



Moss Bluff Rebel: A Texas Pioneer in the Civil War (Sam Rayburn Series on Rural Life, sponsored by Texas A&M University-Commerce)

Philip Robert Caudill

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So wrote Texas pioneer cattle drover William Berry Duncan in his March 1862 diary entry, the day he joined the Confederate Army. Despite his misgivings, Duncan left his prosperous business to lead neighbors and fellow volunteers as commanding officer of cavalry Company F of Spaight's Eleventh Battalion that later became the 21st Texas Infantry in America's Civil War.

Philip Caudill's rich account, drawn from Duncan's previously untapped diaries and letters written by candlelight on the Gulf Coast cattle trail to New Orleans, in Confederate Army camps, and on his southeast Texas farm after the war, reveals the personable Duncan as a man of steadfast integrity and extraordinary leadership. After the war, he returned to his home in Liberty County and battled for survival on the chaotic Reconstruction-era Texas frontier.

Supplemented by archival records and complementary accounts, *Moss Bluff Rebel* paints a picture of everyday life for the Anglo-Texans who settled the Mexican land grants in the early nineteenth century and subsequently became citizens of the proudly independent Texas Republic. The carefully crafted narrative goes on to reveal the wartime emotions of a reluctant Confederate officer and his postwar struggles to reinvent the lifestyle he knew before the war, a way of life he sensed was lost forever.

Moss Bluff Rebel will appeal to history lovers of all ages attracted to the drama of the Civil War period and the men and women who shaped the Texas frontier.



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