



Beyond the Cross Timbers: The Travels of Randolph B. Marcy

W. Eugene Hollon

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Acclaimed in his own time, Captain Randolph B. Marcy—trailblazer, geographer, fighter in the Mexican War, American Indian authority, and author—traveled as extensively as any other nineteenth-century explorer. Yet Marcy has not achieved the fame of Lewis and Clark, Pike, Long, or Frémont, although he was the first to trace the Red River, in 1852.

Marcy conducted five major expeditions through the West and drafted the first reasonably accurate maps of the Southwest. His advice to his military superiors led to the establishment of the chain of “Cross Timbers” forts from Fort Smith to New Mexico, including Forts Arbuckle, Belknap, and Sill, and the location of a number of Indian reservations. During the Mormon War Marcy led a dramatic march over 634 miles of snow-covered mountains to New Mexico to obtain relief supplies for isolated Fort Bridger, Wyoming.

Beyond the Cross Timbers: The Travels of Randolph B. Marcy brings Marcy’s adventures to light, tracing his fifty years of army service and his epic journeys of exploration. W. Eugene Hollon utilized Marcy’s books, official Washington files, and the unpublished personal correspondence of the Marcy and McClellan families to present a graphic picture of nineteenth-century army life at lonely frontier posts, and the trials faced by the band of intrepid wives who followed their soldier husbands into the wilderness. Hollon also includes the story of the wooing and winning of daughter Mary Ellen Marcy by young Lieutenant George B. McClellan, who was to become his father-in-law’s commanding officer during the Civil War and Lincoln’s opponent in the 1864 election.

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