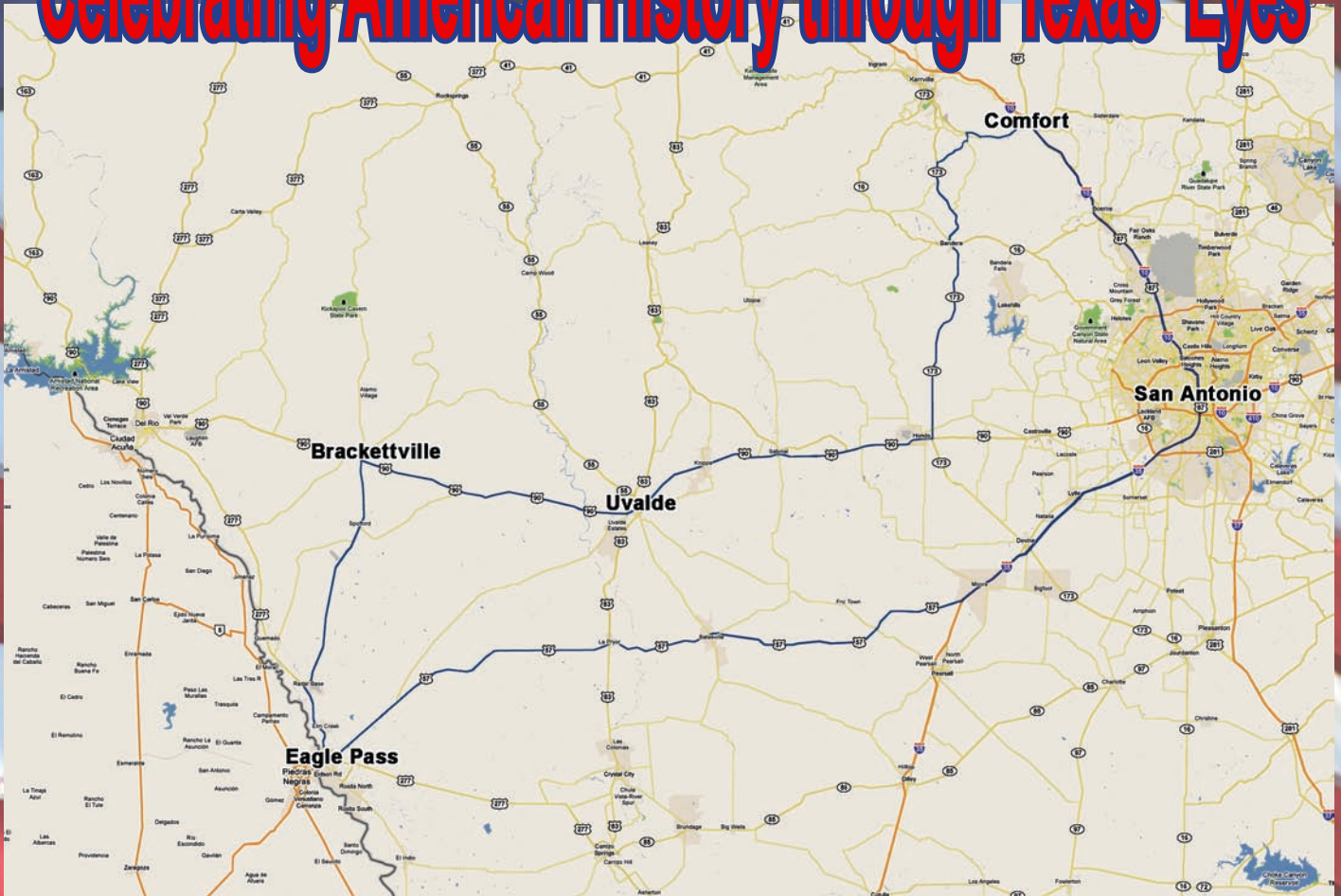


Celebrating American History through Texas' Eyes



RIDE MAP

This month, in honor of Independence Day, we celebrate our country's history by taking a look at Texas' connections to the building of the nation. While recent white papers are now promoting Texas' connection to the American Revolution (namely through Spain's actions and the Texas Longhorn population), most of these links are still in paper form and not readily recognized through places to physically visit. For a map, that's not helpful. So, we go to the next big "skirmish" – the Civil War. This ride map takes you through the northwest section of the South Texas Plains and the southwest corner of the Hill Country – both heavy in beautiful rides and Texas history. There are other Civil War sites in Texas. We will include "bonus ride maps" highlighting other Civil War sites in Texas with our weekly Web-zine (email) during July. If you're not already signed up, you can do so through our website or our Facebook page.

A quick timeline of the Civil War, as seen from Texas:

- November 6, 1860: Abraham Lincoln elected President of the United States, prompting many southern states to secede in expectation of Lincoln's freeing the slaves.
- April 12, 1861: The Civil War began when Confederate forces attacked a US military installation at Fort Sumter in South Carolina.
- February 1, 1861: Texas secedes from the United States, in support of its "sister slave-holding States." The Ordinance of Secession also listed the Federal government's inability to prevent Indian attacks, slave-stealing raids, and other border-crossing acts of "banditry" as reasons for secession. Texas governor, Sam Houston, was thrown out when he refused to back the move.

- February 18, 1861: US General David Ed Twiggs surrenders all US military posts in Texas.
- March 2, 1861: Texas joined the Confederate States of America.
- July 1861: Naval blockade of the South (Galveston).
- January 1862: Lincoln formally declares "war" by issuing an order authorizing the Union to launch unified and aggressive action against the Confederacy.
- April 1862: The Confederate Congress passed a conscription law that ordered all males 18-45 to be placed in service.
- August 1862: Battle of the Nueces, Kinney County, between Confederates and a contingency of German immigrants attempting to remain neutral in the war (also termed "Hill Country Unionists"). The Germans were heading to Mexico to avoid the draft and were stopped at the Nueces River (near Comfort). Some were shot immediately, some drowned in the river, and others were captured and later executed. This confrontation is also known as the Nueces Massacre.
- October 1862: Confederates capture and hang suspected Union sympathizers in Cooke County and surrounding areas. Forty die in the event, known as the Great Hanging in Gainesville.
- October 1862: Federal forces capture Galveston.
- January 1, 1863: Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation, formerly declaring all slaves free, including those in the Confederacy.
- January 1, 1863: Battle of Galveston. Confederates regain control of the city.
- March 1863: The First National Conscription Act (Union) was put in place, making men between the ages of 20 and

- 45 liable for military service. The act also allowed for men to "opt out" by paying a fee or finding a replacement.
- September 1863: Battle of Sabine Pass. A small unit led by Lieutenant Dick Dowling repulses a small union force under General William B. Franklin.
- November 1863: Federal army and navy occupy Brazos Island and Brownsville.
- March-May 1864: Texas troops amass in Northeast Texas around Marshall and Tyler to join Confederate action in the Red River campaign in Western Louisiana. Intense fighting at Mansfield, Pleasant Hill and other sites help repulse the federal invasion of General Nathaniel Banks.
- March 19, 1864: Federal attack on Laredo.
- July 30, 1864: Confederate forces re-occupy Brownsville.
- November 1864: Lincoln was re-elected.
- April 9, 1865: Surrender at Appomattox Courthouse by General Lee.
- April 14, 1865: President Lincoln was assassinated.
- May 10, 1865: Jefferson Davis was captured in Georgia.
- May 13, 1865: The last land battle of the Civil War, the Battle of Palmito Ranch in today's Brownsville, TX. (NOTE: This was a Confederate win.)
- June 2, 1865: General E. Kirby Smith, Confederate States of America, surrenders the Trans-Mississippi Department at Galveston.
- June 19, 1865: US General Gordon Granger, commander of US troops in Texas, arrives in Galveston and orders enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation, thereby ending slavery in Texas.

Continued on next page...

Celebrating American History through Texas' Eyes *Continued...*

Texas was primarily a "supply" state, providing men, munitions, and general supplies to the South during the war. This continued until mid-1863, when the Union captured the Mississippi River, making movement of cattle and men impossible. More than 70,000 Texans served in the Confederate Army and Texas regiments fought in every major battle throughout the war. Jefferson Davis greeted the first companies of Texas soldiers that reached Richmond, VA with "Texans! The troops of other states have their reputations to gain, but the sons of the defenders of the Alamo have theirs to maintain."

Although in the South, there were some dissenters in Texas; Union supporters. About 2,000 Texas men joined the Union Army, making a name for themselves on the other side of the battle line. And, of course, there was a sizable group that attempted to remain neutral.

Obviously, this is a very short synopsis. So much more is available online and in special museums. For the purposes of your ride, here are some highlights of four of these locations...

#1 San Antonio:

Historical Marker: Civil War Centennial 1861-1961. Located on the corner of East Commerce and North Main, on the "Main Plaza".

In February, you can be treated to a Civil War reenactment held at the Alamo. This dramatic event reenacts General David Twiggs surrender of all Union Forts in Texas to Colonel Ben McCulluch and his Texas troops.

Of course, San Antonio is one of the "tourist meccas" of the world, so there's no shortage of things to see and do here.

#2 Comfort:

Travel north on I-10/Highway 87 to Comfort.

The German-language Treue der Union (loyalty to the Union) Monument was dedicated on August 10, 1866 to commemorate those who died at the 1862 Nueces massacre. With the exception of those drowned in the Rio Grande, the remains of the deceased are buried at the site of the monument.

Not Civil War related, but of interest in Comfort...

The Old Tunnel Wildlife Management Area, just 13 miles north of Comfort, is home to thousands of transitory migrants... bats. The abandoned railroad tunnel was built in 1913 and has been home to the bats since 1942. Enjoy the site of thousands of bats emerging at dusk to go feed between May and October.

Comfort is known for their antique shopping, restaurants and B&Bs; and home to three of the 22 Texas Hill Country wineries. Seven buildings that were constructed when the town was first settled still remain. A large part of

the city has been designated a National Historic District, so there is a lot to see and do.

#3 Uvalde:

Travel west on Highway 27. Catch a left on San Antonio Street that continues on as FM 480 exiting Center Point. Just south of Camp Verde, FM 480 dead ends in Ranch Road 689/Highway 173. Take a left, heading toward Bandera.

Of course, you can stop in Bandera. There is so much to see and do there (it IS the Cowboy Capital of the world!)...



but we're on a Civil War trek through Texas so we'll continue through Bandera. Take a right on Highway 90, heading west toward Uvalde. Just south of Uvalde, on FM 140, there is a marker for Fort Inge. This was on the route of the Sibley Campaign (Union) from San Antonio to capture Fort Craig in New Mexico.

#4 Brackettville:

Continue on Highway 90 into Brackettville.

In Brackettville, the Sibley Campaign stopped at Fort Clark. The fort was home to a wide variety of uses, mostly related to Indian wars and a short stint as home to the Buffalo Soldiers. It officially closed in 1946. In 1971 it was converted to a resort/retirement center (Fort Clark Springs). The historic district of the fort is now on the National Register of Historic Places. They still hold their Fort Clark Days every March and they have a small museum honoring

the history of the fort (open weekends only).

Other places of interest near Brackettville...

If you're a camper and/or love the outdoors, there is the recently opened to the public Kickapoo Cavern State Park. Formerly the Seargeant Ranch, this more than 6,300 acres across the Edwards Plateau offers camping, hiking,



picnicking, biking, bird watching and... bat watching May-October. There is also a primitive cave tour available with reservations and only on Saturdays.

Alamo Village – the replica built for the 1959 John Wayne movie. Often preferred over the real thing, probably because there is also a complete western town, circa 1880s on one side and a Mexican village on the other side.

Seminole Scout Cemetery – About 100 Negro Seminole Scouts played a major role in protecting the Texas Frontier from hostile Indians. The cemetery was established in 1872 on the Fort Clark Reservation.

Numerous historical markers are all over Brackettville, including many related to the Civil War.

#5 Eagle Pass:

Next and final stop before heading back to San Antonio is Eagle Pass. Head out of Brackettville on Highway 131, picking up (left on) Highway 277.

Fort Duncan Museum – During the war, Fort Duncan protected the Southern trade with Mexico. Today, visitors can experience and understand the fort's role in the Civil War. Located in the old Commander's Headquarters in the southwest corner of Eagle Pass.

Also to see in Eagle Pass...

Shopping! Either cross the border at the International Bridge or in shops located in old Eagle Pass.

Gambling! The only casino in Texas – the Lucky Eagle Casino, operated by the Kickapoo Tribe south of Eagle Pass.

To return to San Antonio – it's a two-hour ride back up Highway 57. Total ride time is almost seven hours, so definitely plan to stay at least one night somewhere along the way and split the trip into two days of riding.



RIDE MAP