

The American Civil War, also known as the War Between the States, a pivotal conflict in United States history, saw numerous leaders emerge from the Confederate states, each contributing uniquely to the war effort. Texas, a significant player in the Confederacy, was home to several notable military leaders. Among them, John Bell Hood, Thomas Green, and Lawrence Sullivan Ross stand out for their leadership, bravery, and lasting impact. This essay explores the biographies of these three leaders, their military careers, and their enduring legacies.

#### John Bell Hood:

John Bell Hood was born on June 1, 1831, in Owingsville, Kentucky. Raised in a family that valued military service, Hood pursued a career in the armed forces, attending the United States Military Academy at West Point. He graduated in 1853, ranking 44th in his class. Hood's early service in the U.S. Army included assignments in California and Texas, where he gained valuable experience in frontier warfare and honed his leadership skills.

With the outbreak of the War Between the States, Hood resigned his commission in the U.S. Army and joined the Confederate Army in 1861. He quickly rose through the ranks, initially serving as a lieutenant in the cavalry before being promoted to brigadier general. Hood took command of the renowned Hood's Texas Brigade, a unit known for its fierce fighting spirit and loyalty. Hood's leadership of the Texas Brigade was instrumental in several key battles, including the Second Battle of Bull Run, the Battle of Antietam, and the Battle of Fredericksburg. His ability to inspire his men and lead from the front earned him a reputation as a fearless and aggressive commander.

In 1863, Hood was promoted to major general and later to lieutenant general, taking command of a division in the Army of Northern Virginia. By 1864, he was appointed full general and given command of the Army of Tennessee. This marked a significant turning point in his

career, as he led Confederate forces during the Atlanta Campaign and the subsequent Franklin-Nashville Campaign.

Hood's military strategy was characterized by bold and aggressive tactics, often involving direct assaults and high-risk maneuvers. His leadership during the Battle of Chickamauga in 1863 was notable for his decisive actions that contributed to a Confederate victory, although he was severely wounded and lost the use of his left arm. As commander of the Army of Tennessee, Hood's bold strategies during the Atlanta Campaign demonstrated his willingness to take significant risks. Despite his efforts, the campaign ultimately ended in Union victory, leading to the fall of Atlanta. Hood's subsequent actions in the Franklin-Nashville Campaign were marked by high casualties, reflecting the controversial nature of his leadership.

John Bell Hood is considered a notable figure in the Confederate Army due to his leadership qualities, tactical boldness, and the significant roles he played in major battles. His aggressive style and ability to inspire troops under challenging circumstances left a lasting impression on those who served under him. Hood's legacy is complex, as his decisions often resulted in high casualties and mixed outcomes. However, his contributions to military strategy and his leadership of Texas troops have cemented his place in history. Hood's actions during the War Between the States continue to be studied for their impact on the conflict and their reflection of the broader challenges faced by Confederate commanders.

John Bell Hood's military career during the War Between the States exemplifies the qualities of a determined and bold leader. His rapid rise through the ranks, command of key units, and participation in significant battles highlight his importance to the Confederate war effort. While his legacy is marked by both successes and controversies, Hood's contributions to



military history and his role as a notable Texas leader endure as part of the broader narrative of the War Between the States.

Thomas Green:

Thomas Green was born on June 8, 1814, in Buckingham County, Virginia. He moved to Texas in the 1830s, where he became deeply involved in the Texas Revolution. Green played a significant role in the Siege of Bexar and the Battle of San Jacinto, gaining valuable military experience and establishing himself as a capable leader.

After the Texas Revolution, Green continued to serve in various military and political roles, including as a member of the Texas Congress. His early experiences on the Texas frontier shaped his approach to warfare and leadership, preparing him for his future role in the Confederate Army. With the outbreak of the War Between the States, Green joined the Confederate Army, quickly rising to the rank of brigadier general. He served in the Trans-Mississippi Theater, where his leadership abilities were recognized and valued. Green commanded cavalry units, which were instrumental in several key battles and campaigns.

One of Green's most notable achievements was his role in the Confederate recapture of Galveston, Texas, in 1863. His leadership and strategic planning were crucial in this victory, which helped secure a vital port for the Confederacy. Green also played significant roles in the Battle of Valverde and the Red River Campaign, demonstrating his ability to adapt to challenging circumstances and effectively lead his troops.

Green's military strategy was characterized by a deep understanding of frontier warfare, which he applied effectively in the Confederate cause. His ability to inspire his men and his tactical acumen were evident in several battles. At the Battle of Valverde, Green's leadership of cavalry units contributed to a Confederate victory, showcasing his skill in maneuver warfare.

During the Red River Campaign, Green's forces engaged Union troops in a series of battles, including the Battle of Mansfield and the Battle of Pleasant Hill. Although the campaign ultimately ended in a strategic stalemate, Green's actions demonstrated his tenacity and tactical ingenuity. Tragically, Green was killed in action at the Battle of Blair's Landing in 1864. His death was a significant loss for the Confederate Army and the state of Texas.

Thomas Green is considered a notable figure in the Confederate Army due to his leadership qualities, strategic insight, and contributions to key battles in the Trans-Mississippi Theater. His ability to inspire his troops and adapt to the unique challenges of frontier warfare set him apart as a leader. Green's legacy is marked by his dedication to Texas and his military prowess. His actions during the War Between the States helped shape the course of the conflict in the western theater and demonstrated the importance of cavalry and mobile warfare. Green's contributions to the Confederate war effort and his role in key battles are remembered as part of Texas's rich military history.

Thomas Green's military career during the War Between the States exemplifies the qualities of a skilled and dedicated leader. His command of cavalry units, participation in significant battles, and strategic contributions highlight his importance to the Confederate war effort. While his life was cut short, Green's legacy as a notable Texas leader endures, reflecting his impact on military history and his role in the broader narrative of the War Between.

#### Lawrence Sullivan Ross

Lawrence Sullivan "Sul" Ross was born on September 27, 1838, in the Iowa Territory. His family moved to Texas in 1839, where Ross grew up and later attended Baylor University. Before the War Between the States, Ross gained a reputation as a Texas Ranger, known for his leadership and bravery in frontier conflicts with Native American tribes. Ross's early experiences



as a Texas Ranger provided him with valuable military skills and a deep understanding of frontier warfare, which would serve him well during the War Between the States.

At the outbreak of the War Between the States, Ross joined the Confederate Army, initially serving as a private. His leadership abilities quickly earned him promotions, and he rose to the rank of brigadier general. Ross commanded Ross's Brigade, a cavalry unit that played a crucial role in several key battles. Ross's Brigade was known for its mobility and effectiveness in combat, participating in significant engagements such as the Battle of Corinth, the Battle of Thompson's Station, and the Atlanta Campaign. Ross demonstrated tactical acumen and the ability to lead his men effectively under pressure, earning respect from both his peers and subordinates.

Ross's military strategy was characterized by adaptability and a keen understanding of cavalry tactics. His leadership during the Battle of Corinth in 1862 showcased his ability to execute complex maneuvers and contribute to the Confederate war effort. During the Atlanta Campaign, Ross's Brigade engaged Union forces in a series of skirmishes and battles, demonstrating their resilience and combat effectiveness. Ross's ability to coordinate cavalry operations and support larger strategic objectives was a testament to his skill as a military leader.

Lawrence Sullivan Ross is considered a notable figure in the Confederate Army due to his leadership qualities, tactical skill, and contributions to key battles. His ability to inspire his troops and execute effective cavalry operations made him a respected leader.

Beyond his military service, Ross's legacy extends to his contributions to Texas's political and educational systems. After the war, he served as the 19th Governor of Texas from 1887 to 1891, where he focused on improving the state's infrastructure and education. Ross later became the president of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas (now Texas A&M

University), where he played a crucial role in transforming the institution into a respected university.

Ross's impact on Texas's educational system and his dedication to public service are lasting reminders of his influence. There is even a college named after him in west Texas. Sul Ross State University founded in 1917 is a public university located in Alpine, Texas and is part of the Texas State University system. Sul Ross State University continues to serve as an important educational institution in West Texas. His legacy as a soldier-statesman reflects his commitment to both military and civilian leadership.

Lawrence Sullivan Ross's career during the War Between the States and his subsequent contributions to Texas exemplify the qualities of a dedicated and capable leader. His command of cavalry units, participation in significant battles, and strategic contributions highlight his importance to the Confederate war effort. Ross's legacy as a notable Texas leader endures, reflecting his impact on military history and his role in shaping Texas's political and educational landscape.

John Bell Hood, Thomas Green, and Lawrence Sullivan Ross each made significant contributions to the Confederate Army and the state of Texas during and after the War Between the States. Their leadership, bravery, and dedication to their cause and community left a lasting impact on Texas history. While their legacies are complex and reflect the tumultuous times in which they lived, their roles as military leaders and public figures continue to be remembered and studied today. Their stories are integral to understanding the broader narrative of the War Between the States and its enduring effects on Texas and the United States.

## Bibliography / Endnotes

1. "Davis, Stephen." "John Bell Hood and the Struggle for Atlanta." University of Nebraska Press, 1998.

- Provides an in-depth analysis of John Bell Hood's military strategies and his role in the Atlanta Campaign.

2. "Piston, William Garrett, and Richard W. Hatcher III." "Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, and Prairie Grove: A Battlefield Guide, with a Section on Wire Road." University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

- Offers insights into Hood's leadership and the performance of Hood's Texas Brigade during key battles.

3. "Wooster, Ralph A." "Lone Star Regiments in Gray." Eakin Press, 2002.

- Discusses the contributions of Texas regiments and leaders like Thomas Green and Lawrence Sullivan Ross in the Confederate Army.

4. "Cutrer, Thomas W." "Ben McCulloch and the Frontier Military Tradition." University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

- Explores Thomas Green's military career and his impact on the Confederate war effort in the Trans-Mississippi Theater.

5. "Texas State Historical Association (TSHA) - Lawrence Sullivan Ross."

- Provides a comprehensive biography of Sul Ross, detailing his military and political career.

- [TSHA: Lawrence Sullivan

- Ross](<https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/ross-lawrence-sullivan-sul>)

6. "Simpson, Harold B." "Hood's Texas Brigade: A Compendium." Hill Junior College Press, 1977.

- A detailed account of Hood's Texas Brigade and its role in the Civil War, highlighting John Bell Hood's leadership.

7. "Campbell, Randolph B." "Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State." Oxford University Press, 2003.

- Provides historical context for Texas's involvement in the Civil War and the contributions of its military leaders.