Preserving Texas' Civil War Records

Texas Archives Month – October 2012

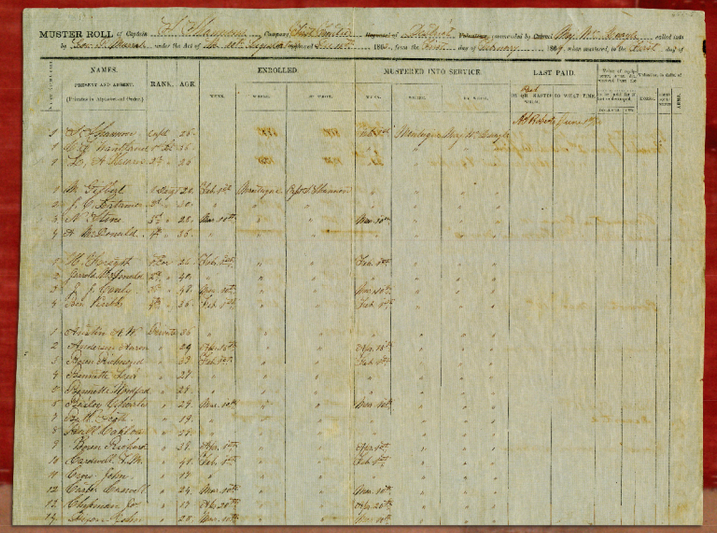
Secessionists and Unionists. Civilian and military. Frontier and city folk. Black and white. Men and women. Young and old.

The state's borders, coast, and frontier faced attacks by Union troops and Indians, while the interior felt the lack of able-bodied men at home.

Archives across Texas contain a multitude of records that tell the stories of the struggles of people who lived through the Civil War, the most defining event of the 19th century.

Their stories—our Texas history.

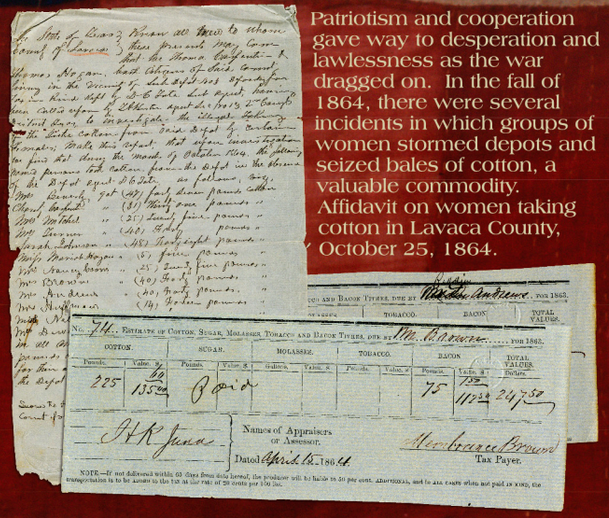
Edmund J. Davis, a district judge in Brownsville, was stripped of his position after he refused to take a loyalty oath to the Confederacy. He fled the state, but soon returned at the head of a Union cavalry regiment, recruited mainly in Mexico, that fought along the border.



With federal soldiers no longer protecting the frontier, the men left at home in Montague County formed the 1st Frontier District unit of the Texas State Troops to protect their families from Indian depredations. Muster roll, February 1 – June 1, 1864.

This color illustration from Harper's Weekly magazine depicts the rebel attack on Union gunboats in Galveston Bay, January 1, 1863.

This document from Wilson County records the impressment of African-American slaves to fulfill the labor shortage created when young men left the community to serve in the Confederate Army.



Patriotism and cooperation gave way to desperation and lawlessness as the war dragged on. In the fall of 1864, there were several incidents in which groups of women stormed depots and seized bales of cotton, a valuable commodity. Affidavit on women taking cotton in Lavaca County, October 25, 1864.

This rare ambrotype is believed to depict the surrender of General David E. Twiggs' federal forces to the Confederates in the main plaza in San Antonio on February 16, 1861.

This Lone Star variation of the Confederate First National Flag was most likely captured by a Union steamer from a British schooner named *William* on July 1, 1862, off the coast of Sabine Pass, Texas as it was headed to Jamaica with 405 bales of cotton.

Captured from Schooner William near oyster bay

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