

Historical Background

“Although most of the fighting of the Civil War took place in northern Virginia and along the Mississippi River, there were several specific events that took place at geographic locations in South Carolina. The first shots of the war were fired at Fort Sumter when northern ships attempted to re-supply the federal fort in Charleston Harbor. The first major setback for the Confederate Army was the capture of areas surrounding Port Royal Sound along the coast near Hilton Head by Union troops. These areas remained under Union control throughout the Civil War. The Union strategy was to prevent ships from importing or exporting from South Carolina ports. The Northern blockade was effective in South Carolina despite the efforts of blockade runners and the use of a new technology, the submarine such as the Hunley. The blockade was devastating to the South because it kept the Confederate Army from receiving supplies. Union forces laid siege to Charleston attacking from Port Royal and bombarding the city for over a year. During this campaign, the 54th Massachusetts unit of African American soldiers led the charge on Fort Wagner at the mouth of Charleston Harbor.”

South Carolina Social Studies Support Document, Grade 8, 2008 http://ed.sc.gov/agency/Standards-and-Learning/Academic-Standards/old/cso/social_studies/social.html

For this lesson, students will be using excerpts from Charles Crosland’s Reminiscences of the Sixties 9 (available from the [University of South Carolina Digital Collections](#)). Published in 1910, this is an account of the Civil War from a confederate officer from Bennettsville, SC. Crosland was a young recruit from an affluent family that was sent to defend Charleston harbor in 1863. In his account, Crosland describes camp life, as well as several military clashes with the Union, and even briefly mentions the sinking of the Housatonic by the Hunley. Crosland also discusses the effects of the war on plantation life (8-3.6). Page 16 discusses his efforts to rescue a blockade-runner, “The Little Ida”, from a Union ship. Before teaching this lesson students should have basic knowledge of the Union’s efforts to blockade Charleston Harbor as part of the larger Anaconda Plan. Students should also have basic geographic knowledge of Charleston harbor and the SC coastline and should be familiar with the location of sites such as Port Royal, Morris Island, Mt. Pleasant, and McClellanville. Because Port Royal was seized by Union troops in 1861, Charleston was South Carolina’s only lifeline for supplies coming from abroad. Blockade-runners made a dangerous but profitable living delivering goods past Union ships, and Confederate soldiers such as Crosland spent the duration of the war protecting Charleston from a direct invasion by Union troops.

South Carolina Standards

8-3.5 Compare the military strategies of the North and South with regard to specific events and geographic locations in South Carolina, including the capture of Port Royal, the Union blockade of Charleston, and Sherman’s march through the state.

Objectives

- Students will read and respond to questions to check for understanding.
- Students will gain a sense of the daily life of soldiers and citizens charged with protecting Charleston during the Civil War.

On the Lives of Soldiers during the Civil War

Time Required

1 class period

Recommended Grade Level

Middle/High School

Lesson Materials

- From the University of South Carolina Digital Collections <http://sc.edu/library/digital/collections/Reminiscences.html> Only pages 13-16 of Crosland's account are required for this lesson.
- <http://www.sciway.net/hist/maps/mapscw.html> Maps of Charleston Harbor circa 1860.
- Student response questions.

Lesson Preparation

1. Download and print only pages 13-16 of Crosland's account.
2. Download and print Maps of Charleston Harbor circa 1860.
3. Download and print student response questions

Lesson Procedure

1. Teacher Introduction to Crosland, describe that he was an 18 year old raised in affluence who had never suffered hardships. (5 min.)
2. Distribute copies of, or use attached link to have students read pages 13-16 of Crosland's account. (20 min.)
3. After students read the selection, they should respond to the prompts attached. (20 min.)
4. Once students respond to the short answer prompts, the teacher may ask the students to share their answers. (10 min.)

Assessment

Grade the student response for completion. Students should answer each question in complete sentences and provide logical, original insight to open-ended questions.

Lesson Extension Options

Have students write a journal entry as if they were a Civil War soldier.

Digital Collections Information

This lesson plan is based on images and/or documents derived from the K-12 Primary Sources Pilot Project collection available from the University of South Carolina's Digital Collections Library. To see more from this collection please visit the following link.

<http://www.sc.edu/library/digital/collections/K-12.html>

To see other collections that may be helpful to your search, visit the Digital Collections homepage by clicking here <http://sc.edu/library/digital/index.php> or visit SCDL's collections by clicking here <http://www.scmemory.org/index.php>.

Student Response Questions

Directions: After reading Charles Crosland's *Reminiscences of the Sixties*, respond to the following questions. Your response to each question should be a minimum of 2-3 complete sentences in length.

1. What does Crosland say was used by troops to build fires? How might these fires symbolize the desperation of the Confederate soldiers, or their difficulties in the war as a whole?
2. Describe the prank that resulted in being shelled by Union boats. What purpose did these pranks serve for the soldiers stationed at Mt. Pleasant? Describe the conditions that made pranks an enjoyable pastime for soldiers.
3. Describe Crosland's month spent on Long Island on p. 14. What type of food did he eat? What do you think was the biggest concern or trouble for Crosland during this month?
4. After Crosland got into trouble for missing the boat back to Mt. Pleasant (p.14-15), how did he escape being disciplined? Do you think this type of treatment was typical during the Civil War? What do the actions of Captain Warley say about society in the 1860's? Do you think all soldiers were treated like Crosland?
5. P. 16 describes Crosland's effort to rescue a blockade-runner, "The Little Ida," from a union patrol boat. What eventually happened to "The Little Ida"? Why do you think the capture of the Union ship felt "as if we had taken a city"?
6. Describe the effects of the war on Mr. Blake's rice plantation. Where do you think the slaves had gone?
7. From Crosland's experiences, how would you describe life for a Confederate soldier on the SC coast? Do you think they had it better or worse than those soldiers serving in Virginia or Tennessee and Mississippi?