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The Secret War for Texas (Elma Dill Russell Spencer Series in the West and Southwest)

Stuart Reid

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Could the British have stopped Manifest Destiny in its tracks in 1836?

A Scottish doctor named James Grant was the agent who tried to make it happen, and Texas was the stage on which the secret battle was fought.

On the eve of the Texas uprising, only two things stood in the way of American ambitions to reach the Pacific Ocean: the British claim to the Oregon country and the vast but sparsely populated Mexican province of Texas. Britain was therefore almost as concerned with the outcome of the Texians' war as Mexico was.

At a crucial point when Texians had to decide whether to seek rights within the Federal Republic of Mexico or to secede and ally with the United States, James Grant led a band of followers toward Mexico, with the intent of forming a state within that nation. His efforts met enduring accusations that he fatally weakened the Alamo by stripping it of men, ammunition, and medical supplies. When Grant was killed on the ill-fated Matamoros expedition, British hopes of blocking the upstart Americans died, too.

Yet, despite his important role, Grant remains a shadowy and often sinister figure routinely condemned by historians and frequently dismissed out of hand as merely an unscrupulous land speculator. Drawing heavily on British sources, Reid tells the forgotten story of Dr. James Grant and the twelve-year-long secret war for Texas, from his involvement in the "silly quixotic" Fredonian Rebellion to the bloody battles along the Atascosita Road. The international scope of the story makes this far more than just another tale of the Texas Revolution.

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