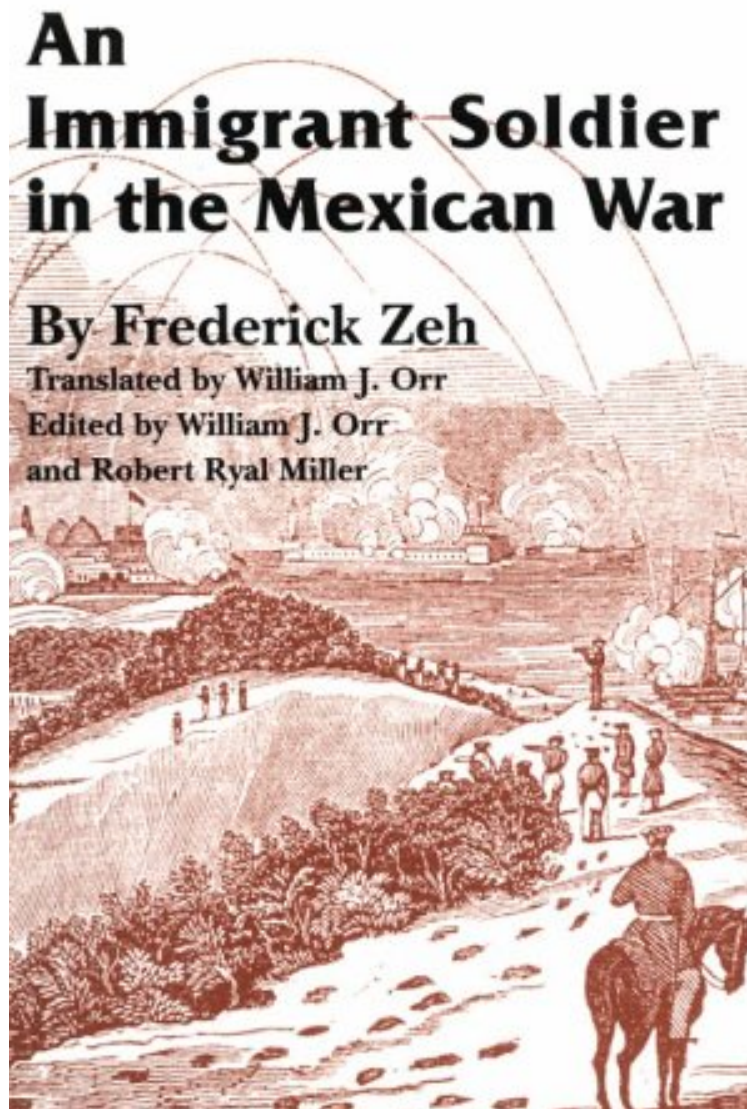


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## An Immigrant Soldier in the Mexican War (Elma Dill Russell Spencer Series in the West and Southwest)

*Frederick Zeh*

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#4858655 in Books Texas AM University Press 1995-10-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.83 x .64 x 5.791, .79 #File Name: 0890966672144 pages | File size: 69.Mb

**Frederick Zeh : An Immigrant Soldier in the Mexican War (Elma Dill Russell Spencer Series in the West and Southwest)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised An Immigrant Soldier in the Mexican War (Elma Dill Russell Spencer Series in the West and Southwest):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent German-American Enlisted Account  
By William Bozic  
This book is a translation of the serialized accounts of Private Frederick Zeh in the Mexican War from a German-language newspaper in the USA done thirty years after the war with Mexico. Zeh's telling is clear and adds new insight into the plight of the common soldier. A large percent of the US Army was foreign-born, so this book sheds light into a neglected aspect of the war; namely foreign-born soldiers fighting in the American ranks. Frederick Zeh arrived in the USA and found hard times. He recounts the debt slavery (Purposely being paid/fed just enough to keep him from starving by his employer in New Jersey) and being fearful of the Nativist attacks against immigrants in nearby Philadelphia, which obliged him to join the US Regular Army in a special rocket/howitzer unit. This is an intimate view from a common soldier. Frederick Zeh arrived at Vera Cruz and fought in the battles of Scott's campaign from Vera Cruz to Mexico City as an artilleryman. His observations of the Siege of Vera Cruz, Battle of Cerro Gordo, etc. are very precise. Do not expect much on grand strategy, as this is a tale of the dangers hardships of a man and his comrades-in-arms. Editors have corrected any minor errors by Zeh and provided excellent endnotes for clarification and further study. This work could be read in a short time and pondered for much longer.

Soon after emigrating from Germany to the United States, Frederick Zeh impulsively joined the army as war with Mexico loomed. His written account is the first book-length description of the Mexican War by a German-American participant a significant contribution, given that nearly half the regular army was made up of immigrant recruits. Although Zeh held the lowly rank of "laborer" in the army, he was well educated and an astute observer, and his story is both lively and well written. Besides the horror of battles, he describes relations between officers and enlisted men, military punishment, and day-to-day life. He is unusually candid about abuses that occurred in the American army and toward Mexican civilians. The editors' introduction gives biographical information on Zeh and sets the stage for the narrative. An epilogue traces the highlights of his activities in the half-century following his military service.

Language Notes  
Text: English (translation) Original Language: German  
From the Back Cover  
Frederick Zeh, a young German immigrant, had hardly arrived in the United States when he was caught up in the war fever that swept his new homeland. He joined the Mountain Howitzer and Rocket Company of the U.S. Army. His impressions of the siege of Veracruz, the long march to Mexico City, the bloody battles that occurred along the route, and the occupation of the capital provide a vivid and unusual account of the Mexican War from an enlisted man's point of view. Although Zeh held the lowly rank of "laborer" in the army, he was well-educated and an astute observer, and his story is both lively and well-written. Besides the horror of battles, he tells about relations between officers and enlisted men, military punishment, and the day-to-day life of the soldiers. Numerous anecdotes and personal stories enliven his narrative. He is unusually candid about abuses that occurred in the American army and toward Mexican civilians. His is also the first book-length account written by a German-American participant - a significant contribution, given that nearly half the regular army was made up of immigrant recruits.  
About the Author  
WILLIAM J. ORR, a foreign service officer with the U.S. State Department since 1987, received his Ph. D. from University of Wisconsin, Madison, and has taught European history at Beloit College and Carroll College. He has done extensive work in translating and editing foreign language documents pertaining to U.S. history.  
ROBERT RYAL MILLER died in 2004. Among his many books on U.S. Mexican history is *The Mexican War Journal and Letters of Ralph W. Kirkham*.