

No Pardons to Ask, Nor Apologies to Make: The Journal of William Henry King, Gray's 28th Louisiana Infantry Regiment (Voices Of The Civil War)

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William Henry King began war service in 1862 in Louisiana and ended it in 1865 in Camden, Arkansas. During this period he chronicled action in the Trans-Mississippi theater, producing a diary that yields one of the most important accounts from a Confederate enlisted man. No Pardons to Ask, Nor Apologies to Make is a gritty look into the life of a soldier, with no romantic gloss. While most journals record the mundane dayto-dayroutine, King's consistently detailed entries-notable for their literary style, King's venomous wit, and his colorful descriptions-cover a wide array of matters pertaining to the Confederate experience in the West. King's observations about his superiors, the Confederacy, contraband, and the underreported Trans-Mississippi campaign are especially striking. Though his long service demonstrates a certain loyalty to the Confederate cause, he writes sharp criticisms of his superiors, of military discipline, and of contemporaneous social and class conditions. His discontent is rooted within a fiery sense of independence that conflicts with centralized authority, whether it takes the form of military, government, or class control. Few published diaries capture the tension and turmoil that existed in the Southern ranks or the class resentment that festered in some quarters of the Confederacy. No Pardons to Ask, Nor Apologies to Make makes an important contribution to understanding how class functioned in the Confederate command and also provides a muchneeded account of action in the Trans-Mississippi theater, where the primary sources are extremely slim.

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