BOOK REVIEWS


Of all the subjects embroiled in Texas history, few have been the subjects of books more frequently than the Alamo, the enduring symbol of courage and sacrifice for the cause of liberty.

Calling Frank Thompson’s The Alamo a paperback somehow does not do it justice. It is more than that - a lavishly printed, well-designed keepsake that creates an accurate picture of the battle that shaped Texas.

Thompson also explores the Alamo as a fixture in entertainment, literature, and marketing. Blending color and black-and-white photos with movie posters, old illustrations, drawings, and other memorabilia, he develops an interesting and visually exciting story of the Alamo’s evolution as an American icon.

While other Alamo books have focused on the Alamo’s principals – William B. Travis, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, et al, Thompson’s book contains something many other books have regrettably omitted - a list of the defenders who died on March 6, 1836, the non-combatants, and the survivors.

For this, I thank him. On page 22, I found my great-great-grandfather, Jesse B. Bowman, one of those who died.

Bob Bowman
Lufkin, Texas


Uniforms of the Alamo and the Texas Revolution, and the Men who Wore Them, 1835-1836, is a sequel by popular demand to the first book by Bruce Marshall. Uniforms of the Republic of Texas, And the Men That Wore Them, 1836-1846. Both books have been long overdue in dispelling the generally accepted conception that the armies of Texas in the revolution and republic were clad indifferently in rustic frontier garb, homespun, and buckskins.

This was true for many during the revolution, but by no means all. Surprisingly, there were uniformed Texas units in all of the major battles of the Texas Revolution – Bexar, the Alamo, Goliad (Coleto), and San Jacinto.

Marshall, an internationally honored artist, provides twenty-one color plates of the uniforms of both the Texan and Mexican armies, and maps of the Alamo and San Jacinto are supplied by his artist son, Randy Marshall.
illustrations include depictions of the flags, weapons and insignia of both armies.

There is a full history of the military campaign and the background leading to the clash of cultures. Of special interest is the inclusion of considerable long-suppressed testimony by a number of Texas officers and soldiers challenging the generally accepted historical version of the Texas Revolution and portraying the Texas commander, General Sam Houston, as a master strategist who, alone, deserved full credit for saving Texas.

Marshall presents credible evidence that Houston was, in fact, a military incompetent who had no intention of fighting anywhere in Texas, not even at San Jacinto, but intended to retreat to the United States border, hoping the U.S. Army would then intervene. This plan was upset by near-mutiny in his rebellious army, who refused to retreat further and themselves chose the route to San Jacinto. Even in the battle Houston sounded retreat, but his officers countermanded his order and continued the battle until total victory. This is quite a different story than the schoolbook version, but it is backed up by solid research on Marshall’s part.

The foreword is by Brigadier General John C.L. Scribner, command historian of the Texas National Guard and director of the Texas Military Forces Museum.

Rob Jones
Austin, Texas


Alexander Campbell was one of the most significant individuals in American Christianity. As the founder of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Campbell began one of the first truly American denominations. Since so few books have ever been written on Alexander Campbell, a strong biography is well overdue.

The story behind the book is as interesting as the book itself. Eva Jean Wrather spent more than seventy years researching, writing, and re-writing a history of Campbell that resulted in a 700,000-word manuscript that she never finished. Following her death, Duane Cummins assumed the project and *Alexander Campbell: Adventure in Freedom, A Literary Novel*, is the first book of a planned trilogy based on Wrather’s research.

Wrather’s goal was to present a detailed account of Alexander Campbell’s life with particular attention to the events that led to the birth of
the Christian Church. The book portrays the life and religious confrontations of Alexander and his father, Thomas, as they moved from Ulster, Scotland, to Washington, Pennsylvania. The book is beautifully written, and the style makes Campbell's character come alive.

The book, however, is much more novel than biography. The text has no bibliography or notations, and thus the reader is asked to rely on the author's research and her interpretation of Campbell's life. Given the lack of documentation, it is often difficult to determine if Wrather is talking for Campbell or Campbell is talking for himself. This makes it difficult to determine the sequence of the development of Campbell's theology and later Christian Church theology. Alexander Campbell: Adventure in Freedom is an excellent book for a casual read by a layperson who wants to know more about Campbell and the Christian Church, but its scholarly value is limited by the same style that makes it so enjoyable to read.

Joe Early, Jr.
University of the Cumberlands


C. Allen Jones has provided scholars with a useful reference tool concerning rural life in antebellum Texas. Jones serves as director of the Texas Water Research Institute and has held positions with the Agricultural Research Corporation in Brazil and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station. He has published articles on various agricultural topics, so he certainly has an expertise in the subject.

Texas Roots takes an in-depth look at the agricultural techniques, ranching styles, dwellings, and trade of rural Hispanic families under Spanish and Mexican rule, and Texians during the Republic and early statehood phases of Texas history. It reflects the history of those eras, and provides insight into the difficulties of rural life which competed with hostile Native peoples, droughts, floods, and the great distances from markets to forge a successful agricultural base for the economy of early Texas.

The author relies heavily on primary documents, which are familiar to many scholars of the era, but read from a different angle. Documents that have provided political, economic, and social historians with vital information also reveal a great deal about the environment, which played an even larger role in the daily lives of our ancestors than it does today. Jones has gleaned these sources for information which he presents in chapters concerned with Native American farming methods, mission agriculture, rancheros, small-scale south-
ern farms, plantations, and major crops of the antebellum era.

This reader can find only one shortcoming. The absence of a conclusion leaves the book failing to synthesize and provide the significance of the work. This point aside, the illustrations by the author are helpful, and the research sound. Texas Roots is a reliable reference tool for libraries, a solid addition to reading seminars in Texas or environmental history, and a nice addition to personal libraries.

Kevin Z. Sweeney
Wayland Baptist University


In *Brush Men & Vigilantes*, Pickering and Falls debunk the myth that Texans were strong supporters of the Confederacy during the Civil War. Focusing on Hopkins and Hunt counties, the authors state that many “Brush Men” were willing to risk everything to support pro-Union causes in Northeast Texas.

Tension began in the area with the immigration of “Upper South” immigrants who tended to favor abolition. “Lower South” pro-slavery cotton farmers immigrated soon after. When the Civil War began, Confederates used vigilante justice on the pro-Union “brush men” hiding in Jernigan’s Thicket near Commerce, from which they conducted guerilla-style raids. Hanging Unionists was commonplace in the Northeast Texas region, and the authors point to the infamous Henby-Howard hangings as an example of such brutal violence during the war. Many Unionists eventually joined the United States Army, but some stayed to fight the war at home. The authors conclude that historians have ignored these pro-Union soldiers because of Texans’ strong ties to their Confederate heritage plus a lack of historical accounts.

Pickering and Falls give an excellent, detailed account of a little known part of Texas Civil War history. The endnotes and maps are helpful for further research. However, with the litany of names and events in the book, it can be hard to track a character’s wartime loyalties. The book will attract a limited audience – residents of the highlighted counties and local Civil War historians. Overall, for East Texans searching for their Civil War heritage and the lesser-known truth of this area, *Brush Men* is an enjoyable read.

Carrie Pritchett
Northeast Texas Community College

Many historians have chronicled the life of Robert E. Lee, highlighting his spotless record as a cadet at West Point and his exploits in the Mexican and Civil War. One small chapter of his life that receives little scholarship was the time he spent in Texas. Carl Coke Rister examines the five years, 1856-1861, that Lee spent in the Lone Star State in detail in his book, Robert E. Lee in Texas. Rister explained how Lee's life on the Texas frontier prepared him physically, mentally, and spiritually for the harsh conditions he experienced during the Civil War.

In 1856, the Second United States Cavalry, garrisoned in Texas, became Lee's first field command. In Texas, Lee experienced the harsh living conditions of the Texas frontier, which included unpredictable weather and poor food with little variety. Some of the major events that marked Lee's stay in Texas included an expedition to capture hostile Comanches in west Texas and the Cortina Wars along the Rio Grande. The rest of the time Lee spent in various camps and forts and traveling to courts martial hearings in south Texas. Even though his initial impression of the state was poor, Texas and the men who served under him grew on Lee and changed him.

Overall, this is an interesting book to read. It is well researched and includes many memoirs and letters from Lee and the people he met while in Texas. By using these sources, Rister provides a clear picture of the years Lee spent in Texas. He demonstrates the conditions on the Texas frontier that people experienced before the Civil War and the last peaceful years of Lee's life before the secession crisis.

Charles David Grear
Texas Christian University


At last the long wait is over! A generation of revisionist scholars who have waited patiently for a new comprehensive synthesis on Reconstruction Texas will celebrate the publication of Carl Moneyhon's Texas After the Civil
For nearly 100 years, the only single-volume, comprehensive study has been Charles Ramsdell's *Reconstruction in Texas* (1910). One might add to the list William C. Nunn's *Texas Under the Carpetbaggers* (1962). By modern standards, both works are problematic because of the authors' personal biases. So teachers have pieced the story of Reconstruction Texas together from a variety of book chapters, journal articles, dissertations, and theses. Thanks to Moneyhon's study, those days are over.

According to Moneyhon, Texas was on the verge of meaningful economic, social, and political changes between 1865 and 1874. The emancipation of slaves, economic destabilization, and a breakdown in the *antebellum* political structure promised to revolutionize Texas, potentially turning it into a modern state. Throughout the era, Republicans, who gained control between 1870 and 1874, introduced measures which promised to change the political and economic landscape of Texas. But, by the end of 1874 it became evident that the radical revolution was over. Reconstruction had failed. While no longer held as slaves, African Americans fell victim to poverty and racism which limited their economic and political autonomy. The state's economy, which had recovered from postwar depression, remained dependent upon cotton as its primary cash crop, and Democrats regained control and dismantled most of the Republican's initiatives.

Contrary to traditionalists' interpretations, Moneyhon claims that Texas Democrats were responsible for the failure of Reconstruction in the state. He contends that Republican reforms threatened the survival of the state's *antebellum* Democratic Party, plantation economy, and racist attitudes that supported both. Fearing a complete loss of control, Democratic leaders and wealthy planters used every means to ensure that Republicans failed in their attempt to bring meaningful reform to the state. Democrats created a white majority by using violence, election fraud, and racial propaganda to defeat the Republican politicians and to keep black Texans from participating fully in the electoral process. Republicans ultimately lost control of Reconstruction because they refused to engage their political enemies in a full-scale civil and racial war. As a result, leading Democrats left Texans a legacy of "a single-crop agricultural system that dominated the economy and racial repression that lasted into next century" (p. 5).

Although Moneyhon reveals little new information on the story of Reconstruction, his effort to provide a new interpretation of the subject should prompt further research on a variety of topics, including a comprehensive study of the Texas Democratic Party, a detailed examination of the effect Republican programs had on the state, and additional analyses of black Texans' response to freedom. Moneyhon has produced a valuable source for students and scholars of Reconstruction Texas, and his work should become a classic, perhaps even enjoying a longer shelf life than Ramsdell's work.

Lewis Gould's *Alexander Watkins Terrell* is a well-written biography of a noted nineteenth-century Texas politician. Gould has written his book in a way that captures the reader's attention and refuses to let it go. Though Gould fol-
lows the convention of most biographers by taking readers through a cradle-to-grave account of his subject. A.W. Terrell’s life is full of so many twists and turns that the story reads like a modern-day adventure novel. While space prevents a full discussion of Terrell’s achievements, his major accomplishments included serving as a district judge, a Democratic lawyer in the Semi-Colon court case (1873-1874), a member of both the Texas Senate (1876-1884) and the Texas House of Representatives (1891-1892 and 1903-1906), America’s minister to Turkey in President Grover Cleveland’s administration, and a reporter for the Texas Supreme Court for more than a decade.

Terrell also was the architect of several pieces of key legislation. During his terms as a senator, he introduced legislation that established the state’s educational system after Reconstruction. He also wrote the law that created the University of Texas, which included provisions for co-education and the establishment of the Permanent School Fund. During his first term in the Texas House he supported and contributed to the legislation that established the Texas Railroad Commission, and during his later terms he served as the primary author of the Terrell Election Laws of 1903 and 1905, which reduced the role of African Americans in state politics and allowed the Democratic Party to gain complete control of the electoral process.

In addition to his ability as a legislative architect, Terrell fought for the Confederacy in the Red River Campaign of 1864. During a key point in the battle, his unit became separated from other Confederate forces. It took Terrell and his men a day to find and rejoin the main body of the army. Shortly after the battle, a rumor circulated that Terrell had shown cowardice in the face of the enemy. After the war, he painfully realized that any chance he had to run for higher political office in Texas was wrecked by this rumor.

One of the more interesting aspects of Gould’s work is the author’s explanation of why Terrell, a man of talent and ability, never rose to high state or national office. Aside from the rumor about cowardice, Gould contends that Terrell’s problem was his aloof mannerism, which many of his contemporaries mistook for condescension and conceit. Gould reveals that Terrell tended “toward deceit, excessive cleverness, and meanness toward his political enemies” to accomplish his political objectives (p. xii). Gould concludes that leading Democrats were willing to profit from Terrell’s abilities as a lawmaker and legislative draftsman, but few of his colleagues liked him as a person and even fewer trusted him.

One of the best aspects of this study is the author’s balanced view of his subject. Unlike other biographers, who assume the role of public defender more than historian, Gould does not attempt to dismiss Terrell’s many character flaws. He explains, “the good and bad in Terrell were mixed together. Racism and reform coexisted in his mind in ways that produced constructive change in some areas and deplorable legislation in others” (pp.167-168). Gould reminds us that Terrell was a product of the society in which he lived, a society just as complex and difficult to understand as the one in which we live.
Both Moneyhon's and Gould's studies advance our understanding of Texas's checkered past. Moneyhon provides scholars with a balanced synthesis of Texas Reconstruction, focusing on primarily on economic and political events between 1865 and 1877. Gould provides a detailed analysis of one man's struggle to survive the vast changes taking place in Texas during late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth centuries.

Kenneth W. Howell
Prairie View A&M University


True Women and Westward Expansion is a window into what Texas women thought about westward expansion and their role in achieving that expansionist goal of the United States in the nineteenth century. This work is the result of completing Caughfield's dissertation at Texas Christian University. It also earned her inclusion in the Elma Dill Russell Spencer series on the West and Southwest. Caughfield explored the letters, diaries, and published works of Texas women, though admittedly Native Americans, Hispanic, and blacks had less of a written record than did white women. Much of what is known of the minority groups' views came from secondhand accounts.

Caughfield chose Texas women because Texas was the focus of much of the nation's interest in manifest destiny during the forty years before the Civil War. From interest in Texas grew the desire to "complete" the national borders and even to press on into Mexico and Central America. As women struggled on the frontier to live up to the ideals of the popular notion of the role of women, known as the Cult of True Womanhood, they used their influence to forward the progress of Manifest Destiny. Under the dictates of True Womanhood, this meant preserving the marks of civilization—home and family as well as supporting the rule of law through the establishment of churches and schools. What Caughfield found was that women did not remain in the private sector of society to promote these causes. "Although in a limited fashion in accordance with the dictates of true womanhood... women were able to function publicly [through] voluntary associations and benevolent societies" (p. 7), to participate in the ongoing pro-expansionist activities of their menfolk. Assistance for the goals of Manifest Destiny came in the form of contributions women traditionally made—banners, food, money, nursing the soldiers, information, letters to dignitaries they knew, and even participation in filibustering themselves. "The true woman, then, would tend to agree with the rationale behind territorial aggrandizement and, within her separate sphere, work toward it" (p. 9).
What Caughfield has done is call attention to the heretofore-neglected role of women in the Manifest Destiny process. It is not that the role of women was unknown, rather that women's support was not considered equally important to the recorded and overt actions of the men. She admirably rectifies that imbalance through her thoroughly researched book. It is comparable to the proverbial pair of scissors. It takes both halves of the scissors to cut the material.

A flaw throughout the book I found irritating was the frequent use of quotation marks around any past belief that she considered politically incorrect for the twenty-first century. I also found it presumptuous to say that women who survived the ordeal of being an Indian hostage exaggerated their experience (p. 33). How could she know except through an educated guess? The work also could have benefited from less use of parenthetical conclusions that could just as well been part of the narrative.

Nevertheless, there can be no doubt about the critical influence women had through being “True Women” who supported the Manifest Destiny of the United States until the Civil War absorbed all thoughts and actions.

Priscilla Benham
University of Houston Downtown


Published previously in 1933 in serial form in a Dallas, Texas, magazine, _Buffalo Days_ is an interesting collection of short stories told by a well known and aging buffalo hunter, J. Wright Mooar, to James W. Hunt. Mooar was a professional buffalo hunter of some reputation whose adventures on the southern plains began in 1871 and continued for a decade. The man who put these stories on paper was James Winford Hunt, a respected Methodist preacher who founded McMurry College in Abilene, Texas, and became the college's first president. This is an interesting book and a good present, and I recommend it.


Stan Hoig tells us much more about Jesse Chisholm, a somewhat shadowy figure, than just his trail blazing ability. Half Cherokee, Chisholm was a linguist who could speak several Indian languages, scout, friend, and diplomat
among several Indians tribes, and an entrepreneur, cattleman, explorer, who also tried a host of other things during his fascinating life. Over sixty years of age when he died just after the Civil War, Jesse Chisholm was a man who was often decades ahead of his contemporaries. Remembered in history for the cattle trail that bears his name, this book will expose the reader to a man who lived a life of untold adventure. Definitely recommended.


These short stories are the product of Charlie Hester, who dictated them to a friend when he was approximately eighty-six years old. They are not particularly well written, and contain little if any insight into the name-dropping, long list of gunmen included in the book. It is also hard to determine whether Hester actually saw, heard about, or was just told some story about the men he discusses in the book.

Allen G. Hatley
Eagle Lake, Texas


John Warren Smith has undertaken a grand epic in telling the story of the Smith family of the Trinity River Valley in Texas. Smith follows the South Carolina family from the 1830s to 1869, and, for the reader, his novel-style writing makes the characters come alive. The main character of this book, John Stephen Smith, is plagued by misfortune as he creates Smith Plantation on a bend of the Trinity River, losing first his wife, Nancy Jane, to scarlet fever; then his second wife, Elizabeth, in childbirth; and undertaking a search for a wet nurse to care for the youngest of his four children, in the slave-breeding farm in the countryside near Huntsville, Texas.

Smith covers challenges to Smith land title in the Cincinnati, Texas, area where the Smith Plantation was located, as well as the problems generated by failure to record the wills of Frederick Pomeroy and Isaac Tousey after they died of yellow fever. Later, he covers the terrible chase, complete with a pack of dogs in pursuit, of Calpurnia, a teenage female slave, caught sitting down and talking back to her overseer. Her drowning in the Trinity River is excused by John Stephen Smith with "She chose her own grave."
No Holier Spot of Ground moves along quickly through ninety-nine short chapters in which the author has captured the settling of Walker and Montgomery Counties faithfully. If there is a negative to this book, it lies in the early chapters where the author goes overboard in his "asides" to the reader. The book would also benefit from an editors eliminating duplicate words and grammatical errors.

In time, No Holier Spot of Ground will become a treasured account of the 1830-1869 periods in Texas history.

Beverly J. Rowe
Texarkana College


The period between 1860 and 1910 was a transitional one for medicine with a mixture of science, folk medicine, quackery, and medicine men. Steele documents the contributions of hardy physicians practicing under primitive conditions to bring the best of the new medical knowledge to the frontier in his book.

Steele presents a didactic and protean view of medicine as practiced in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the western United States. The information is just as valid for any area of rural America during that period. He includes medicine practiced by the American Indians, by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on their explorations, by the mountain men, and by the travelers along the immigrant trails. These lay practitioners had limited knowledge, limited facilities, and limited medications. The amazing fact is that they did not kill more people than they did.

Steele then presents the triumph of modern medicine as practiced by trained personnel in the mining regions, by army surgeons, by doctors in rural areas, and by women physicians over quackery and folk medicine. The final sections document the maturation of modern medicine in the Western states, particularly in Montana, including establishment of hospitals, the growth of the role of the professional nurse, improvements in sanitation, and the development of public health services to treat epidemic diseases.

This is not a medical textbook. It is an interesting and well-written history of the development of medicine in the American West over the last century. Though the work in its entirety is a bit disjointed, the information contained is accurate, informative, and interesting. Most books written on frontier medicine are anecdotal stories of the trials and tribulations of an individual practitioner. Steele relates plenty of stories, but they are mixed with a serious dis-

Ask just about any Texan and they will quickly tell you that their heroes have always been Rangers. Perhaps no frontier institution in the annals of the American West – and certainly none in the Lone Star State – remains surrounded by as much mystique and shrouded in more myths than these legendary peace officers in the service of Texas. Through the generations, the lore of American Southwest has been steeped in stories of larger-than-life lawmen and their historic forerunner far-ranging Indian fighters of the Texas border. Yet the stubborn and troublesome truth persists: so much of that historical literature simply retells the Anglo version of Ranger folklore, one that is sanitized and one that largely discounts the experience of Texans of Mexican heritage.

At last there is a personal recollection that does justice both to the Ranger legend and to the Tejanos whose story was long left from the pages of the Texas experience. In One Ranger: A Memoir, H. Joaquin Jackson and his co-author, a brilliant writer named David Marion Wilkinson, have collaborated to offer readers of all interests a thrilling ride across the rugged landscape of modern Texas.

In the best tradition of the Rangers, and in the best tradition of autobiography, Joaquin Jackson recounts three crowded decades as a member of perhaps the most elite and most famous law enforcement corps in the world. With verve and wit, he recounts his most memorable encounters with cold-blooded killers, con artists, hardened criminals, bank robbers, rough necks, rapists, latter-day cattle rustlers, dope heads and drug dealers, bad men of the worst descriptions – or as Jackson termed the lot of them, “desperadoes and dumb asses.” His folksy language and Wilkinson’s fluid style combine to lead the reader on a thoroughly compelling and entertaining journey through the world of the wicked who would threaten all that is good with contemporary Texas.

“What a life I’ve lived!,” Jackson confesses. “And it was all handed to me for nothing more than the asking. God, how I loved being a Texas Ranger” (p. 269). This dramatic and colorful memoir is not only a must read for all who love Texas history, it is enough to inspire everyone – regardless of their race, religion, or politics – to lift their longnecks (or lemonade) in tribute to a remarkable man who gave his all for Texas.
Jackson's account begins and ends with the best advice anyone ever gave him during his storied career as a Texas Ranger. "Never let the sons of bitches bluff you out" (pp. XV, 269). And that's enough to make even the most reverent and law-abiding citizen truly praise, "blessed are the peace makers."

Michael L. Collins
Midwestern State University

What I Learned on the Ranch And Other Stories from a West Texas Childhood, James Bruce Frazier (McWhiney/State House Press, McMurry University, Box 637, Abilene, TX 79697) 2003. Contents. Illus. P. 156. $18. Hardcover.

What I Learned on the Ranch and Other Stories from a West Texas Childhood tells stories from the childhood of James Bruce Frazier and is the second book in the Texas Heritage Series. Frazier grew up on the Cross Ell Ranch located near Big Spring, Texas, in the 1920s and 1930s and relates his remembrances of growing up there. The foreword written by Frazer's youngest son, Donald S. Frazer (James Frazer had seven sons and three daughters), gives a short family history behind the Cross Ell and the Frazer family's connections there as well as explanation, where needed, to clarify the stories in various chapters. James Frazer's book is an interesting look at ranching from a child's eye view.

Mr. Frazer tells the stories of growing up and how a child explains things to himself. He writes of the events, the people — both real and those of his imagination — who helped shape his formative years. Life on a ranch is more than just people; animals also shaped the life of the author. Frazer's book is enchanting as he relates his life growing up.

What I Learned on the Ranch is a compilation of the author's childhood stories. Without notes or index, it is difficult to use the book as a resource, but it is short and easy to read. Frazer's book gives the reader a view into life on a West Texas ranch as a child saw it.

Dyson Nickle
Wells, Texas

Lawrence H. Konecny and Clinton Machann bring credentials somewhat different but also usual to the fields of ethnic and regional studies of Texas: Konecny in railroad management and Machann a professor of English. They create, in Perilous Voyages: Czech and English Immigrants to Texas in the 1870s, an illuminating mixture of immigrants' actual adventures to Texas, which contrast the extended and exaggerated claims of the period's pamphlets marketing the "glories" of the Texas prairies to credulous European newcomers.

The book structurally links records of the immigrants' experiences with the pamphleteers' assertions. It reproduces William Kingsbury's pamphlet (1877), Englishman William Wright's diary (1879) recounting of his exploratory trip to Texas, and Moravian oral histories that describe immigrant experiences in the Lone Star State. The Moravian period in Texas gives the reader a view of the immigrant's lives that often challenges the pamphlet's glowing claims.

I like this book. The contents are interesting to several groups of readers. First, the pamphlet is a good example of the era's commercial advertising that lauds the ideal of Texas land at the expense of the immigrant when confronted with the reality of actually surviving and making a living from it. Second, Wright's journey is an acceptably cynical view of what the journeyer actually finds in Texas. Third, the Moravians' experiences sums up the true hardship of challenging a new land and a new culture.

Melvin C. Johnson
Angelina College


Perhaps no period of American history is as well documented as that known as the New Deal. By the time Franklin Roosevelt assumed office in 1933, a Depression-weary Congress was ready to try almost any scheme the administration devised to ameliorate the pain of the era. After all, inasmuch as "traditional" remedies had failed, if the Roosevelt Administration proved unable to revive the economy, members of Congress could tell constituents "at least we tried it Roosevelt's way." Such conditions gave birth to novel ideas and desperate measures, and all the newly created agencies of an expanded government required extensive records keeping. Keith Volanto successfully
plumbed these and other archives to present a comprehensive perspective of the federal government’s efforts to support the United State cotton industry.

Government authorities faced many difficulties in their attempt to deal with the collapse of cotton commodity prices. The ways that cotton was raised, ginned, distributed, and marketed all posed problems. Not all production segments in the cotton business could agree on remedies. Overabundant supply, including product from Egypt and India, and shortage of market forced cotton prices into decline. The federal government urged farmers to plant fewer acres of cotton, a move opposed by ginners and railroads. When it devised a method to compensate producers who pledged to take acreage out of cotton production, administration of the reimbursement system proved hellish.

Roosevelt’s policy of enlisting local agencies to administer federal New Deal programs was brilliant; edicts from Washington were more likely to be accepted when pronounced by a neighbor or acquaintance, rather than a “government agent.” In Texas the brunt of the administration’s efforts to reduce cotton production fell upon the shoulders of county agricultural agents, who had to survey farms and extract pledges from farm owners to take acreage out of production. The agents also had to endure the enmity of those whose government checks seemed never to arrive soon enough.

Volanto used primary sources to describe the desperation of cotton producers of the era. His work is enlightened by frequent use of correspondence between government officials and from farmers to their representatives. Employment of these sources helps the author bring readers into the context of the times and illustrates, as perhaps no other source can, the angst of the era, the desperation of the participants, and the magnitude of the task. Volanto illustrates the attempt by an interventionist federal government eager to reverse the precipitous decline of an industry that was as much a region’s cultural heritage as it was its economic engine. Inasmuch as the collapse of cotton prices was precipitated by international trade, weather conditions, and economy, it proved ironic that the largely ineffective efforts by a single government to reverse the situation were superseded by the relief granted by the onset of the Second World War.

Not to read Volanto’s book is to bypass a superb opportunity to view a pernicious and debilitating crisis from the perspective of its participants, to miss the story of those who suffered and those who sought to end the pain.

Page S. Foshee
Austin, Texas


Each of these memoirs is a fascinating chronicle of courage, yet each is as different, one from the other, as was a dashing fighter plane from a lumbering B-17 bomber during World War II. The authors were air warriors in that epic conflict and each has colorful stories to tell of their high-flying adventures both in the sky and on the ground.

What is fascinating about each book is the remarkable clarity of the author's memory. Although these aviators began their military careers over sixty years ago, their collective recollections of the dates and times of training and combat missions, impressions of wartime Texas, the names of flight school classmates, and often intimate details of off-duty hi-jinks flow throughout each book as though it had all happened last week. Yet, as detailed as these reminiscences may be, they are anything but boring or tedious.

William J. Mitchell had the valuable assistance of a loving mother to aid him in remembering the past. She kept every letter he sent home neatly bundled for him to have in later years. While that maternal trait may not have been all that rare during the war years, Mitchell's letters home are. He described almost everything that befell him during his career as an Army pilot, including a sketch about how to recover from a stall. With a youthful exuberance that is infectious still, he told his parents about some of his amorous adventures, which likely enthralled them more than learning how to survive the deadly stall.

In his colorful Shot at and Missed, Jack Myers gives us an eyewitness view of the hazardous duties of a combat bombardier during World War II. The lifespan of a bombardier was potentially highly abbreviated and Myers creates a chilling and vivid picture of how that frightening realization weighed heavily upon him and his comrades-in-arms. He leavens his war stories with a remarkably frank recounting of his social escapades once he climbed out of his perilous perch in the Plexiglas nose of a B-24 bomber.

Of the three books, Allen Stein's Into the Wild Blue Yonder provides us with the broadest, if occasionally somewhat bitter, perspective of the career air warrior. He clearly was a skilled pilot and a good commander who occasionally found himself caught up in the classic politics of military life. His obvious frustrations with the Army's hierarchy aside, Stein rewards us with exciting tales of airborne adventure punctuated by often-hilarious anecdotes from
his long career as a pilot.

In reading Colonel Stein's book, along with those equally well written by Mitchell and Myers, we are reminded just exactly how this nation was victorious in World War II. Simply put, it was because men like these had the courage to volunteer for extremely hazardous duty and to fly directly into the fiery hell of battle.

Read any one of these memoirs and you will find a rare treasure - read all three and you will discover a rich trove of eyewitness history from a time rapidly fading into the twilight.

Thomas E. Alexander
Kerrville, Texas


Former Chief Warrant Officer Harry A. Thompson's recent publication, Patton's Ill-Fated Raid, is a welcome addition to the already substantial body of World War II literature. Thompson, captured early during the Battle of the Bulge, recalls his service in the U.S. Army and his horrific ordeal as a prisoner of war. He recounts General George Patton's botched attempt to rescue American officers, including himself and Colonel John Waters, the General's son-in-law, from a prisoner-of-war camp located deep within German territory. The operation, although initially successful, ultimately failed and is one of the few black marks on Patton's otherwise exemplary record. Thompson and the survivors were recaptured and marched away from the advancing American lines until finally liberated just before the conclusion of the war in Europe.

Thompson's reminiscence is gripping and is a must-read for anybody interested in the history of World War II. It is a valuable eyewitness account, and readers can almost feel the chill of the harsh European winter, the pangs of starvation, and the fear of death from execution or friendly fire. As a bonus, the work features numerous facsimiles of the letters and documents used to reconstruct the author's wartime experience and even includes the message sent to the Thompson family that mistakenly reported his death. Only a few pages are devoted to the raid itself; thus, the title of the book is somewhat misleading since Thompson discusses the brutal treatment he and his peers endured while prisoners of war almost exclusively. Nevertheless, Patton's Ill-Fated Raid is a worthy tribute to the heroism and sacrifices of the soldiers who won World War II.

Jake Bickham
Nacogdoches, Texas
Texas' strength derives from the fact that it is an exceedingly multi-cultural state. To foster and to emphasize that basic fact, the five books comprising the Texans All series were developed by the San Antonio-based Institute of Texan Cultures, edited by Sara R. Massey, and published by Texas A&M University Press. Each book focuses on a particular national group as well as the concomitant ethnic group(s) within the national assemblage that arrived in the Lone Star state. The works supersede "the ethnic pamphlet series" introduced by the Institute over the past thirty plus years.

Readers of all ages will find much to attract them in these books. They are well written and are especially valuable repositories of the lives and history of the peoples who settled in Texas. Each volume incorporates a splendid blend of maps, sketches, and thoughtful sidebars. Each also provides short vignettes of individuals who are important to the history and understanding of that ethnic/national group.

The approach and organization taken by the individual authors varies; to a certain extent each approach and its organization dictated by the national groups the authors studied. Three of the books (Alwyn Barr's The African Texans, James M. Smallwood's The Indian Texans, and Phyllis McKenzie's The Mexican Texans) are organized chronologically, with the respective scholars including the varied ethnic and separate groups within their national focus as they emerged within the chronological timeframe. This has two favorable results: first, that a substantial amount of space and time is spent on the twentieth century, and second that the sections are not broken up into small segments. Marilyn Dell Brady's The Asian Texans and Allan O. Kownslar's The European Texans are organized differently. The Asian Texans covers the nine major Asian regional groups that immigrated to Texas in seven chapters. Each group is introduced in the order in which that group arrived in the Lone Star state. In The European Texans, Kownslar divides the work into four European regions (western, northern, eastern, southern), and then includes each of twenty ethnic/national groups within the appropriate regional chapter. The advantage of this approach is that it is easy to locate where a particular group, the Swedish Texans, for example, can be found in the volume. The disadvantage is that most of the information concerns the nineteenth century.

This is a striking series, worth reading for everyone. Despite that fact, as in any collection, there are those that stand out. Alwyn Barr, the primary scholar of the African American experience in Texas, using the knowledge gained
during an acclaimed career, wrote a superb book. His “Bibliographic Essay” is worth reading just to learn and understand the importance of such endeavors. James M. Smallwood, although stepping outside his usual field, summarized research on Native Americans in Texas exceptionally well. Especially of interest is his focus on Indians in twentieth-century Texas. However, the reader will be well served by any of these volumes, and can learn about the fascinating role of Japanese Texans, Norwegian Texans, Canary Islanders, Tigua Indians, or Black Seminoles, among many, many others.

Bruce A. Glasrud
Seguin, Texas


The argument for reviewing this book for the *East Texas Historical Journal* is that it should have included East Texas, but it doesn’t, and will undoubtedly disappoint any purchaser expecting it to do so. Co-authored by PBS documentarian Juan Williams and the president of the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund, Dwayne Ashley, with a foreword by CBS journalist Ed Bradley, *I’ll Find a Way or Make One* sets out a laudable goal - to fill the historical gap between the extensive writing about African American slavery and the many books covering the civil rights movement and subsequent efforts to end racial bias in the United States. All the royalties from sales of the book will benefit the Thurgood Marshall Fund.

The authors promise to deliver a chronicle of the creation and growth of the black middle class, “the history of education in the African American community, and some of the important events of African Americans and American history.”

This is an impossible task, even in a 450-page book.

Ashley’s and Williams’ premise is correct; without historically black colleges and universities, most privately funded in the days following the Civil War, it would have taken another fifty years to provide even a modicum of higher education for African Americans in southern states. State-funded liberal arts colleges were not established until the 1930s.

Almost from the beginning of black education white people funding it were interested in providing at the most trade schools for the newly-freed men and women. Williams and Ashley document the great battle between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, with Washington supporting the trade-school concept and DuBois arguing for a liberal arts education. Consequently, Washington’s Tuskegee Institute and the agricultural colleges established
under the Morrill Act received the lion’s share of white philanthropy. The others struggled, depending on largely white Northern church organizations and the meager funds African Americans themselves could raise for their continued existence.

That said, the book does not quite deliver on its premise. Given that it is impossible to tell every story of 108 private and publicly funded historically black colleges, there could and should have been a better balance in the history that does emerge. Is it possible that Williams and Ashley did not actually write the entire book, but that it was put together by the staff of the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund, and that they, in turn, depended too much on forms filled out by the current staffs of the extant colleges? If so, many of those charged with completing paperwork apparently do not know their institution’s history.

There were at least fourteen black colleges in East Texas, but they go almost entirely unmentioned, quite common with books on the South, no matter the general subject. One would expect Ashley, who graduated from Marshall’s Wiley College, to include them. He also should have been aware that the Freedman’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, founded more than twenty black colleges, including Wiley and ten others still in existence. However, the efforts of Northern Methodists are entirely left out of a thirteen-page sidebar on the founders of black institutions of higher education. One of them was Wiley College which, at the height of the quality and influence of black colleges in the 1920s and 1930s, ranked academically with Fisk, Morehouse, Dillard, Shaw, and Wilberforce. They all got “A” ratings from the Southern Association the same year. In this book the first five were listed, Wiley was not.

The “Profiles of Historically Black Colleges and Universities,” an appendix, with material undoubtedly submitted by the colleges themselves, is extremely uneven. One of the most outstanding, Atlanta University, is not included. Several make major mistakes when they account for their founding. Some do list their outstanding graduates, some fail altogether.

A definitive book needs to be written about the black colleges of the United States and the valuable contribution they made to the intellectual achievement they made possible. Sadly, this is not it.

Gail K Beil
Marshall, Texas
After the Civil War, many former slaves started the slow slide from freedom to sharecropping. Some freedmen moved out of the South. Others remained but refused to be part of a white-dominated world. They were the founders of freedom colonies, or black communities that arose in the spaces unwanted by white society such as river bottoms and other undesirable locations. Freedom took a lot of hard work, but for many it was worth the cost. East Texas hosted hundreds of freedom colonies.

This well-researched book is the first to tell the story of those settlements and it is the first to use the slave narratives and other sources that allow the settlers' own words to speak for them. Freedom Colonies describes the economic and social conditions that drove the migrations; the conditions the settlers endured and overcame, the institutions they created, and the arrangements with whites that allowed them to survive and in some cases to flourish. The chapters deal with education, work, religion, culture, and other elements of the experience. The authors tell the story of the freedom colonies from the early days to the collapse of most of the settlements to the nostalgic revivals in the twentieth century as former members and their descendants came back to repurchase old homesteads and otherwise reclaim the community.

This work is important because it uses the words of black settlers to tell of previously neglected black settlements. It is fascinating because it provides a story of survival during difficult times.

The authors certainly scoured the state to collect everything they could. Through extensive effort they brought the scattered fragments together to create the portrait of a largely lost and ignored aspect of African American history. The result is a well-written and interesting history.

John H. Barnhill
Houston, Texas

The First Waco Horror is the second book by Patricia Bernstein who has also published articles in a number of magazines such as Texas Monthly. This book details the brutal lynching of Jessie Washington – a seventeen-year-old African American – in 1916. Tens of thousands of residents from Waco and
surrounding areas looked on as the lynching took place.

According to Bernstein, the lynching, which W.E.B. Dubois dubbed the "The Waco Horror," was important for two reasons. Firstly, it caused a massive outcry from whites all over the country. Southerners (including Texans), as well as New Yorkers, vented their disgust over the tragedy, which placed pressure on the law-abiding residents of Waco. Many Waco residents condemned the lynching without expressing sympathy for the victim. Most of them had hoped that this horrific event would disappear quickly from the American memory. This leads into Bernstein's second and more important assertion, which is that the Waco Horror jumpstarted the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (NAACP) rise to prominence.

Lynchings had plagued America (particularly the South) since the post-Reconstruction era and continued to be a problem into the 1930s. Moreover, the Waco Horror was neither the first nor the last lynching to take place in Waco. What made this lynching so important and so different from all the previous lynchings was that the NAACP was able to get an investigator, Elizabeth Freeman, to the scene of the crime quickly. The organization had not been able to do so with previous lynchings. The investigator received fresh leads on the participants of the lynching as well as details of the lynching itself. With the particulars of the lynching in hand, the NAACP succeeded in prolonging its memory, which applied additional pressure on the beleaguered residents of Waco.

While The First Waco Horror is not without shortcomings, such as some lack of objectivity, organization, and focus, it is nonetheless well researched and well written. Bernstein relies heavily on local newspapers, letters, interviews, and NAACP organization papers. She also had access to a significant number of photographs including explicit photographs of the Waco Horror's aftermath.

Dino Bryant
Texas Tech University


Remembers of Mose presents the life of Mose Stimpson, the great-great grandfather of the author, Edward "Sarge" Stimpson, Jr. It represents the collective stories and genealogical information available about Mose. This heartfelt biography contains valuable information for families, historians, and genealogists.

Remembers of Mose typifies the traditional family history. Stimpson tells how he found the information about Mose, then tells his story. He contacted a
direct descendent of Rachel Bellzora Stimpson. Rachel Bellzora received the slave child Mose as a birthday present from her father, Isaac Stimpson. Stimpson saw the family Bible listing Mose and his birth date in April 1830. Several sources revealed that, although a slave, Mose was truly a part of the Stimpson family. After the Civil War, Mose assumed the family name and received support from them to start his own farm as a free man. Mose Stimpson raised a family of his own and became a successful farmer in the Plano, Texas, area. He continued to be a part of the Stimpson family through out his life.

*Remembers of Mose* contains several valuable points. It is a wonderful contribution to genealogy and family history. Stimpson includes several family stories and family trees of the white and black Stimpson family. The book also offers an interesting perspective of slaves and freedmen’s lives.

*Remembers of Mose* is a biography with an added touch of heart and soul from a loving grandson. It shows the importance of family ties and offers valuable insight into slave life in Northeast Texas.

Samantha Kirkley
Tyler, Texas


Billy Joe Shaver’s autobiography is written in the same style of raw eloquence that makes him one of country music’s most distinctive songwriters. He startles and hooks the reader from the opening sentence: “I was not even born yet when my father tried to kill me” (p. vii). This refers to the drunken, vicious beating his dad gave his mother two months before Billy Joe’s birth in Corsicana, an assault that predictably broke up the family and forecast many misfortunes to follow. Billy Joe describes a wild and crazy childhood in the home of his grandmother, highlights of which were attending the Church of the Nazarene and sneaking off one night to see Hank Williams. Just out of the Navy, he met the love of his life, Brenda Tindell, whom he would soon marry for the first of three times. Working in his father-in-law’s sawmill, Billy cut off parts of three fingers of his right hand. During his recovery, he pledged to turn his life around and devote himself to songwriting.

Soon thereafter, Billy Joe went to Nashville, where he worked for Bobby Bare and got his first LP produced by Kris Kristofferson. His huge break came when Waylon Jennings recorded ten of his songs on his classic “outlaw” album, *Honky Tonk Heroes*, in 1973. This jumpstarted Billy Joe’s recording and performing career. That career got its second wind early in the 1990s when Eddy Shaver became his dad’s guitarist. More indebted to Jimi Hendrix and Duane Allman than to any of his dad’s country idols, Eddy brought a harder
edge to Billy Joe’s recordings. Eddy died of a drug overdose and an apparent beating on New Year’s Eve, 1999, a few months after the death of his mother. Somehow, Billy Joe persevered, bolstered by his songs and his deep Christian faith.

Like Bob Dylan’s recent *Chronicles*, this songwriter’s story is brilliantly written. It would be impossible to find a more authentic, compelling Texas voice than Billy Joe Shaver’s.

Stephen K. Davis
Kingwood College