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Review of The Southern Journey of a Civil War Marine: The Illustrated Note-book of Henry O. Gusley

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The Southern Journey of a Civil War Marine: The Illustrated Note-book of Henry O. Gusley. Edited and annotated by Edward T. Cotham Jr. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006. Pp. 224. Acknowledgments, illustrations, notes, index. ISBN 0292712839. \$24.95, cloth.)

Henry O. Gusley was a Union enlisted man who kept a diary of his experiences as part of the Marine contingent on board the steamships USS *Westfield* and USS *Clifton* from May 1862 through September 1863. His notebook fell into Confederate hands when Gusley and hundreds of others surrendered after the humiliating Federal defeat at Sabine Pass. The *Galveston Tri-Weekly News* began printing passages from Gusley's diary in serial form, and these entries became popular reading among Confederate Texans. Ironically, Gusley himself wrote to the paper from Camp Groce, the Confederate prison camp near Hempstead, to request copies of his diary.

Gusley served in the West Gulf Blockading Squadron during the period covered by his diary. He and his shipmates saw action in some of the most important campaigns of the war, including the New Orleans and Vicksburg Campaigns. Most useful for Texas historians, he also witnessed the 1862 capture of Galveston; the recapture of that city on New Year's Day 1863; coastal operations in Matagorda Bay; and the battle of Sabine Pass.

Edward T. Cotham Jr., the author of previous books on the battles of Galveston and Sabine Pass, has done an excellent job of editing Gusley's diary while also adding contemporary photographs, sketches, and engravings. The most revealing of these illustrations are the sketches of Daniel D. T. Nestell, the surgeon on the USS *Clifton*. Nestell, who also ended up at Camp Groce, recorded his impressions of the war through sketches that convey life in the Union Navy, the appearance of the squadron's ships, and some of the operations on inland waters of the Louisiana and Texas coasts. The editor has interspersed Nestell's artwork with other illustrations to give the reader a visual impression of events as Gusley relates them in his diary. Cotham also provides useful information on the role of the Marine Corps in the Civil War, the types of ships and armament the blockading squadron used, and day-to-day details of shipboard life.

The most fascinating aspect of the diary is how the reader can see Gusley interpreting events as they took place. For example, the chapter on the capture of Galveston shows that Texas's most important city fell to the Union with almost no opposition. This outcome helps explain the overconfidence that ultimately led to Galveston's dramatic recapture. In his commentary on Galveston Bay, Gusley also bemoans the hordes of mosquitoes that made life miserable on ship, something with which modern residents of the area can easily sympathize.

The diary's descriptions of operations along the Texas coast also show that not all Texans supported the Confederacy. Many Galveston residents proclaimed Union sympathies, while Gusley notes that the citizens of Indianola and Port Lavaca remained pro-Confederate. These observations serve as reminders from an outside perspective that secession and the war bitterly divided some Texans.

Gusley's last entries cover the humiliating Union defeat at Sabine Pass. He points out that the commanders of the Federal invasion fleet predicted that the assault on the pass and subsequent incursion into southeast Texas would constitute

an easy operation. Much like the recapture of Galveston, Union overconfidence and fierce Confederate resistance led to the loss of two gunboats and hundreds of Union sailors, soldiers, and marines.

Anyone interested in Civil War Texas should read *The Southern Journey of a Civil War Marine*. Edward T. Cotham Jr. has expertly edited and commented on the diary of a Marine who might otherwise have remained anonymous. The combination of Gusley's notebook and Doctor Nestell's sketches provides readers with a visually appealing and fascinating account of the Civil War along the Gulf Coast.

The University of Texas—Pan American

CHARLES V. WAITE

The Mason County "Hoo Doo" War, 1874–1902. By David Johnson. (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2006. Pp. 352. Acknowledgments, illustrations, appendices, notes, selected bibliography, index. ISBN 1574412043. \$27.95, cloth.)

David Johnson, an independent scholar and author of *The Mason County "Hoo Doo" War, 1874–1902*, details a long-running feud that wracked the Texas Hill Country. The feud, which began during the years following Reconstruction, did not conclude until the first decade of the twentieth century. The author argues that local conditions that were particular to the Hill Country and to Mason County precipitated the conflict.

Ethnic envy and rivalry factored heavily into the origins of the "Hoo Doo" War. German immigrants, who had moved into the region during the 1840s and 1850s, generated a great deal of jealousy among Anglo settlers. The German residents of Mason County tended to be more educated and possessed much of the county's farm and ranch land. These Germans came to dominate not only the economic life of Mason County but also its political leadership. Old rivalries only magnified as Texas struggled to recover in the wake of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Texas escaped the plight of invading Union armies during the Civil War. However, the state was plagued by economic dislocations that were endemic across the South during and after Reconstruction. A lack of cash and capital plagued the entire region. The cattle that roamed the open range of central Texas represented untapped economic opportunity for many residents of the state. Nevertheless, it was not until the 1870s when rail lines reached Sedalia, Missouri, and Abilene, Kansas, that Texans would realize the profit potential offered by the central Texas cattle herds. Control of the open range and its herds would offer the spark for old rivalries to burst into open and vicious conflict between the German and Anglo residents of Mason County.

The theft of cattle and control of the range became central themes during the mid-1870s in Mason County. Local authorities and courts weakened by Reconstruction seemed unwilling to bring an end to cattle rustling or to bring order to the county. In addition, state authorities seemed slow to react to requests from local residents to send Texas Rangers to the area to restore peace. Resident stockmen, who were usually German immigrants or of German descent, began to take the law into their own hands. Mob rule or vigilante justice became the key issue in