



Mier Expedition Diary: A Texan Prisoner's Account (Elma Dill Russell Spencer Foundation)

Joseph D. McCutchan

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Few episodes in Texas history have excited more popular interest than the Mier Expedition of 1842.

Nineteen-year-old Joseph D. McCutchan was among the 300 Texans who, without the cover of the Lone Star flag, launched their own disastrous invasion across the Rio Grande.

McCutchan's diary provides a vivid account of his experience—the Texans' quick dispatch by Mexican troops at the town of Mier, the hardships of a forced march to Mexico City, over twenty months of imprisonment, and the journey back home after release. Although there are other firsthand accounts of the Mier Expedition, McCutchan was the only diarist who followed the Tampico route to Mexico City. His account documents a different experience than that of the main body of prisoners who marched to the national capital by way of Monterrey, Saltillo, and Agua Nueva.

Among the last of the prisoners to be freed, McCutchan covers in his journal the whole period of confinement from December 26, 1842, to the final release on September 16, 1844.

The McCutchan diary is set apart from other Mier accounts not only by the new information it provides, but also by Joseph Milton Nance's superb editing. Nance is the acknowledged authority on the hostilities between Texas and Mexico during the era of the Texas Republic. He has transcribed, edited, and annotated the diary with characteristic scholarship and painstaking attention to detail.

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