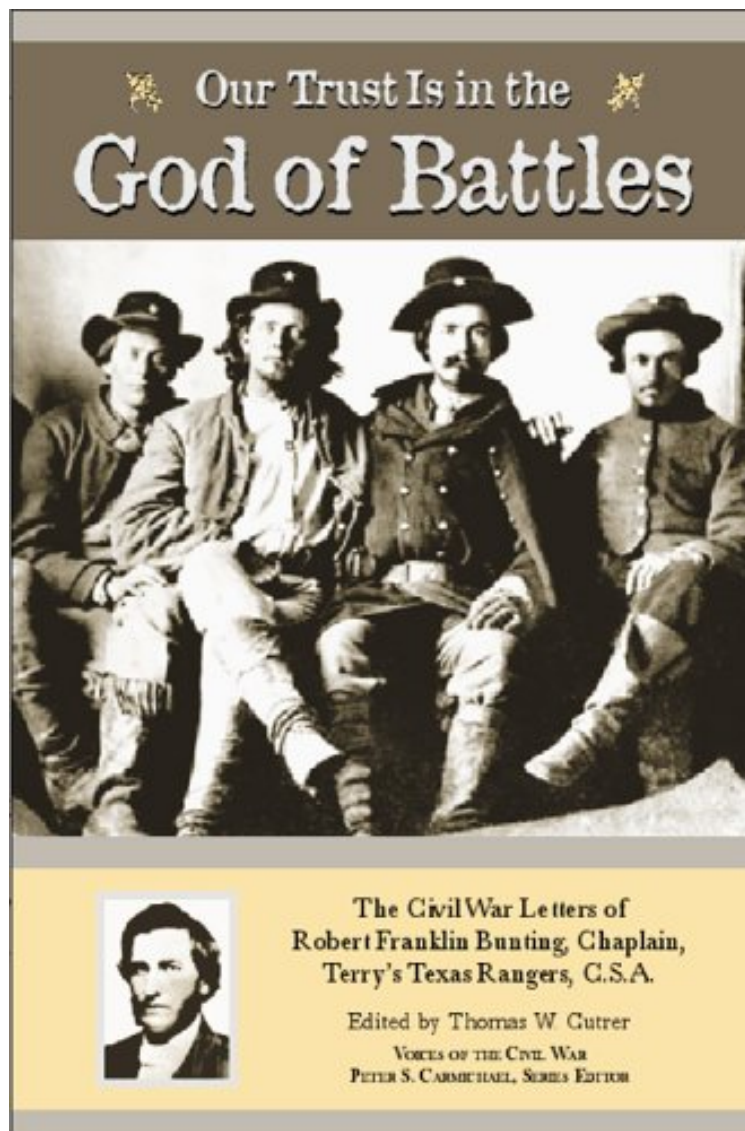


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Robert Franklin Bunting, Chaplain, Terry's Texas Rangers (Voices Of The Civil War):

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy James L. Smithgood compilation of letters articles which aided in my research project0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Chaplain of CSA's Terry's Texas Rangers was Cousin of Ulysses S. Grant!By Will HarveyIn his unpublished book which is in the Dr. Robert F. Bunting's papers at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Henry S. Bunting states:"General Ulysses S. Grant and Dr. Bunting were cousins. Margaret Moody Kelley, Dr. Bunting's great-aunt, married Noah Grant and was the grandmother of General Grant." ("The Biography of Robert F. Bunting, A.M., B.D., D.D., Pioneer Texas Presbyterian Clergyman and Confederate Chaplain," by Henry S. Bunting). In 2010, Rev. William H. Carr of Corpus Christi, Texas asked former President of Virginia Military Institute, Dr. Josiah Bunting, author of a biography on Ulysses S. Grant (Josiah Bunting, "Ulysses S. Grant: The American Presidents Series: The 18th President, 1869-1877," New York: Time Books, 2004) and his account of the Vietnam War, "The Lionheads," (1972) if he was a close relative of Chaplain Dr. Robert Bunting in as much as both were from the prominent Bunting family of Pennsylvania and Josiah had just written Grant's biography. Josiah told Carr "no we are not related." From this conversation and other revelations Carr wrote "Sulfur, Lead and Poppies," (2015)2 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Texas Tall TaleBy Sherman PeabodyRobert Franklin Bunting grew up in southwestern Pennsylvania and graduated from Washington College, Princeton Seminary and Princeton College before settling in Texas in 1852 as a Presbyterian minister. He became as ardent a racist, pro-southerner, pro-Confederacy supporter as the air of Texas could make him. In the fall of 1861 Bunting became the chaplain of the 8th Texas Cavalry, Terry's Texas Rangers, and followed that famous regiment until the end of the war. Bunting believed in a personal God who directly intervened in daily life and truly believed that God cared about the fortunes his His chosen people, in this case, the white people of the southern Confederacy. His letters home for publication have been gathered by Thomas W. Cutrer and they are well worth reading. Not only do they contain detailed information about the operations of the Texas Rangers in the Army of Tennessee, but also lengthy sermons on just how God supports the destiny of the Confederacy. Bunting interpolates each southern defeat into a silver lining; in fact, in his last letter, written on April 7, 1865, he knew of the evacuation of Richmond and Petersburg, Sherman's advances in North Carolina and Jefferson Davis' flight to Danville, Virginia. Bunting says: if only Davis can escape, raise a new army, smite the dreaded abolitionists, ALL WILL BE WELL. He gets points for keeping a positive attitude. I really wonder whether these letters, which appeared in Texas newspapers, really reflect Bunting's own opinions, or whether they were meant to raise civilian courage. I suspect they really reflect Bunting's actual point of view.Thomas W. Cutrer is an awful editor. I wonder just how much of Bunting's world view he believes. Bunting is full of brag and blast and Cutrer's editorial comments do not mitigate what Bunting claims, but really add to them. For example, Cutrer quotes a veteran Texas Ranger who claimed in the "Confederate Veteran" that the former commander of the 4th United States Cavalry admitted that the Texans killed 700 of his men throughout the Civil War (page xxii). Cutrer uses this citation twice (including in again in Wheeler's Raid after the Battle of Chickamauga). BUT, Fox's "Regimental Losses" list the 4th US Cavalry's entire Civil War casualties as 3 officers and 59 enlisted men killed or died of wounds and 109 men died of non-hostile causes. Perhaps Cutrer would have us believe the Texas Rangers killed all the 62 Yankees and then perhaps secretly poisoned the 109, and did this four times over to make a total 700 dead Yanks. Similarly, in a December 1861 skirmish with the German 32nd Indiana Infantry, Colonel Terry and 3 privates were killed and a dozen men wounded. Bunting claims that the Texas Rangers killed 114 Hoosiers and nowhere does Cutrer attempt to state the truth. (The 32nd's losses were 10 killed and two dozen wounded.) Perhaps Cutrer does this because he is a bad researcher and cannot ferret out the facts on Federal soldiers, or because he is biased and lets his world view get in the way of writing history. In either case, his editorial comments are very suspect and are the weakest part of this otherwise fine and valuable book.

Robert Franklin Bunting was a Princeton-educated chaplain who served in the Confederate 8th Texas Cavalry, popularly known as Terry's Texas Rangers, which saw combat at Shiloh, Murfreesboro, and Chickamauga. The manuscript consists primarily of ninety-five letters that Bunting wrote to a variety of Texas newspapers. Designed primarily to describe the unit's movements and actions in detail, the letters also strove to maintain morale as the Confederates' prospects dimmed. Unlike most Civil War soldiers, Bunting wrote with the explicit purpose of publishing his correspondence, seeking to influence congregations of civilians on the home front just as he had done when he lectured them from the pulpit before the Civil War. Bunting's letters cover military actions in great detail, yet they were also like sermons, filled with inspiring rhetoric that turned fallen soldiers into Christian martyrs, Yankees into godless abolitionist hordes, and Southern women into innocent defenders of home and hearth. As such, the public nature of Bunting's writings gives the reader an exceptional opportunity to see how Confederates constructed the ideal of a Southern soldier. Taken as a whole, the letters provide a glimpse into a little-understood aspect of Civil War historiography: the way in which religion influenced the ideology of soldiers and civilians. They also provide a rare first-person perspective on the role of the chaplain in the Confederate Army. Finally, Bunting's letters display an example of successful wartime propaganda: the consistent optimism maintained in the letters doubtless encouraged

soldiers in the ill-fated Army of the Tennessee to remain in the ranks for four long years.

About the Author Thomas W. Cutrer is professor of American studies at Arizona State University West. He is the author of *Ben McCulloch and the Frontier Military Tradition* and *Parnassus on the Mississippi: The Southern and the Baton Rouge Literary Community, 1935-1942*.