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Mounted Warfare Tradition in Frontier Texas, 1822-1865

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August 2020

ABSTRACT

This thesis demonstrates that Nathan A. Jennings has published a coherent and original body of research that meets the standards for the Ph.D. by published works at the University of Kent.

Consisting of a peer-reviewed book and six peer-reviewed articles, the selected works explore how Anglo-Texans, as intervening settlers in a competitive military environment along the North American Great Plains during the early 19th century, adapted tactically and strategically as they developed a distinctive mounted warfare tradition over a forty year period. In order to enrich the analysis, the study incorporates aspects of regional influences, ethnic competition, environmental impacts, political and economic affairs, technological developments, disease and attrition factors, 19th century military theory, and concepts of masculinity and nationalism. Drawing on expansive primary and secondary source research, it employs way of war theory to integrate findings into a coherent narrative that explains the tensions and evolutions of the Texas military experience.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to express my deepest appreciation to Dr. Timothy Bowman and Dr. Mario Draper for their excellent mentorship throughout my doctoral journey with the University of Kent. Despite occurring against the backdrop of a global pandemic, they provided expert knowledge and wise guidance as we navigated the unorthodox nature of the Ph.D. by published works process. This proved a highly rewarding experience that will enable me to serve as a better teacher, researcher, and mentor in future academic endeavors.

Secondly, I would like to thank the School of History for endorsing my candidacy and providing this amazing opportunity to grow and learn as a military historian. I am truly indebted to Dr. Juliette Pattinson, Ms. Faye Beasley, and the department staff for their assistance in guiding me through the doctoral process.

Finally, I would thank my wonderful wife and children for their tireless support throughout a long and unpredictable academic journey that led me to study at the University of Kent. Despite career commitments that demanded long absences and frequent solitude, they have provided a bottomless well of love and support that made the creation of this thesis possible. They are the light of my life and make all the difficult times worth the effort.

SELECTED WORKS

Riding for the Lone Star: Frontier Cavalry and the Texas Way of War, 1821-1865. Denton: University of North Texas Press. February, 2016.

"Riding into Controversy: A Study in Contrasting Views of the Texas Rangers." *Journal of the West* 52, No. 2 (Spring 2013): 42-52.

"Ranging the Tejas Frontier: A Reinterpretation of the Tactical Origins of the Texas Rangers." *The Journal of South Texas* Vol 27, No. 2 (Fall 2014): 72-91.

"Texas Ranger Auxiliaries: Double-Edged Sword of the Campaign for Northern Mexico, 1846-1848." *Small Wars and Insurgencies* Vol. 26, No. 2 (Fall 2014): 313-334.

"Federalized Texas Rangers: Counter-guerrilla Cavalry of the 1847 Mexico City Campaign." *Mexican War Journal* Vol 23, No. 1 (Spring 2014): 30-55.

"Fourth Front of the Mexican War: The Texas-Comanche Frontier." <u>Mexican War Journal</u> Vol 24, No. 1 (Spring 2015): 23-32.

"Riding for Rebellion: A Study of Cavalry Culture and Mobilization in Civil War Texas." *Military History of the West* 43 (Fall 2014): 28-53.

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CHAPTER ONE Introduction to Selected Works

The University of Kent maintains an innovative Doctor of Philosophy programme that recognizes the value of previously published scholarly achievements. According to the university's academic regulation, its Ph.D. by published works is "intended for candidates who have developed their research skills to the doctoral level and published extensively during the course of their careers inside or outside academia." Given this high standard, this monograph argues that candidate Nathan Jennings, an American student who studies 19th century Texas military history, has met the full requirement for Ph.D. by published works by developing a coherent, timely, and methodologically sound body of research. Consisting of a peer-reviewed book and six peer-reviewed articles, the proposed selection of works for the degree represents an original and validated contribution to the field of academic history.

The primary objective of the submitted body of research is to understand how Anglo-Texans, as intervening settlers in a competitive military environment along the Great Plains frontier during the early 19th century, adapted tactically and strategically as they developed an aggressive martial culture over a forty year period. In order to both complicate and enrich the analysis, it incorporates study of regional influences, ethnic enmities, environmental impacts, political and economic affairs, technological developments, disease and attrition factors, 19th century military theory, and concepts of frontier masculinity and nationalism. As argued by Dr. Robert Wooster, a leading Texas military history professor at Texas A&M University, during his review of the book, "This represents an important and highly original contribution to Texas and military history....I applaud the author's ambition and creative thinking."²

For purposes of the Ph.D. by published works, the proposed selection of peer-reviewed works comprises a unified body of research that aligns both analytically and thematically. While the university press book, at 402 pages with illustrations and descriptive endnotes, serves as the core of the selection, each of the scholarly articles expand upon critical aspects of the early Texas military experience to create more than 500 pages of original, coherent, timely, and primary source-based research.³ More importantly, professors in the field of Texas history screened and validated each of the works through a rigorous peer-review process prior to publication. This has led to a compilation of published findings that provides mutually-complimentary analysis of context, causality, and outcomes in relation to Texas military history.

The book, as the largest study of the selection, is entitled *Riding for the Lone Star:*Frontier Cavalry and the Texas Way of War, 1822-1865.⁴ Published by the University of North Texas Press in 2016, it explores how Anglo-Texan settlers blended American, Mexican, and Plains Indian warfare practices to create a hybrid military tradition that centred on armed horsemanship, volunteer militancy, and event-specific mobilization. Incorporating aspects of way of war theory to analyse four decades of military evolution, it provides an original body of research that analyses how Texans adapted to combat both nation-state opponents and tribal raiders across expansive frontiers.⁵ The analysis further emphasises how the para-military Texas Rangers, rising as the masculine, ethnic, and nationalistic ideal for Texan settler communities, came to personify the larger tradition with outsized cultural imprint.

The University of Texas's robust United States and Latin American archival centres, along with museums, government centres, and other university holdings, provided a rich platform to enable the creation of the book. While Dr. H.W. Brands of the University of Texas advised the research and writing of the manuscript, Dr. Joseph Dawson, Texas A&M University

emeritus, provided a critical review that prepared it for pre-publication screening by the UNT Press editor and rigorous 'blind' reviews by respected Texas history professors. Following publication, multiple academic journals published favorable reviews of the book and noted its originality. As assessed by Dr. Gerald D. Saxon in the prestigious *Journal of Military History*, "this is not just another history of the Texas Rangers or frontier military engagements, but rather a broader analysis of how Texas military traditions emerged and shaped these traditions."

The first article included in the selection is entitled, "Riding into Controversy: A Study in Contrasting Views of the Texas Rangers." Published by the *Journal of the West*, which is peer-reviewed and edited by faculty at Walden University, the essay contrasts the competing historiographies and narratives of the Texas military tradition's most iconic manifestation: the Texas Rangers. Examining the evolution of literature concerning the famed order, the analysis reveals diverging perspectives on their controversial record. While traditionalists emphasise the Texas Rangers' "white hat" role in bringing law and stability to troubled frontiers, others criticize the "Texas Devils" as brigands who terrorized Hispanic and Native American minorities. The article finally explores how authors have continued to write Texas Ranger works that seek to capture the reality, romanticism, and horror that defined 19th century frontier Texas.

The second article is entitled, "Ranging the *Tejas* Frontier: A Reinterpretation of the Tactical Origins of the Texas Rangers," and focuses on military developments in colonial Texas. Published by Texas A&M University's *Journal of South Texas*, the essay employs primary source research to argue that the accurate origins of the Texas Rangers can be found during the Anglo-Texan colonization period under Mexican rule, rather than during the later eras of the Texas Republic or American and Confederate statehoods. It analyses, in minute detail, the progression of engagements between Anglo-Texan militia and proximate Indian tribes in order to

understand how the colonists incrementally adopted mobile tactics and as they engaged indigenous cavalry. This precarious beginning established the mounted warfare tradition that would inform how Texan society prosecuted wars against both tribal and nation-state opponents.

The third article, entitled "Texas Ranger Auxiliaries: Double-Edged Sword of the Campaign for Northern Mexico, 1846-1848," was published in 2014 by an interdisciplinary Rutledge journal called *Small Wars and Insurgencies*. It describes how Texan volunteers served as controversial volunteer cavalry with the U.S. Army in the Mexican-American War. The analysis finds that the Texans, wielding newly invented Colt revolvers, provided effective reconnaissance for the invading American army as it fought into Northern Mexico to occupy the city of Monterrey in 1846. However, the research also reveals that the undisciplined horsemen undermined the subsequent U.S. pacification plan by committing atrocities against Mexican civilians. It concludes that the Texans proved tactically valuable to the U.S. Army during the initial invasion, but became an untenable liability during occupation duty.

The fourth article offers another Mexican-American War study, this time published by the *Mexican War Journal*, which is edited by professors from the Universities of Texas at Arlington and Brownsville. Entitled "Federalized Texas Rangers: Counterguerrilla Cavalry of the 1847 Mexico City Campaign," the essay explores how, similar to earlier contributions in Northern Mexico, Texan volunteers again supported the U.S. Army during the invasion and occupation of Central Mexico in 1847. While the research again found that the Texans proved tactically valuable at locating, and defeating elusive Mexican resistance forces which preyed upon the U.S. Army's lines of communication, it also revealed that their repeated atrocities against Mexican civilians threatened to destabilize General Winfield Scott's pacification plan.

The fifth article is entitled, "Fourth Front of the Mexican War: The Texas-Comanche Frontier," and delves into a largely ignored, yet important, aspect of the war between the United States and Mexico. 11 Also published in the *Mexican War Journal*, which remains the only scholarly journal devoted solely to that conflict, the article explores how the newly annexed State of Texas deployed volunteer mounted regiments with federal funding to guard its vulnerable northwest Indian Frontier during the conflict as U.S. Army regulars abandoned their forts and moved south to fight the Mexican Army. Throughout the war, the state government relied upon its mounted warfare tradition that emulated previous Spanish adaptation as it sought to counter unpredictable indigenous raiders and protect the exposed line of Anglo settlements.

The final article selection centres on Texan involvement in the American Civil War.¹² Entitled "Riding for Rebellion: A Study of Cavalry Culture and Mobilization in Civil War Texas," and published in the University of North Texas's peer-reviewed journal, *Military History of the West*, the article provides original research on how the Confederate State of Texas mobilized more mounted soldiers to fight than any other state, North or South, due to its ingrained predilection for nationalistic cavalry service. It concludes that the massive mobilization aided the South's war effort from New Mexico to Georgia, but ultimately exceeded the state's war-making capacity and led to political, social, and economic ruin.

The combined focus of these works thus provides a coherent body of research that explores how Anglo-Texan society developed a distinctive mounted warfare tradition as it adapted to the Great Plains political-military environment and encountered diverse and existential threats between 1822 and 1865. Seeking to advance understanding of how culture informs war-making, the selection of works explore how Texans evolved tactically and strategically as their nascent polity transitioned from a discontented Mexican colony to an

embattled frontier republic and throughout violent American and Confederate statehoods.¹⁴ This includes strategic-level investigation of how they attempted, and often failed, to negotiate tensions between arming for nation-state conflict and seemingly endless tribal warfare.

The proposed selection of works arrives as an original contribution not only to the field of Texas history, but overlaps with broader American, Mexican, and indigenous historical themes. While the book employs way of war theory to contextualize four decades of continuous Texan development, it also include broader analysis of ethnic, cultural, political, economic, technological, and geographic factors that shaped outcomes. As noted by Dr. William Yancey of Texas A&M University, who reviewed *Riding for the Lone Star* for the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, the work "is a military history, but it goes beyond traditional accounts of frontier conflict by placing the Texas military tradition in a broader framework." The professor then concluded that, "In tracing these developments, Jennings has done an admirable job in placing them within societal contexts as well as tactical and strategical concerns." ¹⁵

In summary, this introduction argues that the selection of work submitted meets the University of Kent's high standards for the Ph.D. by published works. Based upon a peer-reviewed book of dissertation quality and six peer-reviewed articles that expand salient points of analyses, it comprises an original, timely, and methodologically sound publication record that adds distinctive value to the field academic history. Taking the argument further, multiple experts in the field of Texas history have validated the originality and quality of the research in both pre-publication processes and in prestigious journals following publication. The next chapters of this monograph will build upon this argument by describing its contributions within the relevant historiography, detailing the methodology and theory behind the study, and concluding with an explanation of findings and conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO Historiography and Originality

The proposed body of research centres on Texas military history while integrating a variety of historiographical fields and themes to inform analysis. Because it weaves an analytical narrative that evolves across four decades of near-continuous frontier warfare between Texans and territorial competitors at the nexus of converging American, Mexican, and Indian influences, the selection of works span a constellation of Texas Ranger, Texas military, Texas state, Confederate, U.S. frontier, American South, Spanish Empire, Mexican frontier, Tejano, African-American, and tribal histories that intersect with more discreet studies on the Texas Revolution, Texas Republic, Mexican-American War, the American Civil War, and numerous Amerindian Wars. Additional germane topics include technology and war, Jacksonian populism, frontier economies, 19th century military theory, and social considerations of race, class, and gender.

The first and most applicable field that aligns with this body of research is that of the famed Texas Rangers. A century of Frontier Defense. This work defined the violent horsemen as, "maintaining law, restoring order, and promoting peace—even though his methods be vigorous." to that of the famed Texas Rangers are seen as a "white hat" force that brought stability that allowed Anglo-American settlements to flourish north of the Rio Grande during the early-mid 19th century.

Webb's work provided the foundation for a succession of publications that remained favorable, or at least not predominantly critical, of the Texas Rangers over the next half-century. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, historians Frederick Wilkins, Robert Utley, and Michael Cox published multi-volume series on the order that provided greater detail and additional research. Cox's work, *The Texas Rangers: Wearing the Cinco Peso, 1821-1900*, in particular, offered additional information by delving into archival records. However, while these works discarded Webb's racist connotations and acknowledged Texan brutality towards Hispanics, African-Americans, and Indians, they remained generally favorable in tone as they caste the frontier horsemen as a necessary factor in Texan political and social development.

This traditionalist approach has catalyzed a variety of biographies about early Texas Rangers who became cultural icons. Beginning with the definitive study of the most important Texas Ranger of the era, John Coffee Hays, historian James Greer republished, *Texas Ranger: Jack Hays in the Frontier Southwest*, in 1993 to explain the impact of his leadership on the Texas frontier. Since then, as other figures gained historical interest, Richard McCaslin authored *Fighting Stock: John S. "Rip" Ford of Texas*, and Jimmy Bryan more recently published, *More Zeal than Discretion: The Westward Adventures of Walter P. Lane*, to illuminate other stories. Thomas Cutrer's insightful biographical study, *Ben McCulloch and the Frontier Military Tradition*, likewise allowed greater insight into the rise of the western frontier ethos. 22

These histories, generally arriving from an Anglo-American perspective, did not go unchallenged by other historians. In 1979, in response to Webb's book and on behalf of Tejano borderland perspectives, noted scholar Julian Samora published a counter-argument to the traditionalist narrative. His seminal work, *Gunpowder Justice: A Reassessment of the Texas Rangers*, sought to comprehensively "reexamine the history, role, and purpose of the Texas

Ranger as a law enforcement officer."²³ Emphasising how Texas Rangers intimidated and disenfranchised Tejanos from ancestral lands in South Texas, he established the overtly critical "Texas Devil" tradition. Historian Michael Collins later expanded this approach with his study, *Texas Devils: Rangers and Regular son the Rio Grande, 1846-1861*, where he criticized the "Anglo-Texan creation myth" and labeled the Texas Rangers as "the Devil's horsemen."²⁴

The proposed selection of works navigates this contest over history and memory by following the historical evidence to unvarnished military conclusions. In the book, *Riding for the Lone Star*, the research identifies the horsemen as the "iconic manifestation of their society's way of war in form, concept, and perception" while also noting how they led a "dynamic tradition that earned publicity for extreme lethality and brutality." Seeking to neither endorse nor castigate the Texas Rangers, it refrains from adopting sympathies that ascribe "moralistic blame" while accurately documenting achievements and atrocities committed by the order. Instead, in accordance with the study's stated scope of work, it analyses how martial culture impacted tactical and strategic outcomes within the ethnically defined spaces of the Great Plains.²⁵

In keeping with the discipline of a military focus, the most original contribution of the body of research to Texas Ranger history is the placing of the genesis and growth of the institution within a much larger and more diverse military tradition. The analysis emphasises how Texas Rangers that fought prior to the American Civil War were exclusively military in identity and purpose, as opposed to popular perception of them serving as frontier constabularies. It describes how the early Texas Rangers emerged as just one of many manifestations of a frontier tradition that included professional soldiers, local militia, national militia, minute men, mounted rifles, Confederate soldiers, and advanced scouts. This context

consequently expands the history beyond the Texas Rangers while retaining them as the masculine and nationalistic ideal for the frontier ethos.

Discreet works that focus on specific border conflicts offer a second historiographical area that intersects heavily with the selected works. Because Texans fought throughout the 19th century both within and outside of Texas, they feature prominently in a litany of campaigns that ranged from New Mexico to Georgia and from Oklahoma to Mexico City. This has led to a proliferation of studies that delve into how and why Texans fought diverse enemies that included plains and woodland Indian forces, the Mexican Army, the Union Army, partisan groups, and criminal brigands. Each of these adversaries posed different tactical and strategic problems, and consequently required Texans to simultaneously grapple with both conventional and irregular enemies on divergent geographic fronts.

One group of conflict studies that involved Texan soldiers includes the Texas Revolution, the Wars of the Texas Republic, and the Mexican-American War—all conflicts where Texas fought Mexico for control of borderland territories. While Stephen Moore's, *Eighteen Minutes:* the Battle of San Jacinto and the Texan Independence Campaign, and Stephen Hardin's Texian Iliad: A Military History of the Texas Revolution, 1835-1836, offer definitive works on how the Texans won independence, Moore's Savage Frontier series likewise provides detailed research on how the Texas Republic and Mexico spent a decade fighting over territories in the Rio Grande Valley. For Texas's role in the Mexican-American War, Frederick Wilkins's, The Highly Irregular Irregulars: Texas Rangers in the Mexican War, explores how federalized Texas Mounted Volunteers supported the U.S. Army in the Rio Grande and Mexico City campaigns. ²⁸

The numerous Indian Wars of Texas comprise a second conflict group that has received considerable academic attention. From a highly critical perspective, Gary Anderson's, *The*

Conquest of Texas: Ethnic Cleansing in the Promised Land, 1820-1875, provides an exhaustively researched study on how Texans reduced, destroyed, or expelled adversary tribes between colonization and final pacification of the Great Plains frontier in the 1870s. For a Texan perspective, Moore's Savage Frontiers series again narrates how the Texas Republic grappled with powerful tribes like the Cherokee and the Comanche while partnering with others such as the Lipan Apache and Tonkowa as they adapted to the Great Plains raiding-trading economy.²⁹

A third, and much more prominent, area of conflict study centres on the experience of Texans in the most destructive event in U.S. history: the American Civil War. While David Smith's, Frontier Defense in the Civil War: Texas Rangers and Rebels, describes Texan attempts to defend their exposed northwest frontier, Jeffery Murrah's, None but Texians: A History of Terry's Texas Rangers, provides an example of the dozens of Texas Cavalry regiments that fought the Union Army from Oklahoma to Georgia. Donald Frazier's, Blood and Treasure: Confederate Empire in the Southwest, likewise describes the failed Texan invasion of New Mexico. Texas and Texans in the Civil War and Charles Grear's Why Texans Fought in the Civil War offer broader studies that delve into wartime politics, economics, and culture.

While these studies provide detailed analysis of specific events or themes, *Riding for the Lone Star* is currently the only work that incorporates over forty years of Texan martial culture, tactical events, and military strategies into a single military tradition. While many works explain aspects of Texas military history, it is the first work to comprehensively explore how Texans organized, equipped, mobilized, fought, and demobilized during times of conflict from colonization to the American Civil War. This includes analysis of scores of battles and dozens of campaigns along divergent fronts against diverse adversaries such as Karankawa cannibals,

Waco warriors, Comanche horsemen, Cherokee fighters, Mexican Lancers, and Union soldiers in order to develop a deeper understanding of how Texans struggled to counter emergent, and often existential, threats in a chaotic and competitive frontier landscape.

Taking the originality of the selected works further, the research has pioneered a new approach to assess Texas history within a theoretical framework that places a distinctive embrace of cavalry functions at the centre of early Texas militancy. As explained by Dr. Alexander Mendoza, a professor of Texas history at the University of North Texas, in his review for the *Civil War Book Review*, "Jennings has done an admirable service to historians of Texas and the Western Frontier... He has written a comprehensive study of Texas cavalry operations in the Lone Star from the colonial period to the Civil War era." The professor then contextualized the contribution: "acknowledging the differences of fighting for various governments, as well as in numerous voluntary forces during this time period, it is important to note the wide breadth and scope of this project." 33

A third area of relevant historiography focuses on how the body of research overlaps with larger United States, Mexican, and Native American political-military themes. Because the evolution of Texas as an international actor so deeply and caustically intersected with the affairs of the surrounding North American societies, its controversial record ensures a vibrant confluence of complicated histories. While this is especially true during the years when Texas fought as an independent republic from 1836 to 1845, it remained relevant during the Mexican colonial era and in later periods of American and Confederate statehoods when Texas, as a subordinate political entity, occasionally executed its own divergent military policies in order to prosecute territorial, economic, and political agendas.³⁴

Beginning with histories of the United States, Texas features prominently in nearly any 19th century study that includes manifest destiny and frontier expansion. From a military perspective, Robert Utley's foundational, *Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848-1865*, and Robert Wooster's well-researched, *American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783–1900*, remain among the most important works that incorporates Texas into America's long struggle to conquer and pacify the western territories. For a more accessible study, H.W. Brands's recent work, *Dreams of El Dorado: A History of the American West*, integrates the explosion of the Texas Revolution and the Texas Indian Wars into the larger tapestry of westward American settlement that created a continental empire. ³⁶

Looking to influences from the south, the turbulent history of Texas as a former Mexican colony and border competitor also features strongly in Spanish and Mexican histories. While David Weber's seminal work, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, establishes the imperial context for the initial Anglo-Texan colonial experience on the frontier of New Spain, Andrés Tijerina's well-researched, *Tejanos and Texas under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836*, explores the volatile period of Mexico City's tenuous rule over Tejas that immediately preceded the Texas Revolution.³⁷ William De Palo's detailed study, *The Mexican National Army, 1822-1852*, further describes how the Mexican Army, as a conflicted institution, evolved over four decades as it fought rebels, Indians, Texans, and Americans for control of coveted northern provinces.³⁸

A third, and equally important, historical genre that remains inextricably linked to Texas history is that of the Native American tribes which Texans both allied with and fought against. Among the many works that detail the Indian Wars that scarred the Great Plains, W.W. Newcomb's dated, *The Indians of Texas*, and Foster Smith's more recent, *From Dominance to Disappearance: The Indians of Texas and the Near Southwest, 1786–1859*, provide excellent

studies on the warlike tribes that grappled, ultimately unsuccessfully, with the intrusion of Anglo settlements into their raiding, trading, and hunting economy.³⁹ For a compelling account of the Texans' most implacable foe, Pekka Hamalainen's noted work, *The Comanche Empire*, explains how the most powerful North American tribe stymied the expansion of Spanish and then American settlements into the vast reaches of the Southern Great Plains until the mid-1870s.⁴⁰

The intersection of the research with these three historical themes, comprising United States westward expansion, Spanish and Mexican frontiers, and Native American territorial contests, reveals one of the most original aspects of the work. It finds the study integrating and analyzing, with a new degree of detail based upon primary source research, how those societies' political, military, and economic interactions shaped Texas's destiny. As argued by Charles Grear in his review of *Riding for the Lone Star* for the *Western Historical Quarterly*, "Nathan Jennings finally and definitely answers some of our basic understandings of early Texas military history...Jennings does an excellent job putting the rich military history of Texas into the perspective of New Spain, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, and the United States."

The Texas military experience further overlaps with another significant area of scholarship: the intrinsic influences of race, gender, and class in the antebellum American South. Concerning tensions over race in 19th century Texas, David Montejano's foundational, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas*, 1836-1986, and Jesus de la Teja's, *Faces of Bexar: Early San Antonio & Texas*, explain the evolution of Anglo-Tejano relations in South Texas. ⁴² Sean Kelly's, *Los Brazos de Dios: A Plantation Society in the Texas Borderlands, 1821-1865*, and Andrew Torget's, *Seeds of Empire: Cotton, Slavery, and the Transformations of the Texas Borderlands, 1800-1850*, likewise describe the role of African slavery in Southern plantation culture in East Texas. ⁴³ Other studies, such as *Monuments to Absence: Cherokee Removal and*

the Contest Over Southern Memory, by Andrew Denson, explore how Anglo-Americans conceptualized and justified the marginalization and destruction of indigenous peoples.⁴⁴

Texan perceptions of gender roles common to Southern society also informed how and why they engaged in armed conflict. While Bertram Wyatt-Brown's, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*, and Dickson Bruce's, *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*, describe regional patriarchal cultures that informed Texan perceptions of masculinity, other works, such as Deborah Liles edited volume, *Women in Civil War Texas: Diversity and Dissidence in the Trans-Mississippi*, and Angela Bosewell's more recent study, *Women in Texas History*, explore how Texan women negotiated sexual, economic, and racial challenges in political systems dominated by white men. ⁴⁵ Mark Carroll's foundational study, *Homesteads Ungovernable: Familes, Sex, Race, and the Law in Frontier Texas, 1823-1860*, likewise analyses how Texan social and legal practices and norms evolved in the turbulent frontier setting. ⁴⁶

Distinctions in class stratification likewise influenced the Texan military experience.

Concerning the robust plantation economy that developed in East Texas, works such as Roger Kennedy's, *Cotton and Conquest: how the Plantation System Acquired Texas*, describe economic hierarchies that informed wartime mobilization. ⁴⁷ Jack Jackson's, *Los Mestenos:*Spanish Ranching in Texas, 1721-1821, and James Wilson's, *Hide & Horn in Texas: The Spread of Cattle Ranching*, 1836-1900, likewise research the precedent for and the meteoric growth of Texas's famed cattle industry. ⁴⁸ These economic concerns, in addition to critical aspects of race and gender that defined early Texan society, influenced how both elites and laborers approached military service and catalyzed both societal unity and class friction during times of conflict.

This complex interplay of racial, gender, and class tensions provides the broader social context for the submitted body of research and its military focus. If concepts of honour culture,

household mastery, racial stratification, property defence, and a predilection for casual violence largely defined white Texan masculinity—as argued by Nicholas Roland in his new book, *Violence in the Hill Country: The Texas Frontier in the Civil War Era*—the selected works advance the analysis to understand how these societal norms manifested as distinctive martial virtues and practices within organized military units. As described in *Riding for the Lone Star*, the importation of Southern cultures resulted in a violent, energetic way of war that "emphasized an ingrained culture of masculinity that centred on mastery of horses and firearms" as Texans adapted to the geography and the raiding economy of the Great Plains environment.⁴⁹

A fifth and final germane area of historiography is way of war studies that analyse and define a particular society's approach to preparing for, waging, and terminating armed conflict. This proved a useful and innovative conceptual approach that allowed synthesis of four decades of continuous nationalistic warfare into a coherent analytical framework. Defined by scholar Brian Linn in his 2007 work, *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War*, as a concept that "encompasses tactics, operational methods, strategy, and all other factors that influence the preparation for, and conduct of, warfare," *Riding for the Lone Star* applied this model to construct a Texas way of war that spanned and interpreted the polity's unique colonial, republic, American statehood, and Confederate statehood military experiences.⁵⁰

Way of war theory has seen a contentious evolution since historian Russel F. Weigley first published his opus on American military history in 1977 entitled, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Strategy and Policy*. Seeking to understand how United States policy makers, strategists, and generals have formulated approaches to waging wars since the nation's inception, the historian employed German historian Hans Delbruck's concept of dividing strategy into those of "annihilation, which seeks the overthrow of the enemy's military

power" and those that rely upon "attrition, exhaustion, or erosion" through an "indirect approach." While Weigley argued that the United States mostly relied upon the latter strategy during its earlier, weaker years, he assessed that as the republic matured and expanded it increasingly embraced the former from a position of strength.⁵¹

However, other historians soon found reason to criticize Weigley's framework as too narrow to accommodate the complexity of America's turbulent record on foreign wars. Linn, in his own work on how the modern United States wages wars, countered and redefined the idea of a national way of war into a much more expansive and comprehensive concept that refused to categorize strategy into limited applications. In a seminal *Journal of Military History* essay entitled, "The American Way of War Revisited," he further critiqued the Delbruck model for failing to "allow for alternative national strategies, such as deterrence or a war of limited aims." In this sense, he proved that Weigley's approach was not altogether wrong, but rather incomplete since it ignored the variety of actions that have occurred in American military history.

A second grouping of way of war studies incorporate the model to examine aspects of how colonial Europeans and Americans wage different kinds of warfare against indigenous peoples. Historian John Grenier's, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier*, provides a useful study on how British, and then American, settlers perceived and fought wars of extermination in New England and Virginia, thereby setting the cultural precedent for many Texan actions against their own tribal competitors on the Great Plains. Guy Chet's, *Conquering the American Wilderness: The Triumph of European Warfare in the Colonial Northeast*, and Wayne Lee's, *Barbarians and Brothers: Anglo-American warfare*, 1500–1865, likewise explore how Anglo settlers viewed ethnic conflict and negotiated the tensions of conducting both European and irregular-style warfare in colonial settings. 54

Riding for the Lone Star incorporates aspects of these way of war studies to create an original theory of how Texans fought a variety of indigenous, Hispanic, and Anglo-American adversaries. While it occasionally applies Weigly's binary model of annihilation and attrition to describe specific Texan national strategies at given points, the research ascribes more readily to Linn's broader definition to "expand beyond strategic considerations" in order to "interpret interrelated cultural and material aspects of Lone Star militarism." The study also incorporates Grenier's ideas about how Anglo settlers justified pre-emptive assaults against Native Americans, often attacking combatant and non-combatant alike, to eliminate threats in ways that would have typically been unacceptable against competitors of European decent.

In summary, the proposed selection of works have provided an original contribution to the field of Texas military history. By connecting the state's distinctive military experiences to a wide diversity of historical fields, the studies have, as argued by Dr. William Yancey in the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, made "a valuable contribution to the historiography of nineteenth century Texas." This achievement centres on the production of a substantial body of research that not only connects hundreds of episodic events in Texas's conflicted past, but intersects with a variety of larger political and cultural themes in United States, Spanish, Mexican, and Native American history within a broader way of war framework.

CHAPTER THREE Methods and Theory

The University of Kent's academic regulations require that a Ph.D. by published works candidate "demonstrates the use of appropriate research methodology" in order to prove worthy of the degree. The proposed selection of works has accomplished this requirement by employing a rigorous, primary source-driven process that analyses historical evidence within a coherent theoretical framework. As an investigative project, the research aims to answer a central question: how did Anglo-Texan settlers create a continuous military tradition with adaptive military tactics and strategy between 1822 and 1865 at the centre of converging American, Mexican, and Indian influences? The answer to this enquiry, which required a multi-disciplinary approach to archival research, serves as the underlying argument for his selection of works. Serves

After conducting initial research on the sweep of Texas military history in the 19th century, the research began with an initial hypothesis that argued that Texans developed a mounted warfare tradition that prized cavalry culture in support of nationalistic warfare.

Indicators that suggested a distinctive trend in mounted combat included: shifts towards mounted tactics towards the end of the colonial era; nationalization of mounted rangers during the Texas Republic period; disproportionate mounted volunteer service in the Mexican-American War; continued Texas Ranger activities during the antebellum period, despite the presence of U.S.

Army garrisons; and finally, the explosion of Texas Cavalry mobilization for the Civil War.⁵⁹

In addition to adopting a tentative thesis, the study also identified the parameters of its scope of work to ensure clarity of purpose and focus. The stated aim, in the introduction of *Riding to the Lone Star*, is to "understand, analyze, and explore the development of its way of war from the vantage point of Anglo-American settlers who predominantly populated and ruled"

the frontier polity." Seeking to ensure a balanced and informed study, the work also emphasises that "important historical themes, like political, economic, cultural, gender, racial, and ethnic considerations, are included only as they shape military affairs." The expansion articles in the body of research continue this imperative by focusing on military affairs while informing developments with integration of other disciplines and themes.

This research process relied first and foremost on primary sources to prove the initial thesis about the continuity and depth of the Texas mounted warfare tradition. Throughout the process, it analysed the accounts of Texans engaged in policy, strategy, and tactical formulation to describe how they perceived the phenomenon of frontier competition while negotiating the tensions of simultaneously conducting nation-state and tribal warfare. Delving into university archives, museum records, and published memoirs, the research also incorporated numerous newspapers to indicate trends in public sentiment, government records to provide insight into priorities and organization, and military reports to ascertain views on the course of events. As argued in the selected works, the resulting study combines the "collision of entire peoples with the hopes and fears of individuals who shaped the frontier landscape."

Beginning with governmental documents, the research relied heavily upon primary source collections housed in the Brisco Center for American History at the University of Texas.⁶² While *The Austin Papers* and *The Writings of Sam Houston*, 1813-1863 provide insight into the policy decisions of leading Texan military strategists, edited volumes such as *The Papers of the Texas Revolution*, *The Laws of Texas*, *The Texas Indian Papers*, and the U.S. Congress's *House Executive Documents* contain a plethora of political and military information.⁶³ When balanced against outside critiques, these official documents allow detailed analysis of the progression of

official legislation, executive orders, letters, reports, financial accounts, and proclamations that shaped and defined much of Texas history.

A second group of valuable primary sources included memoirs by individual combatants who fought in Texas's Indian conflicts and larger nation-state wars. Colonial militiaman Noah Smithwick's *The Evolution of a State*, for example, provides detailed insight into the initial tactical adaptation that Anglo-Texan settlers underwent as they grappled with hostile Indian tribes in the late 1820s.⁶⁴ While Texan soldier Walter P. Lane narrates the same for much of the Texas Republic era in his, *The Adventures and Recollections of Walter P. Lane*, Texas Ranger John Salmon Ford's memoir describes the actions of Texan horsemen in the Mexican-American War and throughout the antebellum period.⁶⁵ For the Civil War, George Griscom's *Fighting with Ross' Texas Cavalry Brigade, C.S.A.*, narrates the day-to-day experiences of a Texas cavalryman in the Eastern Theatre.⁶⁶

While certainly biased and episodic, these recounts by wartime participants proved useful in contextualizing the body of research. For an example of unpublished accounts, the archives of the Briscoe Center contain a monograph by a Texas Republic soldier named Major John Caperton that offers a contemporary observation of how Texans perceived, and sometimes idealized, frontier warfare. Entitled, "Sketch of Colonel John C. Hays, Texas Ranger" and published sometime after the Mexican-American War, the account details how Hays combined unprecedented firearm technologies with innovative mobile tactics to fight ethnic opponents. Reflecting on the performance of Texan volunteers in the Mexican-American War, the contemporary also noted how General Winfield Scott, the senior U.S. Army commander, "gave them great credit for their active and efficient services in suppressing the guerrillas." 67

Campaign and battle reports by Texas military leaders provided another useful group of primary sources that enabled the study to glean new insight into the evolution of the military tradition of Texas. By reexamining documents such Austin's reports to Mexican officials on Indian skirmishes, Houston's report to the Texas provisional government following his victory at San Jacinto, Jack Hays's reports concerning initial employment of innovative Colt revolvers, John S. Ford's reports of counter-guerilla operations in Central Mexico, and reports by Confederate generals on how they employed Texas Cavalry regiments, it identified previously unnoticed continuities concerning Texas's cavalry-centric approach to warfare. While these documents undoubtedly contain willful bias, partisan agendas, and incomplete information, they are nevertheless useful in piecing together causality and outcomes for military events.

As much as individual accounts contribute to historical understanding, the research also engaged archived media, mostly in the form of local, state, and national newspapers, to more deeply understand societal trends and attitudes. While editorial comments are not always perfectly representative of social perspectives, they nevertheless proved useful in understanding political, economic, and ethnic tensions that catalyzed military conflict in early Texas. The research included analysis of editorials, news reports, and government proclamations that were published in papers like the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, *The Bellville Countryman*, *The Texas Democrat*, and *The Texas Gazette* that informed and united the highly literate Texan populace.⁶⁹

These kinds of publications provided Texan society with its primary form of mass communication, often justifying large-scale calls to arms to combat both real and imagined foes. In one example, the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, which emerged as the most important newspaper of the Texas Republic, wrote in 1838 how Anglo settlers justified territorial aggression against Indian adversaries when it first admitted that "rash men" had "aided in

plundering the whole country into a murderous conflict in order that they might secure a few square leagues of land," but then asserted that "blame" was "no longer of importance" because "the die is cast—the tomahawk is uplifted, and an hundreds of helpless mothers and children call aloud for protection." This kind of editorializing proved valuable in understanding the perspective, and the excuses, that Texans employed to justify ethnic warfare as they both aggrandized coveted lands and responded to unpredictable indigenous raids.

Spanish and Mexican primary sources likewise proved instrumental for understanding the development of warfare north of the Rio Grande. The University of Texas's Bexar Archives, which contain original documents from the period of Hispanic governance in Tejas, provide important context for the initial colonization attempts by Anglo settlers under Mexican rule. Other Spanish sources that describe New Spain's military situation on its northern frontier such as, Lancers for the King: A Study of the Frontier Military System of Northern New Spain, and The Letters of Antonio Martinez: the Last Spanish Governor of Texas, 1817-1822, allow analysis of the Great Plains political environment in the decades prior to the Texas Revolution of 1835.

The Bexar Archives in Austin, Texas, in particular, provide a plethora of material pertaining to how Spanish administrators in San Antonio, Tejas, established an early precedent for creating specialized mounted militia to combat fleet tribal raiders. In a report on the frontier garrison's logistical status in 1784, an imperial official noted that volunteer horsemen, as opposed to the professional presidio soldiers, had expended a portion of his ammunition and powder stores when they made "various sorties and scouting expeditions" against the "hostile Indians." This kind of documentation of how Spanish vaqueros and townsmen responded to the unique military environment of the Great Plains revealed the kind of tactical adaptation that Anglo settlers would later emulate with the creation of the Texas Rangers.

If Spanish sources are important for understanding the context of Anglo colonization, writings by later Mexican generals and religious leaders are critical for contextualizing the wars that the Texas Republic, and then the United States, fought against Mexico between 1835 and 1848. As an example, General Vincente Filisola's, *Memoirs for the History of the War in Texas*, and Jose Pena's, *With Santa Anna in Texas: A Personal Narrative of the Revolution*, each provide a Mexican perspective on President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna's ill-fated invasion of Texas in 1836.⁷⁴ While also containing particular biases and agendas, descriptions of such a consequential campaign serve to balance Texan accounts from leaders like Sam Houston who may exaggerate or misrepresent aspects of their unlikely victory.

A final selection of primary sources includes those that describe the indigenous tribes that fought with and against Anglo-Texan interveners over coveted territory. Since few Plains Indians left written records of this period, contemporary accounts by white observers like those in *The Austin Papers*, Noah Smithwick's *The Evolution of a State*, Jean Berlandier's *Indians of Texas in 1830*, Nelson Lee's *Three Years Among the Comanche*, and most importantly, Dorman Winfrey's collection, *The Texas Indian Papers*, offer avenues to better understand how these tribes fought across a century of desperate warfare. While these accounts must be studiously parsed for racial bias and ignorance, they nevertheless provide valuable information about Amerindian influences that heavily influenced the formation of Texas's military tradition.

While primary sources drive its research chronology, the submitted body of research incorporates key secondary sources to integrate additional perspectives, bridge gaps in the investigation, and to connect critical fields and themes in order to enrich and expand the narrative. Rigorously researched works like Gary Anderson's *The Conquest of Texas* and Michael Collins's *Texas Devils*—which are highly critical of the Anglo-Texan role in colonizing

Texas—are employed to balance ethnic perspectives that feature prominently in Anglo primary source accounts like memoirs and battle reports. Analysis from other frontier studies like Thomas Cutrer's *Ben McCulloch and the Frontier Military Tradition*, Robert Wooster's *American Military Frontiers*, and John Grenier's *The First Way of War* allow integration of broader Anglo-American martial histories into the continuity of Texas's way of war.

The task of accounting for participant bias is an important consideration in the selected works. Because of the enmity that often characterized conflict between Anglo interlopers, Hispanic defenders, and indigenous raiders—all in the context of institutionalized white supremacy and African slavery—the research carefully assesses the accuracy and implications of written words while contextualizing them against validated scholarship. The Native American perspective, in particular, remains difficult to fully ascertain because few indigenous Americans left written records prior to the Civil War. For this challenge, expert analysis by historians like Foster Smith in his seminal work, *From Dominance to Disappearance*, about the Anglo-Indian wars proved valuable. For the Mexican perspective, Irving Levinson's *Wars within War:*Mexican Guerillas, Domestic Elites, and the United States of America, 1846-1848, provides a counter-narrative to explain the lopsided outcomes of the Mexican-American War.⁷⁸

Supported by a working hypothesis about the continuity of a Texas mounted warfare tradition, and enabled by a primary and secondary source methodology, the body of research pursues answers to three parallel, yet historically interrelated, sub-enquiries to better inform the study. These investigations centre on further defining the Texan experience through examination of martial culture development, strategic evolution, and tactical adaptation between the time of initial colonization of Tejas and eventual defeat in the American Civil War. The Texans' fixation with cavalry warfare in order to mobilize and fight across the vastness of the Great Plains

likewise emerged as a central theme that connected all three sub-enquiries by creating a distinctive material quality and organizational ethos that informed their way of war.

The first sub-enquiry asks a fundamental question that investigates the formation of Anglo-Texan martial identity: "How did converging plains Indian, Spanish, and United States fighting traditions intersect to shape military cultures that evolved between the Red River and the Rio Grande?" This investigation is important because it explains how Texans came to view themselves as a unique people with an aggressive frontier ethos that prized heroic masculinity, populist militancy, and white dominance. It also explores how Texan society managed Tejano and Indian cultures as it transitioned from a scattering of colonies under Mexican rule, to a surprisingly multi-ethnic frontier republic, and to white-dominated American and Confederate slave states with increasingly stratified economic classes.

The second sub-enquiry focuses on how Texan leaders and governing bodies formulated and executed military strategy amidst difficult geo-political circumstances. Recognizing the challenges that Texans faced in generating military resources in such an austere environment with limited finances, it investigates: "How did centralized governments and frontier settlements prepare and generate both official and ad hoc military organizations as tailored responses to evolving threat environments?" This question delves into the heart of the strategic dilemma which Texans grappled with, yet never fully solved, as they periodically fought modern armies from Mexico and then the United States while simultaneously seeking to counter tribal raids which they provoked or responded to along their expansive northwest frontier.

The third sub-enquiry, which includes numerous stories and anecdotes for which Texans gained continental fame, investigates how Anglo settlers arriving from eastern North American woodland states adapted tactically to a new type of combat on the Great Plains. Eventually rising

to inform Texan martial identity, the remarkable transition of militia infantry to become proficient frontier cavalry—epitomized by the rise of the highly mobile Texas Rangers—saw the advent of a hybrid soldier onto the North American scene. As described by the study, "the colonists combined eastern American ranging techniques, precision marksmanship, and plains horsemanship to create a new type of frontier warrior."⁸⁰ This emphasis on firepower, in particular, became decisive when Texans became the first and only soldiers in the world, for a short time, to wield revolving firearms during the early 1840s.

With these enquiries driving the research towards a central thesis, the work employs way of war theory to translate the research methodology into a coherent analytical narrative. The construction of a distinctive Texas way of war provides an intellectual framework to integrate and contextualize captured information and data. By applying both Brian Linn's expansive way of war definition and John Grenier's frontier warfare thesis—which emphasises comprehensive assessment of societal engagement rather than Wiegly's more narrow conception—the application of way of war theory to Texan affairs enables interdependent investigations into Texan martial culture, strategic evolution, and tactical adaptation while maintaining a continuity of analysis across the society's long experience with territorial conflict.⁸¹

Given this immersive focus on military affairs, the integration of multi-disciplinary research proved essential in preventing the creation of a narrow and isolated study. The research avoids this undesired outcome by incorporating a variety of cultural, political, and economic themes. This includes clear description of Anglo racial antipathy towards Indians and Tejanos, accounting for how Texan politics reflected Jacksonian populist militancy, assessing how military garrisons stimulated economic interests in peripheral counties, and exploring how perceptions of frontier masculinity informed predilections for nationalistic violence. By allowing

these factors to inform, but not distract from, the primary objective, the study creates an appropriately nuanced body of research.

In summary, the methods employed in the body of research have facilitated an original investigation into the existence of a distinctive Texas mounted warfare tradition. By combining primary source evidence with secondary source scholarship, it enables refinement of the primary hypothesis along relevant sub-enquiries to explore how Texan communities developed a hybrid martial culture, evolved military strategy to negotiate the Great Plains environment, and adapted tactically to combat diverse adversaries—all integrated within a societal way of war framework. As argued by Dr. Gerald Saxon in the prestigious *Journal of Military History*, "Jennings is able to place Texas's military decisions during 1822-1865 in a social, political, economic and cultural context." This methodology consequently set conditions for a thorough and diversified study.

CHAPTER FOUR Findings and Conclusions

The selection of works submitted, which aims to answer identified gaps in Texas historiography, create a developed thesis that is reflective of the primary source evidence. As stated in *Riding for the Lone Star*, the findings conclude that, "beginning with initial tactical innovation as colonial militia in Spanish Tejas and culminating with massive mobilization of horsemen for the American Civil War, Texan society developed a distinctive way of war defined by armed horsemanship, volunteer militancy, and event-specific mobilization as it engaged both tribal and international opponents." These three factors, which reflected an ingrained cultural preference for cavalry service, volunteer enlistment, and short-term commitment, proved integral to development of a sustained military tradition.

This argument finds validation when buttressed by the study's allocation of primary source evidence to prove the particulars and continuities of the thesis. Over the course of several settler generations and across multiple wars and hundreds of conflicts, Anglo-Texans consistently gravitated towards military service as horsemen and proved disinclined, with a few notable exceptions, to serve in any other combat arm. This preference, which reflected an idealized masculinity that prized aggression, mobility, and firepower to dominate territorial enemies in austere settings, eventually moved beyond practical application and into a wider societal embrace of a uniquely Texan martial identity.⁸⁴

The developed proof of concept finds further definition in the sub-enquiries that seek to detail aspects of the Texas way of war. Beginning with the investigation of the converging United States, Mexican, and Native American influences that intersected in Texas, the research revealed that Texans amalgamated these cultures to create their own hybrid approach. While the

Anglo-American influence naturally retained primacy, the incorporation of Hispanic citizens into the Texas Republic and Mexican immigration during early periods of American statehood stimulated a vibrant, comingled culture that integrated many Spanish practices and customs. On the Indian side, the comingling proved less apparent in civil life, but nevertheless had a profound effect on military affairs.⁸⁵

The influence of United States culture on how Texans waged war on the Great Plains remained strong, and only became stronger, after annexation into statehood in 1845. As primarily settlers of Scotch-Irish decent who immigrated from across the American South, with many Texas leaders hailing from U.S. President Andrew Jackson's political base in Tennessee, they arrived with an affinity for populist militancy. This included a deep-rooted belief in white supremacy, a predilection for precision firearms, and a long history of forming militia to fight territorial adversaries. These immigrants also typically cultivated a natural suspicion of centralized government and viewed formal military enlistment as a temporary requirement.⁸⁶

From the south, Hispanic communities who had struggled to survive along the Rio Grande Valley established the precedent for how Texans would adapt to the unfamiliar plains environment. For several generations the Spanish Royal Army's presidio system had failed to secure New Spain's northern frontier, and thus compelled ranchers and townsmen to form their own militias called *Companias Volantes*, or Flying Companies. In addition to numerous cultural and economic cross-overs, Tejanos taught Anglo immigrants how to adapt to tribal warfare. The fusion of Spanish and Anglo cultures in South Texas, especially after hundreds of Tejanos joined the Texas Revolution, became a foundational element of the Texas Republic.⁸⁷

The final major regional influence on the growth of a Texan mounted warfare tradition stemmed from the array of competing Indian tribes that fought with and against Texan society.

While the Comanche and Cherokee, who gained stature as powerful tribes in North America during the early 19th century, emerged as primary adversaries, smaller groups, like the Lipan Apache and Tonkawa, established partnerships with the Texans against their historical enemies. If the Comanche, in particular, defined the limitations of Anglo-American settlement and stimulated Texan militancy for almost 50 years, others engaged in trade and served as valuable scouts for Texan rangers and militia.⁸⁸

This confluence of military traditions from across North America subsequently led to an amalgamation of martial cultures that came to be symbolized by the Texas Rangers. As one newspaper commented in 1846, the fusion created a hybrid frontier soldier that could, "ride like a Mexican, trail like an Indian, shoot like a Tennessean, and fight like a devil." At the societal level, the blending of influences above the Rio Grande led to multi-ethnic communities, exemplified by the growth of San Antonio, where Anglo, Tejano, and Indian coalitions often joined together to fight against agreed upon enemies. This amalgamation resulted in a unique mounted warfare tradition that allowed Texans to adopt proven practices, learn from mistakes, and leverage new technologies in order to aggrandize territory and develop economic concerns.

The comingling of regional traditions, while sometimes beneficial, also held a darker consequence: racial brutality towards Mexican, African-American, and indigenous peoples.

Throughout the long march of conflict, Texans became notorious for engaging in "population-centric warfare" against Native American villages. This reputation followed them into the Mexican-American War where U.S. Army generals admonished Texan volunteers for wanton brutality towards Mexican civilians. Later, during the Civil War, Texans massacred Black Union soldiers they captured in order to intimidate African-American resistance. These atrocities,

which stemmed from decades of pervasive societal racism, left a bloody stain on the military record of Texas that cannot be ignored.⁹⁰

The second sub-enquiry of the research, which explored how Texan leaders and governments evolved their military strategies, discovered a story of constant vacillations amidst improbable successes and stunning failures. The requirement to counter the much larger Mexican Army and later the massive Union Army with modern, combined arms capabilities while also engaging in continuous raiding warfare with extremely mobile Indians across the entire northwest frontier created insurmountable tensions. The resistance of the Texas public to serving long-term enlistments as professional soldiers likewise conspired with an inability to fund European-style armies to make preparation for both kinds of combat, often at the same time against geographically dispersed threats, an impossible posture to maintain.⁹¹

These kinds of strategic challenges manifested immediately upon the arrival of Anglo-American colonists in Mexican Tejas. Stephen F. Austin, the leading *empresario*, or contracted colony administrator, found predictable difficulty in uniting the scattered towns and homesteads along the Gulf Coast to form unified defence policies and execute coordinated strategies to manage or destroy proximate indigenous peoples. ⁹² While some had to be conciliated with out of pragmatic necessity, others had to be fought against with united militia efforts. Complicating affairs further, the Anglo leadership remained subordinated to an unfamiliar and unresponsive Mexican governor in San Antonio who lacked the presidio capacity to provide frontier support but retained authority to constrain colonial actions.

This dilemma of creating viable military strategies to counter Native American competitors continued into the years of the Texas Republic with debilitating effects. While the frontier nation's first president, Sam Houston, initially attempted a conciliatory approach, his

successor, the jingoistic Mirabeau Lamar, pivoted the frontier nation sharply towards offensive wars that aimed to aggrandize territory from indigenous peoples and Mexico. When this proved ruinously expensive, Houston, who returned as Texas's third president, shifted foreign policy back towards tribal conciliation as he negotiated several retaliatory invasions by Mexico and fool-hardy counter-invasion by enraged Texans in 1842. This inability to maintain a coherent strategy reflected the tumult of Texan politics and the ethnic enmitties of Texan society. 93

The intermittent requirement for Texans to counter nation-state armies from Mexico, and eventually the United States, also challenged the formulation of viable military strategies. This proved existential for the Texas Republic when, on multiple occasions, the Texan militia system proved unable to prevent Mexican Army from recapturing San Antonio. The State of Texas grappled with this same problem again in 1846 when it produced a volunteer division to fight alongside the U.S. Army in Mexico, and later during the American Civil War when it mobilized dozens of brigades to fight the Union Army. ⁹⁴ The demands of European-style warfare, which differed greatly in character from fighting Indian raiders, severely complicated Texas's ability to formulate a coherent military strategy throughout the 19th century.

A final strain on Texas's ability to manage threats at the strategic level occurred during its period of colonial subordination to Mexico from 1823 to 1835 and during later periods of American and Confederate statehood between 1846 and 1865. Despite existing as a subordinate state with constitutional limitations, Texan governors routinely pursued independent foreign policies, maintained aggressive para-military forces, and conducted independent military actions—often in defiance of national authorities. This led to complicated situations where state leaders developed military strategies either in isolation or in opposition to federal approaches that often sought to deescalate ethnic confrontations in favor of national treaty agreements. 95

Much of the policy divergence between state and federal leaders stemmed from the white Texas population's importation of racial antipathies and hierarchies from across the American South. While insistence on maintaining the institution of slavery catalyzed the decision by Texas to rebel against Mexico City in 1835 and Washington, D.C., in 1861, wide-spread antipathy towards Hispanics resulted in systematic intimidation of Tejanos across South Texas and cross-border attacks against Mexico in violation of international treaty. Texan attitudes towards Indians likewise periodically undermined federally-sponsored peace initiatives when Texas governors routinely employed state rangers and militia to unilaterally engage in tribal conflict in order to aggrandize territory or defend against unpredictable raids. 96

The third sub-enquiry of the research centres on how Texans adapted tactically, at the soldier and unit level, to the Great Plains environment. Based upon analysis of over a hundred skirmishes, raids, and battles that occurred between 1823 and 1866 across much of North America, it found that Texans demonstrated a consistent preference for cavalry service. Throughout this time the embattled frontiersmen developed new equine breeds with greater strength and endurance, pioneered the use of revolving firearms, and innovated mobile tactics that improved Spanish precedents—which all combined to allow devastating lethality against Mexican and Indian adversaries possessing archaic armaments. This predilection then moved beyond practical employment and evolved into a broader cultural appreciation that associated armed horsemanship with nationalistic masculinity. 97

The most consistent manifestation of this unique martial identity was found in the various ranger and militia units that proliferated across the expansive Texas frontier. While only a few companies throughout the 1840s and 1850s such as John Coffee Hays's and John Salmon Ford's units achieved elite status as officially recognized Texas Rangers with enhanced tactical

effectiveness, hundreds of towns and counties spontaneously created a wide scattering of both sanctioned and unsanctioned mounted militias to "range" the countryside and prosecute local interests. Regardless of proficiency or actual utility, thousands of Texan men came to identify with the Texas Ranger ideal as they embraced a distinctly Texan identity.⁹⁸

The multi-ethnic composition of many of these units, especially during the Texas Revolution, the Texas Republic's conflicts, and the Civil War, revealed a pragmatic aspect to Texas's military tradition that complicated its ingrained societal racism. While both the Texas Republic and Confederate Texas enlisted entire Tejano cavalry battalions and legislatively incorporated allied Indian mounted companies, broader Texan society remained racist in orientation and systematically disenfranchise non-white competitors from ancestral lands. As with most colonial landscapes, this led to complex, violent, and shifting relations between intervening white settlers and proximate brown peoples as economic competition intensified.⁹⁹

If the proliferation of both Anglo and mixed ethnicity mounted units underscored Texas's fixation with horsemanship, the society's repeated failures to create and maintain infantry units further proved the enduring cavalry preference. Beginning with the Texas Republic, the national government first failed to maintain the infantry-centric Army of Texas following independence, and then failed again in 1841 to sustain a combined arms formation called the Frontier Regiment. Later, during the Mexican-American War, Texan cavalry service outnumbered infantry contributions by a factor of five. In the Civil War, so many Texan men determined only to serve as cavalrymen that Confederate recruiting officers needing infantry resorted to deception by raising named cavalry units and then intentionally depriving them of mounts.¹⁰⁰

This final conflict, the American Civil War, revealed the full intensity of Texan identification with mounted warfare. Throughout the course of the conflict the Lone Star State,

now under the Confederate banner, produced more cavalrymen than any other state, north or south. By the war's end, Texas produced an astounding 61 cavalry regiments and 39 cavalry battalions as it defended its northwest frontier, invaded New Mexico to the west, and dispatched dozens of cavalry regiments to fight in Confederate armies to the east. ¹⁰¹ This last theatre, which featured attempts to repel invading Union field armies in Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Georgia, saw units like Terry's Texas Rangers gain such renown that a statue commemorating their service now adorns the steps of the state capital building in Austin.

This societal enthusiasm for military service in support of the Confederacy benefited from a frontier culture that privileged martial prowess as the highest of masculine virtues. As argued in *Riding for the Lone Star*, Texas Rangers possessing mastery of horsemanship and firearms came to represent "both physical and symbolic expressions of masculinity and nationalism" that informed how Texans, as a people, prosecuted warfare against both white and non-white enemies. Reflecting intertwined requirements to repel Union Army invasions, defend idealized notions of Southern honor, and preserve social and economic architectures of white supremacy, Texan soldiers mobilized for the Civil War with intent to, as described by one Texan recruit, "emulate the example of the heroes of the Almo, Goliad, and San Jacinto." ¹⁰²

The scale of Texan mobilization in 1861, especially by thousands of young men who had only heard stories of the old Texas Rangers, proved the depth of Texas's cultural affinity for mounted warfare. As argued in "Riding for Rebellion: A study of Cavalry Culture and Mobilization in Civil War Texas" from the selected works, it represented not only an explosion of enthusiasm to serve in mounted arms for another war of independence, but also the culmination of a tradition that had evolved from humble beginnings in colonial Tejas to become a major factor in a long, costly march of tribal and nation-state wars. In that sense, Texas's

massive mobilization for the Confederate cause validated the argument that the Texas way of war's cavalry predilection had matured into a societal fixation, far beyond the practical military requirements, by the early 1860s. 103

The combined results of these research enquiries into Texas's martial culture, military strategy, and tactical adaptation proved the study's central argument: that Texas developed a distinctive way of war that predominantly featured armed horsemanship, volunteer militancy, and event-specific mobilization. By applying way of war theory to connect and contextualize over forty years of constant conflicts and wars, it integrated parallel, yet intrinsically interrelated, sub-enquiries to create an original and coherent narrative. As explained by Dr. Charles Grear in the *Western Historical Quarterly*, the work "is the first to take what historians already suspected about the uniquely cavalry military tradition of Texas and researched it to definitively explain for the first time why Texans typically fought from horseback." 104

In summary, the proposed selection of works developed a convincing argument with supporting evidence to explain how Texan society approached warfare during the 19th century. It accomplished this by analyzing numerous primary sources and then contextualizing them through integration of germane secondary sources. While the investigation revealed that Texas developed an enduring mounted warfare tradition that was shaped by its location at the intersection of American, Mexican, and Indian influences, it also demonstrated how the frontier society struggled to develop strategies to combat diverse opponents even as its various types of forces adapted tactically to the Great Plains military environment. This leads to the conclusion that the research methodology proved successful in achieving the intended purpose of the study.

CONCLUSION

The examples of scholarly work provided above demonstrate an original and well-reviewed contribution to a field of academic history; namely the development of military traditions within Texas in the 19th Century. Consisting of a peer-reviewed book published by a university press and six peer-reviewed articles published by scholarly journals, the submitted selection of works incorporate a unique methodology and approach to integrate four decades of frontier warfare into a coherent narrative. As stated by Dr. Joseph G. Dawson, a former Texas A&M full professor of history who reviewed *Riding for the Lone Star*, "Jennings makes a strong argument for Texas having its own 'Way of War'...readers will find a new perspective to view Texas and military matters." 105

The originality of the body of research, and its alignment with defined and coherent scope of study, provide one of the central rationales for awarding the Ph.D. by published works by the University of Kent. The core of the selection of works, *Riding for the Lone Star*, adopted an innovative approach to connect and integrate numerous events, narratives, themes, and data points in Texas military history into a single, interconnected historical study. As a complimentary addition, the six peer-reviewed articles facilitated the expansion of critical points of interest that include the nature of Texas Ranger historiography, Texan adaptation as colonial militia, Texan involvement in the Mexican-American War, and Texan involvement in the American Civil War. The resulting selection of works makes a persuasive case for a dissertation-level scholarly achievement.

Taking evaluation of the body of research into more objective assessment, this combined focus, spanning four decades of frontier warfare, received favorable validation by multiple experts in the field of Texas history. While *Riding for the Lone Star* passed, and was improved,

by rigorous 'blind' reviews prior to publication, the book went on to received favorable assessment by history professors in the *Journal of Military History*, *Journal of South Texas*, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, *Civil War Review*, and *Western Historical Quarterly*. The six expansion articles likewise passed expert review prior to publication in respected journals connected to Texas history. This consistent record of positive assessment not only validates, but endorses, the quality of the works selected for degree consideration.

Equally important, the research has made a valuable addition to Texas historiography. By providing the first body of research that spans the entirety of early Texas military history—from initial colonization to the American Civil War—while integrating integral themes from American, Spanish, Mexican, and Indian histories, the body of research has filled a void in the record of Texas's historical landscape. Moving beyond romanticized Texas Ranger histories while avoiding the narrow orientation of many critical studies, it has constructed a factual study that focuses relentlessly and dispassionately on the role of Texan culture, strategy, and tactics in the military competition that unfolded across the Great Plains in the early 19th century.

More specifically, the selected works have provided a new, granular level of detail pertaining to the specifics of how Texans adopted and internalized a distinctive mounted warfare tradition. These original scholarly contributions include: describing in minute detail how Anglo-Texan colonists transitioned incrementally from infantry to mounted militia between 1823 and 1835; the previously unnoticed employment of Texan cavalry as reconnaissance forces in the 1836 San Jacinto Campaign; the strategic impact of Texan volunteers who provided controversial reconnaissance and counter-guerrilla support to the U.S. Army in the Mexican-American War; and finally, analysis of the nature of Texas Cavalry mobilization for the Civil War to prove the depth and duration of the Texas way of war. 1066

Expanding into more creative application, *Riding for the Lone Star* also employed the careers of several Texan soldiers to explore how they "illustrated the transcendence of Texas's militancy and how iconic leaders influenced its larger cultural tradition." As an example, it details how Irish-immigrant Walter P. Lane first learned war as a young volunteer in the Texas Revolution, then fought in numerous border conflicts throughout the 1830s and 1840s as a ranger and Mexican-American War officer, and then culminated his service as senior Confederate officer in the Civil War. When he died in 1892, the *Marshal Paper* in his adopted town in Texas honored him as "The Hero of Three Wars" while his family "buried him with battle-scarred flags, rusty sabers, spears, spurs, arrows and other trophies" to "keep silent sentinel." Lane's nationalistic career paralleled the rise and fall of the military tradition he personified. 108

The body of research accomplished its stated objectives by privileging primary sources whenever possible, and then contextualizing the analysis through integration of a wide diversity of secondary sources. Furthermore, by drawing on way of war theory pioneered by scholars such as Russel Wiegly, Brian Linn, and John Grenier, it successfully integrated the findings of several enquiries into a coherent narrative to explain the challenges and evolutions of the Texas mounted warfare tradition. Called "well-organized and insightful" by Dr. Harold Weiss in the *Journal of South Texas*, this methodology resulted in a study that tells the volatile story of Texas's military history within an understandable framework that balances participant biases and interested perspectives against the factual academic record. 109

Looking forward, the research has also created ample opportunity for future study. From the Anglo-Texan perspective, the identification of a peculiar Texan masculinity within the context of Jacksonian populist militancy, as personified by Texas Ranger John Coffee Hays, has revealed an area of frontier culture to be further explored. The roles of Tejanos and Indians as

citizens and partners of the white-dominated Texas Republic could likewise be investigated to better understand pragmatic coalition building in the context of societal racism and ethnic competition. And finally, the uneasy institutional relationship that developed between the Texas Rangers and the U.S. Army provides a third area from which to gain insight into the advantages and pitfalls of inter-governmental partnerships. These opportunities could yield insights into how complex communities and competing organizations negotiate problems with armed conflict.

In conclusion, the proposed selection of works represent a valuable study on how Texas developed a distinctive mounted warfare tradition at the intersection of United States, Mexican, and American Indian influences. It has proven, beyond doubt, that Anglo-Texans cultivated an approach to frontier warfare that prized armed horsemanship, volunteer militancy, and event-specific mobilization even as they fought diverse adversaries across expansive landscapes.

Called a "compelling, deeply informed account of the singular contribution of Texas to warfare in the nineteenth century" by Dr. H.W. Brands, holder of the prestigious Jack S. Blanton Sr.

Chair in History at the University of Texas, the research now stands as the definitive account of how Texans adapted militarily to the challenges of the Great Plains environment.¹¹⁰

¹ University of Kent Academic Regulations, Annex 2: PhD Awarded on the Basis of Published Works (non-staff), Paragraph 2: Eligibility and Entry Requirements;

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/research/annex2-phd-awarded-published-works-nonstaff.html

² Quoted from the Dr. Robert Wooster's Peer-Review of Riding for the Lone Star prior to publication; provided by Ron Chrisman, editor, University of North Texas Press. Contact: ronald.chrisman@unt.edu.

³ See the Selected Works List

⁴ See Nathan Jennings, *Riding for the Lone Star: Frontier Cavalry and the Texas Way of War, 1822-1865* (Denton: UNT Press, 2016), 1-11, for an introduction to the study.

⁵ See Brian Linn, *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 233, for a suitable way of war theory definition.

⁶ Gerald D. Saxon, review of *Riding for the Lone Star: Frontier Cavalry and the Texas Way of War, 1822-1865*, by Nathan Jennings, *Journal of Military History*, Vol. 81, No. 2 (April 2017): 565-566.

⁷ Nathan Jennings, "Riding into Controversy: A Study in Contrasting Views of the Texas Rangers," *Journal of the West* 52, No. 2 (Spring 2013): 42-52.

- ⁸ Nathan Jennings, "Ranging the *Tejas* Frontier: A Reinterpretation of the Tactical Origins of the Texas Rangers," *The Journal of South Texas* Vol 27, No. 2 (Fall 2014): 72-91.
- ⁹ Nathan Jennings, "Texas Ranger Auxiliaries: Double-Edged Sword of the Campaign for Northern Mexico, 1846-1848," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* Vol. 26, No. 2 (Fall 2014): 313-334.
- ¹⁰ Nathan Jennings, "Federalized Texas Rangers: Counterguerrilla Cavalry of the 1847 Mexico City Campaign," *Mexican War Journal* Vol 23, No. 1 (Spring 2014): 30-55.
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- ¹² Nathan Jennings, "Riding for Rebellion: A Study of Cavalry Culture and Mobilization in Civil War Texas," *Military History of the West* 43 (Fall 2014): 28-53.
- ¹³ Jennings, *Riding for the Lone Star*, 1-2.
- ¹⁴ See Annex A: Maps for geographic depictions of major conflict periods in Texas military history.
- ¹⁵ William Yancey, review of *Riding for the Lone Star: Frontier Cavalry and the Texas Way of War, 1822-1865*, by Nathan Jennings, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 120 (July 2016): 118-119.
- ¹⁶ See Jennings, "Riding into Controversy," 44-52, for an explanation of Texas Ranger historiography.
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- ²² Thomas Cutrer, *Ben McCulloch and the Frontier Military Tradition* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993).
- ²³ Julian Samora, *Gunpowder Justice: A Reassessment of the Texas Rangers* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), 2-3.
- ²⁴ Michael Collins, *Texas Devils: Rangers and Regulars on the Lower Rio Grande, 1846–1861* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 4, 257.
- ²⁵ Jennings, *Riding for the Lone Star*, 4, 8.
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- ²⁷ Stephen Moore, *Eighteen Minutes: The Battle of San Jacinto and the Texas Independence Campaign* (Dallas: Republic of Texas Press, 2004); Stephen Hardin, *Texian Iliad: A Military History of the Texas Revolution, 1835–1836* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994); Stephen Moore, *Savage Frontier: Rangers, Riflemen and Indian Wars in Texas,* 4 vols. (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2002–2010).
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ANNEX A: MAPS*

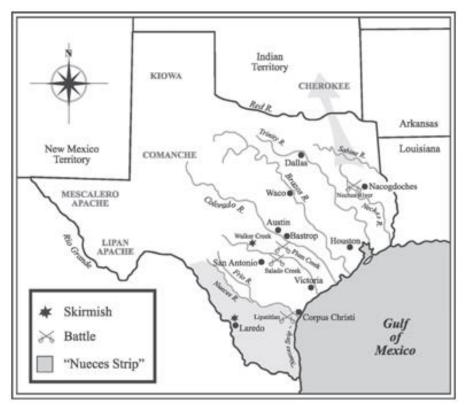


Colonial Tejas, 1822-1835



San Jacinto Campaign of the Texas Revolution, 1836

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The Texas Republic, 1836-1845



The Mexican-American War, 1846-1848



Antebellum Texas, 1849-1860



Civil War Texas, 1861-1865