considered a significant threat to Union supply lines and communications in the Shenandoah Valley. Mosby and his men operated from their base of operations in Manassas, Virginia, and moved throughout Northern Virginia, carrying out a number of successful raids against Union forces. The Rangers operated from late 1861 until the end of the war in 1865. Their activities included capturing Union soldiers, destroying Union supply lines, and providing intelligence to Confederate commanders. Mosby’s Rangers were considered one of the most effective guerrilla units of the Civil War, and they played a significant role in the Confederate effort to disrupt Union supply lines and communications in the Shenandoah Valley. The Rangers were eventually disbanded in 1865 and Mosby continued to practice law in Virginia after the war. Mosby’s Rangers were a small but highly effective unit of Confederate guerrillas who operated in Northern Virginia during the Civil War. They were commanded by Mosby, a Union veteran who had been mustered out of the Union army in 1861. Mosby then organized a small group of men and began raiding Union supply lines, attacking Union troops, and providing intelligence to Confederate commanders. Mosby’s Rangers were known for their agility, speed, and ability to evade Union forces. 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