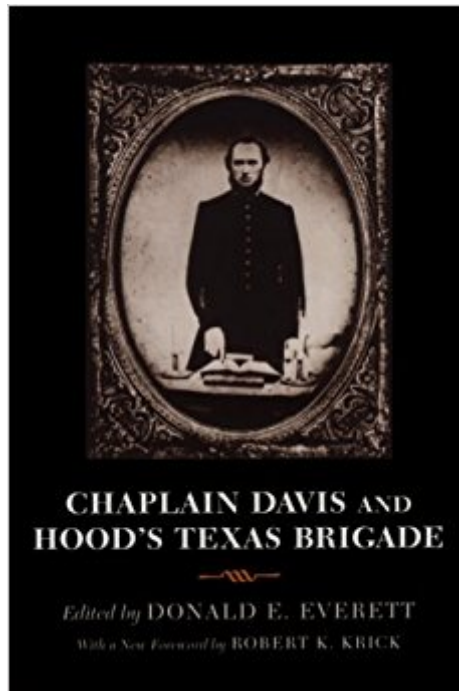


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Chaplain Davis And Hood's Texas Brigade



Synopsis

Ordained a Presbyterian minister in the late 1840s, Nicholas A. Davis joined the Fourth Regiment of Texas Volunteers as chaplain in 1861. Soon after, the unit moved to Virginia, where they fought in the Seven Days Campaign, Second Manassas, Sharpsburg, and Fredericksburg. Davis wrote his memoir two years into battle, drawing upon keen observational skills and a diary he kept faithfully. He delves deeply into little known topics such as religion in the field, the duties of army chaplains, the appalling condition of wounded men, and war-time Richmond. Originally published in 1863 and expanded by Donald Everett in 1962, the volume has won acclaim from both scholars and buffs. To Everett's muster rolls, casualty list, editor's notes, and encompassing index, Robert Krick now adds a new foreword discussing the unsurpassed standing of this work.

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Customer Reviews

Donald E. Everett is professor of history emeritus at Trinity University in San Antonio. Robert K. Krick is chief historian with the National Park Service and the author of several books on the Civil War.

This work is a valuable read for any dedicated student of the Civil War generally and the Texas Brigade in particular. What makes this work so special is that it was written and published in Richmond in 1863- at the height of Lee's power and Southern dominance on Eastern battlefields. None of the memoirs written years later by looking backward through past events. Rather, Davis

wrote of the events of his present and looking forward to a free and independent Southern nation for, at this point of the war in any case, he never doubted it's eventual outcome. Perhaps his view of things was colored more than most since his life more than those he ministered to was founded on faith. Know this right now: Davis was a man of his times; The Negro race was inferior and suitably fitted by God for their role in Davis' society. He had little more use for Catholics or others with religious views particularly different from his own and his belief in his religion was rock solid, four square and unwavering. Some liberal minded readers of today might not be able to handle this work. Just keep another thing in mind: If, and indeed he was a man of his times, he was also singular in his beliefs and opinions. He did all that he could to ease the mental, spiritual and physical suffering of his charges. He entertained no doubt that all he did was guided by the hand of God and the results of his efforts was invariably unquestionably right. If it sounds like I condemn or mock him, you mistake me. I respect him greatly. He stayed close to the troops when he could have spent nearly every night of his service in comfort at some prominent home or another. He worked hard and determinedly and his faith was the product of a strong and indomitable will. Such was the heart of the Confederacy personified, all that was right and wrong with it. However, his views and efforts were not always appreciated or even agreed with. Other memoirs mention Chaplain Davis and they are not usually with any particular affection. In two cases, he was forthrightly condemned for his actions by the writers. The incident was the same for both. As in Washington DC, Richmond was among other things one vast hospital. A place called "Chimborazo" was the primary official complex but other organizations and even private homes provided beds for the sick and wounded. One such organization was run by the "Daughters of Charity" a Catholic organization. They cared specifically to the wounded it being undesirable to expose the women, largely seen as unfit to be nurse in that time and place, to communicable diseases. But soon the government recognized, largely at the insistence of doctors, soldiers, any who came under their care, was second to none and superior to most. As Catholics, Davis could not stand them. He managed to obtain the use of a building and was able to get it staffed to care specifically for members of the Texas Brigade. It should not be hard to imagine his efforts were not generally appreciated by the soldiers. By 1863, Davis calling took him back to Texas and so there ended his narrative about his service in Virginia. I have tried to let you know what to expect. It is a unique look at the War among the many volumes concerning it. You may want to unload it after you've read it but, read it you should. Don't forget, he was NOT typical of a Confederate South and the bulk of it's soldiers. I have not seen this particular edition so cannot speak specifically on it. That's why only 4 stars.

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