



A history of Texas and Texans

Francis White Johnson

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EDITOR'S PREFACE For some years before his death in 1884 Colonel Frank W. Johnson occupied himself in collecting material for and writing a comprehensive history of Texas down to annexation. He left his manuscripts to several "literary executors," of whom Judge A. W. Terrell was the last to survive. In August of 1912 the American Historical Society of Chicago asked me to write for them a history of Texas. I was unable to undertake the task and suggested that they publish Johnson's manuscript with editorial additions which would bring it down to date and give the results of research since Johnson's time. They accepted the suggestion and Judge Terrell welcomed the opportunity to publish the book and consented to write a sketch of Johnson as an introduction. His sudden death two months later prevented his carrying out this intention. On examination I found Johnson's work of value chiefly for the period from 1820 to 1836. His plan was to make the book a documentary history, letting the original documents, so far as possible, carry the narrative. Some of the documents that he used had already been printed in Kennedy, Foote and Yoakum, and since his death some additional ones have appeared in John Henry Brown's 'History of Texas;' but some have never been published. The idea of a documentary history of this period is a good one, for the reason that the colonization of Texas by emigrants from the United States, and the subsequent revolution from Mexico, have generally been misrepresented as deliberate moves in a conspiracy of southern slaveholders to wrest Texas from Mexico and annex it to the United States. No denial of this charge can be so effective as the contemporary documents themselves, which go far toward revealing the thoughts and feelings of the set...



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