THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

FROM THE EDITOR

This month we are trying something new. Each member is encouraged to bring a guest to the February meeting. If a non member joins and mentions the name of a current member, that current member will get a $5 rebate on their 2015 BCWRT Annual dues.

CW Trust's 2014 Successes Bring To 40,000 Acres Total Land Saved

(February/March 2015 Civil War News)

WASHINGTON — The Civil War Trust closed out 2014 having protected more than 2,300 acres of battlefield land and bringing its grand total to 40,000 total acres saved at 122 sites in 20 states.

"A generation from now, I believe that 2014 will be remembered as the year when the conceivable scope of battlefield preservation exploded," said Trust President James Lighthizer.

"We demonstrated, in multiple ways, the tremendous level of public support for protection of hallowed ground as outdoor classrooms and living memorials to the sacrifices of America's military."

In its accounting of 2014, the Trust reported working with willing landowners and preservation partners to complete 45 transactions at 26 battlefields in 10 states.

Battlefield land was preserved at: Appomattox Court House, Va.; Bentonville, N.C.; Brandy Station, Va.; Cedar Creek, Va.; Cold Harbor, Va.; Davis Bridge, Tenn.; Franklin, Tenn.;

Also, Gettysburg, Pa.; Glendale, Va.; Glorieta Pass, N.M.; Harpers Ferry, W.Va.; Kelly's Ford, Va.; Mansfield, La.; Mill Springs, Ky.; North Anna, Va.; Petersburg, Va.; Port Republic, Va.; Rappahannock Station, Va.;

And, Ream's Station, Va.; Richmond, Ky.; Shepherdstown, W.Va.; Shiloh, Tenn.; South Mountain, Md.; Stones River, Tenn.; Trevilian Station, Va.; and Vicksburg, Miss.

Lighthizer said the Trust surpassed 40,000 acres with the October closing of the historic 654-acre Fontaine Farm at North Anna — a property encompassing nearly the entire scene of the May 23, 1864, combat.

In November, the Trust embarked on a large preservation effort at Chancellorsville, seeking to raise nearly $500,000 to save 479 acres associated with Confederate Lt. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson's flank attack.

Lighthizer said these types of landmark transactions were facilitated by the Trust's ongoing Campaign 150 sesquicentennial fundraising, which, in April, met its original $40 million goal and was extended to a $50 million target.

Last July, the Trust announced a $5.5 million national fundraising campaign to save a 4.1-acre tract in Gettysburg that played a key role in combat on July 1, 1863. The purchase, which was finalized Jan. 7, includes the Mary Thompson House, used during the rest of the battle as Gen. Robert E. Lee's headquarters.

What Lighthizer called the year's most significant developments in battlefield preservation came on Veterans Day when the Trust announced the launch of Campaign 1776 (www.campaign1776.org), the first-ever national initiative to preserve and interpret Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 battlefields.

Its first project involves assisting the State of New Jersey to protect four acres on the Princeton Battlefield, scene of George Washington's first victory over British forces on Jan. 3, 1777.

Campaign 1776 received a major boost on Dec. 12, when Congress passed legislation to extend federal matching grants for battlefield protection through 2021 and, for the first time, make sites from other conflicts eligible for what had previously been a Civil War-only program.

"The extension of this grant program mirrors our reasoning for the creation of Campaign 1776," Lighthizer said. "All of these American battlefields are sacred places — living memorials to this nation's brave soldiers, past, present and future — and it is up to us to ensure their protection."

He praised dozens of partners — from government entities to organizations and individuals and Trust members — for making possible the Trust's preservation success in 2014

"Our job would be a whole lot harder without the tireless efforts of these leaders, along with many of our elected officials who fight — tooth and nail — for programs essential to our efforts," he said.

The Trust also works to promote appreciation and understanding of the Civil War through educational programs and digital offerings. In 2014, its website, www.civilwar.org, received more than 5.8 million unique visits — an increase of 30 percent from 2013.

The War Department video series is a popular new online offering. Teachers

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benefit from two new programs: the Teachers Regiment, a virtual community of professionals, guides and other public historians working to raise the level of history instruction nationwide, and the Field Trip Fund, a scholarship fund to assist teachers in planning and paying for student trips to historic sites.

150 years after sinking, Confederate submarine Hunley slowly reveals its secrets

Foxnews, January 30, 2015

Scientists may finally solve the mystery behind the sinking of Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley, the first sub in history to sink an enemy warship.

A century and a half after it sank and a decade and a half after it was raised, scientists are finally getting a look at the H.L. Hunley's hull. Experts hope to solve the mystery of why the famed hand-cranked submarine sank during the Civil War.

"It's like unwrapping a Christmas gift after 15 years. We have been wanting to do this for many years now," said Paul Mardikian, senior conservator on the Hunley project in North Charleston, S.C.

The Hunley sank the Union blockade ship USS Housatonic off Charleston in February 1864 as the South tried to break the Union blockade strangling the Confederacy. But the sub and its eight-man crew never made it back to shore.

The Hunley was discovered off the South Carolina coast in 1995, raised in 2000 and brought to a conservation lab in North Charleston.

It was covered with a hardened gunk of encrusted sand, sediment and rust that scientists call concretion.

Last May, it was finally ready to be bathed in a solution of sodium hydroxide to loosen the encrustation. Then in August, scientists using small air-powered chisels and dental tools began the laborious job of removing the coating.

Now about 70 percent of the outside hull has been revealed. The last remaining areas have been described as "forensic hot spots."

Friends of the Hunley, a group dedicated to conserving and eventually exhibiting the vessel, says that the remaining parts of the vessel's exterior should be revealed during the coming weeks. The team of conservators from Clemson University has already made some interesting discoveries, such as an area of the hull where the metal surface is stamped with the letters "C N." Experts are investigating the meaning of the stamp, which is thought to represent the foundry where the Hunley's iron was forged.

Mardikian said the exposed hull indeed has revealed some things that may help solve the mystery of the sinking.

"I would have to lie to you if I said we had not, but it's too early to talk about it yet," he said. "We have a submarine that is encrypted. It's like an Enigma machine."

He said the clues will be studied closely as scientists try to piece together what happened to the 40-foot submarine that night in 1864.

The Hunley had a 16-foot spar tipped with a charge of black powder that was exploded, sinking the Housatonic. After close examination of the spar two years ago, scientists speculated the crew was knocked unconscious by the shock wave of the explosion.

When the Hunley was first raised, scientists speculated the crew may have run out of air before they could crank back to the coast. Scientists have also discussed the possibility the sub may have been sunk by an open hatch.

The Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley is seen at conservation lab in North Charleston, S.C., on Jan. 27, 2015 photo. (AP Photo/Bruce Smith, file)

After the Hunley was raised, the sand and the silt and the remains of the crew in the interior were removed.

In April 2004, thousands of men in Confederate gray and Union blue walked in a procession with the crew's coffins four miles from Charleston's waterfront Battery to Magnolia Cemetery in what has been called the last Confederate funeral.

Fascinating Civil War artifacts are still being unearthed. A cleanup of the Congaree River in Columbia, SC, for example, may lead to the recovery of Confederate munitions seized and then dumped by Gen. William T. Sherman's Union army.

Chinese in the Civil War

BY PHILIP CHIN, Asian Week

July 3rd honors the third and decisive day of the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863 that turned the course of the Civil War. It also honors the life of Union soldier John Tommy who lost his life that day.

Everyone knows whites and African Americans fought and died in the Civil War but few know about those that didn't fit into this standard mold of the Civil War soldier or sailor. Military records and photographic evidence discovered by historians such as Ruthanne Lum McCunn and numerous Civil War buffs including Gordon Kwok, webmaster of the "Association to Commemorate the Chinese Serving in the American Civil War" provide rare glimpses of these forgotten men. So who were some of these men that served the Union and the Confederacy?

Edward Day Cohata was adopted in China by sea captain, Sergeant S. Day and his wife when he was around five-years-old. His last name was adopted from Cohata, the name of the ship that Captain Day commanded at the time. After Captain Day retired in 1857, young Edward was raised and educated in Gloucester, Massachusetts. He joined the 23rd Regiment Massachusetts Voluntary Infantry and fought his first battle at Drury's Bluff in Virginia on May 16, 1864, one of the battles in the Siege of Petersburg. Although unwounded in the battle he was described as having picked up seven bullet holes through his clothes. At the brutal Battle of Cold Harbor when seven thousand Union soldiers died in just half an hour on June 3, 1864 he had an even luckier escape when a bullet grazed his scalp and permanently parted his hair.

Edward Cohata distinguished himself by saving the life of fellow soldier William E. Low. Severely wounded and helpless after taking a bullet through the jaw, Low was taken to safety from stray bullets and shrapnel behind some sheltering rocks and trees and was later retrieved and taken to the hospital by Cohata. Low continued to express his gratitude even at their last meeting in 1928 when nearly blind and completely deaf he still somehow managed to recognize his old Civil War rescuer.

Cohata rejoined the US Army after his regiment disbanded after the Civil War. He was stationed at Fort Randall in Dakota Territory where he met and married a Norwegian immigrant with whom he had six children. Among his other duties he guarded the captured Sioux chieftain Sitting Bull, whom he described as "friendly" and "kind." It was only after he'd retired and tried to claim a homestead in 1912 that he discovered that he wasn't considered an American citizen entitled to a homestead. Because he'd thought his Civil War service and honorable discharge had made him a citizen already he'd voted in every American election since then with no objections. The problem was that he hadn't filed the papers needed to claim citizenship before the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 that specifically forbade Chinese from becoming US citizens.

Edward Cohata

To add further insult to injury Cohata was also deemed ineligible for the Army and Civil War veteran pensions that he'd earned in his thirty years of military service. Edward Cohata unsuccessfully fought the battle to gain US citizenship until his death in 1935, writing letters to many prominent people on behalf of his case. It is through these letters that we know many of the details of his life story.

The eldest sons of Chang and Eng Bunker, the famous "Siamese Twins" served in the Confederate Army. Chang and Eng were ethnic Chinese from what is now Thailand. After their stint with P.T. Barnum's circus and exhibitions where their status as conjoined twins was shown to the paying public they'd become wealthy enough to buy farmland in North Carolina and became naturalized US citizens. The twins married two white sisters much to the horror of the women's parents and the local community but they eventually had 22 children between them. At the start of

the Civil War the Bunker family owned 20 slaves and were staunchly Confederate. Christopher Wren Bunker, the eldest son of Chang, joined the Virginia cavalry in September 1863. He participated in Confederate cavalry raids into Pennsylvania and West Virginia where he was wounded and captured in the summer of 1864. The treatment of prisoners of war was poor on both sides and at least once Christopher was reduced to eating a rat. He was exchanged for a Union prisoner of war in March 1865 and finally made it home in April 1865 just a couple of weeks after General Lee surrendered.

Stephen Decatur Bunker, the eldest son of Eng Bunker, enlisted in the same Virginia cavalry regiment as his cousin in July 1864. He escaped the battle in West Virginia where Christopher was captured but was wounded in a battle in Virginia in September 1864. Despite his wounds he continued fighting and was reported by family lore to have been wounded a second time before being captured shortly before the war ended. The cousins continued to farm their family land after the war. Christopher Wren Bunker's papers, kept by the University of North Carolina, include the only known letters written by a Chinese American veteran during the Civil War. Nobody knows the Chinese name of John Tommy or John Tomney as he was also known but he was mentioned in several newspapers in both North and South because he became a Confederate prisoner of war in 1862. He'd enlisted at the age of 18, a new immigrant not knowing much, if any, English at all, in the 70th Regiment New York Infantry on May 15, 1861, one month to the day after the war started. He must have

learned the language fast though because he quickly became known as a great wit in camp.

In May 1862 he was captured by the Confederates in Virginia. The capture of a "Chinaman" was mentioned in both Fredericksburg and Richmond newspapers although they didn't name him. In an additional detail supplied by the chaplain of the 4th Texas Regiment the captured "Celestial" was an uncooperative prisoner and was beaten. If so, the beating had remarkably little effect on Tommy. As the New York World of July 9, 1863 reported, "He was brought before Gen. Magruder who, surprised at his appearance and color, asked him was he a mulatto, Indian, or what? When Tommy told him he was from China, Magruder was very much amused, and asked him how much he would take to join the Confederate army. "Not unless you would make me a Brigadier General." said Tommy, to the great delight of the secesh officers, who treated him very kindly and sent him to Fredericksburg." He was eventually transferred to the notorious Libby Prison in Richmond, Virginia where overcrowding and unsanitary conditions led to high death rates among the prisoners. Tommy was eventually paroled and spent his recovery time in New York City caring for sick and wounded soldiers and keeping their spirits up.

John Tommy later rejoined his regiment and quite remarkably in an otherwise all-white regiment was promoted to corporal; a measure of the respect he must have earned from his fellow soldiers and their officers. He fought in the bloody Battles of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and finally at the most famous battle of the Civil War, Gettysburg. His company, with a

normal paper strength of around 80-100 men, went into action already reduced to just 28 men, 20 of whom ended up dead or wounded at Gettysburg. Among the dead was Corporal John Tommy after he'd lost both his legs to cannon fire and bled to death on July 3rd. President Lincoln later dedicated his Gettysburg Address to soldiers such as John Tommy who gave their lives that their nation might live. and famously resolved, "…that these dead shall not have died in vain- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

How the U.S. Civil War led to 'birth of Canada'

Sir John A. Macdonald used the war to leverage both the timing and manner of Canada's Confederation, argues historian John Boyko.

By Jim Coyle, The Star, February 19, 2015

On one of the annual trips he led for his Lakefield, Ont., high-school students to Washington, D.C., and the blood-sanctified soil of Gettysburg, John Boyko came away with the most wonderful of souvenirs. A friend. And an idea.

It was in the early 1990s, he recalled last week in an interview with the Star, that he met a Gettysburg guide named Ed Guy. "Ed Guy the guide," Boyko laughs. "He was the guy who made Gettysburg come alive" for the students.

For Boyko, a teacher, historian and currently an administrator at Lakefield College School, Guy also brought Gettysburg closer to home than most Canadians would imagine possible.

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"He came out with this little pamphlet, a very small pamphlet, that listed Canadians at Gettysburg," Boyko recalls.

"And I said, 'Well, that's fascinating. I didn't know there were any Canadians at Gettysburg.' And that got me interested in it. As I was reading more about it, I thought, 'Wow, Canada was involved way more than I thought.' "

For the last two decades, even while researching other books, the subject enthralled him. Now, in time for the 150th anniversary of the 1863 Battle of Gettysburg, and thanks to the seed planted by Ed Guy, Boyko tells the story of how influential he believes the U.S. Civil War to have been on Canada in his new book *Blood and Daring: How Canada Fought the American Civil War and Forged a Nation.*

"Many people don't believe that Canada had any role in the Civil War," Boyko says. In fact, 40,000 Canadians fought in it (at a ratio of roughly 50 in northern regiments for every one in a Confederate regiment). Twenty-nine Canadians won the Congressional Medal of Honor in the Civil War. Canadian Civil War vets are buried in Arlington National Cemetery. "Standing in the honour guard with Ulysses S. Grant when Robert E. Lee surrendered was a Canadian," says Boyko.

While the fighting was done south of the border, a good deal of scheming, planning and fundraising was done on this side, he says.

Confederate meetings were held in Canada, arms were supplied from this side of the border, and Canadians profited from the war through the traffic of both warring sides in its maritime ports.

Birth of Canada

Most significantly, Boyko argues, Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, used the war to leverage both the timing and manner of Canada's Confederation, and to demonstrate how important it was to create our own system, different from the U.S.

"It wouldn't have come about when it did or how it did if the Civil War wasn't around," Boyko says. "The Civil War was really responsible for the rebirth of the United States and the birth of Canada."

Perhaps in a nod to the inspiration of Ed Guy down in Gettysburg, Boyko spins the tale through the experience of six key "guides" — the likes of Sir John A., newspaperman and legislator George Brown, Confederate agent and head of the south's so-called "Canadian cabinet," Jacob Thompson, and fugitive slave John Anderson, who had made his way to Canada from Missouri along the Underground Railroad.

Anderson's story in the years just before war broke out is particularly pivotal. After escaping the U.S., he was eventually arrested near Brantford and the original Missouri warrant issued on his escape was used by the Americans to reclaim him via extradition. But after labyrinthine legal proceedings, played out at Toronto's Osgoode Hall and elsewhere, Anderson was freed. And the Underground Railroad rolled on.

"The determination of this judge of whether to allow John Anderson to be extradited to the States or not was the entire future of the Underground Railroad," Boyko says. "If they sent him back, it meant Americans could come up and arrest and take back every one of the blacks who were here as a result of the Underground Railroad and that would end it.

"So Canada was involved in the Civil War because we were involved in the Underground Railroad even before the Civil War began."

Toronto rebel hotel

After the fighting broke out, much Confederate activity went on in Canada under the leadership of Jacob Thompson. In Toronto, the centre of Confederate activity was the Queen's Hotel, which occupied the land now home to the Royal York; in Montreal, it was the St. Lawrence Hall. In Halifax, locals gave aid and succour to either side willing to pay the freight. "One of the people who was doing that was a guy called Alexander Keith," says Boyko, "who we know for other reasons now."

"(Thompson) sent raids down into the United States. They burned down part of New York City at one point; they set fires simultaneously to a number of theatres and hotels up and down Broadway. They tried to help (Confederate) prisoners at a camp in Sandusky, Ohio, escape. They disrupted the Republican national convention in Chicago that was going to get Lincoln renominated."

Boyko concludes that, while the War of 1812 was more of a British colonial war than a Canadian war, the Civil War — in its consequences — "was very much a Canadian war."

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Sir John MacDonald – Bing photo

"Britain at that time had had enough of us," he says. "We really had to stand up, unite ourselves to save ourselves. Therefore, if we're going to look at a war responsible for the creation of Canada, it was the Civil War."

In Boyko's telling, the pivotal decision for both the United States and Canada about what each was to become as a people "was made at precisely the same time. The Americans had to decide whether they would live up to their creed: 'Are all men created equal or are they not? Will we live as one country or will we split into many?'

"And Canada at that point, as a direct result of the Civil War and the threats (of U.S. expansionists) that were being made on Canada through the Civil War, had to decide: 'Will we become Americans, because it would have been dead easy? Or will we defend ourselves by becoming Canadians?'"

Some American historians have been as surprised as Canadians likely will be to learn of this country's involvement in the Civil War, the author says.

"I think the Americans are in for as much of a surprise as Canadians are," Boyko says. "I think Canadians who are not immersed in history will be absolutely shocked by what an enormous role the Civil War played in forming Canada."

Six Southern Unionist Strongholds During the Civil War

By Evan Andrews, History.com, January 13, 2015

It wasn't unusual for Americans to have conflicting loyalties during the Civil War. Northerners were often sympathetic to the Confederate cause, and many poor, non-slaveholding regions of the South were equally reluctant to join the rebellion against the United States. These "Southern Yankee" hotbeds supplied thousands of troops to the North, and some even went so far as to declare neutrality or secede from the Confederacy altogether. Below, learn the unusual stories behind six Civil War-era Southern territories where Unionist sentiment was most widespread.

1. Scott County, Tennessee

In June 1861, Tennessee became the last state to separate from the Union after voting in favor of secession. The lion's share of the opposition to the vote came courtesy of the flinty residents of East Tennessee, who were mostly small farmers and mountain people who viewed the affluent, slave-owning planters in the West with contempt. Nowhere was anti-secession sentiment stronger than in remote Scott County, where Unionist Tennessee Senator and future President Andrew Johnson gave a speech just before the referendum. Spurred on by Johnson's claim that "it is not the free men of the north that [secessionists] are fearing most but the free men South," some 95 percent of Scott's citizens voted against the measure—more than in any other part of the state. Later that year, Scott's county court carried out its own act of rebellion when it approved a resolution to separate from the rest of Tennessee and form the "Free and Independent State of Scott." The region went on to become one of the main sources of volunteers for the Union's 7th Tennessee Infantry Regiment, and served as the site of several small but bitter guerilla skirmishes. Amazingly, Scott County would remain an unofficial sovereign entity for 125 years until 1986, when it was readmitted to the state of Tennessee by a formal resolution.

2. West Virginia

Virginia was home to the capital of the Confederacy and supplied many of its most famous generals, but it also boasted one of Dixie's most ardent contingents of Unionists. The Old Dominion had long been politically split between wealthy plantation owners in the East and working class farmers and miners in the West, and the tumult of the Civil War only drove an even bigger wedge between the groups. Most Westerners didn't own slaves—only 4 percent of Virginia's bondsmen were located there—and they were even more fed up with state appropriations for education and infrastructure, which tended to favor the East. The tensions came to a head shortly after Virginia's secession in May 1861, when a group of Western politicians began calling for a "New Virginia" that would remain loyal to the Union. Following a pair of meetings in the town of Wheeling that May and June, the Westerners formed the so-called

Restored Government of Virginia and elected a new governor. The United States was quick to recognize the movement, and after a public referendum, the new state of West Virginia was admitted to the Union in June 1863. Many West Virginians were still split over the Civil War—the state supplied roughly as many troops to the South as it did the North—but the breakaway was nevertheless a major political coup for the United States. Virginia would later try to repeal West Virginia's statehood and annex some of its counties after the war, only to be overruled by the U.S. Supreme Court.

3. Winston County, Alabama

Legend has it that the hill people of Winston County were so opposed to the formation of the Confederacy that they seceded from Alabama and set up their own postal system and army under the banner of the "Free State of Winston." In truth, the sparsely populated northern county never separated from its home state. It was, however, one of the strongest pockets of pro-Union activity in the Deep South. Most of Winston's subsistence farmers didn't own slaves, and they saw Alabama's secession as an illegal act. Christopher Sheats, the county delegate to the state's secession convention, was one of the only a few who voted against the ordinance, and he was so outspoken that he was briefly thrown in jail on charges of treason. Shortly after the measure passed, Winston's residents held a famous meeting at a local tavern and floated the idea of breaking ties with Alabama. While they never formally seceded, many of the county's young men hid in the hills and forests to avoid conscription by the Confederate army, and others fled north and fought for the Union. By the war's

end, Winston had supplied twice as many soldiers to the North as it had the South.

4. Jones County, Mississippi

The story of Jones County, Mississippi's Unionist activities has long been clouded by myth and legend, but most historians agree that this small, wooded backwater was the site of some particularly violent resistance to the Confederacy. The pro-U.S. movement in Jones first crystallized a few years into the Civil War, when the county became a haven for young men who had grown disillusioned with the Confederate cause and deserted the army. Led by a mercurial local named Newton Knight, the runaways organized into a Unionist guerilla outfit called the Knight Company and took to harassing nearby Confederate units.

Newton Night – Library of Congress

Whether Knight and his band were a principled resistance group or mere bandits has been a matter of debate, but there's no doubt they succeeded in stirring the political pot. The group effectively disabled the county government, and at one point, its activities sparked rumors that Jones County had seceded from the Confederacy and was flying the stars and stripes over its courthouse. The Knight Company's disruptive reign continued until April 1864, when Confederate Colonel Robert Lowry used bloodhounds to track the guerillas and drive them from their

hideout in the swamps. Newton Knight later resurfaced, however, and after the war, he assisted in U.S. reconstruction efforts in Mississippi.

5. Searcy County, Arkansas

Even as Arkansas joined in the Confederate march to war, many counties in the Northern part of the state remained ambivalent about separating from the Unites States. Isolated Searcy County was one of the few districts whose delegate originally voted against secession (the vote was later changed in the interest of unanimity), and the mountain community was teeming with Union sentiment. In November 1861, Confederate authorities arrested several dozen Searcy County natives after they were discovered to be part of a clandestine, pro-Union organization known as the Arkansas Peace Society. The prisoners were branded as traitors and marched to Little Rock, where most agreed to join the Confederate army in exchange for clemency. Some later deserted, and other Searcy County men fled north or hid out in the Ozarks to avoid conscription by the Confederacy. Still others switched sides and joined up with the Union, and the region eventually supplied as many as six companies' worth of troops for the U.S. war effort. Like many backwoods communities, Searcy was also the site of intense guerilla activity. As the war progressed, it played host to bloody skirmishes and looting by both pro-Union and pro-Confederate bushwhackers.

6. Texas Hill Country

Texas only supplied roughly 2,000 troops to the North compared to more than 70,000 for the Confederacy, yet historians estimate that as many as a third of its citizens continued to support the Unites States after

secession. This region of south central Texas was home to some of the Lone Star State's most hardline Unionists. Its residents included a large contingent of German immigrants, many of them liberal intellectuals who had fled their home country after a failed revolution in 1848. The German transplants typically considered slavery immoral, and many refused to take an oath of loyalty to the Confederacy or join its army. The Hill Country's resistance put a strain on its relationship with its Confederate neighbors, leading to acts of brutal violence on both sides. The most notorious incident came in August 1862, when around 65 German Unionists tried to flee Texas for Mexico, where they planned to sail for U.S.-held New Orleans. When they stopped to camp along the Nueces River, the Unionists fell under ambush by around 100 Confederate cavalrymen. Nineteen Germans were killed in the initial attack, and several others were later executed as traitors to the Southern cause.