

“VICTORY IS OUR ONLY ROAD TO PEACE”: TEXAS, WARTIME MORALE,
AND CONFEDERATE NATIONALISM, 1860-1865

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This thesis explores the impact of home front and battlefield morale on Texas’s civilian and military population during the Civil War. It addresses the creation, maintenance, and eventual surrender of Confederate nationalism and identity among Texans from five different counties: Colorado, Dallas, Galveston, Harrison, and Travis. The war divided Texans into three distinct groups: civilians on the home front, soldiers serving in theaters outside of the state, and soldiers serving within Texas’s borders. Different environments, experiences, and morale affected the manner in which civilians and soldiers identified with the Confederate war effort. This study relies on contemporary letters, diaries, newspaper reports, and government records to evaluate how morale influenced national dedication and loyalty to the Confederacy among various segments of Texas’s population.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: CONFEDERATE NATIONALISM AND TEXAS

Historians have traditionally viewed the Confederate experience in different ways, and for the most part, have had two minds about the state of loyalty to the Confederate war effort and attempts to build an independent southern nation. Some scholars have held that the Confederacy collapsed from within, long before the eventual surrender at Appomattox, due to a loss of will, a failure to establish a cohesive identity, overbearing government policies, battlefield defeats, guilt over slavery, and class conflict between elite slaveholders and yeomen. Charles Wesley propounded this thesis as early as the 1930s when he argued that the vast majority of the southern populace failed to mobilize into an effective and unified body and that “the mass of the people had lost the will to fight.” The loss-of-will thesis was continued in the 1950s by E. Merton Coulter and Clement Eaton in their individual histories of the Confederacy; however, the argument was most prominently outlined in the work of Richard Beringer and his colleagues in their monumental work, *Why the South Lost the Civil War* (1986). They wrote that Confederate soldiers especially became increasingly apathetic to the “cause” as home front suffering became too extreme and serious, thus causing significant desertions within the ranks of once formidable southern armies. According to this argument, battlefield defeats were inevitable because Confederates “did not want an independent Confederacy badly enough to continue the struggle.” A majority of historians in the loss-of-will school usually look to the summer of 1863, and the dual

defeats at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, as the primary indicators of the Confederacy's failure.¹

Other writers maintain that southerners willingly dedicated themselves to establishing a Confederate nation, identified themselves as Confederates, and in spite of hardships and low morale, accepted defeat only after their armies in the field were forced to capitulate to a more powerful foe. Gary W. Gallagher, one of the primary leaders of this line of thought, has cautioned historians about equating defeats and setbacks with a loss-of-will in the Confederacy and submitted that historians should not view the Confederacy's defeat as inevitable. Rather, he argued that scholars should assume a more responsible approach and understand how and why the incipient nation managed to survive for four years. Historian James M. McPherson also questions the viability of the loss-of-will thesis and finds an inherent flaw in its premise. He submits that if historians assume that Confederates "lost" their will, then somewhere along the line southerners originally had a will to win and establish an independent nation. He argues for a more literal reading of the Confederate experience and maintains that a

¹ Charles Wesley, *The Collapse of the Confederacy* (Washington, D. C.: Associated Publishers, 1937), 89; Richard E. Beringer, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, William N. Still Jr., *Why the South Lost the Civil War* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1986), 436; E. Merton Coulter, *The Confederate States of America, 1861-1865*. Vol. 7 in *A History of the South Series* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1950); Clement Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1954); Paul D. Escott, *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1978); William W. Freehling, *The South vs. the South: How Anti-Confederate Forces Shaped the Course of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001); Robert L. Kerby, *Kirby Smith's Confederacy: The Trans-Mississippi South, 1863-1865* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1972); James Marten, *Texas Divided: Loyalty and Dissent in the Lone Star State, 1856-1874* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1990); David Williams, *Rich Man's War: Class, Caste, and Confederate Defeat in the Lower Chattahoochee Valley* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1998).

loss of will occurred only after the Confederacy itself was defeated. Further, McPherson points out that dissent, division, and conflict were just as prevalent, if not more so, in the wartime North as in the South. If those elements existed in the Union (and they most certainly did), why, then, did the Union still win the war? The basis of his query hinges upon the contention that events on the battlefield dictated the fate of each of the warring sections, in spite of the level of suffering experienced by the home front's civilians. This line of thought contends that the Confederacy lost because it simply could not defeat a stronger foe during key junctures of the war.²

Historians also have written on the multiple ways in which Confederates constructed a national identity during the Civil War. In the 1960s, eminent historian David M. Potter submitted that nationalism did not function independently of other loyalties, but rather, “[subsumed] them all in a mutually supportive relation to one another.” He noted that the most successful form of nationalism encompasses other forms of loyalty, whether they were, for example, family, religion, community, or patriotism, rather than marginalizing or even superseding such qualities. Nationalism, therefore, was not a monolithic creation designed to work and function alone in psychological and ideological conceptions. Recent historians have used Potter's interpretation to form their own understanding of the creation, foundation, and inherent

² Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1997); James M. McPherson, “American Victory, American Defeat,” in Gabor S. Boritt ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), 15-42; William A. Blair, *Virginia's Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998); Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1988); Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005); Emory M. Thomas, *The Confederate Nation, 1861-1865* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979).

meaning of Confederate nationalism. Although debates have arisen regarding the level of commitment Confederates had for achieving their ultimate goal of independence, most scholars now agree that, regardless of their interpretation of Confederate loyalty and dedication, Confederate nationalism existed, albeit in varying degrees. Thus, most scholarly accounts of the subject adopt facets of Potter's analysis to include interconnected loyalty to leaders (for example, Robert E. Lee), region, symbols, national memory, and even gender.³

Scholars have commonly examined the Confederacy as a whole (or large regions with the South) to arrive at their conclusions about the degrees of Confederate identity and nationalism. This study is based on a collection of five Texas counties—Colorado, Dallas, Galveston, Harrison, and Travis (See Map 1)—in order to use the local level as a test case against the sizable backdrop of Confederate historiography. Local studies provide color and texture to the larger Confederate experience and serve as a practical and effective means of approaching larger historiographic problems. Although a sampling of various counties is not a perfect mirror of the collective experience of the entire South, scholars could well benefit by studying Confederate nationalism and identity from the bottom-up, as well as from the top-down. Historical knowledge of the Confederacy as a nation is necessary, of course, but studies on a

³ David M. Potter, "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa," in Potter, *The South and the Sectional Crisis* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1968), 48-49, 63; Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, 223; Faust, *Creation of Confederate Nationalism*, 7; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 5-12, 50, 63, 73, 75-80; Blair, *Virginia's Private War*; Jacqueline Glass Campbell, *When Sherman March North from the Sea: Resistance on the Confederate Home Front* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2003), 71-74; Rubin, *Shattered Nation*.

smaller scale can illuminate the complexities and nuances of the larger story of Confederate nationalism.⁴

Rather than treating each county as a separate case study, this account takes a chronological approach that allows the reader a glimpse into Texans' writings and beliefs as the story unfolded, from the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 through the Confederacy's final surrender in 1865. This approach demonstrates change, continuity, and contingency in Texans' evolving ideologies, philosophies, attitudes, and morale throughout the course of the war. This method provides an opportunity to analyze differing wartime situations, events, and conditions in order to comprehend the level of commitment common Texans exerted for the Confederacy. In so doing, four fundamental questions are posed: First, to what degree was Confederate national identity established in these five Texas counties? Second, if Confederate identity was established, how was it accomplished and further maintained, especially through periods of fluctuating morale? Third, when and how did Texans recognize defeat, and how did they characterize the demise of the Confederate experiment? Fourth, based on the totality of each county's experiences, what conclusions can be reached regarding morale and national identity in Texas during the Civil War? A community-level case study based on hundreds of letters, diaries, newspaper reports, and national, state, and

⁴ See Gordon B. McKinney, "Layers of Loyalty: Confederate Nationalism and Amnesty Letters from Western North Carolina," *Civil War History* 51 (March, 2005): 5-22, and Randolph B. Campbell, "Planters and Plain Folk: Harrison County, Texas, as a Test Case, 1850-1860," *Journal of Southern History* 40 (August, 1974): 369-98, as examples of beneficial local studies. Campbell's study, although another microcosmic study based on Harrison County, is significantly different from the present essay. "Planters and Plain Folk" addresses the nature of antebellum southern society to determine who dominated the South both politically and socially. See the map by Terry Jordan on page 13.

local government records should provide ample evidence about Confederate nationalism, and adds a new dimension of understanding regarding Texas's place in Civil War history. The five counties examined here are ideal settings in which to test the existence of nationalist identity and wartime morale in Texas. Taken together, the counties' physical locations represented many of Texas's major regions in 1860. Moreover, each county's economic and societal structure potentially influenced the ideological make-up and character of its people thereby representing many of the political positions of the antebellum and wartime periods.

Civil War Era nationalism, identity, and morale, when defined properly and placed in an appropriate theoretical framework, reveal that they were equally linked within the actions and expressions of wartime respondents. Nationalism was the level of commitment—whether it was through sentiment, expression, action, or deed—that an individual displayed and directed toward the Confederate cause. This did not necessarily signify blatant and sometimes brash expressions of patriotism, but was instead, a more multifarious construct that required “evidence of unifying and defining characteristics among a people.” The unifying qualities, however, necessitated more than a simple recognition and acceptance of a nation's cause or purpose. Historian James M. McPherson noted that Confederate nationalism encompassed an obligation to defend home, family, and country from invading northern armies. Thus, as numerous scholars have suggested, nationalism was an intricate combination of local and state loyalties that functioned simultaneously and were fused together with adherence to the actual nation. Antebellum, as well as wartime southerners, concurrently harbored both local and national allegiances as long as the goals of community and nation remained

consistent. Scholars have long recognized this, of course, and a study intentionally focused on a microcosmic portion of Confederate society has the potential to uncover the specific methods some southerners used (or did not use) to channel local attachments in forming an ideological bond to the larger Confederacy.⁵

If nationalism was based on outward dedication to one's nation, identity was the inward and psychological manifestation of the multiple loyalties that Confederate nationalism required. Identity is a unique sense of one's self combined with the characteristics that distinguish one person or group from another. In order to compose a functioning identity, individuals needed a "negative reference point" with which to compare in order to stand in a more favorable light. Nevertheless, identity functions in harmony with the basic nature of nationalism. Once a group identifies internally with a cause, movement, nation, or ideal, the internal cognizance of the group identity is then directed through various channels toward the common goal. Therefore, Confederate citizens possessed numerous ways in which to express their identity—which ultimately translated into nationalism—including dual attachments to community and nation. Confederate identity did not necessarily require, however, strict emotional associations to traditional national symbols, most notably the presidency or central government. Individual matters that contributed directly to the war effort, such as collective sacrifice, military service, or even a hatred of northerners, served as practical and tangible instruments that potentially defined Confederate group identity. The level of outward

⁵ Brad R. Clampitt, "Morale in the Western Confederacy: Home Front and Battlefield, 1864-1865," (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Texas, 2006), 16; McPherson, "American Victory, American Defeat," 30-32; Blair, *Virginia's Private War*, 141, 149; John McCardell, *The Idea of a Southern Nation: Southern Nationalists and Southern Nationalism, 1830-1860* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1979), 5-6; Rubin, *Shattered Nation*, 2; Potter, "Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa," 34-83.

expression and acknowledgement of these factors determined the level of one's nationalistic commitment.⁶

Morale is "a measure of human emotion, specifically the confidence or lack thereof individuals experienced regarding the success of their cause." Varying levels of morale stemmed from battlefield results, emotional concern for loved ones, the impact of governmental policies, and especially the level of hardship and suffering citizens and soldiers were forced to endure. Morale certainly played a potentially crucial role in influencing Confederate nationalism and identity. An individual's reaction to wartime events during any point in the conflict had the effect of possibly swaying one's level of loyalty to the Confederate war effort. Thus, some historians have suggested that Confederate morale suffered a steady decline throughout the war—especially after the summer defeats in 1863—that ultimately translated into an abandonment of the Confederacy's cause.⁷

Historians have generally neglected the study of Confederate identity and wartime morale in Texas, primarily because of the lack of any large-scale invasion from Union forces. Although Texas did not experience the romantic and bloody battles of the East, the state played a viable and critical role during the Confederacy's bid for independence. Histories of Texas normally recognize this, of course, but do not examine the ideological and psychological components of Texas's Confederate existence. A small collection of works, including Clayton E. Jewett's *Texas in the*

⁶ Susan-Mary Grant, *North over South: Northern Nationalism and American Identity in the Antebellum Era* (Lawrence: Univ. of Kansas Press, 2000), 35; James C. Cobb, *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), 3; Rubin, *Shattered Nation*, 2-5; Blair, *Virginia's Private War*, 141; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 8, 12, 13, 73.

⁷ Clampitt, "Morale in the Western Confederacy," 6.

Confederacy: An Experiment in Nation Building and James Marten's *Texas Divided: Loyalty and Dissent in the Lone Star State, 1856-1874*, attempt to address issues of morale and nationalism. Jewett believes Texans developed an identity separate from other Confederate states that was based solely on the state's "unique" need for economic security. He writes that "the process of nation building reveals that from 1861 to 1865, Texas existed on its own in the Confederacy."⁸

Marten adopts a different approach and focuses on loyalty, or lack thereof, in Texas during the war. He found, in language reminiscent of the Beringer school of thought, that the patriotism that existed in 1860 and 1861 "reached its zenith in the months immediately following the attack on Fort Sumter, before beginning a decline that would not reach its nadir until the end of the war." Marten argues that the primary reason for Texans' declension in spirit was the result of internal battles between loyalty and disloyalty to the Confederacy. Southern defeat, according to Marten, seemed to be inevitable because Texans were not unified enough in the attempt for victory. Jewett's and Marten's works are valuable additions to Texas's Civil War bibliography, but neither focuses primarily and specifically on the factors that influenced morale or the aspects that fostered (or did not foster) an ideological connection to the Confederacy in Texas.⁹

⁸ Clayton Jewett, *Texas in the Confederacy: An Experiment in Nation Building* (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 2002), 237. Stephen A. Townsend, *The Yankee Invasion of Texas* (College Station: Texas A & M Univ. Press, 2005). See Allan C. Ashcraft, *Texas in the Civil War: A Resumé History* (Austin: Texas Civil War Commission, 1962), Randolph B. Campbell, *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003), 239-67, and Ralph A. Wooster, *Texas and Texans in the Civil War* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1996), as general references on Texas during the war. These three works do not address the specific issues related to wartime morale and nationalism.

⁹ Marten, *Texas Divided*, 1.

Whereas the previous two studies focus specifically on Texas, Robert L. Kerby's *Kirby Smith's Confederacy: The Trans-Mississippi South, 1863-1865*, places the final years of the Lone Star State's Confederate existence within the broader context of the Trans-Mississippi theater. Adopting a similar stance as Richard Beringer and his colleagues, E. Merton Coulter, and Charles Wesley, Kerby notes that by 1863 the region's populace did not possess adequate resources to combat their "sagging morale." Further, he submits that various elements, including conscription and the increasing failure of the Confederate monetary system, plagued the people's will to continue fighting. Kerby also writes that the debate surrounding the arming of the slave population, "more than any other event, bore witness to the Confederacy's moral collapse. With it the Confederate government announced its abandonment of the South's basic social institution and . . . the principle justifying" the South's decision to secede. Kerby's book contains exceptional detail and analysis that is necessary for any study on Texas in the Civil War.¹⁰

The nature of this study not only adds to the voluminous literature on Texas in the Civil War, but also provides an opportunity to understand how small populations reacted emotionally throughout the war and offers a basis for greater understanding of the Confederate experiment in Texas. A brief look at each of the five counties reveals diversity and complexity in each locale. Colorado County, located in the south-central portion of the state, was officially organized in 1837 and was an original county of the Republic of Texas. A long-time slaveholding, plantation-based community that

¹⁰ Kerby, *Kirby Smith's Confederacy*, 58, 396. See also Richard Lowe, *Walker's Texas Division, C.S.A.: Greyhounds of the Trans-Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004) as another valuable resource on the Trans-Mississippi theater.

produced the state's fifth-largest cotton crop in 1860, the county was populated with 7,885 inhabitants, 45 percent of whom were slaves, on the eve of the Civil War. Although the county was composed primarily of families from the Upper South, the dependence on slaves and cotton influenced Colorado's vote in favor of Texas's secession by a margin of 584 to 300 in 1861. Most of the county's Anglo population supported the measure. The vast majority of votes cast against it were from Colorado's sizeable collection of German immigrants. Historian Walter L. Buenger writes that it was quite common for "all Germans [to display] a sincere commitment to the Union" throughout the election of 1860 and the subsequent secession crisis.¹¹

Dallas County, located in north-central Texas along the Trinity River, was slightly larger than Colorado County in terms of population (8,665), but it included considerably fewer slaves in 1860. The fact that only 12 percent of Dallas's population were black bondsmen reflected the county's subsistence economy that was based primarily on the production of various grains, especially wheat, and the raising of livestock. Similar to many of its neighboring counties in North Texas, Dallas was heavily populated by natives of the Upper South and the old Northwest. Nearby counties such as Collin, Denton, and Grayson mirrored the region's economic and cultural compositions and directly correlated to a strong Unionist presence during the secession crisis. Dallas,

¹¹ Walter L. Buenger, *Secession and the Union in Texas* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1984), 98-99; Mark Odintz, "Colorado County," in Ron Tyler et al., eds., *The New Handbook of Texas* (6 vols.: Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), 2:224-26; Randolph B. Campbell, *Grass-Roots Reconstruction in Texas, 1865-1880* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1997), 2, 27, 29; United States Bureau of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 484-85; Colorado County Historical Commission, *Colorado County Chronicles: From the Beginning to 1923* (2 vols.: Austin: Nortex Press, 1986), 99.

however, in spite of its small slave population, ardently supported disunion in 1861 by a vote of 741 to 237. The county was probably influenced by Charles R. Pryor's *Dallas Herald* as well as community leaders who outwardly spoke in favor of secession.¹²

Home of the Lone Star State's second-largest city in 1860, Galveston County is located on Texas's southeast Coastal Plain bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Although the county had a relatively small slave population in 1860 (1,520 out of a total population of 8,229), slavery had existed in Galveston since the 1820s. The county even operated as a prime slave trading market during the antebellum years. Although Galveston was not a setting for the Deep South's cotton and plantation culture, the Island City exported the vast majority of Texas's cotton and other staple products to various parts of the nation as well as abroad. The county strongly endorsed secession by a vote of 765 to 33. Galveston offers a unique opportunity for the study of wartime morale and Confederate nationalism in Texas, because it was one of the few locales in the state to experience combat with Union forces. Targeted by the Union because of its military and commercial strength, Galveston, according to one scholar, was "the focal point of Civil War activity in the Southwest."¹³

¹² Lisa C. Maxwell, "Dallas County," in Tyler, et al., eds., *New Handbook of Texas*, 2:484-86; Campbell, *Grass-Roots Reconstruction*, 2-3, 63, 65; Bureau of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1860*, 484-85; Buenger, *Secession and the Union*, 67; Richard G. Lowe and Randolph B. Campbell, *Planters and Plain Folk: Agriculture in Antebellum Texas* (Dallas: Southern Methodist Univ. Press, 1986), 12, 22.

¹³ Edward T. Cotham Jr., *Battle on the Bay: The Civil War Struggle for Galveston* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1998), 1 (quotation), 23; Earl Fornell, *The Galveston Era: The Texas Crescent on the Eve of Secession* (Austin: Univ. Texas Press, 1961), 23-24; Randolph B. Campbell, *An Empire for Slavery: The Peculiar Institution in Texas, 1821-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1989), 11-13, 52-53, 125-26, 232-35; Diana J. Kleiner, "Galveston County," in Tyler et al. eds., *New Handbook of Texas*, 3:56-60; Bureau of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1860*, 484-87; David G. McComb, *Galveston: A History* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1986), 73-82.

A microcosm of the Old South, Harrison County was among Texas's most "southern" and populous communities. Located in the northeastern piney-woods on the Louisiana border, Harrison contained Texas's largest slave population in 1860, a number that was nearly 60 percent of the county's entire population. Also, more than 90 percent of the white household heads claimed southern birth. Further, nearly 85 percent of the county's farmers produced cotton during the years immediately preceding the Civil War. Harrison's plantation culture extended into the county's political sphere as slaveholders dominated almost every aspect of local political life. Residents of the county expressed vehement opposition to "Black Republicans" and abolitionism and in 1861, and zealously voted in favor of Texas's secession by a margin of 866 to 44.¹⁴

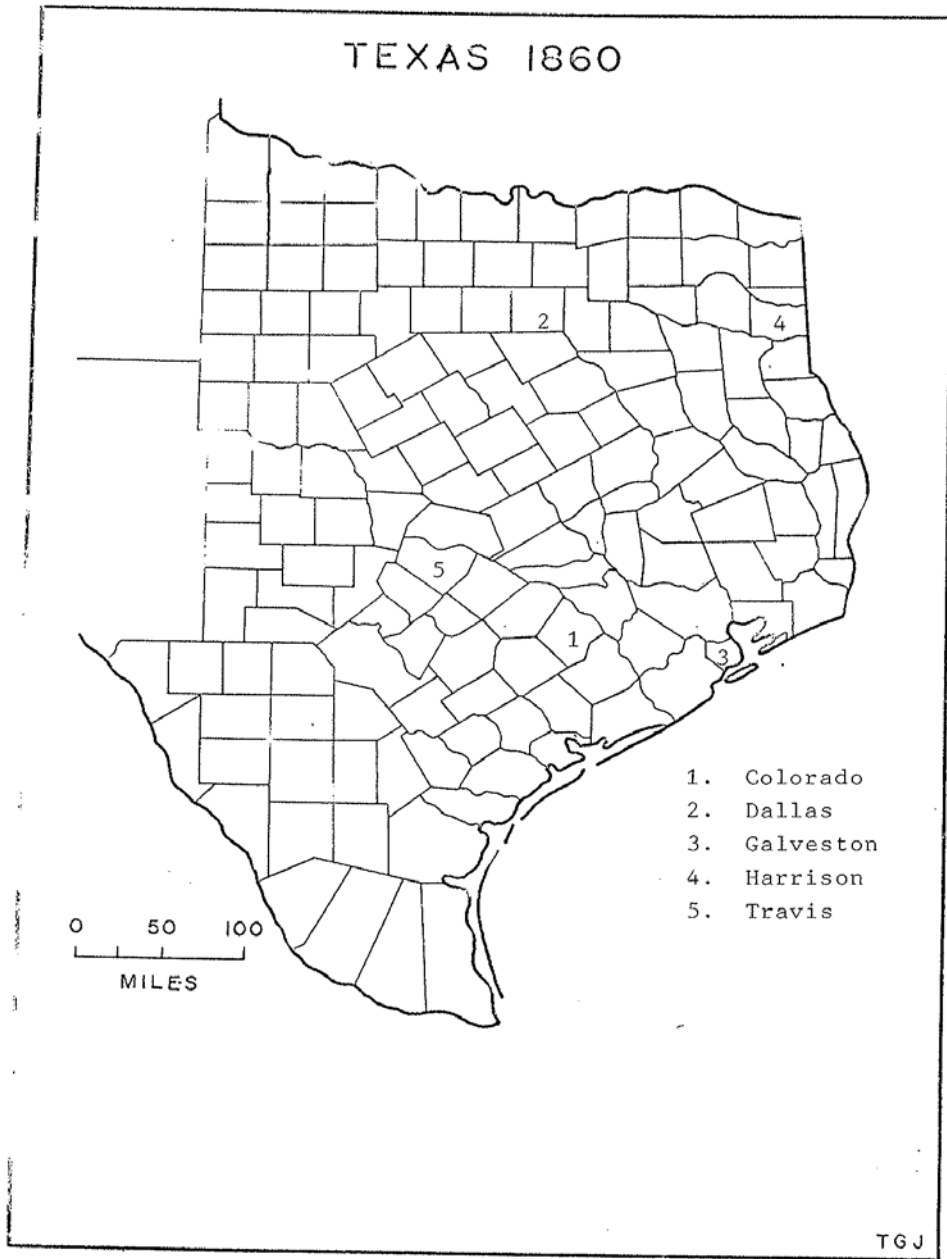
In almost every way imaginable, Travis County, located in the central portion of the state, was completely different from Harrison County. Home to Texas's capital, Austin, Travis County was still largely regarded as the edge of Texas's frontier years prior to the Civil War. Similar to Dallas County, most of Travis's 8,080 residents farmed wheat and corn as their primary crops, but also raised substantial numbers of livestock. Unlike Dallas, however, the absence of a slave-based plantation economy helped foster a sizeable Unionist element in Austin, and in the spring of 1861, the county's citizens voted 704 to 450 against secession. In spite of a slave population that was larger than

¹⁴ Randolph B. Campbell, *A Southern Community in Crisis: Harrison County, Texas, 1850-1880* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983), 17-179, 189-93; Bureau of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1860*, 475, 485. Campbell presents a general overview of Harrison County's Civil War experience, but he does not address issues of morale and national identity.

those in Dallas and Galveston combined, Travis County's unionism remained consistent throughout the war, according to some historians.¹⁵

The story begins immediately following the election of 1860 in which the Republican Abraham Lincoln was victorious. Texans, perceiving a threat to their rights, engaged in actions and rhetoric that eventually helped create a nationalist identity in many locales throughout the state. Countless citizens, however, were not accustomed to the anxiety, stress, and apprehension that the next several months would bring, and few could imagine the level of destruction and death that the ensuing war would produce. Secessionist Texans, as well as their counterparts across the South, entered the secession winter and subsequent war as wild-eyed optimists, but exited the conflict four years later as a changed and weary people. Wartime pressures, including shortages on the home front, military setbacks, and fears of invasion, had the ability to affect the level of ideological commitment to the Confederate cause that Texans experienced. A study of these characterizations provides a missing cog in the state's oft-studied Civil War history.

¹⁵ Vivian Elizabeth Smyrl, "Travis County," in Tyler, et al., eds., *New Handbook of Texas*, 6:553-55; Marten, *Texas Divided*, 64-66; David C. Humphrey, "A 'Very Muddy and Conflicting' View: The Civil War as Seen from Austin, Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 94 (January, 1991): 368-414. Travis's slave population numbered 3,136 compared to Dallas and Galveston's total of 2,594. (Bureau of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1860*, 486).



Map 1

Texas in 1860

Map by Terry G. Jordan

CHAPTER 2

THE CREATION OF CONFEDERATE IDENTITY AND MORALE, 1860-1861

During the last week of January, 1861, Austin resident John E. Campbell informed his brother that “[s]ecession!! Secession! is the cry and nothing else is thought or talked about but secession.” Campbell’s sentiments were undoubtedly shared by many of his fellow citizens from across the Lone Star State. The recent election of Abraham Lincoln, a Republican, had alarmed the South into a suspicious state of fear, disbelief, and anxiety. For many southerners, disunion seemed to be the only remedy for a perceived threat against slavery and southern rights. The story of secession in Texas is well-known and has been studied for generations by numerous historians. Scholars nonetheless have generally tended to neglect the secession crisis’s inherent symbolism in the creation of a wartime nationalist identity in Texas.¹ This chapter explores various actions taken during the secession winter that afforded many Texans the opportunity to make a smooth transition to Confederate nationalism. Second, it examines how Texans lived through the first months of the war in the incipient

¹ John E. Campbell to Dear Brother, January 26, 1861, John E. Campbell Letters, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin—hereafter cited as CAH. For the leading works on secession in Texas, see, Robin E. Baker and Dale Baum, “The Texas Voter and the Crisis of the Union, 1859-1861,” *Journal of Southern History* 53 (August, 1987): 395-420; Walter L. Buenger, *Secession and the Union in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984); Anna Irene Sandbo, “The First Session of the Secession Convention in Texas,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 18 (October, 1914): 41-73; Joe T. Timmons, “The Referendum in Texas on the Ordinance of Secession, February 23, 1861: The Vote,” *East Texas Historical Journal* 11 (Fall, 1973): 12-22; Ralph A. Wooster, “An Analysis of the Membership of the Texas Secession Convention,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 62 (January, 1959): 322-35. All contemporary quotations produced throughout the work appear as they were originally spelled.

Confederate republic, coping with early fluctuations of morale on the state's frontier, Gulf Coast, and interior. The chapter concludes by offering generalizations on the degree to which morale influenced the formation of the state's Confederate identity.

Texas was the seventh and last of the Deep South's cotton-growing states to secede in the early months of 1861. Public demands fueled the calls for disunion, and in January and February, a convention of delegates met in Austin and voted to secede from the United States by a vote of 166 to 8. Then, the state's citizens voted on the measure in a popular referendum held on February 23, and they approved of secession by a margin of 46,154 to 14,747. The convention then reassembled and passed an ordinance on March 5, making Texas part of the newly formed Confederate States of America. The next day, one of the delegates notified his daughter that while enthusiastic cheers erupted in Austin and cannon fire shook the convention hall, "the Lone Star Flag was run up the pinnacle of the Capitol." This emphasis on the Texas flag highlighted one of the central themes in Texas's formation of a Confederate identity.²

During the interim following Lincoln's election in November, 1860, until Texas's secession in March, 1861, the creation of a distinctive Confederate identity in Texas developed in a different manner from that in the majority of other southern states, because Texans already had the recent experience of creating a national identity. Although many of the state's citizens did not discount the emblematic importance of the

² Charles A. Russell to Dear Emeline, March 6, 1861, typescript, Charles Arden Russell Papers, CAH; Randolph B. Campbell, *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 241-46; Walter L. Buenger, "Secession," in Ron Tyler et al., eds., *The New Handbook of Texas* (6 vols.; Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), 5:957-58; Ralph A. Wooster, *Texas and Texans in the Civil War* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1995), 1-24.

American Revolution of 1776, the Texas Revolution of 1836, and the subsequent creation of the Republic of Texas, was seen by many in the state in 1860 as the supreme symbolic foundation of nationalism. Texans engaged in a usable, albeit selective, memory of the Republic period that inaugurated a trend of wildly patriotic actions and speeches based on liberty, freedom, and glory. Many citizens tended to use those aspects of the state's past that were most attractive and likely to support their current worldview during the secession crisis. Newspaper editors and private residents alike explicitly called upon their fellow citizens to replicate the grandeur of the Texas Revolution, and in rare cases, even advocated independence and the recreation of the old Republic. Successfully perpetuating the memory of "36" required the use of a host of symbols, most notably the Lone Star, Republic, Alamo, and San Jacinto.³

In one sense, elements of a past Texas nationalism were used to forge a nationalist mindset in favor of the Confederacy. This notion translates into what historian David M. Potter recognized as a method southerners used to fuse local and state identities with broader nationalistic visions. Potter submitted that national identities were not formed or maintained exclusively on their own, but rather were enhanced consistently and greatly by local influences. Nationalism's very essence required multiple layers of loyalty, including devotion to community and country. In the months preceding the war, the citizenry's "community" was, of course, Texas and its revolutionary heritage. Texans' use of localized memory was essential in buttressing

³ The vast majority of Texas newspapers published between Lincoln's election and Texas's secession contained dozens of articles, editorials, and letters using these very characterizations. For calls upon the state's populace to use the memory of the Texas Revolution, see for example, *Austin Texas State Gazette*, November 10 and 24, December 1, 1860, and *Marshall Texas Republican*, November 24, 1860.

loyalty to their state's past, which ultimately created an easier method of relating ideologically to their situation during the secession crisis. Blending local loyalty and memory planted not only the seeds for a smooth transition to Confederate nationalism, but also established a trend that would be used consistently throughout the war to reinforce and cultivate their sense of duty to the Confederacy.⁴

Historian Clayton E. Jewett has noted that the Texas flag itself was the unifying embodiment and fixture among Texans during the secession winter. James M. Curtis, the mayor of Marshall (Harrison's county seat), illustrated this point at a town meeting immediately following Lincoln's election:

The Lone Star—dear flag of our once glorious Republic—I live again to see its azure folds spread to the breeze, never again to be furled or to be merged into another is my fervent prayer! Twenty-five years have passed away since it was baptized in blood upon the embattled walls of the Alamo—consecrated upon the bloody field of Goliad, and borne aloft to glorious victory upon the plains of San Jacinto. For near ten years it shed its chaste and radiant light o'er the fair land wrested from the despotism of Mexico—our own beloved Texas, when it sunk into an embrace, to which it was wooed by faithful promises of equality and prosperity, which I stand here to-day and say in sorrow, deep and heartfelt sorrow, has been most shamefully, most profligately falsified and betrayed.⁵

⁴ David M. Potter, "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa," in Potter, *The South and the Sectional Crisis* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1968), 48-49, 63. William A. Blair, *Virginia's Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1996), 141, also recognizes the viability of Potter's arguments and notes how Virginians experienced a similar tradition. Texans did not always reference a localized memory, and some citizens did mention the importance of the American Revolution. See G. B. Lipscomb to Jack Campbell, January 24, 1861, Jack Campbell Letters, CAH, and Nathaniel Townsend to Dear Sister, December 10, 1860, Nathaniel Townsend Papers, CAH, and Austin *Texas State Gazette*, December 1, 1860, as examples. For historians' interpretations of Confederate use of the American Revolution, see Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1997), 59, 65, 124, 144, 146, 151, and James M. McPherson, "American Victory, American Defeat," in Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), 30.

⁵ Marshall *Texas Republican*, November 24, 1860.

Moreover, residents of Dallas County circulated miniature Lone Stars and copies of the legislature's 1835 act making Texas an independent republic. Then, just a week before the state seceded, Dallas citizens gathered on the courthouse square and celebrated Texas's Independence Day. While members of the Dallas Light Artillery fired their guns in salute, a Lone Star flag made by many of the county's women was raised atop the courthouse for all "who gathered together [to witness] this fine emblem of Texan Independence."⁶

These events in Dallas and Harrison Counties were not isolated instances of Texans' prideful devotion to their state's foremost symbol. While one newspaper editor wrote that "[t]he glorious flag of the Lone Star is dear to every Texian" and that it "[w]aved proudly over a free country, which true men wrested from the dominion of savages," other communities across the state, including Houston, Columbus, Huntsville, and Navasota, formed "Lone Star Clubs" and raised the flag in proclamation of their liberties and in defiance to perceived tyranny. For example, at a sizeable public gathering in Austin in January, 1861, citizens hosted a large parade that included music, ladies on horseback, and "a large number of carriages in the procession bearing the Lone Star banner." The exhibition moved toward the center of the city and ended at the steps of the capitol, where the Texas flag was raised on a 130-foot pole. Citizens applauded, prominent community leaders delivered patriotic addresses, and a correspondent for the *Austin Texas State Gazette* wrote that it "was a thrilling sight to

⁶ Dallas *Herald*, March 6, 1861 and December 26 1860; Clayton E. Jewett, *Texas in the Confederacy: An Experiment in Nation Building* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), 43.

see the glorious emblem of our liberties so gently kissing the southern breeze as it bravely floated on high,” recalling the state’s “glorious memories.”⁷

The secession crisis generated not only veneration for the Lone Star flag in the hearts and minds of Texans, but also caused many citizens to equate Lincoln’s election as a threat to the South and as a transgression of Texas’s annexation fifteen years prior. One Harrison County resident, signing his name only as “Texan,” wrote to the Marshall *Texas Republican* and proclaimed, “all my wishes, all my hopes, all my interests are Texan . . . [Texas] was once a free and independent nation . . . [and] any attack made upon [her],” according to this individual, discounted Texas’s experience as a former republic. In addition, the battles—most notably the Alamo and San Jacinto—that occurred during the Texas Revolution served as further symbols used by Texans to construct their selective memory. In words similar to those of Marshall’s Mayor Curtis, Lucy Holcombe Pickens—who lived in Harrison during the late antebellum period and married South Carolina’s Confederate governor Francis Pickens—wrote a stirring letter to a military unit raised in her honor that buttressed this point. She declared, “[y]ou will remember the siege of the Alamo[,] that Spartan struggle whose bloody glory fills every woman’s breast with that generous sympathy and honest admiration which the brave alone can give.” Equating the bravery exhibited at the Alamo with the present conflict, Pickens extolled: “and however ardently we may trust that God will give you the Victory over our enemies it is well to fall [because] death comes but once to all and man cannot die better than facing fearful odds for the ashes of his Father and the Temple of his

⁷ Dallas *Herald*, November 21, 1860; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, January 12, 1861; Galveston *Tri-Weekly News* November 22, 1860; Galveston *Weekly News*, March 19, 1861; Colorado *Citizen*, January 5, 1861.

Gods.” Although Pickens had moved from Harrison County to South Carolina, she carried with her the spirit of Texas’s past and conferred this onto the Confederate soldiers who bore her name.⁸

Memorial references to San Jacinto, the battle that ultimately achieved Texan independence, functioned in similar fashion as the calls to remember the Alamo. Galveston’s Committee on Public Safety, in preparing to bolster the city’s defenses against a probable Union invasion, obtained the “Twin Sisters,” two cannon famously used during the San Jacinto campaign, from the governor of Louisiana. The Sisters were an important piece of Texas’s collective memory of nationalism and independence. The Twins arrived in the Island City on April 20, 1861, twenty-five years after their original firing during the Texas Revolution, and were used during the recapture of Galveston on January 1, 1863. Although the guns were “much impaired by rust,” they “did good service on the field of San Jacinto,” and “are now in Galveston . . . ready for service in defence of our liberty again.” Texans firmly believed that they needed components from their past, both material and symbolic, to serve as a legitimate foundation in their ideological connection with the secession crisis.⁹

⁸ Marshall *Texas Republican*, December 8, 1860; Lucy Holcombe Pickens to The Officers and Soldiers of The Holcombe Legion, undated, Lucy Holcombe Pickens Letters, Harrison County Historical Museum and Library, Marshall, Texas—hereafter cited as HCHML; Elizabeth W. Lewis, *Queen of the Confederacy: The Innocent Deceits of Lucy Holcomb Pickens* (Denton: Univ. of North Texas Press, 2002).

Pickens left Harrison County on the eve of the secession crisis. (Ronald Howard Livingston, “Lucy Petway Holcombe Pickens,” in Tyler et al. eds., *New Handbook of Texas*, 5:189).

⁹ Sidney Sherman to Edward Clark, May 22, 1861, Texas Governor Edward Clark Records, Box 310-36, Folder 16, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Austin, Texas—hereafter cited as TSLAC; Elijah Petty to My Dear Ella, December 27, 1861, in Norman D. Brown, ed., *Journey to Pleasant Hill: The Civil War Letters of Captain Elijah P. Petty, Walker’s*

Texans' use of symbolic memory—whether it was derived from the Lone Star flag, Alamo, or San Jacinto—clearly played a vital role during the secession crisis. Memories of the Texas Revolution and Republic were used selectively to justify radical acts of secession, disunion, and the probability of war. Texans chose to adopt a memory based solely on patriotic notions of independence, glory, and freedom that they believed to be standard fixtures of the Republic era. Relying exclusively on attractive memories afforded many in the state with the opportunity to eliminate purposely those memories of the past that threatened their current worldview. For example, Texans chose to view the Republic of Texas as an unadulterated and successful creation rather than remembering its myriad failures, including a poor economy, inadequate defenses, and diplomatic weakness. More important, though, was the manner in which many Texans explicitly excluded Sam Houston from their body of collective memory.¹⁰

Houston, arguably the premiere symbol of Texan independence, was absent from the citizenry's memory because his staunch Unionist positions during the secession crisis did not conform to the state's shared historical recollection. Houston's presidential administration was consistently described as "disastrous" or "humiliating," and some newspaper editors argued that in the event Texas resumed its position as a

Texas Division, C.S.A. (San Antonio: Univ. of Texas Institute of Texas Cultures, 1982), 27; Jeffrey William Hunt, "Twin Sisters," in Tyler et al. eds., *New Handbook of Texas*, 6:604-05; Edward T. Cotham, Jr., *Battle on the Bay: The Civil War Struggle for Galveston* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1998), 13, 18.

¹⁰ For the inherent problems of mixing history and memory, see Randolph B. Campbell, "History and Collective Memory in Texas: The Entangled Stories of the Lone Star State," in Gregg Cantrell and Elizabeth Hayes Turner, eds., *Lone Star Pasts: Memory and History in Texas* (College Station: Texas A & M Univ. Press, 2007), 270-80. For an overview of the failures of the Texas Republic, see Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 159-86.

free republic, he would be forced to remain isolated from public life. Even private citizens mocked Houston because of his political stance. At a celebration in Independence, Texas, just after the state seceded, Austin's first volunteer soldiers marched through the streets amidst cheers and patriotic music. Houston was also in attendance, and when he attempted to emerge in public, the crowd became hushed and "[n]ot a shout greeted his appearance. His gray hairs and former services saved him from insult," one soldier remarked. By 1861 most Texans could not afford, in an ideological sense, to use the memory of Sam Houston as a viable symbol in the creation of a new identity. If Texans outwardly called for a remembrance of his valor at San Jacinto, for example, they would have implicitly endorsed his anti-secession stance, thus purging their own position of any legitimacy. His legacy did not fit the revolutionary and radical template that early forms of Confederate nationalism required. By selecting a memory based on explicit patriotism, Texans deliberately positioned themselves to benefit ideologically from the state's admission into the Confederate States of America.¹¹

Once Texas seceded, joined the Confederacy, and entered the war, citizens put aside their primary identity as Texans, and with unpredicted rapidity, willingly adopted a clear Confederate nationalism. Texans had used a patriotic, discriminating, and somewhat flawed version of the state's history to make an immediate and implicit

¹¹ Austin *Texas State Gazette*, January 5, 1861; M. K. Hunter to My Dear Mother, April 30, 1861, Hunter Family Papers, CAH. See also Austin *Texas State Gazette*, November 10, December 1, 8, 1860, January 19, 1861 and Marshall *Texas Republican* November 3, 1860, as further examples of Texans outwardly rejecting the symbolic use of Sam Houston. For a concise overview of Houston's Unionist policies and positions, see Randolph B. Campbell, *Sam Houston and the American Southwest* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2007, 3rd ed.), 175-99.

transition from what appears to have been a fragile loyalty to the old Union to a vision of themselves as legitimate members of a genuine new country. Texans' pre-secession memory, however, was not born out of an authentic move to resurrect the old Republic. Although some calls existed for this measure, the citizenry's sense of nationalism was fomented through patriotic abstractions that allowed a smooth transition to Confederate allegiance. On the eve of, and during the first months of, the war, the state's populace retained their nationalistic stance and simply replaced "Texas" with calls for "our nation," "our country," or "the South." In late March 1861 a citizen in Harrison County wrote a poem that summarized this point clearly: "Long live our new Confederacy! / Our bright and sunny South! / Queen of the nations clad with power / May she stand proudly forth!" Moreover, Texans' new sense of nationalism was derived, in large part, from a reverence for the new Confederate flag. Whereas the Lone Star banner assumed a leading role in the construction of pre-war memory and identity, the "Stars and Bars" resembled national hope, victory, and independence during the opening months of the war. Historian Walter L. Buenger notes that antebellum Texans' motivations were fueled by a strong sense of nationalism that inclusion in the United States failed to provide. It is quite probable that many people across the state were quickly attached to the idea of a confederated South because of its new and appealing nationalistic offering. Texans required a nation, and the Confederacy, through a shared and selective memory, provided the best hope for the future.¹²

¹² Marshall *Texas Republican*, March 30, 1861; Walter L. Buenger, *Secession and Union in Texas* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1984), 169-72; Walter L. Buenger, "Texas and the Riddle of Secession," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 87 (October, 1983): 151-82. Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005), 1-2, found

Whereas citizens in the Lone Star state previously relied on their explicit faith in the memory of the Texas Revolution and Republic, their recently adopted sense of Confederate nationalism was buttressed by early, unequivocal self-assurance and patriotic belief in the ultimate success of the southern cause. Sentiments ranged from home front calls for unconditional victory to outspoken confidence in the Confederate military effort. Dallas's John M. Crockett, a candidate for lieutenant governor in 1861, informed his constituents that "[the South] can anticipate glorious achievements" because of the "[splendid] destiny that awaits us." Moreover, a citizen in Marshall proudly estimated that the majority of Harrison County's population "seem[s] to have the utmost confidence in the government and think that it ought to be sustained to the last dollar and the last drop of blood." Similarly, a woman on the North Texas frontier declared to her husband who had already enlisted in the army, "I know the South will [not] yield to old Lincoln as long as there is a man left to contend for his rights, and when there are no men [left], I think the women and children will be as hard to conquer." These nationalistic and ideological mindsets were manifested and solidified through an adopted memory of the American Revolution, appeals for local religious leaders to define the South's philosophical mission, and calls for southern and Texan unity.¹³

that it was common for southerners to abandon quickly their American identity (and for the purposes of this study, Texas identity) in favor of Confederate identity. For the state's marked transition from Texas nationalism to Confederate nationalism, see for example, Marshall *Texas Republican*, February 23, and March 23, 1861, and Dallas *Herald*, May 8 and June 26, 1861. See also, George Lee Robertson to Dear Pa, September 14, 1861, George Lee Robertson Papers, CAH.

¹³ Dallas *Herald*, June 5, 1861; G. B. Lipscomb to Jack Campbell, July 8, 1861, Jack Campbell Letters, CAH; Susan A. Good to My Dear Affectionate Husband, July 21, 1861, in Lester N. Fitzhugh, ed., *Cannon Smoke: The Letters of Captain John J. Good, Good-Douglas Battery, CSA* (Hillsboro, Texas: Hill College Press, 1971), 26; David C. Neer to Dear Mother, July 4, 1861, Neer Papers, Nesbitt Memorial Library Archives,

Although many Texans had chosen to view themselves as the inheritors of the principles achieved by the Texas Revolution, this approach was conceived and reacted upon only temporarily until the state joined the Confederacy. Upon Texas's admission into the southern nation, Texans accompanied their fellow Confederates in honoring the memory of the American Revolution. Even before the firing on Fort Sumter, Confederates regarded themselves as the model inheritors of American nationalism who believed they were responsible for upholding the ideals of 1776. Texans' adoption of this same mindset demonstrates their significant departure from a localized reliance on Texas in favor of a national attitude shared by their fellow southerners. A citizen in Columbus anonymously wrote to the *Colorado Citizen* and implored his neighbors to contribute to the southern cause because doing so would sustain the principles espoused by the "champion of Colonial Liberty, Patrick Henry . . . Such a spirit pervading the people of the Southern Confederacy would render them invincible almost against the combined powers of the world."¹⁴

For many southerners, including Texans, the beginnings of civil strife in 1861 represented a continuation of the struggles inaugurated in 1776, as Confederates viewed themselves to be destiny's choice to defend liberty against tyranny. Historian Drew Gilpin Faust argues that this fulfilled not only a sense of nationalism, but also

Columbus, Texas—hereafter cited as Nesbitt Library; Edward Clark to Jefferson Davis, April 4, 1861, in *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, Volume 1, p. 621—hereafter cited as *OR*; Arthur T. Lynn to Lord John Russell, March 14, 1861, British Consular Records, Galveston and Texas History Center, Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas—hereafter cited as Rosenberg Library; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, April 6, 1861; Dallas *Herald*, April 24 and October 30, 1861.

¹⁴ *Colorado Citizen*, October 12, 1861, letter from "Dixie"; McPherson, "American Victory, American Defeat," 30.

provided a usable identification with the past. A ceremony in Austin on July 4, 1861, celebrating the birth of the American republic resulted in readings of the Declaration of Independence as well as historical speeches given by community leaders. One observer wrote that the gathering represented “glowing eloquence” because “[a] parallel between the cause of the Revolution of 1776 and 1861 was drawn.” Later in the year, the *Texas State Gazette* called on women to contribute homemade and hand-sown clothes to local soldiers in order to replicate “the customs of the days of Martha Washington.” Moreover, early conjectures that the war’s main battles would occur in Virginia prompted remarks that the Old Dominion was destined to be “the scene of the first great bloody battle to be fought in the second war for liberty and independence.” Finally, in October 1861 Dallas residents presented several military units with Confederate flags sewn by the county’s women. During the presentation ceremony, Lizzie Johnston spoke to the troops and called upon them to defend home and hearth in the defense of national liberty. W. F. Compton, who received a flag on behalf of the Freestone Boys, thanked her and promised to uphold the inspirational “feelings similar to those which reigned in the bosoms of patriots of ’76,” and noted that he was especially glad that “God has blessed us with another Washington, Jeff. Davis, the man for the times.” Following their admission into the Confederacy, Texans had transferred a localized memory into a national memory by seizing on symbols that justified and legitimized a war based on national liberation and self-preservation.¹⁵

¹⁵ Austin *Texas State Gazette*, July 6, December 27, 1861; Dallas *Herald*, June 5, October 16, 1861; Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1988), 14; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 59, 124, 144, 146, 151; Rubin, *Shattered Nation*, 14-25.

Combined with their recently adopted use of the American Revolution, Texans also solidified their Confederate identity through home front calls for local and state religious leaders to define the South's philosophical and spiritual mission. From the outset, the state's citizens relied on local religious leaders to provide an ideological basis for the war, called outwardly for sermons related to the conflict, and expressed a desire to have the homilies printed and circulated in local newspapers. Preachers understood the importance of having their messages distributed throughout the state and complied with the people's requests. In May, 1861, Harrison County's Cumberland Presbyterian minister, Thomas B. Wilson, explained to his congregation, "our Southern Confederacy, and beloved country[,] . . . Our cause, I verily believe is the cause of God." Moreover, Edwin A. Wagner, a reverend in Marshall, displayed devotion to "no other aim than the glory of God, my country, and my countrymen," and in words similar to Wilson, stated, "we of the South are the chosen of God . . . [and our cause is] promoted . . . [for] the salvation of souls." Identifying the sectional struggle with religious purposes, regardless of church denomination, was indispensable in bolstering a functioning identity in Texas. Local spiritual leaders emphasized that the Confederacy was God's chosen country, which created a sense of salvation and appeal on the home front that was difficult to resist.¹⁶

Following Texas's secession, Episcopal bishop Alexander Gregg, one of the state's foremost theologians and orators, provided a mixture of patriotic fanfare with

¹⁶ "A Sermon, Delivered by Rev. T. B. Wilson, to his Congregation," in *Marshall Texas Republican*, May 25, 1861; "Enthusiastic Demonstration," in *Marshall Texas Republican*, January 5, 1861; *Colorado Citizen*, January 5, 1861; Faust, *Creation of Confederate Nationalism*, 27-29, 82. Rubin, *Shattered Nation*, 38, noted, "The belief that God's will would determine the course of the Confederate war for independence extended to the highest levels of government."

religious allusion and spoke strongly in favor of southern independence. He recognized that the region, as well as the entire nation, had reached a potentially decisive crossroads, and consistently called upon the state's citizens to engage in continual prayer in hopes that God would smile favorably upon the South. In April, 1861, Gregg even ordered all of the state's churches to read prayers for the recently inaugurated Confederate president, Jefferson Davis, as well as the new government. Due to the emotional nature of secession and war, Gregg was careful to instruct his followers not to lose sight of their Christian beliefs, but rather to embrace them more firmly than ever before: "I admonish you, while called to a firm and faithful discharge of every citizen, to remember also your duties as Christians." Gregg believed that the South's fate was not in the hands of man and that victory's assurance could be guaranteed only by the Almighty. In a letter written to the editors of the *Galveston News*, Gregg noted that an "appeal has gone up to Him, who ruleth over the armies of Heaven and earth; he has thus far given continued tokens of his favor; and will, we are assured, make a just and righteous cause completely triumphant in the end."¹⁷

¹⁷ Austin *Texas State Gazette*, January 19, 1861 and July 13, 1861; Lucadia Pease to Dear Sister, April 20, 1861, Pease-Graham-Niles Papers, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Austin, Texas—hereafter cited as AHC. During the 1850s, the Episcopal Church in Austin split because of the political and social debates of the late antebellum period. The congregation had always been divided, and unionists, including S. M. Swenson, George W. Paschal, E. M. Pease, A. J. Hamilton, and Thomas DuVal, constituted a majority. In spite of the pro-Union majority, Gregg was appointed to lead the church. Described as an active southern partisan, Gregg did not shirk in the face of the sizable unionist population in Travis County. Instead, he consistently spread pro-Confederate propaganda throughout the entire war (James Marten, *Texas Divided: Loyalty and Dissent in the Lone Star State, 1856-1874* [Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1990], 53-54; Wilson Gregg, *Alexander Gregg: First Bishop of Texas* [Sewanee, Tennessee: Univ. of the South Press, 1912], 70-76).

The influence of Bishop Gregg and other spiritual leaders resonated across the state. Thomas H. Craig, one of Harrison County's first volunteer soldiers, informed his parents that the Confederacy's fate was in the hands of God: "But who can tell the destiny of man[?] [N]one save he who [said] let there be light and there was light, and in him I put my trust." Moreover, a woman on the Dallas home front, whose sentiments were undoubtedly shared by many across the state, recited a prayer to her husband:

You must not allow your mind to grow gloomy and sorrowful over our separation, but ever remember that we have a kind and indulgent Father who suffereth not even a sparrow to fall to the ground without notice. He has said call upon [Him] in the hour of need and he will not forsake you. My dear husband, I would beg of you not to live alone for fame and glory, but try to live so that you may inherit a home in Heaven. The world is but short at best, and whether prepared or unprepared, we will sooner or later be called to meet our God. I shall ever remember you at a throne of grace and pray our Heavenly Father to grant you a safe return. But, Oh, Father, if Thou in Thy divine wisdom dost not permit a reunion of our little family, grant that we may meet in a better world, where there will be no more parting of friends. Guide and direct us in all things, and give each of us Christian fortitude to bear up under all afflictions, let them come from where they may. May the blessing of Heaven rest on you, and may your name be crowned with honor and success.¹⁸

Similarly, an Austin resident asked God for southern victory, protection of home, and strength for the Confederate people. Early on, the seductive nature of Confederate nationalism as promoted and influenced by local and state leaders, united with a sense of political Christianity, was paramount in building the state's newly adopted sense of duty and identity.¹⁹

Although associating religion with the Confederacy was essential in augmenting the early stages of Texas's new nationalist identity, calls for unity within the southern

¹⁸ Susan A. Good to John J. Good, July 9, 1861, in Fitzhugh, ed., *Cannon Smoke*, 16-17; T. H. Craig to Dear Pa and Ma, October 5, 1861, Craig Family Letters, HCHML.

¹⁹ Austin *Texas State Gazette*, June 22, 1861; Faust, *Creation of Confederate Nationalism*, 27-29, 82.

cause played an equally significant role in creating a sense of accord and purpose among the state's populace. Robert W. Loughery, editor of the *Marshall Texas Republican*, understood this point clearly. In a private letter to Governor Edward Clark, Loughery expounded, "[i]f ever there was a period in our history demanding reflection, deliberation, the dissemination of intelligence, and union among the people of the South, it is the present." Moreover, John B. Webster, one of Harrison County's wealthiest planters, echoed Loughery's sentiments: "the people of the South [need to] be of one mind and one spirit—that there be no division among us in this hour of peril."²⁰

With the South's secession complete and the war underway, newspaper editors and private residents across the state implored their fellow citizens to relinquish any previous loyalties, join the Confederate cause, and engage in a unified sentiment. Columbus's David C. Neer informed his parents in Virginia that Colorado County's people were "determined, and united and will fight to defend their rights, till Death levels all. There never was a people more unified and determined not to be whipped and conquered by the Lincoln Party." Moreover, at a public meeting in Dallas held one month before the Battle of First Manassas, citizens declared that as members of the Confederacy, they pledged their services in order to consolidate their rights and freedoms. They further encouraged "every lover of freedom to rally to the banner of his country . . . [to] enroll his name among the citizen soldiery of the State." Calls for unity and dedication to the Confederacy were manifested not only through public gatherings, but through private means as well. Texans wrote poetry, equated Unionists with the

²⁰ R. W. Loughery to Edward Clark, July 5, 1861, Clark Papers, Box 301-36, Folder 21, TSLAC; *Marshall Texas Republican*, December 1, 1860.

Tories of the American Revolution, and expressed full confidence in the strength of the Confederate government. Pleas for political harmony represented an attempt by Texans to formulate a rallying point for citizens across the state to join the nation-building effort and to help construct what appeared to be a new country. However, it was relatively simple to call for unanimity and purpose and was another matter altogether to achieve them.²¹

The state's small Unionist population, vocal and centered primarily in Austin, projected a reluctant and reserved tone during the war's early months that presented somewhat of an ideological challenge to those Texans who actively supported the Confederacy and outwardly called for unity. Historian Claude Elliott estimated, through no scientific means, that unionists were one-third of the state's population. Moreover, James Marten interprets Texas's domestic experience in the Civil War as one that encompassed violent divisions and diverging loyalties among the civilian population, thus preventing a consensus from forming in support of the Confederacy. Further, Marten argues emphatically that Texans' support for the Confederacy never positively materialized and implies that true Confederate nationalism did not exist fully in the Lone Star State. Historian Anne Sarah Rubin, however, has pointed out that "[w]hile there were Unionist minorities in every state, most Southern whites seemed willing, if not eager, to turn their back on the Union in favor of [the Confederacy], and to do so with nary a backward glance." It is necessary to take Elliott's and Marten's interpretations

²¹ David C. Neer to Dear Parents, May 18, 1861, Neer Letters, Nesbitt Library; Dallas *Herald*, June 12, 1861; *Colorado Citizen*, May 11, June 15, July 6, September 14, 21, and October 12, 1861; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, January 12, April 20, 27, and August 24, 1861; G. B. Lipscomb to Jack Campbell, July 8, 1861, Jack Campbell Letters, CAH; Rubin, *Shattered Nation*, 50-79.

into account, but also to acknowledge that Unionists did in fact constitute only a *minority* of the state's population and that many contemporary accounts, especially written during the war's opening months, expressed a committed desire to support the Confederacy's war effort and fate. For example, just after the firing on Fort Sumter, J. H. Robinson, an Austin merchant and antebellum Unionist, wrote that "I [now] hold myself second to none in Southern patriotism," and that since the war had come, all Texans needed to unite "and hold ourselves ready, with might and means, to help the Southern Confederacy." Prominent Texans, including Galveston's William Pitt Ballinger and Collin County's James W. Throckmorton, both antebellum Unionists, adopted a similar approach and as native southerners, aided the Confederacy in civilian and military capacities. Although perfect unanimity of spirit was never achieved in Texas—and for that matter in any of the southern or northern states—many Texans eliminated unionists, in principle at least, from the population in order to foment and retain the state's blossoming Confederate identity.²²

As a result of the secession crisis and inauguration of civil war, Texans experienced a whirlwind of emotions, induced by great changes both political and social, which created an early form of Confederate nationalist sentiment. In a matter of months, Texans, similar to their southern brethren, were forced to eradicate antebellum loyalties and, almost immediately, were faced with the responsibility to identify with a new nation. Although many Texans succeeded in this endeavor, the outbreak of hostilities created an environment that shifted the Confederacy's romantic birth into a

²² Rubin, *Shattered Nation*, 11; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, April 27, 1861; Claude Elliott, "Union Sentiment in Texas, 1861-1865," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 50 (April, 1947): 449-77; Marten, *Texas Divided*; Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 264.

martial conflict that forced many to endure hardship, sacrifice, and the loss of loved ones. One of the greatest tasks for Texans to achieve was maintaining an ideological connection to the Confederacy while battling fluctuations of home front morale. Early wartime morale was affected primarily by concerns for defense, both coastal and frontier, which affected different regions of the state in varying ways.

During the war's first year, defense of the state's coastline assumed supreme importance, especially in the island city of Galveston. For nearly the entirety of 1861, local civilians and officials, military authorities, and even citizens across the state communicated grave concern about the inefficient preparation of the city's defenses. They also expressed their worry about the state's overall lack of preparation to resist any invasion from Union naval forces. In January, for example, United States military officials still serving in the city before Texas's secession predicted that sufficient forts and other entrenchments would not be fully functioning for at least five years. Further, by December, Confederate soldiers stationed in and around the island noticed that "[n]o successful defense could be made against a large fleet and resistance on the Island would be useless sacrifice of life on our part." Some semblance of defense had been established during the previous months, yet some still believed that "Galveston is *doomed*."²³

²³ George Ingram to My Dear Wife, December 13, 1861, in Henry L. Ingram, comp., *Civil War Letters of George W. and Martha F. Ingram* (College Station: Texas A & M Univ. Press, 1973), 14; Isaiah Harlan to Dear Alpheus, December 5, 1861, Isaiah Harlan Civil War Letters, 10th Texas Infantry File, Texas Heritage Museum, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas—hereafter cited as THM; Jos. G. Totten to Joseph Holt, January 8, 1861, *OR*, Ser. III, Vol. 1, p. 32; Alwyn Barr, "Texas Coastal Defense, 1861-1865," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 65 (July, 1861): 1-31.

According to historian Edward T. Cotham Jr., unsatisfactory procurement of military arms and supplies and negligence on the part of the Confederate government were contributing factors to the city's lack of sufficient defenses, which consequently resulted in declining morale. General Sidney Sherman, the first commander of defenses in Galveston, complained that “[s]hould it become necessary to make a defense here we will find ourselves poorly prepared” due to the dearth of heavy artillery and adequate fortifications. Another citizen similarly wrote that the threat to the Texas coast created an “alarming character” among the civilian population, while the *Houston Telegraph* and *Bellville Countryman* each called for men to volunteer and protect one of the state's most important locales and ports. The flames of fear were certainly stoked along the Texas coast as local citizens and even some soldiers consistently wrote about how the shortages of men and supplies, combined with the anxious awaiting of the Yankee naval fleet, resulted in uncertainty and cheerlessness. For the most part, however, Galveston's civilian population did little to remedy their precarious situation.²⁴

²⁴ S. Sherman to Hon. W. H. Ochiltree, March 8, 1861, *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 1, p. 610; Robert Campbell to Edward Clark, April 14, 1861, Clark Papers, Box 301-35, Folder 4, TSLAC; Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 13-22; *Houston Telegraph*, September 27, 1861; *Bellville Countryman*, October 2, 1861. See also, Mayor and Board of Aldermen of Galveston to Edward Clark, April 12, 1861, Box 301-35, Folder 4, and R. C. Campbell, George Ball, and William M. Armstrong to Edward Clark, April 18, 1861, Box 301-31, Folder 5, and John M. Crockett to Edward Clark, May 1, 1861, Box 301-35, Folder 10, and S. Sherman to Edward Clark, May 22, 1861, Box 301-36, Folder 16, and R. J. McLeod to Mr. Mason, June 24, 1861, Box 301-36, Folder 20—all cited in Clark Papers, TSLAC; Sidney Sherman to His Excellency, Gov. Moore, of Louisiana, April 25, 1861, Sidney Sherman Papers, Rosenberg Library; Unknown to Dear Sir, May 16, 1861, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; Wm. F. Austin to Lieut. Col. L. A. Thompson, May 7, 1861, *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 1, p. 634; Isaiah Harlan to Dear Alpheus, November 24, 1861, Harlan Civil War Letters, 10th Texas Infantry File, THM; *Dallas Herald*, October 2, 23, 1861.

Shortly after the war began, civilians complained continuously about the lack of attention the city received from the national government (then in Montgomery, Alabama) and about the scarcity of home guard soldiers. Sidney Sherman informed Governor Clark of these sentiments and noted that he was pained to admit that “there is in our midst some malcontents . . . [who] might give us trouble.” In spite of a purported \$5,000 appropriation by the local government, Sherman was concerned that a small number of Galvestonians were “ready to hoist the white flag the moment the enemy should make his appearance off the bar and I fear there are others [who] . . . follow a like course.” To make matters worse, citizens resisted Sherman’s authority as military commander and refused to provide supplies of their own gun powder and other munitions to the local quartermaster. By late spring, the few soldiers who were in Galveston declined to serve at night. They found it more desirable to be at home with their families. Such sentiments were quite representative of the civilian population’s declining morale during the first months of the war.²⁵

Contemporary accounts written in Galveston between November, 1860, and the winter of 1861 spoke primarily to the insecurities of the civilian population. Fluctuations in wartime morale certainly had the potential to influence southerners’ dedication to the Confederacy throughout the entirety of the conflict, and many Galvestonians generally refrained from the brash, patriotic expression that characterized other locales in the state. Concerns about lagging business, vulnerable home and property, and

²⁵ Sidney Sherman to Edward Clark, April 17, 1861, Box 301-35, Folder 4, Clark Papers, TSLAC; Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 19-20. For similar interpretations about the influence of morale on Confederate nationalism, see Brad R. Clampitt, “Morale in the Western Confederacy: Home Front and Battlefield, 1864-1865” (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Texas, 2006), 6.

uncertainty about the immediate future took precedence and resulted in a general exodus from the community. A letter written in June by a Galveston woman who was extremely poor and whose husband and son were already serving in the army, buttressed this point:

[M]ust poor men (hundreds besides mine) find their own clothes & board and do the fighting for Slave holders & without a cent & at the same time taking what work there is from the suffering white & give it to their blacks[?] my heart has ben heartofore with the South but such heartless proceedings as is going on will disgust a far less sensible heart than mine[.] how is it that other nations (eaven down to the miserable New England people) can count on every man (yes & women if needs be) because they feed and cloth their Soldiers[,] atende to the wants of the helpless and pay a monthly salary[?]²⁶

Morale was further threatened, when, in October and November, General Paul O. Hebert, the newly appointed commander of Galveston's defenses, considered abandoning the island to the approaching enemy because he believed any effort to defend the city would be fruitless. As a result, civilian fears were compounded. William Pitt Ballinger recorded in his diary that "[a] panic prevails . . . [and a] constant stream of furniture families &c. is going to the boats and cars." Charlie Collings, one of the first volunteer soldiers in Galveston, ventured to the wharf to observe the departing civilians and noted that "[t]here is a general stampede among the citizens" to exit the city. The excitement surrounding Collings apparently reached a fever pitch when a carriage arrived carrying several Catholic nuns. Upon their arrival a French priest "came running

²⁶ Mrs. A. M. Fitch to Mr. [Philip] Tucker, June 25, 1861, Tucker Family Papers, Rosenberg Library. See also T. C. Neel to My dear Wife, December 11, 1861, Neel Family Papers, G. B. Dealey Library, Dallas Historical Society, Dallas, Texas—hereafter cited as DHS.

up and ordered them into the [cars] . . . using the harshest language such as one would hardly use to a negro.”²⁷

Although many Galvestonians entered the war with low spirits, an ideological abandonment of the Confederacy’s cause did not materialize. Citizens, using their fear as a tool to forge a nationalist mindset, aimed to resist a Yankee invasion. One woman grumbled that “our defenceless condition is so well known to each inhabitant, that the fear our enemy may learn it depresses stouter hearts than mine.” Other citizens portrayed the potential Yankee invaders as mercenaries fighting for a foreign country. Such perceptions invariably created a nationalist frame of mind: homes and neighborhoods simply had to be protected from the United States. A Citizens Committee concluded that if the Union navy successfully captured Galveston, “there can be no adequate conception of the evils both to our city and state.” Similarly, one man wrote that “[I]n this event we must fight the enemy on landing or in the interior, as our forefathers of the first revolution did.” Historian Stephen V. Ash, who studied Union-occupied regions of the Confederacy, noted that most southerners deeply believed in the Confederate cause in spite of the strong possibility that their cities and towns could be captured. He further argued that morale could be sustained simply by the *hope* that Union armies would be eventually defeated and driven out of the occupied zones.

²⁷ Diary entry, November 29, 1861, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; C. G. Collings to Unknown, November 30 and December 2 1861, Amerman-Collings Family Collection, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library, Houston, Texas—hereafter cited as HMRC. See also George Ingram to My Dear Wife, December 13, 1861, in Ingram, comp., *Civil War Letters of George W. and Martha F. Ingram*, 14; Dallas *Herald*, October 2 and 9, 1861; Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 39. By July, business declined, shortages occurred, and jobs were lost once the Union blockade was enforced. See David G. McComb, *Galveston: A History* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1986), 73.

Galveston was not captured during 1861, but the lack of faith in the city's defenses certainly gave the impression that the civilian population was expecting to be under Union control. This knowledge, rather than dissolving their faith in the Confederate cause, in some cases buttressed civilian nationalism. Fleeing the city in great numbers indicated that civilians were more willing to take their chances living in the state's interior rather than under Yankee occupation on the island. Moreover, civilians simply did not want to be caught between two belligerent armies fighting for control of the city.²⁸

Galvestonians' experience creating and maintaining their sense of Confederate identity was not unique. Charleston, South Carolina, inhabited arguably by the South's most ardent secessionists, entered the war in a much different way. There, civilians were treated to the war's first Confederate victory, the shelling and surrender of Fort Sumter in April, 1861. Spirits soared among Charleston's population for most of the year; however, just as in Galveston, many Charlestonians were faced with fear and uncertainty when numerous surrounding islands were captured by the Union navy. The surrender of Port Royal Sound sent shockwaves through Charleston, and civilians

²⁸ R. J. McLeod to Mr. Mason, June 24, 1861, Box 301-36, Folder 20 Edward Clark Papers, TSLAC; Citizens of Galveston to General Earl Van Dorn, July [?], 1861, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; Samuel Boyer Davis to J. G. Dashiell, November 26, 1861, Box 301-39, Folder 5, and Thomas M. Joseph to Francis Lubbock, December 16, 1861, Box 301-39, Folder 7—both cited in Francis R. Lubbock Papers, TSLAC; H. W. McLeod to Edward Clark, May 29, 1861, Box 301-36, Folder 17, Edward Clark Papers, TSLAC; Unknown to Dear Sir, May 16, 1861, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; Francis Richard Lubbock, *Six Decades in Texas; Or, Memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock, Governor of Texas in War Time, 1861-63. A Personal Experience in Business, War, and Politics*, ed., C. W. Raines. (Austin, Texas: B. C. Jones and Co. Printers, 1900), 345-50; Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1995), 20, 38-39, 74.

feared that their city would be the next to fall. Many families moved to the state's interior, but at the same time, strongly expressed their defiance to the northern armies and, according to historian Walter Fraser, simply did not want to live under Yankee rule. The enthusiasm for secession exhibited by both cities' population was not compromised when citizens faced impending invasion. Fear, flight, and defiance of Yankee occupation certainly represented a viable form of Confederate identity.²⁹

A small number of Galveston's residents, however, adopted a form of Confederate nationalism that was engendered in a significantly different manner. Much of the white male military-age population was motivated out of a profound yearning to experience adventure and win glory and fame on far-off battlefields outside of Texas. Numerous historians have suggested that Confederate nationalism was generated principally out of fears for, and the desire to protect, home and hearth. Nevertheless, the longing to volunteer and fight in theaters where the war would be potentially decided signified a deep allegiance to an independent southern nation. Multiple letters written to Governor Clark by various company commanders stated that men were ready to march to Richmond, Virginia, and even Washington, D. C., while others surprisingly noted that their services were not even needed in Texas, arguing that Galveston's defenses were already sufficient. A. C. McKeon, captain of the Lone Star Rifles—the unit destined to become Company L of the First Texas Infantry in the Army of Northern Virginia's famed Texas Brigade—acknowledged that many citizens opposed his unit leaving Galveston in the face of the Union naval blockade, but he noted that “I am satisfied that one solitary

²⁹ Walter J. Fraser, *Charleston! Charleston!: The History of a Southern City* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1989), 247, 251-53; E. Milby Burton, *The Siege of Charleston, 1861-1865* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1970), 44-45, 55-56, 76.

company leaving Galveston could make but little difference admitting that there is a 'probability' that our services 'might' be required here. I am anxious to be in the fight with my Company and ready to take the field." McKeon's appeal was not "solitary," but rather one in a long line of similar requests. John Miller, a captain in another infantry company, estimated that "the danger to our Gulf Coast has been much exaggerated." He believed that even if the Union was able to land successfully and capture Galveston, the loss would not be detrimental to the Confederacy. Miller surmised that Arkansas and Missouri were of greater strategic importance, even to Texas's fate. Another commander admitted that his unit threatened to disband if they were not sent to theaters stretching from Arizona to Virginia. He said that his men were "panting for Glory" and were tired of waiting for any action to develop along the Texas Gulf Coast.³⁰

Comparable to Galveston's first volunteer soldiers who longed to leave the city for other theaters of war, the first Confederate and Texas State Troops who arrived in the island city from other locales in Texas experienced a similar degree of high morale, born primarily out of a strong sense of Confederate nationalism. The city's first defenders based their Confederate identity on an immediate hatred of potential Yankee invaders, an unfettered dedication to the southern cause, unbounded confidence in victory, and the knowledge that their first military assignment was the defense of Texas's most important locale. For most of 1861, soldiers who arrived and served in

³⁰ A. C. McKeon to Edward Clark, July 11, 1861, Clark Papers, Box 301-37, Folder 22, TSLAC; John Miller to Edward Clark, August 4, 1861, Clark Papers, Box 301-37, Folder 25, TSLAC; George W. Durant to Edward Clark, September 3, 1861, Clark Papers, Box 301-38, Folder 29, TSLAC. See also Hal G. Runnels to Edward Clark, May 10, 1861, Clark Papers, Box 301-35, Folder 13, TSLAC. Blair, *Virginia's Private War*, 134-52; Jacqueline Glass Campbell, *When Sherman Marched North from the Sea: Resistance on the Confederate Home Front* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2003), 71-74.

Galveston, similar to their civilian counterparts, recognized the woeful state of the city's defenses. In most cases, though, the military population remained explicitly confident about the fate not only of Galveston, but the entire Confederacy as well. In April one soldier informed his cousin that although the city was "in a terrable state of excitement," his unit was armed with revolvers and Bowie knives in preparation to repel any invasion. In spite of the threatening presence of the Union fleet, he was perfectly willing to let them arrive in Galveston simply to get "gloriously whoped." Moreover, various soldiers praised the amount of food provided for their consumption, while others recognized Galveston's strategic and economic importance to the state and were proud and willing to sacrifice for the cause. A volunteer in the Tenth Texas Infantry defiantly noted, "Wee in tend to give them a fight on this land . . . [and] to make a permanent stand . . . there is not any doubts but what wee can whip them. Wee have been drilling very hard fore several days and makeing every priparation that wee can be fore a fight. We in tend to do the best that wee can fore ower self and Country." Another soldier believed that in spite of the deep pain caused by the separation from his family, "my Country needs my services and I would be worse than no man and unworthy of my wife and children if I refused or failed to respond to her call." Hailing from locales across the state, the first soldiers serving in Galveston were really no different from the countless other volunteers in North and South who were motivated out of a profound sense of patriotic nationalism, excitement, hatred of northerners, and enthusiasm for adventure. Their understanding that they were responsible for the defense and protection of Galveston

created a high degree of morale, fueled a nationalist spirit, and fomented a Confederate identity among the city's military population.³¹

Citizens who lived in Colorado, Dallas, and Harrison Counties and in some cases Travis County also identified strongly with the Confederacy in spite of threats to the home front. Similar to Galvestonians, citizens around the state were generally concerned with the state of defense, although on the frontier. Those concerns and even fears did not generate an abandonment of their early faith in the Confederacy. The solidified nature of the state's Confederate identity that had been created during the secession crisis and beyond transcended the panics, inconveniences, and the splitting of families caused by the war's first months. Home front civilians enjoyed buoyed spirits produced by early Confederate battlefield victories. These successes afforded many citizens a strong sense of pride and nationalism that outweighed any uneasiness about frontier defense. Similarly, the counties' first volunteers expressed great willingness and enthusiasm to sacrifice for a cause in which they so deeply believed.

Concerns for defense of Texas's vulnerable frontier created trepidation in many locales throughout the state, but were expressed in a less extreme manner than in

³¹ John Johnson to Dear Cousin, April 25, 1861, Johnson (John) Letter, Pearce Civil War Collection, Navarro College, Corsicana, Texas; Aaron Estes to Deare Wife, November 29, 1861, Aaron Estes Letters, 10th Texas Infantry File, THM; Elijah Petty to Dear Wife, November 5, 1861 and to Dear Daughter, November 7, 1861, in Brown ed., *Civil War Letters of Elijah P. Petty*, 9, 11; Isaiah Harlan to Dear Ma, November 10, 1861, Harlan Letters, 10th Texas Infantry File, THM; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, June 1, 1861; C. G. Collings to Unknown, December 14, 1861, Amerman-Collings Collection, HMRC; T. A. Harris to Edward Clark, September 25, 1861, Clark Papers, Box 301-38, Folder 31, TSLAC; Bell I. Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1943), 15-27; James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997), 8, 13, 18-21, 27-28.

Galveston. Apprehensions emanated from both Texas's northern and southern borders. As Austin's Lucida Pease astutely noted, "[w]e have Indians on one side, and Mexicans on another and we have to protect ourselves against both." Letters written to local newspapers and the governor, for example, spoke consistently of a profound desire for the state and national governments to address the citizenry's inability to defend their exposed peripheries. Some Texans worried that various Indian tribes would become hostile toward the Confederacy; others fretted that the lack of sufficient arms would prevent any formidable defense of the state. Citizens in Dallas and Harrison Counties, for instance, complained that without adequate defense, crops would be ruined and the state would be overrun with Indians and Yankees. Moreover, many citizens predicted that North Texas would assume an important role in providing grains to feed the newly formed armies. A Dallas resident informed Governor Clark that the northern counties had to be defended because the value of "this portion of Texas to the Confederate States is incalculable & too little understood." The countless bushels of wheat, corn, barley, and oats served as essential ingredients to the southern war machine, and the threat to such products, according to this respondent, placed Dallas citizens "[i]n an emergency to defend our soils."³²

³² Lucida Pease to Dear Sister, January [?] 1861, Pease-Graham-Niles Papers, AHC; John M. Crockett to Edward Clark, May 5, 1861, Clark Papers, Box 301-35, Folder 11, TSLAC; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, February 2, 1861, letter from "Volumnia." See also, George Lane to Edward Clark, May 14, 1861, Box 301-36, Folder 14, and N. H. Darnell to Edward Clark, Box 301-36, Folder 15—both letters cited in Clark Papers, TSLAC. David Paul Smith, *Frontier Defense in the Civil War: Texas' Rangers and Rebels* (College Station: Texas A & M Univ. Press, 1992), is the best treatment, yet addresses primarily the military history of the subject. Few sections are devoted to home front morale.

As the war escalated, Texans were apprehensive not only due to the frontier's insecurity. They also complained about the state's remoteness from major news centers and bemoaned the late arrival of war news. A prominent Austin attorney informed one of his clients in May, 1861, "[w]e have had no news or mail for two weeks and we are ignorant of what is going on in the states." Similarly, Dallas's John T. Coit wrote his father that "[o]ur distance from the seat of war prevents our receiving early intelligence," and noted that news sometimes took up to two weeks to arrive in North Texas. Moreover, by the summer, some Austin businesses closed, and most activity in the city ceased except for volunteer military companies training in camp and preparing for war. As a result, John T. Allan noted that "we are in the status quo. No sales of anything but provisions, horses, and arms." He despondently concluded that "[w]e are shut up in prison cut off from the world." It appeared that Texans, similar to some of their fellow citizens in Galveston, experienced a notably different lifestyle with the inauguration of war. Nevertheless, these interruptions and insecurities, combined with concern for frontier defense, did not induce a rejection of the citizenry's ideological adoption of Confederate nationalism. The sentiments created immediately prior to the conflict overrode periodic bouts of gloom and were buttressed by profound faith in the Confederate experiment and early southern battlefield victories.³³

Texas's civilians and soldiers alike drew moral strength from confidence in the Confederacy's future and, as members of the larger white southern community,

³³ John T. Allan to D. C. Osborn, May 21, 1861 [first quotation], April 19, 1861 [third quotation], June 28, 1861 [fourth quotation], John T. Allan Letterbook, CAH; John T. Coit to Dear Father, May 17, 1861, Coit Family Papers, DHS; Nathaniel Townsend to Dear Brother, February 11, 1861, Nathaniel Townsend Papers, CAH; David C. Humphrey, "A 'Very Muddy and Conflicting' View: The Civil War as Seen from Austin, Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 94 (January, 1991): 369, 373-74.

understood that their national mission was based on independence. Many citizens were convinced that Abraham Lincoln and the various Union armies were mobilizing in preparation for a mass subjugation of the South, which fomented a fierce determination to resist the “invaders.” Susan Good, a woman on the Dallas home front, defiantly wrote that she believed that the North would never accomplish its objectives: “No, never, never. All the benefits [the Yankees] will receive will be sending south the thousands of mendicants, paupers, and hired menials who throng [its] cities.”

Moreover, the very idea that the South’s communities and firesides seemed threatened by attacking armies stimulated an acute awareness among the counties’ first volunteer soldiers that it was their responsibility to protect home and country. Unlike some of Galveston’s residents, many Texas soldiers did not express motives based on battlefield glory, but rather national independence and hatred of northerners. John J. Good (Susan’s husband), for example, wrote that the sole reason he volunteered was out of duty to his country, while a member of the Third Texas Cavalry camped in Dallas on his way to Arkansas stated that he was proud to serve “to secure a continuance of the liberty and happiness of those whom I could not live to see enslaved if my forfeited life would give them liberty.” Moreover, John J. Shropshire, a Columbus resident and soldier in the Fifth Texas Cavalry, blamed the conflict solely on the North and considered that the “sin of this war will be great & must I hope eventually fall heavily upon the head or heads that have produced it.” He further explained that he did not particularly like a soldier’s life, but “these are no times to long for the comforts of home. When the home itself is threatened.” Other soldiers articulated similar sentiments and believed that honor and patriotism were overriding priorities that forced them to remain

in the service. As one Dallas cavalryman wrote, “when my service is no longer needed in defence of my country I shall then return to Texas.”³⁴

Confederate battlefield victories achieved in the early months of the war allowed civilians and soldiers from Colorado, Dallas, Harrison, and Travis Counties to sustain their early wartime morale and Confederate identity. Citizens celebrated the achievement of southern arms at First Manassas, Wilson’s Creek, and Ball’s Bluff and consistently referred to the victories as “immortal,” “great,” “glorious,” and believed that the triumphs were providential. Nevertheless, the low civilian morale in Galveston was hardly affected as many respondents all but neglected to mention the battlefield achievements in their writings and continued to remain in gloomy spirits, preoccupied with fear and anxiety. Yet, many Texans believed these battles justified continued resistance and utilized their symbolic meaning to fuel and support the flourishing sensation of Confederate nationalism on the home front as well as in the ranks. Because citizens in the aforementioned communities had constructed an identity based on brash patriotism, the reinforcement of victory only added to their belief in the Confederacy’s national destiny. An Austin resident even believed that the early victories helped diminish part of the Unionist element in the region because “[t]he war . .

³⁴ Susan Good to My Dear Husband, May 5, 1861, in Fitzhugh, ed., *Cannon Smoke*, 5; James P. Douglas to Dear Sallie, June 20 1861, in Lucia R. Douglas, ed., *Douglas’ Texas Battery, C.S.A.* (Tyler, Texas: Smith County Historical Society, 1966), 1-2; John Samuel Shropshire to My Darling Wife, November 4, 1861, and John Samuel Shropshire to My Dear Carrie, August 22, 1861, both in John Samuel Shropshire Papers, Nesbitt Library; George W. Guess to Mrs. S. H. Cockrell, September 10, 1861, photostat, George W. Guess Letters, CAH; R. T. Wheeler to Dr. J. H. Starr, March 30, 1861, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; John E. Campbell to Dear Brother, June 7, 1861, John E. Campbell Letters, CAH; John J. Good to My Dear Sue, May 7, 1861, in Fitzhugh, ed., *Cannon Smoke*, 5; McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 8, 13, 18-21, 27-28, 90, 94-102, 131.

. has been the all absorbing subject. The people here seem now almost unanimous.” More important, though, the victories and subsequent strengthening of Confederate nationalism continued through 1861 and well into 1862 and beyond. Some historians of Texas and the Confederacy have looked at the immediate aftermath of First Manassas as the high-point of Confederate morale, when spirits began to sink slowly thereafter. It appears, though, that many Texans were not only instantly gratified by the victories, but rather, in a consistent tradition left over from the secession crisis, used the battles’ memories well into the beginning of the war’s second year.³⁵

A week before Christmas, 1861, Eugenia Barrett, an Austin music teacher, wrote to her uncle in Nacogdoches and expressed sentiments that undoubtedly summarized how many Texans experienced the development of events from the previous year. She noted that “many changes have taken place since I last wrote you . . . Battles have been fought and won; lives have been sacrificed upon the altar of their country; friends have been scattered like autumn leaves! When may we meet again? I have at times been gay, and others sad.” Nevertheless, she communicated great confidence in the Confederate military effort and believed that Texas’s soldiers “would whip the enemy . . . as they met ‘em!” These attitudes were representative of the varying emotions harbored by many Texans from the beginning of the secession crisis in the winter of 1860 until the close of the following year. Many Texans had successfully created a

³⁵ Austin *Texas State Gazette*, August 3, 1861; S. A. Good to My Very dear Husband, August 3, 1861, in Fitzhugh, ed., *Cannon Smoke*, 36; Cattie Coit to My dear Julie, August 24, 1861, Coit Family Papers, DHS; R. T. Wheeler to Dear Judge, September 22 and September 26, 1861, Oran M. Roberts Papers, CAH; A. W. Terrell to Edward Burlison, Jr., August 5, 1861, Edward Burlison Papers, CAH; Diary entry, November 14, 1861, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 67; Marten, *Texas Divided*, 1-2.

functioning identity with the Confederacy that was born out of brash and wildly patriotic nationalism, and based primarily on a selective memory of the Texas Revolution.

Following the state's secession, these nationalistic sentiments were transferred directly toward the new southern nation and were solidified and reinforced through a national memory of the American Revolution, religious allusions, calls for unity, and especially Confederate battlefield victories.³⁶

Whether Texans experienced low or high morale, early wartime spirits certainly influenced the formation of the state's Confederate identity. Galveston's civilians who entered the war fearful and worried still exhibited Confederate nationalist traits, and although many abandoned their homes, they did not abandon the Confederacy's cause. The community's first soldiers, however, possessed high moral sentiments common to their fellow volunteers across the Confederacy, and these attitudes remained strong through 1861. Different from those in Galveston because their very lives and well-being were not immediately threatened, civilians in Colorado, Dallas, Harrison, and Travis Counties entered the war with relatively high spirits. Their Confederate identity was consistently sustained in spite of concerns for frontier defense and other interruptions in daily lives. By the end of 1861, many Texans thought of themselves as citizens of the Confederate nation, were proud of their direct southern heritage, and were willing to sacrifice for the goal of national independence. These notions directly contributed to the formation of group identity, and Texans proudly and outwardly expressed their explicit sense of nationalism. The next two years, however, forced Texans to face hazards that threatened their morale and identity. Civilians and soldiers, for the most part unified in

³⁶ Eugenia Barrett to My Dear Uncle, December 17, 1861, Charles S. Taylor Papers, CAH.

their sentiment during 1861, later assumed differing levels of national identification as the war progressed, further developing the story of Confederate nationalism in Texas.

CHAPTER 3

THE IMPACT OF MORALE ON NATIONAL IDENTITY, 1862-1863

In 1861, many Texans developed a profound sense of Confederate national identity that was based on collective memory, southern independence, and confidence in victory. Scholars generally agree on these notions, yet tend to differ on the manner in which Confederates sustained their identity and dedication to the southern cause as the war continued and morale fluctuated. Historian James Marten looks to the end of 1861 as the point when Texans' morale steadily declined until the end of the war. Similarly, Bell I. Wiley argues that divisions within southern society unraveled the Confederate will to win shortly after secession. Other writers, while recognizing the scholarly value of such arguments, view the Confederate experience through a different lens. Anne Sarah Rubin acknowledges that challenges to Confederate unity certainly existed, but she is careful to point out that Confederates continually yearned for southern independence and expressed devotion to their new nation. Moreover, Gary W. Gallagher questions the historiographical argument that Confederates lost the will to fight after the summer defeats in 1863. If that was the case, he asks, why did many southerners continue fighting for another two years? In spite of the scholarly debates, one thing is certain: the war's progression had the potential to modify an individual's outward identification with cause and country. How did the ongoing war affect the hearts and minds of Texans? What did Texans experience that threatened or buttressed their loyalty to the Confederacy? Finally, what was the state of morale in Texas at the end of 1863?¹

¹ James Marten, *Texas Divided: Loyalty and Dissent in the Lone Star State, 1856-1874* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1990), 1; Bell I. Wiley, *The Road to*

For the most part, civilians on the Texas home front maintained a significantly high level of morale in 1861, but as the war continued over the next two years, some sectors of society found it challenging to maintain an ideological connection to the Confederacy. The concept of Confederate nationalism, or any form of nationalism for that matter, is one tangled in abstractions. During the first year of the war, Texans demonstrated patriotic tendencies to express their loyalty to the Confederacy. But as the war escalated, Texans on the home front found it exceedingly difficult to maintain the incessant patriotic demonstration that characterized the preceding year and a half. The excitement of secession and the immediacy of nation-building began to wane as news of bloody battles and the recognition of the region's increasing isolation crept slowly into the Lone Star State. Consequently, concerns for the well-being of family, friends, home, and business, and expressions of fear and loneliness gradually entered the writings of many civilians. These disturbing worries did not result in a renunciation of the Confederate nation, though. Rather, most civilians found the means to sustain their commitment to the Confederacy long after the guns were silenced at Fort Sumter. Their sense of Confederate identity remained solidly intact, even if they articulated their national allegiance through more implicit and subtle behaviors.²

The surrender of Forts Henry and Donelson, Tennessee, in February, 1862, and the adoption of the Conscription Act two months later revealed the first signs of the war's length and seriousness. The events further signaled that the Confederacy was

Appomattox (Memphis: Memphis State College Press, 1956), 78; Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005), 50, 79; Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1997), 19-21.

² Rubin, *A Shattered Nation*, 50.

not invincible, a notion typically believed to be true by many southerners during 1861, thus altering some of the early perceptions of Confederate nationalism. As a result, gloom spread across the state because Texans came to realize that the defeats on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers potentially opened various avenues of invasion into the interior of their country. Citizens were especially worried that the forts' surrender "no doubt affords a stimulant to the Enemy for renewed energy in the prosecution of the war." Galveston's William Pitt Ballinger wrote from his temporary home in Houston that the early defeats were "disastrous" and that Nashville's subsequent capture signaled trouble: "our people are very much downcast." Ardent Confederates in Austin even believed that the city's Unionist population were secretly pleased after hearing of the southern reverses. Other citizens started to believe, and were eventually proved correct, that the defeats were the first in a long series of setbacks that the Confederacy would suffer over the next two months.³

In spite of their fears and concerns, many Texans used the loss of Forts Henry and Donelson to re-ignite their sense of Confederate nationalism and hope for independence. Amelia Barr, a zealous southern partisan in Austin, confided to her diary that the defeats were "[b]ad political news," but admitted that "[s]till, though much

³ [Illegible] to Dear Sir, March 9, 1862, James Harper Starr Papers, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin—hereafter cited as CAH; Diary entry, February 27, 1862, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Galveston and Texas History Center, Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas—hereafter cited as Rosenberg Library; N. G. Shelley to O. M. Roberts, February 26, 1862, Oran M. Roberts Papers, CAH; Eugenia Barrett to My dear Uncle, February 23, 1862, Charles S. Taylor Papers, CAH; R. J. Townes to W. P. Ballinger, February 26, and March 10, 1862, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, April 5, 1862; James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988), 402-03; David C. Humphrey, "A 'Very Muddy and Conflicting' View: The Civil War as Seen from Austin, Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 94 (January, 1991): 377, 380.

discouraged, I am not hopeless. In some way or other, God always provides.” Another Austinite similarly wrote that “[o]ur cause must triumph if the blood of every [soldier] must pay the price of achieving it . . . Reverses should only . . . strengthen our high resolves. We cannot afford to lose the fight.” As a result, citizens called on the white male population to fill the Confederate military ranks, and many young men answered the appeal and signed up in droves. One of Harrison County’s new volunteers, Richard S. Keller, had been a candidate for county sheriff during the spring elections; however, he withdrew from the race in order to fight. He informed his supporters that he would return to the election circuit only after “the war is over, and our nationality firmly established, and peace again smiles upon our land.” Further, in April, 1862, the men in the W. P. Lane Rangers, the first company raised in Harrison County, reenlisted “with enthusiastic unanimity” for the remainder of the war. William Heartsill, an original member of the unit, defiantly wrote, “My services belong to the South so long as there is an enemy in our country.” Introducing a theme used consistently throughout the war by many of Texas’s civilians and soldiers, Heartsill noted that service to the Confederacy included the responsibility to protect home and locale. Securing Confederate nationhood assumed a supreme priority above all other duties, especially in the face of early military setbacks such as Fort Donelson.⁴

⁴ Amelia Barr, *All the Days of My Life: An Autobiography* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1913), 236; N. G. Shelley to O. M. Roberts, March 6, 1862, Oran M. Roberts Papers, CAH; Marshall *Texas Republican*, July 12, 1862; William W. Heartsill, *One Thousand Four Hundred and 91 Days in the Confederate Army: A Journal Kept by W. W. Heartsill* . . . Bell I. Wiley, ed., (Jackson, Tennessee: McCowat-Mercer Press, 1953), 77; Diary entry, February 23, 1862, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; Dallas *Herald*, January 29, and April 19, 1862; James A. Tabb to Mrs. E. J. Burgess, April 27, 1862, James A. Tabb Letters, 18th Texas Infantry File, Texas Heritage Museum, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas—hereafter cited as THM; T. A. Harris

The Confederacy's Conscription Act, passed in April, 1862, stirred up a substantial amount of fear, distrust, and anger on the Texas home front, especially in Dallas and the German regions of Colorado County. As eminent historian James M. McPherson writes, "[c]onscription represented an unprecedented extension of government power among a people on whom such power had rested lightly in the past." The act, which made all white males between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five eligible for military service, worried many Texans. They feared that their crops, especially cotton and wheat, would not be harvested adequately and that the sizable slave population would not be watched closely. John M. Crockett, a prominent Dallas resident, wrote to Governor Francis R. Lubbock that "[o]ur people will not stand a draft" because of the potential drain on the male population. He further warned Lubbock that "[t]he excitement [in Dallas] is intense," and that upon the enrolling officers' arrival, the county's men might resist forced entry into Confederate service. Nevertheless, he was assured that Dallas's people still "feel deeply about the affairs here and they have the country at heart." Susan Good similarly informed her husband who was serving in Arkansas that large numbers of Dallas men joined the ranks to avoid the shame of being drafted, and she worried that "Dallas will be left in a destitute condition." Her father, also sensing prospective difficulties, "gave his blacks a talk last night. I have

to J. G. Dashiell, March 18, 1862, Box 410-825, Folder 9, Civil War Records, Texas State Troop Records, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Austin, Texas—hereafter cited as TSLAC; Marshall *Texas Republican*, January 29, 1863; Randolph B. Campbell, *A Southern Community in Crisis: Harrison County, Texas, 1850-1880* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983), 204-06; Randolph B. Campbell, "Fighting for the Confederacy: The White Male Population of Harrison County in the Civil War," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 104 (July, 2000): 23-39.

confidence in them and think it would take something very powerful to induce them to do wrong.”⁵

Dallas residents might have grumbled at the prospect of conscription, but they submitted calmly and probably realized it was for the good of the country. After all, the act did motivate some men to join the ranks and fight on behalf the Confederacy. In Colorado County, however, the prospect of both a state (to fill the ranks of the Texas State Troops) and national draft fostered anger and outward resistance among the sizable German population that was determined not to support the Confederate cause. German farmers in Frelsburg, who did not own any slaves and were generally independent of the southern plantation culture, did not want to leave their farms or families, especially during the fall and winter harvest season. During the last week of December, 1862, mass meetings, some as large as 600 people, were reportedly held not only in Colorado, but also in nearby Austin, Fayette, and Washington Counties to protest the draft. One of the local enrolling officers noted that “[t]he drafted men have continued to refuse to be sworn into State service” for the expressed purpose of

⁵ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 432; John M. Crockett to Francis R. Lubbock, March 14, 1862, Francis R. Lubbock Papers, Box 301-40, Folder 20, and Crockett to Lubbock, March 17, 1862, Box 301-40, Folder 21, both at TSLAC; S. A. Good to My *dear dear* absent Husband, March 8, 1862, in Lester N. Fitzhugh, ed., *Cannon Smoke: The Letters of Captain John J. Good, Good-Douglas Battery, CSA* (Hillsboro, Texas: Hill Junior College Press, 1971), 160; Galveston *Weekly News*, April 29, 1862; Albert Burton Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy* (New York: Macmillan, 1924). Although official reports of the Confederacy’s draft did not reach Texas until late April and May, many home front civilians had been expecting the news as early as January. In December, 1861, Governor Lubbock urged the Texas legislature to pass a state draft, and newspapers, especially the Austin *Texas State Gazette*, carried stories about a national draft all through the spring. (Francelle Pruitt, “We’ve Got to Fight or Die’: Early Texas Reaction to the Confederate Draft, 1862,” *East Texas Historical Journal* 36, no. 1 [1998]: 3-17, esp. 4-7).

defending the Texas coast. Draft officers were even assaulted by armed mobs of the “remarkably stubborn” Germans, causing many officials in the region to use cavalry units to force the protesters into service. By the end of January, 1863, though, most of the population was pacified and submitted to the enrolling officers. After witnessing the menacing threats posed by Texas State cavalry and artillery units, the declaration of martial law in the region, and the jailing of their leaders, many of the insubordinates entered the ranks, however, reluctantly.⁶

Many Texas Germans clearly did not regard themselves as Confederates, but others criticized their native countrymen for their obstinate behavior. Two months after the rebellion, Robert Voigt, an immigrant and captain of a company raised near Houston, then serving close to Vicksburg, wrote that the “Germans [in Fayette, Austin, and Colorado Counties] have put [their] *Nation* to shame & instead of being the protectors of the families whose men are now serving in the army, they are their worst enemies at home in their own country . . . they should feel lucky they are still alive.” Similarly, the Anglo residents of Colorado County were not nearly as disheartened as their German neighbors and carried their Confederate nationalist identity through the stresses of conscription. Some citizens were concerned that the county’s doctors would be drafted, and the local chief justice informed Governor Lubbock that some men were

⁶ A. J. Bell to Maj. J. P. Flewellen, January 3, 1863, and November 28, 1862, both in *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, Volume 15, p. 925—hereafter cited as *OR*; William G. Web to Maj. A. G. Dickinson, January 4, 1863, *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 15, p. 926-27; J. Bankhead Magruder to General S. Cooper, February 26, 1863, *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 15, p. 220; J. Bankhead Magruder to F. R. Lubbock, February 11, 1863, *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 15, p. 974; Lt. Col. P. Hardeman to Capt. Edmund P. Turner, January 26, 1863, *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 15, p. 960; Marten, *Texas Divided*, 118-20.

needed to “meet an enemy at home[.] [P]rovisions must be made to support the army & slaves must be watched and kept under subjection.” Like those in Dallas, native southerners in other regions of the state were still willing to support the Confederacy in the face of a seemingly overbearing government and its policies.⁷

News from the front and the war’s escalating battles, though, caused the greatest fluctuation in morale for the civilian population. Concern for loved ones and the fate of the Confederacy’s armies affected civilian spirits more than laws and government actions. The losses of Forts Henry and Donelson and the passing of the Conscription Act were only two factors that influenced civilian morale in 1862. Battlefield victories and defeats caused home front spirits to soar and sink, but the capture of Galveston in October, 1862, the state’s most important port, signaled one of the lowest points of morale among the civilian population. Battlefield results tended to affect Texans’ views of other aspects of the Confederate experience, such as the gradually declining value of currency, an increasingly powerful national government, and the state of home front harvests. Although Texans were certainly stirred by events across the Confederacy, those that developed closer to home had the greatest impact. Nevertheless, despite the delay of news arriving in the state, citizens trained a keen eye toward incidents further east and, for the most part, understood their potential significance. Most Texans nonetheless did not allow battlefield reverses and worries over loved ones in the ranks to dissipate their Confederate identity. Elements of war weariness began to creep into

⁷ Robert Voigt to My dear Anna, March 30, 1863, in Walter D. Kamphoefner and Wolfgang Helbich, eds., and Susan Carter Vogel, trans., *Germans in the Civil War: The Letters They Wrote Home* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2006), 418; [Chief Justice of Colorado County] to Francis R. Lubbock, January 5, 1863, Civil War Records, Correspondence Concerning Conscription, TSLAC; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 8-12, 58, 65-66, 73-75, 78-80, and 138-40.

Texas during 1862, but a loss of will or an abandonment of the Confederacy's cause did not materialize.⁸

The late spring of 1862 compounded the discouraging sentiments felt by many Texans. The Federal capture of New Orleans, the Confederacy's largest and most important city, was especially troublesome. While news of the city's seizure caused "a good deal of excitement in Austin," William Pitt Ballinger wrote in his diary from Houston that the major setback "fills me with most gloomy apprehensions." He was concerned that Confederate forces would fail in their attempts to recapture the city, but he acknowledged that the loss had a deeper symbolic meaning. The prominent Galveston attorney surmised that the Union would see the capture as a sign that the Confederacy might fail in its attempts to gain independence. From the Dallas home front, though, Cattie M. Coit assured her sister that the Union could not easily hold the city because of "their little force." She was particularly confident that Confederate General P. G. T. Beauregard would defeat the invaders, rid southern Louisiana of the Yankee influence, and aid in the war's speedy termination.⁹

Texans also expressed downcast attitudes and fears related to non-military events. People continued to be anxious about the dearth of males on the home front,

⁸ For other historians who see battlefield results as the decisive factor that influenced Confederate morale, see James M. McPherson, "American Victory, American Defeat," in Gabor S. Boritt ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), 15-42; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 5, 8-11, 12, 58, 65-66, 73-75, 78-80, 106-07, 111, 138-40; Brad R. Clampitt, "Morale in the Western Confederacy: Home Front and Battlefield, 1864-1865" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Texas, 2006), 258.

⁹ Ned Raymond to Dear Sir, May 2, 1862, Nathaniel Townsend Papers, CAH; Diary entry, April 30, 1862, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; Cattie M. Coit to My own dear Sister, May 12, 1862, and Cattie M. Coit to My dear Aunt, May 21, 1862, Coit Family Papers, G. B. Dealey Library, Dallas Historical Society, Dallas, Texas—hereafter cited as DHS; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 418-22.

worried about the depreciation of their currency, and were troubled at the closing of stores and businesses. One woman fretted due to the shortage of available cloth in Dallas for sewing, while James H. Green wrote from Columbus that his “wheat and oats are looking well but I fear we will not make [much money].” Women in particular seemed especially low-spirited because many were left in charge to operate family farms and plantations. One woman, identified only as “A Lady, Citizen of Marshall,” informed Governor Francis Lubbock that her community was destitute of males for protection against a “very numerous and ungovernable” slave population, and she feared that a military draft would exacerbate the circumstances. Similarly, Harrison County’s Jennie Adkins wrote to her fiancée in the Third Texas Cavalry and begged him “not to enter the service again.” Shortly after the fall of New Orleans, one woman even wrote, “[w]ho can express the deep anxiety & the heartrending sorrow this terrible war has caused us all?” Others had nightmares of their husbands and their comrades dying on distant battlefields, and a woman in Farmer’s Branch, near Dallas simply noted, “the women are getting very tired staying home by themselves.”¹⁰

¹⁰ James H. Green to Dear John, March 20, 1862, Columbus, Texas, Letters, CAH; A Lady, Citizen of Marshall to Francis R. Lubbock, February 2, 1862, Records, Francis R. Lubbock Papers, Box 301-39, Folder 13, TSLAC; Jennie Adkins to My dearest Friend, April 21, 1862, Douglas Guthrie Civil War Letters Collection, John and Jennie Adkins Correspondence, Baylor University, Waco, Texas—hereafter cited as Guthrie Collection; Ellen Reid to My dear Friend, April 29, 1862, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; Lizzie Mathis to Kind Friend, November 11, 1862, Mathis Family Papers, CAH; S. A. Good to My Dear Husband, April 20, 1862, in Fitzhugh, ed., *Cannon Smoke*, 184; Cattie Coit to John Coit, April 25 [, 1862], Coit Family Papers, DHS; Lucadia Pease to My dear Sister, Pease-Graham-Niles Papers, March 19, 1863, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Austin, Texas—hereafter cited as AHC; Harriet Perry to My dear Husband, December 3, 1862, Presley Carter Person Papers, Duke Univ. Library, Durham, N.C. The Perry letters have been edited and published in M. Jane Johansson, ed., *Widows by the Thousand: The Civil War Letters of Theophilus and Harriet Perry, 1862-1864* (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 2000). John T. Allan to D. C. Osborn,

By the middle of the summer, though, Confederate battlefield fortunes turned brighter with major victories in Virginia, especially the successful defense of Richmond. Civilians on the Texas home front responded with buoyed spirits and praised the successful armies. After Union Major General George B. McClellan's retreat from the Virginia Peninsula, Austin "seemed drunk with excitement. There was shouting and bell ringing, and the continual crack of firearms." Moreover, the Dallas *Herald* reported that "[t]he dark and lowering clouds, that have hitherto been hovering over our beloved country, are fast disappearing before the genial rays of liberty's bright luminary." Battlefield victories contributed to the retention of Confederate identity on the home front. Even during the previous months when morale suffered substantial declines as a result of battlefield reverses, many Texans still vowed allegiance to their new country and reported that they were ready to defend their state from northern invaders. A woman in Dallas wrote to her cousin in nearby Collin County and informed him he needed to spend a few days with her before he left "for the wars." She advised him to be safe on his upcoming ventures, "fight like a brave Texas boy, [and] kill as many as you can." The utter hatred of Yankees in itself represented a profound nationalistic stance, because it portrayed Union armies as foreign legions infiltrating the South. Cattie and John Coit's young boy was even envious of his father's service in the Confederate army because of the opportunity to kill Yankees. Cattie noted that the boy

January 25, February 21, and March 24, 1862, Letterbook, John T. Allan Papers, CAH; Callie Wright to Dear Sister, August 28, 1862, Abraham Alley Family Papers, Caldonia Wright Correspondence, CAH; Dallas *Herald* August 2, 1862. Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1996), 55-56.

“said the other day he was going up to camp where Pa was, and was going to set fire to the Yankees and burn them all up.”¹¹

These sentiments demonstrated that it was certainly possible for home front civilians to exhibit nationalist identification even in the face of periodic Confederate military reverses. A citizen in East Texas wrote in March that “[w]e have now no position in [Kentucky or Missouri], and half of Tennessee is gone. We are not, however, in the least discouraged.” An elderly man in Austin who fought during the War of 1812 greatly desired to volunteer for military duty, but realized his age would prevent him from doing so. Nevertheless, he believed that he could assist “in building fortifications in and around Charleston, S.C.” Even though the war exerted serious demands on the home front’s women, they were still willing to envision an independent Confederacy. When Harrison County’s Jennie Adkins pleaded that her fiancée not volunteer for duty again, she also noted explicitly that “[y]ou will perhaps think I have lost my patriotism, but my country is as dear to me as ever.” Moreover, a Dallas woman confidently reported that “[v]ery near every person have left for the war, and I think the next call will be for the women, if they do I am ready to march.” Confederate nationalism was still very much alive among many Texas civilians as the war entered a new phase by the autumn of 1862. The home front population realized that Confederate armies were not invincible and that prospects for victory were not necessarily certain. Nevertheless,

¹¹ Barr, *All the Days of My Life*, 240; Dallas *Herald*, June 14, 1862; M. A. Record to Dear Cousin, March 2, 1862, Gerhart Family Collection, J. Erik Jonsson Central Library, Texas/Dallas History and Archives Division, Dallas, Texas; Cattie Coit to My dear dear Husband, April 16, and June 24, 1862, Coit Family Papers, DHS; G. Crosby to James H. Starr, March 30, 1863, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; Diary entry, February 4, 1863, Cecilia Labadie Diary, Rosenberg Library; C. Barrett to My Dear Uncle, December 21, 1863, Charles S. Taylor Papers, CAH.

they expressed sincere confidence that their nation would fight and continue to strive for their original goal of liberation. Dips in morale were quite common, but these dark moments did not affect identification with country for most Texans.¹²

As October, 1862 dawned, Texans were faced with a new challenge: overcoming the psychological, material, and symbolic impact as a result of the fall of Galveston. Texans had long understood Galveston's importance to the Confederate war effort and its significance as a major entryway into the interior of the state. Consequently, throughout most of 1862 many Texans assumed that the city would be strongly defended. The few civilians remaining in the vicinity, however, doubted greatly that Galveston's defenses were sufficient to resist any form of attack and even predicted the city's fall. One man wrote in June, "[t]hey can take it whenever they see proper" because of the thin line of defenders and cannon on the island. Another citizen was upset with Confederate decisions to declare martial law and remove the remaining civilians from the city and noted, "this is wrong and inhuman . . . to remove the great mass of non-combatants and poor people from their little homes where they can live economically, and force them into the country, and destroy their cisterns, cattle, poultry . . . [This] advances no public good as I conceive and involves infantile misery." Citizens living near the city had reason for concern because the Union navy had been in the harbor for nearly the entire year enforcing the blockade and even capturing supplies the

¹² [Unknown] to William Randolph Howell, March 27, 1862, William Randolph Howell Papers, CAH; G. Crosby to James Harper Starr, June 12, 1862, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; Jennie Adkins to My dearest Friend, April 21, 1862, Guthrie Collection; Lizzie Mathis to Kind Friend, November 11, 1862, Mathis Family Papers, CAH; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 27, 36, 38, 40, 44; Angela Boswell, *Her Act and Deed: Women's Lives in a Rural Southern County* (College Station: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 2001), 92-93.

civilian and military populations needed for survival. General Paul O. Hebert, the Confederate commander in charge of the city's defenses, believed that Galveston's defense was futile, and to the dismay of many, he removed his cannon from the island to the interior. By the beginning of October, Union naval officers demanded the city's surrender and agreed to a four-day truce in order for the remaining civilians and soldiers to leave the island. Colonel Xavier B. Debray, who relieved Hebert of command on the eve of the city's capture, admitted that "Galveston cannot be defended, and a fight in the city would be a useless braggadocio." He further implored the civilian population not to fight the Yankees because he feared any resistance would result in many deaths and the destruction of the city.¹³

The capture of Galveston in the first week of October did not end in any fighting or loss of life. Its easy defeat resulted in sinking spirits throughout the state because Texans now believed a deeper Union invasion was imminent. Governor Lubbock wrote from Austin that his state was in its most dire "hour of peril . . . There seems to be no doubt that a serious invasion of Texas will be attempted this winter." With the island

¹³ J. F. Smith to Miss Justina Rose, June 28, 1862, John Franklin Smith Papers, CAH; Diary entry, May 24, 1862, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; Report of Col. X. B. Debray, October 5, 1862, in *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 15, p. 148; See also Report of Brig. Gen. Paul O. Hebert, October 15, 1862, *OR*, October 15, 1862, Ser. 1, Vol. 15, p. 147; *Galveston Weekly News*, January 14, April 8, May 13, and 20, 1862; Edward T. Cotham Jr., *Battle on the Bay: The Civil War Struggle for Galveston* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1998), 57-72; Ralph A. Wooster, *Texas and Texans in the Civil War* (Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 1995), 62-63. The Union blockade was not entirely effective in Galveston. Stephen R. Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy: Blockade Running during the Civil War* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 272-75, found that slightly more than forty blockade runners successfully reached Galveston from other ports between December, 1861, and June, 1865. Also, between February, 1862, and June, 1865, slightly less than fifty ships slipped through Galveston's blockade on route to other ports. The vast majority of vessels were either heading to, or returning from, Havana, Cuba.

essentially evacuated and the war literally on Texas's shores, William Pitt Ballinger believed that it was "[a] bleak day in our history. Galveston is in the power of the enemy." Sensing that the Union would next take Houston and proceed northward into the heart of the state, he nervously recorded, "[o]h the disasters and sufferings yet to be endured . . . Our prospects ahead indeed look to me very gloomy." Civilians who had recently evacuated the city suffered immensely due to a lack of provisions and the usual comforts of home. People naturally blamed the war and admitted that much had changed over the past year that caused their spirits to sink so low. One woman admitted in November that "this is almost more than I have strength to bear[.]" As it turned out, not all of the civilian population left the island.¹⁴

Most civilians near Galveston appreciated the gracious approach extended by the Yankee occupation, but conditions in the city deteriorated greatly. Colonel Isaac S. Burrell, commander of the Forty-second Massachusetts Infantry, estimated that as many as 3,000 people still inhabited the island and were "almost destitute of the means of subsistence." He even believed that those who remained in the city were loyal to the United States and as a result, did not want them to suffer in their current condition. A Union marine, Henry O. Gusley, recorded in his diary that Galveston's mayor and some of the population were grateful to have their city once again under the control of the

¹⁴ F. R. Lubbock to Maj. Gen. J. B. Magruder, December 6, 1862, *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 15, p. 896; Diary entry, October 4, 17, and November 5, 1862, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; Maria James to William Pitt Ballinger, November 12, 1862, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; Jon S. Beers to Dear Madam, October 23, 1862, Beers Family Papers, Rosenberg Library; Galveston *Weekly News*, October 10, 15, and November 14, 1862; Elijah P. Petty to Dear Wife, October 20, 1862, in Norman D. Brown, ed., *Journey to Pleasant Hill: The Civil War Letters of Elijah P. Petty, Walker's Texas Division, C.S.A.* (San Antonio: Univ. of Texas Institute of Texas Cultures, 1982), 94.

United States, especially after the American flag was raised. Although little evidence suggests that most of the remaining civilian population was indeed unionist, some anti-Confederate sentiments in Texas were indeed buttressed when Galveston was captured. Ernst Cramer, a German immigrant and draft-evader in South Texas, was in constant fear of being arrested, but the recent Union success “raised our hopes and gave us the surety and confidence that the North would bring us help. The ‘Hurrah’ for the Union echoed from all corners.” Nevertheless, in spite of the dangerously low morale experienced across the state, the loss of Galveston did not cause an ideological abandonment of the Confederacy’s cause among many segments of Texas’s population. In his study of Union-occupied regions of the Confederacy, Stephen V. Ash found that in spite of many Confederate locales being seized rather easily with little resistance, most southerners retained their hatred of Yankees and were “resolutely determined to subjugate the enemies in their midst.” After hearing of the city’s capture, a Columbus resident confidently noted, “I am anxious to thrash a Yank,” and believed that the Federals “are all tired of this war.”¹⁵

Texans were forced to endure only two months of severely low morale as a result of Galveston’s loss. Spirits were raised considerably when Major General John B. Magruder, a former officer in the Army of Northern Virginia and one thought to be

¹⁵ Isaac S. Burrell to [Nathaniel P. Banks], December 29, 1862, *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 15, p. 204; Ernst Cramer to My Beloved Parents, October 30, 1862, in Kamphoefner and Helbich, eds., *Germans in the Civil War*, 428-30; Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1995), 22-23; George McCormick to Dear Father, October 21, 1862, Draper/McCormick Papers, Nesbitt Memorial Library Archives, Columbus, Texas—hereafter cited as Nesbitt Library; Diary entry, October 9, 1862, in Edward T. Cotham Jr., ed., *The Southern Journey of a Civil War Marine: The Illustrated Note-Book of Henry O. Gusley* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2006), 106; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 149-50; Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 69.

ineffective by Robert E. Lee, was assigned to command the District of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Upon Magruder's November arrival in Houston, he was greeted with cheers, and, as historian Edward T. Cotham Jr. writes, "was the toast of the town . . . and quickly won the hearts of Texans anxious to believe they had at last found a military leader worthy of their support." Magruder immediately began planning a counterattack and received great moral support from the civilian population who easily understood Galveston's symbolic and strategic importance. In the early morning hours of January 1, 1863, Magruder led a force of nearly 2,000 Texas troops on land as well as on gunboats and attacked the unsuspecting Federal occupation force. Union gunboats were forced out of the harbor, but one of the biggest, the *Harriet Lane*, was destroyed. Union soldiers on shore were forced to surrender. News of the stunning victory sent shock waves around Texas, raised morale considerably, and resurrected sentiments that had not been experienced since the secession crisis and inauguration of war.¹⁶

Two weeks before the recapture of Galveston, Robert E. Lee's army in Virginia achieved one of their most one-sided victories of the war. After the Union Army of the Potomac experienced horrific casualties and a dreadful retreat from the Battle of Fredericksburg, morale soared across the Confederacy. While many southern soldiers and civilians "placed the battle in a decidedly favorable light," Texans were generally unresponsive (at least in their letters and diaries) to the significant Confederate victory

¹⁶ Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 99, 100-34; Randolph B. Campbell, *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003), 253-54; Proclamation of General Magruder, January 15, 1863 (p. 231), N. P. Banks to Maj Gen. H. W. Halleck, January 7, 1863 (p. 201), W. S. Long to Maj. D. C. Houston, January 10, 1863 (p. 208)—all cited in *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 15.

in Virginia. Civilians on the home front instead drew nearly all of their buoyed spirits from Galveston, probably because it was much closer to home and represented a victory that they believed essential to the overall war effort. In this case, Texans' morale and Confederate nationalist sentiment were reinvigorated by local influences. Countless citizens regarded the small battle as a "brilliant affair," and congratulations to Magruder and his men were extended by the Texas legislature, Sam Houston, and even Jefferson Davis. William Pitt Ballinger, whose sentiments summarized the despondency felt by most Texans when Galveston fell to the enemy in October, spoke for many once again when he wrote that January 1, 1863, was "[a] glorious day in our annals . . . I have never passed a day of more excitement," and that the swing in Confederate momentum "entirely changed the aspect of affairs" for the war effort. Some citizens who still lived in the city and had suffered from low morale since the beginning of the war understood the moment's importance, used rhetoric common to many Texans, and reveled in the opportunity to make outward expressions of Confederate nationalism. An anonymous resident wrote to the Houston *Telegraph* and proclaimed that a great shift had taken place in the city: sentiments had rapidly changed, defense of the island was progressing quickly, and Galveston itself was preparing to become "the Vicksburg of Texas." The battle, although rarely referenced by many contemporary observers outside of Texas and passed over lightly, if at all, in modern-day Civil War texts, served as a powerful morale boost as Texans entered the third year of the war.¹⁷

¹⁷ Gary W. Gallagher, "The Yanks Have Had a Terrible Whipping: Confederates Evaluate the Battle of Fredericksburg," in Gallagher, ed., *The Fredericksburg Campaign: Decision on the Rappahannock* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press),

Six days after Galveston was recaptured, a citizen in Austin noted that many of the city's residents were making equipment for the Confederacy's soldiers, and he asserted that the once sizable unionist population was "not so strong here as last winter." Another Austinite claimed that the "war is an all absorbing topic" and that his spirits were high. The recapture of Galveston had a profound influence on much of the home front population's sentiments. Texans experienced an extended phase of relatively high morale throughout the entire spring and early summer. Knowing that their state was once again safe from Union invasion, at least temporarily, also provided the civilian population with a sustained nationalist spirit and a renewed expectation of independence. A man near Dallas wrote in April to his son serving in the army and praised the prospect of a good harvest season because it would afford the disappearance of "hunger and want . . . from our country and that our brave soldiers will be enabled to keep the field and confront the myrmidons of a despicable and contemptible tyranny. Our prospects still look cheering at this, the beginning of the

126; Diary entries, January 1 and 3, 1863, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; "Letter from Galveston," January 6, 1863, Houston *Telegraph* clipping, Civil War Scrapbook, Rosenberg Library; Gideon Linsecum to John A. Rutherford, January 21, 1863, in Jerry Bryan Linsecum, et al. eds., *Gideon Linsecum's Sword: Civil War Letters from the Texas Home Front* (Denton: Univ. of North Texas Press, 2001), 205-10; "Joint Resolution of Thanks," (p. 221), Congratulations of Sam Houston, January 7, 1863, (p. 933-34), and Jefferson Davis to Maj. Gen. J. B. Magruder, January 28, 1863, (p. 211), all cited in *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 15; W. P. Hill to James H. Starr, January 6, 1863, G. Crosby to James H. Starr, January 7, 1863, and James Reily to Dear Sir, January 8, 1863, all cited in James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; Guy M. Bryan to Dear Ballinger, January 2, 1863, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, January 28, 1863; Galveston *Weekly News*, January 7, 28, and March 25, 1863; Diary entry, January 29, 1863, Cecilia Labadie Diary, Rosenberg Library.

end.” Another citizen living just north of Columbus simply predicted that the South was destined to be “under an entirely different form of government.”¹⁸

Although Texans enjoyed high moral spirits during the first half of 1863, the result of the Vicksburg and Gettysburg campaigns during the summer shattered most of the home front’s optimism. Just prior to the campaigns, Texans were supremely confident that the South’s Mississippi River fortress would withstand Union capture. General Ulysses S. Grant’s attempts to seize the city initially failed and resulted in cheers across the Lone Star State. Many Confederates believed that Vicksburg would never fall, but when it did succumb on July 4, 1863, spirits sank to new lows across the South. The fall of Vicksburg resulted in a much greater loss of spirits than did the defeat at Gettysburg. Home front civilians not only realized that the Trans-Mississippi theater was cut off from the rest of the Confederacy, but also expected an unopposed Federal invasion into Texas. Many Texans displayed an almost entirely defeatist reaction to the losses. One man wrote in August, “[t]he spirit of the people is decidedly low,” and astutely noted, “[a]s long as the war promises success the spirit of the people will be equal to it. But the day that it becomes apparent that the strength of the North can overrun us & that we have mainly to oppose unconquerable resolution vs. their power; I not only distrust its being done, but I fear a reaction against the leaders of the Revolution and Slaveholders.” An anonymous citizen in Dallas signing his name

¹⁸ T. C. Neel to My Dear Wife, January 6, 1863, Neel Family Papers, DHS; R. T. Wheeler to O. M. Roberts, February 12, 1863, Oran M. Roberts Papers, CAH; M. Ikard to Dear Robert April 17, 1863, Elijah H. and Robert E. Ikard Letters, 19th Texas Infantry File, THM; Diary entry, January 7, 1863, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, 1863-1865, DeGolyer Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas—hereafter cited as DLSMU; Diary entry, May 18 and 20, 1863, Thomas H. Duval Papers, CAH; R. T. Wheeler to James H. Starr, April 16, 1863, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH.

“Vicksburg” produced a handbill distributed throughout the county essentially stating that the Confederacy was a beaten entity, that “[r]uin is coming upon us, and staring us in the face,” and that Texans’ support of the Confederate government had vanished.¹⁹

Although Texans were generally downcast as a result of Vicksburg’s fall, many did not let the significant defeat rupture their hope of an independent Confederacy. As the initial effect of Vicksburg and Gettysburg wore off, Texans, although suffering from increased home front demands and hardships, viewed the losses as substantial but were not yet willing to concede a Union victory. As numerous historians have recognized, considerable dips in morale and periodic military reverses did not shatter the southern will for victory. A prominent Austin resident resolutely noted that in spite of “our present difficulties . . . I am ready to buckle on my armor and do what I can in defence of our homes & liberty.” He further commented that “the South, ere long, [will] be proclaimed free and Independent, not only by the dastardly Vandals, but the North at large—We cannot be subjugated; No, Never!” Another woman similarly wrote to a

¹⁹ Diary entry, August 21 and July 29, 14, 1863, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; “Handbill Circulated in Dallas County, 1863,” September 1863, DHS; Diary entries, July 2, 18, 27, August, 8, and 27, 1863, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, DLSPMU; C. W. Gregg to My dear Catherine, October 10, 1863 and Cattie to My own dear Husband, September 11, 1863, both cited in Coit Family Papers, DHS; G. Crosby to James H. Starr, June 10, 26, and July 9, 1863, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; S. M. Swenson to Dear Cousin, July 9, 1863, Swante Palm Letterbook, CAH; Sallie Patrick to My Esteemed Friend, July 27, 1863, William Randolph Howell Papers, CAH; Diary entries, June 6, 9, 28, July 4, 5, 6, 16, 30, August 1, 4, 5, 21, 1863; Thomas Duval Diary, CAH; E. M. Pease to My Dear Daughter Carrie, August 10, 1863, Pease-Graham-Niles Papers, AHC; Sarepta S. Ball to J. H. Mathis, September 16, 1863, Mathis Family Papers, CAH; Diary entry, August 10, 1863, in John Q. Anderson, ed., *The Journal of Kate Stone, 1861-1868* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1955), 233; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, July 18, 1863; Mother to My Dear Son, December 24, 1863, Mathis Family Papers, CAH; Robert L. Kerby, *Kirby Smith’s Confederacy: The Trans-Mississippi South, 1863-1865* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1972), 129-35; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 627-38, 664-65, 668, and 682-85.

soldier that her spirit was nearly broken until she realized that her country's armies still remained in the field. She noted that she nearly gave in to despair "for never has our prospects been more gloomy than at present. But this dark cloud may have a silver lining, God grant that it may and this horrid and cruel war may soon end." Similarly, a Columbus citizen wrote to the Galveston *Weekly News* in November and reported that his town was bustling with business and that the people had a "firm and determined countenance."²⁰

The primary reason civilians did not lose their will to fight by 1863 was due to a mobilization of home front resources to support the war effort and a reliance on national symbols that sustained both their morale and national identity. Battlefield reverses, although at times significant and causing severe downward turns in civilian morale, were countered by the home front's continued willingness to aid in the prosecution of the war. Women, who often suffered from low morale, supported the Confederacy in a great way through Ladies Aid Societies, created at the outset of the war and sustained well into 1863. Women's aid was traditionally enacted through charitable donations and informal fund raisers, but perhaps more significant was the production of *tableaux vivants*, or dramatized plays enacted by the home front's women and girls. In February, 1863, Harrison County's Border Church Aid Society held a large tableau for the benefit

²⁰ G. Crosby to James H. Starr, August 13, 1863, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; Sallie Patrick to My esteemed friend, August 31, 1863, CAH; Letter from Columbus, November 4, 1863, Galveston *Weekly News* clipping, Civil War Scrapbooks, Rosenberg Library; James M. McPherson, "American Victory, American Defeat," Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), 30; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 67-73; Richard E. Beringer, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, William N. Still Jr., *Why the South Lost the Civil War* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1986), 97, 186, 230, 268, 271-75. For Trans-Mississippi morale in 1863, see Kerby, *Kirby Smith's Confederacy*, 51-52, 58-61, 89. Kerby argues that morale collapsed in the Trans-Mississippi in late 1863, primarily as a result of Vicksburg.

of their community's soldiers in Jonesville, the eastern portion of the county. The tableau drew a large crowd from across the area as the local chief justice and other prominent businessmen and planters held their own acting roles in the play. Eugene O. Perry, a private in the First Texas Infantry serving in the Army of Northern Virginia, informed his sister that he was glad that the tableau was "crowned with success. The sum raised indeed surprised me . . . All honor the patriotic ladies of Texas."²¹

Texans outwardly and proudly supported the war effort, and similar events were held in Dallas, Austin, Columbus, and Houston. Citizens from all social classes attended and donated what they could to the war effort, especially for the benefit of Texas's soldiers, and newspaper editors and private residents alike praised the women's energies. After a successful tableau in Dallas in February, 1863, the editor of the Dallas *Herald* wrote, "[t]he ladies who got up and managed the affair, deserve the highest praise for their industry and energy, and we are pleased to see that their efforts have been so liberally responded [to] by our citizens." Perhaps one of the most successful turnouts, though, occurred in Columbus in 1862 when several thousand garments were collected and distributed to Texas units serving from Louisiana to Virginia.²²

²¹ Eugene O. Perry to Dear Del, March [?] 1863, E. O. Perry Letters, First Texas Infantry, THM; Harriet Perry to Salle M. Person, February 18, 1863, and Harriet Perry to My dear Husband, February 19, 1863, Person Papers; Marshall *Texas Republican*, February 19, 1863; Unknown diary author, September 2, 1862, Horace Randal File, HCHML; Campbell, *Southern Community in Crisis*, 35-36; Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 26-28; Boswell, *Her Act and Deed*, 101.

²² Dallas *Herald*, February 4, 1863, September 4 and 18, 1861, February 19 and May 17, 1862; Galveston *Weekly News*, October 15, 1862; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, September 14, 1861; Sallie E. Jones to Pendelton Murrah, November 9, 1863, Box 301-44, Folder 7, Pendelton Murrah Papers, TSLAC; Diary entry, January 1 and May 17,

Although women suffered intermittently from fluctuations in morale, their support and dedication to the war effort represented one of the primary symbols used to display Texans' sense of Confederate nationalism. Historian Gary W. Gallagher argues that Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia "functioned as the principle focus of Confederate nationalism for much of the war," and that southerners used "Lee and his men . . . as the preeminent symbol of the Confederate struggle for independence and liberty." Although this claim is supported through ample evidence from across the Confederacy, including Texas, most citizens used Lee and his army as a secondary symbol in the quest for nationhood. Instead, Texans viewed the common soldier of the Confederacy as the superlative image in the establishment of a Confederate nation. Texans serving in Lee's army, though, certainly looked to Lee for symbolic guidance. On the eve of the Gettysburg campaign, for example, Harrison County's James H. Hendrick, a private in the First Texas Infantry, informed his father that the army was "in better health and trim for fighting than it was before Fredericksburg," and that the men "have a great deal of confidence in our generals, especially General Lee." The home front's citizens, however, expressed sentiments that conformed more to a reliance and dedication to local influences in order to fuel their sense of nationalist identity. As Robert Loughery, editor of the *Marshall Texas Republican*, wrote, "We have but one hope for Southern independence, and that is to be found in the strong arms and heroic determination of the sons of the South." The generic soldier was especially championed as a man who exuded a confident and unselfish aura in the struggle for national liberation against perceived northern tyranny. Those who volunteered for

1862, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; Diary entry, January 12, 1863, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, DLSPMU.

military duty were seen as the embodiment of virtue and as men who were eager to protect home, hearth, and secure southern independence.²³

The fact that Texans used the common soldier as their primary symbol was a result, in part, of the soldiers' perceptions of themselves. Harrison County's J. B. Craig related the recent death of one of his comrades in a letter to his aunt, and explained that the deceased had "expressed a great desire to be restored to good health . . . that he might get revenge from our foes. [H]e said to me if he could be in three fights more he would be perfectly resigned to his fate." Craig's description buttressed the patriotic view that nothing could supplant a soldier's willingness to fight for independence, even in the face of death. Further, citizens used these beliefs as a rallying and unifying measure to overcome their own adversity on the home front. Theophilus Perry, a captain in the Twenty-eighth Texas Cavalry, for instance, wrote to his wife in Marshall and attempted to bolster her weakening morale by revealing that the men in the army "are the hopes of the country," and as such, victory would be ultimately ensured. In spite of the bitter cold

²³ Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 63, 85; James Henry Hendrick to Dear Pa, June 10, and June 15, 1863, J. H. Hendrick Letters, HCHML; Marshall *Texas Republican*, August 30, 1862, April 13, September 21, and December 7, 1861; M. Ikard to Dear Robert, April 17, 1863, Elijah H. and Robert E. Ikard Papers, 19th Texas Cavalry File, THM; George W. Guess to S. H. Cockrell, May 5, 1863, George W. Guess Letters, CAH; Diary entry, August 14, 1863, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, DLSPMU; R. T. Wheeler to O. M. Roberts, February 12, 1863, O. M. Roberts Papers, CAH; George Lee Robertson to Dear Pa, July 2, 1861, George Lee Robertson Papers, CAH; Dallas *Herald*, July 10, 1861, and May 17, June 28, and September 13, 1862, and January 28, 1863; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, June 29, 1861 and February 1, 1862. For periodic examples of Texans looking to Lee for symbolic guidance, see Diary entry, July 29, 1863, in Anderson, ed., *Brokenburn*, 230. See Martin Crawford, *Ashe County's Civil War: Community and Society in the Appalachian South* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 2001), 121-22, as an example of how other Confederate communities used symbolism generated in part from the home front.

Mississippi winters and other hardships he had already experienced, a Columbus soldier proudly wrote:

I am as determined as ever to see what I can do to help our country safely through this mighty revolution and though we may suffer from cold hunger and fatigue I hope I may never forget that I came here to fight for home friends Parents and sisters for all that I have and for all that is dear to me, though I must acknowledge my Patriotism runs cold when I see the injustice done the poor private soldier who came here not for the glory nor for tyranny but to serve his country.²⁴

These examples suggest that the state's citizens used the common soldier as their symbol because they needed someone continually to look to and provide for.

Moreover, home front civilians' morale was probably boosted significantly when reading letters that spoke consistently of hope and independence in the face of suffering.

Southern soldiers in the field—whether they fought in the East, West, or Trans-Mississippi—were viewed as the ultimate custodians of national independence.

Texans' symbolic reliance on the common soldier of the Confederacy functioned much like their memory of the state's past during the secession crisis. One reason that many citizens focused on the common soldier was their need to feel attached to local influences. The home front's populace ultimately directed their efforts toward the Confederacy when supporting the common soldier, but they did so in a manner that required them to focus on local matters. Active engagement in the war effort was

²⁴ J. B. Craig to Dear Aunt, December 16, 1863, Craig Family Letters, HCHML; Theophilus Perry to Dear Harriet, July 9, 1863, Person Papers; George McCormick to Dear Father, October 31, 1862, Draper/McCormick Papers, Nesbitt Library; James A. Tabb to Mrs. E. J. Burgess, April 27, 1862, James A. Tabb Letters, 18th Texas Infantry File, THM; Dallas *Herald*, July 19 and October 4, 1862; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, February 1, 1862; James C. Cobb, *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), 57, argues that southerners were more apt to identify with the Confederate military effort than with the actual Confederate nation. In Texas's experience, at least, the two were integrated.

essential to maintain a functioning identity with the broader national view, and the home front simply could not neglect these local loyalties. This was evident when the state's women banded together in local churches, organizations, and social settings for the well-being of the state's volunteers. The very methods Texans used to support the South's fighting force were accomplished implicitly through local loyalties, but were expressed explicitly and outwardly in terms of support for the Confederate nation itself.²⁵

The fact that many of Texas's soldiers understood themselves to be primarily responsible for achieving Confederate independence generated strong nationalist sentiment in the state's military population. During the war's first two full years, there were of course, periodic instances of low morale that generally consisted of home sickness, complaints about food and officers, and sometimes even battlefield defeats. For the most part, though, many soldiers from Colorado, Dallas, Galveston, Harrison, and Travis Counties proudly fought for Confederate independence and wrote countless letters home expressing their confidence in ultimate victory, even in spite of bouts of depressed morale. At the beginning of the war, Texans who volunteered for Confederate service were spread from New Mexico to Virginia and from the Gulf Coast to Georgia. Most of these soldiers, regardless of their original destinations, articulated their willingness, happiness, and desire to suffer and fight for the Confederate cause.²⁶

²⁵ Potter, *South and the Sectional Crisis*, 34-83, esp. 48-49; William A. Blair, *Virginia's Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), 141.

²⁶ For the general nature of soldier morale in both the Union and Confederate armies, see James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997), 155-62. See also Richard Lowe,

As the war escalated, however, and the patriotic fanfare of the secession crisis dissipated, a significant split occurred in the manner that soldiers serving outside of Texas and those serving within the state's borders identified with the Confederacy and the war effort. Noteworthy distinctions in morale, generated from differing battlefield experiences, were the primary indicators of the ideological divergence that occurred among Texas's soldiers.

During the first part of the war, Texans serving in the East, West, and many parts of the Trans-Mississippi theaters assumed a leading role among the state's entire population who outwardly expressed consistent Confederate nationalist sentiment. Whereas civilians were affected both positively and negatively by news of battlefield victories and defeats, government policies, and the general state of the Confederacy's struggle for independence, myriad soldiers' letters from the field indicated that even the greatest military reverse would not derail their hopes of an autonomous southern nation. Serving in the Confederate army and consistently fighting Yankees represented one of the foremost methods of expressing one's dedication and willingness to support the Confederacy. Many soldiers recognized this, were proud of their role, and were willing to die for their country. James A Tabb, a private in the Eighteenth Texas Infantry, confidently wrote that after volunteering in 1862, "I now belong to the Confederacy," and that "if it [is] my lot to die, thank God I have one consolation: 'Tis sweet to die in such a glorious cause.'" Moreover, George W. Guess, a Dallas resident campaigning in the Indian Territory and parts of Louisiana, wrote in 1863 that he was "satisfied with my lot. And when I say I am satisfied, I mean that I am fully convinced that my country needs

Walker's Texas Division, C.S.A.: Greyhounds of the Trans-Mississippi (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2004), 68-69, 109-11, 115-17, 131, and 157.

my services.” He was further “willing to sacrifice every feeling of personal interest, pride & pleasure, if . . . I may aid in the least in securing the independence of my country.”

The fundamental reason for these sentiments was based principally on the active nature of the soldiers’ service. Traveling to distant lands to defend home and country against invading armies allowed Texas’s volunteers to maintain high spirits and strong feelings of nationalism.²⁷

Throughout many parts of the Confederacy, especially in Virginia, Georgia, and Tennessee, civilian perceptions of plundering and barbarous Yankee armies bolstered Confederate identity. Although much of Texas’s home front population deplored the threat posed by Union armies, civilians in the Lone Star State were relatively safe from invasion during the early years of the war and did not encounter northern forces. However, many Texans who served outside of the state witnessed the war and the enemy firsthand and developed an unreserved hatred for their military foes. For many Texas volunteers, their first battlefield encounters with the Yankees left indelible impressions of vitriol and abhorrence. Shortly after his first battle at Pea Ridge, Arkansas, a Dallas artillery captain confided to his wife that “I was once tender hearted . . . and expect to be so again when peace sheds her genial influence over the land, but on the field I had no more feeling for the dead [Yankees] than so many hogs. [I] did not budge from my course to avoid running over them. Confound them. I wish they were

²⁷ James A. Tabb to Mrs. E. J. Burgess, April 27, 1862, James A. Tabb Letters, 18th Texas Infantry File, THM; George W. Guess to Mrs. S. H. Cockrell, May 5, 1863 and July 17, 1862, George W. Guess Letters, CAH; Sebron G. Sneed to My darling Fannie, December 25, 1862, Sebron G. Sneed Family Collection, CAH; W. G. Vardell to Hon. Thomas C. Neel, April 18, and August 12, 1863, Neel Family Papers, DHS; William Henry Myers to Dear Uncle, June 22, 1862, William Henry Myers Letter, 6th Texas Cavalry File, THM; John J. Shropshire to Dear Carrie, January 16 and 26, 1862, John Samuel Shropshire Papers, Nesbitt Library.

all dead and hope to have the pleasure of assisting soon in executions again.” Soldiers likewise blamed the war’s causes and destruction solely on the North and vowed revenge. Harrison County’s Khleber Miller (K. M.) Van Zandt, a captain in the Seventh Texas Infantry, rhetorically questioned, “When will Lincoln cease this wicked, fratricidal war, and let parted loved ones be united?” Other soldiers viewed the South as a region occupied illegitimately by a foreign foe. A private in the Seventeenth Texas Cavalry informed his father in Marshall that he was “willing to ‘grin and bear’ [the struggles of a soldier’s life] if it will be the means of saving our country from the Vandal hordes of Lincoln[,] Seward and Co.” Many Texas soldiers viewed the South as a chaste entity that had been deeply scarred and violated.²⁸

Even after disastrous military defeats such as Vicksburg, Texans in the field frequently expressed their confidence in ultimate southern victory. K. M. Van Zandt was not “disheartened or cast down” concerning the July, 1863, loss: “I trust that it may indeed be the darkness that precedes the coming of the glorious day.” In similar language, William Heartsill, a cavalryman from Harrison County, confidently wrote after the dual losses at Gettysburg and Vicksburg: “an old adage comes to our relief; the darkest hour of the night is just before the dawn of the day.” Some historians have argued that following the defeats in July, 1863, the Confederacy was effectively beaten. Although such losses were detrimental, many southerners harbored Private John N.

²⁸ John J. Good to My dear Wife, March 12, 1862, in Fitzhugh, ed., *Cannon Smoke*, 165-66; Khleber Miller Van Zandt to My Dear Wife, October 25, 1861, Civil War Letters of Khleber Miller Van Zandt, Seventh Texas Infantry File, THM; George B. Adkins Jr. to Dear Father, July 30, 1863, Guthrie Collection; See also, Diary entry, September 21, 1862, Riggs (G. A. A.) Papers, 1832-1895, CAH; Blair, *Virginia’s Private War*, 9, 56, 77-80; Ash, *When the Yankees Came*, 38-75; Campbell, *When Sherman Marched North*, 71-74.

Coleman's optimistic sentiments in December 1863: "We will [still] be sure to gain our independence." Similarly, a member of Terry's Texas Rangers wrote from Georgia in the late summer that Vicksburg "has cast quite [a] gloom over our future, though I think we will come out all right yet. I am not near willing to give up our struggle yet."²⁹

These statements were not unrealistic or more wishful portrayals. Rather, they reflected the beliefs of a segment of society that, by 1863, had invested far too much blood and treasure simply to capitulate. Moreover, many of Texas's soldiers understood that they were principally responsible for the fate of the Confederacy. A Marshall attorney serving in the Twenty-eighth Texas Cavalry, wrote shortly after Vicksburg that he was "far from despairing," and still clung to a vision of southern independence. Sustained morale was essential in buttressing nationalist visions among much of the state's military population. For example, as historian Susannah U. Bruce has noted, men in the famed Texas Brigade serving in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia endured unfathomable hardships and suffered from periodic spells of low morale. Nevertheless, "[t]hrough it all . . . pride and an overwhelming dedication to cause, country, and comrades kept them in the ranks." She maintains that the Texas Brigade's

²⁹ K. M. Van Zandt to My Dear Wife, July 16, 1863, Van Zandt Letters, Seventh Texas Infantry File, THM; Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred 91 Days*, 138; John N. Coleman to My Dearest Jennie, December 7, 1863, Guthrie Collection; Benjamin F. Burke to Dear Father, July 31, 1863, Benjamin F. Burke Letters, 8th Texas Cavalry File, THM; J. C. Brightman to L. M. Rogers, July 18, and August 23, 1863, John Claver Brightman Papers, CAH; George W. Guess to Miss S. H. Cockrell, July 6, 1863, George W. Guess Papers, CAH; George McCormick to Dear Father, September 12, 1863, Draper/McCormick Papers, Nesbitt Library; Diary entries, July 10, 13, 14, and 18, 1863, G. A. A. Riggs Papers, CAH; Theophilus Perry to Dear Harriet, November 4, 1862, Person Papers. For historians' views on defeat in 1863, see for example, Paul D. Escott, *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1978), 126, 197, and Charles Wesley, *The Collapse of the Confederacy* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1937), 75-76; Lowe, *Walker's Texas Division*, 109-11.

enthusiasm for Confederate independence was created and sustained shortly after leaving the state. Interaction and fighting with Union forces, and battlefield victories and even defeats, generated a fierce dedication to the Confederacy, in spite of hardships such as bad food, inclement weather, little pay, and monotonous camp life.³⁰

Whereas Texans who served in theaters outside of the state displayed an explicit and outward sense of Confederate nationalism, soldiers who stayed within Texas's borders—especially near Galveston and along the Gulf Coast—found it exceedingly difficult to express continual nationalistic rhetoric. Being assigned essentially to one of the war's backwaters fostered a static environment that effectively bred boredom and inactivity, while the idle routines of daily life inhibited soldiers from expressing stirring statements of independence, hope, and glory. Once the excitement of secession wore off, some Texas volunteers consistently complained of monotony and menial hardships, and others even questioned the purpose of their service in such remote locations. Some soldiers grumbled that they felt wasted and useless to the army and the cause. Morale along the Gulf Coast was shaped completely by the lack of military activity, and spirits consequently dropped beginning early in 1862. Following the Confederate recapture of Galveston on January 1, 1863, however, soldiers' morale was inflated considerably, and sentiments among many men resembled those of their comrades serving in the East and West. Nevertheless, just like the secession crisis, the city's

³⁰ Theophilus Perry to Dear Harriet, July 9, 1863, Person Papers; Susannah U. Bruce, "The Fierce Pride of the Texas Brigade," *Civil War Times Illustrated* XLVI, No. 7 (September, 2007): 38, 32-39; Fred Mathee to Dear Mother, July 11, 1862, Fred Mathee Letter, 5th Texas Infantry File, THM; [Unreadable] to T. C. Neel, May 25, 1863, Neel Family Papers, DHS; George McCormick to Dear Father, October 31, 1862, Draper/McCormick Papers, Nesbitt Library.

recapture was only temporarily inspiring. Eventually, dangerously low morale returned to plague the region's soldiers.³¹

A multitude of letters from Texans in other theaters consistently expressed nationalistic prose and lofty spirits. Along the Texas Gulf Coast, though, many soldiers' missives did not indicate enthusiasm for the war. This is not to imply that Texans serving in their own state were anti-Confederate or even unionist, but the very nature of their service seemed to erode any outward passion for the war effort. The soldiers did not feel nearly as attached to the military cause as their comrades serving in other theaters. In a letter to his mother, M. K. Hunter tersely noted that in Galveston "[t]ime drags slowly down here. Nothing to do and no excitement." John Franklin Smith similarly remembered Galveston during the late antebellum period as a port city bustling with activity, business, and commerce. When he wrote to his cousin in the summer of 1862, however, he noticed drastic changes among the scenery and population, both military and civilian: "Now the wharves are vacant, and the streets almost deserted. Occasionally two or three drays are seen moving slowly along in the most public streets, a carriage or two with Mexican ponies is met, a few lounging soldiers and yawning shop keepers are found on the sidewalks, the former seeking to kill time instead of Yankees, and the latter waiting for an opportunity to 'fleece' the needy customer." Soldiers tended to write about anything other than the war, including their day-to-day activities, the clothes they currently wore, or the quarters in which they slept. Hardly anything in their daily lives as members of the military produced any semblance of national purpose or

³¹ For issues of soldier morale in Galveston, see Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 131-32, 159, 160, and 162-63. Lowe, *Walker's Texas Division*, 118, found similar sentiments among the writings of some Texans serving in Louisiana in 1863.

duty. Many men simply did not understand their purpose in the army, and some explicitly wished for a discharge. In their minds, they could accomplish more at home serving their families and self-interests. Thomas Jefferson League succinctly wrote, “I am tired of soldiering I assure you, it is far from the being the vocation I should select for a constant occupation,” while L. D. Bradley grumbled, “ I can see no reason for [being stationed here] myself; for now that we have got here, we can neither see or hear anything of the Yankees.”³²

The war seemed to be a foreign concept to these men simply because the conflict itself was not a part of their daily lives. For many Confederates, both soldiers and civilians, exposure to the war—whether it took the shape of home front mobilization or fighting in the field—was essential to fuel nationalism and dedication to the cause, and even some Texans serving in Galveston recognized this. William H. Neblett, who was a volunteer in the Twentieth Texas Infantry and served in Galveston for most of the war, astutely noted in the summer of 1863 that “[t]here is a great amount of

³² M. K. Hunter to Dear Mother, February 19, 1863, Hunter Family Papers, CAH; J. F. Smith to Miss Justina Rose, June 28, 1862, John Franklin Smith Letters, CAH; Thomas Jefferson League to Mary D. League, November 6, 1862, Thomas Jefferson League Papers, Rosenberg Library; L. D. Bradley to Little Honey, December 8, 1863, Bradley (L. D.) Papers, Pearce Civil War Collection, Navarro College, Corsicana, Texas—hereafter cited as PCWC; Ashbel Smith to Lt. Col. J. D. McAdoo, November [?] 1863, Letterbook, 1863-1865, Ashbel Smith Papers, CAH; E. J. Wright to Dear Sister, March 20, 1863, Caldonia Wright Correspondence, 1862-1866, Abraham Alley Family Papers, CAH; Simon Kuykendall to Dear Wife and Children, March 11, 1863, Simon Kuykendall Papers, Rosenberg Library; J. E. Wallis to Dear Kate, April 3 and 19, 1863, Tucker Family Papers, Rosenberg Library; John W. Lockhart to My Dear Wife, February 14, 1863, John W. Lockhart Papers, Rosenberg Library; M. S. Townsend to Dear Wife, April 11, 1862, Moses Townsend Papers, Nesbitt Library; Aaron Estes to Deere wife and children, January 5, and February 14, 1862, and to Deere Brother January 29, 1862, and to Dear Friend, January 29, 1862, Aaron Estes Letters, 10th Texas Infantry File, THM; Elijah P. Petty to Dear Margaret, April 7 and 8, 1862, in Brown, ed., *Journey to Pleasant Hill*, 48; *Galveston Weekly News*, April 15, November 19, and June 24 1862.

demoralization in the Regiments here. From what I can hear such is not the case with the troops East of the Mississippi or those who have been in active service from Texas.” This statement is essentially correct regarding the diverging nature of both types of service experienced by Texas’s soldiers. Active participation in the war fomented a mindset among Texans serving in the East and West that they were truly responsible for the Confederacy’s independence. Those who were assigned to Galveston and the Gulf Coast, however, rarely achieved this mindset due to the monotony of daily life and uninspiring feelings of uselessness to the cause. Neblett also complained that “[t]hings [go] on in the same uninterrupted course leaving us here as mere spectators of that great drama of the war.” During his free time, he would walk along the beach collecting seashells while his comrades “spend about six hours a day on card playing.” He summarized his experience in Texas’s Island City with the following sentiments: “The life we lead here could hardly be considered camp life at all except for the galling and damnable military restraint which calls all a man[']s patriotism in to reconcile him to it.” These sentiments were not necessarily anti-Confederate rhetoric and did not reflect hope that the South would lose the war. Rather, Neblett implicitly acknowledged that he and his comrades actually desired to be a part of the Confederacy’s bid for independence. Their daily environment, though, seemed to sap any patriotism necessary to sustain a nationalist mindset.³³

For the most part, the symbolic and tangible aspects of Confederate independence were all but lost on those who served along the state’s Gulf Coast. The

³³ Wm. H. Neblett to Dear Lizzie, August 18, November 22, and April 28, 1863, in Erika L. Murr, ed., *A Rebel Wife in Texas: The Diary and Letters of Elizabeth Scott Neblett, 1852-1864* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2001), 138, 209-10, 98-99.

Confederacy's entire existence was born out of military events and wartime interaction. Serving in a backwater outpost did not foment the level of morale necessary to buttress a nationalistic attachment to the Confederacy, and soldiers' spirits accordingly declined during the first two years of the war. Historian Dennis W. Brandt, who studied the Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania Infantry, a Union regiment, found that unit morale assumed its lowest point when men were assigned to guard a railroad in western Pennsylvania during the first year of the war. Soldiers in the Eighty-seventh were accordingly dispirited and did not identify closely with the Union war effort. Discipline was low, attention to detail was neglected, and "[e]stablishing unit esprit de corps was nearly impossible" due to the unit's responsibilities. These Union men tended to complain of boredom, questioned the purpose of their service to the United States, and constantly wished for redeployment to theaters where fighting took place. Boredom eventually turned to all-out defiance of regimental commanders and discipline issues were the rule rather than exception.³⁴

Considering that a soldier's morale and subsequent national identification was largely affected by proximity to military events and activity, Galveston's recapture by Confederate forces on January 1, 1863, resulted in soaring spirits among the city's defenders. In one of the few instances in the war, these soldiers were called upon to engage in military activity and tactics that largely resembled acts undertaken by comrades in other theaters. Following the successful takeover, soldiers' sentiments and letters home resembled those of men serving in Lee's army in Virginia. On December 28, 1862, several days prior to the affair, J. H. Russell, a private in the Seventh Texas

³⁴ Dennis W. Brandt, *From Home Guards to Heroes: The 87th Pennsylvania and its Civil War Community* (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 2006), 96, 89-97.

Cavalry, noted that his captain called for volunteers to retake the city, “and I for one leaped forth with eagerness to respond to the call of my Country.” Much like civilians on the home front, Galveston’s soldiers referred to the battle as a “brilliant affair” and praised their efforts and commanders. Another soldier referred to the Yankees as our “cruel unfeeling foe,” while others bragged that “Galveston is now ours & likely to remain.” In the battle’s immediate aftermath, soldiers were supremely confident that the city would remain in Confederate control for the remainder of the war. More important, though, the city’s recapture also caused soldiers to examine larger wartime events in a more positive light. John Claver Brightman was convinced that “the war will close about the first of June” because “Lee will be sure to whip Burnside, and the North never will be able to collect another army.” The symbolism of Galveston’s recapture suggests that the city’s defenders indeed possessed Confederate identity, but because of the totality of their service, their nationalistic tendencies were not consistently pronounced.³⁵

Although Galveston did remain in Confederate control for the rest of the conflict, soldier morale devolved quickly after the January battle. By the spring, letters and diaries once again resembled the more characteristic tones of indifference, boredom, tedium, and monotony. Soldiers needed consistent action—or least more than what

³⁵ James Reily to Dear Sir, January 8, 1863, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; J. H. Russell to Dear father and Mother, December 8, 1862, J. H. Russell Civil War Letters, 7th Texas Cavalry File, THM; J. E. Harrison to My Dear Ballinger, January 3, 1863, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; Diary entry, January 1, 1863, and W. R. Howell to Miss Sallie, January 19, 1863, William Randolph Howell Papers, CAH; J. C. Brightman to William Brightman, January 1, 1863, typescript, John Claver Brightman Papers, CAH; W. S. Alexander to J. H. Starr, January 7, 1863, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; E. C. Ritchie to My dear Cecilia, January 12, 1863, Tucker Family Papers, Rosenberg Library; J. E. Wallis to Dear Kate, January 28 and April 3, 1863, Tucker Family Papers, Rosenberg Library; L. D. Bradley to Little Honey, January 8, 1863, Bradley Papers, PCWC.

was available to them along the Gulf Coast—and the dearth of military responsibility and aversion to service eventually led to dangerously depressed spirits and nearly to the outbreak of violence. Morale among Galveston’s military population reached its lowest point by August, 1863, when several regiments engaged in a brief mutiny against their officers. Soldiers complained incessantly about the quality and quantity of their food, which was reportedly “sour, dirty, weevil-eaten, and filled with ants and worms.” Moreover, soldiers were especially demoralized about the recent news of Vicksburg’s fall, the seemingly useless drill on hot summer afternoons, and late wage payments by the Confederacy. Consequently, members of the Third Texas Infantry refused to drill or obey their officers’ orders. Eventually, under the threat of military incarceration and even death, members of the Third Texas hesitantly gave up and were confined in their tents under the supervision of armed guard. Although the incident may appear minor, its symbolic meaning demonstrates the extent to which morale declined among Galveston’s soldiers. Texans serving in the East, West, and many parts of the Trans-Mississippi experienced very similar hardships, and for the most part, willingly suffered and sacrificed for the Confederacy.³⁶

The dichotomy between both segments of Texas’s military population was quite pronounced. Morale and national identification were manifested and sustained by battlefield and various military experiences, yet soldiers, depending on their location in

³⁶ Lieut. Col. E. F. Gray to Lieut. R. M. Franklin, August 4, 1863, in *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 26, Pt. 1, p. 241; See also, X. B. Debray to Capt. A. N. Mills, August 11, 1863, X. B. Debray to Capt. Edmund P. Turner, August 12, 1863, X. B. Debray to Capt. A. N. Mills, August 12, 1863, P. N. Lockett to Capt. Edmund P. Turner, August 13, 1863—all cited in *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 26, Pt. 1, pp. 242, 243, 244, 245, 246; Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 155-57; Alwyn Barr, “Texas Coastal Defense, 1861-1865,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 65 (July, 1861): 23.

the war, exhibited stark differences in the manner in which they viewed and reacted to the conflict. Both groups certainly suffered during their time in the service, but the key difference was noticed in the late summer of 1863 by General John B. Magruder, commander of the district of Texas. He was admittedly shocked that his own soldiers would “be so unmindful of their high obligations and so unjust to themselves and the fair fame of their regiments as to exhibit a spirit of insubordination from such petty motives as dissatisfaction with their rations and indisposition to drill or a desire for furloughs.” Even at the time, Magruder nevertheless understood the plain distinction between both groups:

The devoted soldiers of Texas, who have illustrated every battle-field in Virginia, Tennessee, Mississippi, and New Mexico by their heroism; who have lived for weeks on insufficient and uncooked food; who have borne with scanty clothing the snows and frosts of a rigorous climate, to which they had not been accustomed, without a murmur; who, leaving this State as cavalry, have drilled with little intermission from morning till night to perfect themselves as infantry; who have sacrificed every private preference to insure success against the common enemy, will hear with incredulity, and then believe with anguish, the tale which reflects such dishonor and disgrace upon their comrades left behind to defend their beloved State, their aged parents, their faithful wives and helpless children.³⁷

Perhaps Magruder was a bit harsh toward the soldiers under his command, but his characterization speaks volumes about the diverging ways in which Texas soldiers perceived their wartime roles. Texans who traveled to distant lands viewed themselves as the Confederacy’s leaders to achieve independence, regardless of their theater of operation. Hardships—and they were certainly incurred by all of Texas’s soldiers—generally did not deter these men from their mission. In cogent language, J. B. Williamson, a Harrison County resident serving in the Trans-Mississippi, elucidated this

³⁷ “General Orders No. 139,” August 24, 1863, *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 26, Pt. 1, p. 246.

latter point: “I would like much to see my friends in Marshall, but have not the least idea when that happy day will come,” because “Hard, hard indeed is the struggle for independence!” Historian James M. McPherson similarly noted that Confederate soldiers were motivated throughout much of the war to defend their homes and families from northern armies and thus were perfectly willing to endure hardship and sacrifice for their country. Moreover, Gary W. Gallagher maintains that active military service strengthened one’s national ties to the Confederacy by “[inspiring] a belief that they sacrificed more for the cause than any other Confederates.” He also submitted that soldiers typically were more nationalistic when they participated in battles, regardless of the outcome. Many Texans exhibited these qualities, but those who remained in the state did not produce and sustain such emotions. In most instances, they simply did not feel as attached to the Confederacy because their immediate service appeared not to be directed toward any national mission or goal. Soldiers clearly thought of themselves as Confederates, though, as demonstrated by their rhetoric following the Battle of Galveston. Many of the men’s sentiments represented their desire to participate and fight, and victory definitely created thoughts of national hope. Nevertheless, those emotions simply could not be sustained because of the dreadfully low morale that typified the region. Galveston’s soldiers did not call for Confederate defeat or surrender, but they also did not maintain optimistic levels of national expression that characterized so many letters from Texans in the East and West.³⁸

³⁸ J. B. Williamson to F. C. Henderson, October 31, 1863 and J. B. Williamson to Miss Flora, November 10, 1863—both letters in J. B. Williamson File, Harrison County Historical Museum and Library; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 73-74; McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 94-102; Blair, *Virginia’s Private War*, 149-50; Reid Mitchell, “The Creation of Confederate Loyalties,” in Robert Azug and Stephen Maizlish, eds., *New*

In December, 1863, Lucy Pier Stevens, a young girl who lived just north of Columbus, closed the year by reflecting on the effect of the last two years of the conflict: “Peace, prosperity and happiness [once] smiled upon [us] and now our beloved country is deluged in war. Not a home but feels its sorrows and in many instances, husbands, brothers, and Fathers have been torn from their homes to spend their life[']s blood for the defense of what they feel to be a just cause.” This reaction certainly exemplified the manner in which many Texans—both civilians and soldiers—responded to the war once news of bloody battles and destruction entered the Lone Star State. By the end of 1863, Texans were a changed people. The pageantry, excitement, and fanfare of the secession crisis had long since passed. The people now were more subdued and less boisterous. Although the manner in which they expressed their national devotion was altered considerably, Texans nevertheless still supported the Confederate cause. Home front civilians struggled against the news of deaths and battlefield reverses but managed to find the resolve necessary to sustain their hope in an independent Confederacy. Civilians drew strength through their support of the war effort and used the common soldier of the Confederacy as their symbol of national hope. Texans needed to look to someone for guidance and they found emblematic refuge in the very individuals Lucy Stevens referenced in her diary. Texas soldiers in the field accordingly responded by exhibiting high levels of morale and hope that undoubtedly aided the home front’s spirits. Through the course of two and a half years of war, most Texans had not lost the will to fight. As the conflict entered its third full year, though, many on the home front were faced more than ever with the dire threat of military invasion,

Perspectives on Race and Slavery in America (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1986), 99-100.

shortages of food and money, and the long casualty figures from the front. Morale had not broken on the Texas home front, but 1864 would bring new challenges.³⁹

³⁹ Diary entry, December 13, 1863, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, DLSPMU.

CHAPTER 4

FEAR, DESPAIR, AND THE NATIONAL SPIRIT, 1864-1865

On January 2, 1864, from his military post in Galveston, William H. Neblett informed his wife that “[a]nother year has passed and we are now launched upon another destined no doubt to be the most important in our lives. What the future holds in store for us we can only guess and hope and fear.” He noted that dwelling on the future had always caused him stress and anxiety, and he was consequently hesitant “to enter into the scenes of merriment” from the recently passed holiday season. Similarly, from his Austin residence, former Governor Elisha M. Pease characterized the state of affairs simply as “these times of uncertainty.” As Texans entered the third year of the war, the manner in which they viewed and reflected on the conflict had been greatly altered from the previous years. The patriotic fanfare that had defined the secession crisis was essentially non-existent by 1864, leaving a mindset that was based on endurance and survival. Texans understood fully that the war had created terrible hardships that might affect the people’s willingness to continue the fight for another year. Toward the latter half of the war, home front civilians across the Confederacy were challenged with soaring inflation, an increasingly intrusive national government, and significant material shortages. Although Texans had not lost their will to struggle for independence through 1863, how did they sustain their loyalty to the Confederacy in spite of considerable home front hardships compounded with battlefield reverses during

the latter half of the war? Also, how did Texans recognize and accept the Confederacy's defeat in 1865?¹

As 1864 dawned, Texans' morale was severely tested. Disaffection with government policies, monetary decline, material shortages, war weariness, fear, isolation, and especially concerns about the fate of Confederate armies all worried civilians daily on the home front. These problems had for much of the war, and, as the conflict dragged on, they seemed to be more pronounced in civilian writings and actions. The increased pressures and demands of sustaining life and family in Texas—and for that matter any southern state—naturally created depressed and worried spirits. With the exception of Galveston's capture in October, 1862, the state had been relatively safe from any serious threat of Yankee invasion. The Union's Red River Campaign in April, 1864, though, intensified home front fears with the thought that most of the state might be overrun and easily captured by enemy forces. Moreover, as civilians slowly started to repopulate Galveston, conditions in the city deteriorated, crime escalated, martial law was strictly enforced, and curfews were put in place. These combined factors—material concerns and apprehension of military threats—mentally

¹ Wm. H. Neblett to Dear Lizzie, January 2, 1864, in Erika L. Murr, ed., *A Rebel Wife in Texas: The Diary and Letters of Elizabeth Scott Neblett, 1852-1864* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2001), 271; E. M. Pease to W. P. Ballinger, January 30, 1864, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin—hereafter cited as CAH. Robert L. Kerby, *Kirby Smith's Confederacy: The Trans-Mississippi South, 1863-1865* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1972), 51, argues that even by the beginning of 1863 civilians in the Trans-Mississippi “could see little reason to hope for the ultimate vindication of the Southern cause.” Kerby points to government policies, desertion, monetary decline, and generally low morale as contributing factors for a loss of will among Confederates. Ralph A. Wooster, *Texas and Texans in the Civil War* (Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 1995), 133, writes that “[m]any of the hopes for Southern independence that Texas Confederates held early in the war had disappeared by 1864.”

and emotionally consumed many Texans. Whereas many in the state had displayed an outward willingness to support the Confederacy while facing hardship, the privations brought about in 1864 tested even the most strident southern partisans. If Texans were to realize their dream of an independent Confederacy, they would have to overcome these home front challenges.²

In the spring of 1863, the Confederate government attempted to counteract rampant inflation in the South by enacting income and profits taxes and by impressing provisions and other goods that armies in the field desperately needed to remain active. Local commissary and quartermaster officers traveled across the South and paid what they deemed a “fair” price for civilians’ goods, including food and animals. Many farmers, especially those who lived near active military areas, generally suffered as a result. According to historian James M. McPherson, southerners viewed these acts as “another source of . . . alienation from the government and the cause it represented.” Eventually, this process came to include the impressment of slaves, a practice that resulted in protest among many Texas masters. Major General John B. Magruder estimated that at least 60,000 bondsmen might be needed to build fortifications along the Gulf Coast. Slave impressment economically disrupted the state’s peculiar

² For a summary of the hardships faced by Texans, see Wooster, *Texas and Texans*, 121-32; Richard Lowe, *Walker’s Texas Division, C.S.A.: Greyhounds of the Trans-Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2004), 170-212; Edward T. Cotham Jr., *Battle on the Bay: The Civil War Struggle for Galveston* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1998), 160-67; [Illegible] to William Pitt Ballinger, April 30, 1864, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH.

institution, and by 1864, many owners outwardly resisted the practice as much as they could.³

Civilians on the Texas home front accordingly expressed their resentment of such policies. In early 1864 a group of Dallas County citizens petitioned General Edmund Kirby Smith, commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department, and explained that some local impressment officers had engaged in unlawful acts by confiscating slaves, flour, and other grains for their own personal use and had employed other “innumerable cases of overbearing oppression.” The citizens’ committee further requested that Smith either remove the officers or significantly curtail their power. The tone of the letter certainly suggested that the government’s wartime policies were taking a toll on Dallas’s population: “General you know as well as ourselves that there is a point where indurance ceases to be a virtue and we hope that the good and loyal citizens of this county will not be driven to the last resource of taking up arms to defend their property.” Dallas residents were primarily upset because of the dearth of wheat harvested from the previous year’s crop. Civilians implored both the state and federal governments to force such practices to cease, simply because of the lack of adequate grains for the local residents to consume. One citizen informed Governor Pendleton Murrah that his neighbors would regain confidence if only they were relieved of the illegal pressures enacted by the impressment officers. If so, this individual surmised that the population would probably end up planting and harvesting more wheat for private as well as public consumption. Dallas citizens assured their state and national

³ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988), 616, 615-17; Randolph B. Campbell, *An Empire for Slavery: The Peculiar Institution in Texas, 1821-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1989), 234-39; Kerby, *Kirby Smith’s Confederacy*, 56-57, 254-56.

leaders that they understood that impressment, in spite of its ills, was “for the good of the common country.”⁴

Whereas impressment weighed on the minds of many Texans, other residents were irritated about the national government’s continued insistence on conscription. The Confederacy’s Third Conscription Act, which went into effect on February 17, 1864, made white males between the ages of seventeen to fifty eligible for the draft. Civilians had always been troubled because of the draft laws, and some women in Harrison County became especially concerned because of their potential effect on the county’s population. Jennie Adkins admitted that she “was very low-spirited when [I] first learned of this.” Similarly, Harriet Perry, who always seemed to write downcast letters to her husband in the army, acknowledged in January that the proposed act was “[t]he topic of conversation” in the county. She also realized that the latest law would draft the county’s remaining white males into military service and could possibly “take my Father and yours. I hate that very much.” Government actions, including impressment and conscription, negatively affected Texans’ home front morale. As the war continued, many Confederates consequently felt detached from their government and grumbled at its intrusion.⁵

⁴ “Petition of Dallas County Citizens to E. Kirby Smith, 1864,” G. B. Dealey Library, Dallas Historical Society, Dallas, Texas—hereafter cited as DHS; E. A. Daniel to Pendleton Murrah, February 22, 1864, Pendleton R. Murrah Papers, Box 301-44, Folder 17, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Austin, Texas—hereafter cited as TSLAC; “An Appeal to the Citizens of Travis and the Counties Adjacent,” November 23, 1864, Thaddeus Armstrong Papers, Galveston and Texas History Center, Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas—hereafter cited as Rosenberg Library.

⁵ Jennie Adkins to Dearest Friend, January 11, 1864, Douglas Guthrie Civil War Letters Collection, John and Jennie Adkins Correspondence, Baylor University, Waco, Texas—hereafter cited as Guthrie Collection; Harriet Perry to Dear Husband, January

As if an invasive national government were not enough to depress home front spirits, many Texans also confronted the reality that their Confederate currency was depreciating and becoming increasingly worthless. Countless southerners, recognizing that the government's monetary system was obsolete, were now faced with wild inflation. By September, 1864, fifty Confederate dollars were equal to the buying power of one dollar at the beginning of the war. Texans responded to their country's economic calamity with very pessimistic tones. A man in Colorado County estimated that "imported goods . . . are now selling at 500% in specie above former prices." Soldiers in the army also informed their families of the escalating financial crisis. Dallas's Henry F. C. Johnson, who served in South Texas, noted that "I have bought supplies for my family that cost over 2000 dollars in specie & it looks like I have not half enough yet ever thing is rediculously high here." As a result of the high prices, he had eight yoke of oxen and three horses stolen from him while in the army. In Harrison County, one woman claimed that cotton cards had doubled in price between December, 1863, and January, 1864, and that some town lots in Marshall were selling for as much as \$15,000. Her husband simply responded by writing that "I do not want any Confederate money except to pay debts with."⁶

18 and 29, 1864, Presley Carter Person Papers, Duke Univ. Library, Durham, N.C.— hereafter cited as Person Papers; Richard N. Current, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Confederacy* (4 vols.; New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 3:398; Richard E. Beringer, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, William N. Still Jr., *Why the South Lost the Civil War* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1986), 288, 449-53.

⁶ Edwin T. Austin to J. S. Beers, May 6, 1864, Beers Family Papers, Rosenberg Library; Henry F. C. Johnson to My Dear Wife, November 27 and May [?], 1864, Henry F. C. Johnson Letters, J. Erik Jonsson Central Library, Texas/Dallas History and Archives Division, Dallas, Texas; Theophilus Perry to Harriet Perry, March 8, 1863, Harriet Perry to Theophilus Perry, January 18 and February 14, 1864, Person Papers; Randolph B. Campbell, *A Southern Community in Crisis: Harrison County, Texas, 1850-*

As a result of the depreciating currency, the Union naval blockade, and the Trans-Mississippi Department's isolation from the rest of the Confederacy, many Texans were forced to endure significant material shortages. Once again, morale was severely affected, and civilians expressed their worries to friends and loved ones who were undoubtedly experiencing similar hardships. In the early spring of 1864, two letters from citizens in Marshall to Governor Pendleton Murrah testified to this latter point. One complained that "[t]his town and vicinity is entirely without Shoemakers," and as a result, it was impossible to procure adequate shoes for his family: "I am here at this time to see two of my Children . . . with sickness engendered from not having shoes." These sentiments reflected very clearly the second letter's message: "The nerves of some of our good people are a little unsettled." In Dallas, citizens bemoaned the lack of paper and even medicine. A Lancaster doctor estimated that out of the ten physicians in the county, he was the only one "who has a tolerable assortment & supply" of medicines.⁷

Although these were severe cases, perhaps the greatest amount of material want occurred in Galveston. Citizens began slowly to repopulate the city after it was recaptured by Confederate forces in early 1863, but growing civilian numbers resulted in deteriorating conditions brought about by living under military occupation. In April one resident wrote to the Austin *Texas State Gazette* and noted that fences were "pulled down, doors and windows smashed in, . . . walls defaced, and every conceivable

1880 (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983), 208-09, 215-16, 234, 237-38; Wooster, *Texas and Texans*, 126; McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 438-42.

⁷ J. Richardson to Pendleton Murrah, February 21, 1864, Pendleton Murrah Papers, Box 301-44, Folder 18, TSLAC; G. G. Gregg to Murrah, March 25, 1864, Murrah Papers, Box 301-45, Folder 24; Samuel T. Bleelsodott to Pendleton Murrah, September 23, 1864, Murrah Papers, Box 310-46, Folder 42, TSLAC.

damage done that a wanton spirit of destruction could suggest.” Citizens in the beleaguered city also suffered from a dearth of firewood, unless they were willing to pay the speculation price of \$40 per cord. To make matters worse, local markets were poorly stocked with meats and fish, and “vegetables are scarcely to be had at any price.” Some people in the city wrote to William Pitt Ballinger, who sought refuge in Houston, and implored his assistance to obtain shoes, flour, and even money. Perhaps the epitome of suffering in Galveston was recorded in March, 1864, by H. C. Medford, a soldier stationed on the island: “There are now one hundred and eighty families in this city, drawing rations from the government. Many seem to be on sufferance at that. Small children frequently come to our camps and beg for something to eat; and take away every scrap that we throw away.” In June a paucity of provisions caused General James M. Hawes, appointed commander of Galveston in April, to suspend the sale of bread and other provisions to many of the city’s inhabitants. About a dozen women loudly protested this action, and some were arrested while others were sent permanently to Houston and ordered not to return.⁸

Disaffection with government policies and a devalued currency lowered spirits considerably on the Texas home front. As a result, Texans, seemingly more than ever, expressed their fears, worries, and readiness for the war to conclude. Lamenting the

⁸ Austin *Texas State Gazette*, April 13, 1864; Diary entry, March 10, 1864, in Rebecca W. Smith and Marion Mullins, eds., “The Diary of H. C. Medford, Confederate Soldier, 1864,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 34 (October, 1930): 122; Mrs. Carrie Butler to My dear Friend, February 2, 1864, Edward T. Austin to W. P. Ballinger, February 10, 1864, Sallie James to My Dear Ballinger, May 17, 1864, Mrs. J. E. Armistead to Dear Cousin, August 11, 1864—all cited in William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; George Ball to J. S. Beers, march 25, 1864, Beers Family Papers, Rosenberg Library; William H. Neblett to Dear Lizzie, April 11, 1864, in Murr, ed., *Rebel Wife in Texas*, 376; Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 148-67, esp. 164.

length of the conflict and her husband's extended absence, Harriet Perry wrote that "I feel very low-spirited about the war." A Dallas woman's letter to her son expressed almost unbearable loneliness: "I wish this war would stop so you could come home again, there is nothing but war war all the time to be heard all Propheying peace but there is no peace[.] draft conscript and press is all [that] go now a days it [is] hard times all over the country." Other civilians fretted about the lack of letters received from loved ones serving in the army, their inability to visit relatives in other states on account of the Mississippi River being under Union control, or the knowledge that their families in other regions of the state suffered from inadequate medical care. The shocking actions of several Texas State Troop units stationed in Colorado County caused severe concern among Columbus's population. On several consecutive nights in March, some soldiers stole goods and money from local grocers totaling more than \$2,000 and also robbed local planters of forage and equipment. One man sincerely worried that Columbus's people would be too afraid to raise their crops out of fear that they would be taken by renegade soldiers. In addition, apprehensions about Galveston's safety once again resurfaced. Ashbel Smith, who was in charge of the city's defenses, admitted that "the general aspect of our affairs is not flattering," and was "somewhat apprehensive" that the city could be easily captured.⁹

⁹ Harriet Perry to My Dear Husband, January 10, 1864, Person Papers; Mother to Dear Son, February 7, 1864, Mathis Family Papers, CAH; Ashbel Smith to My dear Doctor, October 15, 1864, Letterbook, Ashbel Smith Papers, CAH; John T. Harcourt to Pendleton Murrah, March 23, 1864, Pendleton Murrah Papers, Box 301-45, Folder 45, TSLAC; Laura Duval to Dear Tom, January 31, 1864, Thomas H. Duval Papers, CAH; R. D. Johnson to Ahsbel Smith, April 10, 1864, Ashbel Smith Papers, CAH; Diary entry, January 12, 1864, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, 1863-1865, DeGolyer Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas—hereafter cited as DLSMU; Cattie Coit to My very dear husband, March 21, 1864, Coit Family Papers, DHS; Lucadia Pease to My Dear

Home front frustrations with government policies, monetary decline, and material shortage seemingly influenced civilian morale more than they had during previous years. Nevertheless, spirits continued to be swayed above all by events that transpired on the battlefield, and Texans were keenly aware that victories and defeats were the principal factors that would determine the Confederacy's fate. Throughout the war, civilians wrote continuously about their perceptions regarding current battlefield reports and rumors, and their morale was affected accordingly. Historian Gary W. Gallagher suggests that in spite of the disaffection that resulted from worries over government policies and material circumstances, Confederates used victories during the first half of 1864 to propel their morale and to "[indulge in] a cautious optimism." Texans were no different in this regard, especially following the successful repulsion of Union Major General Nathaniel P. Banks' Red River Campaign in April. Prior to this important Confederate victory in northwest Louisiana, however, Texans were consumed with fear of invasion that far outweighed their grumblings regarding conscription, impressment, or inflation.¹⁰

The Federal plan, conceived by General-in-Chief Henry W. Halleck and put into operation by Banks, called for an invasion of Texas by means of the Red River in Louisiana. The main purpose was to break up the Confederate Trans-Mississippi theater, accumulate the plentiful cotton stored in the Red River valley and East Texas,

Sister, March 31, 1864, Pease-Graham-Niles Papers, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Austin, Texas—hereafter cited as AHC; L. D. Bradley to his wife, September 10, 22, 27, and October 4, 1864, Bradley (L. D.) Papers, Pearce Civil War Collection, Navarro College, Corsicana, Texas—hereafter cited as PCWC.

¹⁰ Gary W. Gallagher, "Our Hearts are Full of Hope: The Army of Northern Virginia and the Confederacy in the Spring of 1864," in Gallagher, ed., *Lee and His Army in Confederate History* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2001), 120, 115-20.

institute President Lincoln's 1863 Reconstruction plan, and warn the French not to meddle in the war from their position in Mexico. Harrison County especially was one of the primary objectives in the Union's war strategy because it had one of the state's few railroads (the Southern Pacific), a powder mill, and ordnance works. Most important, though, Marshall was partial home to the Confederate Quartermaster Bureau. If the Union operation through northwestern Louisiana and northeastern Texas was successful, important military resources would be destroyed or captured and the entire Trans-Mississippi department would be disturbed considerably. Many of Harrison's citizens had feared a Union invasion as early as mid-1863. Louisa Perry bluntly informed her brother in August, "I fear the federals will be here soon," while her sister-in-law Harriet wrote, "We are very much afraid the Yankees will get here after awhile. I do not know what will become of us all." It was clear that by April 1864 some Harrison County citizens harbored concerns similar to those held by John B. Magruder, commander of the Department of Texas. He deduced that if Banks was allowed unfettered access across Louisiana into Texas, Shreveport and Marshall would be destroyed, civilian morale would be shattered, and chaos would reign. Moreover, one Marshall resident even wrote that "many citizens are so much alarmed and excited at the approach of the enemy that they are moving away," while a soldier instructed his parents on what to do in the event Union armies infiltrated the region:

Should [the Yankees] come in about Shreveport . . . I would advise you to secure as much meat and corn as possible. They will certainly take all you have, negros [*sic*], corn, stock meat, and everything . . . [but] if you do not [save your belongings] I assure you from experience that they will leave you nothing . . . They will destroy all the fencing around [the] yard, garden[,] field and everything . . . They frequently break open and ransack every trunk, bureau and the like in a house, even taking the ladies clothing . . . I know from what I have seen how they will serve you. Should they come . . . you may ever feel so much repugnance

towards them . . . [but] let them know that you are a good Southern man to the last.¹¹

The campaign's two primary battles, Mansfield (Sabine Crossroads) and Pleasant Hill, fought respectively on April 8 and 9 in northwestern Louisiana, resulted in a decisive Confederate victory and the retreat of Union forces. Texans' fears were greatly calmed, morale soared, and hope was reinforced for further Confederate battlefield successes. In the war's grand scheme, some historians do not view the Red River Campaign as one of the essential ingredients for Union victory. Nevertheless, Gary W. Gallagher notes that the Confederate successes in Louisiana were seen by many southern contemporaries as important achievements for independence. The triumph of Confederate arms at Mansfield and Pleasant Hill were two in a string of successes during the spring of 1864 that many southerners used to boost and sustain their morale. Even though Confederates were gladdened by the outcome in Louisiana, Texans were especially elated because their state was once again free from potential

¹¹ Louisa Perry to My dear Brother, August 10, 1863, Person Papers; Harriet Perry to My dear Sallie and Tempie, October 18, 1863, Person Papers; William Woodson to Pendleton Murrah, April 7, 1864, Pendleton Murrah Papers, Box 301-45, Folder 27, TSLAC; W. W. Perry to Dear Pa and Ma, January 25, 1864, E. O. Perry Letters, 1st Texas Infantry File, Texas Heritage Museum, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas—hereafter cited as THM; J. B. Magruder to General E. B. Nichols, April 2, 1864, in *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, Volume 34, pt. 3, p. 726—hereafter cited as *OR*; Battle Perry Person to Emma Perry Webster, April 3, 1864, Emma Perry Webster Letters, Harrison County Historical Museum and Library, Marshall, Texas—hereafter cited as HCHML; Kerby, *Kirby Smith's Confederacy*, 284-321, and Lowe, *Walker's Texas Division*, 169-212, esp. 169-71; Campbell, *Southern Community in Crisis*, 212-14; Kerby, *Kirby Smith's Confederacy*, 284-321. For civilian fears outside of Harrison County, see Diary entry November 22, 27, 1863, and March 23, 1864, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; George W. Guess to My Dear Madam, September 22, 1863, George W. Guess Papers, CAH; Cattie Coit to John Coit, September 11 and November 13, 1863, Coit Family Papers, DHS. Shreveport, Louisiana, is located twenty-five miles east of Marshall.

Yankee influence. Newspapers heralded the victories as “glorious for our cause,” and even prompted one editor to write that “[a] brighter day is . . . about to dawn upon us, and we now only require one grand united effort to end this struggle, which is fast drawing towards a close.” Private residents expressed similar tones based on unadulterated hope and confidence in the Confederate cause. A displaced Galveston woman living in Houston proudly wrote that “[t]he dawn is faintly appearing, at least so our recent victories here & across the River would indicate. Confederate money must look up – peace must be not far off – Am I too hopeful? certainly. The spring campaigns have resulted in nothing but disaster to our enemies – we have great cause for encouragement.” William Pitt Ballinger observed that many Texans were convinced that the war could end only in favor of the South because the recent victories struck a “most decisive blow to the subjugation theory.” Meanwhile in Dallas, “every one seems inspired by confidence,” and were “wonderfully cheered up by” the recent news.¹²

In the face of seemingly insurmountable internal pressures and hardships, Texans found a renewed sense of vigor and national purpose after the Red River Campaign, and it appeared that many were eager once again to express confidence in the Confederate war for independence. The morale that was generated as a result of

¹² Galveston *Weekly News*, April 20, 1864; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, April 13, 1864; E. H. Reily to James Harper Starr, April 23, 1864, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; Diary entry, April 11, 1864, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; Cattie Coit to My dearest husband, May 3, 1864, Coit Family Papers, DHS; Sarepta Ball to My Dear Brother, May 6, 1864, Mathis Family Papers, CAH; G. Crosby to James H. Starr, April 19, 1864, Starr Papers, CAH; Nat M. Burford to O. M. Roberts, August 26, 1864, Oran M. Roberts Papers, CAH; Diary entries, April 9 and 19, 1864, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, DLSPU; Edwin T. Austin to J. S. Beers, May 6, 1864, Beers Family Papers, Rosenberg Library; Gallagher, “Our Hearts are Full of Hope,” 116-17; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 722-23; David C. Humphrey, “A ‘Very Muddy and Conflicting’ View: The Civil War as Seen from Austin, Texas,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 94 (January, 1991): 405-07.

the April victories was sustained for the rest of the spring, most of the summer, and even into the fall. Of course, Texans expressed their normal worries and fears, but they remained supremely confident that Confederate armies would bring success. In May citizens in Columbus and the surrounding counties were greatly encouraged by news that told of Union defeats in all three theaters. William Pitt Ballinger heard similar accounts of the Army of Northern Virginia's success and was satisfied with the "[r]eports that Grant's army had been utterly routed – I look with solicitude . . . A decisive success by Lee it seems to me, added to the current of good fortune to our arms heretofore, must go very far towards demonstrating to the Yankees that the South can't be conquered." Moreover, Texans generally did not despond after hearing of the disastrous reverses in Georgia during the late summer. One woman confidently wrote that "[t]he fall of Atlanta has caused me no . . . anxiety . . . I intend to serve during this war in every possible way that will not call me out of my legitimate sphere so far as a woman can represent my brave husband." Similarly, a Marshall resident still had "strong hopes that this war will close this year, I am quite hopeful of the success of our armies in Va & Geo."¹³

Although Texans grumbled openly about an overbearing government and failing currency, their celebrations of military success suggest that many still dreamed of independence and were still willing to place their hopes in the Confederate armies that

¹³ Diary entry, May 18, 1864, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; Ellen H. Reily to Dear Doctor, September 24, [1864], James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; Emory Clapp to James H. Starr, August 4, 1864, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; Diary entries, May 4, 6, 21, and June 7, 1864, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, DLSPMU; [Unknown] to William Pitt Ballinger, August 17, 1864, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, CAH; Jennie Adkins to John N. Coleman, December 6, 1864, Guthrie Collection. Ballinger was referring to operations in the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Campaigns during the first two weeks of May. (McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 724-35.)

remained in the field. Texans no longer expressed their national commitment in loud and brash ways, but it was not necessary to do so in order to remain pledged to the cause. The sense of inward Confederate identity that was created at the beginning of the war remained securely intact, even when hardships appeared to be insufferable. Harrison County's Jennie Adkins likewise informed her fiancée that she missed him greatly and that "your absence is deeply felt, but to God and my country I resign you until the war is over." Although Texans had not experienced the ravages and destruction of campaigning armies similar to southerners in Virginia, Tennessee, and Georgia, they were still hardened by the war's demands. The Red River Campaign especially bolstered many civilians' Confederate identity, specifically those in East Texas who were directly threatened. The Union efforts to capture Texas signified that home, family, and property were threatened by a foreign invader, and this created a mindset of survival and resistance against a common foe. Fear blanketed the Texas home front in March and April, and many citizens thought material devastation was likely. Nevertheless, others believed that no force, regardless of its perceived viciousness, could wrest away one's ideology and compel anyone to renew their allegiance to the Union. Historian Anne Sarah Rubin has argued correctly that fear of Yankees was expected, especially in the latter of stages of the war, and that the prevalent consternation created "a nationalist rallying point" among many Confederates.¹⁴

¹⁴ Jennie Adkins to Dearest friend, March 2, 1864, Guthrie Collection; Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005), 87; Brad R. Clampitt, "Morale in the Western Confederacy: Home Front and Battlefield, 1864-1865" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Texas, 2006), 117, 259; Jacqueline Glass Campbell, *When Sherman Marched*

Historian James Marten, in his study of loyalty and dissent in wartime Texas, adopts a different interpretation. He argues that low morale, especially toward the end of the conflict, was a result primarily of disaffection with long casualty lists, exorbitant taxes, impressment, and conscription. He wrote that “[t]hese factors could erode any man’s loyalty, and many southerners withdrew whatever support they had given to the Confederacy and retreated into a neutrality or uninvolvedness.” He further suggests that Confederates and Texans easily succumbed to these emotions and indifference because they had never successfully established a functioning identity and connection with the Confederacy. In short, Marten maintains that low morale reflected a loss of will and even disloyalty. He is certainly correct that Texans suffered from severe internal pressures, but he generally does not take into account the profound impact of battlefield results on Confederate morale. In fact, he does not even mention the Red River Campaign’s psychological influence on the Texas home front. Historian William A. Blair’s interpretation of wartime Virginia seems more reasonable and holds that Virginians came to resent the power and intrusion of the national government. Consequently, it was easy to see how “[s]igns of disaffection on the home front . . . can mask the significant portion of the citizenry who still hoped for independence despite losing hope and confidence in their government.” It was certainly possible for civilians simultaneously to detest the actions and reach of their government and also to have a deep desire for independence. Many Texans were similar to the Virginians in Blair’s

North from the Sea: Resistance on the Confederate Home Front (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2003), 71-74; William A. Blair, *Virginia’s Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1996), 144, 152.

study: they were willing to bear the burden of internal hardship, while looking to their armies for spirited guidance, if it ultimately meant Confederate victory.¹⁵

The effect of the Red River Campaign stimulated high morale and national sentiment among much of the civilian population. Texans expressed confidence in ultimate victory and continued to believe in their armies as long as they remained active. In August, 1864, a Dallas man fervently contended that “I have never despaired nor doubted our final success, the beginning of the end is not far off—the war cant last much longer.” Of course not all Texans engaged in such explicit rhetoric, but instead were willing to write in more subdued tones. Lucy Pier Stevens, who lived just north of Columbus, simply looked to God for guidance: “let us trust in him . . . We can not be the judges. I shall try to be reconciled.” Texas newspapers especially attempted to sustain spirits, and reverted back to methods that were used during the secession crisis. Toward the end of the war, when morale was severely tested, the Austin *Texas State Gazette* wrote stories about George Washington’s heroism during the American Revolution and reminded readers of his patriotism, Christian spirit, and about how he defeated the British under seemingly impossible odds. Texans also continued to use symbolism to express confidence and hope and looked once again to the common soldier of the Confederacy for guidance. Romantic poems were written that detailed the generic volunteers’ unselfish service and duty to country, and home front support remained strong. In November, 1864, Harrison County’s Ladies Aid Society pronounced “that we have not been unmindful of those who are battling for our rights

¹⁵ James Marten, *Texas Divided: Loyalty and Dissent in the Lone Star State, 1856-1874* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1990), 86, 87; Blair, *Virginia’s Private War*, 130, 128-29.

and liberties,” and reported raising more than \$4,200 through tableaux, charades, and various social functions. J. E. Armistead, a woman on the Dallas home front, summarized how Texans probably viewed their roles in the war’s last year: “‘Where there is a will there’s a way,’ and I know no such word as fail where impossibilities do not rise like mountains to defeat my progress.” Even when the battlefield situation began to appear exceedingly grim in April, 1865, some Harrison County residents even advocated the use of slaves to aid the Confederate war effort. Texans simply wanted unconditional independence and, in the face of hardships and fear, were still willing to see the war to its conclusion.¹⁶

Perhaps the greatest example of Texans’ willingness to continue supporting the war effort came when many public meetings were held explicitly articulating persistent dedication and loyalty to the Confederacy. In early January, 1865, Dallas residents gathered at the courthouse to state their opposition to reconciliation with the North. The

¹⁶ Nat M. Burford to O. M. Roberts, August 26, 1864, Oran M. Roberts Papers, CAH; Diary entry, July 3, 1864, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, DLSPMU; *Marshall Texas Republican*, November 11, 1864; *Austin Texas State Gazette*, October 26, 1864, February 22 and March 8, 1865; “Joint Resolution, May 28, 1864, Requesting the Return of the First, Fourth, and Fifth Texas Regiments,” in *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 34, pt. 4, pp. 633-34; Ashbel Smith to My dear Sir, March 9, 1865, Letterbook, Ashbel Smith Papers, CAH; George W. Grover to Edward T. Austin, February 1 and March 29, 1864, George W. Grover Papers, Rosenberg Library; *Houston Telegraph*, “The Young Volunteer,” February 10, 1864; Rebecca J. McLeod to [J. S. Beers], [?], 1864, Beers Family Papers, Rosenberg Library; Cattie Coit to John Coit, January 3, 1865, Coit Family Papers, DHS; Alexander Pope to Pendleton Murrah, January 11, 1864, Box 301-44, Folder 11, Mrs. W. L. Pickens to Pendleton Murrah, October 25, 1864, Box 301-46, Folder 44, and John Henry Brown to Pendleton Murrah, January 19, 1865, Box 301-46, Folder 47—both cited in Murrah Papers, TSLAC; *Dallas Herald*, September 10, 1864; “Receipts from the Confederate Government between January 1, 1864 February 1, 1865, totaling \$1,600,” George W. Guess Papers, CAH; “Eulogy,” [April, 1864?], Person Papers; Gallagher, “Our Hearts are Full of Hope,” 118. For further reports of the Harrison County Ladies Aid Society, see *Marshall Texas Republican*, November 25, December 2, 1864, and January 13, 20, 27, and April 14, 1865.

citizens committee continued to believe that President Lincoln was solely responsible for bringing war and destruction to the southern people “and their institutions.” Further, Dallasites were fully determined “to resist to the death, and make . . . our separation from that government final, and independence sure.” Resolutions were passed that carefully pointed out that Confederate victory could be achieved only through the continued determination, heroism, and sacrifice of the South’s military population and called upon civilians to provide their soldiers with the appropriate support.¹⁷

An even larger meeting occurred in Harrison County and was surrounded with more symbolic meaning. Between November, 1864, and January, 1865, Henry Ware, one of the county’s largest planters, led a small contingent of citizens who advocated a peace settlement with the North. As a result, all those “who have at heart the interest of the Confederacy” were invited to a public meeting in Marshall on February 4. Those who attended resolved that “we, as a people are as devoted to the cause of our country as in the first year of the war.” And in an allusion to the Declaration of Independence, the meeting further resolved that the county’s citizens were still willing to “pledge fortune, life, and honor upon the issue.” The resolutions committee added that no settlement with the “abolitionist party” was acceptable, and reiterated that “the only hope [for peace was] to be found in the success of Southern arms.” Ware presented an obvious threat to the county’s ideological stance, and it is apparent that many people thought his voice needed to be quelled. Harrison’s community leaders and citizens were not only menaced by Ware’s desire for peace, but more important, were probably concerned how his actions and words would affect the home community and their

¹⁷ Dallas *Herald*, January 12, 1865.

support of the war effort. As it turned out, Henry Ware's opposition did not resurface and apparently did not affect the community. For example, nearly one month after the Ware incident, one of the county's soldiers referenced the public meeting and declared that he would accept peace only if it came "under the FREE and independent FLAG of the SOTHERN CONFEDERACY," and he urged his fellow citizens to "fight it out and GAIN all, or fight it out and LOSE all."¹⁸

Although the public meetings were purely symbolic, the mobilization during the war's final months signified that the home front was as sincere about southern independence as it had been during the secession crisis nearly four years earlier. Historian Robert L. Kerby acknowledges that many people in the Trans-Mississippi still advocated a sovereign Confederacy and that the meetings symbolized their willingness to continue the struggle. Nevertheless, he characterizes such gatherings as "a measure of hysteria [that] had begun to infect the Trans-Mississippi population," and that significant home front demoralization caused the people to seek "refuge in illusion." William A. Blair found that wartime Virginians participated in similar gatherings, but interpreted the events as proof that civilians coped with the war's length through the patriotic resolutions that were adopted. This was probably more akin to Texans'

¹⁸ Marshall *Texas Republican*, February 10, 1865, carried the entire proceedings and resolutions of the public meeting; William W. Heartsill, *One Thousand Four Hundred and 91 Days in the Confederate Army: A Journal Kept by W. W. Heartsill . . .* Bell I. Wiley, ed., (Jackson, Tennessee: McCowat-Mercer Press, 1953), 231-32. Unfortunately, the number of people who were at the meeting was not recorded. See also Marshall *Texas Republican*, November 18, 25, December 2, 9, 23, 1864, and January 27, February 3, 1865 for published statements from Ware as well as Loughery's responses. Campbell, *Southern Community in Crisis*, 217-18

perceptions. The meetings on the Texas home front were merely emblematic, yet patriotism was quite helpful in sustaining morale and national purpose.¹⁹

Most citizens in the Lone Star State had not relinquished their sense of Confederate identity, and their words and actions during the latter part of the war testified to their desire for independence. Hardships, shortages, and destitution were certainly characteristic of the home front experience, yet Texans were not willing to concede a Union victory. As civilians simultaneously continued to suffer and support the war effort, soldiers in the field carried on their responsibility of fighting for a cause they believed to be just. Similar to their families at home, Texans serving both in and out of the state also suffered and were quite explicit regarding their perceptions of the war and the level of their commitment to continue the struggle.

During the first part of the war, Galveston's military population exhibited many instances of low morale, generated in large part by the static nature of their environment, general inactivity, and feelings of uselessness. Morale reached its lowest point in August, 1863, after several regiments mutinied against their superiors. Nevertheless, appropriate changes were made to appease the soldiers: food was better prepared, and soldiers were allowed to refrain from drilling in the blistering summer heat. During the remainder of the year, soldiers' spirits were lifted, especially after hearing the news in September that Yankee forces had been defeated at Sabine Pass. The Island City's defenses were also improved which gave both the civilian and military population reasons for hope and confidence. At a Christmas celebration, one soldier

¹⁹ Kerby, *Kirby Smith's Confederacy*, 394; Blair, *Virginia's Private War*, 132.

proudly proclaimed that “we mean to defend this place till h[e]ll freezes over, and then fight the Yankees on the ice.”²⁰

As 1864 progressed, the buoyed spirits felt at the end of the previous year generally subsided, and some of the city’s military population once again experienced low morale. The same causes—boredom, monotony of camp life, and disaffection with their commanders—soon infected many of the soldiers’ behavior and writings. The men complained of loneliness and the destitution of the city. In the words of one, “[a]ll familiar affairs appear so trivial and worthless and empty.” When William H. Neblett was relieved from his nightly post in the local telegraph office, he would walk the streets for exercise, but “I believe I have seen every house in the place in my evening walks. City scenery is very monotonous and I never have found a walk so uninteresting as are to me now in this place.” Soldiers like Neblett who had been stationed in Galveston for long periods tended to suffer the greatest from the tedium and dullness of military life. Conversely, L. D. Bradley, who had served for three years campaigning in parts of the Western and Trans-Mississippi theaters and who had been captured when Vicksburg fell, arrived for service in Galveston in May. He viewed his new destination as a refuge and felt lucky to be stationed in such a safe locale: “Soldiering here in Galveston, is a very pleasant thing compared to what it is in the field, or in active service. We are quartered in houses, & have a great many more comforts & conveniences around us than we are accustomed to in camps.” He was especially grateful for the plentiful fish and oysters, and even the opportunity to go to nightly theatrical performances in the city. Bradley immediately enjoyed his new surroundings and relished the opportunity to

²⁰ Quoted in Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 159.

serve in Galveston: “we have everything here so different, and so much more comfortable, than we have ever been accustomed to before in Camps, that I believe I would be willing to be stationed here for the balance of the war; and particularly so, because I don’t think there will ever be least danger about it . . . I have no idea that the Yankees intend making any attack on the place.”²¹

Much to Bradley’s chagrin, though, his spirits began to drop after several months along the Texas Gulf Coast. His complaints resembled those of his comrades, and by the early fall, he wrote, “[w]e are still sweltering away at this delectable spot, nothing happening, or so it seems to happen, occupying ourselves altogether in killing time and mosquitoes.” Perhaps the most explicit articulation of depressed spirits came from the diary of Harvey C. Medford, a private in Lane’s Texas Cavalry Regiment. He candidly wrote in March that “I hate the monotony of such a life as this. I would rather skirmish with Yankees, than lie in camps in so much inactivity. Oh! That the dreadful war were over, then I could lead the kind of life that suits me best. How I would love to be among my native hills on this beautiful day of spring with my gun among the wild animals of the forest.” Medford’s portrayal of low morale is noteworthy because it invoked, much like sentiments on the home front, elements of severe war weariness and Confederate identity. He was clearly disaffected with the nature of his military service because he principally desired to fight against Union armies.²²

²¹ William H. Neblett to Dear Lizzie, May 8 and 22, 1864, both in Murr, ed., *Rebel Wife in Texas*, 404-05, 418-19; L. D. Bradley to Little Honey, May 2, 1864, Bradley Papers, PCWC.

²² L. D. Bradley to September 10 and October 18, 1864, Bradley Papers, PCWC; Diary entry, March 17, 1864, in Smith and Mullins, eds., “Diary of H. C. Medford,” 132; See also, Benjamin Madison Clark to his family, October 3 and 7, 1864, Benjamin Madison Clark Letters, 16th Texas Infantry File, THM.

Medford found it exceedingly difficult to remain enthusiastic about the war because his environment took an emotional and financial toll: "My life is but damned little pleasure to me. This war is beggaring me. I am about to get out of money." In the early spring, Medford, like many of his comrades in Galveston, also became aware that their provisions and food were deteriorating. He criticized the poor quality of beef rations that the soldiers were given and wrote, "[i]t is an outrage that confederate soldiers should be compelled to live upon what we live upon." He further noted that he would remain faithful to his service and would not "mutinize or desert; but if there are any justifiable causes for such things, it is here in our army." The situation had grown increasingly worse, and by March the military population's morale declined sharply and resulted in another mutiny. Soldiers were particularly distressed because they did not believe that their superiors were sharing in their wants and hardships. For example, several of Galveston's ladies hosted a dinner and ball for General Magruder and his staff. News of the event traveled quickly among the various units scattered around the city, and many soldiers became outraged when they learned of the merriment and food to be enjoyed by their officers. One soldier estimated that nearly 500 of his comrades stormed the house where the party was taking place, "approaching with arms, and two pieces of artillery, and preparing to raze the house to the ground." Magruder agreed to talk with the dissidents who demanded that he not enjoy the feasts or dances while they, as well as their families at home, suffered. The general pleaded with the mob to disband on the conditions that they would receive better rations and furloughs. The

soldiers reluctantly complied, and probably assumed that Magruder would uphold his word. Later in the night, however, he and his guests enjoyed their party anyway.²³

Sentiments remained severely downcast in Galveston and behavioral problems involving clashes between soldiers and civilians revealed that the stresses of war were deeply entrenched in the city. Robberies, fights, and even murders were common throughout most of the year, and relations deteriorated between both segments of the city's population. The problems stemmed from the military commanders' assumption that Galveston's civilians had few wartime rights and were subservient to the military's authority. Some soldiers in the city, therefore, proceeded to raid local stores and saloons, stealing whatever goods that still remained in the city. Charles W. Hayes, who wrote a monumental history of Galveston in the 1870s, attributed the soldiers' behavior simply to their circumstances and surroundings. He submitted that "[t]heir rations consisting of a small quantity of inferior beef, and the poorest quality of corn meal, it is not surprising that the soldiers . . . committed these frequent depredations upon the residence and property of citizens." Even though Magruder promised to remedy some of the soldiers' complaints, many deserted anyway in 1864 and Hayes argued that such actions signified that Galveston was more of "a conquered city than one that was loyal to the cause of the Confederacy."²⁴

²³ Diary entry, February 15 and March 12, 1864, in Smith and Mullins, eds., "Diary of H. C. Medford," 111, 128, 129; William H. Neblett to Dear Lizzie, March 12, 1864, in Murr, ed., *Rebel Wife in Texas*, 343; Houston *Daily Telegraph*, March 8, 1864; Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 162; Barr, "Texas Coastal Defense," 30.

²⁴ Charles W. Hayes, *History of the Island and the City of Galveston* (2 vols.: Cincinnati, 1879 [set in type but not released]; Austin: Jenkins Garrett Press, 1974), 2:616, 617, 612-21; Cotham, *Battle on the Bay*, 160-67.

There is no indication of the number of soldiers who deserted, and Hayes's characterization might be somewhat misleading. Many soldiers suffered severe hardships, and some resorted to violence, mutiny, and poor behavior. Nevertheless, these actions did not necessarily signify that soldiers in the Island City desired a defeated Confederacy. H. C. Medford wrote in early 1864 that, although he had "a mind full discontent," he still "hope[d] for a speedy peace and a free south." Medford was only one individual, and his confident words generally were not characteristic of many other soldiers' writings. Loud and explicit expressions of nationalism had never been characteristic of Galveston's soldiers in the first place, and actions taken in late 1864 signified low morale. But, the soldiers' actions generally did not constitute an outward hope that the Confederacy would lose. Because they had little control over the environment that dictated their actions, soldiers who served in the city had few attachments to the cause, and their level of national identification suffered accordingly.²⁵

Much like their comrades defending the state, Texas's soldiers serving in theaters across the South had experienced similar hardships and threats to morale during the latter phases of the war. Little or no pay, escalating homesickness, and periodic military reverses impacted the state's volunteers, yet, for the most part, soldiers in the East, West, and Trans-Mississippi remained staunchly dedicated to the cause. Texas's soldiers had long understood themselves to be the leaders to achieve southern independence and, during much of 1864, it appeared that these perceptions were still fully embraced. Serving for extended periods, fighting consistently against the Confederacy's enemies, and suffering collectively all reinforced their acceptance of their

²⁵ Diary entry, February 3, 1864, in Smith and Mullins, eds., "Diary of H. C. Medford," 114.

roles as soldiers. Elements of hardship and war weariness bolstered their sense of Confederate identity and caused many Texas soldiers to articulate explicitly their willingness to fight until their country's independence was achieved or their cause ultimately defeated. Contrary to their fellow soldiers in Galveston, Texans serving in other theaters fortified their Confederate identity through a deep faith in their leaders and by understanding that their nation's destiny was their sole responsibility.

Throughout 1864 and 1865, many Texas soldiers informed their families and friends of the hardships they had endured but also indicated that such adversity only buttressed their willingness to remain in the field. On the eve of the Red River Campaign, a Dallas soldier explained that he had served a long time and greatly desired a furlough, and that "I do want to come home & stay awhile." Nevertheless, he clearly understood that he ultimately needed to remain with his command because it was for "the good of my country, is the part of a good patriot, & it being my duty, I must do it, however great the sacrifice may be." Similarly, Dallas's J. H. Mathis, a cavalryman in the Army of Tennessee, noted the "many hard trials" his unit had endured, including the "[loss of] a good many men . . . but we are not discouraged yet, but expect to stay in the [army] so long as the war [goes on] hoping that we may achieve our independence." Colorado County's George McCormick, who served in parts of the Western theater in Waul's Texas Legion, probably reflected the sentiments of many Texas soldiers when he wrote in April, 1864, that "[a] sense of duty and a serious love of country is all that keeps me here now." Four months later, while lying in a Mississippi hospital after being seriously wounded, he informed a friend, "you cannot imagine how much I have suffered[.] if I had to go through [it] again I believe

death would be preferable . . . I tell you old fellow this thing of having a leg cut off is a very dangerous and serious affair and after I get well [I] must be a cripple for life[.] but I have the consciousness of having lost my limb in a righteous cause.” Other men similarly wrote that they were also willing to suffer the loss of arms or legs if it meant that the South would be sovereign. Serving for several consecutive years had hardened these men against the war’s horrors and fostered a mindset among many that they were merely small cogs in a larger and more important machine. Independence was the ultimate goal, and these men understood that their role was to keep fighting until it was achieved, regardless of what they were forced to endure. As Harrison County’s John N. Coleman, a private in the Third Texas Cavalry, wrote in July, “[e]very nerve is being strained . . . [but] everyone is confident of success.”²⁶

One of the greatest expressions of soldiers’ dedication to the cause came in the spring of 1864 when many units reenlisted for the duration of the war. Although some men were motivated to reenlist because the Confederate government mandated that soldiers in the army would have to remain permanently in their units, it appeared that many reenlistments were inspired out of absolute patriotism. Douglas’s Texas Battery,

²⁶ George W. Guess to My Dear Madam, September 22, 1863, George W. Guess Papers, CAH; J. H. Mathis to Miss Susan Jackson, February 14, 1864, Mathis Family Papers, CAH; George McCormick to Dear Father, April 5, 1864, and George McCormick to W. W. Woolsey, August 24, 1864, Draper/McCormick Papers, Nesbitt Memorial Library Archives, Columbus, Texas—hereafter cited as Nesbitt Library; John N. Coleman to Jennie Adkins, July 10, 1864, Guthrie Collection; Diary entries, August 13 and December 25, 1864, James Marshall Riggs to My Dear Mother and Sisters, September 28, 1864—both cited in G. A. A. Riggs Papers, CAH; Diary entry, January 20, 1864, Lucy Pier Stevens Diary, DLSPMU; John P. Cox to My dear Uncle, June 12, 1864, John P. Cox Letter, 19th Texas Cavalry File, THM; Charles A. Simpson to Dear Brother, August 9, 1864, Charles A. Simpson Letter, 8th Texas Cavalry File, THM; W. W. Perry to Pa and Ma, January 25, 1864, E. O. Perry Letters, 1st Texas Infantry File, THM; Theophilus Perry to Harriet Perry, January 28 and March 23, 1864, Person Papers.

a prominent artillery unit formed in 1861 by volunteers from Dallas and Smith Counties, was one of the first units to reenlist in the Army of Tennessee, and its members voted unanimously to serve for another twenty-five years. Even the Confederate Congress praised the efforts and passed a joint-resolution of thanks in the unit's honor. Fellow Texans commented that morale in the army was significantly enhanced. A Dallas soldier wrote that his comrades believed "[t]hey are today invincible," and noted that following the reenlistments, "the war spirit seems so high." Reenlistments demonstrated soldiers' loyalty to their nation and consequently raised spirits and hope for civilians on the home front. An Austin soldier serving in South Texas was filled with determination when he wrote in February, "I . . . am fully determined to fight as long as there is a yankee army upon our soil as I was the day I first took the oath to support our Confederacy. I have never taken but one such oath and by that oath I am determined to [serve] till my hair's are gray even should our organized armies in the field be dispersed."²⁷

For the most part, Texans who served in theaters outside of the state held their leaders in high regard, suffered equally with their commanders, and consistently followed their generals into battle. These qualities were primarily the result of the examples set by various leaders. Men who served in the Army of Northern Virginia's famed Texas Brigade arguably benefitted the most from serving under the command of

²⁷ R. Q. Mills to My Dear Wife, March 4 and 12, 1864, R. Q. Mills Letters, DHS; George Lee Robertson to Dear Ma, February 12, 1864, George Lee Robertson Papers, CAH; Lucia R. Douglas, ed., *Douglas' Texas Battery, C.S.A.* (Tyler, Texas: Smith County Historical Society, 1966), 92; "Joint Resolution of Thanks to the Enlisted Men of Douglas' (Texas) Battery," *OR*, Ser. 1, Vol. 32, Pt. 2, p. 754; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 93-95; Andrew F. Lang, "Lone Star Pride: The Good-Douglas Texas Battery, CSA, 1861-1865," *East Texas Historical Journal* 45 (Fall, 2007): 36; Clampitt, "Morale in the Western Confederacy," 80-118.

Robert E. Lee. Lee was revered by those he led, and his men were willing to endure many hardships out of devotion and admiration for their general. Texans especially held Lee in high regard because of the respect and confidence he bestowed upon their regiments. For example, at the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864, Lee forcefully galloped to lead the Texans in a charge against a strong Union position, but after much protest out of concern for Lee's safety, the Texans managed to force him to retire to the Confederate rear. The Texas Brigade, however, was deeply moved by Lee's exploits and proceeded to reinforce their line and successfully drove back the Federals. Historian J. Tracy Power explains that "[i]f Lee could go so far as to place himself in immediate danger at the head of his troops . . . his behavior dramatically underscored the Army of Northern Virginia's dependence on the experience and example of its officers."²⁸

Lee fostered confidence in his men not only on the battlefield, but in camp as well. Soldiers willingly endured hardship and shortages of goods because they witnessed their own commander engage in similar practices. In February, 1864, Henry M. Trueheart, a Galveston resident traveling with the Army of Northern Virginia, recalled that in one instance soldiers received only one-quarter pound of beef, a little bread, and some coffee for five consecutive days. Nevertheless, "[i]t is gratifying to see how cheerfully they bear it too rarely complaining—but laughing and joking over it all and wondering how *much less* a man [can] learn to live on." He was especially impressed with the reenlistments "of whole Regts, Brig's, and Divisions—for the war. With such a

²⁸ J. Tracy Power, *Lee's Miserables: Life in the Army of Northern Virginia from the Wilderness to Appomattox* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1998), 46; diary entry, May 6, 1864, Thomas L. McCarty Papers, CAH.

spirit the Yankees will fight us in vain.” The shortages and privations experienced by Lee’s army were not temporary and continued into the late spring. In April, 1864, following the Texas Brigade’s return from duty in Tennessee, Galveston’s Thomas L. McCarty, a private in the First Texas Infantry, reflected on the level of adversity his unit had endured over the past eight months:

[The] Brigade has suffered heavily, and particularly for the necessities of life, and clothing and Shoes, the men are ragged, hatless, and shoeless, fed on the greatest part of the time ¼ of a pound of bacon a day, and corn meal & nothing more, still they are in good spirits, laugh and joke, and never seriously complain, sometimes they would kill a ‘Hog or such’ to satisfy their Hunger, if there ever was noble, brave, patriotic, men in any army, they are in this Corps, & this Brigade in particular . . . now we return to old familiar scenes and places, many of which are so indelibly fixed in our memories that times cannot efface them, we know what the past has been there, and realize, that we can anticipate the future to be one of the same character.²⁹

Upon returning to the Army of Northern Virginia, men in the Texas Brigade were greeted with sights of Robert E. Lee also sacrificing for the good of his army and country. Another account written by Henry Trueheart noted the immense shortage of food and provisions for the army, but “[t]heir noble Genl is equally self sacrificing—A splendid house bo[u]ght for him by the city of Rich[mond] he declined to receive, while his soldier’s families need help.” Lee inspired confidence and trust in his troops, and they accordingly responded on the battlefield and in camp by displaying equal levels of sustained morale and hope that their cause would succeed. Unlike the soldiers serving in Galveston, Texans in the Army of Northern Virginia were surrounded by inspiring leaders. At the same time, the soldiers’ suffering was relieved by witnessing their

²⁹ Henry M. Trueheart to Dear Tom, February 6, 1864, in Edward B. Williams, ed., *Rebel Brothers: The Civil War Letters of the Truehearts* (College Station: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 1995), 187; Diary entry, April 21, 1864, Thomas L. McCarty Papers, CAH.

supreme commander forfeit luxuries and gifts while remaining in the field. Lee realized that setting an example was a foremost responsibility, and his actions were embraced and emulated by the men he commanded.³⁰

These qualities were transferred onto the battlefield as the Army of Northern Virginia continued to fight and remained the main hope for many throughout the Confederacy's armies and home front. For example, George Lee Robertson, an Austin resident who served with Lee during the beginning of the war and who suffered a neck wound at Antietam that forced him to return to Texas, retained his faith in his former comrades and leader. From his post in South Texas, Robertson wrote to his sister in April and attempted to lift her spirits by writing, "I know one thing, Lee will always hold his own and if they allow him time he will inflict such a blow that they will never get over it. As long . . . as Robt. E. Lee is at the helm never say our prospect is gloomy." Soldiers serving in Galveston suffered not only from a lack of material goods, but also from a lack of such inspiring and symbolic leadership. Texans along the Gulf Coast generally did not identify with their leaders and became upset when it appeared their leaders were not sacrificing. Consequently, these soldiers rarely found solace or identified with their commanders because their officers seemed to have self-interest, rather than their country's interest, truly at heart. Those Texans who served with Lee benefitted greatly from his style of leadership and his faith in the men he commanded.³¹

³⁰ Henry M. Trueheart to Dear Cally, April 14, 1864, in Williams, ed., *Rebel Brothers*, 191; Douglas Southall Freeman, *R. E. Lee: A Biography* (4 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933-34), 3:241-47.

³¹ George Lee Robertson to Dear Julia, April 15, 1864, George Lee Robertson Papers, CAH.

Despite establishing a functioning identity, maintaining an ideological connection to the Confederacy, and engaging in popular support for the war, Texans on the home front and soldiers in the army could not avert defeat. Nevertheless, some civilians still clung to hope as long as their country's armies remained active. Texans had generally looked to the common soldier of the Confederacy for symbolic inspiration throughout much of the war; however, the final weeks brought a noticeable shift in several letters and diaries. Similar to George Lee Robertson, Texans began to glance eastward and placed all of their hopes in Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. Many civilians were convinced that as long as Lee remained active, independence still would be a viable option. In early January, Cattie Coit wrote from Dallas, that "[f]our years ago he made comparatively a small figure in the world. Now every eye is . . . turned upon [Lee]." Even when it became perfectly evident that the Army of Northern Virginia, as well as other major Confederate armies, were on the verge of surrender, some Texans still dreamed that Lee would somehow win a seemingly impossible victory. He had done it many times in the past, and in April, Galveston's Ellen H. Reily believed that he might be able to do it again: "We look with almost breathless interest for tidings from Gen. Lee. We certainly are in the very struggle, or rather in the crisis which (I trust) is to precede a perfect restoration to life & health."³²

Some civilians remained confident even after receiving news in late April confirming Lee's surrender. The state's soldiers, however, lost their will and began to

³² Cattie Coit to My beloved husband, January 3, 1865, Coit Family Papers, DHS; E. H. Reily to Dear Friend, April 19, 1865, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; John Henry Brown to Pendleton Murrah, January 19, 1865, Pendleton Murrah Papers, Box 301-46, Folder 47, TSLAC. See Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 8, 10-12, 58-59, 63, 65, 72, 85-89, 139-40, 152, for the interpretation that Lee was the Confederacy's premier symbol throughout the entire war.

go home. Historian Brad R. Clampitt found that it was more common for Texas troops serving in parts of the Trans-Mississippi theater to give up prior to civilians on the home front, simply because these soldiers had gone sixteen months without pay, were tired of camp life, and were completely despondent after hearing of Lee's and General Joseph E. Johnston's surrenders. John Franklin Smith, a soldier who served in Galveston, wrote in May that "[t]he troops in the Trans-Miss. Department are thoroughly demoralized, [and] whipped . . . for about nine tenths are determined not to fight any more for the independence of the South." Although some civilians might have held out hope slightly longer than soldiers, both groups of Texans soon admitted that the Confederacy was officially conquered.³³

Following the surrender of the Confederacy's last armies in May, civilians on the Texas home front recognized that the end had finally arrived and officially acknowledged defeat. Historian James Marten submits that by the late spring, "it was painfully clear that many Texans could muster no tears when the Southern cause was finally lost." Although this might be true in some locales throughout the state, it appeared that in several of the test counties for this study, civilians greatly bemoaned the Confederacy's defeat in language that reflected their despondency. Harrison County's William Heartsill confided to his diary that "[o]ur bright dream is [over], our

³³ J. F. Smith to My Dear Cousin, May 19, 1865, John Franklin Smith Letters, CAH; Brad R. Clampitt, "The Breakup: The Collapse of the Confederate Trans-Mississippi Army in Texas, 1865," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 108 (April, 2005): 499-534, esp. 501-06; Cattie Coit to John Coit, May 5, 1865 and Cattie Coit to My dearest Cousin, May 6, 1865—both cited in Coit Family Papers, DHS; Diary entries, May 4 and 7, 1865, J. F. Leyendecker Civil War Diary, Nesbitt Library; Ashbel Smith to My dear Doctor, April 27, 1865, Letterbook, Ashbel Smith Papers, CAH; Diary entries April 21 and May 7, 1865, William Pitt Ballinger Papers, Rosenberg Library; George Lee Robertson to Dear Fannie, March 3, 1865, George Lee Robertson Papers, CAH.

country is subjugated, our armies are scattered to the 'Four winds of the Heavens,' our cause is lost! *lost!! LOST!!!*" Amelia Barr complemented these sentiments when she wrote from Austin, "[t]he dream is over. No Southern independence now. Robert thinks it will [now] be Southern slavery." In July, 1865, Marshall's Henry F. Coleman, a former private in the Seventeenth Texas Cavalry, summarized two significant consequences of Confederate defeat that undoubtedly troubled many Texans: "Slavery is done in this contry the negroes is all free . . . This cruel war has left many vacant place[s] at home that never can bee filed again."³⁴

Although Texans acknowledged that the war was over and admitted defeat, their inward identity as Confederates remained intact. An integral component of Confederate identity had always been the hatred and fear of Yankees, and the end of the war seemed to compound, rather than dissipate, such perceptions. A Colorado County woman informed her sister in June that she was exceedingly dispirited with defeat because "I have nothing to found my hopes upon, for it is the Yankeys who are dealing with us and who have proven themselves to be the most cruel race that ever existed." She further implored her friends and family to save all of their money, "for we have no idea what we will come to." During the same week, W. J. Smith, a Marshall resident, noted that many people in Harrison County recently heard news that Union forces had arrived in Shreveport. The reports created significant panic among the community's

³⁴ Marten, *Texas Divided*, 105; Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred 91 Days*, 245; Diary entry, May 25, 1865, Amelia Barr, *All the Days of My Life: An Autobiography* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1913), 249; Henry F. Coleman to his brother, July 30, 1865, Henry F. Coleman Letters, 17th Texas Infantry File, THM; Henry Hoeffler to My friend, June 30, 1865, and W. D. Miller to My Dear Sir—both cited in James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; J. Bankhead Magruder to [Ashbel Smith and William Pitt Ballinger], May 24, 1865, John Bankhead Magruder Papers, Rosenberg Library.

population: “There seems to be great fear here, people dont know what to do, consequently some of them are drinking a good deal of whiskey, for myself I have a heart now for any fate.” These letters suggest that Texans’ identity as partisan southerners was far from extinguished. The next phase of the state’s tumultuous nineteenth-century history revealed that Confederate identity and nationalism had never entirely left the hearts and minds of many Texans. Instead, many civilians revived their Confederate distinctiveness while coping with military occupation and Republican-dominated Reconstruction and emphasized their Confederate past during the Lost Cause celebrations of the late nineteenth century. Confederate nationalism had been created by secession and war, but military defeat did not necessarily extinguish.³⁵

³⁵ Callie Wright to My dear little Sister, June 11, 1865, Abraham Alley Papers, Caldonia Wright Correspondence, 1862-1866, CAH; W. J. Smith to [James Harper Starr], June 7, 1865, James Harper Starr Papers, CAH; Gallagher, *Confederate War*, 188-89n8. For the leading works on the Lost Cause see, Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987); Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, eds., *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2000); Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1980); Kelly McMichael Stott, “From Lost Cause to Female Empowerment: The Texas Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy” (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Texas, 2001).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS: TEXAS, IDENTITY, AND VARYING DEGREES OF CONFEDERATE NATIONALISM

Confederate nationalism and identity were prevalent all across the Texas home front and also within the ranks of the state's fighting forces throughout the Civil War. In each of the five test counties in this study, Texans' words, actions, and wartime existence confirmed the claim that Confederate nationalism was in fact real, and that for four years most many civilians and soldiers willingly pledged their support, and some sacrificed their lives, for the creation of a new nation. Texans' Confederate identity was generated by secession and the outbreak of war in 1861 and was sustained through four years of fighting and fluctuating spirits. Morale, both on the home front and battlefield, greatly influenced an individual's national identification. Texans, though, generally refused to allow periodic depressed moods to dictate when they admitted and recognized Confederate defeat. Instead, civilians and soldiers maintained explicit confidence in Confederate victory as long as their nation's armies remained active and intact. Texans dreamed of an independent Confederacy and relinquished their efforts in May, 1865, only after their armies were defeated by a larger and more powerful foe.¹

The Lone Star State's Confederate identity was created during the secession crisis, but it was nourished by some unique sources. Texans relied on a popular and selective memory of the Texas Revolution and Republic period that recalled images of glory and independence in many contemporary writings and actions. Using Texas's past allowed many in the state to engage in wildly patriotic and loud expressions of

¹ Similar conclusions regarding the entire Confederacy are reached in Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1997).

nationalism, and these sentiments were quickly transferred into a salute to the Confederate nation following secession. Once Texas joined the Confederacy, citizens celebrated their new nation, called for unity, relied on religious leaders to define the new country's mission, and reveled in early battlefield victories. Such qualities helped contribute to the formation of the state's Confederate identity.

Although it appeared to some that Texas's entrance into the war created a unified ideological front, Confederate nationalism was not a monolithic creation and did not function to the same degree among all of the state's citizens. Many civilians in Colorado, Dallas, Harrison, and Travis Counties entered the war with loud expressions of nationalistic patriotism, were supremely confident that Confederate armies were invincible, and believed that victory would be achieved quickly. Galveston's citizens, however, were immediately consumed with fear that their city's defenses were inadequate against a Union invasion, and many civilians fled to the interior of the state. The brash and outward demonstration of nationalism did not characterize the Island City's population during the first year of the war, but many civilians implicitly created a Confederate identity. Fear and flight demonstrated that Galvestonians preferred to abandon their homes rather than live under Yankee rule. The city's early Confederate identity was based on equating the Union military as a force bent on conquest and destruction. Although Texans' used nationalism in various ways during the first year of the war, many civilians had developed a distinctive inward identity as Confederates.

The diverging manner in which Texans in and out of the state expressed nationalistic sentiment in 1861 became more complex and distinct as the conflict progressed. In general, over the next several years, home front civilians refrained from

engaging in the strident and outward patriotism that had characterized the secession crisis. Instead, similar to Galveston's civilians, many Texans assumed a more subdued role to express their identity as Confederates. Home front mobilization and support for the war effort was common in many households and social organizations and signified Texans' desire for independence. Even during periods of low morale, especially after the fall of Forts Henry and Donelson, New Orleans, Galveston, and Vicksburg, many citizens relied on symbolism generated from home front mobilization to sustain their Confederate identity. During most of the conflict, Texans looked to the common soldier of the Confederacy as the leading figure who would achieve independence. This further displayed how Texans came to regard Confederate armies as the essential institutions that would achieve ultimate victory. The home front population needed an inspiring figure to look to and provide for, and their very sons, husbands, and fathers seemed to be the ideal individuals whom civilians identified with the cause. Although their level of national expression was greatly restrained as the war continued, Texans' actions revealed that their Confederate identity was firmly intact.

As the conflict evolved toward its final year, some home front civilians revealed a divide in their perception of what was needed for independence to be achieved. Caused mainly by the Union's Red River Campaign and its aftermath, this split was defined rather explicitly, for example, in Harrison and Galveston Counties. Harrison was one of the fundamental Yankee objectives during the campaign, and the impending invasion of East Texas by Union forces caused fear and panic among much of the region's population. Even though the Federal campaign ultimately failed, Harrison's citizens clearly understood the depth of the Yankee threat, were further hardened by the

war's demands, and were willing, especially as the end of the war neared, to alter traditional standards of antebellum political and social life in favor of independence. The clearest example of this was a desire to use slaves to aid the Confederate war effort. Although this initiative had been quietly proposed throughout the entire conflict, the war's latter stages highlighted the Confederacy's dire situation and prompted scattered calls to arm slaves. Such proposals were uncharacteristic of the antebellum South's social structure and represented the degree to which some citizens aspired to create a nation. Harrison's citizens fit squarely within historian Emory Thomas's assertion that "Confederate Southerners began to respond to their circumstances by redefining themselves—or, more precisely, by defining themselves as a national people."²

In the spring of 1865, when the Richmond government considered the use of slaves for Confederate service, Robert Loughery, editor of the *Marshall Texas Republican*, wrote, "The negroes may render material aid in the achievement of our independence and make excellent soldiers." Similar sentiments were expressed even as early as 1862, as some in Harrison County recognized the possible benefit of utilizing slaves in the war effort. Quentin D. Horr, a private in the Seventh Texas Infantry, implored the community for "fifty Negro men aged from eighteen to fifty years, to be [used] as cooks and teamsters" for the Seventh Texas. Horr's request applied only to "those [persons] having Negroes that they can spare," in order to restore "the health of the patriotic soldiers who have so nobly offered themselves in this struggle, for those institutions so dear to us." Although Horr's appeal did not explicitly advocate the

² Emory M. Thomas, *The Confederate Nation, 1861-1865* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 298.

actual arming of slaves, his statement demonstrates how southerners ironically desired the use of bondsmen to contribute to the creation of a nation based on racial servitude. Although some historians argue that this represented an abandonment of the Confederacy's basis for existence, it is probably more accurate to conclude that the use of slaves in the military revealed just how far southerners were willing to go to achieve national independence.³

Although Union troops did not threaten Texas for the remainder of the war, the Red River Campaign signaled to East Texans that by 1864, the Confederacy needed an extra boost for victory. In spite of Harrison County's identification with the Deep South plantation culture, some citizens were willing temporarily to disrupt slave operations if it meant that southern sovereignty would prevail. By contrast, Galvestonians took a different approach. The city's greatest danger had come nearly two years earlier when it was captured by the Union navy, but Confederate forces had controlled the island ever since. More important, though, historian Philip D. Dillard notes that Galvestonians were far removed from the war's campaigning armies and did not fully appreciate the Confederacy's shortage of manpower. Further, Galveston had not been truly threatened since the beginning of the war, thus creating different perceptions along the

³ Marshall *Texas Republican*, April 14, 1865, and October 11, 1862. For the argument that arming slaves discredited the Confederacy's existence, see Robert L. Kerby, *Kirby Smith's Confederacy: The Trans-Mississippi South, 1863-1865* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1972), 396. The issue of arming slaves late in the war is tricky to comprehend fully. Bruce Levine, *Confederate Emancipation: Southern Plans to Free and Arm Slaves during the Civil War* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2006), 14-15, 89-110, 115-17, argues that rank-and-file men such as Horr did not positively alter their perceptions regarding race. Rather, many southerners argued that independence was the ultimate goal, and if slaves could aid in that goal, with the understanding that they would remain an inferior race, then many Confederate soldiers and civilians were willing to arm the black population.

Gulf Coast for the need to arm slaves. As a result, Willard Richardson, editor of the *Galveston News*, adamantly opposed the measure. Dillard suggests that those regions of the Confederacy trampled by campaigning armies and threatened with ultimate destruction, especially late in the war, were much more willing to support the idea of armed bondsmen. The dichotomy between Harrison and Galveston Counties is stark, but it is not intended to imply that Harrison's citizens desired independence more than Galveston's. Instead, it demonstrates that Confederate nationalist identity, among Texans at least, was created and sustained in different ways depending on regional location. The overall point is that Texans desired independence but, because of differing wartime experiences and circumstances, possessed specific ideological variations on how to achieve their goals.⁴

Similar to the different ways home front civilians identified with the Confederacy, Texas's soldiers serving in army also possessed distinct forms of identification and morale. Many of Texas's soldiers who served in the East, West, and Trans-Mississippi theaters embraced their roles as the Confederacy's leaders and consistently expressed their desire, willingness, and motivation to fight and die for what they believed to be a righteous cause. Whereas the home front population generally ceased obvious and explicit forms of nationalistic articulation, Texas's volunteers in the field outwardly used rhetoric that clearly signified their level of outward national commitment. Serving in the army resembled one of the highest forms of nationalism, and many soldiers recognized this. Fighting against their nation's enemies, campaigning, and winning and losing on

⁴ Philip D. Dillard, "What Price Must We Pay for Victory?': Views on Arming Slaves from Lynchburg, Virginia, to Galveston, Texas," in Lesley J. Gordon and John C. Inscoe, eds., *Inside the Confederate Nation: Essays in Honor of Emory M. Thomas* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2005), 316-28.

the battlefield created a solid identity and buttressed the home front's expectations and hopes for their armies. Texans in the ranks were also exposed to low morale, but, in most cases, they overcame depressed spirits by retaining strong confidence that they would emerge victorious. Honor, duty, and devotion to their country, leaders, and families, manifested significantly high levels of nationalism and identity among Texas's soldiers.

Texans who served along the Gulf Coast and especially in Galveston, suffered from low morale for most of the war and, consequently, expressed far less nationalistic rhetoric. Nevertheless, these soldiers also thought of themselves as Confederates. For example, when they first arrived for duty in the Island City, many of the volunteers acknowledged how proud they were to defend one of the state's most important cities. And, when Confederate forces recaptured the city in early 1863, many of the men's sentiments resembled those in the Army of Northern Virginia after significant victories. As the war slowly dragged on, though, time took its toll on many of the men's spirits. Boredom, frustration with daily duties, and anger towards officers caused morale to sink considerably and, in two instances, resulted in mutinies. Galveston's defenders rarely commented on their yearning to achieve independence, yet some of their actions and words dictated that they implicitly desired Confederate victory. Many of the men felt that they were being wasted and that their service was useless. These feelings suggested that many of these Texans wanted to be a part of the Confederate war effort in a larger capacity, and their low morale and negative behavior probably reflected these cravings. Galveston's soldiers certainly did not engage in nearly the same level of explicit nationalistic rhetoric as their comrades serving outside of the state. But, both groups

shared the same Confederate identity as soldiers striving for the cause of national independence.

Confederate identity, although it was created through vastly different forms of nationalistic expression in Texas, was sustained for the entirety of the war. Texans displayed a popular will and support for the war effort and did not accept defeat until it was obvious that further resistance was futile. In the late spring and early summer of 1865, Texans resigned themselves to Confederate defeat, but only after four long years of struggle, death, and sacrifice. Confederate nationalism, identity, and morale were key hallmarks of Texas's wartime existence and defined the character, outlook, and pride of its people.

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