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The Black Infantry in the West, 1869-1891, by Arlen L. Fowler

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insolvency, regional divisions, the deceitfulness of General Antonio López de Santa Anna, the refusal of Manuel Gómez Pedraza and his moderate party to cooperate, the lack of patriotism by the Church, the militia as a political form of curtailing their power base, plus the lack of A sense of national identity. The Moderate statesman Mariano Otero wondered why the Mexicans did not rise up in defense of their homeland in the way that the Spaniards had done during the Napoleonic invasion of 1808, he concluded that Mexico's military fiasco in 1847 could only be attributed to the fact that "there has not been nor could there have been, a national spirit, for there is no nation", it would take until the next century before a united Mexico would evolve.

The last chapter, four and a half pages, is a brief assessment of the previous chapters with a glimpse at the political post war period of Mexico until 1870.

Terry D. Hooker
President, South and Central American Military
Historians Society
Hull, England

The March to the Sea and Beyond, Sherman's Troops in the Savannah and Carolinas Campaigns. Joseph T. Glatthaar. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995. Appendices, Bibliography, Index, Maps, Notes and Photographs. xiv plus 318 pages. \$14.95.

The author, a history professor at the University of Houston, has published two other well received books on the Civil War, and this book confirms Professor Glatthaar's position as a very talented historian/author. *The March to the Sea and Beyond* is the winner of the prestigious Bell Irvin Wiley Award, Fletcher Pratt Award, and the Jefferson Davis Award.

This book is an examination of Sherman's army in order to demonstrate how that army was different from all other Civil War armies. The primary distinction revolves around the fact that Sherman's army was dominated by seasoned veterans. The author tells us that it was his "intention in writing this book to examine the campaigns from the level of the common soldier, both enlisted men and officers, to illuminate that veteran character (page xii)." To achieve this analysis, Glatthaar explores the relationships of Sherman's soldiers and their attitudes and viewpoints toward the people and

institutions they were at war with.

The major theme of this book is to show how success of Sherman's Savannah and Carolina campaigns were successful, in large part, as a result of the makeup of his army. Thus we see how the army, consisting of the XIV, XV, XVII and XX Corps conducted their movements through the South. The support of the soldiers in this army towards the war effort was almost universal. Glatthaar demonstrates this fact by analyzing the returns of the 1864 presidential election and discovering that eighty-six percent of the men voted for Abraham Lincoln. Their support did not stop just at the ballot box. The author has thoroughly researched their letters and diaries to see how the soldiers influenced their friends and families back home to support the war effort.

The book constantly reveals ways how the veterans of this army impacted on its successes. More than fifty percent of the company level troops reenlisted, and the vast majority of the officer corps had joined the army in 1861-1862. Thus, the veterans knew what was needed in order to be successful, and they imparted this knowledge upon the new recruits. This had a positive effect upon the ability of the army to invade Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina and successfully prosecute the war against the South.

Joseph Glatthaar has done a superb job in researching this book. He has relied extensively upon primary sources in his writing, and this greatly enhances the value of the book. *The March to the Sea and Beyond* is an excellent analysis of Sherman's army in 1864-1865 and is recommended reading for anybody wishing a better understanding of this largely overlooked army.

Jay Jorgensen
Colonia, New Jersey

The Black Infantry in the West, 1869-1891. Arlen L. Fowler. With a new Foreword by William H. Leckie. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996. Bibliography, Index, Notes and Photographs. xxii plus 167. \$12.95 paperback.

This 1996 paperback edition of Arlen Fowler's standard work on the black infantry in the west is a convenient overview of the 24th and 25th Regiment's contribution to the settlement of Texas, the Indian Territory, the Dakotas, Montana and Arizona. Historian William H. Leckie provides a new foreword calling it

"essential reading" for understanding the African American role on the frontier. Indeed, although recent studies have overshadowed this brief survey, it is still an excellent starting point for studies of the buffalo soldiers and should be read as the ground-breaking research it was when first published.

Fowler's history is a straightforward recordation of the general movements of these two regiments beginning with their ten years along the Texas-Mexican border. In 1880 the 25th was moved to the Dakotas and the 24th to Oklahoma and later Arizona. Being infantry, their lives had little of the glamour and glory associated with the 9th and 10th Cavalry. Theirs was the hard, monotonous duty of manning the garrisons, guarding and escorting supply trains, road repair, wood cutting assignments and stringing telegraph wire. This duty was only occasionally broken by patrols and both units participated in the dangerous expeditions across the border into Mexico. In the Dakotas the 25th provided disaster relief to homesteaders and took part in the Pine Ridge Campaign. In Oklahoma the 24th kept the peace at various Indian agencies. In 1888 the 24th were transferred to the Arizona Territory where they struggled mightily with the weather, monotony and isolation. Despite bad food, unhealthy living conditions, incessant boredom and routine, Fowler points out that both regiments had desertion rates below the white units. Although one must temper this record with the fact that their garrisons were remote and there were very few other opportunities for blacks in the west, it is still an impressive record.

Interestingly, the reviews of this book when it first came out were not all that favorable and some were highly critical. All pointed out the need for such studies and recognized that the subject was long overdue. But most were also critical of its brevity, lack of depth, and occasional historical errors. One reviewer went so far as to state that it "lacked scholarly objectivity," which is a bit too strong. Another called it a "narrowly conceived institutional history," a criticism with some merit. Admittedly, it is simply a published version of Fowler's dissertation, and reads like one. Further, as Leckie notes, it fails to discuss the individual soldiers (and for that matter the white officers), who made up these units. Including more on the personalities would have made it much more readable, as would more detail into their campaigns. None of the reviews mentions the lack of maps; a failing common among military histories, this one included. On the other hand, Fowler's chapters on the education of the black soldiers and the attitudes toward the black infantryman read better than the early narrative chapters and are more insightful.

The book's greatest contribution, when written and still today, is simply to bring an awareness that the undermanned, poorly equipped, and largely unappreciated black infantry in the west were there. The men of these two units did their duty, performed well, suffered much, and deserve recognition. This book laid the foundation for more detailed studies of the black infantry. Today it serves as a quick reference for those acquainted with the buffalo soldiers and as a beginning point for the uninitiated.

Steven D. Smith
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The U. S. Army in the West, 1870-1880: Uniforms, Weapons, and Equipment. Douglas C. McChristian. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995. Appendices, Bibliography, Illustrations, Index and Photographs. xix plus 313 pages. \$34.95.

The trans-Mississippi western frontier is as much a part of American folklore as it was a historical phenomenon. The hardy pioneer family, trekking over the Santa Fe Trail, the mysterious gunslinger, ready to defend hapless townspeople against marauding bandits, the war-bonneted Cheyenne warrior, at once savage, noble, and doomed--all are images which have entered the popular imagination and indeed, affected historical scholarship for better and worse. Of all the images of the nineteenth century west, however, perhaps none is as evocative of the rugged frontier as the intrepid army trooper. Whether bravely riding to his death in "They Died with Their Boots On" or appearing in a popular insurance advertisement, the frontier soldier or cavalryman often appears immaculately uniformed, campaign hat jauntily tilted on his head, and yellow kerchief blowing in the prairie wind. As Douglas C. McChristian, National Park Service Chief Historian at the Little Big Horn Battlefield points out in *The U. S. Army in the West, 1870-1880*, however, the popular image and historical reality are, to put it lightly, at odds.

This new publication by the University of Oklahoma Press is organized by time period. McChristian notes that in the aftermath of the Civil War, the army was saddled with an over-abundance of poorly-made uniforms based largely on European prewar designs. These were singularly ill-suited for the realities of western field campaigns, and in fact had a discernible impact on troop morale, already low because of the post-