

BOOK REVIEWS

More Zeal than Discretion: The Westward Adventures of Walter P. Lane Jimmy L. Bryan Jr. (Texas A&M University Press 4354 TAMU College Station, TX 77873-4354), 2008. Contents. Acknowledgements. Introduction. Epilogue. Notes. Bibliography. Index. P. 250. \$35.00. Hardcover.

Jimmy L. Bryan, Jr., has provided us with an interesting and enjoyably readable biography of one of Texas' more curious characters, Walter P. Lane. As the title indicates, throughout his life Lane was a zealous man who sought adventure in the Texas Revolution, the Mexican–American War, the California Gold Rush, and ultimately the Civil War. As if that list were not enough, the author points out that Lane found time to get involved in the tumultuous politics of Reconstruction in his adopted hometown of Marshall, and later write his famous *Adventures and Recollections of General Walter P. Lane* in the 1880s.

What kind of man could lead such a life? Bryan argues that Lane represented the classic romantic adventurer, always restless with the mundane existence, which most people of his class led. Born in Ohio, the young Lane soon succumbed to the call of adventure and enlisted in the Texas army, serving honorably at San Jacinto. After 1836, Lane made several attempts to settle down and go into the grocery business with his brother in East Texas, but these attempts all proved fleeting.

Bryan uses the latest arguments about gender and masculinity to portray Lane as a man who preferred danger to safety and manly camaraderie over the domesticity of marriage. Each time a new opportunity for adventure arose, whether it was the Gold Rush or the Civil War, Lane quickly abandoned his home in Marshall and set out for a new adventure. In the end, his life represented a series of adventures with no real feminine influence other than his niece, who kept house for him.

This book is an excellent biography of an intriguing character from Texas' frontier past. Read in conjunction with Lane's own *Adventures and Recollections*, Bryan's work should provide both the scholar and the Texas History buff a solid grounding in the life of Walter P. Lane.

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Confederate Struggle For Command: General James Longstreet and The First Corps In The West Alexander Mendoza (Texas A&M University Press, 4354 TAMU College Station, TX 77843-4354), 2008. Contents. Illustrations. Acknowledgements. Preface. Conclusion. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. P. 278. \$32.95. Hardcover.

In *Confederate Struggle for Command*, Alexander Mendoza integrates the unhappy adventures General James Longstreet and his First Corps, experienced in eastern Tennessee and western Virginia in 1863-64, with the peculiar military and personnel problems the Confederates faced in the region. Mendoza admits that Longstreet made his share of mistakes that winter, but