



The Texas Union Herald



Colonel E. E. Ellsworth Camp #18
Department of Texas
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Volume I – Issue 1 February 2016

Rattling Sabres

(Editorial)

by

Glen E. Zook

This is the inaugural issue of a newsletter for the Colonel E.E. Ellsworth Camp #18, Department of Texas, Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War. The name of the publication was to be an extension of the publication that started as the Lone Star Unionist back in the latter half of the 1990s which then “morphed” into the Southwest Unionist that was the newsletter for the entire SUVCW Department of the Southwest. Over the years, that publication has “faded into the woodwork”. It is hoped that this “The Texas *Union Herald*” may become the newsletter for the entire Department of Texas.

During the period from 1995 until 2000, I was the editor / publisher of the Lone Star Unionist. Then, starting in 2000, for various reasons, my association, with the SUVCW, faded. However, as of January 2016, I am again a member of the organization.

Back in the “goode olde dayes”, the newsletter contained not only current news, and events, but also had numerous historical articles the vast majority of which were written by local members. Of course, various camp officers are going to have to contribute columns concerning their duties, minutes of meetings, announcements of activities, and so forth. Also, historical articles, which were originally published during the final years of last century, are going to be reprinted since the information, in the articles is just as pertinent today as back then.

One, very popular, series of articles was written by quite a number of members. Those articles concerned the actual ancestor that the member used for their membership requirements. Continuing that series, but with information provided by current members, is just one area that I plan on happening.

Although I have enough historical articles available for inclusion in “The New Lone Star Unionist” for quite a number of years, I definitely want to include newly written articles provided by current SUVCW members. Frankly, the material provided does not have to be in “perfect” condition, ready to print. I can certainly edit the provided material into an article ready for inclusion in the newsletter.

I now need to set forth my personal resume’ both in the field of publishing and my history with the SUVCW. As such, I will start with my experiences in the writing / publishing arena:

I wrote my very first magazine article when I was a junior in high school (1961). That article was accepted and I was paid the huge sum of \$30.00 and the article took up all of 2/3rd a page in the old small sized magazine format (5.5” by 8.5”). Getting \$30.00 for less than a half-hour’s effort was unheard of in 1961 for most people, let alone a high school student. That would be a rate of \$60.00 hour which, today, according to various calculators on the Internet, is equal to \$480.00 an hour today! In 1968, I was paid \$1800.00 for a single article which equates to almost \$12,400.00 today! Needless to say, writing articles definitely added to my yearly income.

After graduating from Georgia Tech in March, 1967, I was employed, at the “new” corporate headquarters, by the Collins Radio Company and was employed in the telecommunications industry even before graduating from college. Before retiring, I was a telecommunications consultant. Well, I still, occasionally do some consulting but not that much.

Even when employed “full time”, I have also been involved in writing, editing, and publishing for over 50-years. Besides writing magazine articles, I was the editor and publisher for my college fraternity alumni newsletter, another position was as a contributing editor to an international magazine, the editor / publisher for several local organizations, of several regional organizations, and even the publisher of the monthly newsletter of a large national organization. In addition, for several years, I wrote a 3-times a week newspaper column for the Belo (owner of the Dallas Morning News) Suburban Newspapers

My SUVCW experiences have been numerous starting with being the editor / publisher of The Lone Star Unionist newsletter. At the camp level, I held several elected positions ending with being the Commander of Lone Star Camp #1 and the Commander of the SVR unit, First Lone Star Infantry (Union). Continuing to the Department level, I held several appointed and elected offices ending up with being the Commander of the Department of the Southwest. At the time, the Department of the Southwest included not only Texas, but Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. Finally, at the National level, I held several appointed positions including the SVR National Public Information Officer, Graves Registration Committee member, and, finally, the National Patriotic Instructor.

The Texas **Union** Herald

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Articles, news items, features, and the like are welcomed for publication in **The Texas Union Herald**. Deadline is normally the 25th of the month preceding the cover date of publication. Submissions may be handwritten, typewritten, or submitted in any of the popular computer formats (Microsoft Word, Open Office, Word Perfect, and ASCII). Please contact the editor for details.

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Dues for 2016 are now in order

Articles Needed!

If the members of the Colonel E.E. Ellsworth Camp #18 do not want to be inundated with articles that were chosen by the editor (what he wants to see in the newsletter) then they need to start inputting items for inclusion in **The Texas Union Herald**. Tidbits about the Civil War, stories, articles, current news items, photographs, even commentaries are most welcome.

Don't worry if you are not an accomplished author. Get the idea onto paper (computer, etc.) and get it to the editor. He really can edit (rewrite, etc.) and you'll be surprised at just how well you can write!

If you have E-Mail capabilities, you can either include the information in the body of the message or put it in either Word format or ASCII ("txt") format. If, for some reason, you cannot do either, contact the editor to see if your particular word processor format can be handled.

If "hard" copy, make sure the copy is legible (can be read by someone else!). Typewritten, computer printed, even in Crayon on "Big Chief" tablet is acceptable. Just get the information in!

Even small (1 or 2 paragraphs) material, or photographs, can be used. That makes editing and publishing the newsletter easier since "fill" material is available for those little areas that seem to happen whenever an article is included in the publication.

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Meeting Minutes of Meeting Heritage Farmstead Museum, Plano, TX.

January 19, 2016

Commander Ridenour called Camp #18 to order at 7:08 PM. In attendance were Brothers Erder, Gates, C, Holley, S. Holley, Johnson, Peddie, B. Rudy, H. Sickler, Swafford and Thomas. Brother Sickler offered an opening prayer. Brother Peddie led us in the Pledge of Allegiance and The American Creed.

Introduction of Guests and New Members:

Patrick Quinn and Glen Zook were present as guests. Commander Ridenour introduced Mr. Quinn and Brother Gates introduced Mr. Zook.

Secretary/Treasurer Report:

Brother Gates reported that the minutes from the December meeting had been forwarded to all for comment or corrections. Brother Gates noted that no comments or corrections were received. Brother Gates also reported that the Treasurer's report for January and 2015 Audit had been forwarded to all for comment or corrections. He noted that no comments or corrections were received. Brother Gates moved that the minutes and Treasurer's report be accepted. The motion was seconded by Brother Peddie and it was carried unanimously.

Patriotic Minute/ Camp Monthly Program:

Brother Peddie presented a program based of Abe Lincoln's top 10 favorite stories. Included was the story about the "Perfect Woman". Brother Peddie had an ancestor who knew President Lincoln in Illinois and was later interviewed about what he remembered of the President.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

Brother Gates proposed Glen Earl Zook for membership in the camp. His application was reviewed and found to meet all requirements for regular membership. Brother Gates called for a vote and it was seconded by brother Peddie. The vote was unanimous in favor of accepting brother Zook.

Past Department Commander Blair Rudy presided over the installation of the slate of officers elected in December for 2016.

Commander	Brother Ridenour
SVC	Brother Schneider
JVC	Brother Erder
Secretary	Brother Gates
Treasurer	Brother Gates
Chaplain	Brother Sickler
Patriotic Instructor	Brother Peddie
Graves Registration	Open
Historian	Brother Gates
Civil War Memorials	Open
Eagle Scout Coordinator	Brother J. Schneider

New brother Glen Zook described how he had edited the newsletter for Lone Star Camp 1 of the old Department of the Southwest. He volunteered to perform the same duty for Camp 18. Commander Ridenour accepted his offer and directed that the camp officers and members assist brother Zook in every way possible.

SVR/1st US Business:

2LT Thomas, commander of Co. K, 1st US Infantry SVR reported on opportunities for living history, memorial services and reenacting in 2016. He requested that the Adjutant for the SVR forward to all members of SVR and Camp 18 a copy listing those events and encouraged all to participate.

Guest Speaker:

No speaker

Closing Announcements:

The next month meeting will be on Tuesday, February 16, 2016.

There being no further business before the camp, Commander Ridenour declared the meeting closed at 7:57 PM.

Closing Benediction:

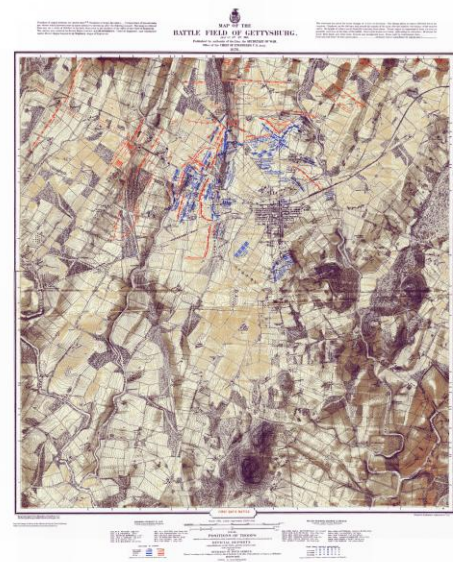
Brother Sickler conducted the Benediction.

Respectfully Submitted,
In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Don Gates, PDC
Secretary/Treasurer

February Meeting

**The February 2016 meeting of the
Colonel E. E. Ellsworth Camp #18
SUVCW
Will be held on
Tuesday 16 February 2016
At the
Heritage Farmstead Museum, Plano,
TX.**



Map of the Battle of Gettysburg

The following is from a book entitled **Hill's Manual of Social and Business Forms** copyright 1886 and published in 1890. Although the title of the book does not suggest any connection what-so-ever with the Civil War, it contains much information about the battles of the Civil War, summarized by the persons who fought during the war. The volume is virtually a 4 year college course in one book, including all sorts of things like Government, proper writing forms, how to make public speeches, correct use of the English language, and many other topics. It covers all major battles of the Civil War and many of the minor skirmishes. All spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. are directly quoted from the original ("sic") and are not those necessarily used today.

The Battles of the Late Civil War

The Causes of the Rebellion

Leaving desolation in its track, throughout many parts of the South, was a four-years' war, waged between the people of the Northern and Southern portions of the United States, extending over a period of time from April 12, 1861, to the surrender of Lee, April 9, 1865.

Among the causes that produced the war, briefly states, were these: The staple productions in the South, prior to the war, were cotton and sugar. To sell these productions in the markets of the world at the highest figures, and purchase the necessaries of life at the lowest price, was regarded by the Southern people as legitimate. To have unrestricted commercial intercourse, therefore, with the people of all nations, being free to export their productions without hindrance, and import goods from abroad free of duty, was considered for the best interests of the South.

There existed a decided difference of opinion between the people of the Northern and Southern States on this subject. A large body of people at the North believed that home industries could best be built up through the shutting out of foreign production by a high protective tariff. This party favored the placing of a high tax on all goods from abroad.

Protective tariff against free trade, which became a sectional issue, was one of the causes. Another was the black man. For generations the colored people had been regarded by most persons at the South as property that could be rightfully bought and sold.

In many parts of the North, in the early history of the country, slavery was common. Washington was a prominent owner of slaves, as were many other great and good men; and the institution of slavery having for generations been protected by legislation, a vast body of people at the South regarded it as perfectly right to buy, sell, and own slaves.

Gradually a public sentiment grew up in the North antagonistic to the idea of one class owning another class. This feeling extended into the halls of national legislation, and in time developed very bitter sectional feeling.

The final result was that the Southerners, thinking of the triumph of the United States when they cut loose from England, and that the people of the South should have the right to make such laws as they deemed best for their own interests, inaugurated the work of separating the South from the North by the act of secession, passed by the legislature of South Carolina, in which that State Seceded from the Union, December 20, 1860. This example was followed by others of the Southern States in the following order, eleven States passing ordinances of secession between the fifteenth day of December 1860, and June 10, 1861: Mississippi, January 9, 1861; Florida, January 10, 1861; Alabama, January 11, 1861; Georgia, January 19, 1861; Louisiana, January 26, 1861; Texas, February 1, 1861; Virginia, April 17, 1861; Arkansas, May 6, 1861; North Carolina, May 21, 1861; Tennessee, by a vote of the people, June 8, 1861. The Western portion of Virginia refused to secede, and in 1863 was admitted into the Union as the loyal State of West Virginia.

The people of the South were then desirous of having the authorities of the United States withdrawn from the seceded States, and in order to hasten and compel this, an attack was made on Fort Sumter, April 12, 1861. This precipitated the war of the Rebellion - a four-year's struggle - that caused a loss of near 500,000 lives, and fastened upon the United States a debt, at the close of the war, of near \$3,000,000,000.

An outline of each prominent battle, the numbers killed, wounded and taken prisoners, are given in the succeeding pages:

The Battles of the First Year of the War

Battle of Fort Sumter - Fort Sumter, in Charleston harbor, S. C., occupied by Major Robert Anderson and a force of 47 effective United States soldiers and 62 other persons, and mounting 52 cannon, was bombarded by General Beauregard, commanding 7,000 Confederates, in Charleston, April 12 and 13, 1861. The fort was set on fire by the Confederates, and evacuated, after a fair defense, by Major Anderson. His loss was only one man, who was killed by the bursting of a gun inside the fort; the Confederate losses are not generally known.

Skirmish at Fairfax Court House, Va. - Fought May 31, 1861, between 47 Unionist cavalry, under Lieutenant Tompkins, and a force of 1,500 Confederates.

Battle at Phillippi - Fought June 3, 1861, at Phillippi, W. Va., between 2,000 Confederates and several regiments of Unionists, under Colonel Kelly and Colonel Lander, resulting in the retreat of the Confederates, with a loss of 15 killed, a number of wounded and taken prisoners, and \$25,000 worth of arms surrendered. Colonel Kelly was severely wounded.

Battle at Big Bethel - Fought June 10, 1861, at Big Bethel, Va., between 2,500 Unionists, under General Pierce, and 1,800 Confederates. The Unionists were defeated, with a loss of 16 killed, 34 wounded, and 5 missing. The Confederate loss is unknown.

Skirmish at Cole Camp - A body of Confederates attacked a company of Home Guards at Cole Camp, Mo., June 10, 1861. The later were defeated, with a loss of 10 killed, 20 wounded, and 30 prisoners.

Skirmish at Falling Waters - Fought near Hainesville, W. Va., July 2, 1861, between five Confederate

regiments and a battery, under General Johnston and a portion of the Unionists in General Patterson's division. After a sharp fight the Confederates retired to Martinsburg. Their loss was about 80 killed and wounded. The Unionists had 3 killed and 10 wounded.

Battle of Carthage - Fought at Carthage, Mo., July 5, 1861, between 1,500 Unionists, under General Sigel and about 6,000 Confederates, under Generals Parsons and Rains. The Unionists were defeated, and lost 14 killed and 31 wounded. The Confederate loss was estimated at about 500.

Battle of Rich Mountain - Fought at Rich Mountain, Va., July 11, 1861, between a detachment of Unionists, under Colonel Pegram. The Confederates lost 150 killed and wounded, and 800 others surrendered as prisoners. The Unionists, during that and the succeeding three days' campaign, lost only 13 killed and 40 wounded; the Confederates 200 killed, and 7 guns.

Battle of Carrick's Ford - Fought July 13, 1861, at Carrick's ford, Va., between 10,000 Confederates, under General Garnett, and a column of Unionists, under General Morris. After a sharp action the former retreated, General Garnett having been killed. The Union loss was 2 killed and 10 wounded.

Skirmish at Screytown - Fought at Screytown, Va., July 13, 1861, between a body of Confederates, and a party of Unionists under Colonel Lowe; the later were defeated with a loss of 9 killed, and 40 wounded and missing.

Battle of Blackburn Ford - Fought July 18, 1861, near Blackburn ford, Va., between Colonel Richardson's brigade of Unionists and a body of Confederates. The latter received the Unionists with a raking fire from a battery. The Unionists maintained their position, however, for three hours, until ordered to retire to Centerville. Their loss was 19 killed and 64 wounded and missing; that of the Confederates about 60.

First Battle of Bull Run - Fought July 21, 1861, at Manassas, on Bull Run river, in Northeastern Virginia, between General McDowell and about 28,000 Unionists and about 30,000 Confederates, commanded by Generals Beauregard and Joseph E. Johnston. The Unionists fought well at first, but, the Confederates being reinforced, a panic ensued in the Union army, and it fled in great disorder toward Washington. The Union loss was 481 killed, 1011 wounded, and 1,460 missing; the Confederates lost 378 killed, 1,489 wounded, and 30 missing. The Unionists also lost 4,000 muskets and 4,500 sets of accouterments, 20 cannon, and a considerable quantity of ammunition.

Battle of Dug Spring, Mo. - A body of Confederates, under General Rains, was defeated by General Lyon's command, August 2, 1861. The latter lost 8 killed and 30 wounded.

Battle of Wilson's Creek - Fought August 10, 1861, at Wilson's Creek, Mo., between 5,000 Unionists, under General Lyon, and about twice as many Confederates, under Generals McCulloch and Price. After six hours' hard fighting, during which General Lyon was killed, the Unionists retired to Springfield, Mo. The Union loss in killed, wounded and missing was 1,256 men; that of the Confederates was 1,768 men.

Skirmish at Charleston, Mo. - August 21, 1861, Colonel Doherty, with 300 Illinois soldiers, dispersed a rebel force, losing 1 killed and 6 wounded.

Battle at Summerville, Va. - The seventh Ohio regiment, 900 strong, was surprised while at breakfast, August 26, 1861, by a Confederate force, under General Floyd, but fought their way out, with the loss of six officers.

Capture of Forts Hatteras and Clark - These two Confederate defenses of Hatteras Inlet, N.C., were captured August 29, 1861, by a Union naval squadron, under Commodore Stringham, U.S.N., and a land force of 300 men, under General Butler. The Confederate loss was 691 officers and men taken prisoners, 49 killed and 51 wounded; 29 cannon, 1000 stand of arms, 6 regimental colors, and a large amount of military trappings and stores. The Unionists had none killed and but a few wounded. The forts were commanded by Commodore Barron, Colonel Martin and Major Andrews.

Battle of Boonville - Fought at Boonville, Mo., September 1, 1861, between Unionists and Confederates. The former were the victors, with a loss of 6 wounded, and they destroyed the town.

Battle of Carnifex - Fought near Carnifex ferry, Va., September 10, 1861, between 4,500 Unionists, under General Rosecrans, and six regiments of Confederates, with 16 cannon, under General Floyd. After several hours' fighting, darkness came, and the contest ended. The Confederates retreated, leaving a large quantity of stores and war material in the hands of their foes. The loss in men by the Unionists was 15 killed and 70 wounded; the Confederates lost but a few men.

Skirmish at Blue Mills, Mo. - September 17, 1861, the Third Iowa regiment encountered a band of Confederates, and was compelled to retreat. Receiving reinforcements, they again rallied, when the Confederates retired. The Union loss was 12 killed and 85 wounded.

Battle of Cheat Mountain - Fought September 12-17, 1861, at Cheat Mountain Pass, Va., between 9,000 Confederates, under General Lee, and the Unionists under General Reynolds, who held the Pass. After several days' skirmishing at a number of points, the Confederates retired, without dislodging the Unionists. Their loss was 100 killed, including Colonel John A. Washington; the Unionists lost 9 killed and 12 wounded.

Siege of Lexington - Lexington, Mo., on the Missouri river, about 300 miles above St. Louis, was held by 2,460 Unionists, under Colonel Mulligan, in fortifications of earthworks. On the 21st of September, 1861, they were attacked by four times their number of Confederates, under General Price. For several days Mulligan defended his position, but not receiving expected reinforcements, and being without water, he surrendered. His men were paroled, but some 3,000 muskets and rifles, 5 cannon, wagons, 750 horses, army stores, ammunition and bold belonging to Missouri banks, fell into the hands of the enemy. The Unionists had also 39 men killed and about 120 wounded. Price abandoned Lexington a few days afterwards.

Skirmish at Papinsville - September 21, 1861, General Lane, with a body of Unionists, encountered a Confederate force at Papinsville, Mo., losing 17 men, killed..

Fight at Chapmanville, W. Va. - Fought October 2, 1861, between a party of Confederates and Colonel Envartz's Kentucky volunteers, in which the former were defeated, with a loss of 47 prisoners. The Union loss was 4 killed and 8 wounded.

To be continued next month

Texas Leaves the Union

by
Harry Dolbier

Sam Houston said no. As governor of Texas, he would not call a special session of the legislature to consider secession. Much as he deplored last month's election of the Black Republican Lincoln, Houston, a slave-owner but a staunch Unionist, knew that secession meant war -- a war that could only result in the ruin of Texas and the South.

Rebuffed by Governor Houston, prominent secessionists drew up a petition calling for a convention to consider the state's future.

Houston tried to head off the convention by calling the legislature into session on January 21, 1861, hoping to convince it to declare the convention unconstitutional. The governor was disappointed. Not only did the legislators declare the convention legitimate over Houston's veto, they then went ahead to authorize the payment of per diem and expenses for the delegates.

When the delegates assembled in Austin on January 28, Governor Houston reiterated his opposition to the convention, his loyalty to the Union, and his conviction that secession meant ruin. For all that, he vowed that after a vote of the people "no citizen will be more ready to yield obedience to its will or risk his all in its defense than myself."

On the first of February the convention passed an ordinance of secession 166 to 7, subject to ratification by the voters. Within a few days the legislature added its approval. The convention published a "Declaration of Causes," describing why secession was necessary and should be approved by the voters, and printed 10,000 copies in English, 2,000 in Spanish, and 2,000 in German.

In their excitement, convention delegates ignored the fact that their charter allowed them only to draft an ordinance and present it to the people. On February 2 they sent seven representatives to Montgomery, Alabama, to discuss relations between Texas and the other Southern states. They also began discussions with the senior U. S. Army officer in Texas, Brevet Major General David E. Twiggs, about the disposition of federal property in the state.

Twiggs, 71, was a Georgian and like many other officers held loyalty to his state in higher regard than loyalty to the United States. The secession agitation came as no surprise to the general. As early as December 13, 1860, he had written to his superior officer, Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, "I think there can be no doubt that many of the Southern States will secede from the Union. The State of Texas will be among the number." General Scott left matters in Twiggs' hands, "in the full confidence that your discretion, firmness, and patriotism will effect all of good that the sad state of the times may permit."

Twiggs replied to Scott, "I am a Southern man. As soon as I know Georgia has separated from the Union I must, of course, follow her. I most respectfully ask to be relieved in the command of this department on or before the 4th of March next."

While General Twiggs waited to be relieved, a bitter, corrupt, and violent election campaign raged in anticipation of the February 23 ratification vote. A year earlier, both Unionists and secessionists had been dedicated minorities in Texas, while most citizens fell into the undecided, wait-and-see camp. During the campaign, using persuasion, threats, and intimidation, the secessionists steadily gained ground, attracting the undecided and frightening Unionists away from the polls. The loyal men gave as good as they got, at least verbally -- Governor Houston in one of his milder sallies described secessionist T. J. Green as possessed of "all the characteristics of a dog except fidelity."

On the morning of February 16, General Twiggs was awakened by the news that a horde of armed Texans, a thousand or more, was gathered in the plaza of San Antonio apparently intent upon seizing the arsenal. The general hastened to confront the Texans.

Twiggs made no secret of his sympathy for the Southern cause and was often heard to say that he would never fire on American citizens, that he would surrender the public property to Texas authorities whenever it might be demanded. There was no need to coerce him, he told one of his officers. "If an old woman with a broomstick should come with full authority from the State of Texas to demand the public property, I would give it up to her." After token protestations, Twiggs surrendered.

In all, Twiggs turned over nineteen posts to the Texans, and agreed to remove 2,328 troops from the state. The San Antonio Herald estimated the value of the surrendered public property, exclusive of real estate, at \$1,209,500. Without Twiggs' acquiescence, state authorities also pocketed some \$80,000 in gold and silver, including one army payroll brought into Texas after the federal property had been turned over to the state.

All this was too much even for the dithering Buchanan administration. On March 1 the War Department published General Order Number 5, in which, "by direction of the President of the United States," General Twiggs was dismissed from the army, "for his treachery to the flag of his country." (The order was signed by Adjutant-General Samuel Cooper, who a week later resigned from the U. S. Army to become the highest ranking military officer in the Confederacy.)

When election day rolled around, 75% of the voters in Texas turned out and endorsed secession 46,129 to 14,697. One hundred and twenty-two counties voted, and eighteen of them, mostly in the north and west, produced pro-Union majorities.

The Ordinance of Secession went into effect on March 4, declaring Texas a separate sovereign state.

The very next day convention delegates forgot the "separate sovereign" business and applied for admission to the Confederacy. They didn't need to. On March 1, the rebel congress had voted Texas into the Confederate States of America. Henceforth, orders would come from Montgomery.

Sam Houston accepted the fact that Texas was no longer one of the United States. He did not, however, believe there was anything legal about its association with the Confederacy. The convention and the ratification vote, he pointed out, had dealt with only one issue, severance of the union with the other states, the only question they were legally entitled to deal with. After the popular vote, the governor maintained, the convention ceased to exist, and the government of Texas should now return to its normal functions, administering the affairs of an independent republic.

The men in control of the convention were having none of this. The convention, in the manner of other revolution tribunals, voted itself the power "to do whatever... may be necessary and proper for the protection of the rights of the people and the defense of the State in the present emergency." The first thing it did to protect the rights of the people was to re-write the Texas constitution in conformance with principles announced in Montgomery and mandate that all state officers take an oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. When Governor Houston declined to take the oath he was expelled from office.

By April 11, Texas was one of the Confederate States of America. Sam Houston soon retired to Huntsville, David Twiggs donned the uniform of a Confederate major general, and Union sentiment disappeared from Texas. During the next four years Texas provided the Confederacy with 31 generals and 60,000 soldiers, 3,849 of whom died for the cause.

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Blast from the Past!

Lincoln's Birthday celebration 12 February 1998

Left: Mark Backus Commander Lone Star Camp #1

*Right: Glen Zook Commander Depart of the Southwest
Dr. & Mrs. Beryl F. McClarren as President and Mrs. Lincoln*



*Dahlgren Cannon at the
Texas Civil War Museum
Fort Worth*

The Battle of Galveston

January 1, 1863

Contributed by
Brother Don Gates

In the fall of 1862, Union Commodore William B. Renshaw sailed into Galveston harbor and demanded the surrender of the island city by its occupants. With virtually no defense force, the Confederate commander on the island, Colonel Joseph J. Cook, had little choice but to comply. An advance party of the 42nd Massachusetts Infantry, three companies about 260 men, arrived on December 25th and took up positions on Kuhn's wharf.

About the same time in late 1862, Major General John B. Magruder was named Confederate commander of the District of Texas. Upon arriving in Houston, Magruder immediately began making plans to recapture Galveston. To implement his plan, Magruder outfitted the decks of two river steamers, the Bayou City and the Neptune, with bails of cotton. The compressed cotton would be used to protect an on-board attack force to challenge the Federal fleet in Galveston harbor. A land force would also be used in a joint land-sea attack.

On New Years Eve, the Confederate Cottonclads, as the curious looking vessels were called, threaded their way from Harrisburg, through Galveston Bay, and toward the western entrance to Galveston harbor.

About dawn on New Year's Day, 1863, the Confederate Cottonclads entered the west end of Galveston harbor. Their nearest and first target was the Union's Harriet Lane.

After a brief encounter and some maneuvering, the tide of battle foretold an almost certain Union victory. The initial Confederate ground assault by General Scurry's 500 men with 21 guns was repelled by the 42nd Massachusetts and the Federal warships. Things went as badly at sea. After only a brief contest, Neptune had been sunk and the lone surviving Confederate Cottonclad, the Bayou City, was outnumbered six-to-one among the armed vessels in the harbor.

After recovering from its first encounter, however, the Bayou City circled around and made a second desperate run on the Lane. This time, the Confederates hit their target with remarkable precision. In short order, a boarding party consisting of over 100 Colonel Tom Green's dismounted cavalry from the Bayou City succeeded in storming and overpowering the crew of the Lane.

Meanwhile, across the harbor, the Federal Flagship Westfield, with Commodore Renshaw on board, had become hopelessly grounded in shallow water. The crew tried furiously to dislodge her, but she would not budge. At that point, a temporary truce was negotiated as both sides considered their positions.

During the truce, Renshaw decided to destroy the still immobilized Westfield and attempt a Federal escape from the harbor. Even this plan went terribly awry. As Renshaw and his crew fused the gunpowder on the flagship and quickly rowed away, nothing happened. They returned for another attempt. But as they debarked the second time, the gunpowder prematurely exploded, rocking the entire harbor. The explosion killed Renshaw and thirteen of his crew.

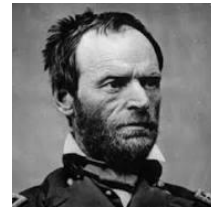
With flags of truce still flying, the remaining Federal vessels stoked their boilers, and quietly began heading for the open sea. In this endeavor they were successful, for the Confederates had little means to pursue.

Thus, the island of Galveston was recaptured. Twenty-six Confederates had been killed and 117 wounded. About twice that many Federals died in the conflict. The Union's showcase vessel and nearly 400 men, including all three abandoned companies of the 42nd Massachusetts, were captured. More importantly for the Texans, however, was that their victory restored control of Galveston to the Confederacy, where it would remain for the balance of the war.

February Birthdays



12 February 1809 Abraham Lincoln



14 February 1820 William T. Sherman



14 February 1824 Winfield Scott Hancock