

To Secede

To officially end a political relationship with a country, to separate from the country. Southern states officially separated from the Union in 1860 and 1861.

Secession

The act of political separation from a country. The separation of the Southern states led to the Civil War.

The Confederacy

The shortened name for the Southern states that seceded from and rebelled against the United States during the Civil War from 1861 to 1865.

The Union

The states that remained in the United States during the Civil War were often referred to with this term.

Theater

An area or zone of fighting during a war. There were three primary areas of fighting in the Civil War: the Eastern, Western, and Trans-Mississippi.

Blockade

To prevent materials or people from entering or exiting an area, often by sea. Union ships were stationed along the Southern coast during the Civil War.

Emancipation

Freedom from slavery or bondage. During the Civil War, President Lincoln issued a Proclamation stating that enslaved people in rebelling states were free.

Terry's Texas Rangers

This was a cavalry group that fought in the Western Theater during the war. It was nicknamed for its commander, Benjamin Franklin Terry.

Casualties

The number of killed, wounded, or missing in action during a war. The Civil War had the highest number of Americans killed of any war in U.S. history.

Plantation Agriculture

Large-scale farming cultivating cash crops like cotton. This was the primary economic activity of most Southern states.

Slavery

Forcing people to work without pay. This type of labor was common in Southern states, and this issue was the primary cause of the Civil War.

Abraham Lincoln

An anti-slavery Northern Republican who was elected president of the United States in 1860. Southern states began to secede following his election.

The American Civil War

A conflict fought between Northern and Western free states against Southern slave states. It lasted from 1861 to 1865 and ended in the defeat and collapse of the Confederacy.

Sam Houston

The governor of Texas at the time of secession. He opposed secession and tried to persuade Texans to remain in the Union. He was removed from office for refusing to swear loyalty to the Confederacy.

John Bell Hood

He led the famous "Texas Brigade" which was the only Texas military unit to fight in the Eastern Theater of the war.

The Battle of Galveston

The Union Army captured and occupied this important Texas port city. At this conflict, Texas Confederates recaptured the city and held it until the end of the war.

The Battle of Sabine Pass

Union troops attempted to travel by ship up this prominent east Texas river, however Texas Confederates at Fort Griffin defended the area and the Union retreated.

The Battle of Palmito Ranch

This was the final battle of the Civil War fought in South Texas, despite the fact that the majority of the Confederate Armies had surrendered and the war was effectively over.

Unionists

People who supported the North and opposed Southern secession. A group of Germans and a group of North Texans were attacked and killed by Confederates during the war for holding this belief.

Mexico

Texans were able to avoid the Union blockade by taking part in the “Rio Grande Trade” and moving goods through this country at the state’s southern border.

Refugees

People escaping violence, destruction, or natural disasters. Many Southerners fled to Texas to avoid the war and hide their slaves.

Juneteenth

On this day, we celebrate when Union Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston to deliver General Order Number 3, enforcing the emancipation of Black Texans who had been enslaved.

Camp Ford

Texas was the site of the largest concentration of Union prisoners-of-war at this location in east Texas.

Texas' Advantages

Texas was far from the majority of Civil War fighting, so its economy was able to continue mostly uninterrupted. Texas also had access to trade with Mexico.