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The Fate of Texas: The Civil War and the Lone Star State
(review)

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ton (chapter seven), and the role of the Texas Cavalry in the Red River Campaign (chapter eleven). The essays covering military topics are particularly strong. But even those familiar with the material are sure to find something new in each of the essays in the collection. For example, in "The Knights of the Golden Circle in Texas" (chapter four), Linda S. Hudson introduces readers to the "Military Degree Knights" and the important role these low-ranking men played in bringing about secession and ensuring the surrender of Federal forces in the state before the outbreak of the war. Previously thought to be a secretive, shadowy organization, the Knights that emerge from Hudson's detailed research are anything but. On the contrary, Hudson demonstrates the relative openness of the organization and its influence on all facets of Texas politics.

In "A Sacred Charge upon Our Hands" (chapter fourteen), Vicky Betts analyzes the many ways the government and citizenry of Texas attempted to ease the extreme difficulties faced by families of Confederate soldiers. The state's "first experiment with state-level public welfare" was surprisingly wide-spread, yet not entirely successful. Betts looks at the entire spectrum of aid available during the war years for women and children, ranging from private charitable assistance to mutual aid societies, and to county and state direct assistance. Local newspapers assisted the state government by running stories detailing the plight of residents, playing on the sympathies of those in relative financial comfort. Likewise, stories often linked aid with patriotism: those who were not on the battlefield could do their part indirectly by helping the families of Texas's fighting men. Even the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville aided families. According to Betts, the prison textile factory provided cloth to soldiers' families as long as recipients vowed not to use it for sale or barter.

Overall, this is a first-rate essay compilation and Editor Howell should be applauded. The essays are tied together smoothly with hardly any overlap; most of the essays chosen for the collection complement each other. The lack of footnotes in Archie McDonald's "Brief Overview" (chapter two) is unfortunate, as this essay alone could serve as a starting point for student research. Additionally, John W. Gorman's excellent quantitative study on frontier defense (chapter five), at a mere seven and one-half pages, seemed all too brief (although that was presumably an editorial decision, as Gorman included four and one-half pages of data). These small criticisms aside, *The Seventh Star of the Confederacy* is an important collection for any historian of the Civil War period in Texas and would serve as an excellent book for undergraduates.

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REBECCA A. KOSARY

The Fate of Texas: The Civil War and the Lone Star State. Edited by Charles D. Gear. (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2008. Pp. 294. Illustrations, notes, selected bibliography, index. ISBN 9781557288837, \$37.50 cloth.)

Charles D. Gear has enlisted an impressive group of historians to present some of the latest research on Civil War-era Texas. The volume's eleven essays cover a diverse host of topics that reflect the current state of Civil War literature,

move beyond traditional military and political narratives, and reveal that there is still a burgeoning area of inquiry within Texas's Civil War experience. With the exception of the first chapter, which examines the Lone Star State's role in the formation of Confederate strategy, most of the essays present a "bottom-up" view of the war's impact on Texas's citizens and soldiers. A collection of local studies, for example, use various communities as test cases to address larger historiographic issues and problems. Richard B. McCaslin presents a condensed version of his fine book, *Tainted Breeze: The Great Hanging at Gainesville, Texas, 1862* (1994), and highlights the significance of wartime dissent, vigilantism, and violence on Texas's home front. Similarly, studies on two Texas counties conducted by Angela Boswell and Randolph B. Campbell demonstrate the further importance of local investigations. Using exhaustive collections of local government records and private correspondence, Boswell examines the role of women in Colorado County and concludes that the Civil War afforded women more independence and presented the opportunity for increased public influence. Campbell, who has dedicated a large portion of his career to local history, effectively challenges the scholarly notion that veterans retreated from public view following their participation in the conflict and reveals that veterans from Harrison County were a dominant force in postwar local and state politics.

The book also includes essays that emphasize the reactions, motivations, fears, and expectations held by common Texans, which underscore the personal and human side of the conflict. Utilizing primarily contemporary letters and diaries as essential sources, Richard Lowe, Charles Grear, and Carl H. Moneyhon demonstrate that Texans, although far removed from the war's major theaters, were wholly engaged with the conflict's progress and outcome. Lowe examines the relationships between Texas soldiers and their families on the home front, while Grear explains the myriad factors that inspired Texans to leave their homes and fight east of the Mississippi River. Moneyhon looks to the end of the war, analyzes citizens' reactions to the stress of defeat, and concludes that although Texas had not endured the ravages of war, many in the Lone Star State still "experienced a profound sense of defeat" (139).

One of the book's unique features is an emphasis on the non-Anglo perspective. Walter D. Kamphoefner's study investigates the feelings and perceptions harbored by Texas Germans toward the Confederacy, race, and slavery. Although considerable work has already appeared on this subject, Kamphoefner presents a somewhat revisionist thesis and argues that specific attitudes regarding secession, war, and Reconstruction pushed Germans away from the "mainstream" of Anglo society. Similarly, Dale Baum's essay on refugee slaves fills in a needed gap in the literature. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, Baum calculates the number of slaves brought into Texas from neighboring southern states and evaluates their significance both to wartime and Reconstruction politics and society. Moreover, he supports Steven Hahn's argument in *A Nation under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (2003) by arguing that "communicating through neighborhood grapevine stories of their masters' diminished roles in flight as patriarchal authorities, the refugee slaves might have influenced in measurable ways the course of grassroots Reconstruction" (102).

The final two essays by Alexander Mendoza and Julie Holcomb reveal the increasingly important issue of the Civil War and cultural memory. Mendoza's piece evaluates the influence of George Washington Littlefield, a Confederate veteran, and his support for statues at the University of Texas at Austin memorializing the failed Southern cause. On a larger level, though, Mendoza examines the different ways in which generations of Texans have chosen to identify with the state's Confederate past and have "altered the meanings of the Civil War in various eras to fit their contemporary convictions" (xx). Holcomb provides an equally unique perspective by demonstrating how the role of public history has largely formed the manner in which the Texas public remembers and interprets the Civil War. She thus convincingly calls on public historians to engage in "a more inclusive and interpretive strategy," especially in regard to race relations, simply because a large portion of the general public informs its historical awareness at public sites, museums, and landmarks.

This review, unfortunately, cannot capture the profound level of research and information presented in this volume. These eleven historians have done a remarkable job in providing new and groundbreaking areas of research that contribute to an even deeper understanding of the Lone Star State's experience in the Civil War. *The Fate of Texas* reveals, though, that there is still more work to be done. This is far from a criticism, however. Grear acknowledges in the introduction that the field would benefit from studies on Tejanos in the Civil War, the role of religion, and the Texas Cotton Bureau, to name a few. Nevertheless, historians will greatly benefit from this latest round of original research on both Texas's wartime and postwar role.

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Moss Bluff Rebel: A Texas Pioneer in the Civil War. By Philip Caudill. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009. Pp. 230. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 9781603440899, \$29.95 cloth.)

Considering that much of Texas's history is based on romantic stories and mythic images of iconic figures, lesser-known aspects of the state's historical saga are sometimes left untold. Philip Caudill, in *Moss Bluff Rebel*, resurrects the tale of one such obscure individual, William Berry Duncan. Using Duncan's rich and untapped diaries and letters as principal sources, Caudill traces the life of this seemingly typical mid-nineteenth-century cattle wrangler, businessman, local politician, slave owner, soldier, and family-man through his settlement in Texas, the depths of the Civil War, and the trials of Reconstruction. Caudill's biographical narrative follows a chronological approach and distinguishes itself in its successful depiction of the ways in which an unglamorous and ordinary pioneer coped with turbulent events and life-altering experiences.

As a resident of Liberty County, Duncan profited from his astute business skills and earned most of his money through trading cattle. When the winds of secession blew across the state, Duncan, sensing a threat to his prosperous profession and generally indifferent to national politics, ever-so reluctantly joined the Confederate