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**Review of *The Texas Military Experience: From the Texas Revolution through World War II* Edited by Joseph Dawson III**

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*The Texas Military Experience: From the Texas Revolution through World War II.* Edited by Joseph Dawson III. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1995. Photographs, notes, index. x + 248 pp. \$29.50.

*The Texas Military Experience* is primarily a compilation of papers read at a symposium sponsored by the Military Studies Institute at Texas A & M. The quality and scope of the essays, needless to say, vary greatly. Several, such as Paul Hutton's "The Alamo as Icon," Thomas W. Cutrer's piece on Ben McCullough, and especially Joseph C. Porter's meticulously researched study of Captain John G. Bourke's tour of duty on the Rio Grande, are especially well written and thought provoking. Hutton's sardonic but gentle dissection of the defenders of Alamo mythology alone would make the book worthwhile for most Texas expatriates.

Some of the offerings are disappointingly broad in scope. The essays by William H. Leckie and the late Sandra L. Myres on the buffalo soldiers and officers' wives respectively are well done, to be sure, but may seem somewhat redundant to the many readers already familiar with their work. World War II essays by Roger J. Spiller on Audie Murphy and Martin Blumenson on the 36th Infantry Division are both interesting and informative, though one wishes that Blumenson's work especially had reflected more adequately the amount of research he has obviously done on the 36th Division.

The most disappointing entry, unfortunately, concerns the topic with the greatest potential interest. In an article uniquely entitled "Texas in the Southern War for Independence," Ralph A. Wooster uses a shotgun approach that sacrifices depth for comprehensiveness. The result is a pedestrian overview resembling what one would expect to find in any standard Texas History survey.

An introduction by Joseph Dawson and an epilogue by Roger Beaumont tie the discordant themes of the anthology together in as professional and logical a manner as possible.

A reader might do well to read both *before* turning to the essays themselves. Despite the inevitable variations in quality, *The Texas Military Experience* seems above average when compared with most compilations of symposium papers.

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