

The Battle of Cedar Creek

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a boxed 'A' and a 'D' chord. The second staff has 'D' and 'G' chords, and a first ending bracket. The third staff has a second ending bracket, a boxed 'B', and 'D' and 'G' chords. The fourth staff has 'D', 'G', 'D', and 'A' chords. The fifth staff has first and second ending brackets, both labeled 'D'.

"The Battle of Cedar Creek" was composed by Private J. Pressley of the 3rd Alabama Volunteer Infantry Regiment, A.N.V. Wounded at the Battle of Cedar Creek, in mid-October of 1864, he created this tune to commemorate the sacrifices of his fellow soldiers.

The Battle of Cedar Creek, or Battle of Belle Grove, was fought on October 19, 1864, during the Civil War. The fighting took place in the Shenandoah Valley of Northern Virginia, near Cedar Creek, Middletown, and the Valley Pike. During the morning, Lieutenant General Jubal Early appeared to have a victory for his Confederate army, as he captured over 1,000 prisoners and over 20 artillery pieces while forcing 7 enemy infantry divisions to fall back. The Union army, led by Major General Philip Sheridan, rallied in late afternoon and drove away Early's men. In addition to recapturing all of their own artillery seized in the morning, Sheridan's forces captured most of Early's artillery and wagons.

An example of folk tradition, this tune seems to have been spread by ear more than by print. I found this version in Lamancusa's **The Gettysburg Collection of Old-Time Fiddle Tunes** (2021). I also found a transcription of Jerry Correll's playing by Mark Wardenburg.

The banjo tablature is from John Letscher.

The 2nd South Carolina String Band were introduced to this piece by banjo player Howard Zane, who, in 1948, at the age of 10, learned it from Bob Pressley, the son of the composer. It was recorded by Chris Coole, 2nd South Carolina String Band, Lonesome Ace String Band and Jerry Correll on *Goin' Up Elk Creek* (2008).