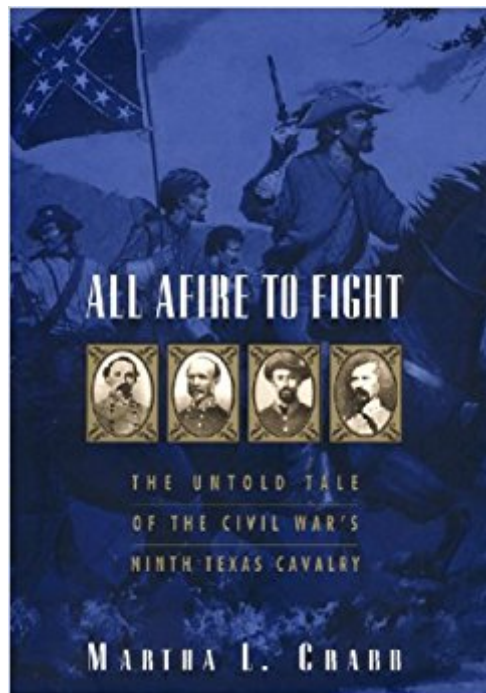




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All Afire To Fight:: The Untold Tale Of The Civil War's Ninth Texas Cavalry



Synopsis

In October 1861, the young men of the Confederacy's newly formed Ninth Texas Cavalry forded the Red River between Texas and what is now eastern Oklahoma. They would remain on active duty throughout the entire Civil War, moving from skirmish with little rest and no furloughs, distinguishing themselves in several major campaigns across the South. Their casualties would be tremendous--three-quarters of the unit would be wounded or killed in battle, die of disease or in Indian attacks, or be mustered out because of physical unfitness for service. And those who survived would not see their Texas homes again for four long years. But despite it all, they remained...ALL AFIRE TO FIGHTDrawing on letters, journal entries, family stories, and official war records, Martha Crabb re-creates the remarkable Civil War odyssey of the Ninth Texas Cavalry--a thousand or so fearless, hell-raising western boys who endured unspeakable hardships, yet didn't lose their devil-may-care spirit or raw determination to win. You'll meet teenager Newt Keen, who marched and fought for more than three years, then spent nine hellish months in a Union prison, yet still was "not half whipped"; Tom Berry, respected and honored by all, who perished during the battle of Atlanta with the regret on his lips that he could do no more; dedicated soldier A.W. Sparks who was even more dedicated to his brother, so much so that he stole into a Union hospital in order to stay with his wounded sibling for twenty-four hours; and Sul Ross, a Texan Ranger whose courage and integrity no man could doubt, who became the Ninth's brigadier general later in the war and a Texas legend after it. Through their stories, you'll get to know the human face of warfare--and experience a soldier's-eye-view of the drama, exhilaration, and horror of bloody conflict--made palpable and immediate through evocative descriptions and scrupulous research.

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Customer Reviews

Crabb's "untold tale" adds considerably and readably to knowledge of the Trans-Mississippi Confederacy. Raised in northeast Texas in fall 1861, the Ninth Texas contained few natives of the state but a great many men enthusiastic about identifying themselves with it and typically Texan in preferring to ride to war rather than walk. The regiment's career involved fighting in the Indian Territory, Arkansas, Mississippi, Georgia, and Tennessee before being furloughed to recruit back to full strength in March 1865. Although they missed a good many historic battles, the Texans saw plenty of hard fighting and almost unbelievably more hard riding, which frequently so wore out the horses that the regiment had to be dismounted. Add to those conditions the logistical shoestring on which the Confederacy fought, and it isn't wonderful that the men's health and morale suffered, though never to the point of giving up as long as there was any hope for the Confederacy. Roland Green

"Any reader who wants to march, or ride, alongside the Civil War soldier, to hear the rhythms of his speech, taste the sparseness of his rations, feel the raggedness of his clothes, share his grim laughter, smell the sweat from the heat and his fears, will experience this immediacy in Martha Crabb's magnetically readable ALL AFIRE TO FIGHT. She has wedded period documents to sharp-eyed reporting to novelistic skill in telling an unforgettable saga of war." -- Joseph E. Persico, author of *My Enemy, My Brother: Men and Days at Gettysburg*, and co-author with Colin Powell of *My American Journey*"Martha L. Crabb has produced what must be called a brutal book. For all that we have learned of the Civil War, she manages to shock us anew with her Texas boys' description of death, mutilation, illness, hunger, cold, fear, loneliness--all that 1861-1865 must have been. They tell the story, and a fearful one it is." -- Gene Smith, author of *Lee & Grant: A Dual Biography*; *American Gothic: The Booths*; and *When The Cheering Stopped*"Much of the burden of Confederate arms was borne on horseback, and especially in the vast regions west of the Appalachians and beyond the Mississippi. In the saddle, too, rode much of the greatest drama of the Civil War. Martha Crabb's ALL AFIRE TO FIGHT brings vividly to life the war fought by one dynamic outfit, the Ninth Texas Cavalry. Based on exhaustive research, and crafted with a keen ear to good storytelling, ALL AFIRE TO FIGHT offers one of the finest Southern unit histories to appear in years." -- William C. Davis"The author brings history alive in this well-researched, compelling, and vividly written account of the wild Texas boys of the Ninth Texas Cavalry. A notable contribution to Civil War literature." -- Duane Schultz, author of *The Dahlgren Affair* and *QUANTRILL'S WAR*

amazing what people before us have gone through.politics was alive and well (or sick) then even as now.strange to realize how little some things change.the young boys,full of ideal,left texas only to find unbelievable hardship and often neglect by their superiors.yet they became fierce fighting warriors that,through their resourcefulness,acquitted themselves with honor during many battles.I thoroughly enjoyed my time spent in this book and recommend it to all who are interested in this period of the history of our nation.

Being a civil war re-en actor and in a Calvary unit, this book gave me more insight of the daily lives of those who rode horse back during the civil war.

I am a "California Yankee" whose favorite view of Texas has usually been through the rear view mirror - I should not have liked this book. But as a retired military officer, I was enthralled by Martha

Crabb's graphic telling of men at war. Her obviously well documented and researched stories about the brutal fighting conditions, starvation, and primitive medical care gave me a real respect for the combatants of the civil war era and just how much some parts of warfare have changed for the better. And her description of broken government promises, bureaucratic obstacles, and the occasional incompetent leader, showed how much has remained the same. This book would make a great movie

Any Texan interested in the state's role during the Civil War, and certainly any Civil War enthusiast will find much to enjoy in Ms. Crabb's detailed account of this little-known aspect of that bloody conflict. She doesn't shy away from reporting just how terrible a conflict it was, but she humanizes it by following, mile by agonizing mile, the Ninth Texas from its formation, through each of its battles and conflicts, until she brings the survivors home. Her book is meticulously annotated and documented, leaving little doubt as to her sources and her extensive research. Even long-time Civil War buffs are guaranteed many new insights into this unit. Particularly interesting are the reports of daily life of the ordinary boys and young men who made up the Ninth Texas Cavalry, the ordeals they faced just to survive, and the extraordinary courage they showed as they battled Union troops, fatigue, ravenous hunger, and homesickness. Because of the distance back to Texas, most never returned until the conflict ended; hundreds of others were buried throughout the South. Through her book, Martha Crabb once again brings alive the terrible toll exacted by this Civil War, describing battles and wounds until the reader can hear echos of the cannon and the screams of the wounded. It's not a pretty picture she describes, but it's one which every American should face once again.

Afraid he might miss GLORIOUS war, Reuben silently escapes from Pa's farm to join the Texas Cavalry. Through four years of the American Civil War Reuben and his fellow soldiers suffer HIDEOUS war without adequate food, clothing, and arms. Often led by fools, they fought heat, cold, measles, dysentery, and Indians, yet they never waver in their courage and dedication. Many of the men of the Ninth Texas Cavalry had lived in Texas only a few months, at most a couple of years - yet Texas Pride permeates the story. Meticulously researched, Ms Crabb has used letters and diaries written by the men of the Ninth to tell the story. All Afire to Fight reads like a modern best selling thriller. It is filled with action, pathos, and undiluted horror as told by the men who did the fighting.

There's nothing I appreciate more is a historical work where the author has consulted numerous

often obscure primary sources in order to construct a never before written history. All Afire to Fight is one such work, and I have to say I have really enjoyed reading this book and learning about the Ninth Texas Cavalry--not to mention the military activities in the theater of the war where they were active, about which I am not that familiar at the moment. I found the narrative to be excellently written for the most part, although there were a few awkward spots. The one real detracting aspect of the book was the lack of a roster. In my opinion, no regimental history should be without one (the more detailed the better!) provided the information is extant.

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