



Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Edmund Jackson Davis. Then, answer questions about it.

Edmund Jackson Davis 1827–1883

Governor Edmund Davis played a critical role in reconstructing Texas after the Civil War. He championed the constitutional rights of formerly enslaved Texans, established the state's Republican Party, and instituted a centralized system of public education. Yet these accomplishments barely survived him.

Before the Civil War, Davis was a lawyer and judge in South Texas. When secessionist fever struck in the 1850s, Davis sided with Sam Houston in opposing attempts to remove Texas from the Union. When Texas seceded, Davis left the state to meet with Abraham Lincoln and formed a cavalry regiment with the U.S. Army. He fought in Union attempts to retake Galveston, Sabine Pass, and Brownsville, earning promotion to brigadier general.

After the war, Davis joined fellow unionists to re-establish state government through the federal program of Reconstruction. As president of the 1868 constitutional convention, Davis sought a new political order that insured equality under the law for all Texans, regardless of race.

In 1869, Davis won the Texas governorship, the first Republican elected to the office. However, political turmoil marred his term, as he sought to defend African American voting rights in the face of violent opposition. Davis lost the controversial election of 1873 to Richard Coke, ending Reconstruction in Texas and reversing most of Davis's reforms. He died ten years later, his agenda left for future generations to accomplish.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Edmund Jackson Davis. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. Who did Edmund Jackson Davis side with in the question of whether Texa should secede from the Union?
2. What office was Davis elected to after the Civil War?

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Creating Connections.** Based on what you know about Reconstruction in Texas, why was Davis's time in office so difficult?