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ABOUT THE COVER

The cover of Volume 41 features an unidentified Confederate cavalry soldier, similar in many ways to the Texas Confederate horsemen discussed in the article by Thomas W. Cutrer in this issue. Photograph courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

*“Room Enough for All Brave Men”
Walter L. Bragg Reports the Battle of
Woodsonville*

THOMAS W. CUTRER*

Abstract: Walter L. Bragg, a sergeant in the 6th Arkansas Infantry, fought in the battle of Woodsonville, Kentucky, and soon after wrote to his sister, describing the engagement in detail. Most notable is his depiction of the mounted charge of the 8th Texas Cavalry, better known as Terry’s Texas Rangers, against the 32nd Indiana Infantry in which the Rangers’ commanding officer, Colonel Benjamin Franklin Terry, was killed.

Key Words: Civil War; Woodsonville; Benjamin Franklin Terry; Terry’s Texas Rangers; Eighth Texas Cavalry.

The battle of Woodsonville, Kentucky, fought on 17 December 1861, was a small affair, involving fewer than 1,500, on either side and resulting in no strategic advantage to either Union or Confederate forces. As a Texas private, Leonidas B. Giles, wrote, however, “in view of the great disparity of the forces engaged and the losses sustained, this was one of the most remarkable of all the conflicts of this very remarkable war. One of the very few actions where mounted men engaged infantry on their own ground.”¹ Coming early in the war as it did, however, the fight attracted considerable national attention. It was made more notable because on this field the commander of the Terry Texas Rangers, Colonel Benjamin Franklin Terry, was killed in action, one of the war’s first casualties among regimental commanders. His regiment would become widely known as one of the most colorful and accomplished cavalry units of the war.

In common with all Civil War battles, reports—from official records, private letters and reminiscences, and newspapers—of the fighting at Woodsonville, or Rowlett’s Knob as it is sometimes called, are imprecise and often contradictory. Reconstructing events exactly as they happened, and in the order in which they occurred, is rendered almost impossible because of faulty memories, limited perspective, and partisanship of even the best observers. Accounts of Woodsonville are subject to intense controversy, with

both sides not only claiming victory but insisting that they inflicted severe casualties on the enemy while suffering only lightly themselves. The letter published here, written by Walter L. Bragg to his sister shortly after the battle, sheds some additional light on the Rangers' charge and the death of Terry.

In the winter of 1861, the 8th Texas Cavalry was responsible for "picketing, skirmishing, scouting, and watching the advance of the enemy" for General Albert Sidney Johnston's Army of Tennessee.² Eager for "an enterprize among the enemy," the Rangers were pleased to join Brigadier General Thomas C. Hindman's brigade in seeking a confrontation with the advance elements of Major General Don Carlos Buell's Army of the Ohio, then operating near Munsonville on the Green River in central Kentucky.³ At 8:00 A.M., 17 December, Hindman started his command—1,100 infantry, 250 cavalry, and 4 pieces of artillery—toward Munsonville "for the purpose of breaking up the railroad from the vicinity of that place southward." Some two and one-half miles south of their objective, the Rangers encountered Colonel Augustus von Willich's 32nd Indiana Infantry—an all-German regiment—and, in Ranger George B. Burke's words, "thought we would devil them some before we left them."⁴

Hindman ordered Terry's Rangers forward to occupy Rowlett's Knob, the dominant terrain on his front. Hindman then advanced his infantry and artillery, screened by the Rangers, to within three-quarters of a mile of the river.

Colonel von Willich had that morning deployed two companies of the 32nd Indiana, Captain Jacob Glass's Company B and First Lieutenant Max Sachs's Company C, in a strip of timber bordering the south bank of Green River, there to protect the crew repairing the Louisville and Nashville railroad bridge. Four others he placed in line of battle north of the bridge, and the remaining four were held in reserve.

Around noon, as Hindman advanced, he observed Glass's skirmishers emerging from the timber and into the open fields between the river and his own developing line. Terry's men engaged them, and Glass, who reported being "annoyed by skirmishers of the enemy," called for reinforcements from Company C. Simultaneously, Lieutenant Colonel Henry von Trebba, commanding the 32nd Indiana in Willich's temporary absence, ordered his four reserve companies south of the river to reinforce B and C.⁵

Hindman gave Terry instructions to decoy the advancing Federals up Rowlett's Knob, where, Hindman wrote, "I could use my infantry and

artillery with effect and be out of range of the enemy's batteries."⁶ The Rangers' retrograde movement was successful in drawing the enemy into open ground, but Terry, not being one "to invite visitors and then leave someone else to entertain them," ordered his regiment to form into line and charge. At about 2:00 P.M., with the fresh Union companies emerging from the wood on his right and center, Terry led seventy-five Rangers on an impetuous charge into what he believed to be a full brigade, drawn up behind "straw ricks, forage stacks, and railway embankments." At the same time, Captain Steven C. Ferrell led another seventy-five against the Union left.⁷

"With lightning speed, under infernal yelling," Willich reported, "great numbers of Texas Rangers rushed upon our whole force." The Federal commander described how Terry's and Ferrell's men rode to within fifteen yards of his lines—"some of them even between them"—and then opened fire with rifles, shotguns, and revolvers.⁸ "It was hand to hand from first to last," recalled Pauling Anderson of the Rangers. "No men could have fought more desperately than the enemy. The Rangers were equally reckless."⁹

According to Ranger J. K. P. Blackburn, "the impetuosity and the impudence of the charge threw the Federal Germans into consternation," and although Willich claimed that the Federal skirmishers "made great havoc" among their attackers, the skirmishers soon retreated behind a square formed by Captain Peter J. Welschbillig's Company G, a formation that Willich described as "an infantry hollow square at a kneel and parry by bayonet against cavalry." A volley from the square repulsed the Rangers' charge, "but only after having discharged their guns and rifles at our men." Twice more the Rebel cavalry charged Welschbillig's square, but both times they were repelled by rifle fire and bayonets. After the third attack, Willich reported, the Rangers "disappeared in wild disorder from the battleground,"¹⁰ but Private A. L. Steele of Company H claimed that only after the 8th Texas "had driven the enemy's infantry back through the fields $\frac{3}{4}$ miles on to their reserves in the timber" did General Hindman recall it to its original position.¹¹ The entire action, which Pauling characterized as "one of the most desperate fights of the war," did not last more than fifteen minutes.¹²

Early in this confused and ill-conceived melee, Colonel Terry fell, mortally wounded. According to Private William Nicholson of Company D (who was not present), Terry "had come up to five of the enemy behind a

fence—and raising himself up in his stirrups—said, ‘Boys, here’s another nest of birds,’” and had shot two of the enemy “when a ball entered below his right cheek and came out the top of his head—his slayer lived but a few seconds.”¹³ Private William Taylor Gainer of Company G, who was present when Terry was killed, remembered “about fifteen men killed and wounded over his body.” Although Willich later claimed that First Lieutenant William G. Mank of Company A permitted four of the Rangers to remove Terry’s body from the field, Gainer stated that Ranger Tom A. DeVinne “took up Terry’s body and rode off the field with it to the depot at Cave City” from where it was shipped to Houston for burial.¹⁴

Among those taking part in the Rangers’ charge was Walter L. Bragg. Bragg, born in Lowndes County, Alabama, in 1838, was graduated from Harvard College in 1858 and then took up the practice of law at Camden, Arkansas. He enlisted in Company H, 6th Arkansas Infantry, at Pocahontas in July 1861 and was soon elected as a sergeant.¹⁵ Although not a member of Terry’s regiment, Bragg took part in its charge at Woodsonville and gave a detailed account of it in a letter to his sister.¹⁶

* * * *

Head Quarters, 1st Brig., 1st Div.
 Con[federate] S[tates] of A[merica]
 Decr. 29th, 1861

My Dear Sister,

On the 16th I received a letter from Florence, and one week before that while at Bowling Green I received yours.

You can judge how busy I have been when I inform you this is the first opportunity I have had to reply.

I also mention that I received a letter from Ma day before yesterday and one from Junius yesterday.

As usual I have no news to write. You know *news* never was a *staple commodity* of mine.

You have doubtless been informed before this of our battle at Green River, and that I was in the Texas Ranger charge and escaped unwounded. But I suppose you would like to have the full particulars, and accordingly I will give them as briefly as possible.

On the morning of the 17th this Brigade was put in motion to attack the enemy 4000 strong who was posted at Green River eleven miles distant. Terry’s Regiment of Texas Rangers was in front: Phifher’s [6th Arkansas] Battalion of Cavalry next¹⁷: and following these was the 2nd Regiment of Arkansas volunteers,¹⁸ Marmaduke’s Battalion,¹⁹ the Artillery²⁰ and in the rear was the Sixth Regiment of Ark[ansa]s Vol[un]teers.²¹

Being Sergeant of the Picket Guard I was on horseback in front and acted with the Texas Rangers.

We proceeded through the Mountain defiles until we arrived on a high hill [Rowlett’s Knob] about six hundred yards from Green River. Here there was an open field in our front and we could distinctly see the enemy’s camp across the River, and also their batteries. Our pickets were thrown forward to meet and engage the enemy. In about ten minutes the enemies [sic] skirmishers advanced to attack us and the balls flew thick over our heads and around us. Several of our horses were killed and two men wounded. At this juncture Colonel Terry ordered us to fall back behind the hill in order to induce the enemy to believe we had retreated when it was supposed they would advance. The manouvre succeeded. As soon as we fell back they advanced and drove in our pickets who retreated slowly fighting from tree to tree against the overwhelming force of the enemy. Colonel Terry announced to his men to prepare for a charge. I rode up to him and said “Colonel Terry, can I fight with your men in this charge?”

He said “certainly, Mr. Bragg—there is room enough for all brave men, and I think unless I am much mistaken we will all have fighting enough here today.”

On came the enemy. But not yet in sight of us. The order was given.

At once there rose so wild the yell
Within that deep [i.e., dark] and narrow dell,
As all the fiends from heaven that fell
Had pealed the banner-cry of hell!²²

And on we went: the enemies [sic] bullets sweeping over and around as like a storm of hail, as we jumped fences and gullies. They formed the hollow square to receive us—their bayonets gleaming in the sun. But on we went right up at them—yelling with every leap of our horses. Arriving at a gap in a fence near the enemies [sic] line we crowded through it pell

mell some jumping their horses over to the right—others to the left. In leaping the fence, several horses fell, among others my own, and slammed me severely causing me to spit blood for several days. The enemy lost 100 killed and wounded. Our loss was 8 killed and 20 wounded out of 60 men who made the charge.²³ The enemy had a whole Regiment. The charge did not last five minutes. The enemy were driven in wild disorder and fled like deer to the River. We then withdrew for the artillery which opened upon the enemy and added still more to their confusion and flight. The enemy also attempted to turn our left flank but were intercepted by Marmaduke's Battalion and put to route [sic]. The enemy now came over in heavy force and our forces withdrew two miles, took a strong position and waited their attack. But they did not come.²⁴ We then returned to our camp—rejoicing over our victory but every heart sad at the death of the Gallant Terry.

Should I live a thousand years I could never forget that charge. It was about 1 o'clock, and the warm sunshine, the lofty mountains, the splendid landscape, the hazy air, the quiet herds grazing in the fields all contributed to constitute a contrast remarkable in itself to the shock of arms and the din of death! The roaring of a thousand guns—the sulfurous smoke hanging like a purple canopy—the screams of wounded horses flying without riders over the field—the shout of onset—the groans of wounded men—made a scene at once awful and sublime! In the tremendous tragedy the prisoners of the enemy were killed on every hand. In vain they threw down their guns and raised their hands to Heaven—the death of Terry was avenged!²⁵

So much for the battle.

Genl. Hindman has appointed me Sergeant of the Picket Guard one of the most responsible and dangerous positions which can be given a private. Six days ago when we thought a battle was imminent I acted as his aide by his request.

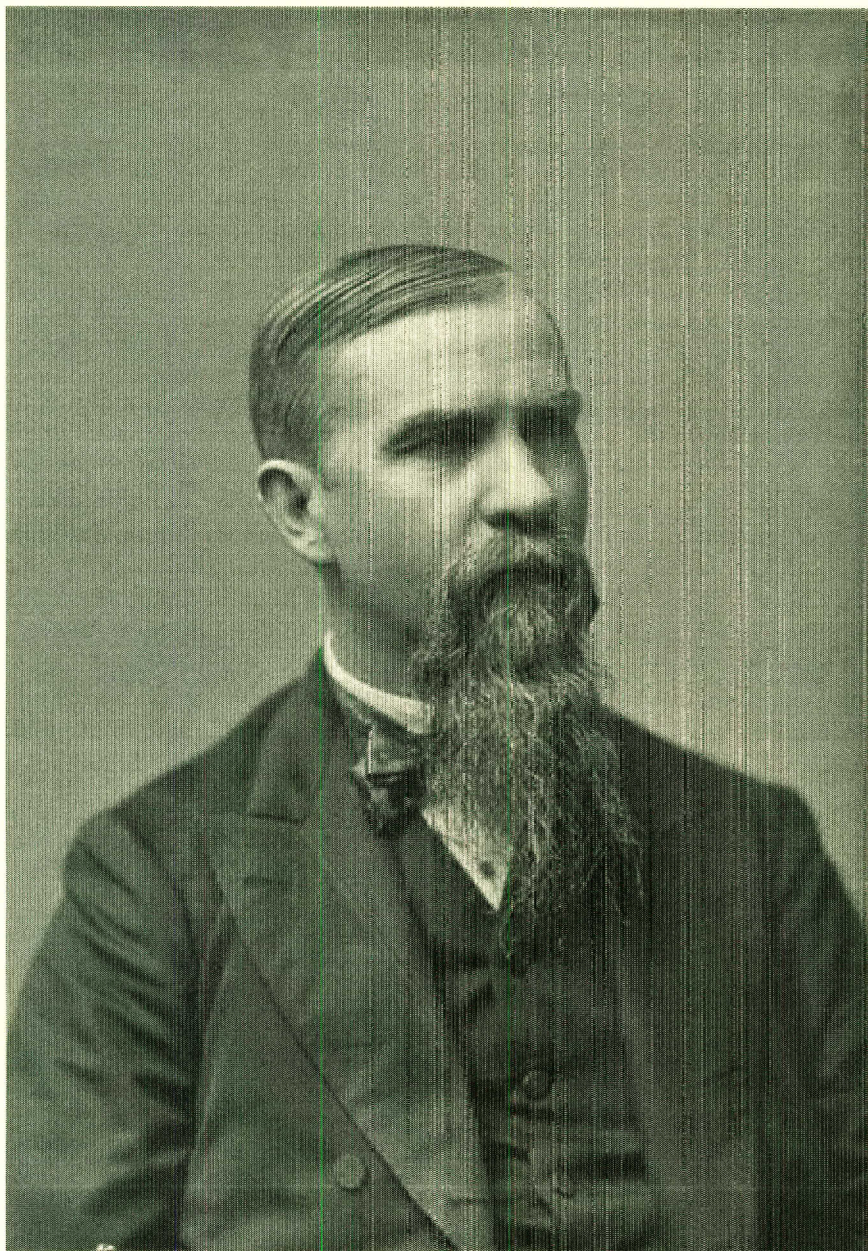
I have to do all his writing in the office—examine prisoners—visit the pickets by night and day—instruct them—have the foremost position in battle. This suits me rather better than being a private without any responsibility.

In conclusion and I send my love to you all.

Affectionately

your brother

W. L. Bragg



Walter L. Bragg
courtesy Alabama Department of Archives and History Digital Archives



Woodsonville, Kentucky
Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies.
Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891–1895. Plate CII, 1.

Endnotes

* Thomas W. Cutrer is a professor of history and American studies at Arizona State University. He is indebted to Dr. Norman C. Savers, Jr., of Little Rock, a retired dentist and Air Force colonel, and Arthur R. Carmody, Jr., a Shreveport attorney, for permission to publish their kinsman’s letter.

¹ L. B. Giles, *Terry’s Texas Rangers* (Austin: Von Boeckman-Jones, 1911; facsimile reprint, Austin: Pemberton Press, 1967), 21. Other reprints include *A Terry Texas Rangers Trilogy: The Civil War Memoirs of J. K. P. Blackburn, L. B. Giles, and E. P. Dodd, Eighth Texas Cavalry*, with introduction by Thomas W. Cutrer (Austin: State House Press, 1996).

² John M. Claiborne, “Terry’s Texas Rangers,” *Confederate Veteran*, V, 6 (June 1897), 254.

³ Jessie Burke Heard, comp., “A Terry’s Ranger Writes Home: Letters of Pvt. Benjamin F. Burke,” Photocopy of typescript, 1965, Eugene C. Barker Texas History Center, University of Texas, Austin), 9.

⁴ Thomas C. Hindman, 19 December 1861. U.S. War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) (Hereafter cited as the *OR*), Series I, Volume VII, 19-20; Augustus von Willich, *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 17-19; Michael A. Peake, *Baptism of Fire: Rolett’s Station, 1861: A History of the 1st German, 32nd Regiment, Indiana Volunteer Infantry* (Max Kade German-American Center, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and Indiana German Heritage Society, 1999).

⁵ Thomas C. Hindman, 19 December 1861. *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 19-20.

⁶ Giles, *Terry’s Texas Rangers*, 20; Claiborne, “Terry’s Texas Rangers,” 253.

⁷ Augustus Willich, *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 17-20.

⁸ Nashville *Republican Banner*, 19 December 1861, based on account of Paulding Anderson, Jr.

⁹ Augustus Willich, *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 17-20.

¹⁰ A. L. Steele to *Confederate Veteran*, III, 10 (October 1895), 315; Thomas C. Hindman, 19 December 1861. *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 19-20.

¹¹ Nashville *Republican Banner*, 19 December 1861.

¹² Jones, Margaret Bell, comp., *Bastrop: A Compilation of Material Relating to the Town of Bastrop with Letters Written by Terry Rangers* (Bastrop, Tex., 1938), 48. According to A. L. Steele, Terry was killed about 200 yards northwest of the Turnpike Bridge, over the excavation made for the Louisville & Nashville Railroad through the gap at Rowlett’s Knob, about one-quarter of a mile north of Rowlett’s Station. Steele to *Confederate Veteran*, 316.

¹³ Augustus Willich, *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 17-20; Mamie Yearly, comp., *Reminiscences of the Boys in Gray, 1861-1865* (Dallas: Smith and Lamar, 1912), 249. For other primary accounts of the action at Woodsonville, see Henry W. Graber, *The Life Record of Henry W. Craber: A Terry Texas Ranger, 1861-1865* (Dallas: Privately published, 1916); reprinted as *A Terry Texas Ranger*, with introduction by Thomas W. Cutrer (Austin: State House Press, 1987), 44-45; Maury Darst ed., “Robert Hodges, Jr.: Confederate Soldier,” *East Texas Historical Journal*, IX, no. 1 (March 1971), 26, 28; Basil W. Duke, *A History of Morgan’s Cavalry*, edited by Cecil Fletcher Holland (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1960), 103-104; and Thomas W. Cutrer, ed., “Our Trust is in the God of Battles”: *The Civil War Letters of Robert Franklin Bunting, Chaplain, Terry’s Texas Rangers* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006), 11-15.

¹⁴ Subsequently to the fight at Woodsonville, Bragg is said to have transferred to an Alabama regiment in which he became a company commander with the rank of captain. He was severely wounded on 31 December 1862 at the battle of Murfreesboro, but returned to the Army of Tennessee to surrender with Joseph E. Johnston at Greensboro, North Carolina, 28 April 1865. After the war, Bragg settled first in *Marion, Alabama*, but moved to *Montgomery*

in 1871. In 1874, he was elected chairman of the Democratic State Executive Committee, a post he held for three years. In 1876, Bragg was elected as Alabama's representative on the *Democratic National Committee* and in 1880 served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. In 1878 he was elected the first president of the Alabama state bar association. In March, 1881, he was appointed President of the Alabama Railroad Commission, and when the Interstate Commerce Commission was created in 1887, Bragg was appointed by President *Grover Cleveland*. Still suffering from war wounds, Bragg died at *Avon-by-the-Sea, New Jersey*, on 21 August 1891. *The New York Times*, 21 August 21 1891.

¹⁵ Maj. Charles W. Phifer was the commanding officer of the Sixth Arkansas Cavalry Battalion, consisting of four Arkansas and two Louisiana companies. The battalion was assigned to the cavalry of Hardee's division in the Army of Central Kentucky in October 1861, and took part in the skirmish at Woodsonville. On 15 May 1862, at Corinth, Mississippi, it was consolidated with the Second Arkansas Cavalry Battalion and renamed as the Second Arkansas Cavalry Regiment under the command of Col. William F. Slemons.

¹⁶ The Second Arkansas Infantry was organized in June 1861 and elected John Rene Gratiot, a West Point graduate, as its colonel. He led the Second Arkansas at Oak Hills (Wilson's Creek) and Elkhorn Tavern (Pea Ridge) and, after the regiment was called east of the Mississippi, through all of the major battles of the Army of Tennessee.

¹⁷ John Sappington Marmaduke of Missouri was graduated with the West Point class of 1857 and served on the frontier with the Seventh United States Infantry until he resigned to enter Confederate service on 17 April 1861. Assigned to William J. Hardee's brigade, he was promoted to colonel on 1 January 1862 and assigned to command of the Third Confederate Infantry, an Arkansas regiment. He was severely wounded at Shiloh but recovered to be promoted to brigadier general on 28 September 1862. He commanded an Arkansas brigade during the siege of Corinth and thereafter a cavalry division in the trans-Mississippi. For his role in repelling Frederick Steele's invasion of Louisiana in 1864 Marmaduke was promoted to major general, 17 March 1865. During Sterling Price's Missouri raid of 1864 he was captured at Marais des Cygnes, 25 October, and was held at Fort Warren in Boston Harbor until August 1865. After his release he travelled in Europe for a year but returned to Missouri where he was elected governor in 1885.

¹⁸ Capt. Charles Swett commanded the artillery of St. John Richardson Liddell's division. This battalion was made up of Swett's own Mississippi battery, under Lieut. Harvey Shannon, and the Arkansas batteries of John T. Trigg and George T. Hubbard.

¹⁹ The "Bloody Sixth" Arkansas Infantry served in the Army of Tennessee from Woodsonville to Atlanta, endured John Bell Hood's evil-starred Tennessee campaign, and ended the war with Joseph E. Johnston in North Carolina. The regiment sustained one of the highest percentages of casualties of any in either army, and few of its men survived through April 1865.

²⁰ Bragg here only slightly misquotes the well-known lines for the Sixth, Canto, Seventeenth Verse, of Sir Walter Scott's epic poem, *The Lady of the Lake*.

²¹ Numbers engaged and numbers lost, on both sides, were widely disputed. William Nicholson stated that "there were 600 of the enemy in ambush and but 200 rangers," but Col. Willich reported his command at "3 field, 1 staff, and 16 officers of the line, 23 sergeants, and 375 men," and reported correctly that Hindman's force "consisted of one regiment Texas Rangers, two regiments infantry, and one battery, consisting of six guns."

Estimates of casualties varied more widely. Pauling Anderson reported sixty-six Union dead upon the field, and Blackburn estimated the enemy's loss at one-hundred and sixty-three killed and two-hundred-and-eighteen wounded. Hindman placed the Federal loss at seventy-five killed plus an unknown number of wounded. He also claimed to have taken seven prisoners back to Bowling Green, with an unspecified number of other prisoners, too badly

wounded to be moved, “left at citizens’ houses.” Willich, however, reported his loss as one officer—First Lt. Max Sachs, the acting commander of Company C—and ten enlisted men killed, twenty-two wounded, and five missing. Hindman reported his loss as Terry and three other Rangers killed and First Lt. A. W. Morris and three other Rangers dangerously wounded. Capt. John G. Walker and three more Rangers he reported as slightly wounded.

Anderson placed the number of Confederate casualties at “only five,” and Blackburn counted seven killed and fifteen wounded. William Taylor Gainer claimed that the Rangers “lost fifteen or twenty killed and wounded, and buried about forty Yankees.” Willich and Buell, however, placed the Rebel loss at thirty-three killed and fifty wounded. Leonidas B. Giles was probably as close to right as anyone when he calculated that “150 men charged 418, inflicting a loss of thirty-eight, sustaining a loss of twelve. Jones, ed., *Bastrop*, 48; Augustus Willich, *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 17–20; Nashville *Republican Banner*, 19 December 1861; J. K. P. Blackburn, *Reminiscences of the Terry Rangers* (Austin: University of Texas Littlefield Fund for Southern History, 1919), xxx; Thomas C. Hindman, 19 December 1861. *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 19–20; William J. Hardee, Special Orders Number 46. 21 December 1861. *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 21–22; Yeary, comp., *Reminiscences of the Boys in Gray*, 249; 17 December 1861. *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 15; Giles, *Terry’s Texas Rangers*, 24.

²² Ironically, although both commanders claimed victory, both thought themselves outnumbered and ordered their respective forces to retreat. Following the repulse of the Rangers, the inexperienced Hindman thought Union troops to be crossing Green River “by regiments” and moving around both of his flanks. He responded by deploying three companies of Col. John Sappington Marmaduke’s First Arkansas Battalion as skirmishers on the Rebel left, supported by the Second and Sixth Arkansas infantry regiments and Capt. Charles Swett’s Arkansas battery, driving the Federal right, as he claimed, to the river. Thomas C. Hindman, 19 December 1861. *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 19–20.

²³ Willich, observing the advance of Hindman’s command—“the band playing”—toward the railroad bridge, feared that his regiment’s route of retreat would be cut, and so “ordered the signal ‘fall back slowly’ to be given.” The Rebel wounded were collected, he reported to Brig. Gen. Don Carlos Buell, and “our troops fell back to a secure position.”

Despite the retreat of the Thirty-Second Indiana, Hindman was convinced that the Federals had crossed Green River in numbers “more than double my own” and held even greater numbers in reserve. He, therefore, withdrew down the turnpike to a position two and a half miles to the south, there “to meet the enemy if disposed to advance.” When the Federals failed to follow him, he retired to his camp at Cave City, arriving at 8:00 P.M. Predictably, Buell reported to Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan that “the rebels ingloriously retreated.” Nashville *Republican Banner*, 19 December 1861; Thomas C. Hindman, 19 December 1861, *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 19–20; Don Carlos Buell, 17 December 1861, *OR*, Series I, Volume VII, 15.

²⁴ Ranger Benjamin Franklin Batchelor concurred with Bragg’s account of the slaughter of Union soldiers who sought to surrender. “We took few prisoners,” he confessed to his wife. “In fact, the men were too much exasperated after the death of our colonel to take prisoners—they were shot down.” H. J. H. Rugley, ed, *Batchelor-Turner Letters, 1861-1865* (Austin: Steck Company, 1961), 3.

²⁵ Thomas Carmichael Hindman, a native of Knoxville, Tennessee, moved to Helena, Arkansas, in 1856 and was elected to Congress in 1858 and 1860. A leading advocate of Arkansas secession, Hindman raised and commanded the Second Arkansas Infantry until his promotion to brigadier general on 28 September 1861. After commanding a Rebel division at Shiloh, Hindman was promoted to major general and returned to Arkansas on 14 April 1862 as commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department. His strict enforcement of conscription laws made him unpopular, and the War Department replaced him with Lt. Gen. Theophilus H. Holmes. Hindman continued in command of troops in northwest Arkansas

but was defeated at the battle of Prairie Grove on 7 December 1862. Reassigned to the Army of Tennessee, Hindman commanded a division at the battles of Chickamauga and Kennesaw Mountain. Receiving severe wounds in both of these engagements, he was incapacitated from further service. With the fall of the Confederacy, Hindman immigrated to Mexico where he became a coffee planter, but returned to Arkansas in 1867. There, in his home in Helena, he was assassinated on 28 September 1868. Diane Neal and Thomas W. Kremm, *Lion of the South: General Thomas C. Hindman* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1993).

*“Troublesome Hellions” & “Belligerent Viragos”:
Enlisted Wives, Laundresses, and the Politics of
Gender on Nineteenth-Century Army Posts*

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The wives of America’s frontier officers and soldiers lived within the bounds of a patriarchal military culture that strictly relegated women’s roles to the domestic sphere. Military masculinity, rooted in heroic images of men protecting their women, depended upon military wives’ acceptance of their subservient and submissive roles as delicate housewives in need of male protection. Despite the distinct military caste system that aimed to limit fraternization between officers’ wives and enlisted wives, all Army wives on frontier posts shared the same social experience of being second-class minority citizens.¹ Operating within a male-dominated subculture whose laws enforced a sexual double standard that tolerated male sexual infidelity but punished wives’ promiscuous behaviors, these women were pressured to live up to Victorian notions of ‘true womanhood’ by not questioning their second-class status.²

Yet, question they did. Some enlisted wives, working as laundresses for the frontier regiments, consistently transgressed the boundaries of appropriate feminine behavior by using violence, profanity, alcohol, extra-marital sex, and deceit to demand acknowledgment in a military caste society that relegated them to the most inferior social position because of their dual status as “women” and “enlisted.” By demanding respect and recognition through subtle, humorous, and often violent means, notable enlisted wives negotiated, contested, and adapted military customs to their own benefit. Occupying the margins of the military caste system, their actions and behaviors provide a crucial entry point into understanding the unstable and complex power gradations of gender in frontier army society. Yet, occupying a marginal space in frontier military society should not relegate enlisted wives’ contributions and experiences to the margins of frontier military and women’s history. To the contrary, these women’s actions and behaviors are all the more important for scholars to re-examine precisely because their marginal status provided them the space to challenge

the most unstable contradictions of the military patriarchal order. Enlisted wives and laundresses, who have remained largely invisible or misunderstood in the historical record, created meaning and self-respect in a society that depended heavily upon their manual labor yet stigmatized them for being too 'unladylike.' Understanding how these women internalized and reacted to such prescriptive gender divisions provides a more inclusive and realistic picture of how all military wives on frontier army posts adapted to a culture that relegated authority strictly to men.³

While an abundance of scholarship has addressed officers' wives as complicit in upholding this behavioral double standard, to date no work has been devoted solely to understanding how enlisted wives negotiated the double standards, contradictions, and power inequalities of the military caste system.⁴ Lacking sources from the women themselves, many of whom were uneducated and/or lacked the leisure time to write, such an analysis requires re-reading traditional sources critically to uncover aspects of enlisted wives' and laundresses' lives while acknowledging the biased perceptions of the authors.⁵ Officers, officers' wives, and historians have formed opinions about enlisted wives' characters based on nineteenth-century Victorian, middle class ideals of female propriety, chastity, and subservience, mostly finding them falling short of ideals of 'true womanhood' due to their direct language, violent behavior, and fearlessness in challenging anyone who showed them disrespect. The nature of this research is thus tentative, based on an analysis of notable case studies of exceptional enlisted wives and laundresses whose behaviors gained the attention of military officials and their wives, but whose experiences by no means represent all such women.⁶

Notable enlisted wives, working as laundresses to supplement their husbands' meager incomes, creatively and selectively behaved in 'unladylike' ways to challenge their second-class status to men and the military's strict gender roles that confined women to domestic duties while giving men free reign over the public sphere. Women's most popular form of resistance was violence. By acting violently toward men and each other for various reasons, some enlisted wives transcended acceptable forms of female behavior, and in the process, forced frontier military society to re-define what being a lady really meant in such a violent environment. Other minor forms of resistance included enlisted wives' use of profanity and consumption of alcohol. An exceptional enlisted wife, who was actually a man but successfully disguised himself as a woman for years, subtly challenged the military's strictly

enforced gender roles by showing that appropriate gendered behavior was a choice and that men's power over women was not absolute.

Enlisted wives often resorted to violence in order to demand respect. Mary Leefe Laurence, in her childhood memoirs of growing up in the frontier army, recalls a memorable fight between two enlisted wives at Ringgold Barracks in Texas. Observing through the fence that separated "Laundress Row" from officers' quarters, Mary Gazelle and Norah Truan attacked each other with broomsticks and mud to the amusement of bystanders who encouraged the women with shouts of "Go it, Mary!" and "Give it to her, Norah!"⁷ Soldiers eventually stepped in to break up the fight that "terminated...with brooms and mud swept up from puddles."⁸ Historians have used this broom fight as evidence of enlisted wives' "common manners and shady reputations," because their blatant violence stood in direct opposition to the modesty and quiet natures that "true women" possessed.⁹ While it is impossible to discern what Mrs. Gazelle and Mrs. Truan were fighting over since they left no written records, the fact that they embroiled themselves in a physical fight to resolve the matter suggests not their 'common manners,' but rather their courage and willingness to defend their individual honor, reputation, or control over material objects. In the military caste system that relegated enlisted wives to the bottom of the social hierarchy, it makes sense that these women would fight with each other, and anyone else, who threatened to make them feel more inferior than they already felt.

Another classic fight between enlisted wives illustrates how they expected each other to respect their personal space and property. Two enlisted wives got into an argument at Fort Keogh in Miles City, Montana in the 1890s because one had burned her trash too closely to the other's freshly washed clothes hanging on the line. Casey Barthelmess, the observer, recalled that the argument escalated when the offended woman threatened to beat the other woman with a baseball bat if she did not move her trash pile. The commanding officer ordered an enlisted soldier to prevent a quarrel by walking the post between their quarters with a rifle and bayonet. Frustrated with the officer's intervention in what they felt was their personal business, the two women quickly united and directed their anger toward the intruding officer.¹⁰ By threatening the woman who burned her trash too closely to the other woman's clothes, this seemingly violent woman illustrated that she took pride in her clothes and her work. As a laundress,

her clean clothes were likely the only material proof she had of her worth and reputation in the military caste system. In this light, threatening the other woman with a baseball bat seems reasonable in her efforts to protect her reputation and the private property on which it hinged. Further, that the enlisted laundresses' disagreement quickly transformed to solidarity when threatened by the intrusion of the commanding officer suggests that these women, despite their internal quarrels, forged some sense of a collective identity against outside forces of male control. By directing their anger toward the commanding officer rather than the enlisted soldier who was ordered to keep the peace, these women challenged their superior's intervention in what they felt was their personal affair.

While some enlisted wives used violent tactics to demand respect from each other and intruding officers, others used violent threats to protect their husbands' honor. Working as a laundress at Camp McDermit, Nevada in 1871, a Mrs. Cavanaugh threatened to kill an officer with a butcher knife for shaming her husband. The first lieutenant had ordered Mr. Cavanaugh, the company blacksmith, to be bounded by his thumbs for drunkenness.¹¹ Rather than silently enduring her husband's shame, Mrs. Cavanaugh outspokenly defended her husband's honor by threatening to kill the officer who punished him for an offence that both officers and enlisted soldiers committed regularly. Historians have cited Mrs. Cavanaugh's violent threat as evidence that some enlisted wives were "terrors in camp" and "of a more violent nature" than 'true ladies.'¹² But by having the courage to make such a violent threat to an officer, Mrs. Cavanaugh highlighted the military's inconsistency in punishing enlisted soldiers for offences that officers committed but for which they were rarely punished. Mrs. Cavanaugh, like Mrs. Gazelle and Mrs. Truan embroiled in the broom fight, did not accept the authority of the military male officialdom without significant question, as historian Michelle Nacy argues for officers' wives.¹³ Rather, some enlisted wives' used violent means to fight for the honor and respect they felt they, and their husbands, deserved. Occupying the margins of military society enabled these women to challenge male authority because they had less invested in clinging to the rigid class system that relegated them to the most inferior position on frontier army posts.

While some enlisted wives used violence as a means to protect their husbands' honor, others probably used assertive tactics to protect their authority in their own households. The most notable example is Mrs.

McCormick, who was arrested on charges of attempted murder of her husband with an axe. One of the few enlisted wives who left a written record, Mrs. McCormick wrote in her own defense to Major L.H. Marshall at Fort Boise in Idaho that she was mistreated by post officials on false charges. Hitting her husband with a tin cup, which he exaggerated as an axe, was not grounds for being forcibly drummed off post at bayonet point, she argued. Cast off post to live by herself with her three children, Mrs. McCormick was later treated by a sergeant with much disrespect when he threatened her with death or a beating for placing her tired and hungry children in an ambulance to rest during a march.¹⁴

Mrs. McCormick's case illustrates how severely military officials punished enlisted wives for challenging their husbands' masculinity by performing in masculine ways. Certainly the male officials were protecting one of their own by controlling what they viewed as a belligerent wife who detracted from the Army's mission, and perhaps her punishment fit her crime by nineteenth century standards. But by challenging her husband's authority with the use of a tin cup, Mrs. McCormick asserted her own authority as being equivocal to her husband's. Ironically, the sergeant who violently threatened Mrs. McCormick was applauded for controlling a disorderly woman, while the disorderly woman who violently threatened her husband was ostracized. This gendered double standard that punished wives for challenging male authority while encouraging men to use violence to enforce female submission did not escape the notice of enlisted wives like Mrs. McCormick. Notable enlisted wives like Mrs. McCormick resorted to violence because it was a language that frontier soldiers understood and practiced in order to survive. Co-opting violence enabled McCormick to redress her gendered disadvantage on an army post far outnumbered by armed men, especially because there was little she could do to correct the pervasive stereotype officers held of them as being coarse and rough-natured.

In some cases, enlisted wives' assertive tactics resulted in violence against them. Julia Roach, a laundress married to Corporal John Doyle of Company G, 27th US Infantry, was murdered by her husband at Fort C.F. Smith, Montana. Doyle claimed that Julia verbally abused him, and he changed his name from Roach to Doyle and moved west to get away from her. After tracking and following John to the military post in 1878, Julia allegedly insulted and berated any man who crossed her path, including

her husband. On June 25, 1878, John shot Julia at close range “in a fit of passion” on a public street. Afterwards, John attested, “I did it, but I did not mean it.” After appearing before a Board of Inquiry for his criminal behavior, John deserted his military unit to avoid trial. Julia was buried at Fort C.F. Smith.¹⁵

While it is unknown what motivated Julia to berate her husband and other soldiers on post, what is clear is that historians have portrayed John Doyle as the “distraught” and “hapless” victim of a “belligerent virago” and “shrew” because Julia defied the Victorian expectation of feminine subservience and forbearance.¹⁶ Committing murder is arguably the most violent act a person can commit, yet historians, along with John Doyle himself, seemed to think that Julia’s “vile temper” was justification enough for his actions.¹⁷ Doyle’s confession “but I did not mean it” contradicted his action of shooting Julia at close range. Had he not meant to kill her, he probably would have aimed his gun at a body part less vital to his wife’s survival. As a Corporal in the 27th Infantry possessing marksmanship of a high enough degree to earn him a position in that specialty, it is highly unlikely that Doyle would have made such a glaring mistake as killing his own wife at close range.

Comparing Doyle’s case with that of Mrs. McCormick yields fascinating, though tentative, conclusions about how the frontier army’s gendered treatment of accused persons in court had negative consequences for women. Recall that Mrs. McCormick was charged with attempted murder of her husband, and without having the opportunity to plead not guilty before a Board of Inquiry she was arrested and confined in a guardhouse.¹⁸ After she was banned from post, her reputation as a troublesome wife preceded her and influenced the way the sergeant violently threatened her with death or a beating. John Doyle, on the other hand, actually confessed that he murdered his wife, yet was neither arrested nor sent to prison to await his trial, giving him time to desert his unit. While it is unknown what actions army officials took to retrieve Doyle after his desertion, it is clear that McCormick was treated much more harshly than her counterpart who actually confessed his crime.

Why there was such disparity in their treatment can only be a speculative exercise, but one worth engaging if historians are to better understand the complex ways that gender interacted with other factors to shape the contours of frontier army life. The most obvious difference between

Doyle and McCormick was their affiliation with the Army. As a soldier, Doyle contributed directly to the Army's mission whereas McCormick, as a soldier's wife, indirectly impeded the Army's mission by threatening her husband's life. McCormick's gender likely played a secondary role in her harsher treatment because her transgression of Victorian femininity (by expressing discontent of any kind) threatened not only her husband's life, but his authority as well. Add to the analysis the different opinions and personalities of the officers and judges (for different men presided over each case) that influenced their decisions over how to handle McCormick and Doyle, and it seems likely that McCormick's harsher treatment for threatening her husband with the crime that Doyle actually carried out on his wife resulted from a complex interplay between Army affiliation, gender expectations, and judges' individual beliefs and biases. To the extent that McCormick's case is representative of the majority of frontier women who found themselves entangled in the web of the military judicial system, it seems a reasonable assertion that in the practically all-male environment of frontier army posts, women of any stature who were subjected to a military trial with male judges were, like McCormick, at a disadvantage because they were far outnumbered and lacked a legitimate voice in the absence of female judges. Testing this hypothesis against a wide swath of court cases involving both male and female affiliates of the frontier army would yield valuable data on how military crime and punishment were gendered in an expressly hierarchical institution.

It seems probable that Julia's story served as an example to other wives of what would happen if they overstepped the boundaries of proper feminine behavior. Yet, some did not heed the warning and used direct violence against soldiers to defend their reputations. The most shocking instance was at Fort Bascom, New Mexico in 1866, when a Mexican enlisted wife, working as a laundress, threatened to cut off a soldier's tongue for making an insulting remark to her. According to Marian Russell, who observed the incident, the soldier continued to make offensive remarks to the laundress until she snuck into his quarters while he was asleep one night and cut off the tip of his tongue.¹⁹ Cutting off the tip of a soldier's tongue seems unruly at first glance, and historians have used this incident as evidence of enlisted wives' coarse natures. But considering that husbands went to great lengths to protect their wives' reputations by dueling and taking people to court, this woman's action could be interpreted as a self-defensive measure to protect

her reputation. Rather than allowing the soldier to continue slandering her reputation and waiting for her husband to defend her honor, this enlisted wife exhibited extreme independence and self-respect by handling the matter on her own. That this woman persisted in punishing the slanderous soldier suggests that she believed her honor was more important than any punishment she would receive. By not internalizing her inferior status within military society and taking advantage of her marginal position, this woman challenged military definitions of ladyhood.

Along with violence and direct self-assertion, often enlisted wives on frontier military posts often transgressed the boundaries of acceptable feminine behavior by assuming masculine traits including using profanity and drinking alcohol. Enlisted wives co-opted these male activities in selective situations to expose their contempt for the military's behavioral double standard that socially ostracized wives for partaking in the same behaviors soldiers freely enjoyed without the risk of ruining their reputations or losing their freedom. The most notable enlisted wife who used profane and disrespectful language to attack the gender and class inequalities of the military caste system was Hannah, who was court-martialed in the 1820s at Fort Atkinson, Iowa. Charged with using disrespectful language to Captain Bennett Riley, a military court found her guilty of insulting a superior and ordered her discharge from her regiment's laundress position and from the army post. The commanding officer then nullified the court's penalties and allowed Hannah to stay on post as the regiment's laundress.²⁰

Hannah's use of disrespectful language to an officer directly defied acceptable feminine traits such as submissiveness to men and quiet forbearance. While it is impossible to know what Hannah's motivations were for insulting the officer, and what she specifically said to Captain Riley that justified her discharge, Hannah's case provides a shining example of an enlisted wife creatively challenging her inferior status in military society. The fact that she went unpunished for asserting her opinions to a man of high rank highlights the tenuous nature of strictly demarcated gender roles that exceptional wives and laundresses like Hannah exposed. While her case is rare because her punishment was overturned, her story highlights the complex negotiations in which numerous enlisted wives engaged to challenge their inferior status within an authoritarian institution that denied them a legitimate voice. Hannah's behavior ultimately suggests one of two things: if she acted intentionally, she realized that gaining acknowledgment

meant she had to resort to extreme measures; if she acted unintentionally and really did not mean to verbally challenge the officer, the extent to which she internalized the independence and assertiveness necessary for survival on the frontier was considerable.

Some enlisted wives' consumption of alcohol, an activity that challenged Victorian notions of female propriety and moral character, loosened inhibitions and enabled these women to negotiate their inferior social positions in ways they might not have done in a sober state. The most notable instance, recorded by Elizabeth Custer in her memoir, *Following the Guidon*, describes a company laundress named Judy O'Grady who, on Christmas morning, rang the post quartermaster's doorbell in a tipsy state to inform him of her suffering. Custer notes that, "on opening the door a disheveled tipsy Jezebel of a camp-woman, bracing herself against the wood-work as best she could, said to him [quartermaster], "It's cold, and my nose bleeds," and with this information she departed."²¹ Custer considered O'Grady's act a "case of justice meted out" because the quartermaster appropriated himself with material objects like a comfortable bed and a doorbell which he would not allow others to have. Every time an officer's wife suffered or needed anything after O'Grady's act on Christmas morning, she would characterize her discomfort with the phrase "It's cold, and my nose bleeds."²²

O'Grady's attempt at getting the attention of the post Quartermaster, whom she otherwise probably would never have had cause to speak to, highlights how enlisted wives some who worked as laundresses transcended acceptable feminine behavior in order to get acknowledged for their suffering. For these women, enduring illness, freezing weather, and other discomforts of frontier army life were probably frustrating because they lacked a legitimate voice with which to express their needs. Judy selectively targeted the quartermaster because he was the man who controlled the post's resources, and he decided who received what items. That Elizabeth Custer even noted her disdain for the stingy quartermaster highlights how Judy's courage in confronting the quartermaster—the man with arguably the most power on post—contested the gender and rank hierarchy, gaining the acknowledgment of her troubles from the quartermaster and earning the respect of her social superiors.

In order to understand the frontier military's sexual double standard, it is enlightening to consider a specific enlisted wife, Maria Straw, who was quarantined for venereal disease. Her experience shows how military doctors

enforced a quarantine policy that condoned soldiers' sexual promiscuity at the expense of women's reputations. Such medical policies might not have been enforced to harm women of the frontier army intentionally, but they had consequences that left these women struggling to control their own bodies and sexuality.

While officers' wives' diaries and military documents are scattered with hints of the moral looseness of enlisted wives, the case of Maria Straw best highlights historians' tendency to take these sources as truth without questioning officers' and their wives' purpose in painting enlisted wives and laundresses as immoral. Maria Straw, a soldier's wife, was quarantined in 1877 at Fort Union, New Mexico, "to prevent contagion among the men," according to one account.²³ The historian based his argument that Straw was quarantined to prevent the spread of venereal disease on an army veteran's remark that army doctors on the frontier "had nothing to do but confine laundresses and treat the clap." Officers' judgments about enlisted wives' and laundresses' sexual morality, especially unmarried ones, were "perhaps discriminatory but nonetheless realistic," Edward Hoffman concludes. Underscoring his argument about venereal disease is his assumption that Straw was a prostitute—despite her marriage to a soldier and lack of evidence to prove her occupation—and that women were responsible for spreading venereal disease to soldiers.²⁴

Yet women did not contract venereal disease by themselves. Undoubtedly some laundresses were probably prostitutes because as mothers, they had to provide for themselves and their children in a hostile and transient environment. Prostitution was one of the few occupations available to women on the frontier in the nineteenth century because the army sanctioned prostitution as a means to relieve the carnal appetites of its soldiers. Considering that army officers accommodated the carnal needs of their men by allowing "a wagon full of prostitutes to accompany [their] troops on the march for ready gratification," it seems likely that Maria Straw could have gotten chancroid from her husband, who might have taken up with one of the many prostitutes following the frontier army.²⁵ By excluding the possibility that Maria's husband might have been responsible for the contraction and spread of chancroid, an ulceration of groin area lymph nodes due to venereal disease, army doctors located the diseased vector in Maria's body. Given the likelihood that soldiers contracted and contributed to the spread of venereal disease on army posts, it is curious that the Army

quarantined only women like Maria who were viewed as threats to the effectiveness of the frontier fighting force.

For practical purposes, quarantining women over soldiers better suited the Army's mission. Quarantining soldiers for venereal disease would not only have reduced the size of its fighting force and threatened post security from external threats; it would also have punished soldiers by attaching a social stigma to the sexual exploits that officers encouraged. But the habit of quarantining laundresses and enlisted wives *along with* prostitutes who followed and served soldiers had the unintended effect of stereotyping all laundresses and wives as women with dangerously loose morals. The power of such stereotypes is evident in Hoffman's work, where Straw's medical condition justified her discriminatory treatment. By quarantining these women, army doctors created visual evidence—through physical separation and stigmatization—that enlisted wives and laundresses belonged to the lowest class of military society due to their loose morals and unhygienic habits. By dismissing men's role in the contraction and spread of venereal disease, historians have left unquestioned the army's sexual double standard that punished women for promiscuity while encouraging soldiers to indulge their carnal appetites.

Neither the Army's double standard about sexual promiscuity nor its quarantine policy was inevitable. Despite the intense measures the frontier military took to enforce the Victorian belief that domestic work was only for women and that public affairs were men's business, the presence of enlisted wives constantly exposed the futility and instability of these imposed gendered categories because enlisted wives almost always worked in the public sphere as company laundresses. Falling under the authority of post commanders, laundresses received living quarters, food rations, and payment proportional to the soldier's rank, ranging from fifty cents to two dollars monthly for enlisted men to upwards of five dollars for officers' laundry.²⁶ Earning a living wage and legal recognition from the Army, enlisted laundresses were living proof that women could successfully participate in men's public affairs and that soldiers were extremely dependent on the women they berated as second-class citizens. Their very presence was a constant reminder to military officials that prescribed gender roles were only as effective as women allowed them to be.²⁷

The most persuasive challenge to the military's enforcement of distinct boundaries of masculinity and femininity was the presence of a transsexual

enlisted wife, "Old Nash." Working for years as the 7th Cavalry's laundress, seamstress, cook, and midwife, Mrs. Nash earned the reputation of being a dedicated, reliable woman with a strong work-ethic, an "architectural build, and massive features." Elizabeth Custer wrote in her memoir, *Boots and Saddles*, that Mrs. Nash was "tall, angular, awkward, and seemingly coarse," but all of her troubles had "softened her nature." Elizabeth, in relating Mrs. Nash's harsh background, described how Mrs. Nash told her that before coming to work for the 7th Cavalry, she dressed "as a man in order to support herself by driving the ox-teams over the plains to New Mexico... Finding life as a laundress easier, she had resumed her woman's dress and entered the army." Mrs. Nash decided to go west when "her own two children had died in Mexico."²⁸

Always wearing "a veil pinned about the lower part of her face," Mrs. Nash told Elizabeth that her first husband had deserted her, taking the hundreds of dollars she had saved washing, cooking, and sewing for soldiers.²⁹ Without actually getting a divorce, Mrs. Nash took a second husband, a quartermaster clerk named Clifton, who was happy before he got married. After his marriage to Mrs. Nash, he became depressed and "succeeded in stealing her savings and deserting like the first."³⁰ Again ignoring the law and "thinking divorce a superfluous luxury," Mrs. Nash married a third soldier, Corporal Noonan, who Elizabeth believed was "the handsomest soldier in his company."³¹ While Noonan was away on a scouting expedition, Mrs. Nash became ill and died. Elizabeth learned that upon her deathbed Mrs. Nash "made an appeal to the camp women who surrounded her . . . to put her in her coffin just as she was when she died and bury her at once." These women refused to bury Mrs. Nash without "paying proper attention to the dead," and discovered upon dressing her body that Mrs. Nash was a man. Elizabeth, upon finding out Mrs. Nash's secret, did not pass judgment, but rather exhibited pity when she declared, "Old Nash, becoming weary of the laborious life of a man, had assumed the disguise of a woman, and hoped to carry the secret into the grave."³²

The Bismarck *Tribune*, reporting on the Nash scandal, illustrated Corporal Noonan's suicide upon learning his wife was a man: Corporal Noonan, of the 7th Cavalry, whose "wife" died some weeks ago, committed suicide in one of the stables of the lower garrison . . . the shame that fell on him in the discovery of his wife's sex, undermined his desire for existence, and he crawled away lonely and forsaken and blew out the life that promised

nothing but infamy and disgrace. The suicide was committed with a pistol, and Noonan shot himself through the heart. The affair created almost as intense excitement at the post as did the announcement of the death of Mrs. Noonan, but there was a sigh of relief on the corporate lips of the 7th Cavalry when its members heard that Noonan by his own hand had relieved the regiment of the odium which the man's presence cast upon them... There is no explanation of the unnatural union except that the supposed Mexican woman was worth \$10,000 and was able to buy her husband's silence.³³ That officials were relieved to hear of Noonan's suicide indicates the fragility of gender roles in frontier army society. "The odium which the man's presence cast" upon military men signified homosexuality as a constant threat to the patriarchal nuclear family ideal on which military stability rested.

With the exception of historian Peter Boag, scholars have been surprisingly silent about the significance of Mrs. Nash's story, despite its rich potential for understanding the instability and fluidity of prescribed gender roles in the frontier army. Patricia Stallard mentions Mrs. Nash in passing as "the most notorious laundress of the Indian Wars era," while Miller Stewart relates Mrs. Nash's story as evidence that not all laundresses were "inept, self-willed, quarrelsome, regulation-defying, and even pugilistic."³⁴ Evan Connell believes the significance of Mrs. Nash was the extent to which her case provided a "startling intermission" to the "monotonous drama of frontier life."³⁵ More than a mere "startling intermission," Mrs. Nash's story is central to a gendered analysis of the frontier army because it illustrates the instability of the frontier army's definitions of masculinity and femininity.³⁶

Rather than being censured by Elizabeth Custer and other women who knew her, frontier officers' wives viewed Mrs. Nash with pity as a "poor old thing" because her behavior epitomized the military's ideal woman. Dutifully cooking, cleaning, and sewing for the company's soldiers, and subserviently maintaining an immaculate domestic space for her husband, Corporal Noonan, Mrs. Nash appropriated traditional feminine behaviors in order to make her disguise as a woman appear more realistic.³⁷ That Elizabeth Custer and her circle of friends did not discriminate against Mrs. Nash because she was really a man suggests that feminine behavior, rather than a person's biological sex, was the true marker of high female society to officers' wives. Corporal Noonan's suicide due to the shame he felt for hiding his homosexuality suggests that for men, a woman's biological sex

was equally important to her submissive behavior in upholding a masculine ethos.

The Nash-Noonan scandal created a stir in the frontier military community. That a man chose to transgress the boundaries of masculine behavior and behave like a woman raised doubts about males' natural and inevitable power over females. Mrs. Nash's unions with three husbands highlighted the military's fear of homosexual behavior among troops (which was one reason the Army sanctioned prostitution). Homosexuality was the ultimate threat to the military's image of masculine power and domination, and its stigma in the frontier army was so strong that the "corporate lips of the 7th Cavalry" were relieved when Noonan committed suicide so they would not have to face the ironies, contradictions, and latent fears that the Nash-Noonan case illuminated. The frontier military's response to the homosexual union between Nash and Noonan—to turn a cheek and pretend it did not happen—arguably portended the military's later version of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy for active-duty homosexuals. By showing that gender and its corresponding behavior was a choice, Mrs. Nash undermined the logic of the military's patriarchal system that made men's power over women seem inevitable. By raising questions about what it really meant to be a man or a woman, Mrs. Nash's case suggested what many officers and soldiers chose to ignore: that their prescribed definitions of manhood and womanhood that made their authority over women seem inevitable were, in fact, unstable, fluid, and entirely dependent on men and women performing masculinity and femininity in accordance with the standards of the nineteenth century.

The creative and selective ways enlisted wives contested their inferior status within frontier army society complicate the traditional narrative of the frontier army's march across the West in the nineteenth century. Rather than being a unified, monolithic group of American patriots sacrificing in the name of manifest destiny, military hierarchical power relations were unstable and contested. Often enlisted wives working as laundresses posed considerable challenges to the army's internal unity by illuminating gendered double standards and inequalities that forced officers and their wives to consider the fragility of their gender and rank power. Occupying the lowest status in military society enabled these women to challenge Victorian definitions of ladies. Remarkably, these enlisted wives' behavior in challenging patriarchal authority suggests that they were

not as invested in attaining lady status as were officers' wives. While some scholars have argued that working class women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century aspired to the middle class feminine ideal, some enlisted wives on the western frontier rejected this feminine ideal in favor of more traditionally masculine traits such as fighting, threatening, cursing, drinking and prostituting.³⁸ By co-opting these traditionally masculine behaviors to challenge their inferior status, these enlisted wives *performed* in a way that men would understand.

While the women analyzed here were exceptional because their behavior was subversive enough to attract the attention of travelers, officers' wives, and military officials, their stories reveal that women of the frontier army were influenced by, and in turn influenced, their surroundings. By internalizing certain aspects of the militaristic and masculine frontier army culture to fit their changing needs, these exceptional women challenged traditional definitions of proper femininity in ways that exposed the frontier army's sexual and behavioral double standards, as well as the inadvertent gendered consequences of such policies relating to crime and venereal disease. Analysis of frontier army society through the eyes and actions of enlisted wives and laundresses reveals the self-determination of a group of women whose importance has been doubly glossed over by military and women's historians alike. Military historians' traditional tendency to focus on military leaders and battlefield strategies has created scholarship that literally writes military wives out of existence. Revisionist military historians and women's historians who have recently begun to address women in the military have mainly explored military life through the experiences of officers' wives, largely because these women were educated and left written records. Certainly the lack of written accounts from laundresses and enlisted wives poses a formidable challenge to scholars who must piece together disparate sources to recreate these invisible women's experiences.

But the challenge is worth undertaking because laundresses and enlisted wives offer incredibly rich (and largely uncharted) research ground on which to explore issues of gender role instability, gender performance, changing ideals of masculinity, and the internal workings of military society that have fueled the United States' rise to become a global superpower. Analyzing select behaviors such as violence, profanity, alcohol consumption, and transgendered disguising as enlisted wives' rejections of military patriarchy by no means constitutes a complete picture of the myriad

ways these women challenged, or even supported, their second class status to men. But by interrogating the stereotypes of these women as “belligerent viragos” and troublesome hellions” as a starting point for further inquiry, scholars gain a deeper understanding of the instability, dynamism, and complexity of frontier military society that is closer to historical reality than the romanticized fiction that such misleading stereotypes propagate. Examining these women on their own terms reveals how, in spite of all the odds of frontier military life as poor women in a hostile, male-dominated environment, they often selectively and creatively pushed the boundaries of acceptable feminine behavior in order to gain recognition and respect within a patriarchal society that refused them a legitimate voice.

Endnotes

¹ *Kellie Wilson-Buford is a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She thanks her colleagues John Wunder, Sean Kammer, Adam Hodge, and Jeannette Jones for their comments; anonymous readers for their critiques; and her family for their unconditional support and acceptance of frontier military wives into innumerable dinner and telephone conversations. Verity McGinnis rightly asserts that neither enlisted nor officers’ wives enjoyed legal status, unlike laundresses, who received housing, food rations, and medical care. Between 1878 and 1883 the army phased out laundresses’ legal status. Considered camp followers, frontier army wives received no benefits. See McGinnis, “Ladies of the Frontier Forts,” *Military History of the West* 35 (2005): 51.

² McGinnis argues that military protocol required military wives to conduct themselves in accordance with Victorian ideals of piety, chastity, and submission. Wives who transgressed the codes of conduct required for “ladies” were ostracized and banned from Army forts. See McGinnis “Ladies of the Frontier Forts, 53.

³ Company laundresses, who were almost always enlisted wives, married into the military caste system and took on their husbands’ ranks just as officers’ wives did, but their dual status as ‘woman’ and ‘enlisted’ relegated them to the lowest rung on the social ladder, beneath officers, enlisted soldiers, and officers’ wives. Historians can examine these invisible women through careful reading of the diaries of officers and their wives, memoirs of western settlers, and official military documents in which commanders discussed the merits and problems associated with the company laundresses’ presence on frontier posts. Primary and secondary sources portray enlisted wives on a continuum ranging from inept, troublesome hellions to “ladies in every sense of the word.” For the troublesome hellion interpretation, see Miller J. Stewart “Army Laundresses: Ladies of the ‘Soap Suds Row’,” *Nebraska History* 61 (Winter 1980): 428-30. For the view of enlisted wives as ladies, see Ami Mulford, *Fighting Indians in the 7th U.S. Cavalry* (Reprint of 1878 ed.; Johnstown: Old Army Press, 1970), 60.

⁴ Frontier military and women’s historians have produced an impressive array of scholarship analyzing officers’ wives experiences with and contributions to frontier military life. For examples, see Sandra L. Myres, “Frontier Historians, Women, and the ‘New’ Military History,” *Military History of the Southwest* 19 (Spring 1989): 27-37, and “Army Women’s Narratives as Documents of Social History: Some Examples from the Western Frontier, 1840-

1900," *New Mexico Historical Review* 65 (April 1990): 175-98; Mary L. Williams, "Ladies of the Regiment: Their Influence on the Frontier Army," *Nebraska History* 78 (Winter 1997): 158-64. Scholarship on officers' wives, while valuable, provides an incomplete picture of frontier military wives' experiences because it generally excludes enlisted wives who made up a majority of the military's female spouses. One exception is Cynthia Wood's "Army Laundresses and Civilization on the Western Frontier," *Journal of the West* 41 (Summer 2002): 26-34.

⁵ McGinnis notes that the "lack of narratives by enlisted men's wives affords only a top-down consideration of the army's social divisions" in "Ladies of the Frontier Forts," 51.

⁶ In "Ladies of the Frontier Forts," McGinnis represents the middle-of-the-road approach to laundresses and enlisted wives, noting that "despite their common manners and shady reputations, the army laundresses, portrayed as drabs by the 'ladies' of the post, deserved their legal recognition for services rendered" (p. 51).

⁷ Mary Leefe Laurence, *Daughter of the Regiment: Memoirs of a Childhood in the Frontier Army, 1878-1898*, ed. Thomas T. Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 73.

⁸ Laurence, *Daughter of the Regiment*, 73.

⁹ See, for example, McGinnis, "Ladies of the Frontier Forts," 51.

¹⁰ Maurice Frink and Casey Barthelmess, *Photographer on an Army Mule* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), 94-95.

¹¹ O. L. Hein, *Memoirs of Long Ago* (New York: G. P. Putnam's, 1925), 68.

¹² Patricia Y. Stallard, *Glittering Misery: Dependents of the Indian Fighting Army* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 65; Stewart, "Army Laundresses," 429.

¹³ Michele Nacy, *Members of the Regiment: Army Officers' Wives on the Western Frontier: 1865-1890* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), 2.

¹⁴ Stallard, *Glittering Misery*, 59-60.

¹⁵ Barry J. Hagan, "I Did It, But I Did Not Mean It," *Council on Abandoned Posts* (periodical) (Arlington, Virginia: Spring, 1977), 17-21, as cited in Stewart, "Army Laundresses," 429-30.

¹⁶ Stewart, "Army Laundresses," 430.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 429.

¹⁸ Stallard, *Glittering Misery*, 60.

¹⁹ Marian Russell, *Land of Enchantment: Memoirs of Marian Russell Along the Santa Fe Trail*. Dictated to Mrs. Hal Russell; editor Garnet M. Bayer (Evanston, IL: Branding Iron Press, 1954), 110, as cited in Stallard, *Glittering Misery*, 65. Records do not suggest what type of punishment this enlisted wife received for cutting off the tip of a soldier's tongue. Based on prior cases, this woman was probably banned from the post, and the soldier was not punished for his un-gentlemanly conduct.

²⁰ Stallard, *Glittering Misery*, 59.

²¹ Elizabeth Bacon Custer, *Following the Guidon* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 228-29.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Edward Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 312.

²⁴ Coffman, *Old Army*, 312, notes that the judgments officers made about the morals of laundresses, especially unmarried ones, were "perhaps discriminatory but nonetheless realistic."

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ McGinnis, "Ladies' of the Frontier Forts," 51.

²⁷ Although enlisted wives' intentions are not known due to the lack of sources they left behind, their traditionally masculine behaviors suggest that they cared little for achieving lady

status, and rather internalized the violent environment of frontier military forts to their own benefit.

²⁸ Custer, *Boots and Saddles*, 201.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 199.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 199; Evan S. Connell, *Son of the Morning Star: Custer and the Little Big Horn* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984), 156.

³¹ Custer, *Boots and Saddles*, 200; Connell, *Son of the Morning Star*, 156.

³² *Ibid.*, 202.

³³ *Bismarck (North Dakota) Tribune*, 6 July 1876, as cited in Connell, *Son of the Morning Star*, 156-57.

³⁴ Stallard, *Glittering Misery*, 60; Stewart, "Army Laundresses," 427.

³⁵ Connell, *Son of the Morning Star*, 157.

³⁶ Peter Boag is the most notable historian of homosexuality in the western experience. For a more general overview of transgendered individuals in the west, see Peter Boag, "Go West Young Man, Go East Young Woman: Searching for the Trans in Western Gender History," *Western Historical Quarterly* 36 (Winter 2005): 477-97.

³⁷ Custer recalls that when she went to visit Mrs. Nash at her quarters, she "found the little place shining" with luxurious items like silk, wool, polished tins and pink cambric. See Custer, *Boots and Saddles*, 200.

³⁸ See, for example, Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

*“I Know No Other Country’: Tejanos and the
American Wars of the Twentieth Century,
1917-1972”*

ALEX MENDOZA*

At the turn of the twentieth century, Tejanos¹ had a military legacy that fit well with the martial spirit of a republic—and later, a state—that had been forged by war. In the years leading up to the Texas Revolution, Tejanos had influenced the Anglo military in various ways, ranging from offensive cavalry maneuvers to permanent militia organization.² Yet in the eventual dispossession of the Mexican Texan population that occurred in the wake of independence, Tejanos moved away from the notions of honor and patriotism as cornerstones of motivation for enlistment and participation in martial conflicts. Instead, they looked upon local circumstances and self-advancement to forge their allegiances and influence their loyalties. While nineteenth century critics might have claimed that Tejanos lacked the valor and bravery necessary for war, the truth was that Mexican Texans had already witnessed the eclipse of political and social rights in the wake of the Texas Revolution and the Mexican American War (1846-1848). Even the Civil War and its aftermath had seen the Tejano community part with additional landholdings and their economic predominance in the state. Consequently, Tejanos became guarded in the midst of American-led wars and frontier conflicts of the nineteenth century. It was not until the wars of the twentieth century that Tejanos were able to reemphasize the concept of a warrior tradition that had lay dormant for more than half a century. And while the ideas of demonstrating bravery and honor were certainly factors behind the motivation to fight, Tejanos also recognized that military service for the government could lead to other extrinsic benefits such as civil rights and assimilation.³

The notion that Tejanos, like all Hispanics, joined the ranks of the military to uphold one’s patriotic duty and service to the nation proved prevalent amongst community groups and veterans organizations by the turn of the twenty-first century. As monuments and other civic honors recognized the Mexican Texans who had fought admirably in past wars,

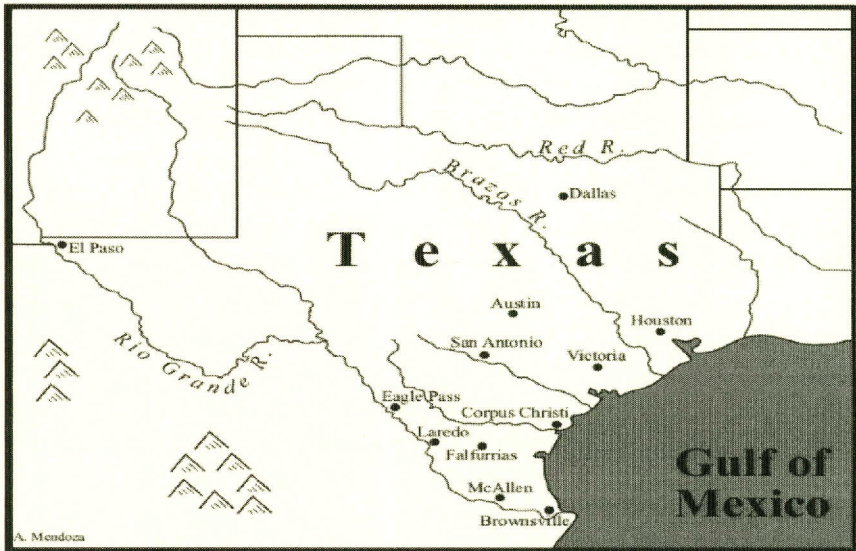
the general narrative explaining Tejano military service revolved around the concepts of honor, bravery, and patriotism.⁴ Yet scholars examining Tejanos' responses to war in the twentieth century have found a shifting set of values influencing the particular circumstances behind Tejano military service. Each war added a nuanced layer in regards to how Tejanos modified their martial spirit and shifted their motivations to join the armed forces. Accordingly, the military experience of each conflict altered how Mexican Texans would relate to their postwar world.

While some Tejanos might have hesitated in joining the American Expeditionary Force during the First World War, feelings ranging from romantic adventurism to the desire to prove one's self-worth through battle influenced their inspiration for military service. And while the participation of Mexican Texans certainly moved them towards the path of American assimilation, it was this integration into mainstream society that made Tejano service in World War II a more profound experience in regards to patriotism and national loyalty. However, Mexican Texans also saw economic and educational opportunities as well as avenues for social advancement through military service in the "Good War." These aspects remained strong through the Cold War conflicts as Tejanos rallied behind a slew of variant agendas, including education and civil rights.⁵

Military service in the wars of the twentieth century integrated Tejanos into the mainstream of American society. Through military service Tejanos gained access to educational and economic opportunities previously unavailable to them prior to the early twentieth century. Yet until most recently, historians have generally neglected the study of the Tejano military experience. Scholars such as Carole Christian and José Ramírez have chronicled the Tejano experience in the First World War while Lorena Oropeza and Steven Rosales have analyzed the broader implications of Chicano military service in the wars of the late 1900s.⁶ The recent works of these historians and others have highlighted the significance of Hispanic military service as it pertains to citizenship, acculturation, masculinity, and community. The portrait that emerges from this scholarship offers a more comprehensive view of how Mexican American soldiers rationalized military service, moving beyond an oversimplification of Anglo-Mexican or Anglo-Tejano relations based on race and class conflict to one that embraces a disparate set of paradigms including gender, cultural identity, and nationalism. These post-Chicano Era historians have broadened our

understanding of Mexican American history as it pertains to identity formation and community strategy.⁷ Tejanos' military service during the twentieth century fits into this new model of analysis. The various wars of the twentieth century shaped how Mexican Texans sought to alter perceptions that viewed them as foreigners in the land of their birth, how they tried to prove loyalty to the nation, and the impact that their investment in military service could provide in their struggle for political and social equality. This essay maintains that Tejano military service was not a hegemonic experience forged through the prisms of patriotism and assimilation. Rather, Mexican Texans altered their motivations in the various wars of the twentieth century, shifting through a complex set of intrinsic and extrinsic values. This study thus contributes to Tejano scholarship by exploring how Mexican Texans were able to shape their community strategy and how they adapted to the new opportunities provided by military service.

Since social and political barriers to nineteenth century military service existed at the end of the 1800s, the Tejano population remained fragmented as a large percentage of Mexican Texans still retained a loyalty to their native land, despite a growing affinity for state and national influences in America. Tejanos basically had to deal with the reality that even their elite had seen their influence wane at the end of the nineteenth century as the modernization of railroads and economic progress tied Texas to the rest of the nation. Anglo-Tejano marriages declined and harsh reminders of a racial caste system persisted as *dejure* and *defacto* segregation placed the Tejano population in a separate category. Moreover, violence and intimidation continued as anti-Mexican sentiments persisted by the turn of the twentieth century. Despite the lessened influence of the Tejano elite in state affairs at the end of the 1800s, some efforts for change occurred in the first two decades of the twentieth century. In fact, some Mexican Texans accommodated themselves to the imposition of Anglo American culture, symbols, and values in the wake of newly arrived Mexican immigrants who had been displaced by that nation's Revolution.⁸ At the same time, these attempts to demonstrate Tejano loyalty to Texas and the United States came in the midst of further anti-Mexican sentiment which was further sparked by the lawless raids and subversive activities of Mexican revolutionaries and Tejanos on both sides of the Rio Grande. Native Tejanos, frustrated with their deteriorating political and economic status, would lend their support to both banditry and separatist movements such as the Plan of San Diego



Twentieth Century Texas

Rebellion, which called for an all-out war against the United States. As a result, the Texas-Mexico border still raged with violence during the early 1900s.⁹

The onset of World War I and U.S. entry into the conflict in April 1917 thrust the Mexican Texan population into the maelstrom of an American war with implications for Tejano community. Tejanos, in the words of historian José A. Ramírez, “demonstrated patriotism, but also disloyalty.” On the one hand, Tejanos fled the state to avoid military service. On the other hand, others quickly volunteered, eager to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States. In Kingsville, about 40 miles southwest of Corpus Christi, more than one hundred Tejanos volunteered their services to the United States in April 1917. Other Mexican Texans wrote the authorities in Washington to inquire about the possibility of organizing Spanish-speaking companies in the American military.¹⁰ However, in contrast to the volunteer-laden army of the Spanish-American War (1898), the First World War employed conscription through a Selective Service Act that would integrate the new recruits into the existing regular army. Three registration efforts netted a total of 24 million citizens and non-citizens for the draft. In Texas, 5,000 of the 197,000 men who served in the armed forces had

Spanish surnames. The advent of governmental supervision of the Selective Service Act also allowed Tejanos other avenues in which to support the war. Throughout the Lone Star State Mexican Texans made their way to serve in draft boards, clerks, and interpreters for the United States military. Other middle-class Tejanos sponsored fundraisers and challenged the citizenry that had excluded them from politics and society to contribute to the war effort. This was a major turning point as the burgeoning Tejano population now sought to support the very system that had excluded them for generations.¹¹

Tejanos of all classes answered the nation's call to arms during the Great War. Individual reasons may have varied, but they generally revolved around similar motivations: patriotism and support for the U.S.; a desire to escape the economic morass of poverty; ethnic pride indicative of demonstrating the worthiness of the "*Mexicano*" people; and the aspiration to seek adventure in a foreign war.¹² In Laredo, Benjamin Ramos of *El Democrata Fronterizo* urged his readers to support the war effort "for honor, for patriotism, for gratitude, for our own best interests" because as residents of the United States "we have benefitted from her liberties."¹³ This sense of patriotism was not absolute. While thousands rallied to the Stars and Stripes, many other Tejanos simply fled to Mexico to avoid conscription, uncertain about supporting a state and nation that had disfranchised them politically and socially. Consequently, Tejano enlistment for the First World War could have likely been higher.¹⁴ Yet there is an explanation for this hesitation to adopt an American identity during the First World War. Up until the first two decades of the twentieth century, many first-generation immigrants still demonstrated a dual mentality, or a bicultural identity. Even though ethnic Americans participated in the nation's society and economy, they still retained a cultural retention from their ancestral homeland. In his study of Mexican workers in Texas, historian Emilio Zamora, outlined this dual identity as it pertains to Tejanos. Zamora maintains that Mexican workers adopted a circular migration along the Texas-Mexico border that shaped their "Mexicanist" identity as many Tejanos, particularly those in south Texas, subscribed to this sense of identification because of a profound love and loyalty for Mexico.¹⁵

Yet many of those who served demonstrated a discernible martial spirit that echoed that of many in the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). In addition to Private Marcelino Serna, part of the 89th Division, Fourth Corps,

First U.S. Army, who received the Distinguished Service Cross for his bravery in the Meuse-Argonne, other Tejanos also received awards for their actions on the field of battle. Pvt. Graviel García of Somerville, located about sixty miles east of Austin, earned the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions on October 16, 1918. García, fighting as part of Company C, 325th Infantry Regiment, 82nd Division, AEF, near St. Juvin, France, voluntarily went out into "No Man's Land" under heavy enemy fire and administered first aid to a wounded comrade. While making his way back with the wounded man, García was himself wounded. His actions, nevertheless, earned him the military's recognition.¹⁶

While García's actions proved heroic, the central Texas native did not receive the highest honors of Mexican American servicemen in the Great War. That distinction went to Private David Bennes Barkley (David Barkley Cantú) of the 356th Infantry for his bravery in infiltrating enemy lines to obtain information about the enemy's dispositions. Barkley, born to a Mexican American mother (Cantú) and Anglo-American father in Laredo, but raised in San Antonio, had volunteered to fight in 1917. Wary that he might be placed in a segregated unit, Barkley used his father's surname to enlist. On November 9, 1918, Barkley and a comrade succeeded in obtaining the necessary information. As the two men returned to their unit, Barkley drowned while trying to swim across the Meuse River. His companion made it back successfully and the reconnaissance mission contributed to one of the final Allied offensives prior to the Armistice. For his actions, Barkley received the French Croix de Guerre, the Italian Croce al Merito di Guerra, and the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award for valor in the United States Armed Forces. Later, when his ethnic origins were discovered in 1989, he became the first Hispanic Medal of Honor recipient.¹⁷

In some cases, acts of bravery from Tejano soldiers came from anger or resentment like in the case of Simón González, a day laborer in the small central Texas town of Martindale, about ten miles east of San Marcos. González was drafted into the 360th Infantry Regiment despite the fact that his blind father, Maximiliano, protested his son's conscription due to his dependency on him and the hardships his absence would cause. Protests to the local draft board and army officials went unheeded and González left for Europe. González then transferred his hatred for the German American-led draft board in his home town to the enemy in France. "I am here because of the Germans in Martindale!" he often exclaimed. González was killed in action in 1918, his anti-German feelings notwithstanding.¹⁸

The end of the Great War did not, however, signify an end to the discrimination of Tejanos by the ruling classes. The postwar elation and the federal government's awareness of the Mexican American presence in Texas soon gave way—again—to old fashioned stereotypes and prejudice.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the First World War served as a turning point as Tejanos sought to stake a claim to the promise of American citizenship. Fortunately for Tejanos, during the years following World War I, the burgeoning middle class had led to the creation of an organization, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), which emphasized attention on the civil rights of Hispanics. LULAC saw that through military service the gap between the American creed and practice could be exploited. Accordingly, LULAC published a volume entitled "*Los México-Americanos y La Gran Guerra y Su Contingente en Pro de la Democracia, la Humanidad y la Justicia: Mi Diario Particular.*" Written years earlier by Alice native, José de la Luz Sáenz, it was the only chronicle of a Mexican-American soldier who fought in World War I. The book recounted the experiences of a thirty-year-old soldier of Mexican descent who had fought on behalf of democracy, humanity, and justice. Throughout his diary, Sáenz maintained that the ideals of democracy for which he fought could be applied to his fellow Mexican Americans in Texas in their struggle for social and economic equality. LULAC, for its part, continued to broadcast the essential credentials that Mexican Americans brought to the table.²⁰ These feelings manifested themselves within the Tejano community with a burgeoning sense of American identity as more Mexican Texans accommodated themselves to American traditions and values. As historian Carole Christian notes, World War I gave the Tejanos the first opportunity to consider themselves as Americans rather than continuing to remain on the margins of society.²¹ Tejanos continued to rail for social justice as deportations and repatriation during the Great Depression hindered their goals of integration into the American mainstream. World War I Tejano military veterans and other community leaders thus emphasized integration towards American equality during the 1930s. Veterans such as Sáenz (Alice), Ben Garza (Corpus Christi), John C. Solís (San Antonio), and M.C. González (San Antonio), to name a few, focused their efforts in helping the Tejano community try to take advantage of the opportunities that American society could offer. During the interwar years, Mexican Americans in Texas held a stronger sense of belonging to the United States than ever before.²²

After the First World War, the approximately 5,000 Tejanos who joined the ranks of the American Expeditionary Force generally returned to their prewar lives as the National Defense Act of 1920 and subsequent legislation cut funding for the armed forces. A cost-conscious Congress shifted the country's responsibility for defense to the National Guard units across America. During the interwar years, the United States Army dwindled to about 130,000 men, a number that would remain below authorized strengths until the late 1930s. During that time, the Texas National Guard numbered approximately between 6,600 to 8,200 men organized into a modified organization of the Thirty-sixth Division. The Guard included a disproportionately fewer number of Tejanos due to more stringent federal standards imposed by the National Defense Act. In the case of Company G, 143rd Infantry Regiment, 36th Division (the "Houston Light Guards"), the first Tejanos did not join the ranks of the Texas National Guard unit until the 1930s. On the eve of World War II, Tejanos accounted for nine percent of the members in the company. For Tejanos, service in the National Guard meant additional opportunities to stake a claim to the American dream.²³ Yet for government officials, the Texas National Guard provided them an opportunity to further "Americanize" Tejanos. In El Paso, building upon the AEF's practice of segregating non-English speaking soldiers to train them more efficiently, National Guard officials formed an infantry company made up mostly of Mexican Americans. In October 1923, officials organized Company E, 141st Regiment, 36th Division. The 83 men, mostly Tejanos, withstood challenges to being disbanded as the state's only unit made up of Mexican-Americans to remain in service up until President Franklin D. Roosevelt mobilized the National Guard units across the country.²⁴

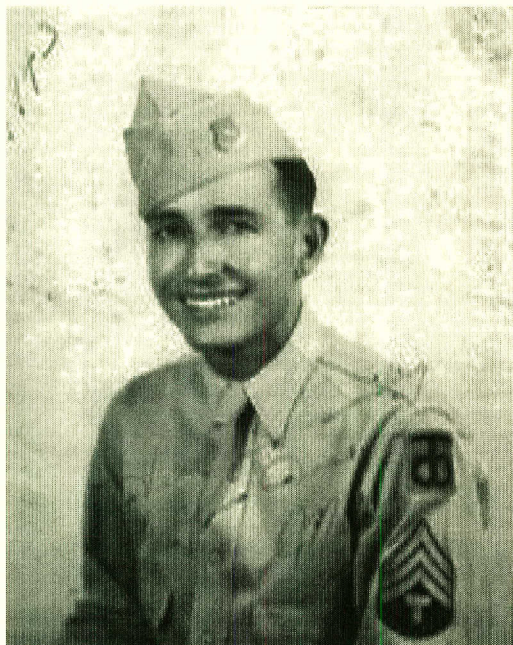
The United States' entry into World War II after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 once again thrust the Tejano population into another conflict. But unlike past wars, the Tejano community responded to the Second World War with the patriotic fervor of their Anglo-American neighbors. This was evident in the fact that as many as 750,000 Texans served in the armed forces during the war, a proportionally larger percentage than any other state.²⁵ Of those, it is estimated that more than 100,000 Tejanos served in the United States armed forces.²⁶ Historians often refer to the Second World War as the watershed moment for Mexican Americans and their quest for social and political equality.²⁷ Yet as Arnolde De León argues, Tejanos found themselves in a new place. The Mexican

American generation of the 1920s and 1930s, "became increasingly insistent on their right to enjoy the privileges guaranteed them under the United States Constitution."²⁸ The Tejano population hence sought to become "genuine Americans" and prove oneself in battle while the family sacrificed for the war effort at home.²⁹ Like the previous world war, Tejanos viewed service in the military as a means to achievement and recognition that Mexican Texans would not be able to attain in everyday life. While the need to defend one's home proved paramount, the Second World War would include additional layers influencing and shaping Tejanos' service motivation. While socio-economic opportunities and the desire to enter mainstream American society were significant motives behind Tejano military service, the concepts of patriotism and nationalism remained dominant as well.³⁰ These feelings were exemplified by Luis Leyva, born in Mexico but a resident of Laredo, who was an undocumented citizen and was not drafted. Nevertheless, Leyva volunteered. "I know no other country," he explained. "This is my country; this is where I live."³¹

Large numbers of Mexican Americans answered the country's call to arms and their stories and anecdotes of serving in the U.S. armed forces or supporting the war had rich meaning to the Tejano community.³² With the language barrier less of an issue than in previous wars, all Mexican Americans saw service in integrated units. Of course, Company E, 141st Regiment, 36th (Texas) Division out of El Paso proved the exception, traveling to the European theater in a unit comprised mostly of Mexican Americans. In a fitting sense of irony, the men of Company E adopted the slogan, "Remember the Alamo" as they campaigned and reminisced of their experiences of the Texas barrios.³³

As in previous conflicts, Tejanos performed bravely on the field of battle. Of the thirty-three Texans to receive the Medal of Honor in the Second World War, five were of Mexican descent, Lucian Adams of Port Arthur, Macario García of Sugar Land, José M. López of Brownsville, Silvestre S. Herrera of El Paso, and Cleto L. Rodríguez of San Antonio. The figure was especially notable considering that out of the thirteen Medals awarded to Hispanics in World War II, almost half came from Texas.³⁴ Formal recognition and honors for their military service meant a great deal to these Tejanos, particularly in the postwar era. For instance, Private First Class, Manuel D. Martínez, a member of the 359th Infantry Regiment from Laredo, participated in the D-Day invasion, receiving the Bronze Star

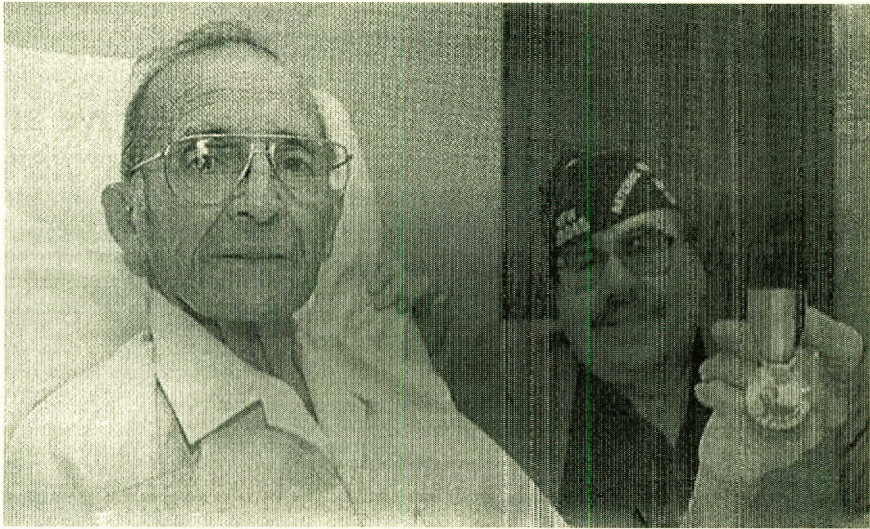
for his “heroic” actions in taking over an assault after his squad leader had been wounded. Fifty years after the war, Martinez received another honor, the Jubilee of Liberty Medal from the French government in recognition for his participation in the liberation of France. Martinez appeared with that medal in his hometown newspaper, proudly displaying his honor on behalf of the nation’s veterans.³⁵



Private Manuel D. Martinez, Laredo, Texas. Martinez, a native Tejano born and raised in the Gateway City, served as a private in the 359th Infantry Regiment and fought honorably in the European theater of war. Photo courtesy of Magda Martinez.



Private Manuel D. Martinez, 359th Infantry Regiment, somewhere in Europe in 1945. Photo courtesy of Magda Martinez.



Private Manuel D. Martinez, left, photographed along with Felix Garcia, Veterans Service Officer for Webb County, with the Jubilee of Liberty Medal from the French government in recognition of his participation in the D-Day invasion of Normandy. Martinez's hometown newspaper proudly acknowledged the Tejano's service to his nation in his later years. Photo courtesy of Magda Martinez.

In the midst of heroism and bravery the notion of patriotism began to stand out. San Antonio native, Manuel C. Vera, who later served in the Pacific, exemplified this very concept:

"I was eager to get in to the war. I may not have understood it, but I saw it as someone attacking our country, and our response was that the proper thing to do was to fight back. We understood that [joining the military] was the patriotic thing to do, and for me at least, it was not a question of trying to get revenge against Japan, but simply that they needed to be stopped or else who knows where it would end if [Japan] was not stopped on their side of the Pacific."³⁶

The feelings of Vera epitomized how many Tejanos now felt.³⁷ And while others enlisted for the sake of romantic adventurism, to get out of jail, or to seek financial opportunities, most Mexican Texans were much like their Anglo-American comrades, joining the military for honor and country.³⁸ At the same time, the ties to their ancestral land remained intact. Medal of Honor recipient, José M. López of Brownsville, for instance, was also awarded the Aztec Eagle, the highest honor given to a foreign born citizen in Mexico.³⁹

The meanings of the Second World War's military experience had a profound impact on Tejanos, moving sentiments beyond honor and nationalism. While not as articulate as the "Double V" campaign that marked the African American war effort, the Mexican Texans were keenly aware that the war against the totalitarian dictatorships would only serve to bolster their struggle for social and political equality at home.⁴⁰ But first, many of them emboldened themselves to shirk the racial stereotypes of the past. Robstown native, Cpl. Raymond Muñiz, noted that military officials disapproved of Mexican American soldiers speaking Spanish. In one instance, Muñiz recollected, he and several other men were reprimanded for speaking Spanish amongst themselves.⁴¹ Laredoan Virgilio Roel, a private in the 84th U.S. Army Infantry, noticed the discrimination right away. "I found a lot of prejudice, mainly resentment from white soldiers, especially if a Mexican American soldier got a better assignment because of his intellect. There was also crude discrimination by both commissioned officers and high-rank enlisted men in cases where the Mexican Americans were of a darker complexion," Roel said.⁴² Rio Grande Valley native, Pvt. Juan Martínez, 1st Cavalry Division, also noted the racial friction within the ranks of the U.S. Army, noting that one Anglo soldier in his own squad wanted nothing to do with him. "He hated me and didn't want to take orders from me," Martínez remembered.⁴³ In some cases, Tejanos simply had to overcome the harsh stereotypes that their fellow servicemen held. "One guy was reading a cartoon and asked me if Mexicans really live with chickens," noted Pvt. Guadalupe Hernández, a native of McAllen.⁴⁴

Despite proving themselves on the field of battle, discrimination could still haunt Tejanos. In one outlandish case, Fort Bend County native, Macario García, who had received the Medal of Honor along with twenty seven other soldiers at a White House ceremony in August 1945, was denied service at a Richmond, Texas restaurant the following month. An outraged García fought with the owner only to be arrested by police soon thereafter. LULAC and private groups rallied to his defense. After a trial, García was ultimately acquitted of all charges.⁴⁵

The postwar world demonstrated that the Second World War did prove to be a watershed moment for Tejanos as military service opened opportunities for education and financial security previously unavailable to them. Organizations like the League of United Latin American Citizens, founded in 1929, and the American G. I. Forum, organized in Corpus Christi

in 1948, by Hector P. García, galvanized support for Mexican Americans in Texas and across the country. Yet negative feelings persisted, such as in the case of Pvt. Felix Z. Longoria of Three Rivers, Texas, approximately seventy miles west of Corpus Christi. Longoria had been killed in action in the Pacific, his body buried in Luzon. In 1949, his remains were supposed to be sent to his family for burial in Three Rivers. However, the local mortician refused to have a wake for a "Mexican" in their place of business, despite Longoria's honorable service record which included commendations for bravery and a Purple Heart. The resulting imbroglio which harkened the racial injustices of the past led to the American G. I. Forum's involvement and the ultimate burial of Longoria's body at Arlington National Cemetery.⁴⁶ The Longoria case and other incidents notwithstanding, Tejanos refused to acquiesce to the social, economic, and racial subjugation of past generations. The war and the resulting G. I. Bill, which expanded educational and economic opportunities for Mexican American veterans, had given many Tejano servicemen the hope that racial discrimination would remain in the past as they viewed themselves as Americans rather than Mexicans.⁴⁷

The postwar world of Tejanos might have been changing in the midst of the massive demobilization of the nation's military, but the onset of the Korean conflict in June of 1950 soon thrust the United States into another war, this time to contain Communism. Texans once more answered the nation's call to arms as more than 289,000 servicemen from the Lone Star State made their way to Southeast Asia. Of these, an estimated 50,000 were of Mexican descent, an estimate derived from examining the 1,719 casualty reports in Korean Conflict Casualty File, 1950-1957 (Machine-Readable Record), Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Of the 1,700 casualties, 302 were of servicemen with Spanish surnames, a rough aggregate of 17.5 percent. That same percentage was used to calculate how many Mexican Americans could have been part of the 289,000 Texans that served in the Korean conflict. It is difficult to surmise with precision because at the time there were no racial/ethnic classifications and many Hispanics were simply labeled as "White" or "N/A." There is also the possibility that several, if not many, of the Spanish-surnamed servicemen were Puerto Rican or from some other nation.⁴⁸

While the Selective Service Extension Act of June 30, 1950 focused on the National Guard and other reserve units to be the first to go to Korea, more than 200,000 draftees were soon called to arms by the end of the

year. Yet the United States did not enter the war alone as U.S. armed forces participated in the conflict alongside seventeen other countries that were part of the United Nations peacekeeping force.⁴⁹ Accordingly some Tejanos found themselves in positions of leadership in the newly integrated armed forces. Sgt. Arnaldo Gutierrez, from Laredo, was part of the 500-man American Korean Military Advisory Group (AKMAG), a unit responsible for training the South Korean Army with modern weapons. In a fitting sense of irony considering the status of Mexican born Texans a generation earlier, Gutierrez and his unit, which included several other Tejanos, were charged with “Americanizing” the South Koreans. “We worked under the 8th Army and we were there to train the South Koreans . . . and instruct them on the American way of life, including the responsibilities of freedom and democracy,” Gutierrez noted.⁵⁰

In some respects, the patriotic fervor that marked enlistment in World War II was absent in the Korean War despite the fact that nearly 148,000 Hispanics served in the military in the conflict. Yet Tejanos still found various motives behind joining the armed forces. Clearly, the desire to serve one’s nation proved dominant. But the soldiers who joined the ranks of the armed forces in Korea had additional motives for military service. The desire to improve one’s socio-economic standing through access to the economic benefits of programs like the G.I. Bill influenced Tejanos. In addition, the memory of World War II and how Mexican American soldiers had gained respect and upward mobility through service to their country loomed large during the Cold War. The significance of patriotic duty as exemplified by previous Tejano generations who had fought in the previous two world wars proved particularly influential to the Tejanos who served in the Korean conflict. Veteran Ernesto Gonzalez recalled, “We didn’t have much knowledge in Duval County about the Korean War. The only reason I went was because my brother had been drafted . . . and my family would cry every night . . . and so I told my father ‘As soon as I’m old enough I’m going to join the army so I can help my brother win the war, so that he can come back.’”⁵¹ In Mercedes, Texas, Rolando Hinojosa echoed Gonzalez’s sentiments. As a young boy, Hinojosa was deeply influenced by Pearl Harbor as the nation was gripped with patriotic sentiment in the wake of the surprise Japanese attack. Unable to enlist because of his age, Hinojosa remained influenced by the nation’s call to arms. “There was a lot of propaganda, movies and everything,” he noted. His older two brothers

joined the armed forces, something that the younger Hinojosa was finally able to do in 1946, when he turned seventeen. By the onset of the Korean War in 1950, Hinojosa related his military service to both patriotism and familial obligation as he recalled how his older brothers had served in the army and navy, during World War II.⁵²

Beyond native Tejanos' motives behind military service, Mexican immigrants' desires to join the ranks of the military were also influenced by the notion of socio-economic improvement during the Cold War period. The nation's naturalization laws, coupled with the military's need for more soldiers, proved to be a perfect mix for Mexican immigrants in Texas during the years leading up to Korea. In 1918, Congress had modified its naturalization laws in order to make it easier for immigrants serving in the military to become United States citizens. By the 1940s, the federal government had continued to support the streamlined naturalization process of soldiers born in a foreign country.⁵³ In the Korean War, that symbolized the inclusion of many Mexican immigrants who had made their way into the United States searching for a better life during the postwar economic boom. Cpl. Raúl M. Chavarría, a native of Tamaluipas, Mexico, found himself thrust into the war by the events around him. Originally arriving in Texas to search for work, the twenty-four year old laborer eventually made his way to Chicago where he received a summons to return to Texas and to report for military service. After training in El Paso, Chavarría left the Lone Star State bound for New York and then Germany, much to his chagrin. "*Yo pedí ir a Korea, pero me mandaron a Alemania,*" he recalled [I asked to go to Korea, but they sent me to Germany]. Chavarría became a citizen in 1954, one year after the United States and North Korea signed an armistice. He later appreciated the opportunity that military service gave him towards citizenship.⁵⁴

Despite the heavier reliance on foreign born soldiers, especially those from Mexico, the United States armed forces ultimately had nine Hispanic soldiers receive the Medal of Honor for their acts of bravery on the battlefield during the Korean War. Of these, two medals went to Tejanos, United States Marine Corps Sgt. Ambrosio Guillen of El Paso, and United States Army Cpl. Benito Martinez of Fort Hancock, about forty miles southeast of El Paso. Guillen distinguished himself for the military honors by helping fend off an enemy assault near Songuch-on and forcing the enemy to retreat before he was mortally wounded. In the case of Martinez,



Some Mexican nationals used U.S. military service to gain citizenship during the twentieth century. In the case of Cpl. Raúl M. Chavarría, born in the Mexican state of Tamaulipas, he joined the ranks of the U.S. Army while en route to work in Chicago from San Antonio, serving in the 5th Division during the Cold War era. Photo courtesy of Raúl M. Chavarría.



Closeup of Cpl. Raúl M. Chavarría's 1950s U.S. Army uniform. Chavarría remained proud of his military service more than half a century later. Chavarría's Tejano grandson, Raúl Perez, received his grandfather's uniform as a testament to the notions of honor and bravery and the benefits it could bring. Photo courtesy of Raúl M. Chavarría.

he was awarded the Medal of Honor for fending off an enemy assault on his outpost position before being mortally wounded.⁵⁵

In the decade after the Korean War, the United States found itself embroiled in another southeast Asian country as American military forces poured into Vietnam to prevent another nation from falling to Communism. Texas once again answered the call as more than 500,000 Texans served in the military during the 1960s and 1970s. Of these, approximately 25,000 saw service in Vietnam. During that period, Tejanos found themselves in an improved social, political, and economic climate. The foremost civil rights organizations, LULAC and the American G.I. Forum, had railed against the remaining vestiges of discrimination and segregation during the 1950s and

1960s. As such, the Tejano community continued to view military service as a way out poverty and as a demonstration of national pride and bravery.⁵⁶

Perhaps no one exemplified the notion of bravery and pride like Raul "Roy" Perez Benavidez from El Campo, about 50 miles southwest of Houston. Born in Cuero, Benavidez hailed from Mexican and Yaqui Indian descent. His parents died at an early age and Benavidez moved to El Campo to live with family. Like many Tejanos of that era, Benavidez dropped out of school in his teen years and worked a variety of labor intensive jobs until he joined the Army in 1955. Stung by the racial discrimination prevalent in the 1940s, Benavidez vowed to master English and improve his lot in life. He thus changed his name from Raúl to Roy and he strived towards obtaining an education.⁵⁷ Master Sergeant Benavidez left for Vietnam in 1965 to serve as an advisor for the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). He was wounded shortly thereafter when he stepped on a landmine. Nevertheless, he returned to active duty three years later to earn a Distinguished Service Cross for his bravery during a firefight near Loch Ninh. Benavidez exposed himself to enemy fire while rescuing comrades and retrieving vital documents left behind in a chopper that ferried U.S. troops to action. Benavidez received thirty-seven wounds and fought off enemy soldiers in hand-to-hand combat. Army doctors originally thought he was dead until Benavidez spit blood in their faces to inform them he was still alive. Surviving the wounds, Benavidez received the Congressional Medal of Honor years later.⁵⁸ In his later years, Benavidez toured the country providing speeches on honor, bravery, and patriotism. He ultimately became arguably the most celebrated Tejano war veteran as his image was used for a *G.I. Joe* action figure and his name used to honor various schools and U.S. Naval vessels. Benavidez even had a commemorative U.S. Postal Service stamp in his honor. In addition, he published two autobiographies describing his rise from poverty to war hero.⁵⁹

Benavidez may have been the most popular Tejano to serve in Vietnam, but he was not the only Texan of Mexican descent who distinguished himself for bravery. U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Alfredo Gonzalez of Edinburg and Cpl. Miguel Keith of San Antonio earned the Medal of Honor for their actions in Vietnam. In the case of both Gonzalez and Keith, the two men received mortal wounds while in battle; their Medals of Honor awarded posthumously. Both men received additional honors including the naming of schools, buildings, and in the case of Gonzalez, a U.S. Naval destroyer,

the *U.S.S. Gonzalez*, as well. Tejanos thus earned three of the seventeen Medal of Honor awards given during the conflict.⁶⁰ Others, like SFC Isaac "Ike" Camacho, earned additional service medals for acts of heroism and bravery. Camacho, a native of El Paso, was captured by the Viet Cong in November 1963 after a skirmish and remained a prisoner for twenty months until he escaped in July 1965, receiving the Silver Star and the Bronze Star for his actions.⁶¹

The final tally had more than 2.7 million Americans serving in Vietnam. Out of those, 47,364 were killed in action. Texas claimed 3,450 of its own dead. A 1969 study revealed that 8,167 soldiers from Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and California had suffered casualties since 1961. Of those, 19 percent were deemed of Hispanic descent, a figure seen as markedly high considering that the Hispanic population represented a figure of 11.8 percent of the total population in those five states.⁶² In Texas, out of the 3,415 killed, 777 held Spanish surnames, a figure that represents 22 percent of the total figure and slightly higher than the Tejano representation in the Lone Star State's population.⁶³

The high casualty counts had little impact on the leading Mexican American civil rights organizations in Texas as LULAC and the American G.I. Forum rallied behind the American war effort in Vietnam. For instance, War II veteran and LULAC activist, John J. Herrera, a native of Houston, approved of the war to stop communism. Hector P. García, the founder of the American G.I. Forum, concurred, contending that "the majority if not the total Mexican-American people approve of the present course of action in Vietnam." The Tejano community seemed to understand that military service could provide a strong impetus for additional social and political gains during the Civil Rights era. As historian Lorena Oropeza demonstrates, the Forum kept a tally of the Mexican American casualties as a means of highlighting the "ethnic group's sacrifices on behalf of the war effort."⁶⁴ In 1968, the organization even sponsored a tour to demonstrate the vitality of the war effort to Mexican American families. Garcia even collected letters from soldiers in Vietnam supporting the commitment of what the troops were fighting for. In one letter, Texan S. B. Sanchez pointed out the need to be a "good citizen" and that the war was America's responsibility as a "great country." Sanchez maintained that it was necessary to go to war "to defend our freedom and heritage."⁶⁵ The feelings Sanchez expressed echoed those of Benavidez, who later said that he fought as a proud American.⁶⁶

Yet by the late 1960s the growing Chicano movement in California and the Southwest challenged the concept of a loyal and faithful population of Mexican Americans that would remain docile to the interests of the United States. In fact, the new wave of Chicano leaders found focused on a variety of different agendas, including education and the war.⁶⁷ Among one of the criticisms in Texas was the disproportionate number of Mexican Americans who died in the conflict. In one case study, figures revealed that sixty-six percent of San Antonio's casualties in 1966 had Spanish-surnames even though the city's total population of Tejanos stood at forty-one percent.⁶⁸ On a related note, Tejanos also criticized that no Mexican Americans sat on draft boards despite the fact that they comprised more than fifty percent of the population in some areas along the Rio Grande Valley.⁶⁹ Unlike other Civil Rights era protestors, the Mexican American movement did not actively criticize the soldiers. As Oropeza points out, unlike the white antiwar movement, Chicano/a protestors emphasized that Mexican Americans should fight for social justice at home and not in a foreign war for a government that was considered the enemy. And while the Chicano/a movement may not have altered the rich tradition of Hispanic participation in the nation's wars, a different opinion from the mantra of assimilation and Americanization that had marked the Mexican American community in the wake of the Second World War was now evident.⁷⁰

In the post-Vietnam era, Tejanos retained the strong elements that marked the longstanding cornerstones of military service: patriotism, bravery, and the concept of Americanism. Memorials, documentaries, monuments, and veterans groups are just some of the means that the military service of Mexican Texans can lay claim to the most significant element of all, the importance of citizenship. In 2002, the private business leaders and city officials in Laredo succeeded in building the "nation's first monument honoring the 40 or so Hispanic soldiers who have received the country's highest award for military valor, the Medal of Honor."⁷¹ The centerpiece for the downtown memorial was native son, David Barkley Cantú. Barkley Cantú also served as a focal point of "Veteranos: A Legacy of Valor," a play that combined theater, music, dance and Department of Defense footage to tell the story of four soldiers in four wars. "Veteranos" creator and director Enrique Castillo argued that his film had deep implications for the Mexican American community. "The reason all people need to see this is that we [Latinos] didn't start with the Alamo, and we're still here, and we

have always been here. If you are a good American, it's important to know the history of this country, which includes the culture of our young men," Castillo maintained.⁷²

The concepts of Americanism and patriotism echoed in the twenty-first century. In 2008, Maj. Gen. Freddie Valenzuela, commander of the U.S. Army South, published *No Greater Love: The Lives and Times of Hispanic Soldiers*, a book that explored "the legacy of Hispanic Americans in the military." In his introduction, Valenzuela, who was born in Refugio, but raised in San Antonio's West Side, minced no words, describing himself as "an American first, and foremost." And while he hoped to honor the legacy of Hispanic soldiers, he hoped that his work could serve as a stepping stone for other Hispanics interested in the military path.⁷³ General Valenzuela argues that Hispanics, not just Mexican Texans, are special to the American armed forces because they have always been confronted with questions about their "loyalty to this country and willingness to contribute to American progress." Valenzuela argues that Hispanic soldiers undoubtedly love and cherish their country. As such, Hispanics by and large join the armed forces not for the educational and economic opportunities military service affords, but because they represent the very embodiment of what America stands for: sacrifice, selflessness, and hard work. "Hispanic soldiers by and large do not join for self-aggrandizement or personal gain. . . . [M]ost of these soldiers want to be among comrades, getting to get the job done. We learned to be workhorses, not show horses."⁷⁴

While General Valenzuela's views on Hispanic soldiers are grounded in the experience of a rich military career that spanned more than thirty years, the history of Tejanos' military service offers an interesting paradox to his assertion that they did not view military service through the prism of "personal gain." To be sure, honor and the need to defend one's nation proved a predominant sentiment amongst the Tejano population. But, the full gamut of the Tejano military experience in the twentieth century indicates that additional factors influenced how Mexican Texans viewed military service. As George Mariscal notes, the need to assimilate was also a strong driving force behind the disproportionate number of high enlistments of the twentieth century. Mariscal argues that Hispanic views on bravery and courage, or as he calls it, the "Warrior patriotism," draws from the Mexican culture that inherently supports bravery and the "readiness to die for *la patria* [the homeland]."⁷⁵ That concept was not always prevalent in

the Tejano population, however. In the wars of the nineteenth century, the loyalty and allegiance of Tejanos was predicated more on local circumstances than any overriding feelings of patriotism and national identity. It was not until World War II that Mexican Texans began to truly identify themselves with the concept of the American dream and what it could mean for their community and their families.

It does not diminish the martial spirit of those who fought in the various conflicts in the United States in the years following the Texas Revolution. Yet the rationale behind the motivation and support for each conflict the Tejano community witnessed was far more complex than the hegemonic narratives of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Tejanos were always willing to risk their lives to defend their homes, but up to the First World War, feelings of cultural loyalties to their ancestral homeland and self-preservation often usurped nationalistic sentiment; especially considering the racial discrimination and the political marginalization of the previous generations. And while service in the Frontier Guards was available to Tejanos in the late 1800s, the Mexican Texan population still shied away from service in the Army up to the First World War as a "Mexicanist" ideology persevered during the early 1900s. Yet by the Great War, Tejanos began to move towards assimilation into American culture. Clearly some Tejanos feared past patterns of ostracism and estrangement while many others viewed their military service through the spectrum of patriotism and a desire to demonstrate one's self-worth through feats of bravery. Certainly, Tejanos viewed fought to defend their homes above all else. But additional extrinsic motivations also played a role in their desire to join the ranks of the armed forces. During the post-World War I era Tejanos, like other Mexican Americans across the nation, became aware of the economic advantages that military service could provide. By World War II, Tejanos clearly recognized the benefits of military service. Those extrinsic factors shaping the Tejano community during the Second World War tied into longstanding notions of patriotism as more Tejanos were born in the United States and identified themselves as Americans rather than Mexicans. Accordingly, by the late twentieth century, Tejanos recognized that to overcome the doubts about their courage or loyalty could be found in their willingness to fight and die in battle.

The motivations of Tejano military service in the wars of the twentieth century evolved through time, just like the patriotic investment of many



Hispanic Medal of Honor Monument, Laredo, Texas. In 2003, the City of Laredo awarded the building of a memorial to honor all Hispanic Medal of Honor recipients to local artist, Armando Hinojosa. Atop the monument is a statue of local Tejano World War I veteran, David Bennes Barkley (David Barkley Cantú), who posthumously received the Medal of Honor for his actions in the Great War. The names of all Hispanic Medal of Honor recipients are engraved in a plaque on the base of the memorial. Photo courtesy of Alex Mendoza.

of these men was altered through each successive conflict. Military service ultimately integrated Tejanos into the mainstream of American society. Yet this was not the goal from the onset of the World War I. Instead, each successive war provided Tejano servicemen and their communities a disparate platform to engage the inequities of the political and socioeconomic worlds they knew. Military service by Mexican Texans had profound consequences in regards to their loyalty and status as citizens of the United States. Military service provided an impetus for challenging the social ostracism and exclusionary practices in the state and nation as Mexican American veterans reminded society that they owed veterans

the medical and political benefits that martial citizenship had earned them. The wartime and military experience of Tejanos thus provides an alternative category through which scholars can examine the concepts of cultural identity, nationalism, and community strategy. As such, the war narratives of Tejano soldiers challenge conventional interpretations behind the hegemonic views of Mexican American military experiences and U.S. American identity and culture.

Endnotes

¹ The author would like to thank the *Military History of the West's* anonymous readers for their thoughtful comments on an earlier version of this essay.

The term Tejano (and, in turn, *Tejana*) is used to identify ethnic Mexicans who lived in Texas after the Texas Revolution, regardless of nationality. In many cases, these Texans of Mexican origin chose to reside in Texas would later claim, to varying degrees, a distinct identity as Tejanos. For the sake of simplicity, I use the terms "Tejanos," "Mexican Americans," "Mexican Texans," and "Hispanic Texans" interchangeably. In the case of people born in Mexico, I use the terms "Mexican," "*Mexicano*," or "Mexican immigrant" interchangeably.

² Andrés Tijerina, *Tejanos and Texas Under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1994), 88-91.

³ Scholars who have explored the motivations as to why Tejanos fought in the Civil War have argued that the concept of protecting their homes from attack remained a formidable rationale as to why Tejanos joined the ranks of the Confederacy or the Union. While political ideology was limited, some Tejanos found similar ideas behind the Confederacy's states' rights rhetoric. See Charles D. Grear, *Why Texans Fought in the Civil War* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2009), 158-159; Jerry D. Thompson, *Vaqueros in Blue and Gray: Mexican Texans in the Civil War*, new ed. (Austin: State House Press, 2000), xiv-xvi, 25-31, 81-96; Arnoldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 54-56; David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 51-52. Ralph Edward Morales, III, "The Tejano-Anglo Alliance: Tejanos, Ethnicity, and Politics in Texas, 1832-1865" (M.A. Thesis, Texas A&M University, 2008), 3-5, argues that Tejanos saw military service in the Civil War as a first step towards "Americanization," (quote on page 3) as they fought to defend their homes alongside their Anglo compatriots.

⁴ *The Laredo Morning Times*, September 22, 2002, May 11, 2003, July 5, 2004; Maria Eugenia Guerra, "What Drove LNB's Decision to Turn Premium Real Estate into a Park Space Honoring Hispanic Medal of Honor Recipients," *LareDOS: A Journal of the Borderlands*, vol. 10, no. 12 (December 2004), 11; Alex Mendoza, "*Luchando por la Memoria*" [Struggling for Memory], *LareDOS: A Journal of the Borderlands*, vol. 14, no. 10 (October 2008), 63.

⁵ Ronald Takaki, *Double Victory: A Multicultural History of America in World War II* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2000); Maggie Rivas-Rodríguez, ed., *Mexican Americans and World War II* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005); U.S. Government, *Hispanics in America's Defense* (Washington, D.C.: Neale Publishing, 1989).

⁶ José A. Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire: Mexican Texans and World War I* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009); Carole Christian, "Joining the American Mainstream: Texas' Mexican Americans During World War I," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 92 (April

1989): 559-595; Lorena Oropeza, *¡Raza Sí! ¡Guerra No!: Chicano Protest and Patriotism during the Viet Nam War Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Steven Rosales, "Soldados Razos: Chicano Politics, Identity, and Masculinity in the U.S. Military, 1940-1975," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 2007). Additional works pertinent to Tejanos include Thompson, *Vaqueros in Blue and Gray*; Jerry D. Thompson, *Mexican Texans in the Union Army* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1986); Rivas-Rodríguez, *Mexican Americans and World War II*; Charley Trujillo, *Chicanos in Viet Nam* (San Jose, Calif.: Chusma House Publications, 1990); and Lea Ybarra, *Vietnam Veteranos: Chicanos Recall the War* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004).

⁷ Alex M. Saragoza, "Recent Chicano Historiography: An Interpretive Essay," *Aztlan* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1988-90), 1-77; David G. Gutierrez, "Significant to Whom?: Mexican Americas and the History of the American West," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 24 (November 1993): 519-539; Arnoldo De León, *The Tejano Community, 1836-1900* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1982). For the older works dealing with Hispanic military service, see Harley L. Browning, et al., "Income and Veteran Status: Variations Among Mexican Americans, Blacks, and Anglos," *American Sociological Review* 38 (1973), 74-85; Raul Morín, *Among the Valiant: Mexican-Americans in WWII and Korea* (Los Angeles: Borden, 1963); Lea Ybarra and Nina Genera, *La Batalla Esta Aquí (The Battle is Here): Chicanos and the War* (El Cerrito, CA: Chicano Draft Help, 1972).

⁸ Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 1-3, 6-7, 8-11, 15-18; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 65; Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*, 82-92; Elliott Young, "Red Men, Princess Pocahontas, and George Washington: Harmonizing Race Relations in Laredo at the Turn of the Century," *Western Historical Quarterly* 29 (Spring 1998): 50-51; Elliott Young, "Deconstructing *La Raza*: Identifying the *Genie Decente de Laredo*, 1904-1911," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 98, no. 2 (October 1994): 228.

⁹ The turn of the twentieth century border violence that stemmed from the social discrimination and economic exploitation that Tejanos experienced originated from native Tejanos. See Elliott Young, *Catarino Garza's Revolution on the Texas-Mexico Border* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Benjamin Huber Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); Emilio Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000).

¹⁰ Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 19 (quote), 20.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 22-23; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 91, 93.

¹² Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 27-30. Ramírez examines the rich and disparate complexities of Tejanos' mobilization efforts in Chapter Two of his study on Tejanos in World War I.

¹³ *ElDemocrata Fronterizo*, Laredo, Texas, October 5, 1918 (translation mine). The editorial reads: "por honor, por patriotismo, por gratitud, por nuestro propio interes . . . por que residemos en los Estados Unidos y hemos gozado de sus libertades."

¹⁴ Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 31-33.

¹⁵ Zamora, *The World of the Mexican*, xi, 197-210. See also De León, *The Tejano Community*, 23-201; Emilio Zamora, "Mutualist and Mexicanist Expressions of a Political Culture in Texas," in Emilio Zamora, Cynthia Orozco, and Rodolfo Rocha, eds., *Mexican Americans in Texas History* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2000), 83-101.

¹⁶ Elena Gomez, "Marcelino Serna Became World War I Hero," *Borderlands* 23 (2004-2005): 10; Ralph A. Wooster, *Texas and Texans in the Great War* (Buffalo Gap, TX: State House Press, 2010); 117-145; Jorge Rodríguez, "A History of El Paso's Company E in World War II," (M.A. Thesis, The University of Texas at El Paso, 2010), 17-22; U.S. Government, *Hispanics in America's Defense*, 25; José de la Luz Sáenz, *Los México-Americanos y La Gran Guerra y Su*

Contingente en Pro de la Democracia, la Humanidad y la Justicia: Mi Diario Particular (San Antonio: Artes Graficas, 1933), 174-175; Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 102.

¹⁷ "Laredo's only Medal of Honor Winner Remembered," *Laredo Morning Times*, November 9, 2002; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 94.

¹⁸ Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 26, 102.

¹⁹ Nancy Gentile Ford, *Americans All!: Foreign Born Soldiers in World War I* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001), chapter 2, 144-145.

²⁰ Translation of title is "The Mexican Americans and the Great War and their People in Favor of Democracy, Humanity, and Justice: My Particular Journal." See Emilio Zamora, "Fighting on Two Fronts: José de la Luz Saenz and the Language of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement," in Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Silvio Torres-Saillant, eds., *Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage* (Houston: Arte Public Press, 2002), 214-230; Alex Mendoza, "The Warrior Tradition," *LareDOS: A Journal of the Borderlands* vol. 14, no. 4 (April 2008): 65; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 108-109.

²¹ Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 22-23; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 91, 93; Christian, "Joining the American Mainstream," 572-577, 592-594.

²² Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 22-23; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 91-102, 110-112; Zamora, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 214-230; Cynthia E. Orozco, *No Mexican, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 52-55.

²³ Harry L. Krenek, "A History of the Texas National Guard Between World War I and World War II" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1979), 20-21, 24-27, 30-31, 39-41; Elmer Ray Milner, "An Agonizing Evolution: A History of the Texas National Guard, 1900-1945" (Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1979), 24-31, 35-55, 78-82; Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: Free Press of America, 1994), 396-404; Bruce A. Olson, "The Houston Light Guards: Elite Cohesion and Social Control in the New South, 1873-1940" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 1989), 341-342; Bruce L. Brager, *The Texas 36th Division: a history* (Austin: Eakin Press, 2002), 2. It is difficult to specifically delineate exact totals of Tejanos in the U.S. military due to the government's policy of labeling all soldiers of Mexican descent as "white" during the First World War and beyond. Thus, in the interwar years, specific numbers for Texas military personnel of Mexican descent is difficult to ascertain due to the policy of labeling Tejanos as "white" and the number of Mexican American veterans who came from mixed ancestry (as in the case of David Bennes Barkley/David Barkley Cantú). See Neil Foley, "Becoming Hispanic: Mexican Americans and the Faustian Pact with Whiteness," in Neil Foley, ed., *Reflexiones: New Directions in Mexican American Studies* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), 53-66.

²⁴ Rodriguez, "A History of El Paso's Company E," 27-30. See also Farwell, *Over There*, 60-61. Farwell maintains that some government officials saw the First World War as an opportunity to "Americanize" the one hundred million "hyphenated-Americans" that made up the U.S. population and impose middle-class American values.

²⁵ Robert A. Calvert, et al., *The History of Texas*, 4th edition (New York: Harland Davidson, 2007), 347.

²⁶ There is difficulty in providing a precise number of Tejanos due to the fact that under the race categorization on enlistment and discharge papers, Mexican Americans and other Hispanics were often described as "White," "Mexican" and simply, "NA." Beyond Puerto Ricans, this figure is imprecise. See *Hispanics in American Defense*, 27. For a study on the American G.I., see Lee Kennett's *G.I.: The American Soldier in World War II* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1987).

²⁷ Oropeza, *¡Raza Si! ¡Guerra No!*, 12-13; George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 256.

²⁸ Arnaldo De León, "Mexican Americans in Texas," in Ben Proctor and Archie McDonald, eds., *The Texas Heritage*, 4th Edition (Wheeling: Harlan Davidson, 2003), 215.

²⁹ Richard Griswold del Castillo, "The War and Changing Identities: Personal Transformations," in *World War II and Mexican American Civil Rights* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 51; Mario T. García, *Mexican Americans: Leadership, Ideology, and Identity, 1930-1960* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 114.

³⁰ Christian, "Joining the American Mainstream," 593-594. For a discussion on the implementation of American nationalism in the period between the Civil War and World War I see Cecilia Elizabeth O'Leary, *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

³¹ Griswold del Castillo, *World War II*, 56.

³² See David Zimmerman, "Mexican-American Texans," in James Lee War, ed., *1941: Texas Goes to War* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 1991), 128-143.

³³ *Albuquerque Journal*, July 26, 1981; *Houston Chronicle*, April 5, 1999; Rodriguez, "A History of El Paso's Company E," 37, 45-50, 51-61. According to Company E historian, Jorge Rodriguez, the unit's men were expected to serve as translators for non-English speaking Tejano draftees from South Texas. The men of Company E responded in kind, making it a rule amongst themselves that only English would be spoken while on duty.

³⁴ De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 117; *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v., <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/qdw2.html> (accessed September 26, 2009).

³⁵ *Laredo Times*, undated clipping in author's possession; "Manuel D. Martinez, Enlisted Record and Report of Separation"; "General Orders No. 394," 30 April 1945. Copies in author's possession, courtesy of Martinez's daughter, Magda M. Martinez.

³⁶ See Manuel C. Vara Interview, Courtesy of the U.S. Latino & Latina WWII Oral History Project, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas at Austin (hereafter cited as OHP, UT)

³⁷ See, for instance, the oral interviews of Gonzalo Garza, Oscar Torres, Bob Sanchez, and Luis Leyva in OHP, UT.

³⁸ Reynaldo B. Rendon (Corpus Christi) joined the military to get out of jail for a previous transgression; Bob Sanchez (Laredo) thought service would be a "bit romantic"; while Ramon M. Rivas (Eagle Pass) joined the U.S. Army to make a little more money than he was earning with the Works Progress Administration. See Rendon and Rivas oral interviews in OHP, UT. Other Tejanos shirked duty, to be sure. For instance, in 1942, the *Falfurrias* newspaper, *Falfurrias Facts*, reported that the local draft board was seeking information on Luis García and Gilberto Alcántar, two Mexican Texans who were believed to have fled to Mexico to avoid service. See *Falfurrias Facts*, June 19, 1942.

³⁹ Matt S. Meir and Feliciano Ribera, *Mexican Americans-American Mexicans: From Conquistadores to Chicanos* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 161.

⁴⁰ Rosales, "Soldados Razos," 73-74.

⁴¹ Raymond Muñoz Interview, OHP, UT.

⁴² See Virgilio Roel, *ibid*.

⁴³ Juan Martínez Interview, *ibid*.

⁴⁴ Guadalupe "Lupe" Hernandez Interview, *ibid*.

⁴⁵ "Macario García," *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v., <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/GG/fga76.html> (accessed July 29, 2010)

⁴⁶ Patrick J. Carroll, *Felix Longoria's Wake*, 55-56; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 120-121; Carl Allsup, *The American GI Forum: Origins and Evolution* (Austin: University of Texas

Press, 1982); Ignacio M. García, *Hector P. García: In Relentless Pursuit of Justice* (Houston: Arte Publico Press, 2002).

⁴⁷ See the interviews of Quirino Longoria, Luis Leyva, Julius V. Joseph, Joe Jasso, Rafael Hernandez, José Garza, and Gonzalo Garza, in OHP, UT; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 127-128, 134.

⁴⁸ Korean Conflict Casualty File, 195-1957 (Machine-Readable Record), Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Record Group 330. Further study is clearly needed in this area.

⁴⁹ Terrence Gough, *U.S. Army Mobilization and Logistics in the Korean War* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1987).

⁵⁰ John Andrew Snyder, "Overdue Remembrance: Korean War Ceasefire and Veterans Finally Recognized by Congress," in *LareDOS: A Journal of the Borderlands*, vol. 15, no. 9 (October 2009): 31.

⁵¹ Quote in Julie Leininger Pycior, *LBJ and Mexican Americans: The Paradox of Power* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 79.

⁵² Rosales, "Soldados Razos," 118-119.

⁵³ Ford, *Americans All!*, 63-64; Lucy E. Salyer, "Baptism by Fire: Race, Military Service, and U.S. Citizenship Policy, 1918-1935," *Journal of American History* vol. 91, no. 3 (2001): 847-876.

⁵⁴ Raúl M. Chavarría, oral interview, August 1, 2009 (translation mine). Chavarría eventually joined the U.S. Army's 5th Division which saw service in Europe during the 1950s. "Armed Forces of the United States Report of Transfer or Discharge, October 6, 1956," copy in author's possession.

⁵⁵ *Hispanics in America's Defense*, 34, 59, 60.

⁵⁶ For the numbers of Texans in Vietnam see Record Group 330: Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, National Archives; *Austin American-Statesman*, May 26, 2010; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 128-132.

⁵⁷ Undated newspaper clipping in Roy Benavidez Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin (hereafter CAH); *San Antonio Express News*, November 8, 1998.

⁵⁸ Roy Benavidez Biographical Sketch in Benavidez Papers, CAH.

⁵⁹ *El Campo News Leader*, April 16, 1980, March 28, 1981, Feb. 21, 1981, July 28, 2001; *Triad: Published in the interest of Fort McCoy Personnel*, March 24, 1989, Vol. 6, No. 6; Roy P. Benavidez with Oscar Griffin, *The Three Wars of Roy Benavidez* (New York: Ballantine, 1986); Roy Benavidez with John R. Craig, *Medal of Honor: One Man's Journey From Poverty and Prejudice* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 1995). For an in-depth look at the information on Benavidez see the Roy P. Benavidez Papers in CAH.

⁶⁰ See John Flores, *When The River Dreams: The Life Of Marine Sgt. Freddy Gonzalez* (Bloomington, IN : Author House, 2006); Oropeza, ¡Raza Si! ¡Guerra No!, 189; *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v., <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/KK/fkeyj.html> (accessed September 21, 2009); *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v., <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/GG/fgoqp.html> (accessed September 21, 2009).

⁶¹ *Hispanics in America's Defense*, 37.

⁶² *Hispanics in America's Defense*, 38-39. Brady Foust and Howard Botts offered a lower estimate in their conference paper, "Age, Ethnicity, and Class in the Vietnam War." See Oropeza, ¡Raza Si! ¡Guerra No!, 216, n. 85.

⁶³ [Southeast Asia] Combat Area Casualties Current File (electronic record), Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Record Group 330, The National Archives; De León, *Mexican Americans in Texas*, 122, 136, places Texas' Tejano population at 1.4 million in 1960 (14% of total) and 2 million in 1970 (20% of total).

⁶⁴ Oropeza, ¡Raza Si! ¡Guerra No!, 62.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 63. For views of Mexican American Vietnam veterans, see Lea Ybarra, *Vietnam Veterans: Chicanos Recall the War* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2004).

⁶⁶ *San Antonio Express News*, November 8, 1998.

⁶⁷ Meier and Ribera, *Mexican Americans*, 218-220.

⁶⁸ See Oropeza, ¡Raza Si! ¡Guerra No!, 67.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 68.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 7-8, 191-193.

⁷¹ *Laredo Morning Times*, May 5, 2003.

⁷² Ibid., October 16, 2002.

⁷³ Freddie Valenzuela with Jason Lemons, *No Greater Love: The Lives and Times of Hispanic Soldiers* (Austin: Ovation Books, 2008), xiii, xvii.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 4.

⁷⁵ Marsical, *Aztlán and Viet Nam*, 27. Marsical writes: "The idea that masculine behavior must include a readiness to die for 'la patria' is powerful in Mexican nationalist ideology." See also George Marsical, "Mexican Americans and the Viet Nam War," in Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco, eds., *A Companion to the Vietnam War* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 349.

BOOK REVIEWS

America's Captives: Treatment of POWs from the Revolutionary War to the War on Terror. By Paul J. Springer. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010. Pp. viii; 278. \$34.95.

In this first comprehensive treatment of the subject, Springer successfully highlights the dissonance between our nation's prisoner of war policy, which has remained largely consistent since the Revolutionary War, and our military's inconsistent enforcement thereof. Official concern for internationally accepted standards of POW treatment, a belief that reciprocal action might be warranted if American captives were mistreated by an enemy, and a preference for the quickest and cheapest solutions form the foundation of policy. However, new conditions presented by each war and insufficient peacetime preparation have made and continue to make those policy objectives difficult to realize. Procedures for maintaining captives are improvised in war, ignored in peace, and consequently re-improvised when hostilities again commence due to an "institutional unwillingness" to apply lessons learned in a past war when planning for the next (p. 5).

That some of those lessons would have proven irrelevant becomes equally apparent as Springer traces that improvisation from Saratoga to Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. Along the way, presentism is skillfully avoided; departures from the Western world's accepted law and custom of war on the western frontier and in the Philippines appear as exceptions rather than precursors. Not only have American POW treatment guidelines dating from 1863 formed the basis of international agreements from 1874 to 1949, but American treatment of its POWs has generally been more humane than that of its enemies. Subsequent refusal to classify non-uniformed combatants as POWs and the recent scandals have damaged the U.S. reputation, Springer argues, but so, too, can improvements based on recent experience improve it.

Accepting that a nation whose endemic fear of military professionalism might make its peacetime military too poor, amateurish, and disinclined to plan for the next war's POW operations is easy enough, and the author

makes that case well. Attributing departure from policy during hostilities to the same sort of systemic dysfunction is a tougher sell. Even when the unique conditions in each of our wars are factored in, such frequent failure as Springer relates would not be possible without plenty of bad decisions and poor leadership. Although William C. Hoffman and John H. Winder receive due credit for the abysmal POW treatment by both sides during the Civil War, one encounters far more problems than culpable individuals in other instances. Staff studies, budgetary constraints, inspections, and manpower shortages aside, the Army's unbroken habit of assigning third stringers to these duties and simply disposing of them when something goes wrong merits a bit more attention – even though this is not a book about Francis Dodd or Janis Karpinski.

That habit underlines the traditionally low priority of POW issues, and Springer views brighter expectations for the future as “unrealistic” (p. 206) Now that our Army is organized, trained, and deployed for population-centric wars rather than the enemy-centric ones it has waged in the past, let us hope he is wrong.

Pittsburg State University

JOHN DALEY

The Enemy in Our Hands: America's Treatment of Prisoners of War from the Revolution to the War on Terror. By Robert C. Doyle. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010. Pp. xx; 468. \$34.95.

Americans tend to believe that they treat enemy prisoners of war (EPWs) “reasonably well.” (xvii) Professor Robert C. Doyle argues that this is true, at least when the EPWs are conventional foreign combat soldiers. America, he contends, has a less sterling record in caring for domestic political prisoners or unconventional forces.

The American Revolutionary War set the precedent of reciprocity, the belief that if the American military treated foreign soldiers humanely then the enemy might reciprocate with humane treatment of American prisoners. This paradigm functioned even more successfully during the War of 1812 and continued as the basis for POW policy in all of America's conventional wars. Indeed, the U.S. War with Mexico, the U.S. War with Spain, both world wars, the Korean War, and the First Gulf War all featured humane treatment of captive EPWs based on the reciprocal principle.

American treatment of “enemy” prisoners falls into question, according to Doyle, when it involves domestic political prisoners. Loyalists in Revolutionary America or political dissenters in the Civil War and World War I suffered unjust conditions, and both the North’s and the South’s treatment of each other’s prisoners during the Civil War were suspect. The U.S. also struggled with appropriate policy for the treatment of unconventional combatants like American Indians or Filipino, Vietnamese, Iraqi, or Afghan insurgents.

Doyle concludes that American treatment of EPWs has entered a new paradigm in Iraq and Afghanistan. Gone is the precedent of reciprocity that governed American policy for two centuries. The American military now considers captured insurgents like al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters “unlawful combatants” or “detainees” rather than “prisoners of war,” and, consequently, denies them the protections of the Geneva Convention. In the process, according to Doyle, the U.S. military has lost its moral high ground in this regard.

Doyle’s book is well written and very engaging. Yet, at times, the author might further explore the differences between the varying types of prisoners he discusses. For example, are there inherent differences between Confederate spies Antonia Ford and Belle Boyd, the Chiricahua Apaches, American socialist Eugene Debs, and World War II broadcasters “Axis Sally” and “Tokyo Rose” that may account for the differing treatment they received from various American authorities? Ultimately, however, this is a fine narrative from a distinguished scholar of prisoners of war that will interest military historians and anyone curious about the development of humanitarian law.

U.S. Army Command and General Staff School

DEREK R. MALLETT

In the School of War: Essays. By Roger J. Spiller. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010. Pp. xix; 403. \$21.95 paper.

This collection of fascinating essays by Roger J. Spiller, the George C. Marshall Distinguished Professor of Military History at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (retired) raise a number of important themes in understanding war and military history. Chief among these, the hidden war of the individual soldier, appears in a number of essays.

Spiller addresses this issue from both the psychological and the physical challenges of combat and its aftermath. The road to acknowledging the impact of modern war on the individual's psyche proved long and full of obstacles. Officers in WWI saw such behavior as a weakness and promised harsh measures toward those who reported their symptoms. The illness remained with troopers for many years. As late as 1940, substantial of U.S. veterans were still coping with the affects of shell shock. By WWII, the U.S. Army eventually developed an effective strategy for a malady that affected large numbers of U.S. troops in all theaters of war. As Spiller's essays make clear, shell shock or Post-traumatic Syndrome as it became in Vietnam, remained a challenge in every war. In another venue, Spiller addresses the naïve understanding of the U.S. public of war itself. Whether in a poignant 1989 interview with noted scholar, Paul Fussell, or in an account of movies civilians never encountered the real war. Even high-level commanders far to the rear knew little of the battlefield realities. Arrows and lines on map never capture what the horror men face in battle.

Spiller's essays are revealing in other ways. For example, he finds evidence wanting for S.L.A. Marshall's noted claim that only 25% of all the infantrymen fired their weapons in combat. As Spiller writes, Marshall never asked such a question of the men he interviewed. In another piece Spiller traces the origins and development of doctrine as a key in the U.S. approach to preparation for war. Here, the career of General William DePuy stands out. The lessons of the 1973 Israeli-Egyptian War made clear to DePuy how ill-prepared the Army was for war. Notions such as mobile air defense, "come as you are", and reliance on training to overcome battlefields challenges eventually formed the basis of AirLand Battle Canon and made doctrine, for the first time, an integral part of the army's preparation. In another piece Spiller argues that the Vietnam Syndrome vanished under a wave of successful military ventures in the 1980s and that public support remained strong, not hesitant. Provocative and enlightening Spiller's belongs on every military historian's shelf.

University of Utah

EDWARD J. DAVIES

Texas Aggie Medals of Honor. By James R. Woodall. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010. Pp. xiv; 179. \$25.00.

A former Commandant of the Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University, James Woodall speaks with authority on a subject he knows well: the intimate relationship that exists between the school, the military, and the several alumni associations that bind them together. His thesis is that the experiences of these remarkable men at A&M College helped prepare them for the sacrifices and contributions they made. The close nature of the lifetime bonds that were forged among the cadets and their families also becomes evident.

Writing with a personable, engaging style, Woodall cleverly opens with a “problem” that serves as a vehicle to attract the reader and simultaneously introduce the men who earned the nation’s highest and most prestigious military award. The problem involves rediscovering the whereabouts of the original medals. Woodall pursues clues and contacts that eventually lead to determining custody of the artifacts, providing important context in the process. The bulk of the book consists of well-written individual biographical sketches of each recipient, from cradle to grave. By drawing heavily from accounts by family members, friends, and physical witnesses, Woodall brings each man to life and exposes their human side. Each story culminates in the circumstances that earned them the Medal of Honor.

As a critical comment, although Woodall documents much of his work so that others might follow his path, there are several points where he presents information without citing its source. In one example he quotes a key verbal change in the orders to bomb Ploesti (p. 32) and in another gives details on a unit’s history (p. 114) without identifying the sources. In addition, some graphics lack sufficient detail or use reference points different than the written account, detracting from their utility (p. 97). However, other maps are detailed and supplement the text well (p. 119). Otherwise, Woodall draws from a good balance of both primary and secondary accounts and skillfully teases the reader with new facts unearthed by his research.

From a military perspective, Woodall examines several points not commonly covered in similar works: the role of academic institutions in mobilizing for war; the process of recovering, identifying and repatriating deceased servicemen; and the long-term personal impact of being awarded the Medal of Honor. Finally, Woodall’s numerous interviews of survivors

and witnesses contribute materially to the historical record of some of the combat actions discussed in the book.

Texas A&M University

MICHAEL E. KRIVDO

My Old Confederate Home: A Respectable Place for Civil War Veterans. By Rusty Williams. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010. Pp. viii; 313. \$34.95.

By some accounts upwards of forty thousand Kentucky men donned the gray in the Brothers' War; a staggering 20 percent suffered permanent physical, mental, or emotional impairment. Though the United States Congress later approved pensions for disabled men who had served the Union, it felt no responsibility to provide similar benefits for their erstwhile enemy. Kentucky, like most southern states, lacked the funds to assist former soldiers in need. Tragically, thousands of men were reduced to living in poverty and frequently turned to liquor for solace.

How Kentucky came to care for its Confederate veterans is the story of this engaging, fast-paced story. As Rusty Williams, a freelance writer and historian, makes clear, support for a home for the commonwealth's soldiers heightened in the 1890s with popular acceptance of the mythology of the Lost Cause. Partisans male and female embraced the call for treating veterans with respect and dignity. In 1897, the president of Kentucky's United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) chapters proclaimed the urgent need to establish "a place of refuge and care" for veterans (p. 42). Above all, Bennett H. Young, the prominent railroad lawyer revered as one of John Hunt Morgan's raiders, lobbied state legislators on behalf of such a facility.

Their dream was realized in 1902, when the Kentucky General Assembly chartered the Kentucky Confederate Home with the guarantee of an annual state appropriation. Pewee Valley, a village of some 450 people located sixteen miles east of Louisville, was selected as the site of the home. The facility would operate in a four-story structure that once housed a luxury hotel.

Part convalescent hospital, part military encampment, the home quickly filled to capacity. Residents were expected to adhere to stringent rules and regulations. Reveille was sounded with a cannon shot at six a.m.

From that hour until lights out at nine p.m., everyone wore uniforms at all times. Residents could not leave the thirty-three-acre grounds without permission. Above all, no alcohol was to be consumed. Yet drunkenness remained the most common offense for which residents were disciplined.

During its thirty-year existence, the Kentucky Confederate Home provided comfortable lodging for more than one thousand aging veterans. The facility closed in 1934, as interest in the Confederacy waned and as the old soldiers died off. In the depths of the Great Depression the home became too costly for the state to maintain. Its last five residents were transferred to a nearby sanitarium; three died within the year.

Undeterred by the loss of most of the home's operational documents in a fire ninety years ago, Williams has done a masterful job ferreting out such materials as UDC minutes, letters, and memoirs. Scholars of the Civil War, the Lost Cause, and Kentucky history are in his debt.

Eastern Kentucky University

THOMAS H. APPLETON JR.

Counting Coup and Cutting Horses: Intertribal Warfare on the Northern Plains, 1738-1889. By Anthony R. McGinnis. Lincoln: Bison Book; University of Nebraska Press, 2010 (rp of 1990 ed.). Pp. x; 258. \$17.95 paper.

The practice of counting of coup in intertribal warfare as a means of displaying courage and honor in combat is a concept that was established before Anthony R. McGinnis published *Counting Coup and Cutting Horses: Intertribal Warfare on the Northern Plains, 1738-1889*. One of the most succinct works on this practice was published in the 1940 monograph titled *Rank and Warfare among the Plains Indians*, by Bernard Mishkin. However, McGinnis surpasses Mishkin's work by providing a more in depth study of the "complex intertribal rivalries" of Plains Indian society (p. x). Going beyond standard works on the Plains Indian wars of the 19th century, such as Ralph K. Andrist's *The Long Death: The Last Days of the Plains Indian*, McGinnis also focuses on the cultural, economic and historical background of intertribal warfare back to the early 18th century.

As the author of several journal article publications in the 1970s and 1980s on the history of the Plains Indians, including two articles on intertribal warfare, McGinnis clearly spent many years researching the topic before first publishing *Counting Coup and Cutting Horses* in 1990. The

book's impressive bibliography and excellent bibliographical essay at the end of the book also demonstrate a profound knowledge of the history of Plains tribes.

The book's chapters are arranged by years, which can be useful in identifying the relationships of certain key events to the history of the Plains tribes. However, when considering that the work covers many diverse and unique tribal histories over a large geographic area that extends from Nebraska to Alberta, the chapter divisions seem slightly artificial and compartmentalized. In addition, although the author seems to generally take care to be balanced in discussing tribal histories and white-Native American relations, it is surprising to find the book describing Custer's defeat at the Battle of Little Bighorn as a "massacre" (p. 139). However, such criticisms pale in comparison to the author's well-informed presentation on the warfare motivations and battle practices of the Plains tribes. McGinnis also brings into the discussion the challenges presented by outside influences, including the U.S. Army, U.S. and Canadian officials, and white settlers and venture seekers.

Counting Coup and Cutting Horses is highly recommended and should be on the bookshelf of anyone wanting a thorough discussion of intertribal warfare on the western Plains. This study should also be included in collections focusing on the Plains tribes of the U.S. and Canada.

Northeastern State University-Tahlequah

GARY L. CHEATHAM

Encyclopedia of Indian Wars: Western Battles and Skirmishes, 1850-1890. By Gregory F. Michno. Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing Co., 2003. Pp. xxxv; 439. \$28.00.

Forgotten Fights: Little Known Raids and Skirmishes on the Frontier, 1823 to 1890. By Gregory F. Michno & Susan J. Michno. Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing Co., 2008. Pp. xxviii; 384. \$28.00.

Frontier service during the time of the Indian wars has often been described as long periods of tedious routine disrupted by short sharp and skirmishes that shattered the routine of garrison bursts of violence. These books are about the occasional battles, raids, life and patrols for soldiers and sometimes struck terror into the hearts of innocents on both sides of the conflict as well. As Gregory and Susan Michno write in *Forgotten*

Fights, “everyday experience could erupt without warning into violent confrontations....” (p. v.)

This rapid descent into combat and terror happened often. Gregory Michno’s *Encyclopedia of Indian Wars* lists 675 armed clashes that he considers among the most important of 1,470 that he has considered during the peak period of fighting between 1850 to 1890. *Forgotten Fights*, written by Michno with his wife Susan, identifies 300 additional encounters, that are less well known, and covers a longer period, starting at the time of the first plains war in 1823. It also includes a number of clashes that did not involve U.S. military forces, but were between civilians and Indians and ranged from defensive efforts to massacres, on both sides. The end date of 1890 for both books represents the consensus view that the Pine Ridge campaign and the slaughter at Wounded Knee Creek represented the last major conflict of the Indian wars, coincident with the end of the frontier period.

Both volumes are organized chronologically and have lists of battles by state that are accompanied by individual state maps and show the locations of the fights. Both are annotated, and have extensive bibliographies, and indexes of fights by state as well as general indexes. *The Encyclopedia* has a separate third index of Indian tribes involved in the conflicts. In both books, the individual entries identify locations, dates, forces and leaders involved, and outcomes. Overall, the volumes are easy to use as reference books.

While the bibliography is close to comprehensive, three essential sources form the major basis for identifying the individual battles. These are lists of clashes with Indians published by the Adjutant General’s Office in 1891, Francis B. Heitman in his well-known *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army* (1903), and George Webb, editor of *Winners of the West* and a leading advocate of pension rights of Indian War veterans, in 1939. The three overlap to a very considerable degree, but differ around the edges, with the activist Webb’s being the most comprehensive. I have always been in favor of what is sometimes derisively called bean counting, and these books are based on a lot of counting. This is particularly true of the *Encyclopedia*, in which Gregory Michno carefully counted up the battles and used his data to identify the locations and periods of the most severe and most frequent fighting, single out the most active military units, and note the most aggressive leaders among the tribes and within the army. He also takes a stab at counting casualties, the most difficult aspect to estimate

because both sides sought to remove their dead from the field of battle and only one side kept the kind of detailed records that historians find useful. This statistical analysis is very helpful in creating an overall picture of the conflict that is sometimes obscured by generalizations and mythologizing about the frontier.

The frontier conflicts of the 19th century continue to fascinate Americans to this day. As recently as early July 2010, Nathaniel Philbrick's book *The Last Stand: Custer, Sitting Bull, and the Battle of the Little Big Horn* (Penguin, 2010) stood near the top of the Washington Post's best-seller list. These two books by Gregory and Susan Michno provide an overall framework for looking at the period of warfare with native groups, and should be useful for historians, general readers, and tourists.

Mt. Vernon, Virginia

FRANK N. SCHUBERT

Homer Lea: American Soldier of Fortune. By Lawrence M. Kaplan. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010. Pp. x; 314. \$40.00.

Winston Churchill once described Russia as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma". So too has Lawrence M. Kaplan pinpointed and unraveled Homer Lea, an extraordinary man by any measure. Masterfully researched and carefully word-crafted, this excellent biography charts the writings, dynamic character and aspirations of Homer Lea across the canvas of modern Chinese history. His life quest is artfully sketched against the backdrop of his personal crippling medical affliction, physical pain and tribulations. All subject matter is treated with first hand scholarship.

"Despite personal ill health throughout his 35 years", Lea's adventures and relations with Chinese reformers and revolutionaries amidst the closing hours of the 267 year old Manchu dynasty are addressed. The onset of the 'Warlord Period' and the struggle of key democratic reformers adrift in those tumultuous times are also meticulously chronicled. This biography for Chinese scholars clarifies the murky tale of Homer Lea, often cloaked in myth until now. It examines how an American citizen mysteriously rose to 'generalship status' in the Chinese Nationalist Army and become a personal military advisor to Sun Yat-sen. Details of his earlier work with prominent early Chinese reformers, especially Kang Yu-wei, in China and the U.S. are also adequately explained.

By the turn of the century, Lea is a fervent supporter of the campaign to "Restore the Kwang-hsu Emperor" and fully in league with its sympathizers. Yet less than a decade later Lea's search for fame and personal fortune finds him in direct alliance with the democratic forces advocating dynastic upheaval. This breathtaking, volte-face change is not fully explained in view of the political currents swirling around in China. It would have been helpful for the reader if historical events leading to the downfall of the Manchu dynasty were further explained, particularly at the strategic level in Asia.

The Japanese were able to undertake Western reforms through their equally painful "Meiji Restoration" where every aspect of Japanese culture was assessed as useful to modernization or jettisoned in the wake of Commodore Perry's 1854 visit. Why were the Chinese unable to effect basic reform leading to modernization? Unlike Japan, no comparative transformation occurred in China. Rather, the Manchu dynasty collapsed of its own dead weight and direct inability to adapt fundamental aspects of Western cultural, economic and military modernization. Although modernization struggles occurred in both countries near simultaneously, Japan was successful. China was not.

That overarching struggle in China is omitted for the sake of using a magnifying glass to delve into Homer Lea's individual involvement, and how he straddled the struggle for reform and modernization. The lone Chinese attempt to modernize—the "Tung Jih" Restoration in the 1880s—is omitted. For key Chinese reformers to include Kang Yu-wei, their underlying purpose was directly motivated and driven by the failed "Tung Jih" Restoration, the Chinese last chance to modernize before World War I.

However, in the examination of Homer Lea's life, this book is a fascinating study in self promotion, egotistic self confidence, and astonishing good luck during a turbulent period of Chinese history. A most interesting tale of international intrigue, this work is a keeper, and has earned a place in the library of Chinese modern history scholars.

San Clemente, California

CARMINE DEL GROSSO

Myth, Memory, and Massacre: The Pease River Capture of Cynthia Ann Parker. By Paul H. Carlson and Tom Crum. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2010. Pp. xix; 195. \$29.95.

Texans like their history raw and red from the blood of battle, and almost any battle will do. A case in point is the encounter between a small number of Texas Rangers led by future governor Lawrence Sullivan Ross and U.S. troops commanded by Sergeant John W. Spangler and Comanche on December 19, 1860. The clash resulted in the rescue of Cynthia Ann Parker, a white child captured in 1836 and long since accommodated into the her captive's culture. By then Parker had become a wife of Peta Nacona and the mother of future warrior Quanah Parker.

That is the basic story. From then to now, various persons had a hand in broadening that story into what Carlson and Crum call a flawed collective memory. Just as often the authors use the terms "myth and folklore." The cast of characters who did so stars Ross himself, whom they suggest changed his story to enhance his heroism in proportion to his political prospects: indeed, helped lead him to the governorship. Others, especially Benjamin F. Gholson, who was not in the battle but reported hearsay, did so to enhance their own reputations or to satisfied audiences who wanted only heroism.

Along the way, the "battle/massacre," depending on perspective, became known as the Battle of Pease River, but occurred on Mud Creek, a tributary of that river; the date became December 18, not December 19, because subsequent reporters kept repeating a mistake without checking; Peta Nacona, not present during the fight, died there fighting Ross himself, and the nature of the Comanche's alleged death transformed him from "a lazy buck" to a mighty chief, and so on.

Carlson and Crum became history detectives in this study to show how Ross and his supporters warped the story for his political advantage, how a minor incident became a crucial chapter in crushing Comanche culture, and to analyze all extant accounts of the action for accuracy and purpose. In each they have succeeded. Readers will not find out much about Parker but they will learn a great deal about Ross, Gholson, and others whose character as historical witnesses is open to question.

Carlson and Crum have done their detective work well.

Stephen F. Austin State University

ARCHIE P. McDONALD

Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier. By Jeremy Agnew. Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing Co., 2008. Pp. xiii; 266. \$16.00 paper.

Dr. Jeremy Agnew has written an imminently readable and even-handed popular summary of a typical soldier's life in the trans-Mississippi west from 1846-1890. The book has three major parts: "Pacifying the Frontier," "The Nineteenth-Century Army," and "The Frontier Soldier's Life." Tables, illustrations, and appendices add useful information.

Agnew successfully outlines most of the aspects of frontier soldiering, but some matters of organization and content detract from an otherwise fine work. For example, the thrust of the book, namely, "The Frontier Soldier's Life," has to wait in line behind two other large, introductory sections. As but one example of improving concision, Agnew's explanation of military rank and organizational structure would have been superb candidates for illustrated tables or diagrams in lieu of written descriptions.

Some topics in *Life of a Soldier* suffer from either excessive or insufficient treatment. Agnew devotes approximately 24 pages to weapons and armaments, for example, while penning less than two pages on army wives and their families. This is curious, as his quite substantial bibliography contains several noteworthy accounts by these wives, who were the best chroniclers of life at the frontier posts. The author also spends 16 pages discussing enemy tribes and methods of warfare. While a fascinating topic, it arguably adds little to the main subject of the book.

Given his academic background, Agnew prudently leaves any new historical interpretations to others. Even so, it would have been helpful to fully define the term "soldier." Individual and group experiences differed depending upon whether one were an officer, non-commissioned officer, or enlisted man. In a similar vein, Agnew offers no discussion of how Victorian cultural norms created class and gender hierarchies and dictated social interactions within the military community. And while the book is an excellent accounting of the various tasks and duties performed by the frontier soldier, there is little to no explanation of how their efforts aided the development of the western frontier.

In the main, Agnew's *Life of a Soldier* accomplishes what it purports to do: present a summary account of the life of frontier soldiers in a single volume. For those new to the subject, it will be a valuable introduction and hopefully inspire additional reading of such standard works as Don Rickey's

Forty Miles Day on Beans and Hay, and Robert Utley's *Frontiersmen in Blue and Frontier Regulars*, among others.

Sheridan, Wyoming

JEFFREY C. PRATER, PhD

Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates Who Joined the Army after 1861. By Kenneth Noe. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. Pp. xiv; 317. \$35.00.

Kenneth Noe defines later enlistees as individuals who joined the ranks no earlier than January 1862. His book explores why those men avoided 1861 enlistment and examines their initial and sustaining motives. Noe argues that the literature on common soldiers is skewed in favor of those who enlisted at the war's beginning, and thus focuses on soldiers likely to be highly motivated and fighting for a cause. In an effort to address that imbalance, Noe compares his sample of 320 later enlistees to standard interpretations of common Confederate soldiers. Later enlistees emerge as more likely to be married, only slightly older, and considerably less ideological with regard to the war. Approximately 43 percent of the soldiers in Noe's sample were slaveholders or came from slaveholding families. Overall, political ideology and concepts such as honor, duty, camaraderie, and unit pride meant less to later enlistees than to their 1861 counterparts.

More practical motives emerge for Noe's later enlistees. Federal invasion and threats to slavery and real property prompted many enlistments. These threats fueled a genuine hatred of the enemy among later enlistees and provided both initial and sustaining motivations as part of the larger incentive centered upon defense of home. Later enlistees considered Federals invaders bent on destroying everything dear to white southern men. Thus, home, financial security, women, and slavery all were threatened. This dynamic provided the sense of urgency initially lacking among later enlistees, most of whom were not motivated by the Confederate nationalism or political rhetoric that drove so many 1861 enlistments. Noe's impressive sample, quantitative analysis, and appendices curiously do not contain exact enlistment dates for each soldier. Such data would have proven useful, particularly in a discussion of the link between emancipation and enlistment motives.

This important study will appeal more to scholars than to a popular audience. Each chapter contains statistical analysis and historiographical discussions. Indeed, the book is clearly written with its place in historiography in mind. Some readers might quibble about the title. Noe convincingly argues that once in uniform these men generally performed as well as any others, even referring to them as “willing soldiers” (p. 195), raising potential questions about just how reluctant they ultimately were. Still, “reluctant rebels” obviously refers to the soldiers’ later enlistments and their relative lack of ideological commitment. Military historians, particularly those interested in the experience of the common soldier, will consider this book essential reading.

East Central University

BRADLEY R. CLAMPITT

Josie Underwood's Civil War Diary. Edited by Nancy Disher Baird. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009. Pp. xviii; 262. \$30.00.

Josie Underwood's Civil War Diary is a thoroughly engaging account of life in Bowling Green, Kentucky, during the first two years of the Civil War. Josie (1840-1923) was the daughter of prominent Unionists Lucy and Warner Underwood. A lawyer, Warner had served in Congress and was an elector for John Bell in 1860. Josie adopted her parents’ deep interest in the fate of the nation and wrote extensively about the effects of the war on her family and community. The surviving typescript of her diary has been lightly edited by Nancy Disher Baird, who has added illustrations, brief footnotes, a biographical appendix, and a selected bibliography.

Josie’s diary is valuable for two major reasons. First, it broadens our view of Unionism by providing an in-depth look at a family that was both completely southern and totally devoted to the Union. The Underwoods owned slaves and believed that slavery would best be preserved under the U.S. Constitution. The family resented the North and disliked President Abraham Lincoln. Second, Josie’s diary demonstrates how divisive the war was in the upper South. The extended Underwood family included both Unionists and Confederates, causing emotional turmoil for Josie, her parents, and siblings (When her brothers-in-law skirmished against each other in Franklin, Kentucky, in August 1862, Josie wrote, “This war is too heartbreaking and there seems no end to it,” p. 196). Josie also chronicled

how the war tore apart friends, alienated neighbors, and prompted slaves to question their owners' mastery.

Josie fully described the Confederate occupation of Bowling Green, as well as the Union takeover and subsequent occupation. In September 1861, Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston, commander of the Army of the West, established his headquarters in Bowling Green, and about 1000 soldiers, mainly Missourians and Mississippians, set up tents at the Underwoods', where they wreaked havoc on the farmstead and the family's routine. Despite their Unionism, the family provided for ill Confederate soldiers. Nevertheless, early in 1862 the Underwoods were evicted from their home, which was then burned just before the Confederate retreat. Josie welcomed the arrival of Union troops but lamented the rampant illness among them. She assisted her mother in distributing goods sent by northern aid societies for the soldiers. The Underwoods left Kentucky in the fall of 1862 when Lincoln appointed Warner consul to Glasgow, Scotland.

Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area ANTOINETTE G. VAN ZELM

A Small but Spartan Band: The Florida Brigade in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

By Zack C. Waters & James C. Edmonds. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010. Pp. xiii; 254. \$29.95.

Florida has figured little in the traditional histories of the Confederacy. Many historians view it as a remote backwash of the war and there is a scarcity of published information about the operations of Florida troops outside the state. Recent scholarship examining the state's contributions to the Southern war effort typically concentrates on the vast herds of Florida scrub cattle that fed the Confederate armies of Beauregard and Bragg after the Union captured Vicksburg and interdicted the flow of Texas beef.

However, 15,000 Floridians were eligible for service in the rebel armies. While Florida regiments in the Army of Northern Virginia were small and poorly trained, they participated in important missions like the charge against sixty Union cannons on Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg. Zack Waters and James Edmonds have brought the identities, hardships, and activities of many who served in those regiments to life with their exhaustive study of scattered collections of letters, diaries, memoirs, and other obscure sources from that turbulent era.

Through the authors' valuable research, readers discover the contradictory combat results and galling deprivation of the Florida brigade serving under Brigadier General Edward A. Perry. His brigade followed Robert E. Lee from the heady Seven Days battles on the Virginia peninsula in 1862, through the Gettysburg defeat in 1863, to the heartbreaking surrender of the starving ANV at Appomattox in 1865. Florida soldiers exhibited both gallantry and feebleness along the way. We find out, for example, about the dimly known, heroic leadership of the Eighth Florida's Captain Thomas R. Love, who steadfastly held his unit's position in the exploding Fredericksburg rubble against an unrelenting federal artillery barrage. In contrast to Love's fortitude, we also learn that the Fifth Florida's usually stalwart Private David Geer barely escaped death by fleeing from the battlefield when Burnside's Corps routed his unit at the Wilderness. These two events and the others cited in the book teach us about the perseverance and desperation of Perry's dwindling brigade as attrition reduced the ranks of his St. Augustine Rifles, Wakulla Tigers, Madison Rangers, and other companies.

Waters and Edmonds fill a gaping void in our knowledge of Florida's manpower contribution to Lee's forces. The state's bedraggled soldiers suffered staggering casualties as they fought with inadequate food, clothing, and ammunition. Near the end of the war, a shocked Richmond artillery major described the surviving Florida combat veterans as "unwashed, un-combed, underfed, and almost unclad creatures." (p. 177) Perhaps his description best provides a fitting final image of the sacrifices Floridians made in contributing to Lee's manpower. In this interesting book, the ghosts of long-forgotten Florida rebels finally materialize to claim their rightful place in the bloody context of the Civil War.

Miami, Florida

CHARLES W. RICE

War's Relentless Hand: Twelve Tales of Civil War Soldiers. By Mark H. Dunkelman. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006. Pp. xiii; 288. \$34.95.

Mark H. Dunkelman is the author of several books on the 154th New York Volunteer Infantry. He is thus well placed to tell the stories of twelve ordinary soldiers of the 154th, selected using four criteria: the vividness of

their story; the availability of documentation; the variety of their fates; and their different experiences. Of the twelve, two died in action, three from wound-related complications, one from disease, one from mental illness, and five survived the war more or less intact. Most of Dunkelman's subjects receive twenty or so pages of description, but two get barely ten pages each. This vignettes are richly detailed, with letters to and from the soldiers being the main source of evidence.

Dunkelman seeks "to breathe life" into his subjects, "to reconstruct a bit of their world during the Civil War" (p. xii), and to a limited extent he succeeds. We are moved by the story of Milton Bush, who purchased a substitute in 1862 but was recalled to service on penalty of arrest for desertion two years later, only to die from fever before his official discharge papers arrived. We marvel at the charmed life of the incorrigible rogue, "Salty" Oyer, wounded at Chancellorsville and in Georgia, captured and imprisoned after Gettysburg and Savannah, and who lived into the 1920s. For a brief while, we can immerse ourselves in a version of the inner life of a small group of Civil War soldiers with a reasonably common experience.

This is merely a "version" for two reasons. First, the extensive source base is largely one-dimensional. Letters and journals are an amazing source for the common soldier, but they are inherently limited by the nature of their form. Soldiers wrote volumes, but they only reveal a particular, pre-selected portion of their experience. Second, we are lacking the broader context that exists in the secondary literature. James McPherson, Reid Mitchell, Gerald Linderman, Earl Hess, and Randall Jimerson may not have written specifically about the 154th New York, but their insights into the lives of soldiers more generally have informed a generation of academic historians. Their absence makes this a weaker volume that it could otherwise have been.

If you are interested in the 154th or in vignettes of the soldier's life, then you will find much to praise in this work. If you are looking for a wider vision, you will be disappointed.

The Chickamauga Campaign. Edited by Steven E. Woodworth. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010. Pp. xvii; 199. \$24.95.

Steven E. Woodworth's *The Chickamauga Campaign* is a collection of eight essays that examine various facets of the battle of Chickamauga. The book is the second installment of the series entitled *Civil War Campaigns in the Heartland*, which focuses on in-depth analysis of battles and campaigns from the oft neglected Western Theater of the Civil War. The editor of the series, Steven E. Woodworth, is the author numerous works on the Civil War, including: *Jefferson Davis and His Generals* (University of Kansas Press, 1990); *Six Armies in Tennessee* (Bison Books, 1998); and *Nothing but Victory: The Army of the Tennessee, 1861-1865* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2005).

Like other books of the *Civil War Campaigns in the Heartland* series, the purpose of *The Chickamauga Campaign* is to examine new aspects of a major battle of the Western Theater of the Civil War. In that regard, Woodworth's work is successful. Essays by John Lundberg, Alexander Mendoza, David Powell, Ethan S. Rafuse, William G. Robertson, Timothy B. Smith, Lee White, and by Woodworth himself, analyze aspects of the battle of Chickamauga that have largely been neglect by previous historians who have tackled the subject.

Among the more significant essays of this collection is Ethan S. Rafuse's "In the Shadow of the Rock," which focuses attention away from renowned corps commander, George H. Thomas, and examines the roles and actions of the lesser known Union corps commanders of, Alexander McCook and Thomas Crittenden. Of the eight essays that make up *The Chickamauga Campaign*, Rafuse's chapter best exhibits the strengths and weaknesses of the book. By focusing on McCook and Crittenden, Rafuse illuminates the roles of two Union generals who have been largely ignored by historians, but in doing so, he glosses over the significance of Thomas's stand at Snodgrass Hill, which was irrefutably the most significant Union action during the battle. This omission of Thomas' actions would be understandable if other chapters discussed the subject in detail, but they do not. Therefore, because of its focus on lesser known aspects of the battle, *The Chickamauga Campaign's* targeted audience is those that already have a working knowledge of the battle.

Like Rafuse's essay, six of the seven other essays that make up the book focus on various aspects of the battle or its commanders. However, in the closing essay of *The Chickamauga Campaign*, Timothy B. Smith provides

readers with a fascinating analysis of the creation of the Chickamauga National Military Park. This compelling and well written provides a fitting conclusion to an exceptional book.

Texas Tech University

JASON A. STEWART

Patrick Connor's War: The 1865 Powder River Indian Expedition. By David E. Wagner. Norman, OK: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 2010. Pp. 296. \$39.95.

After working for Pitney Bowes for almost 40 years the author retired to Hulett, Wyoming. A long time student of the military history of the West and the Indian Wars of the northern plains Wagner began researching the 1865 Powder River Expedition in 2003. David Wagner authored another work also published after his death in November 2008. *Powder River Odyssey: Nelson Cole's Western Campaign of 1865 the Journals of Lyman G. Bennett and Other Eyewitness Accounts* was released in March 2009.

For many the period between 1861 and 1865 is entirely contained by the operational stories of the conflict between the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia. There were apparently no significant events west of the Mississippi River until George Custer's ill-fated expedition ten years later. Mr. Wagner's work provides a compelling story in contrast.

Four different columns of the expedition advanced from widely displaced points of origin. Colonel Nelson Cole's command leaving Omaha, Nebraska on 1 July. Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Walker departed Fort Laramie, in southeastern Wyoming, on 5 August. General Connor marched out of Fort Connor on the Powder River in central Wyoming on 23 August. James Alexander Sawyers government-funded road-building column was to survey to the north, having left the mouth of the Niobara River in northeastern Nebraska on 13 June 1865.

Wagner covers many events, from the summary execution by hanging of Big Crow, a Cheyenne warrior accused being a murderer and spy, running battles with various Indians, to the hardships suffered by Colonel Cole's and Lieutenant Colonel Walker's elements that became lost in their advance and almost starved.

This work is comprehensive and invaluable for any student of the Indian Wars of the latter half of the 19th century. Patrick Connor's War set the stage for the next thirty years of Plains Indian Wars. Mr. Wagner did an

excellent job of utilizing a variety of sources, including military records, first person journals and letters of participants to construct a comprehensive narrative of the first post-Civil War Indian campaign. *Patrick Connor's War: The 1865 Powder River Indian Expedition* is highly recommended to any student or teacher of American history following the Civil War.

Kailua Kona, Hawaii

MAJOR TIMOTHY S. COOKE (USAR, RET.)

Every Day a Nightmare: American Pursuit Pilots in the Defense of Java, 1941-1942.

By William H. Bartsch. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010.

The Japanese military and naval assault in December 1941 brought disaster to American forces across the Pacific. In two previous books, William Bartsch chronicled the desperate, but futile, efforts of United States Army Air Forces' pursuit and bomber aircrews to defend the Philippines. Turning to a lesser known fight in this book, he details the plight of USAAF pursuit pilots and maintenance personnel in the ill-fated defense of the oil-rich Dutch East Indies from the Japanese onslaught.

Describing the movement of these Americans and their Curtiss P-40E aircraft from the United States to Java, Bartsch makes extensive use of personal diaries to place a human dimension on what could have been simply a detailed history of the deployment of men and machines to an often forgotten arena in the early days of the war. These first-hand accounts personalize the terrible toll exacted by sending partially trained personnel on such an arduous movement. They left a trail of crashed aircraft and dead pilots to guide those who followed the route from Australia to Java. Insufficient training and inferior aircraft brought them even more misery and death from the Japanese army and naval air forces in the vain effort to deny the Japanese the oil resources that sparked their drive toward the Dutch East Indies.

The strength of this book is Bartsch's use of personal accounts to develop the gradual realization, first by the pilots and then by their commanders, of the hopelessness of the effort. All the while, the American public was consistently told of great successes against the Japanese air forces. Unfortunately, the strength of the book is also its greatest flaw as Bartsch bogs down in the repetitive minutia of individual memories. For example,

must the reader be told repeatedly how the pilots marveled at the excellent camouflage used at Ngoro Field? In addition, Bartsch comes up short on one of the historian's hardest tasks, describing simultaneous actions at different locations. Too often, he presents the reader with vignettes that jump back and forth across distance and time that confuses his overall narrative. Despite these difficulties, Bartsch has done an excellent service toward expanding our understanding of the early days of America's combat involvement on a global scale. If nothing else, this reviewer recommends that every casual student and serious historian of American air power read Bartsch's epilogue. It provides a careful synthesis and critique of the events in Java that are useful for understanding the role of air power in 1942 and today.

National Museum of the US Air Force Historian JEFFERY S. UNDERWOOD

Soldiers of Conscience: Japanese American Military Resisters in World War II. By Shirley Castelnuovo. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010. Pp. xxii; 162. \$16.95 paper.

The narrative of the Japanese-American experience in World War II is well-established and well-understood. White Americans on the West Coast blended racism, invasion hysteria, and the opportunity to acquire Japanese-American property on the cheap, and demanded the removal of Japanese Americans to the interior of the United States. Franklin Roosevelt's government complied, albeit reluctantly, and established concentration camps in remote locations, where "relocated" Japanese Americans, both enemy aliens and American citizens, suffered physical and mental deprivation. Japanese Americans stoically accepted this injustice, while young Japanese-American men went forth to fight in Europe and serve as intelligence specialists in the Pacific. As a result of their collective courage and fortitude, Japanese Americans gained the trust of other Americans, and eventually a government apology and token compensation.

Northeastern Illinois University political science professor emerita Shirley Castelnuovo challenges this narrative by recovering the stories of a small group of Japanese Americans who were either already in the US Army at the time of Pearl Harbor or drafted later, and chose to refuse combat training, declining to fight for a government that denied their

essential human rights. Some went so far as to attempt to renounce their American citizenship and request repatriation to Japan. American military authorities interpreted these actions as mutiny, disloyalty, or cowardice, rather than as a form of conscientious objection, and punished these soldiers with imprisonment and less-than-honorable discharges. The wider Japanese-American community either ignored or denigrated their choices, preferring to embrace the more comfortable narrative of stoic compliance and heroic service.

Castelnuovo relies on solid archival work and extensive oral histories to successfully reconstruct this missing chapter of Japanese American and American military history. After giving an overview of the Japanese American wartime experience, she details the experiences of several groups of resisters, based on their assigned units. She clearly differentiates the dissimilar circumstances faced by different groups of Japanese-American resisters, though the transfer of individuals between units leads to a little overlap. She includes two concluding chapters. The first, which analyzes the attitude of the wider Japanese-American community to the resisters, is insightful, and explains why such a small group is historically important. The second, which attempts to link the World War II resisters to soldiers who have attempted to refuse service in Iraq, falls somewhat flat. The differences are too broad for true comparison, but her take on the right of a soldier to opt out of a given war, "selective conscientious objection," is thought-provoking.

This is an important, insightful, and interesting book. It is quite readable, and largely free of editorial errors. It is highly recommended.

Headquarters, US Air Force

LIEUTENANT COLONEL GRANT T. WELLER,
USAF, PH.D.

The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Air Force or the US Government.

Nancy Batson Crews: Alabama's First Lady of Flight. By Sarah Byrn Rickman. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2009. Pp. xviii; 209. \$29.95 paper; \$9.95 ebook.

In her biography of Nancy Batson Crews, Sarah Byrn Rickman eloquently tells the story of a strong-willed woman and of the Women's

Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS) of World War II. This is Rickman's third book on the WAFS - the initial group of twenty-eight women ferry pilots who would quickly join other women to become the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASP, and it is her best effort thus far. Rickman's training is as a fiction writer and while her earlier books had many elements of that style, this work on Crews reveals her growing skills as a non-fiction writer.

Nancy Batson Crews was twenty-two, beautiful, and a natural pilot when she joined the WAFS. Utilizing oral histories with Crews as well as with family and friends (Crews passed away in 2001) one can clearly hear Crews' own voice throughout the book. The majority of the book includes Crews' involvement in aviation including her beginnings in the University of Alabama's Civilian Pilot Training Program in 1941 and her joining the WAFS in October 1942. Six of Rickman's twenty-four chapters are devoted to Crews' wartime flying, but the WAFS/WASP experience follows Crews throughout her life and thus throughout the book.

In the post-war chapters Rickman reveals Crews' shift from ferry pilot into her new role of wife and mother. By 1964, now in her 40s with school-age children, Crews returned to flying. She continued flying commercially until the new century and was a businesswoman both in aviation and land development until her final years. Crews stayed connected with the WAFS/WASP as well. Crews was among those WASP who reunited in the 1960s and she eventually served as President of their organization from 1972-1975, the years they began their initial efforts toward recognition as veterans. Rickman met Crews in 1991 and is a significant part of the last fifty pages of the book. Rickman credits Crews with changing her life direction and inspiring (and funding) her first book on the WAFS. This biography is clearly a labor of love as Rickman calls Crews "my mentor, my benefactor, my friend." While the final pages seem more reminiscence than biography, Rickman tells a valuable story of a very interesting woman. *Nancy Batson Crews: Alabama's First Lady of Flight* will be a useful read for those interested in women's wartime flying, postwar aviation, Southern women, and a tale of a riveting life.

Surface and Destroy: The Submarine Gun War in the Pacific. By Michael Sturma. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011. Pp. x; 248. \$29.95.

There is no shortage of submarine histories of World War II. But most of these books have focused on the undersea aspect of the conflict. Michael Sturma, in this briskly written account, examines the experience of surface gun combat by submarines in the Pacific. He is well suited to this task, having previously written two excellent U.S. submarine histories. Sturma holds a solid grasp of the secondary literature as well as a keen eye for primary sources.

Sturma begins with the moral gray area generated by the U.S. orders to conduct unrestricted submarine warfare. American submariners found themselves dealing with all sorts of targets not worth a torpedo, particularly sampans, junks, and sea barges. Since the U.S. submarine force leadership did not promulgate specific orders regarding these contacts, individual submarine commanders were left to make the decision whether or not these were legitimate targets.

Some submariners refused to attack small craft, while others did not hesitate to rake them with pitiless gunfire, leaving few, if any, survivors. And in between these extremes, some submariners went to great lengths to spare lives. As Sturma notes, "by the latter stages of the war many submariners were reverting to traditional prewar protocols that many believed submarines had made obsolete. It became common for boarding parties from submarines to check the cargoes and evacuate the crews of suspect ships before destroying them." (p. 8)

Sturma does not just discuss the American experience. For instance, British submarines frequently employed surface gun attacks in the Straits of Malacca. Indeed, the number of surface gun attacks made by British submarines in 1945 equaled over half the number of surface gun attacks made by U.S. submarines during that year. Sturma dedicates fewer pages to chronicling Japanese attacks, stating, "such attacks were far more commonly carried out by Allied submarines than by their enemies," (p. 40) which most likely was more a matter of opportunity than ethics.

There are a few minor errors of detail in Sturma's work, mostly dealing with a juxtaposition of sources. Additionally, Sturma neglects Roger Dingman's *Ghost of War*, which would have corrected an historical myth that Sturma repeats in his text. But these quibbles aside, *Surface and Destroy* is

a well-researched account of an experience that has not been previously examined in great detail. Although frequently uncomfortable to read, *Surface and Destroy* is an important addition to the field of submarine history.

Groton, Connecticut

JOEL IRA HOLWITT

Come Up and Get Me: An Autobiography of Colonel Joe Kittinger. By Joe Kittinger and Craig Ryan. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010. \$27.95, 272 pages, 40 illustrations.

It is an image that still takes my breath away. It is a minute or so before 7 a.m. on August 16, 1960. Captain Joe Kittinger has just stepped from the open gondola of a balloon floating 102,800 feet above New Mexico. An on-board camera captured the moment as a small figure clad in a green pressure suit and white helmet and boots falls toward the solid cloud deck, almost twenty miles below. Half a century later, no one has ever made a parachute jump from a higher altitude.

Working with balloon historian Craig Ryan, Joe Kittinger has produced an autobiography that carries the reader from his bucolic Florida boyhood through every aspect of one of the most distinguished careers in military aviation. The author earned his wings as a USAF fighter pilot in 1950, qualified as a test pilot during an early flying assignment in Germany, then signed on as a member of a team of aerospace medical researchers led by Col. John Paul Stapp. During the course of Projects *Manhigh* and *Excelsior* Kittinger he flew balloons to, and jumped from, the edge of space, testing new techniques and equipment designed to save the lives of aircrew operating high altitude, high speed aircraft.

While other airmen were qualifying as astronauts, the author volunteered for three combat tours in Vietnam. His first two tours were with the Air Commandos, flying Douglas A-26 attack aircraft. During his final tour as vice-commander of a fighter wing operating the F-4D Phantom II, he scored a victory over a MiG-21. On May 11, 1972, just four days before the end of his third tour, he was shot down and spent the next eleven months as a prisoner of war. As the senior ranking officer among FNG's (Fucking New Guys), prisoners captured since the resumption of air attacks against North Vietnam in December 1971, Kittinger offers both a moving account

of his individual experience as a POW and much insight into the problems of leadership under the most difficult circumstances.

While he retired from the Air Force in 1978, the author certainly did not retire from flying. Returning to his native Florida, he flew balloons and antique biplanes for his own air show and became a major competitor at gas balloon races and events. In addition to winning the re-established U.S. James Gordon Bennett Balloon Race four times, he completed the first solo, non-stop balloon crossing of the Atlantic, flying 3,543 miles from Maine to Italy.

Come Up and Get Me is an engrossing account of an extraordinary career in the air that offers adventure enough for any armchair aviator, as well as grist for the mill of the more serious scholar interested in subjects ranging from the bureaucratic realities of science and technology programs in the post-war military to the life of an airman in the "flight suit" Air Force. In summing up, I can only echo the words of Neil Armstrong, who wrote the foreword for the book. "For those who are fascinated with the history of flight, *Come Up and Get Me* will serve as an introduction to a new and unforgettable chapter. I am confident they will enjoy the adventure as much as I have."

*Senior Curator, Aeronautics Smithsonian
Institution, National Air and Space Museum*

TOM D. CROUCH

Until They Are Home: Bringing Back the MIAs from Vietnam, A Personal Memoir.

By Thomas T. Smith. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2011. Pp. 136. \$29.95.

The POW/MIA flag, with its white on black image of a dejected American prisoner profiled against a backdrop of barbed wire and guard towers, still waves at many American Legion and VFW halls, barber shops, bars, and auto repair establishments and adorns the jackets of bikers, wherever veterans and sympathizers gather to hail heroes and to deconstruct the disaster of Vietnam. And annually, on Memorial Day, sculptors chisel into the black granite of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial the names of veterans whose remains have only recently been recovered in Indochina or who have succumbed recently to war-related wounds. In *Until They Are Home: Bringing Back the MIAs from Vietnam, a Personal Memoir*, Thomas T. Smith, a veteran of

the post-Vietnam U.S. Army and an academic historian, recounts his role in command of an MIA search team scouring Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in search of the soldiers, sailors and marines who never returned from the war, dead or alive.

When the war ended, the Pentagon counted 2,585 American veterans as "Missing in Action" and in 1992 established the Joint POW/MIA Accountability Command (JPMAC) to launch a recovery effort. As relations between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam warmed in the 1980s, Vietnamese officials slowly became more cooperative in the mission, and in 2003 Lt. Col. Thomas Smith arrived in Hanoi to help carry out the mission. During his tour of duty, the remains of fourteen American MIAs were located, identified, and returned home for belated honor and burial. Smith's mission required delicate diplomatic negotiations to retain the cooperation of the Vietnamese and heroic endeavors to confront the weather, jungles, and swamps of Southeast Asia. At every stage of the mission, Smith and his compatriots labored to honor veteran sacrifices in a thankless war, to bring closure to their loved ones, and to redeem the military code of "nobody left behind." "We have an ironclad commitment," Smith writes, "to our military and their families. If they are lost, we will do whatever it takes to find them. As a professional soldier and the father of a son who was serving in Iraq, I found this commitment by the American people extraordinary. No other nation on earth makes it, means it, and keeps it."

Smith writes with clarity, passion, and respect, not only for the lost Americans but for their former Vietnamese adversaries. The book should attract the interest of Vietnam veterans and for others interested in the war. I teach a course on the Vietnam War for undergraduate college students and recommend *Until They Are Home* as a supplementary text to other professors engaged in similar work. Students will leave the book with a heightened appreciation of the U.S. military and a deeper understanding of the Vietnamese.

Sam Houston State University

JAMES S. OLSON

Life and Death in the Central Highlands: An American Sergeant in the Vietnam War, 1968-1970. By James T. Gilliam. Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2010. Pp. xx; 295. \$27.95.

James T. Gilliam's book is a synthesis of his own war memoir with the analysis of a professional historian as he is not only a Vietnam Veteran, but also a Professor of History at Spelman College. Gilliam uses after-action reports and officer duty logs to supplement his memories as an infantry sergeant in Vietnam. Unlike Gilliam's first book based upon his war experiences, *The War in the Central Highlands of Vietnam: An Historian's Experience*, this study includes more personal experiences as opposed to war analysis.

Gilliam grew up admiring his relatives who served in World War II. In fact, Gilliam originally enrolled in ROTC at Ohio University, but dropped out due to his disenchantment with his older brother's experiences as a marine in Vietnam. Therefore it was ironic that Gilliam flunked out and was drafted in September 1968. Gilliam was successful in his army training however, and became one of the few African-Americans to attend NCO Academy. He was then sent to Vietnam as a sergeant in the 4th Infantry Division.

Gilliam's writing is vivid as he describes the first time he killed a man when he and an NVA soldier fired upon each other from 20 feet, only Gilliam did not miss. The war stories become more intense as he describes a one-on-one battle inside a tunnel in February 1970 where he was forced to beat a Viet Cong soldier to death only to realize after the fact by feeling his fallen foe's chest that it was probably a woman that he killed. Gilliam was so traumatized that he never told anyone about the tunnel fight, not even his platoon members, until he told his therapist in 2005.

The intensity climaxes when Gilliam is sent to Cambodia, where he is convinced he will not survive. One again he participates in extreme combat that he describes in stunning fashion. Even the last day of Gilliam's tour of duty is eventful as his barrack is bombed in a sapper attack and a soldier walking in front of him is shot to death while walking aboard the plane that was to take him and Gilliam home.

The book reads like an action novel. Gilliam's skill as a professional researcher also comes to play as he backs up his stories with archival sources. The only minor flaw is that Gilliam should have given us a more detailed

description of who he was before the war and what made him adjust in society following his traumatic experiences as we are only led to understand that he did eventually recover.

Texas Tech University Vietnam Center and Archive

TY LOVELADY

The 9th Infantry Division in Vietnam: Unparalleled and Unequaled. By Ira A. Hunt Jr., USA (Ret.). Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010. Pp. xiii; 195. \$35.00.

This book focuses primarily on the operations performed by the 9th Infantry Division in the Mekong Delta from 1967 to 1969. Author Major General Ira Hunt discusses the difficulties faced by the division's commanders who were tasked with the duty of protecting a large area of South Vietnam with limited resources. It is Hunt's belief that the 9th Infantry Division rose to the challenge and performed admirably.

Hunt served as the 9th Division's chief of staff during the Vietnam War so this offering is not a typical firsthand account of battle. Hunt presents a straightforward analysis of the situation in the Delta and the division's capabilities, and gives the reader a clear view of the different types of operations the 9th Division performed with a detailed breakdown of its evolution over time and increasing effectiveness.

Hunt points out the importance of the Mekong Delta as a major agricultural region and population center of the country that was, when the 9th Division arrived, primarily under the control of the Viet Cong. The author discusses the significance of the impact of the Tet Offensive on the enemy as well as on the men of the 9th Division. Much of the book is dedicated to describing the different combat operations in which the division participated, such as "jitterbugging," using a helicopter-mounted people sniffer to detect the enemy before inserting troops, the development of a sniper program, and how standard tactics used elsewhere in Vietnam had to be adapted in response to the conditions in the Delta. An especially useful section of the book discusses the different analyses performed by the division staff such as a study designed to reduce the number of soldiers debilitated by trenchfoot, and a description of how an overhaul of the helicopter maintenance program affected combat missions.

The book shows how the 9th Division changed its tactics in response to enemy intelligence, referencing captured enemy after-action reports supplied in the book's appendix. There is also a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of the division's pacification program and discussion of the use of local protection forces and Tiger Scouts to free up American soldiers for patrol operations.

This book shows the nuts and bolts of how a military division operates, overcomes challenges and judges mission effectiveness. Scholars studying the evolution of battle tactics in Vietnam will find this book useful and others interested in the 9th Infantry Division will enjoy this unique insider's point of view.

Texas Tech University

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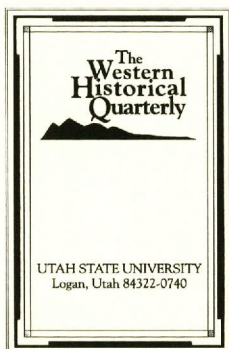
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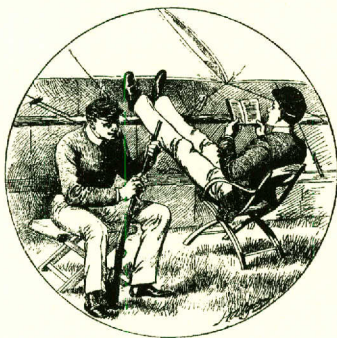
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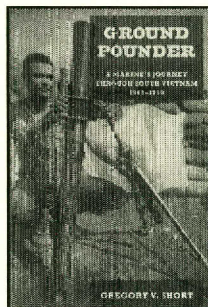
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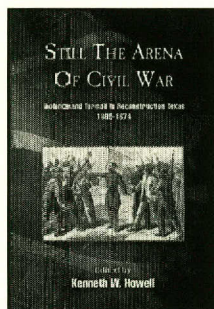
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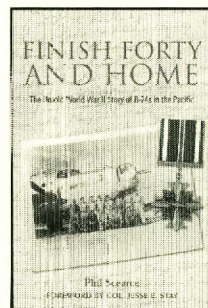
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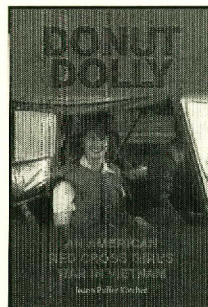
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