Overview: Meet the Maxeys
Sam Bell Maxey was a successful lawyer, military veteran, and a two-term U.S. Senator. Sam Bell and Marilda Maxey completed their impressive home in Paris, Texas, in 1868, during the period of Reconstruction. All who lived and worked at Maxey House lived through a socially, politically, and economically chaotic time in Texas history.

U.S. History Since 1877 TEKS
(3) History. The student understands the political, economic, and social changes in the United States from 1877 to 1898. The student is expected to:
   (B) analyze economic issues such as industrialization, the growth of railroads, the growth of labor unions, farm issues, the cattle industry boom, the rise of entrepreneurship, free enterprise, and the pros and cons of big business.

(29) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:
   (A) use a variety of both primary and secondary valid sources to acquire information and to analyze and answer historical questions;
   (B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing and contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations, making predictions, drawing inferences, and drawing conclusions;
   (D) use the process of historical inquiry to research, interpret, and use multiple types of sources of evidence;
   (H) use appropriate skills to analyze and interpret social studies information such as maps, graphs, presentations, speeches, lectures, and political cartoons.

Materials
- Historical images for display/distribution
- Graphic organizers
Vocabulary

- **artifact**: something made and used by people in the past.
- **general**: a high-ranking senior military officer in the Army
- **Reconstruction**: a period after the Civil War (1865-1877) during which efforts were made to reunite the divided country and determine how freed slaves would be integrated into American society
- **senator**: an elected member of a state or national assembly who vote on laws. Prior to the passage of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1913, senators such as Sam Bell Maxey were elected or chosen by members of each state’s legislature rather than voters.

**Historical Context**

Sam Bell Maxey was a successful lawyer, Confederate general, and a two-term U.S. senator. Sam Bell and Marilda Maxey completed their impressive home on Church Street in 1868, during the period of Reconstruction. This was the time after the Civil War (1865-1877) during which the U.S. government attempted to rebuild the south. The government controlled southern state leadership and enforced slave emancipation and citizenship rights. Many white southerners and former slaveowners were angered by the U.S. Army’s occupation of the south. Former slaves, though free, were left without property, food, land, or jobs after the war. Reconstruction efforts focused on ensuring former slaves their citizenship rights like the rights to vote and marry, attempts to ensure safety and fair work contracts, and organizing education for freed peoples of all ages.

The Maxey’s African American domestic staff may have included a butler, maid, and cook, who lived on site. Household servants began their day as early as 6 a.m. and worked until 10 p.m. every day of the week. A cook for a smaller household would probably wash and mend laundry and mind the children in addition to their cooking duties throughout the day. Other workers tended to the outdoor work of the estate including care of the horses, livestock, landscaping, flower gardens, and vegetable gardens. A servant named Nancy Newby and her husband John worked for the Maxeys from at least 1871 to 1880. Nancy had been formerly enslaved by the Maxey family and had traveled with them from Kentucky to Texas. In 1871, Nancy made a total of $35.65 for the year. John made less money and took out loans from the Maxey family. While they worked at Maxey House, these staff lived in the servant quarters.

**Activity: At Home with the Maxeys**

*15 minutes*

Display/distribute the **resource images** of rooms at the Maxey home.

Ask the following questions for discussion as students analyze the photos:

- What details in the photos tell you about the Maxey’s social standing? Give examples.
- What activities might have taken place in these rooms?
- What similarities and differences do you see between the Maxey house’s rooms and rooms in today’s houses?
- Why are historical photographs valuable?
Activity: Meet Mr. Maxey
20 minutes

Display/distribute the biography of Sam Bell Maxey. Read it aloud or ask for volunteer readers.

After reading, discuss these questions as a class:
- What careers did Sam Bell Maxey have?
- Why did Maxey have to ask the U.S. president for a pardon after the Civil War? Do you think this was fair? Why or why not?
- What do you feel was Maxey’s most important accomplishment? Why?
- How does the Maxey State Historic Site help tell the story of Texas?

Have students create a timeline of the major milestones in Sam Bell Maxey’s life.

Primary Source Activity: In Their Own Words

Display/distribute Maxey’s 1862 and 1865 handwritten letters, transcripts, 1865 presidential proclamation, and analysis organizer. Tell students that the 1862 letter was written during his military service in the Confederate Army. The 1865 letter was written after the close of the Civil War in a petition for a presidential pardon. The 1865 presidential proclamation was issued by Andrew Johnson.

Preview the letters and transcripts including salutations, dates, audience, and any other relevant information. Ask students to pay attention as they read each letter to Maxey’s use of language. Is it formal or casual? What accounts for the difference? What role does audience play in how Maxey wrote his letters? What was the impact of the presidential proclamation?

Have students work individually or in pairs to complete the graphic organizer. Share responses and any questions these primary resources may raise.

1862 Maxey Letter Answers:
1. his wife Marilda
2. It was the longest one. It showed Marilda had remembered his birthday
3. a skirmish broke out
4. They are both sick.
5. in Chattanooga, rain
6. “the sacred cause of liberty”
7. “a life of slavery”
8. They will have enough money for a good life.
1865 Maxey Letter Answers:
1. President Andrew Johnson
2. It was the practice of his office not to write letters for men who were educated at West Point.
3. when the Civil War broke out
4. He was born and raised in a southern state and felt he needed to support that state in the war.
5. practicing law
6. to be pardoned so his political and civil rights could be restored; to be allowed to practice law
7. to continue to work for law and order and the restoration of harmony
8. Paris, Texas

Activity: Mapping Paris, Texas
35 minutes


Preview the map, including the title, subtitle, key, map inset, and any other additional information.

Ask students to look at the map to answer the following questions:

- Find South Church Street and East Washington Streets on the map.
  - What building is located at the southwest corner? (Maxey House)
Look at the map key information on the left side of the map, A-14.

- How many churches are listed? (9 churches, A-I)
- How many railroad depots were in Paris in 1885? (2 depots, P and Q)
- Where could the people of Paris buy boots and shoes for themselves and saddles for their horses? (Paris Dry Goods, 5; Wortham & Co., 7; John Straub, 11)
- What do you notice about one of the churches? Why was it listed like this? (specifically listed as a “colored” church, I.; segregation)
- Where could the people of Paris go to buy furniture? (J.W. Rodgers, 3; Thomas Hardware Co., 9)
- Where could the people of Paris go for entertainment? (Opera House, N)
- What were the names of hotels in Paris? (Peterson Hotel, R; Lamar Hotel, S)
- What industries are represented on the map? (gas, Z; oil, 1)
Assessment
Evaluate student work for completeness and understanding.

Additional Resources & Extensions

The Portal to Texas History
https://texashistory.unt.edu

The Handbook of Texas Online
https://tshaonline.org/handbook

Library of Congress
https://loc.gov
  • Web Guide—African American Sites in the Digital Collections
    “1861-1877: Civil War and Reconstruction”
    http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/afam/afam-1861.html

Facing History and Ourselves
www.facinghistory.org
  • Race in U.S. History
    https://www.facinghistory.org/topics/race-us-history
  • The Reconstruction Era
    https://www.facinghistory.org/reconstruction-era

National Park Service
  • Reconstruction Era National Historical Park
    https://www.nps.gov/reer/index.htm
  • The Era of Reconstruction 1861-1900 Theme Study
    https://www.nps.gov/reer/index.htm
Zinn Education Project
- Teach Reconstruction Campaign
  https://www.zinedproject.org/campaigns/teach-reconstruction/
- If We Knew Our History
  https://www.zinedproject.org/if-we-knew-our-history/
- Related Resources
  https://www.zindedproject.org/collection/reconstruction/

Teaching Tolerance – Teaching Hard History
- A Framework for Teaching American Slavery
  https://www.tolerance.org/frameworks/teaching-hard-history/american-slavery

Digital History
- Reconstruction
  http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraID=8&smtID=1

National Endowment for the Humanities EDSITEment!
- The Battle Over Reconstruction curriculum unit
  https://edsitement.neh.gov/curriculum-unit/battle-over-reconstruction
Activity Image: Maxey House
Activity Image: Maxey House Library
Activity Image: Maxey House Parlor
Activity Image: Sam Bell, Marilda, and Dora Maxey
Activity Resource: Sam Bell Maxey Brief Biography

Sam Bell Maxey was born in Kentucky in 1825. He graduated from West Point Military Academy and fought in the U.S. Army during the Mexican-American War. After the war, he left the army and returned to Kentucky, where he joined his father’s law firm. Sam married Marilda Cass Denton in 1853. In 1857, the family moved to Paris, Texas. They raised an adopted daughter, Dora Bell Maxey, and their great-nephew, Sam Bell Maxey Long.

Sam Bell Maxey joined the Confederate Army at the start of the Civil War. He rose to the rank of major general. He was Commander of Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) and Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Confederate States of America from 1863 to 1865. When the Confederate Army surrendered to the Union Army, the Confederate Army officers were stripped of their rights as citizens and were considered to be traitors to the United States.

At the end of the war, Sam Bell Maxey had to ask the President Andrew Johnson for a pardon, or forgiveness, in order to recover his property and rights as a citizen of the reunited country. The governors of Texas and Kentucky each sent recommendations for Sam Bell Maxey. Ulysses S. Grant, former commanding general of the Union Army and Maxey’s former West Point classmate, also supported him. In 1867, Sam Bell Maxey received his pardon and returned to his work as a lawyer.

The next year, Sam Bell and Marilda built their beautiful home on Church Street. They entertained many important people from Paris and around Texas in their home. From 1874-1886, Sam Bell Maxey represented Texas in Washington, D.C. as a U.S. Senator. Known as a hard worker, he had an influence on Native American affairs, railroads, and post offices.
Activity Resource: 1885 Bird’s Eye View Map of Paris, Texas
Activity Resource: 1866 Letter of Recommendation for Sam Bell Maxey

Citation: Case Files of Applications from Former Confederates for Presidential Pardons, Amnesty Papers, available online at Fold3 (Accessed 12/15/2019) https://www.fold3.com/image/24309320.

To Dr. Maxey resigned from the Regular Army in 1847 and afterwards settled in Texas. Know him well as a soldier at West Point and afterwards as a captain in the Mexican War. I believe him to be well worthy of executive clemency and heartily recommend it.

U. S. Grant
Hi. Ln.
Washington D.C.
Jan 15th 1866.

Received from
Department of Justice
December 18, 1894.

P & k 464285.
In camp near Corinth, Mississippi
May 5, 1862

My dear wife,

I received your letter of March 30th postmarked April 2 addressed to me at Chattanooga yesterday.

Your letters are always most welcome, and this one particularly so. It is the longest one I have received from you. I noticed the date and thought to myself, does she know it is my birthday? I saw in a little nook of cross lining that you did.

I was ordered from Chattanooga here at my request, and was sent with a fine Brigade 24 miles north of here on the Mobile and Ohio Rail Road to Bethel.

I wrote to you from there, and again prepared another letter to you from Bethel, but before I sent it got with some skirmishing and everything was in a bustle for a day or two and I did not send it. Day before yesterday I came back here under orders.

Yesterday I got my old Regiment in my Brigade and a better satisfied set of boys you never saw. I also found Will Hunter and he had applied to Gen. Vandoon to be transferred to my command which the General consented to, and the transfer was made. When he comes over I shall use him as a mounted Courier.

I have been very uneasy about Ben. He has got well, but has not got away from Chattanooga yet. Major Sorriss has not yet joined me having been sick. I got a dispatch from him dated May 2 from Atlanta. I immediately replied directing him to bring all we left from Chattanooga, which I hope he will do.

It is the prevailing belief that a heavy battle will be fought here in the course of a few days. I think it would have taken place before now had it not been for the miserable rainy weather. It rained pretty much all day yesterday and all last night, and it is now about as muddy as it can well be. I have felt very much depressed on account of the sad news of poor Rice, that reached me for the first time day before yesterday.

I had got here the evening before, and had got leave for the first time in near two months to be absent from camp a day, setting out aiming to hunt him out and get him with me if possible. I met Poindexter who told me of his fate at Elkhorn. I saw Will Hunter who confirmed it.

He was a brave boy and died gloriously the field of battle in defense of the sacred cause of liberty. A death such as his is infinitely preferable to a life of slavery.

No stain rests upon his name, I may meet the same fate. One thing you may rest assured of, you are not the wife of a coward. One result of this battle will unquestionably have a tremendous influence upon the destiny of the Southern Confederacy.
I have not doubted success. The clouds of adversity have been lowering over the South since February. City after City has fallen, the Mississippi now is virtually in their hands, and yet I do not despair of ultimate success.

We may be reduced to poverty – even now millions upon millions of dollars of cotton have been consigned to this cause by patriotic citizens, and yet the prize to be gained is of so much more value that the loss is insignificant.

Years may be consumed in the effort, but if the people of the South are true to themselves, they must conquer.

If the country could be rid of cravens and skylarks, we could gain our independence in a year. When I will get to see you again and my pleasant home I know not.

I think I will be better able to appreciate home after this war is over than ever. In the meantime be of good cheer. You need have no fears if I live of having enough money to do you. I have two hundred dollars for you now, but do not know when I will get a chance to send it.

I am living economically and will send all my spare money to you every opportunity. I hope the $300 I sent to you by Dr. Segons got through safe. After saving for yourself what you need, pay my little debts first. You are mistaken about our not having anything after payment of our debts.

It is true the hard times have greatly interfered with me, but if I live I can pay every dollar and have a very pretty property. Let Jim have some money as he needs it. He is a good boy and should be paid.

Tell the rest of the family that I have not had spare time to write, and one letter to you will do as much good as the dozen of the same date. When I get time, I will write. Keep in good spirits. I hope to write you again after the battle is over.

As ever yours affectionately
S. B. Maxey
His Excellency,
Andrew Johnson,
President of the U. States
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to present herewith my application for Special Pardon, with the endorsement of A. J. Hamilton, Prov. Govr. of Texas, together with his letter saying that it “is a rule of action in his office not to recommend any man who was educated at West Point to the President of the U.S. for pardon.”

This is the only objection assigned, and I have no reason to believe that any other exists.

I respectfully submit that I was born and raised in a slave state, appointed a Cadet therefrom, and never lived out of a slave state, and for years before the act of secession of Texas, had been a private citizen. When the War broke out, and not till then, did I hold any position, Civil or Military, under the late Confederacy.

I acted with my State. In this I am neither more nor less guilty than the mass of the people South. The fact that I was educated at West Point, did not, in my judgement, require me to take up arms against my State. Whether this view was right or wrong, it was honest.

By the 4th par. of a proclamation of Gov. Hamilton, issued Sept. 8th (net) I, together with all other lawyers falling within any of the exceptions of the President’s Proclamation of May 29th last, are prohibited from practicing law.

A careful comparison of the Constitution, the proclamation, and my parole, has led me to conclude, that my Political rights are held in abeyance, subject to the future action of the President, or of the Courts, and that I am not to be disturbed in my civil pursuits and the ordinary avocations of life, pending the determination of my political rights. In the note of the Govr. returning my application, he leaves my case to the direct action of the President.
Activity Resource: Transcription of Letter from Sam Bell Maxey to President Andrew Johnson [p.2]

I therefore respectfully ask of the President,
1\textsuperscript{st} That I be pardoned, and restored to my Political and Civil rights.
2\textsuperscript{nd} That I be, (in the event that he does not pardon me,) permitted and authorized to pursue my profession of the law.

In conclusion I beg to say, that whatever decision may be made by the President, I shall not cease to exert my influence in favor of law and order, and the restoration of harmony.

I went into the war in good faith, and the South having fairly yielded, after a submission of the issues to the sword, I consider it my honorable duty, faithfully to abide the award.

I have the honor to be, Mr. President, Most Respy. Your obt. Servt. S. B. Maxey, Late a Major Genl Prov. Army, C. States
Paris, Tex.,
Oct. 24th, 1865.

His Excellency,
Andrew Johnson, President of the U. S.
Washington, D.C.

Sir: I have the honor to present herewith my application for Special Parson, with the endorsement of A. J. Hamilton, Capt. 9th of Texas, together with the letter saying that it is a rule of action in his office "not to recommend any man who was "educated at West Point to the Regiment "of the U. S. for Parson."

This is the only objection I know of, and I have no reason to believe that any other exists. I respectfully submit that I was born and raised in a Slave State, opposed to secession, and never lived out of a Slave State, and for years before the act of secession of Texas, had been a firm citizen.
When the War broke out, and not one of them, did I hold any position, civic or military, under the late Confederate. I accede with my State.

In this, I am neither more nor less guilty than the mass of the people from. The fact that I was educated at West Point, and not in my judgment require me to take up arms against my State. Whether this view was right or wrong, it was honest.

By the 4th War of a Proclamation of Dr. Hamilton, June 27th, 1863, together with all other lawyers facing within any of the exceptions to the President's Proclamation of May 29th last, and prohibited from practising law.

A careful comparison of the Constitution, the Proclamation, and my Paroles, has led me to conclude, that my Parolone rights are held in abeyance, subject to the future action of the President, or of the Congress, and that I am not to be considered in any civil pursuits or the ordinary avocations of life, pending the determination of my political rights.
In the note of the Gov't returning my application, he leaves my case to the direct action of the President.

Therefore respectfully ask of the President,

1. That it be speedily, and restored to my Rightful and Civil rights.

2. That I be, in the event he does not favor me, permitted and authorized to pursue my Peterson of the law.

In conclusion I beg to say that whatever decision may be made by the President, I choose not cease to exert my influence in favor of law and order, and the restoration of harmony.

I went into the war in good faith, and the South having fairly joined, after an submission of the states to the Union, I consider it my honorable duty, faithfully to abide the awards.

Than the honor to be,

Very Respectfully,

S. B. Maxey,

Sgt. Maj. Genl.

Prov. Army, C. S.
A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas the President of the United States, on the 8th day of December, A. D. eighteen hundred and sixty-three, and on the 24th day of March A. D. eighteen hundred and sixty-four, did, with the object to suppress the existing rebellion, and to restore the authority of the United States, issue proclamations offering amnesty to certain persons who had directly or by implication participated in the said rebellion; and whereas more than one year has elapsed since said proclamations were issued, and in that time many persons have failed and refused to take the benefits offered thereby; and whereas many persons who have complied with the terms and taken the oath in said proclamations prescribed, committed acts of hostility against the government of the United States after the said offer of amnesty and notice thereof, and as to all such a doubt exists whether the said proclamation affords the legal protection intended to be given; and whereas many persons have continued their hostility to the government till a recent date, notwithstanding the proffered pardon, who are now willing to accept the amnesty of the government;

To the end, therefore, that doubts may be removed, that the authority of the government of the United States may be restored, and that peace, order, and freedom may be established, I, Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, do proclaim and declare that I hereby grant and assure to all persons of color who have, directly or by implication, participated in the existing rebellion, a free pardon; and that I hereby grant and assure to all white persons who have, directly or indirectly, participated in the existing rebellion, except as hereinafter excepted, a full pardon, but upon the condition, nevertheless, that every such person will, in aid of the emancipation proclamation, the legal validity of which is hereby affirmed, freely and forever disclaim, and will never assert, right or title to slaves, and that every such person will never thereafter own a slave or any interest therein, and will take and subscribe the following oath, (or affirmation:)

"I, -- --, declaring that I do, freely and forever, disclaim, and that I will never assert, right or title to slaves, and that I will never hereafter own a slave, or any interest therein, pursuant to the President's proclamation of date -- day of --, 1865, do solemnly swear (or affirm) in the presence of Almighty God that I will henceforth faithfully protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, and the union of the States thereunder."
I do further proclaim and declare that such persons as shall continue hostilities against the government of the United States, or give aid and comfort to insurgents and hostile persons after notice of this proclamation, or a reasonable time shall have elapsed within which notice must be presumed, will not be entitled to the pardon offered herein; and that all persons not hereinafter excepted, and who desire the benefits of the amnesty of the government, must within -- months from the date hereof comply with the terms and take the oath herein prescribed.

The following classes of persons are excepted from the benefits of this proclamation: All who are or shall have been civil or diplomatic officers or agents of the so-called Confederate government; all who left judicial stations under the United States to aid the rebellion; all who shall have been military or naval officers of said so-called Confederate government above the rank of colonel in the army or lieutenant in the navy; all who left seats in the Congress of the United States to aid the rebellion; all who resigned commissions in the army or navy of the United States and afterwards aided in the rebellion; all who have engaged in any way in treating colored persons or white persons in charge of such otherwise than lawfully and prisoners of war, and which persons may have been found in the United States service as soldiers, seamen, or in other capacity; all persons who are absentee from the United States because of the rebellion; all persons who held the pretended offices of governors of States in insurrection against the United States; all persons who were on the........day of.........., 1861, residents of the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, California, Oregon, and the Territories not declared in insurrection, and who, after that time, voluntarily left their homes and joined in said rebellion, or gave aid and comfort thereto; all persons who have been engaged in the destruction of the commerce of the United States upon the high seas under the pretext of aiding the rebellion; all persons who have made raids into the United States from Canada, or been engaged in destroying the commerce of the United States upon the lakes and rivers that separate Canada from the United States; and all persons who may have sold or otherwise disposed of their slaves to prevent their becoming free.

Activity Resource: Maxey House KWL Organizer

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Site Visit Recommendations

- Complete the pre-visit lesson or other introductory lessons prior to your field trip.
- Divide students into small groups, each with an adult chaperone.
- Make sure students bring pencils. Pens and markers are not allowed in the exhibits.

Information

To schedule a site visit field trip for your students, please call 903-785-5716.
For admission prices and hours of operation, please visit us online at http://visitsbmh.com.

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