

paying any federal taxes as Shepherd bribed officials instead (p. 205). Added to these problems was the arrogance of Shepherd's children, especially his younger son Grant. He was contemptuous of the Mexicans who surrounded him from his childhood. Grant grew up to work as mine foreman, continuing to enforce the increasingly stringent social controls instituted by his father.

This book details the story of the development of great wealth for U.S. investors, of the exploitation of Mexican workers—both indigenous and mestizo—and of a corrupt and permissive state at both the local and national levels. Hart has provided a short work which is eminently usable for the classroom and which provides both scholars and students a concrete and specific basis for understanding the social unrest that led to the Mexican Revolution.

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More Zeal Than Discretion: The Westward Ventures of Walter P. Lane. Elma Dill Russell Spencer Series in the West and Southwest. By Jimmy L. Bryan Jr. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008. xii + 249 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00.)

Walter P. Lane is one of the more shadowy figures in Texas history. A native of Ireland, he was brought to the United States at the age of four and came to Texas on his own at about eighteen, just in time to participate in the Battle of San Jacinto. For the next thirty years, he lived for adventure and action and fought in the Mexican War and in the Civil War. He eventually settled in East Texas, becoming a solid citizen, with all the strengths, weaknesses, and prejudices of solid citizens of East Texas in that era.

Until recently, little information has been available on Lane. Most has been either anecdotal through secondhand sources or from his memoir *Adventures and Recollections of General Walter P. Lane*. The book, which the late John H. Jenkins considered essential to any research library on Texas history, is virtually unobtainable in its original 1887 edition and scarce in reprint until the latest edition was published (Dallas, 2000). Jimmy L. Bryan Jr. has filled the gap with *More Zeal Than Discretion*. Now, finally, we have a biography of a man who in many ways epitomized much of what was good and bad in the ordinary American frontiersman. Bryan notes that while Lane "neither fashioned the policies that directly influenced the course of events, nor commanded the decisive campaigns that executed them, he did participate in many important movements of the nineteenth century" (p. 2).

The scarcity of information makes it difficult to form a well-rounded picture of Lane. Bryan explains that there are few extant records that he himself might have generated, particularly for the first forty years or so of his life. His *Adventures and Recollections* is a prosaic account; the attitudes and opinions Lane expresses in the book are those of a man of seventy, rather than an illumination of the decades leading up to it. This makes Bryan's effort all the more remarkable.

The Lane whom Bryan reveals to us is not necessarily admirable. He is brave but does not inspire. Lane's primary motivation is little more than a quest for adventure and excitement which, Bryan points out, played more of a role in national development than most modern Americans realize. During the Mexican War, Bryan has no qualms about killing prisoners. After the Civil War, he is determined to keep the newly emancipated blacks on as low a level as possible. He also is a misogynist, very blunt in his disdain for women. In the end, the reader detects in Lane

a certain amount of bitterness over the possibility that he could have done more with his life.

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Texas Devils: Rangers and Regulars on the Lower Rio Grande, 1846–1861. By Michael L. Collins. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008. xi + 316 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$26.95.)

Ever since their appearance as mounted volunteers in 1823, the Texas Rangers have exerted a strong hold on the popular imagination, and the group is probably the most-chronicled police force in American history. Michael L. Collins's *Texas Devils: Rangers and Regulars on the Lower Rio Grande, 1846–1861* fills an important gap in the oft-told history of the Texas Rangers by focusing on an era that has not previously been addressed in such detail. Among its many contributions is its coverage of the formative years of the Texas Rangers between the Mexican-American War and the outbreak of the American Civil War. During this era, revenge for the Alamo and Goliad was never far from the minds of the Rangers. Likewise, simmering resentment and fear inflamed by reports of Anglo mistreatment of Mexicans and Tejanos only inflamed matters along the border. All of the familiar figures from the Rangers pantheon are here, including John Coffee "Jack" Hays, Ben McCulloch, and John Salmon "Rip" Ford; but unlike Walter Prescott Webb's sanitized version, *The Texas Rangers: A Century of Frontier Defense* (Boston, 1935), they are portrayed warts and all, and sometimes as less than heroic.

Collins elucidates the relationship between the cultured and well-educated Robert E. Lee, dispatched to take over the Military

Department of Texas in 1860, only months after capturing John Brown at Harper's Ferry, and the hardscrabble and sometimes profane Ford, both "southerners by breeding and belief, they seemed to have come from different worlds" (p. 204). This same juxtaposition works well when comparing the Regular soldiers and the Rangers, whom they viewed with disdain because of the Rangers' penchant for acting "outside the law and the accepted conventions and articles of war" (p. 197). Ranger insubordination and disorderly conduct became so egregious that Lee, "unconvinced of their value," approved their removal from the Mexican border to the Indian frontier, where he felt their style of fighting was better suited (p. 208).

Collins is at his best demonstrating that Ranger companies were only as good as their commanders. During this era, they were just as likely to provoke war as to stop it and were often undisciplined and disorderly, leading one observer to note they were "more a hindrance than anything else" (p. 135). The author's fine use of diaries and journals reveals the Rangers as often less than exemplary combat, with some eyewitnesses commenting on individuals deserting in the face of gunfire, getting lost in the chaparral, quarrelling, and getting drunk. Even their own commander, Rip Ford, referred to some of his men as "plundering rascals" (p. 194).

What sets this book apart from others on the topic is the engaging, often elegiac, writing style of the author, which should appeal to general readers and academics and give it the readership it richly deserves. Collins's use of primary sources such as diaries, documents, letters, and journals reveals a more complicated Ranger legacy that separates fact from fiction, revealing more of their controversial legacy on both sides of the border.

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