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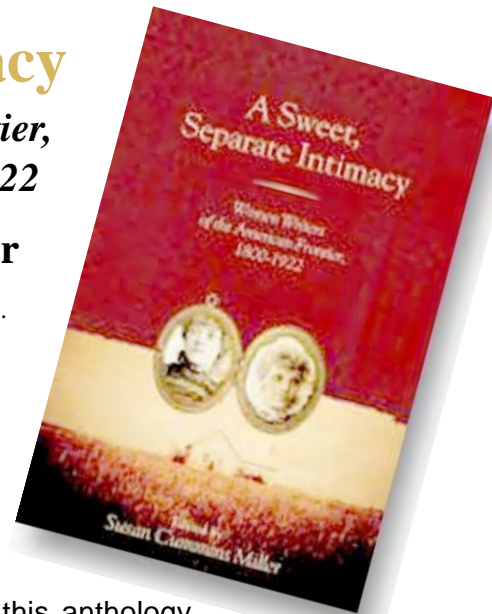
## A Sweet, Separate Intimacy

*Women Writers of the American Frontier,  
1800-1922*

**Susan Cummins Miller, editor**

Lubbock, Texas 79409: Texas Tech University Press, 2007.  
contents, text sources, references, index.  
447 pp. Paperback \$26.95.

**Review by Linda Sybert Hudson, PhD**

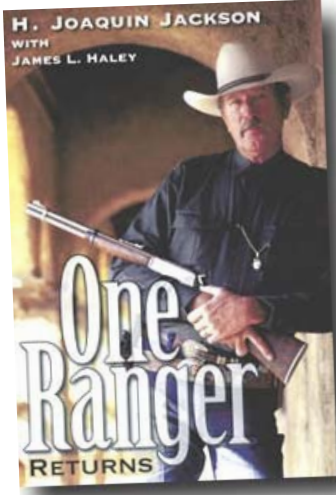


In 2000, Susan Cummins Miller first published this anthology featuring thirty-four women's impressions of local scenes and topics of the American frontier. The time period of the book ranges from 1800 to 1922. A concise biography and description of the significance of each author is given as Miller introduces snippets of poems, essays, fiction, and recollections that together paint a broad view of the West. Using the poignant words of the women participants gives insight into their thoughts and feelings, and their frontier impressions and experiences add a sense of time, place, and social commentary to the history of their time. For the most part, these women wrote professionally and published for an audience of avid readers enamored of the frontier. Cummins includes women travelers, but the primary authors are Anglo and European women settlers and Chinese, Hispanic, and Native American writers. Hers is a multicultural, multi-social and multi-racial frontier that is spread from Michigan and Texas to the Pacific Coast.

The only Texas woman featured is Mary Maverick. She gives her recollections of the scientific quest for the bones of the Comanche by a Dr. Weideman, who boiled flesh from dead Indians killed in a local battle. Instead of being concerned about his callous treatment of the remains of another human being, townspeople and mavericks were more alarmed at his dumping the leftover broth into the aqueduct that furnished drinking water to the citizens of San Antonio.

Other sections of the book illustrate the caring, tender feelings, and emotions of frontiersmen about their fellow inhabitants. As Cummins transmits the strength and courage of people who lived there, she provides views of the landscape and descriptions of the harshness and beauty of the land.

Susan Cummins Miller is a geologist and a poet who is best known as the author of four mystery novels set in the Southwest and featuring the female sleuth, Frankie MacFarlane. Miller was born and reared in California but now lives and writes in Arizona.



# One Ranger Returns

by Joaquin Jackson and James L. Haley

Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008.

## Review by Robert Nieman

*One Ranger Returns* is more than a continuation of Joaquin Jackson's first book, *One Ranger*. No one volume could have held all the stories of a twenty-seven-year veteran Ranger who liked to work—and Joaquin Jackson liked to work. Furthermore, Jackson shows a personal side of himself and his family in this biography that is seldom seen in memoirs.

Throughout the book, Jackson makes you feel that you are with him as he works every kind of felony imaginable. There were very few criticisms of the first book, *One Ranger*, but one major disparagement was Jackson's omission of the 1966-1967 farm labor dispute in the Rio Grande Valley by the United Farm Workers. In *One Ranger Returns*, Jackson meets this issue head on. In the years following this clash, Rangers were painted with a broad brush as being little more than strikebreakers and thugs at the beck and call of the farm owners. Jackson challenges these indictments in the strongest of terms. It is not easy to find many historians willing to defy this common perception, but Jackson presents a compelling and reasonable case in defense of the Rangers.

Unlike TV and movie characters, no Ranger can claim that he solved every case he worked. Experienced police detectives and Rangers would never "promise" to solve a case; only a rank amateur would make such a foolish statement. All any veteran police officer will ever swear to do is the very best he or she can—and no more.

Jackson steps to plate and writes openly of the frustration that comes with an unsolved double homicide. The 1938 murders of a mother and her daughter was a thirty-two-year-old case when Jackson took over the investigation, and he did everything in his power to solve it. From its start in California to the tragic end in the desert near Van Horn, Texas, Jackson brings the crime to life. In light of the popularity of cold-case files on television, this would be an ideal case for presentation—except that, in real life, the case has never been solved.

As in *One Ranger*, Jackson again attempts to put to rest the myth that he retired from the Rangers in 1992 because of the admittance of women into the elite law enforcement group. Regrettably, once a myth starts, it takes on a life of its own. No matter how many times Jackson denies it, many will continue to believe that Jackson quit the Rangers rather than serve with women.

The book ends with one of its strongest points: the clear and undying love this burly, six-foot-three, tough-as-nails Ranger has for his wife and two sons. They, in turn, write moving tributes of their love for their husband and father.

Throughout this book, there is one overriding theme: pride. Joaquin Jackson is extraordinarily proud of the Rangers with whom he served, and he is proudest of all that he was a Texas Ranger.