

Section

3

Campaigns in Texas and the Southwest

Main Ideas

1. By fighting in and around Texas, the Confederacy hoped to avoid Union occupancy.
2. Geographic features affected the outcome of the military campaigns fought in the region.

Why It Matters Today

Many Texans served in the military during the Civil War. Use current events sources to learn about men and women who serve in our nation's military today.

Key Terms and People

- Henry H. Sibley
- Battle of Glorieta Pass
- cottonclads
- Battle of Galveston
- Richard Dowling
- Davis Guards
- Battle of Sabine Pass
- Santos Benavides
- Red River Campaign

The Story Continues

Texan Val C. Giles shivered in the darkness. He was on guard duty, watching a Virginia swamp where many soldiers had died that day in battle. As he thought about his fallen comrades, something terrifying happened. He recalled, “The biggest ghost I had ever seen” slowly rose out of the swamp. He thought that it must be a dead soldier. Only later did he learn that the “ghost” was merely swamp gas.



TEKS: 1B, 5A, 8A, 9A, 9B, 9C, 18B, 21A, 21B, 21C, 21D, 21E, 22A, 22C, 22D

myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on the campaigns fought in and around the Southwest.



The New Mexico Campaign

While many Texans served in the eastern theater of the Civil War, some served closer to home. Shortly after the war began, Texas forces led by Colonel John R. Baylor marched into New Mexico Territory and claimed the area. In the fall of 1861, General **Henry H. Sibley** took three Texas regiments to seize the Southwest—from New Mexico to California—for the Confederacy. The region had great wealth from its gold and silver mines as well as ports on the Pacific Ocean.

Sibley's 2,000 troops won a battle against 2,500 Union soldiers at Valverde, New Mexico. The Texas force then seized Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Gradually the army was weakened by disease and lack of food and water. One soldier remembered the march through the desert

Analyzing Primary Sources
Finding the Main Idea Why did the Texans retreat after the Battle of Glorieta Pass?

region. “We had suffered a lot, had gone hungry, and did not have enough water. We sweated during the day and froze at night.” Union troops met part of Sibley’s force in the **Battle of Glorieta Pass** in New Mexico, on March 28, 1862. A Texas soldier recalled the battle.

TEXAS VOICES

“We were under fire 6 hours, compelling [forcing] the enemy to retreat 3 miles and we won the battle. . . . On the day of the battle the enemy sent 200 men around to our camp and burned all our wagons together with all our clothing and provisions.”

—Julius Eggeling, quoted in *Westward the Texans*, edited by Jerry D. Thompson

Stranded without supplies, Sibley and his small army had to retreat to Texas. Union forces occupied El Paso and kept control of the Southwest for the rest of the war.

Reading Check Identifying Cause and Effect What was the climate of New Mexico like, and how did that affect the Confederates’ attempt to capture the region?



BIOGRAPHY

Richard Dowling

(1838–1867) Richard Dowling of Houston joined the Confederate army and became a skilled artillery commander. In 1863 he was given command of Fort Griffin, which guarded Sabine Pass. Dowling knew that his men needed to be excellent shots to prevent Union vessels from simply steaming past the fort. When Union ships did attack, firing as they came, Dowling’s men were ready. In his report of the fighting, Dowling praised his men. “All my men behaved like heroes; not a man flinched from his post. Our motto was ‘victory or death.’”

Why was Dowling a good choice to command the fort?



The Battle of Galveston

The Union navy had blockaded Texas ports by the summer of 1862. When a Union fleet sailed into Galveston Harbor in October, the small Confederate force there retreated. Galveston was vital to the Confederacy. If left in Union control, northern forces could easily sweep into Texas. General John B. Magruder, the commander of Confederate forces in Texas, made plans to recapture it.

Magruder’s men converted two steamboats to gunboats, lining the sides with cotton bales for protection. Some soldiers doubted that these **cottonclads** would help much. Nonetheless, troops commanded by Colonel Tom Green boarded the *Neptune* and the *Bayou City* to attack Union ships in the harbor. At the same time, soldiers were preparing to attack the Union forces from the mainland. The **Battle of Galveston** began in the early morning hours of January 1, 1863. A Texan on the *Bayou City* remembered the events.

TEXAS VOICES

“The *Harriet Lane* [a Union ship] ran up beside us and I was ordered to cut the stays. When I cut them, the stage planks fell on the *Harriet Lane*. . . . Commodore Smith went aboard the hostile ship and after a moment’s feeble resistance, she struck her colors and surrendered.”

—M. L. Clark, quoted in *Reminiscences of the Boys in Gray, 1861–1865*, edited by Mamie Yearly

The remaining Union ships fled. Meanwhile, Confederate land forces overran the Union troops in Galveston, capturing several hundred soldiers. The Confederacy once again controlled the key Texas port.

Reading Check Sequencing List in order who controlled Galveston and the approximate dates of their control.



★ The Battle of Sabine Pass

The Union did not intend to leave Galveston in Confederate hands. In September 1863, Union troops set sail from New Orleans, which had been captured by the North in April 1862. General William B. Franklin and about 4,000 troops planned to invade Texas through Sabine Pass, march overland to Houston, and then capture Galveston. Confederate lieutenant **Richard Dowling** and about 45 soldiers in an all-Irish unit known as the **Davis Guards** were to protect the pass. They manned a small post called Fort Griffin, surrounded only by trenches and earthen mounds. The fort had six cannons, which the soldiers had used to practice hitting targets in the pass.

Union forces attacked on September 8, 1863. General Franklin planned to use gunboats to destroy Fort Griffin's cannons so that his troops could land. Union forces shelled the fort for more than an hour. The Davis Guards held their fire until the gunboats were close by. Dowling then ordered his men to fire. The Confederate gunners fired fast and accurately. They quickly crippled two gunboats and halted the Union attack. The rest of the Union ships turned back, but not before the Guards captured more than 300 Union soldiers. The victory excited people in Texas and the rest of the South. The Confederacy had lost two major battles that summer, and the **Battle of Sabine Pass** helped restore southern confidence. Lieutenant Dowling and the Davis Guards received special medals for their actions.

Reading Check Summarizing Why was Sabine Pass a strategic location, and how did holding it affect events in Texas?

Interpreting Visuals

Sabine Pass. Sabine Pass is the outlet of the Sabine River into the Gulf of Mexico. **Based on this illustration of the Battle of Sabine Pass, how do you think geographic factors affected the battle?**



The Civil War in Texas, 1862–1865

Interpreting Maps Union forces targeted Texas ports to limit Confederate trade.

Locate What Texas towns experienced conflict during the Civil War?



The Coast and South Texas

Despite the Confederate victories at Galveston and Sabine Pass, Union forces once again attacked Texas. Two months after the Battle of Sabine Pass, Union forces commanded by General Nathaniel Banks captured Brazos Island off the mouth of the Rio Grande. They wanted to take Brownsville and stop trade between Texas and Mexico. Texans like Sarah “Sally” Scull led wagon trains loaded with cotton across the border to Matamoros. From there, Texans shipped the cotton overseas and purchased supplies for the Confederacy. The Union wanted to cut off this supply route. This route was important as the blockade tightened. Ships known as blockade-runners sometimes slipped past the Union navy, but they could not carry on regular trade.

Union troops captured Brownsville in early November 1863. Banks then split his forces. One group of troops moved north up the coast, capturing Matagorda Island and occupying Indianola. Colonel Edmund J. Davis of Texas, leading the other column of Union troops, captured Rio Grande City. But his attack on Laredo failed. Texas troops led by Colonel **Santos Benavides**, the highest-ranking Mexican American to serve in the Confederate army, turned back the attack. After Union forces were

called away from Brownsville, Colonel John S. Ford quickly recaptured the town for the Confederacy. Although Union troops controlled Brazos Island, none remained on the mainland of the lower Texas coast.

Reading Check Finding the Main Idea What geographic feature made South Texas strategically important, and what was the goal of Union forces attacking the region?

The Red River Campaign

The Union troops had left Brownsville to take part in the **Red River Campaign**. Union leaders wanted to invade northeastern Texas from Louisiana along the Red River. They planned to attack in the spring, when the river was usually deep enough for boats.

In March 1864 General Banks and 27,000 men began moving up the river, supported by a fleet of ironclads. Banks hoped to link with a smaller Union army of 15,000 men moving south from Arkansas.

On April 8, 1864, Confederate units commanded by General Richard Taylor intercepted Banks at Sabine Crossroads near Mansfield, Louisiana. The Confederate forces totaled fewer than 9,000 men, but in a stunning blow they forced Banks to turn back. Brigadier General Tom Green, fighting with Taylor, led troops in several successful attacks against Banks during the battles of Pleasant Hill and Mansfield.

Meanwhile, unusually low water levels on the Red River slowed the Union gunboats. They narrowly escaped destruction while retreating. The Union army moving south from Arkansas had no better luck. On April 18, Confederate forces defeated it at Poison Springs, Arkansas. Confederate troops had again turned back Union attacks in Texas.

Reading Check Analyzing Information How did the depth of the Red River affect General Banks's invasion of Texas?



Daily Life

Camp Life

"I am sick of war," a Texas officer wrote to his wife in 1863. Many soldiers probably agreed with this officer. Soldiers spent far more time sitting in camp than fighting. Soldiers had to live with bad weather, disease, poor food, and a lack of supplies. Texans were quite creative, however, at getting food, as noted by General Lee. "When you Texans come about the chickens have to roost mighty high."

What problem did Texas soldiers face in camp?

Section 3 Review



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ONLINE QUIZ

1. Define and explain:

- cottonclads

2. Identify and explain

the historical significance of:

- Henry H. Sibley
- Battle of Glorieta Pass
- Battle of Galveston
- Richard Dowling
- Davis Guards
- Battle of Sabine Pass
- Santos Benavides
- Red River Campaign

3. Analyzing Information

Use the graphic organizer to list three of the Confederacy's goals for fighting in and around Texas.

Confederacy's Goals for Texas

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. Finding the Main Idea

- a. What battles were fought in and near Texas, and what was their significance?
- b. What effects did geographic factors have on military campaigns in the region?

5. Writing and Critical Thinking

myWriteSmart

Supporting a Point of View Imagine that you are a Union or Confederate officer. Write a memo to your superior explaining why controlling Brownsville is important. Consider:

- trade and transportation routes to Mexico
- the use of Brownsville as a launching point for an invasion of Texas