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Granbury's Texas Brigade: Diehard Western Confederates (Conflicting Worlds: New Dimensions of the American Civil War)

John R. Lundberg

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John R. Lundberg's compelling new military history chronicles the evolution of Granbury's Texas Brigade, perhaps the most distinguished combat unit in the Confederate Army of Tennessee. Named for its commanding officer, Brigadier General Hiram B. Granbury, the brigade fought tenaciously in the western theater even after Confederate defeat seemed certain. Granbury's Texas Brigade explores the motivations behind the unit's decision to continue to fight, even as it faced demoralizing defeats and Confederate collapse. Using a vast array of letters, diaries, and regimental documents, Lundberg offers provocative insight into the minds of the unit's men and commanders. The caliber of that leadership, he concludes, led to the group's overall high morale.

Lundberg asserts that although mass desertion rocked Granbury's Brigade early in the war, that desertion did not necessarily indicate a lack of commitment to the Confederacy but merely a desire to fight the enemy closer to home. Those who remained in the ranks became the core of Granbury's Brigade and fought until the final surrender. Morale declined only after Union bullets cut down much of the unit's officer corps at the Battle of Franklin in 1864.

After the war, Lundberg shows, men from the unit did not abandon the ideals of the Confederacy -- they simply continued their devotion in different ways. Granbury's Texas Brigade presents military history at its best, revealing a microcosm of the Confederate war effort and aiding our understanding of the reasons men felt compelled to fight in America's greatest tragedy.

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