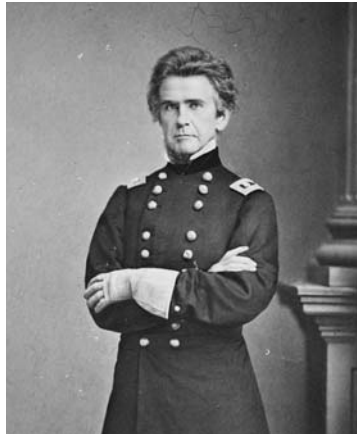


Kentucky's Civil War: Union General Ormsby Mitchel



Historical Marker #1758 in Kenton County commemorates Union General Ormsby Mitchel, the namesake of Fort Mitchell, Ky.

During the Civil War, several dozen earthen fortifications were constructed to protect Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. One of the Kenton County forts was named for Mitchel, a Kentucky native.

Born at Morganfield in 1809, Mitchel moved to Ohio as child. After graduating from West Point and a seven-year stint in the army, he taught mathematics and astronomy at Cincinnati College. According to one historian, Mitchel became “the country’s most respected authority on astronomy and a charismatic speaker on the subject.”

When the Civil War erupted, President Lincoln appointed him brigadier general, and Mitchel commanded the Department of the Ohio before leading a division. Appointed major general in April 1862, Mitchel commanded a corps in South Carolina, where he died of yellow fever late that year.

Fort Mitchell—replete with the extra “l” at the end—was named in his honor. The town that grew up around the former fort was incorporated as the city of Fort Mitchell in 1909.

Photo: Union general and Kentucky native Ormsby Mitchel. Fort Mitchell was named in his honor. Photo courtesy the Library of Congress.