

Texas Joins the United States

Section 3



MAIN IDEAS

1. Political parties became active in Texas for the first time after annexation.
2. Texas used its public lands to pay off its remaining debt, to promote education, and to improve life.

Key Terms and People

Democratic Party especially popular in Texas, this political party generally represented the views of farmers and small business owners

Republican Party political party that believed that slavery should be banned in all states and territories of the United States

Know-Nothing Party political party whose members supported slavery and wanted to keep immigrants and Catholics out of government

Elisha M. Pease elected Governor in 1853

Section Summary

POLITICAL PARTIES

In the late 1840s Texans started to join political parties that had been organized in the United States. The **Democratic Party** generally represented the views of farmers and small business owners. The party was very strong in Texas and the South. Some Texans supported the Whig Party, the other major U.S. political party. Whigs supported banking and large business interests. In the mid-1850s the Whig Party collapsed when its members became divided over the slavery issue. Many Whigs joined the **Republican Party**. Republicans believed that slavery should not be allowed anywhere in the United States. In the mid-1850s the American Party—commonly called the **Know-Nothing Party**—briefly appeared. This party supported slavery and wanted to keep immigrants and Catholics out of government. Most Texans did not support the Know-Nothing Party.

Which party did most Texans support?

Section 3, *continued***EARLY GOVERNORS OF TEXAS**

James Pinckney Henderson served one term in office, and he did not seek re-election. Texas voters chose George T. Wood as their new governor. Wood lost the next election to Peter Hansborough Bell. Like Wood, Bell worked to establish the extent of the state's territory.

He resigned to take a seat in the U.S. Congress, and Lieutenant Governor J.W. Henderson became governor for the remaining 28 days of his term.

Elisha M. Pease was the next governor. Pease was a popular governor who supported education and other reforms. He won a second term in 1855. In 1857 Sam Houston and Hardin Runnels ran for governor. Houston lost in a bitter campaign. However, he defeated Runnels in the 1859 race.

How many terms did Pease serve as governor?

DEBTS AND LAND ISSUES

The governors, like the presidents of the Republic, had to deal with the public debt and create a land policy. In 1845 the Republic of Texas owed some \$10 million. The annexation resolution made the state responsible for paying this debt by selling public lands. But there were few buyers, and the debt continued to rise. The federal government and Texas developed a plan to eliminate the debt. Texas gave up its claim to 67 million acres of land in present-day Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Wyoming. In return, the federal government gave Texas money to help pay the debt. The debt was paid off by 1855. The state gave much of its remaining public land to settlers. The state also set aside land for public schools and universities.

How did Texas pay off its public debt?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Sequencing Name in order the governors of Texas during the 1840s and 1850s.

Section 3, *continued*

DIRECTIONS Read each sentence below and circle the word from the pair that best completes each sentence.

1. The (Democratic Party/Republican Party) was especially popular in Texas.
2. The (Democratic Party/Know-Nothing Party) supported slavery.
3. The (Republican Party/Know-Nothing Party) believed slavery should be banned.

DIRECTIONS Write two adjectives or descriptive phrases that describe each term or person.

4. Elisha M. Pease _____
5. Know-Nothing Party _____