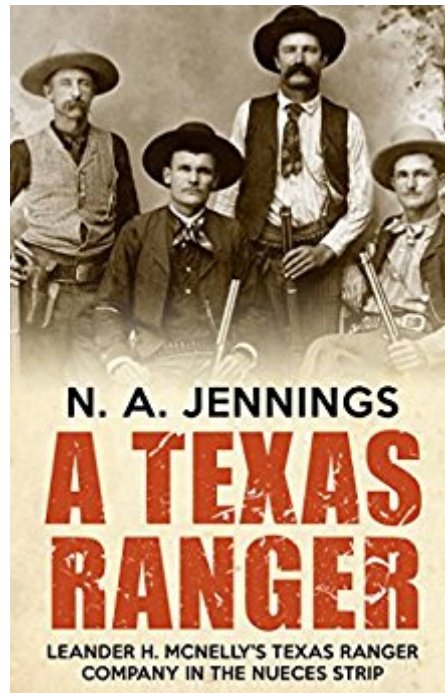




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A Texas Ranger



Synopsis

In 1874, Napoleon Augustus Jennings moved to Texas to become a prominent member of the Texas Rangers tasked with border patrol under the command of L.H. McNelly. South Texas was overrun by thieves and outlaws, and over three thousand Mexican guerrillas raided settlers on both sides of the border. McNelly's Rangers became famous for their often violent and murderous campaigns. Maintaining strict law in the anarchic area was not easy and they quickly gained a reputation as "fire-eating, quarrelsome daredevils". During this period they made over eleven hundred arrests and killed many more. McNelly ordered them "to have fun, and to carry out a set policy of terrorizing the Mexicans at every opportunity," Jennings's memoir includes many accounts of these clashes with Mexican guerrillas and records well-known incidents involving McNelly's battles with the US government and the fight at Las Cuevas with Cortuna and his raiders. Jennings also provides first-hand accounts of scrapes with King Fisher's outlaw band, John Wesley Hardin, and the families involved in the Taylor-Sutton feud. In an era of cattle thieving and terror, A Texas Ranger follows Jennings through the southern border of Texas and finds a vivid first-hand portrayal of life in the late 19th century in one of the most lawless and violent places in the United States. "If any time of the past was ever vivid and vital enough to live on through mere reporting it was the time when McNelly's rangers rode the bloody border of Texas. Hence it is exceedingly fortunate that a man who was to become a skilled reporter rode with them and later saw reason for putting down some of the things he had been part of." J. Frank Dobie Napoleon Augustus Jennings was born in Philadelphia, the son of a wealthy merchant, on January 11, 1856, and graduated from St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire. He moved to Texas in 1874 and became a ranger, that years chronicled in this book. When his father died in 1878 he returned to Philadelphia and attempted to run the family business, but was smothered by city life. He returned to the West in 1881 as a prospector, miner, stagecoach driver, and sign painter in Colorado. Jennings died in New York on December 15, 1919.

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Customer Reviews

I read several chapters last night and am not sure I will continue with the book. Many of the character's adventures read like a tall tale or campfire story leading me to believe this book is more fiction than fact. Another reviewer indicated the author took liberties with the truth in this book.

The author served with the famed Texas Rangers as a young man for approximately three years. Despite the relatively short term of service, it was a very full experience, including some of the most famous exploits of the early days of the Rangers. Told with wit and self-deprecating humor, it is an easy and thoroughly enjoyable read.

Garth Brooks has a song called Cowboy Bill. The lyrics go " He told a good story of his life on the border and the way it was then". This book tells the story of a man like Bill who in another lyric "rode with the Rangers". However, this is not a tale of fiction, but rather a fascinating true story. It is probably the best non-fiction book ever written about a man like Bill.

The book, written by Jennings, was a very interesting read because you can tell there are life experiences involved by the slow evolving story. It kept my interest the entire way through the book. I even knew some people named Selmon in my youth in Callahan County Texas. It made the reading even more interesting.

I always enjoy reading history written by those who actually were there.. this book was well well-written and very engaging.

I picked up this book while on a trip to Texas, since I was interested in learning more about the history of the area. I found the story both informative and entertaining. Recommended for anyone interested in Texas history or just an exciting true adventure.

Great book about true 1870's era Texas Ranger adventures and gunfights.

A very interesting account of what it was like to be a Texas Ranger during their inception. A first handed story that will hold your interest.

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