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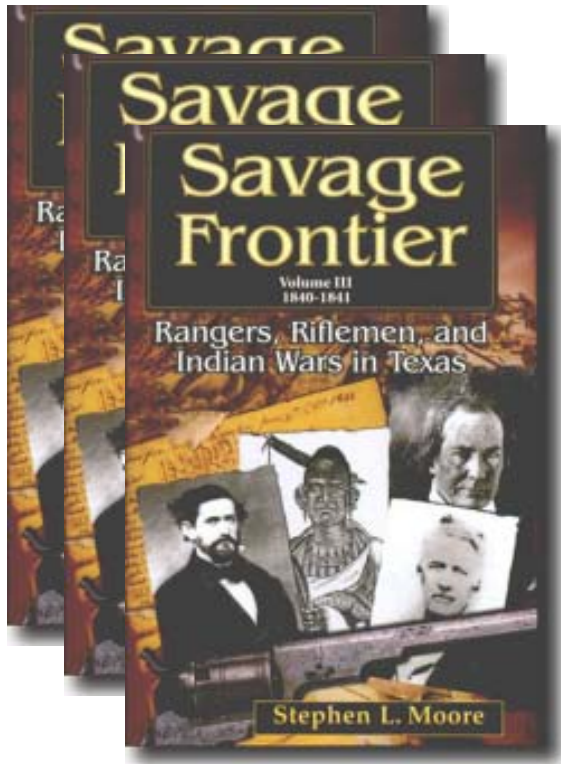
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## Savage Frontier 1840-1841

*Volume III*  
*Rangers, Riflemen,  
and Indian Wars in Texas*

By **Stephen L. Moore**

University of North Texas Press, PO Box 311336,  
Denton, TX 76203. xii + 436 pages, extensive  
endnotes, bibliography, appendices, index,  
illustrations and maps. Cloth \$34.95. Paper  
\$19.95.

ISBN 978-1-57441-229-1.

**Book Review by Chuck Parsons**

**S**tephen L. Moore, a sixth-generation Texan, has developed as an authority on Texas history and World War II military history. This is the third volume in his study of the early Ranger history of Texas. The preceding volumes covered the 1835-1837 and then the 1838-1839 periods. In addition, two other works by Moore focus on early Texas history: *Eighteen Minutes: the Battle of San Jacinto* and *The Texas Independence Campaign and Taming Texas: Captain William T. Sadler's Lone Star Service*.

This *Savage Frontier* volume now presents accounts of not only such well known fights as the Council House Battle (March 19, 1840) and the Battle of Plum Creek (August 12, 1840), but also lesser known engagements such as Jack Hays's fight against Mexican marauders near Laredo (April 7, 1841) and his Uvalde Canyon Fight (June 29, 1841). Musters of those men engaged in various battles accompany the narrative.

Combined with the narratives of the numerous engagements and campaigns are the muster rolls, a valuable addition to the book, as in volumes one and two. Moore's works become immensely important not only for the historians as reference works, but also for genealogists. Many an individual wants to claim a Texas Ranger in their family tree, but are unaware of documentation. This work will be a good starting place for those searching for verification.



Moore's works are not limited to traditional secondary sources, such as the writings of John Henry Brown, Noah Smithwick or A. J. Sowell. He has combed through an extensive amount of primary source materials, materials in the Texas State Archives and the Center for American History, for example. Combining all these muster rolls, as well as many other prime source documentation, making them easily accessible in book form, makes Moore's works a necessary addition to any library of Texana.

One fascinating chapter deals with the so-called legend of Captain Jack Hays holding off a group of Comanches from the top of the Enchanted Rock in present Llano County. Many historians have scoffed or seriously questioned whether this engagement did in fact take place. Their reasoning is that there is no contemporary account of it, such as in early newspapers, and Jack Hays made no report of it—at least a report that has survived. Thus many believe it is just another Texas Ranger tale, based on nothing.

What is most interesting however is that Moore presents evidence that the fight probably did happen, perhaps not exactly as recounted by early writers, but reasonably close to the descriptions. Hays' reports did not always describe what today we would consider important: in one fight one of his rangers was killed, but he made no mention of the man's death. And perhaps some newspaper did report the engagement but that newspaper has not survived.

The first published account appears in Samuel Chester Reid Jr.'s account of Ben McCulloch's Texas Rangers, published in 1847. John Caperton wrote a manuscript on Hays' life, having been a ranger himself and hearing of Hays' exploits from Hays himself. Caperton's account was prepared a number of years later, and possibly based his account on Reid's.

There will always be discussion about early events in Texas history. Healthy and civil disagreements do no harm to anyone. Works such as Stephen L. Moore's three volumes only enlighten all readers.



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