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By, With, and Through - Officers Commanding Indian Scouts, 1867-1886:

Creating Self and Shaping the West

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in History

by

Michael Richardson

2022

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

By, With, and Through - Officers Commanding Indian Scouts, 1867-1886:

Creating Self and Shaping the West

by

Michael Richardson

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2022

Professor Joan Waugh, Chair

This study uses the biographical method to explore the postbellum Indian Wars that resulted in the consolidation of federal authority over the territory and peoples of the trans-Mississippi West. Frontier army officers Richard Pratt, Gustavus Doane, and Charles Gatewood commanded Indian scouts during campaigns to subjugate tribes that resisted federal authority. Military records and other archival sources, including personal memoirs, allow us to understand this process of consolidation through their experiences. What these officers accomplished by, with, or through Indian scouts provide windows on the army's essential role in consolidating federal authority. They also demonstrate the effect of their individual agency on the broader outcomes of consolidation.

The army was sent west to nation build following the Civil War, facilitating settlement and development throughout the region. To limit friction between settler and Indian communities

along the frontier the federal government sought to concentrate Indians on reservations. The army's role was to subjugate Indian tribes that violently resisted concentration. Pratt enabled General Philipp Sheridan's plan to subdue the Comanche by employing scouts from a variety of tribes to lead army columns during the 1874-75 Red River War campaign. Doane acted through the Crow tribe to support army commands during the Great Sioux War of 1876-77. In the final phase of consolidation, Gatewood acted with two Apache scouts to open negotiations with Geronimo, resulting in his surrender to General Nelson Miles.

The role of commanding scouts also allowed officers to transcend the rigid regimental structure and stagnation of the army's promotion system. These officers had outsized effects on how consolidation was implemented and, importantly, how we understand that historical process today. Pratt changed the national discourse on Indian assimilation, eliminating overt extermination from the debate. Doane's official reports motivated national leaders to preserve a precious western landscape, thereby redefining the possible outcomes of consolidation. Gatewood's faithfulness provided the myth of the west one of its central characters, who remains the benchmark for understanding consolidation today.

This study also prepares us to more effectively examine current U.S. policies, the army's role in implementing those policies, and the effects officers have on implementation.

The dissertation of Michael Richardson is approved.

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University of California, Los Angeles

2022

## DEDICATION

To Garrett for all your patience. Yes, now we can go play.

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## PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

- “Keep ‘em Moving: The Role of Assessment in US Cavalry Operations against the Plains Indians,” in *Assessing War: The Challenge of Measuring Success and Failure*, Georgetown Univ Press, 2015
- “White Men of Another Color: Richard Henry Pratt’s Experiences with Indian Scouts on the Southern Great Plains,” UCLA History+ Conference Proceedings, October 2011
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## I. Introduction

“The incorporation of the trans-Mississippi West into the political structure of the nation required a generation of offensive warfare. For the several hundred thousand Indian people it meant thirty years of desperate resistance.”

Robert V. Hine and John M. Faragher, *The American West: A New Interpretive History*<sup>1</sup>

The trans-Mississippi West commanded the attention of the United States after the Civil War. Enabled by Lincoln’s three great policies—the Homestead Law, Pacific Railway Act, and Morrill Tariff Act—the American people consumed the territory between the Mississippi River and the Continental Divide. The occupation and exploitation of the west by settler communities and commercial enterprises held various consequences for the newcomers and the American Indian communities already inhabiting the territory. The federal government sought to impose and consolidate its authority through its agents, including the U.S. Army, as a means to control settlement, particularly the distribution of the land and its resources. These agents were also tasked to mitigate violence between the various peoples converging in the west. Officers commanding Indian scouts in campaigns to subdue tribes resisting federal authority, like Richard Henry Pratt, Gustavus Cheyney Doane, and Charles Bare Gatewood, provide a promising source for examining the process of consolidation.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robert V Hine, John Mack Faragher, and Jon T Coleman, *The American West: A New Interpretive History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 223, 225.

<sup>2</sup> United States Congress, “Homestead Act (1862),” Pub. L. No. Public Law 37-64, 12 STAT 392 (2021), <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/homestead-act>; United States Congress, “Pacific Railway Act (1862),” 12 STAT 489 § (2021), <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/pacific-railway-act>; United States Congress, “Morrill Act (1862),” Pub. L. No. 37–108 (2021), <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/morrill-act>; Richard Edwards, “Changing Perceptions of Homesteading as a Policy of Public Domain Disposal,” *Great Plains Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (2009): 179–202; Peter Wallenstein, “The Morrill Land-Grant College Act of 1862,” in *Civil War Congress and the Creation of Modern America: A Revolution on the Home Front*, ed. Paul Finkelman and Donald R Kennon (Athens: Ohio State University, 2018), 82–117.

No force on earth, including Indian resistance and federal officials, could have stopped the waves of settlers from occupying the land and consuming its resources. The collective violent resistance by Indian communities, though often spectacular and sometimes effective in delaying occupation, ultimately proved inadequate for securing their safety or territory. Federal Indian policy, always lagging behind the reality of settlement, more often abetted settler occupation of the land than fulfilled the diplomatic agreements with the various Indian tribes. The unchecked occupation of territory by those whose world vision considered the land free and open, superimposed upon the historic competition between tribes, had already proven a recipe for extermination, expulsion, or assimilation of Indian tribes east of the Mississippi and in much of the nation's Pacific coastal region. After the Civil War, it appeared that the tribes of the trans-Mississippi West would likewise be extinguished as communities.<sup>3</sup>

Societies differ in their understandings and memories of the process by which the utilization of land and natural resources transitioned principally from American Indian occupation and use to that of Euro-Americans. This sense making remains as relevant today as in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In May 2022, the Department of the Interior's Indian Affairs published the "Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report." This report underscores the continuing individual human toll of policies related to consolidation along with the social, cultural, and political consequences of the process.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Hine, Faragher, and Coleman, *The American West*, 281, 337; Richard White, "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": *A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 143–45; Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 165; White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own*, 148.

<sup>4</sup> For an introduction to nomadic peoples' perceptions of territoriality see Alexander C Diener and Joshua Hagen, *Borders: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 26–28; for additional interpretations of the contrast between native and settlers' perceptions of the land see Peter Nabokov, *A Forest of Time: American Indian Ways of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005); Ned Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Elliott West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, & the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: Univ. Press of



## The Army and Indian Scouts

While Lincoln's legislative legacy catalyzed settlement of the west, it also complicated the federal government's efforts to bring coherence to the process. The army and other federal agencies had varying, sometimes conflicting, roles in implementing policies intended to consolidate federal power over the land and people of the west as settlement progressed.

The army on the frontier served many functions, the most obvious, yet seldom performed, being the subjugation of Indian tribes that violently resisted permanent concentration on reservations. The frontier army, institutionally, understood that Indian communities could be effectively subdued by conducting military campaigns that physically, emotionally, and materially exhausted a targeted tribe. This "societal disruption strategy" has ancient roots but for the United States Army emerged from the seventeenth century colonial Anglo-Indian wars of the eastern seaboard.<sup>5</sup>

By the 1860s, the army needed both presidential authority and Congressional funding to subjugate a tribe through war. Army officers including Generals Sherman, Sheridan, Schofield, and others understood that Congress was loath to support and quick to withdraw resources for military operations. This political reality meant that army leaders had to make societal disruption

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Kansas, 1998); John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 65; Bryan Newland, "Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report, Vol. 1" (Washington DC: Department of Interior, May 2022), 5–9, [https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi\\_investigative\\_report\\_may\\_2022\\_508.pdf](https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi_investigative_report_may_2022_508.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Michael Richardson, "'Keep 'em Moving': The Role of Assessment in US Cavalry Operations against Plains Indians," in *Assessing War the Challenge of Measuring Success and Failure*, ed. Leo J Blanken, Hy S Rothstein, and Jason J Lepore (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2015), 96; Howard Henry Peckham, *The Colonial Wars: 1689-1762*. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2001); John Grenier, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

campaigns as efficient as possible. Integrating Indians as scouts into the combat formations pursuing the targeted tribe increased the army's efficiency and effectiveness.<sup>6</sup>

The duties of integrating and supervising the Indian scouts invariably fell to junior ranking officers. These officers used various methods of commanding scouts—some led by example while others merely shepherded. The nature of commanding scouts required officers to expand their professional knowledge and competencies. Those who led scouts interacted with a wider array of people, including tribal leaders and senior commanders, than did their peers. These officers had to understand, in some way, the motivations of their Indian audience in order to recruit scouts. They also had to communicate to tribal leaders how the service of their men would benefit the tribe. Commanding scouts gave officers an intimate connection with the tactical execution of an army campaign, literally the blood, sweat, tears, and toil of daily operations and activities. Simultaneously, to be effective or perceived as such, those duties demanded the officers understand their senior commander's intent for the outcome of the campaign. This knowledge allowed them to effectively communicate useful observations made by the scouts.

Officers chose to command scouts, among other reasons, because it afforded them opportunities to transcend the stagnation of the army's promotion system and rigid regimental structure. Scout commanders sought recognition as being qualitatively superior to their peers. The reasons for commanding scouts strengthened an officer's motivation to succeed in the role. Scout commanders, unlike their peers, generally reported to and produced correspondence for

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<sup>6</sup> Works addressing the role of Indian scouts include Fairfax Downey and Jacques Noel Jacobsen, *The Red/Bluecoats* (Fort Collins, Colo.: The Old Army Press, 1973); Thomas W Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers: Indian Scouts and Auxiliaries with the United States Army, 1860-90* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987); Mark Van de Logt, *War Party in Blue: Pawnee Scouts in the U.S. Army* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010).

their senior commanders. Knowing the commander's objectives and being intimately connected to operations allowed them to write reports and other official correspondence in a manner that emphasized the importance of their role in achieving the campaign's desired outcome. A successful scout commander could expect more positive interaction with senior officers than what most of their peers would expect. This increased interaction could result in the senior officer's mentorship and, at times, advocacy on behalf of the scout commander for desirable duties and assignments. The army's need for Indian scouts created an officer cadre with the attributes needed to enable scouts to provide value to the army. Some of those officers were conscious of the military and, often, civilian audiences who observed their performance and could, in turn, promote their interests.<sup>7</sup>

Officers seeking advantage through their role commanding scouts had an outsized effect on the implementation of consolidation and, importantly, how we understand that historical process today. The officers' reporting sought to enhance their credibility as a means to ensure their continued service commanding scouts or appointment to other desirable duties such as independent command, aid de camp, or transfer to a staff bureau. These desirable roles showed the senior officer's confidence in the junior officer and, in turn, afforded the junior an opportunity to demonstrate their potential for greater responsibilities.

This project seeks to examine the army's roll in the process by which the federal government consolidated its authority over the trans-Mississippi West. The experience of Richard Pratt, Gustavus Doane, and Charles Gatewood, officers commanding Indian scouts, provides the window for this examination. The nature of commanding Indian scouts presented these officers opportunities to influence both the implementation of federal policy and their

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<sup>7</sup> Hugh Lenox Scott, *Some Memories of a Soldier*. (New York: The Century Co., 1928), 31–32, [http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.\\$b60354](http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.$b60354); Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 106–7.

own professional development. As each officer participated in military operations, they pursued goals, and also attempted to create and shape legacies through personal recollections and, at times, official documentation. Because the actions of Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood proved to be consequential and controversial they remain interesting subjects for historical analysis. That fact means the historic memory of these figures continues to evolve.

### **Perspectives on Consolidation: The Frontier Army and War in the West**

Interpretation of the Frontier Army and its members is found in survey, military, and ethno-histories of the United States and American West. Works explore questions about technical and human aspects including cultures of war, leadership, tactics, military operations, federal policy, life in the frontier army, and officers' perceptions of their experience. These works reveal insights about how the process of consolidation affected the army, the extent of Army-Indian cooperation during the process, officers' and soldiers' experiences implementing federal policies, and even the effects of horse theft on the army.<sup>8</sup> The publications illuminate the context the army found itself in the postbellum period, demonstrate the necessity of officers to recruit and employ scouts, and emphasize the impact of personal agency on the outcomes of grand processes discernable within the historic record.

The appearance of the frontier army in survey literature place the institution in the context of the era and suggest the effects of its presence in the West. Historian Richard White

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<sup>8</sup> T. J Stiles, *Custer's Trials: A Life on the Frontier of a New America*, 2016; Paul Andrew Hutton, *The Apache Wars: The Hunt for Geronimo, the Apache Kid, and the Captive Boy Who Started the Longest War in American History* (New York: Crown Publishing, 2016); Catharine Rohini Dias Franklin, "Sherman's Lieutenants: The Army Officer Corps, Federal Indian Policy, and Native Sovereignty, 1862-1878" (Ph.D., United States -- Oklahoma, The University of Oklahoma, 2010); Matthew S Lockett, *Never Caught Twice: Horse Stealing in Western Nebraska, 1850-1890* (Lincoln: Univ of Nebraska Press, 2020).

broadened our understanding of the frontier army by situating its campaigns of subjugation into the context of inter-tribal wars of conquest and defense. Philip Weeks, in *Farewell, My Nation: The American Indian and the United States, 1820-1890*, argues, “only when the Army combined conventional tactics with more innovative ones that took advantage of vulnerable aspects of the Plains Indians’ way of life... did the military arm of the government finalize Concentration [a component of consolidation], effectively enforce policy, and successfully conclude the Plains Indian Wars.”<sup>9</sup> Stephen Aron explains that the army’s role proved pivotal in securing the west for white settlement only after the commencement of “devastating assaults against Plains Indian villages and food supplies.”<sup>10</sup> These views validate the significance of the institution’s actions while also implying historians have much to reveal about what transpired at the grass roots level.<sup>11</sup>

Ethno-histories describe Indian and American cultures and methods of warfare. The collected works of scholars Bernard Mishkin, Frank Secoy, John C. Ewers, Grenville Goodwin, Jack Williams, and Peter Nabokov provide a foundational understanding of the logic of warfare in the postbellum West. According to their studies, Indians held comparative advantages related to individual martial excellence and survivability, mobility, knowledge of the terrain, and understanding of other indigenous peoples’ lifeways. In contrast, the army’s comparative advantages were the combination of a centralized command structure to orient and apply the collective lethal power of its soldiers enabled by a sophisticated logistical system that sustained

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<sup>9</sup> Philip Weeks, *Farewell, My Nation: The American Indian and the United States, 1820-1890* (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, 1995), 121.

<sup>10</sup> Stephen Aron, *The American West: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 64–65.

<sup>11</sup> White, *It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own*, 94; Richard Maxwell Brown, “Violence,” in *The Oxford History of the American West*, ed. Clyde A Milner, Martha A Sandweiss, and Carol A O’Connor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 416–17 Brown emphasizes the army’s role in massacres of Indians as part of the phenomenon he termed the “Civil War of Incorporation.”

soldiers' with a relatively inexhaustible supply of man and animal power, food, and munitions. Each culture shared a similar disadvantage—dependence on horses and mules. Historian Matthew Lockett's examination of the phenomena of horse theft amplified previous scholars' work on just how important the horse was to war and commerce on the Great Plains. These two war cultures, along with their advantages and disadvantage, remained consistent throughout the postbellum period. The consistency of these war patterns explains the army institutional decision to integrate Indians as scouts as a means to increase the efficiency of its campaigns and that animal resources would be one focal point of those operations.<sup>12</sup>

Military histories characteristically seek to answer questions related to policy and strategy, battles and operations, or tactics. Historians laid a substantial foundation of knowledge regarding the role of military activity in the consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West. Exemplifying this work are Robert Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891*; Andrew J. Birtle *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine*; Perry D. Jamieson's *Crossing the Deadly Ground: United States Army Tactics, 1865-1899*; Robert Wooster, *The Army and US Indian Policy*; and Paul Hedren, *The Great Sioux War Orders of Battle*. Taken in total the various military histories of the postbellum Indian Wars provide an appraisal of the Army's role in consolidation through a comprehensive survey of Indian War campaigns and other major events including non-combat activities. These works also

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<sup>12</sup> Bernard Mishkin, "Rank and Warfare Among the Plains Indians" (Lincoln, Univ of Nebraska Press, 1992); Frank Raymond Secoy, *Changing Military Patterns on the Great Plains (17th Century Through Early 19th Century)*, (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1992); John C Ewers, *The Blackfeet: Raiders on the Northwestern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003); Grenville Goodwin, *Western Apache Raiding and Warfare*, ed. Keith H Basso (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 1993); Two Leggings, *Two Leggings: The Making of a Crow Warrior*, ed. Peter Nabokov and William Wildschut (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); Jack S Williams and Robert L Hoover, *Arms of the Apacheria: A Comparison of Apachean and Spanish Fighting Techniques in the Later Eighteenth Century* (Greeley, Colo.: Museum of Anthropology, University of Northern Colorado, 1983); Pekka Hamalainen, "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures," *The Journal of American History* 90, no. 3 (December 2003): 833–62; Lockett, *Never Caught Twice*.

describe the Frontier Army's characteristic method for subjugating resisting Indian tribes, compare and contrast soldiers' and Indians' combatant capabilities, and provide observations of the Indian scout phenomenon.<sup>13</sup>

Where military historians focus on operational and tactical details, historians of the American West took the lead in studies of the social and cultural aspects of the frontier army. Most revealing are the works of Michael Tate and Sherry Smith. Tate examined the non-combat roles performed by the Army throughout trans-Mississippi West in the postbellum era. Smith analyzed army officers' and their wives' perceptions of Indians as well as questions about the dispossession of Indian lands, Indian acculturation into white society, and what events altered these perceptions over time is a seminal examination of the Army as an institution. Smith's work also treated army officers as a distinct (and understudied) group on the frontier placing them in the social and intellectual context of the nineteenth century American society. Smith's work inspired other historians, including Catherine Franklin, whose unpublished dissertation examined the frontier army's role in consolidation through the perspective of its department and division commanders. These and other scholars' conclusions validate assumptions underlying this study. First, the army was consistently the government's agent for the implementation of policies intended to consolidate federal authority over the trans-Mississippi West. Second, despite its

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<sup>13</sup> Robert M Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Lincoln: Bison Books, 2014); Andrew J Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941* (Washington: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1998); Perry D Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground: United States Army Tactics, 1865-1899* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994); Robert Allen Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); Robert M Utley and Wilcomb E Washburn, *Indian Wars* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002); James L Haley, *The Buffalo War: The History of the Red River Indian Uprising of 1874* (Abilene, Tex.: State House Press, McMurry University, 2007); William H Leckie and Shirley A Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014); Paul L Hedren, *Great Sioux War Orders of Battle: How the United States Army Waged War on the Northern Plains, 1876-1877* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012); Douglas C McChristian, *Fort Laramie: Military Bastion of the High Plains.*, 2017.

prominent role as the federal government's agent, the army was often marginalized by elected and appointed officials and the public it served. And third, the successful conduct of war against resisting tribes required the service of Indians as scouts despite some officers' "distrust, bewilderment, and misunderstanding" of them as allies.<sup>14</sup>

In the convergence of military and social history of the American West several works specifically explored the Indian scout phenomenon. George Grinnell's *Two Great Scouts and their Pawnee Battalion* along with Fairfax Downey and J.N. Jacobsen's *The Red Blue Coats* told the story of Indian scouts through the officers who led the formations, suggesting these men were the principal and dominant agents in these relationships. Later historians Thomas Dunlay and Mark Van de Logt widened the aperture for examining Indian scouts in postbellum period. In *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, Dunlay argued that the army had little choice but to rely on Indian scouts as guides and trackers while service as scouts was never a given by individual Indians. He concluded that the choice to serve as scouts was overlaid upon the centuries-old Native American inter-tribal conflicts and an indicator of a far more complicated situation than the pressure of Indian-white contact. Dunlay also concluded that an officer's success commanding scouts came from "personal qualities" rather than any "legally based authority."<sup>15</sup> Van de Logt

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<sup>14</sup> Sherry Lynn Smith, *The View from Officers' Row: Army Perceptions of Western Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995), 181; Michael L Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001); Franklin, "Sherman's Lieutenants"; Other histories of the American West relevant to the Frontier Army include: Edward M Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Thomas T Smith, *The U.S. Army and the Texas Frontier Economy, 1845-1900* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1999); Oliver Knight, *Life and Manners in the Frontier Army* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993); Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Mont.: Mountain Press Pub. Co., 2008); Elliott West, *The Last Indian War: The Nez Perce Story* (Oxford [England]; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Brian DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2009); Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Karl Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn: An Apache Massacre and the Violence of History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 91.



integrated oral history with archival documentation to examine the experience of Pawnee men as Indian scouts. In addition to serving alongside frontier army regiments during campaigns of subjugation, Pawnee scouts proved capable and willing to perform other activities including escorting dignitaries, delivering the mail, guarding telegraph lines, protecting railroad construction crews, and guiding scientific exploration teams. These scholars demonstrated that both officers and Indians employed their own personal agency in choosing to perform, or not, duty as scouts. Simply put, service as scouts was as likely to promote the scout's personal or tribal agenda as that of the officers they served alongside.<sup>16</sup>

Officers who succeeded in command of scouts possessed unique personal attributes. These men were capable of fusing the highly regimented pattern inherent in the army with the unregimented, individualistic pattern common to American Indian societies. Not all officers were able to perform this function. Scout commanders possessed an intellectual and emotional capacity to recognize, understand, and integrate the different comparative advantages and, often diametrically opposed, values that each military culture represented. Those officers who succeeded in overcoming these challenges are identifiable as brokers of war patterns and cultures. These military officer brokered exchanges proved of value in the campaigns of subjugation constituting the postbellum Indian Wars.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> George Bird Grinnell, *Two Great Scouts and Their Pawnee Battalion* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973); Downey and Jacobsen, *The Red/Bluecoats*; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*; Van de Logt, *War Party in Blue*; Michael L Tate, *The American Army in Transition, 1865-1898* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2007); Ben Innis and Richard E Collin, *Bloody Knife: Custer's Favorite Scout*. (Bismarck, N.D.: Smoky Water Press, 1994); David D Smits, "Fighting Fire with Fire": *The Frontier Army's Use of Indian Scouts and Allies in the Trans-Mississippi Campaigns, 1860-1890.*, 1998; Orin Grant Libby, *The Arikara Narrative of Custer's Campaign and the Battle of the Little Bighorn* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); Janne Lahti, "Colonized Labor: Apaches and Pawnees as Army Workers," *Western Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2008): 283–302, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25443731>; Eve Ball, "The Apache Scouts: A Chiricahua Appraisal," *Arizona and the West* 7, no. 4 (1965): 315–28; Adam R Hodge, "Auxiliaries and Scouts," 2015, 92–109.

<sup>17</sup> Margaret Connell Szasz, *Between Indian and White Worlds: The Cultural Broker* (Norman, Okla: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001). For purposes of this study the definition of cultural broker is "a go-between or liaison, one who advocates on behalf of another individual or group." Cultural brokering is "the act of bridging, linking, or

Scholarship in the last decade has further expanded our understanding of the frontier army, those associated with it, and the society which fielded it. That Kevin Adams concluded that the army was, like the Gilded Age society it represented, affected by class and racial consciousness is unsurprising, particularly given the nature of the army's hierarchical command structure and legislated segregation by race. His contribution demonstrates the value of applying different analytical lenses to the subject, in his case, class and race. Similarly, T.J. Stiles' biography of George A. Custer employs the officer's life and death to illustrate the "tsunami" of change that "reordered" American culture from agrarian, individualistic, romantic, and heroic to a postbellum "new order" that "was industrial, corporate, scientific, and legal."<sup>18</sup> Custer's actions, including leading his command to destruction on the Little Bighorn, were especially ironic. This icon of antebellum culture, played a prominent role in consolidating the federal power necessary to enable the United States' transformation into an industrial and professionalized power. Paul Hutton's *Apache Wars* retold the complex story of the three decades long war between the Apache tribes and the United States using one individual, Mickey Free, to orient readers throughout the narrative. Hutton claimed that Free's personal agency, seeking to serve his needs and goals first as a victim and later as an army interpreter and scout, had an outsized effect on the initiation, prosecution, and conclusion of nineteenth century America's most mythologized conflict. Stiles and Hutton further demonstrate the efficacy of

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mediating between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change." Found at: <http://culturalbrokerage.blogspot.com/2008/07/key-terms-that-cultural-broker-or-those.html>

<sup>18</sup> Stiles, *Custer's Trials*, xvii.

biography as an effective means of historic interpretation as well as the power of personal agency to determine or effect macro-historical processes.<sup>19</sup>

Works on biography and memory provide a method to analyze and organize the past. Barbara Caine observed that biography is an effective tool for situating the individual in the context of their times and how an institution or group enables the individual. Caine also addressed performativity, the concept of how people consciously portray themselves in words and deeds, which serves biographers as a useful analytical tool. Joan Tumblety's anthology *History and Memory* examines memory as both source, what is remembered, and subject, how and why it is remembered in a certain way. For this study, the combination of selected biographies provides something closer to the totality of the army experience. The documentary evidence reveals how the officers under examination portrayed themselves and their actions in their reports and recollections in a positive light, often in spite of countervailing evidence.<sup>20</sup>

An interesting feature for this study is that Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood each produced extensive notes and recollections that laid the foundations for future biographers. These biographies present these officers across the spectrum from hero to villain, aligning with emerging or dominant social values at the time of publication. Pratt, who founded the Carlisle Indian Industrial Institute in 1879, and Doane, who claimed a leading role in one of the most infamous massacres of American Indians, are particularly polarizing figures.

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<sup>19</sup> Kevin Adams, *Class and Race in the Frontier Army: Military Life in the West, 1870–1890* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2012); Stiles, *Custer's Trials*; Hutton, *The Apache Wars*.

<sup>20</sup> Barbara Caine, *Biography and History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Joan Tumblety, *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Examples of works of memory include Celine Fremaux Garcia, *Celine: Remembering Louisiana, 1850-1871*, ed. Patrick J Geary (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987); Joan Waugh, *U.S. Grant: American Hero, American Myth* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

Elaine Eastman, an early Carlisle staff member, published a 1935 biography of Pratt, *The Red Man's Moses*, presenting him as a model of nineteenth-century activism. He became a committed, outspoken member of the “Friends of the Indian” movement after completing his field service in the West. As a racial progressive he was a passionate evangelist for nation and faith whose efforts forced renewed debate on federal Indian policy and the reallocation of national resources to assist assimilation efforts. By the late twentieth century, Pratt’s memory transformed from champion for good into the leading exemplar of a racist, genocidal movement to destroy Indians. Exemplifying this trend, anthropologist Patrick Wolfe stated “Richard Pratt and Phillip Sheridan were both practitioners of genocide.”<sup>21</sup> Sociologist Jacqueline Fear-Segal characterized Pratt as Janus-faced, optimistic in the rhetoric of assimilation but racist in implementation. Even historian Peter Cozzens, an apologist for the frontier army, claimed Pratt was “despised” because he “was not above beating Native behavior out of his students” or “strong-arming Plains Indian families into surrendering their children to his faraway school.”<sup>22</sup> More recent scholarship and government research document many of the as-yet-undisclosed consequences of the boarding school movement Pratt played such a leading role in establishing.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (December 2006): 387–409, <https://doi.org/10.1080=14623520601056240>.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Cozzens, *The Earth Is Weeping: The Epic Story of the Indian Wars for the American West* (New York: Vintage, 2017), 425.

<sup>23</sup> Elaine Goodale Eastman, *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1984); Jacqueline Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007); Preston Scott McBride, “A Lethal Education: Institutionalized Negligence, Epidemiology, and Death in Native American Boarding Schools, 1879-1934” (Ph.D., United States -- California, University of California, Los Angeles), accessed June 25, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/2440716535/CF29CA9F360D41F5PQ/126>; Newland, “Indian Boarding School Report.”

Orrin H. and Lorraine Bonney's *Battle Drums and Geysers* interpret Gustavus Doane, the lieutenant who assisted the founding of Yellowstone National Park, as a heroic pioneer of Montana without regard to his obvious character faults. In contrast, Kim Allen Scott's *Yellowstone Denied* presents Doane as a self-absorbed, less-than-honorable, ambitious opportunist while ignoring organizational and nineteenth-century societal influences affecting the actions of frontier army officers. These authors focus on the same major events in Doane's life yet present significantly different interpretations of the man and the meaning of his lived experience. In 2014, activists labeled Doane a violent war criminal, and in June 2022 they succeeded in having his name removed from a peak in Yellowstone National Park.<sup>24</sup>

The literature related to Charles Gatewood focuses on the 1886 surrender of the Apache shaman, Goyahkla, a man more commonly known as Geronimo. These works are heavily influenced by the feud between Generals Nelson A. Miles and George Crook, who represented opposing public images of the frontier army. Contemporaries of Gatewood, Britton Davis and John Bourke, both Crook men, published works that ascribed Gatewood with sole credit for Geronimo's surrender as a means to strengthen claims for General Crook's methods of Indian warfare and management. Gatewood himself prepared notes for an unpublished memoir that laid the foundation for other works. Charles Gatewood, Jr, himself an army officer, edited and published his father's account of the surrender to coalesce support for a bid to see his father posthumously recognized by the War Department. In 2005, historian Louis Kraft used the full

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<sup>24</sup> Orrin H Bonney and Lorraine Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers: The Life and Journals of Lt. Gustavus Cheyney Doane, Soldier and Explorer of the Yellowstone and Snake River Regions* (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1970); Kim Allen Scott, *Yellowstone Denied: The Life of Gustavus Cheyney Doane* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007); Hannah Osbourne, "Calls for Mount Doane Rename: Yellowstone Shouldn't Have Features Named After Genocide Exponents," *Newsweek*, June 5, 2019, <https://www.newsweek.com/yellowstone-mount-doane-rename-first-national-park-shouldnt-have-features-named-after-genocide-1442247>; Associated Press, "Yellowstone Mountain That Honored Massacre Leader Renamed," *The Kansas City Star*, June 11, 2022, <https://www.kansascity.com/news/nation-world/national/article262399442.html>.

scope of Gatewood's notes to produce *Lt. Charles Gatewood & His Apache Wars Memoir*, in which he further advanced the junior Gatewood's effort to have Charles posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his role in Geronimo's surrender. In their focus to achieve singular recognition for Charles, all these works ignore the collective nature of operations employed across the army to implement consolidation, whether conducted in the field or on a reservation. The authors' focus on gaining Gatewood credit for the surrender of Geronimo also meant they did not address the critical role that Charles performed in facilitating the creation of a narrative and myth that, however oversimplified and ethno-centric, explain the reasons for and costs of the Indian Wars.<sup>25</sup>

Biography is a powerful means to convey the meaning of experience but it does not necessarily stand the test of time. The biographies of Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood remind us that the interpretation of an individual means as much about the biographer and their time than about the subject and their time.

This variety of literature demonstrates that the frontier army remains a lucrative subject for analysis and one of enduring interest. The literature also reveals the need for a reevaluation of these officers by reading the official documents and recollections against the grain. Essentially, I applied my own understanding of the underlying meanings embedded in these documents based on my lifetime of experience as an army officer. I have produced similar and, in some cases, the very same battlefield reports and administrative documentation in the course of conducting military operations.

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<sup>25</sup> David Roberts, *Once They Moved Like the Wind: Cochise, Geronimo, and the Apache Wars* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 29; Britton Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo.*, ed. Milo Milton Quaipe, 1976; John Gregory Bourke, *On the Border with Crook.* (Alexandria: Time-Life Books Inc., 1980); Order of the Indian Wars, *The Papers of the Order of Indian Wars*, ed. John M Carroll (Ft. Collins, Colo.: Old Army Press, 1975); Charles B Gatewood, *Lt. Charles Gatewood & His Apache Wars Memoir*, ed. Louis Kraft (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

## **The Method: Biography in the Context of the Army**

This project uses the biographical method to add to the literature on the army's role in the process of consolidation. Biographies of the three officers illuminate some distinct and some shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives within the army. The biographies also provide insight on how the army as an institution enabled the officers "to engage in their most important endeavors."<sup>26</sup>

Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood's experiences provide material for a comparative analysis of officers commanding scouts that spans the breadth of the postbellum army experience. These three represent the officer corps of the period. Each was born in a different state; one came from the Midwest, another the far West and one from the East. Two rose from the ranks during the Civil War, while one received a commission from West Point after the war. All three men served in the cavalry, the principle branch of the army expected to find and fight resisting tribes. They were all lieutenants, officers junior in rank, when they commanded scouts. In performance of their duties, they led Indians from various tribes, served in different regions of the West, and fought in different campaigns of the Indian Wars. And each, in their own way, achieved an outsized influence on the process of consolidation. These men provide a window on army campaigns of subjugation and demonstrate the range of experiences among officers who commanded scouts.

## **Sources: Speaking with the Dead**

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<sup>26</sup> Caine, *Biography and History*, 117–18.

I've had a powerful conversation with the dead through my research. As an Army Special Forces officer I often wondered about the experience of my predecessors. I found the power to converse with three of them—through the bureaucratic documentation of the army and federal government, works of their contemporaries, and their own personal collections of notes and recollections. The documents were accessible through the National Archives, university and regional archives, published works and anthologies of primary sources, and more each day online through websites including the Ancestry.com, Fold3, the Internet Archive, Hathi-Trust, Department of the Interior, the Census Bureau, and US Geological Survey.

The conversation I had through the sources brought me to the conclusion that these officers and we, too, have misrepresented the effects of their personal agency. They, like most of their peers, transcend the simplistic good and evil, hero and villain paradigms that they saw themselves in and that biographers and historians have employed in their interpretations. From my reading of the available materials what I hear is the voices of officers and soldiers—like the men and women I served with throughout my career—with all their strengths and weaknesses. That conversation never excused their thoughts or actions but helped to explain why they followed the paths they did, whether the results proved beneficial or cascaded into a horrible wrong. These were men who chose the profession of arms to meet their needs and expectations while accepting the responsibility of officers charged with implementing national, social, and military policies that held great consequences for their fellow citizens and, even more so, for the Native American people who paid such a heavy price in lives, lands, and ways of life.

This military archives, records, personal collections and memoirs used to examine the army's role in the consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West provided insight on a number of questions I had for these long dead officers. How did the institution perform its role? What were



their roles in the process? What were the consequences and outcomes of their efforts? Why did they seek command of scouts? How did the army's organizational culture affect their command of scouts? Did they consciously use their command of scouts to advance personal or professional goals and ambitions? How did command of scouts impact their careers and life?

What, if any, parallels are there between officers commanding scouts in the Indian wars of consolidation and officers engaged in similar twenty-first century military operations?

Through these sources, I came to understand this period in the history of the trans-Mississippi West through the interplay of individual agency and the structural influences of officers' participation in the larger expression of political will represented by the process of consolidation.

### **Organization of the Work**

I organized this project into six principal chapters. Following the introduction, chapter two presents my exploration of the frontier army in which I concluded the institution was a principal agent of action for the federal government's process of consolidating political authority and territorial control over the trans-Mississippi West. I conclude the chapter by explaining how and why some officers came to command Indian scouts. I structured the succeeding chapters, geographically and chronologically, to examine the experiences of Richard Henry Pratt, Gustavus Cheyney Doane, and Charles Bare Gatewood. Each officer commanded Indians in campaigns that resulted in the subjugation of a tribe or tribes that resisted federal authority, specifically the expectation they remove from valued lands and embrace an agrarian lifestyle.

I argue that each officer followed a different path to command of scouts and along their way—before, during, or afterwards—affected the outcome of consolidation in some way as they

sought to control their destiny. Pratt's experiences on the southern Plains culminated in the 1873-74 Red River War. His command of scouts sparked his determination to address the assimilation of Indians, and coupled with a motivation to depart the Great Plains, led him to found the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. Pratt and the school were controversial in his time and are even more so today. His efforts ultimately transformed the political discourse on Indian Policy. Doane's exploration and reporting on the natural wonders along the Yellowstone River in the early 1870s helped to redefine the meaning of consolidation for the federal government and its constituents. His notoriety and passion for adventure saw him assigned to command scouts during the Great Sioux War of 1876-77. Afterwards he drew on the relationships he acquired with senior officers during the campaign to seek assignment to further exploration duties. Finally, Gatewood's hazardous duty in the southwest during the climax of the Apache Wars made him the shepherd of Geronimo, the Bedonkohl Apache leader. Geronimo's survival and his legend gave and continue to provide meaning to the process of consolidation and enhance the myth of the west.<sup>27</sup>

My examination of these officers' experiences provides a window onto the army's role across the trans-Mississippi West. My work also demonstrates how officers seeking to benefit from their professional performance simultaneously affected the results of and, even, how we understand the process of consolidation of federal authority today through the evolving memories that we hold of these men.

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<sup>27</sup> Wilfred M. McClay, "A Tent On The Porch," *American Heritage*, August 1993, 2-3, <https://www.americanheritage.com/tent-porch> McClay presents Turner's frontier thesis as "the single most influential interpretation of American society and culture ever written" and a catalyst in the evolution of western mythology.

## II. The Frontier Army: Agent of Consolidation

*While the nation at large is at peace, a state of quasi war has existed, and continues to exist, over one-half its extent, and the troops therein are exposed to labors, marches, fights, and dangers that amount to war. Were the troops withdrawn, or largely diminished...I believe a condition of things would result amounting to anarchy.*<sup>28</sup>

William Tecumseh Sherman, Commanding General of the Army, 1870



Infantry and wagon train prepared to depart Fort Davis, Texas.

John Vance Lauderdale papers, Call Number WA MSS S-1317, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale.

This chapter explores the Frontier Army as an agent of action for the federal government's process of consolidating political authority and territorial control over the trans-Mississippi West. It is intended to lay a foundation for evaluation of Lieutenants Richard H. Pratt, Gustavus C. Doane, and Charles B. Gatewood who led Indian scouts as a means to enhance the army's role in the process of consolidation. Those officers served as cultural brokers between their army commands and the American Indian peoples they served among as the two groups navigated through the process of consolidation. Their experiences and the outcomes of

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<sup>28</sup> William T. Sherman, Commanding General of the Army in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1869*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1869), 24, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078465>.

those experiences form an aperture through which patterns in the broader process of consolidation can be discerned.

The chapter is organized into seven landmarks guiding the reader from a macro to micro perspective. It proceeds by acknowledging the continent-encompassing process of consolidation and then examines the organizational culture and environmental conditions challenging the army's officers and men immediately following the Civil War in their efforts to implement federal policy. The post-Civil War army's organizational culture included institutional knowledge about fighting Indians inherited from the nation's origins that served as an intellectual foundation underlying plans for campaigns intended to subjugate tribes. At every level of command, officers were influenced by this culture and took the environmental conditions into account as they implemented the federal policy across the trans-Mississippi West. The chapter then examines the variety of roles imposed on the frontier army by the federal government, including warfare and the methods employed to subjugate tribes within the broader process of consolidation. The army's culture and its diverse duties, resulted in officers following a variety of professional routes, including volunteering to lead scouts. The chapter concludes by explaining how and why some officers came to command Indian scouts.

### **Consolidating the Continent: A Process**

From the period of the Early Republic until 1890, the federal government worked to consolidate its authority over the land and peoples within its North American territorial claims. While the 1890 census heralded territorial consolidation by declaring the frontier was closed (an occasion celebrated by Turner during the 1893 American Historical Association meeting), the unnecessary massacre of Miniconjou Sioux men, women, and children at Wounded Knee

Creek on the Lakota Pine Ridge Reservation in that same year signaled the ultimate consolidation of federal authority over all the peoples within United States territory. Throughout the period of consolidation, the federal government used every means at its disposal—diplomatic, military, economic, legal, and even spiritual—to implement and complete the process. The contrasting understandings between American Indian and Euro-American peoples regarding the use and possession of land during this transition resulted in a near continuous cycle of encroachment, conflict, and retreat or removal along the frontier of settlement. In the post-Civil War era, this frontier spanned the trans-Mississippi West, an expanse of approximately 2,500,000 miles of territory stretching from the west bank of the Mississippi westward to California, Oregon, and the Washington Territory and from the borders of Canada to Mexico.<sup>29</sup>

Consolidation immediately benefited Euro-American settler, corporate, and federal interests. In contrast, consolidation disadvantaged American Indian peoples by dispossessing them of the territory that sustained their nomadic, semi-nomadic, or sedentary ways of life and that they, in many cases, claimed as their ancestral homelands. The federal government's philosophy underlying this process was based on the theory that American Indian societies were unsophisticated and presumed to be incapable of peaceful governance over their people, the

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<sup>29</sup> "In this advance, the frontier is the outer edge of the wave [of westward expansion] – the meeting point between savagery and civilization." Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, ed. Penguin (London: Penguin Books, 2008), 2–3; Current scholarship and historic interpretation address more than a single frontier of white settlement. Other frontiers that influenced and were influenced by the process of federal consolidation include agricultural (most closely aligned with settlement), mining, and transportation, see David M Kennedy, Lizabeth Cohen, and Thomas Andrew Bailey, *The American Pageant: A History of the American People*, 14th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2010), 643–54; Brown, "Violence," 814–16; Report of Major General Miles, Headquarters Department of the Missouri, Chicago, Ill., September 14, 1891 United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1891* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1891), 132–54, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078465> provides a summary of the causes, actions, and results of the army's participation in the Ghost Dance Revival. ; Wounded Knee is addressed in Hine, Faragher, and Coleman, *The American West*, 381–83; Russell F Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1991), 153–63; Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: Bantam Books, 1970); Prucha, *The Great Father*; Clayton K. S Chun, *U.S. Army in the Plains Indian Wars, 1865-91* (Osceola: Osprey, 2004), 23.

lands they claimed, or the exploitation of resources within the territory they traversed. The romantic vision of "Manifest Destiny" led to federal authorities justifying dispossession and extinguishing "aboriginal title" in the west as they sought to occupy and economically develop the North American continent.<sup>30</sup>

The contrasting norms and values of each society resulted in both episodes of conflict and cooperation. American Indians valued individual excellence with respect to hunting, warfare, governance, and diplomacy while they understood land and the territories they traversed as a communal asset. Euro-Americans valued individual excellence in the economic and commercial spheres particularly with respect to private possession and exploitation of land and natural resources. Additionally, though they celebrated individual exploits in diplomacy, government, and military affairs, Euro-Americans assumed a much more collective approach to governance and warfare. This collective approach is clearly indicated by the fact that most significant commercial and infrastructure development of the west was enabled and supported by federal efforts and largesse, not private enterprise. Not coincidentally, many areas of permanent settlement were initially near frontier military installations, and the implementation of many federal policies was conducted, in part or wholly, by the army. Ultimately, the Euro-American focus on commercialism, the commodification of natural resources, and collective forms of

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<sup>30</sup> Robert G Ferris et al., *Soldier and Brave: Historic Places Associated with Indian Affairs and the Indian Wars in the Trans-Mississippi West*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), 3–10 Conflict among Native American peoples west of the Mississippi was endemic prior to the influx of Euro-American settlers even before the Civil War. Making claims to territory as ancestral homelands is somewhat problematic since a westward demographic shift by Native Americans from east of the river resulted in tribes historically associated with territory to be forced further west. The experience of the Mandan, Arikara, and Crow peoples driven west after often violent displacement by the Sioux exemplifies this process in the early 19th century. The pressure was exacerbated by federal government attempts to consolidate Native American peoples in shared territories at first west of the Mississippi then north and south of the Oregon and Santa Fe trails - the two major overland routes - and finally within government supervised reservations. Robert Marshall Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West 1846-1890*. (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Pr., 2003), 33–34, 43; Diener and Hagen, *Borders*, 45–46 See p.52 for perceptions of bringing civilization to the colonized. Carl Waldman, *Atlas of the North American Indian* (New York: Facts on File, 2000), 216.

warfare would be the defining factors shaping outcomes across the trans-Mississippi West during the federal government's consolidation efforts of the late 19th century.<sup>31</sup>

The settler community, represented by individuals, families, commercial enterprises, and territorial governments, sought to exploit western lands, playing a significant role in the consolidation process. The federal government encouraged the settler perception of the land as open for private possession because it was the cultural custom of Euro-American society and improvement of the land was an expeditious way for the government to raise capital and meet the expectations of a large body of its constituents. Beyond government encouragement, the settler motivation to individually possess land for personal benefit resulted in settlement and commercial operations regardless of formally agreed upon, physical, or perceived boundaries signifying the frontier between Indian and Euro-American communities. This forced the federal government to regularly react to shifts in the line of settlement. As settlers took possession of land and resources beyond the frontier, the federal government was routinely driven to act to legitimize settler and commercial occupation, mitigate violent resistance by Indians, and often both simultaneously. Settlers thus served as a forcing function driving consolidation in ways that no entity of the federal government could control. Settlers' decisions and actions caused the federal government and the army to react to changes along the settler frontier.<sup>32</sup>

Federal entities operating in the trans-Mississippi West included the army, Office of Indian Affairs (later the Bureau of Indian Affairs), US Magistrates, and US Marshals. Territorial

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<sup>31</sup> Thomas T Smith, *The US Army and the Texas Frontier Economy* (College Station: Texas A & M Univ. Press, 1999); Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*; Brown, "Violence," 5–6 and Chapter 5 "National Initiatives"; Kennedy, Cohen, and Bailey, *The American Pageant*, 2010, 651.

<sup>32</sup> Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West 1846-1890.*, 34–35; Kennedy, Cohen, and Bailey, *The American Pageant*, 2010, 179–80, 635, 640; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 3–4; Ferris et al., *Soldier and Brave*, 10–11; Maurice Matloff, *American Military History* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1989), 301.

governments appear to have both forced federal action in the West as well as acted as intermediary agents in managing the implementation of measures related to consolidating their territory during periods the federal government was not able to act. In many instances, the professional standing army, known as the regular army, served as the federal government's ultimate mechanism for implementing the policy of consolidation. The army performed a variety of roles that spanned a spectrum of activities. Some of these activities, including combat and security, the Army was well organized and cultural oriented to perform while others, such as Indian management and civil relief, required the institution to adapt itself to perform successfully.<sup>33</sup>

The Army's role in consolidation, its composition, disposition, capabilities, limitations, and mode of operating, provides necessary context for this study. It is important to understand how officers joined the Army, why they stayed, and what roles they performed. That context sets the stage for further exploration of officer experiences commanding Indian scouts as part of the army's broader role in the consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West.

### **Beyond the Civil War: An Army in Transition**

Following the Civil War, the army performed a leading role within the process of political and territorial consolidation because it was the largest, most broadly distributed agent of the federal government across the trans-Mississippi West. Importantly, the army was also often

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<sup>33</sup> Donald Mitchell, David Rubenson, and Rand Corporation, *Native American Affairs and the Department of Defense*, ed. United States National Defense Research Institute (U.S.) and Department of Defense (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1996), 25; Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*, 5, 197; Francis Paul Prucha, *Broadax and Bayonet: The Role of the United States Army in the Development of the Northwest, 1815-1860* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995) provides an overview of the army's role in consolidation before the Civil War. Continuing with Prucha's thesis in the post-Civil War era is Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*.



the only federal agency capable of acting collectively and with unity of purpose to implement and enforce United States Indian policy in the late-nineteenth century. The structure, organization, bureaucratic systems, and culture governing the army made it effective in implementing its role. Simultaneously, that same structure, culture, and systems, counter-intuitively, provided incentives for officers to assume roles other than their primary responsibilities as a means to seek rewards beyond the army's promotion system. One of those roles was to lead Indians as scouts.<sup>34</sup>

Immediately after the Civil War, the Union Army was rapidly demobilized. At the time of the army's grand review through the streets of Washington DC in May 1865, nearly 1,075,000 men wore the Union uniform. Of those, 1,034,064 served as soldiers in the volunteer forces. The vast majority of men in the volunteers were exactly that – volunteers. There were, however, as many as 120,000 conscripts who served during the course of the war. A further 169,624 African-American men, as many as 144,000 of them former slaves, served in regiments designated as the United States Colored Troops (USCT). By November 1, 1866, only 11,043 volunteers remained in uniform. And finally, mixed throughout the volunteer forces and often serving with the regiments of their home states, were men who were officially in the Regular Army but served for various periods in the volunteers.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> William T. Sherman, Report of Lieutenant General W.T. Sherman, St Louis, Missouri, November 5, 1866. United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1866*, vol. 1 (Washington: G.P.O., 1866), 18–23 Sherman provides a summary of his mission and disposition of forces to accomplish those missions noting that the army is expected to act under the assumption the Indians as hostile while the BIA acts as if they are under the protection of the government. Tate, *The American Army in Transition, 1865-1898*, 99; Matloff, *American Military History*, 300.

<sup>35</sup> Peter Maslowski, "To the Edge of Greatness: The United States 1783-1865," in *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War*, ed. Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox, and Alvin Bernstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 240. According to Maslowski the Union conscription drive was intended to motivate volunteers as the war progressed. In this effort, he claims the statistical outcome proved the intended result of more men enlisting voluntarily. E.D. Townsend, Assistant Adjutant General, Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the Army for the Year 1866, dated AG Office, Washington, October 20, 1866, in United States, *ARSW 1866*, 1:6, 8, 14; Matloff, *American Military History*, 180–81 the Regular Army strength in 1848 was less than the 10,000 roughly the manpower authorized by Congress in 1815. In 1850 the Congress increased the total strength to 12,927

President Lincoln had made his first call for volunteers from the states immediately following the attack on Fort Sumter. State governors, in turn, had called men to serve the Union cause, organized them into regiments of volunteer soldiers, and then provided those regiments for federal service as part of the Union army. Between May and November 1865, the army discharged or “mustered out” 800,963 of the volunteers and transported them home. Of the 11,043 volunteers who remained in service in November 1865, 10,000 of were in USCT Regiments. Most of these soldiers were fulfilling reconstruction duties as part of the federal force occupying the former rebellious states.<sup>36</sup>

The other soldiers remaining in the army after the war were members of the Regular Army. Many were professional soldiers and officers who had served in the regulars before the war. These professionals were joined by some of the 62,000 men who enlisted into federal service during the war, and later by other men enlisting for service. Of those seeking enlistment after the war were newly freed men filling the ranks of the six regiments designated as colored troops and authorized by Congress. A significant proportion of officers for the post-Civil War army were drawn from former volunteers who demonstrated exceptional service during the war. One of the volunteer officers who converted to the regulars was Nelson Miles, who would end his career in 1903 after serving eight years as commanding general of the army. This collection

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officers and men. The number of regiments was increased in 1855 from 15 to 19 without increasing the fulltime manpower. The intention was to create the organizational and leadership structure for an expandable army that would total 27,818 officers and men in the event war. Congress expected to provide funding to enlist the full complement of soldiers only when necessary. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Lincoln increased the Army by 9 Regiments and the total authorized strength to 22,714 men. Robert B Edgerton, *Hidden Heroism: Blacks in America's Wars* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002), 26.

<sup>36</sup> Edward M. Stanton, Secretary of War in United States, *ARSW 1866*, 1:1; Francis R Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, from Its Organization, September 29, 1789 to March 2, 1903, Vol I*, vol. 1 (Washington: G.P.O., 1903), 600–604.

of soldiers and officers constituted the army that, from 1866-1890, performed duties to complete consolidation of the nation.<sup>37</sup>

### *Influential Origins*

In many respects, the Regular Army was an afterthought for the nation's politicians and population. The idea of a large standing army controlled by the central government was antithetical to the principles embraced by the nation's founders who explicitly decried the threat it posed to individual liberties and popular sovereignty. These charges were leveled against George III and other European monarchs who maintained armies in peacetime. Based on those concerns from the nation's inception until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, most fighting men of the United States were not professional soldiers. The Civil War army was no exception.<sup>38</sup>

For the periods in between the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the Civil War, the regulars ensured the nation maintained a core of professionals educated and competent in the contemporary military sciences. The men also provided a standing force to defend the borders of the nation as well as a core of officers to lead a rapidly expandable army of volunteers and conscripts when needed. As noted, these professionals dutifully fulfilled their roles during the

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<sup>37</sup> United States Senate, *A Bill to Increase and Fix the Military Peace Establishment of the United States*. (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1866), <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage>; United States, *General Orders No. 56. The Following Act of Congress Is Published for the Information and Government of All Concerned: An Act to Increase and Fix the Military Peace Establishment of the United States.*, ed. Adjutant-General's Office (Washington, D.C.: War Dept., Adjutant General's Office, 1866); Virginia Weisel Johnson, *The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson a. Miles*, ed. W. M Johnson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962); Robert Wooster, *Nelson A. Miles and the Twilight of the Frontier Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996); Paul Andrew Hutton and Durwood Ball, *Soldiers West Biographies from the Military Frontier*. (Norman: Univ of Oklahoma, 2014), 340–57.

<sup>38</sup> Townsend in United States, *ARSW 1866*, 1:2–8; Lawrence D. Cress, "Reassessing American Military Requirements," in *Against All Enemies: Interpretations of American Military History from Colonial Times to the Present*, ed. Kenneth J Hagan and William R Roberts (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 61; Andrew F Lang, *In the Wake of War: Military Occupation, Emancipation, and Civil War America* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2018).

Civil War with many officers, and even non-commissioned officers, accepting leadership positions in the state volunteer forces and then returning to the regular army following the war.<sup>39</sup>

Ultimately, the existence of a standing army owed much to the real and perceived threats of American Indians to the settlement of western lands. Successively, across the Appalachian Mountains into the Ohio Valley, then the land forming the eastern drainage of the Mississippi River, and, then, the lands west of the Mississippi. Each wave of settlers pushing the frontier westward brought violent resistance from Indian tribes. That violence in turn led to outcries for federal assistance in the guise of the army. By the outbreak of the Civil War, the Regular Army, as an institution, had been in near continuous contact treating with, managing federal relations with, or fighting Indians for sixty years.<sup>40</sup>

The institutional knowledge gathered about methods for fighting Indian peoples developed in those years became deeply ingrained in the regulars. Practices employed from the colonial period into the mid-nineteenth century were based on the concept of breaking down the social cohesion of a targeted Indian population by disrupting their annual life cycles. American officers learned that, with enough resources to maintain soldiers active in the field, a tribe would eventually lose the means to resist as the community's social order broke down under the pressure of relentless pursuit and threat of direct attacks. Because a critical mass of officers who led the army after 1866 had personal experience fighting Indians or managing Indian affairs,

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<sup>39</sup> James A. Garfield. "The Army of the United States, Part 1." *North American Review* 126, No.261 (March - April 1878): 193-216, found in Peter Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars, 1865-1890. Vol 5, The Army and the Indian* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2005), 15–40.

<sup>40</sup> Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 7–13, 63. Birtle argues methods of irregular warfare, including Indian warfare, were developed during the colonial period and ultimately passed into the nascent officer corps. See also, ; Coffman, *The Old Army*, 3, 8, 38–41; William B. Skelton, "The Army in the Age of the Common Man," in *Against All Enemies: Interpretations of American Military History from Colonial Times to the Present*, ed. Kenneth J Hagan and William R Roberts (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 102–4.

there was little difficulty in reestablishing the pre-war Indian fighting practices after the Civil War.<sup>41</sup>

39TH CONGRESS,  
1ST SESSION.

**S. 138.**

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JULY 20, 1866.

Ordered to be printed.

## **AMENDMENT**

Intended to be proposed by Mr. WILSON to the amendment of the House of Representatives to the bill of the Senate (S. 138) to increase and fix the military peace establishment of the United States, viz: Strike out all after the word "That" in the first line of the amendment, and in lieu thereof insert:

3 The military peace establishment of the United States  
4 shall hereafter consist of five regiments of artillery, twelve  
5 regiments of cavalry, forty-five regiments of infantry, the  
6 professors and corps of cadets of the United States Military  
7 Academy, and such other forces as shall be provided for by  
8 this act, to be known as the Army of the United States.

1       SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That the five regi-

First reading of Act to Increase and Fix the Military Peace Establishment, 1866; Published in *Congressional Globe*,  
Accessed at: <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage>

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<sup>41</sup> Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 10–12; Chun, *U.S. Army in the Plains Indian Wars, 1865-91*, 16-19. Chun explains that the army regulars brought their vision of "total war" refined during their campaigns to break the southern population's will to resist onto the Plains where Sheridan refined the technique into "selective totality." Selective totality combined the operational methods of winter campaigning using converging columns attacking at dawn with a vast distribution of forces in geographically advantageous locations throughout the trans-Mississippi West. The operational methods mitigated the mobility advantage horse born tribes held over the Army while the distribution of forts and camps served as logistical and command hubs for Army commands to physically isolate Indian tribes and, if necessary, enable the prosecution of campaigns of indefinite duration to subjugate any specific tribe.

### *A Tale of Diminishing Returns*

The July 1866 act of Congress “to increase and fix the Military Peace Establishment of the United States” reorganized the Regular Army, resulting in the service having strong, consistent leadership throughout the decades following the Civil War. It was first led by Ulysses S. Grant. Then in 1869, William T. Sherman assumed command following Grant’s election to the Presidency. Phillip Sheridan commanded from 1883 until his death in August 1888, when John Schofield took command and led the Army through the completion of consolidation. Each of these men had served as leading generals during the Civil War.<sup>42</sup>

The act signaled the nation’s changing political priorities following the war and was a harbinger of the army’s transformation during the war. Breaking with historic political culture, Congress increased the number of fighting regiments from 31 to 56 and more than trebled the total manpower of the army from its pre-war authorization. Indicative of changing cultural attitudes, and a nod towards the army’s changing role, the act authorized the formation of six regiments comprised of African-Americans, the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, and the 38<sup>th</sup>, 39<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, and 41<sup>st</sup> Infantry, acknowledging the significant contributions of African-American soldiers during the war. Rounding out the act’s unique features, it authorized the President “to enlist and employ in the Territories and Indian country a force of Indians, not to exceed one thousand, to act as scouts.”<sup>43</sup> Commanders would use the authorities granted in the act of 1866 to good effect in the decades to come.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> United States, *An Act to Increase and Fix the Military Peace Establishment of the United States, March 16, 1866*. (Washington: G.P.O., 1866), Section 9; Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:19, 28–29.

<sup>43</sup> Section 6, United States, *Military Act of 1866*, 4.

<sup>44</sup> United States, Section 1, 3, 4. Only 10 cavalry and 41 infantry regiments were ultimately approved and manned. Of the six colored regiments only four were maintained. Those units gained positive acclaim as the “Buffalo Soldiers.” Their high standards of performance proved their value to the army and an avenue for professional

The purpose of the army was, and remains, to defend the nation against all enemies. More specifically, the post-Civil War army divided its responsibilities and forces between four roles performed for the federal government: occupation of and support to the reconstruction of the formerly rebellious states, securing the nation's external borders, performing internal security functions along the Indian-settlement frontier, and finally, conducting activities in support of civil governments and communities. Each of these areas of responsibility and roles held unique challenges for the army formations assigned to them.<sup>45</sup>

### *Organization: Line and Staff*

The army was divided into two parts, the Line and the Staff. The Line comprised the Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery Regiments and constituted the fighting forces of the army. The Staff was organized into ten functionally specific departments and bureaus that supported the Line primarily with administration and resources.

General Grant, in consultation with the Secretary of War, President, and Congress, distributed the army based on the unique requirements of each of the four missions noted above. The artillery regiments and engineer battalion assumed much of the coastal defense responsibilities. These were the army's technical elements and, except for the field artillery that directly supported infantry and cavalry regiments, had historically operated independently. The infantry and cavalry regiments were divided between reconstruction duty in the south and

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advancement and economic stability for several thousand freedmen. ; Maslowski, "To the Edge of Greatness: The United States 1783-1865," 209-13; Edward L. N. Glass, *The History of the Tenth Cavalry, 1866-1921* (Tuscon: Acme Printing Company, 1921), Forward, 19, <http://archive.org/details/historyoftenthca00glasrich>; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 6, 26-27; Coffman, *The Old Army*, 226-29.

<sup>45</sup> Kenneth J Hagan and William R Roberts, eds., *Against All Enemies: Interpretations of American Military History from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 28; Tate, *The American Army in Transition, 1865-1898*, 3-4; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 12.

constabulary work in the trans-Mississippi West. The Army would perform reconstruction duties until 1877 when a compromise was reached to facilitate the election of President Rutherford B. Hayes.<sup>46</sup>

The Staff, a smaller but still significant portion of the army, performed administrative and logistical functions. The bulk of the army staff was stationed in Washington DC, but a portion was distributed in arsenals, depots, headquarters, and forts across the country. Staff officers were responsible for the subsistence, supply, and arming of the line regiments. The staff departments and bureaus included the Adjutant General (Administration), Inspector General (Compliance), Judge Advocate General (Legal), Quartermaster (Supply), Subsistence (Food), Medical, Pay (Finance), Ordnance (Arms and Munitions), Signal Corps, and Engineers. The Engineers were in turn divided into the Corps of Engineers and a battalion of Engineers providing all manner of technical capabilities supporting both military and civil endeavors.<sup>47</sup>

The Line was organized into regiments and companies consisting of standardized groups of soldiers and officers from the three principle arms of the Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery. The Act of 1866 authorized forty-five regiments of infantry, ten regiments of cavalry, and five regiments of artillery. Each regiment was authorized one Colonel (commanding), one Lieutenant Colonel (second in command), one major (three for Cavalry and Artillery), and a staff of non-commissioned officers (senior sergeants). The sergeants, along with lieutenants appointed as adjutant and quartermaster from the regiment's complement of officers, performed the

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<sup>46</sup> Ulysses S. Grant, "Report of General U.S. Grant, Commanding Army," in United States, *ARSW 1866*, 1:17; Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty!: An American History* (New York: Norton, 2005), 508. The political compromise of 1876 saw white southern Democratic leaders provide their support for Hayes's election in exchange for the withdrawal of federal troops from Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina. The withdrawal of Union troops essentially ended federal reconstruction policies and returned the south to the political control of the Democratic party.

<sup>47</sup> W.T. Sherman in United States, *ARSW 1869*, 1:23, 28.



administrative and logistical functions of the command. The action elements of each regiment were the subordinate companies. In 1866, an infantry regiment had ten subordinate companies, each consisting of one Captain, one 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, one 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, one First Sergeant (senior non-commissioned officer), four sergeants, eight corporals, two “artificers” (mechanics), two musicians, one wagoner (teamster), and 50 privates. The cavalry and artillery regiments each had 12 companies with a similar complement of officers, sergeants, and privates (67 cavalry and 45 artillery, respectively).<sup>48</sup>

The army was organized and distributed into geographically-based commands to structure the distribution and administration of its forces. Most importantly, these commands facilitated the conduct of military operations in support of consolidation. From largest to smallest, the command structure consisted of divisions, departments, and, when needed, districts. These organizational constructs were generally identified with the most prominent water course (river or ocean) either within or defining the command’s boundaries. Within this structure, the line regiments and their subordinate companies were distributed to the various forts and camps that served as forward staging areas for the conduct of their various duties.<sup>49</sup>

For much of the post-Civil War era, the command structure consisted of four divisions: Division of the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Missouri, and the South. The subordinate departments within each division changed, but, during the post-Civil War consolidation period, the Trans-Mississippi West essentially fell within the boundaries of the Divisions of the Missouri and Pacific. Beginning on the west bank of the Mississippi River, running to the shores of the Pacific

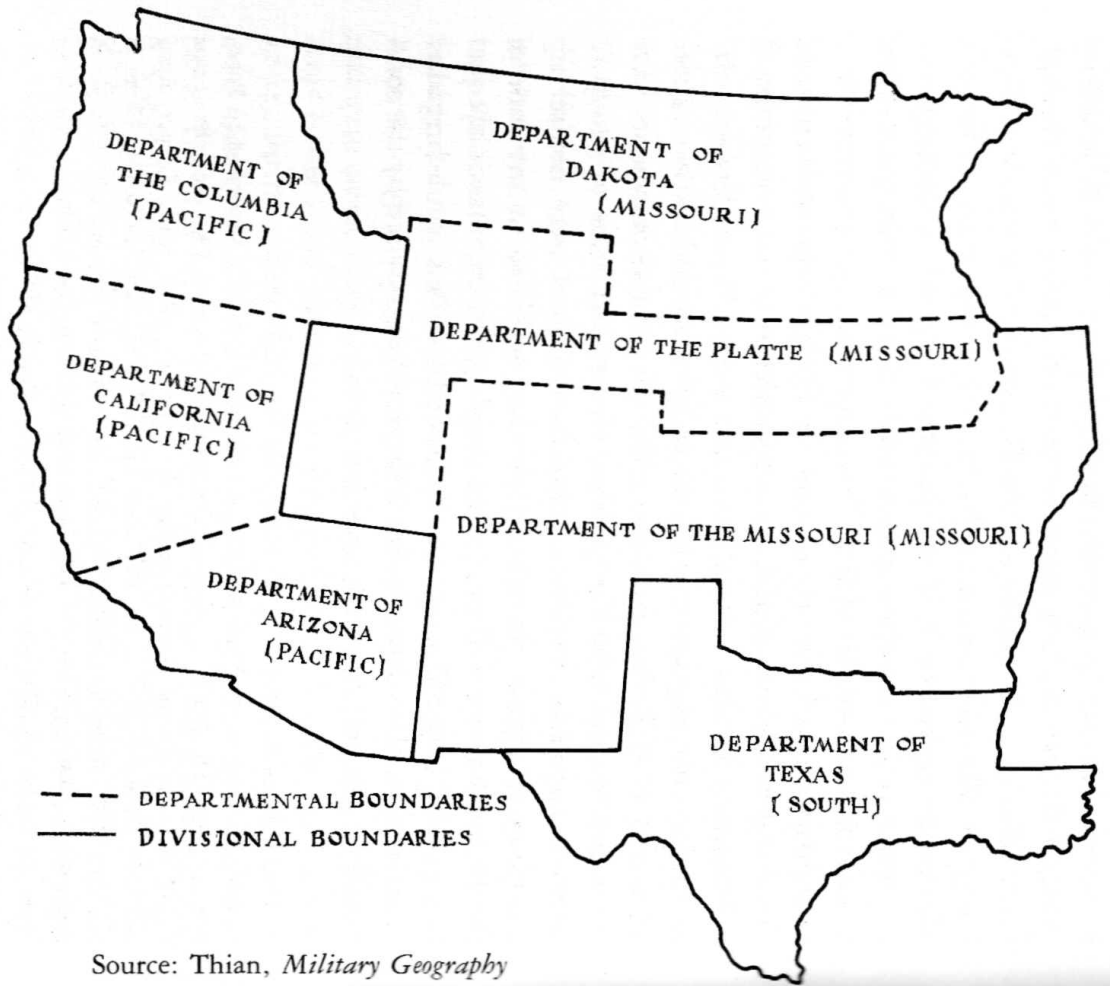
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<sup>48</sup> Robert N Scott, *An Analytical Digest of the Military Laws of the United States, Etc.*, ed. United States (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1873), 219–26; Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:602–5.

<sup>49</sup> United States, War Department, *Army Regulations. Regulations of the Army of the United States and General Orders in Force on the 17th of February, 1881* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1881), 16–17.

Ocean, and divided roughly at the Rocky Mountains, these commands oversaw nearly two-thirds of United States territory. The officers and men posted to these two divisions represent what we recognize today as the Frontier Army. They shouldered the burden of implementing much of the federal government's consolidation efforts.<sup>50</sup>

### Departments and Divisions of the Military West, July 1, 1870



Reproduced from *The Military & United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* by Robert Wooster, p.26, by permission of the University of Nebraska Press. Copyright 1988 by Robert Wooster.

Of the Frontier Army, the Division of the Missouri proved the most heavily involved in the subjugation of Indian tribes following the Civil War. The division included the Departments

<sup>50</sup> Chun, *U.S. Army in the Plains Indian Wars, 1865-91*, 23, 27; Foner, *Give Me Liberty!*, 524-27.

of the Platte (Utah, eastern Idaho, Wyoming, Nebraska, Iowa), Dakota (Montana, North & South Dakota, and Minnesota), Missouri (Colorado, New Mexico, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Illinois), and, after 1870, Texas. These lands were inhabited by the majority of Indian peoples including the Sioux, Crow, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Comanche, Pawnee, Arikira, Mandan, Hidasta, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole. Many of these tribes resisted settler encroachment and the imposition of federal or other political authority. Other tribes, having already failed to maintain sovereignty, were more compliant. While some tribes allied with the United States government and the army, the division conducted major campaigns to subdue the Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Comanche, and other resisting tribes.<sup>51</sup>

The Division of the Pacific included the Departments of Arizona, California, and Columbia (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Alaska). Between 1866 and 1880, Generals Henry Halleck, George Thomas, John Schofield, Irvin McDowell succeeded one another in command of the division. By the end of the 1860s, many of the Indian peoples within the division boundary, particularly those along the coast and valleys west of the Rocky Mountains, were subjugated or otherwise brought under federal authority. Just as in the Division of the Missouri, tribes chose resistance, compliance, or alliance as the pressures of consolidation came upon them. Some of the tribes would be split with members pursuing different responses over time and at times, even simultaneously. Major acts of consolidation in the division included campaigns against the Modoc, Bannock, Nez Perce, and Apache peoples.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Division of the Missouri described in Raphael Prosper Thian, *Notes Illustrating the Military Geography of the United States, 1813-1880* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 24–25, 185; Matloff, *American Military History*, 306–10, 315–18.

<sup>52</sup> Division of the Pacific in Thian, *Notes Illustrating the Military Geography of the United States, 1813-1880*, 26, 185; Matloff, *American Military History*, 311–16.

Division commanders were responsible for implementing federal policies in their area of responsibility. They determined the disposition of forces within their commands, advocated with the commanding general for resources, as well as planned and oversaw campaigns of subjugation when required. Commanders leveraged technology to the advantage of their commands while they also sought to integrate changing patterns of settlement, commerce, mining, and infrastructure development into their planning and projections. Generals Sherman and Sheridan, in particular, recognized the implications of the commercial buffalo hunting industry and shifting settlement patterns as means to rapidly pacify territory by denying a region's resources to Indian tribes. As early as 1867, General Grant emphasized the strategic importance of railroad development "the completion of these roads will also go far toward a permanent settlement of our Indian difficulties."<sup>53</sup> General Sherman's annual report for that year indicates his responsiveness to the Commanding General's guidance, stating the "two most important enterprises, in which the whole civilized world has an interest, have been in progress within this Indian country—the Omaha Pacific railroad and the Kansas Pacific railroad...My instructions have been to extend to both these roads as much military protection and assistance as the troops could spare...and I shall continue the same general orders to aid these important enterprises."<sup>54</sup> Division commanders were astute observers of alterations in the strategic and operational landscape between Indians and the army.<sup>55</sup>

General Sherman's initial distribution of forces across the Division of the Missouri illustrates the organizational design of the Frontier Army. In his 1866 annual report to the

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<sup>53</sup> U.S. Grant in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1867*, vol. 1 (Washington: G.P.O., 1867), 3.

<sup>54</sup> W.T. Sherman in United States, 1:36.

<sup>55</sup> William T Sherman, *Memoirs of General W.T. Sherman*, ed. Michael Fellman (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 807 Sherman discusses the strategic importance of the trans-continental railroads.

Secretary of War, Sherman reported that in August of that year, 578 commissioned officers and 13,953 enlisted men were on duty across the division. Sherman distributed the 10<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiments to Major General Terry, commanding the Department of Dakota, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment and the 18<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, and 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiments, along with Battery C of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Artillery Regiment, to Major General Cooke, commanding the Department of the Platte. Major General Hancock, commanding the Department of the Missouri, received direct command of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiments, most of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, along with the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 37<sup>th</sup>, and 38<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiments and Battery B, 4<sup>th</sup> Artillery Regiment. To Major General Ord, commanding the Department of the Arkansas, Sherman assigned 4 companies of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, the 19<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiments, and Battery B, 5<sup>th</sup> Artillery.<sup>56</sup> Finally, capitalizing on Congress' authorization to enlist Indian scouts, Sherman delegated that authority to his subordinate commanders as a means to further enable their activities. To Terry he authorized 200, Cooke 200, Hancock 150, and finally to Ord 50 Indian scouts. According to the general, the dichotomy of federal Indian policy significantly influenced his distribution and utilization of his soldiers, "we in the military are charged with a general protection of the infant settlements and long routes of travel have to dispose our troops and act as though they (Indians) were hostile; while by the laws of Congress, and the acts of our executive authorities, these Indians are construed as under the guardianship and protection of the general government

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<sup>56</sup> On March 11, 1867, the Department of the Arkansas was merged into the Department of Missouri as part of the Fourth Military District. In 1880 the Department was reestablished briefly, consisting of the States of Arkansas, Louisiana, and the Indian Territory (Oklahoma), and transferred to the Division of the Gulf see Thian, *Notes Illustrating the Military Geography of the United States, 1813-1880*, 53.

through civilian agents.”<sup>57</sup> Sherman developed his plans for fulfilling the goals of consolidation from this initial distribution of forces.

Between 1866 and 1890, the Division of the Missouri was a focus of attention receiving the largest distribution of regiments and highly regarded commanders. This distribution ultimately proved appropriate given the turmoil generated as wave after wave of settlers and commercial ventures fanned out across the territory that was home to the largest population of Indian peoples and those tribes which proved most capable of challenging the federal government’s authority. The command gained the confidence and support of the President and Congress as seen in its commander’s promotion. General Sherman commanded the Division of the Missouri between August 1866 until his promotion to Commanding General of the Army in March 1869. Sheridan would command the division until his own ascension to command of the army in November 1883. John Schofield succeeded Sheridan in command of the division and then, again, as commander of the army upon Sheridan’s unexpected death by heart attack in 1888. The fact that the commanders of the Division of the Missouri succeeded each other as Commanding General of the Army indicates the significance of this command to national leaders in the post-Civil War era.<sup>58</sup>

After assignment of whole or fragments of regiments from the division headquarters, department commanders further distributed forces within their areas of responsibility. Commander’s distributions commonly resulted in between one and four companies of soldiers being stationed at any specific location, whether a fort, camp, or other installation. Like

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<sup>57</sup> W.T. Sherman in United States, *ARSW 1866*, 1:19–20 The 10th Cavalry and 38th Infantry were two of the six regiments authorized by Congress for African Americans to serve as soldiers. Sherman identifies them in his report with the designation “(colored).”

<sup>58</sup> Thian, *Notes Illustrating the Military Geography of the United States, 1813-1880*, 24–25, 185; Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*, 19.

Sherman, these commanders based their distribution plans on factors such as the forces available, population centers, tasks assigned, topography within their department boundaries, major routes of travel, locations of natural resources, and areas of potential conflict. These last might include proximity to reservations and areas of increased settlement activity. The major overland travel routes for wagon trains required commanders to both secure them from attack and provide services to the travelers in a variety of emergencies. As noted, further influencing the distribution of forces, were the routes of the trans-continental railroads.<sup>59</sup>

### **Frontier Army and Challenges of the trans-Mississippi West**

The soldiers responsible for shepherding the majority of the army's roles in the post-Civil War process of consolidation faced compounding challenges, some natural, some self-inflicted. The challenges generally fell into three categories: terrain, resources, and policy. Combined, the vast territory, continuously diminishing resources, and inconsistency of federal policy toward Indian Affairs made the west a daunting place to serve for the officers and men of the Frontier Army.<sup>60</sup>

The sheer scope of territory that officers and men were expected to secure posed a challenge. The frontier zone included the Great Plains, Plateau, and Southwest regions of the United States. These vast areas of spectacular, rugged, often arid terrain were sparsely populated, and much of the land was not yet politically organized as states. The Great Plains stretched from

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<sup>59</sup> Sherman, *Memoirs of General W.T. Sherman, 782-783*, on 807 Sherman discusses the strategic importance of the trans-continental railroads; Philip Henry Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan - Volume 2*, vol. 2 (Scituate, Mass.: Digital Scanning, 1999), 111, 114, 119, <http://site.ebrary.com/id/2001531> and 130 describes Sheridan's selection criteria for locating Fort Sill, Indian Territory. Chun, *U.S. Army in the Plains Indian Wars, 1865-91*, 27–30, 48–51 defines various installations.

<sup>60</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 167; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 5–6; Chun, *U.S. Army in the Plains Indian Wars, 1865-91*, 4–5.

the Mississippi River in the east to the Rocky Mountains in the west and from the Canadian border in the north to the Mexican border in the south. The Plateau region covered the front range of the Rocky Mountains west into the states of Oregon and California and Washington Territory. The Southwest region was particularly arid, extending from the southern Great Plains west to California and south to the border with Mexico. These three regions of the trans-Mississippi West alone presented the army with the challenge of garrisoning 1,815,640 square miles of frontier territory.<sup>61</sup>

Compounding the challenge of securing such a vast landscape, was Congress's periodic reductions of the army's budget and size throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The post-war demobilization created an immediate vacuum of security in the western region of the country where volunteer forces had provided the majority of military power throughout the War. Congress would also progressively cut the army's manpower and funding first in 1866, then in 1869 and 1874, and again in 1878, following the end of Reconstruction. White Democrats returning to power in the southern states and positions in Congress sought fiscal vengeance against the former army of occupation while the Republican Congress members, who formerly championed the army, saw fiscal expenditures for the Frontier Army of limited utility for their continuing political agenda. Between 1866 and 1890, the Frontier Army would face the challenge of garrisoning and patrolling the trans-Mississippi West with a force of never more than 23,000 officers and soldiers or roughly one man for every 100 square miles.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Thomas D Phillips, *Boots and Saddles: Military Leaders of the American West* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 2015), vii; Because of settlement driven by gold and agricultural opportunities many Indian peoples west of the Rocky Mountains were already subjugated by the late 1860s and by 1880 that region was the most urbanized portion of the country. See David M Kennedy, Lizabeth Cohen, and Thomas Andrew Bailey, *The American Pageant: A History of the American People*. (Boston. MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2010), 650.

<sup>62</sup> Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 15; Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 59; The Frontier Army hit its manpower peak of 23,000 officers and men in 1870. See Coffman, *The Old Army*, 254; Philip Henry Sheridan, *Record of Engagements with Hostile Indians Within the Military Division of the*



For the first half of the nineteenth century, the trans-Mississippi West had been considered of limited value for settlement or commercial ventures. Americans thought the Great Plains were arid steppe lands that lacked adequate water to sustain farming and settlement, the Southwest was a desert, with inhospitable topography, and few had knowledge of the natural resources of the Rocky Mountains or the Mountain Plateau. Even though these geographic traits precluded the introduction of large-scale agriculture or natural resource extraction, the core of the American expansionist ideology, the drive to incorporate these territories into the nation regardless of the desires of that territory's American Indian occupants, remained strong during the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>63</sup>

By the 1860s, scientific advancements in agricultural technology and horticultural science had transformed Americans' view of the Plains. Facilitated by the development of transcontinental railroad lines, migration of Euro-Americans from the eastern seaboard onto the Great Plains became rapid and widespread. This wave of settlement increased the friction between settlers and Indians. Before the Civil War, the army was generally distributed along the boundary of the Great Plains. Increased migration across and settlement in the Great Plains by Americans forced the already limited manpower of the army to be dispersed into smaller contingents throughout the interior of the Plains region to protect major overland, water, and rail

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*Missouri, from 1868 to 1882, Lieutenant General P. H. Sheridan, Commanding*, ed. United States. Army. Military Division of the Missouri (Chicago, Ill., United States: Headquarters Military Division of the Missouri, 1882), 6, <http://archive.org/details/recordofengageme00unitrich> In comparison, the Military Division of the Missouri, reported a total aggregate strength of 15,940 officers and soldiers in 1882; Adams, *Class and Race*, 19.

<sup>63</sup> Zebulon Pike, *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike (Volume 2 of 3)*, by Zebulon Pike., ed. Elliott Coues, vol. 2 (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1895), 525–26, [https://www.gutenberg.org/files/43775/43775-h/43775-h.htm#Page\\_417](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/43775/43775-h/43775-h.htm#Page_417); Edwin James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, Performed in the Years 1819 and '20, by Order of the Hon. J. C. Calhoun, Sec'y of War: Under the Command of Major Stephen H. Long. From the Notes of Major Long, Mr. T. Say, and Other Gentlemen of the Party* (Longman, Hurst, Pees, Orre & Brown, 1823), 211, 237; Hine, Faragher, and Coleman, *The American West*, 159.

routes; large immigrant settlements; and in some cases, Indian reservations. As more and more Euro-Americans entered or traversed the trans-Mississippi West, the army found the same topography posing equally significant challenges to their operations. These challenges were especially apparent when soldiers ventured into as yet unmapped territory, particularly in search of Indian tribes during punitive campaigns against tribes that resisted federal government control.<sup>64</sup>

A third obstacle faced by the army was the lack of clear policies regarding federal government's relations with the people and lands of the trans-Mississippi West. The United States government had routinely failed to effectively live up to its obligations as negotiated in treaties with American Indian tribes of the West. The federal government lacked a clear policy addressing the settlement of lands of the trans-Mississippi West by migrants, primarily whites, emigrating from the eastern seaboard. This lack of policy resulted in routine encroachment by settlers within the lands claimed by Indian tribes or those lands designated as government Indian reserves. Immigrant encroachment caused near continuous frictions between settler and Indian communities in conflicts to control natural resources throughout the post-Civil War era. General Grant summarized the Indian plight accurately, "with a frontier constantly extending and encroaching upon the hunting grounds of the Indian, hostilities, opposition at least, frequently occur."<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Kennedy, Cohen, and Bailey, *The American Pageant*, 2010, 646; Hine, Faragher, and Coleman, *The American West*, 223, 225.

<sup>65</sup> U.S. Grant in United States, *ARSW 1866*, 1:17; Edwin P. Smith, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1873*, vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874), 55. Incidents of violence were not always settler initiated, but primary and secondary sources indicate the underlying motivation for most violence was settler efforts, often projected through territorial or federal governments, to dispossess Indians of the land and its natural resources; Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*, 251–56; Adams, *Class and Race*, 16.

In 1869, the administration of Ulysses Grant implemented a new policy regarding relations with the Plains Indians. Commonly referred to as the “Peace Policy,” under its provisions the army was forbidden from entering Indian reservations unless specifically authorized entry by the Office of Indian Affairs-appointed agent supervising the reservation. This policy applied even when army units were in pursuit of hostile, renegade, or law-breaking Indians. The policy was intended to overcome the failures of previous government policies that systematically separated Indian tribes, preventing them from integration into the United States. Even with the changed policy, Indian agents were ill equipped to deal with disturbances involving Indians on the Plains. In most circumstances, the agents called for and depended upon the Army to quell disturbances and restore stability on and around their assigned reservations.<sup>66</sup>

In sum, soldiers assigned to duties on the Western Frontier faced and overcame daunting challenges in their role of securing territory claimed by the United States and subjugating Indian tribes that resisted federal authority. These included a lack of material, financial, and manpower resources; vast, often harsh geographic area of responsibility; and overly broad and ambiguous duties encompassing diplomatic, political, social, and law enforcement types of activities posed a third challenge. Despite all the challenges, army officers and their soldiers were the principle representatives of the federal government throughout the trans-Mississippi West. Often the only federal authorities present and capable of action, these men routinely found themselves arbiters of the competing demands between and among settlers and Indians. As such, the army provided a major source of stability on the Great Plains.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Smith, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1873*, 1:6–8; W.T. Sherman in United States, *ARSW 1869*, 1:24; Wilbur Sturtevant Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 99.

<sup>67</sup> Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*, 39–40.

## **Roles of The Frontier Army**

In the trans-Mississippi West, the army's role in the consolidation process consisted of a variety of duties, some obvious and others less so. These included leading or providing manpower to federal internal improvement and infrastructure projects, securing overland transportation and telegraph routes, managing or supporting the management of Indian relations, providing humanitarian relief, resolving labor disputes, and, in the absence of federal or territorial law enforcement officers, conducting constabulary duties that secured and stabilized communities in areas of social turbulence.<sup>68</sup>

### *Closing the Gaps*

Throughout the post-Civil War era, the army and its distributed regiments remained the most powerful and capable of the federal government's organizations across the trans-Mississippi West. Even with Congressionally directed manpower reductions and a broad geographical disposition, the Army vastly outnumbered the two other major federal actors in the west—the Office of Indian Affairs and the Marshalls Service. The army's relatively large presence in the west resulted in it being relied upon by federal authorities to support the implementation of Indian policy and law enforcement actions on a regular basis. General Sherman, Commanding General of the Army, explained in his 1869 annual report that “many of the officers have been required to perform, at great risk, the duties of Indian agents, governors,

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<sup>68</sup> Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*, 305-317. Tate describes the the frontier army as “a multi-purpose army”; Adams, *Class and Race*, 17. Adams states soldiers followed a “long-standing trend...the use of the frontier army for a variety of non-military purposes.”

sheriffs, judges and inspectors of elections, etc., etc., duties foreign to their military training, and they have done this duty without a murmur and with marked intelligence.”<sup>69</sup>

Complicating the process of consolidation was the 1849 change in which executive agency oversaw the management of relations between the federal government and American Indians. Relations with Indian peoples were managed by the Office of Indian Affairs (commonly referred to as the Bureau of Indian Affairs). That office was originally overseen by the War Department with army officers acting as federal representatives to many Indian tribes, but in 1849, the office was transferred to the newly established Department of Interior. In the decades after 1849, the War Department and senior army officers lost their influence over the development and implementation of Indian management policy. The result was regular disagreement between army and Interior Department leaders on how to effectively manage Indian affairs.<sup>70</sup>

The Bureau of Indian Affairs assigned agents and a variety of employees to supervise implementation of the federal government’s goals of civilizing and Christianizing Indians as part of consolidation. As the army returned to the West in 1866, Indian Affairs agents were assigned to sixty-one ‘agencies’ throughout the country to implement these policies. In his annual report to the President for 1866, Mr. Nathaniel Green Taylor, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, reported 282 Indian office officials (81 agents, 114 teachers, 2 farmers, and 75 missionaries)

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<sup>69</sup> William T. Sherman, Commanding General of the Army in United States, *ARSW 1869*, 1:24.

<sup>70</sup> Henry Barrett Learned, “The Establishment of the Secretaryship of the Interior.,” *American Historical Review* XVI, no. 4 (1911): 754–55, 766; Waldman, *Atlas of the North American Indian*, 216; Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*, 22 The Office of Indian Affairs was commonly referred to as the Bureau of Indian Affairs “BIA” throughout the 19th century even though it was not officially designated as such until the 20th century. For the purposes of this project the Bureau of Indian Affairs of “BIA” will represent the federal organization managing Indian Affairs regardless of time period and formal designation at the time.

supervising the implementation or attempting to supervise the Civilization and Christianization of an estimated total population of 295,774 Indian men, women, and children.<sup>71</sup>

In general, army leaders advocated the use of force while Interior officials advocated peaceful approaches to gain Indian acquiescence to federal governance and policies. Generals Sherman and Sheridan preferred implementing the process of consolidation by force. They intended to subjugate any tribes that resisted federal direction. In contrast, Interior and BIA officials advocated negotiating treaties with each tribe to (theoretically) bind each side to an agreed set of outcomes. In the post-Civil War era, this included tribes accepting concentration on and restriction to a certain set of geographic boundaries designated as a reservation. As part of accepting restriction to a reservation, Indians were expected by Indian Affairs agents and army officers to also take measures to transition from their nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyles into a sedentary, agrarian lifestyle. In return, the federal representatives agreed to ensure the tribes received formal title to the reservation lands and were provided foodstuffs, livestock, tools, and vocational education to facilitate their lifestyle transformation.<sup>72</sup>

The federal government seldom abided by treaty obligations regardless of the sincerity of the representatives sent to negotiate with Indian leaders. This failure was due to a number of self-imposed obstacles. The first obstacle was Congress; the Senate had to ratify the terms of each treaty and it was not unusual for treaties not to be ratified. Even when ratified, the implementation of any particular treaty required an annual fiscal appropriation that had to be

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<sup>71</sup> Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 7; Nathaniel G. Taylor, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1866* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1867), 346–51, 372, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008696072>; See also Francis Paul Prucha, *The Indians in American Society: From the Revolutionary War to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

<sup>72</sup> Taylor, *ARCIA, 1866*, 7–15; “Peace or Force” in Weeks, *Farewell, My Nation*, 113; Extract from report of the Secretary of the Interior in D.N. Cooley, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1865* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1866), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008696072>.

approved by both houses of Congress. In the post-Civil War era, there was no guarantee that Congress would approve fiscal appropriations to pay for implementation of treaties.<sup>73</sup>

The next challenge, after clearing the Congressional hurdles, was implementation through the agents and staff of the BIA. A significant number of army officers considered BIA's pacifist approach to managing Indians counter-productive. Those officers claimed that, in general, Indians perceived peaceful gestures as a sign of weakness. This perception undermined the credibility of the agents appointed to oversee tribes and their transition to reservation life. Compounding problems, many of the personnel of the Department of Interior and BIA were appointed through the political patronage system resulting in many appointments going to politically savvy but corrupt individuals or candidates incapable of administering any type of social programming. Through the appointment of a number of unscrupulous agents, the BIA agents and staff gained a reputation among army officers as being plagued by inefficiency and graft. Army officers contended that the agents routinely undercut federal credibility by embezzling appropriated funds and annuity goods promised Indians as part of historic treaties and post-Civil War agreements negotiated to govern Indian tribes on reservations. A final obstacle was public sentiment among western settlers. Many white settlers denigrated Indian peoples, disagreed with negotiations of any sort with Indians, and often advocated the extermination of Indian peoples.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West 1846-1890.*, 46; Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*, 42, 104.

<sup>74</sup> Smith, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1873*, 1:III-IV; Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*, 104; Brown, "Violence," 173; Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West 1846-1890.*, 46, describes the Congressional patronage system as a "three-way alliance that fed on the annuity system" consisting of members of Congress authorizing expenditures to their protégés appointed to oversee Indian agency who worked in concert with local contractors to bilk appropriations allocated to pay for Indian annuities promised as part of a treaty; John Dishon McDermott, *A Guide to the Indian Wars of the West* (Lincoln, Neb.: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1998), 4-7, 10-11.

The United States Marshals represented the federal government's oldest law enforcement agency. In the territories of the west, they provided "the only alternative for enforcing law and order aside from local sheriffs and the military."<sup>75</sup> Marshals were apportioned in direct relationship to the appointment and location of federal district judges. There were twenty-one federal districts overseeing civil and criminal justice across the trans-Mississippi West during the period of consolidation. Exemplifying the manpower limitations of the marshals, the western half of Arkansas, and the entire Indian Territory, was overseen by the District Court Judge for the Western District of Arkansas located at Fort Smith, Arkansas. Although the Western District had the largest concentration of US Marshals during the period of consolidation, that court was served by fewer than two hundred marshals. The Marshals' duties included hunting federal fugitives, serving warrants and subpoenas, protecting and conducting the administration of the court, judge, and witnesses, and, until 1870, conducting the national census within a district that exceeded 74,000 square miles.<sup>76</sup>

In contrast to the Indian Affairs agents and federal marshals, by 1870 the army consisted of 37,358 officers and men, 31,178 of whom were assigned to regiments of the line (artillery, cavalry and infantry) distributed across 203 posts. In that year the Department of the Missouri, with responsibility for the Indian Territory, had an aggregate strength of 12,199. The army provided assistance to Indian agents and marshals in the form of technical expertise, manpower,

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<sup>75</sup> David S Turk, "A Brief Primer on the History of the U.S. Marshals Service," *The Federal Lawyer*, August 2008, 26.

<sup>76</sup> Turk, 26–27; US Marshalls Museum, *Life & Law in 19th Century Arkansas*, Educator Resource Series: Teacher Guides for Civic Literacy Enhancement (Fort Smith, AR: US Marshalls Museum, 2012), 8, 26; US Marshalls Museum, *Origins and Early Days of the U.S. Marshalls*, Educator Resource Series: Teacher Guides for Civic Literacy Enhancement (Fort Smith, AR: US Marshalls Museum, 2019), 8–9; Larry D. Ball, "Before the Hanging Judge: The Origins of the United States District Court for the Western District of Arkansas," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 49, no. 3 (1990): 211, <https://doi.org/10.2307/40030797>.



transportation, material resources, and even subsistence. At times, the army was called upon to unilaterally perform Indian affairs and law enforcement actions. The army's manpower and breadth of skills ultimately made it the federal government's de facto agent of action across the trans-Mississippi West.<sup>77</sup>

Social disturbances were particularly acute along the continuously fluctuating boundaries representing the frontier between settler and Indian peoples. The army performed constabulary duties not only to mitigate Indian violence and depredations against settler communities but also to limit settler encroachment on lands guaranteed under treaty to Indians. When all other measures by the federal government failed to secure an area, the army could be called upon to accomplish the task by force of arms.<sup>78</sup>

### **Indian Wars: Warfare as a Means of Consolidation**

War proved a significant means to advance or complete the process of consolidation within regions of the trans-Mississippi West. The differences in how the Indian and settler communities understood their relationships with the land and its natural resources ensured that the movement of settlers through, and especially into, territory claimed by Americans Indians would be interpreted by those Indian communities as encroachment on their lands. As individuals, tribes, and even confederations of tribes, many Indians chose to resist encroachment. Whether initiated by Indians as their means of resistance or perpetrated by settlers in response to

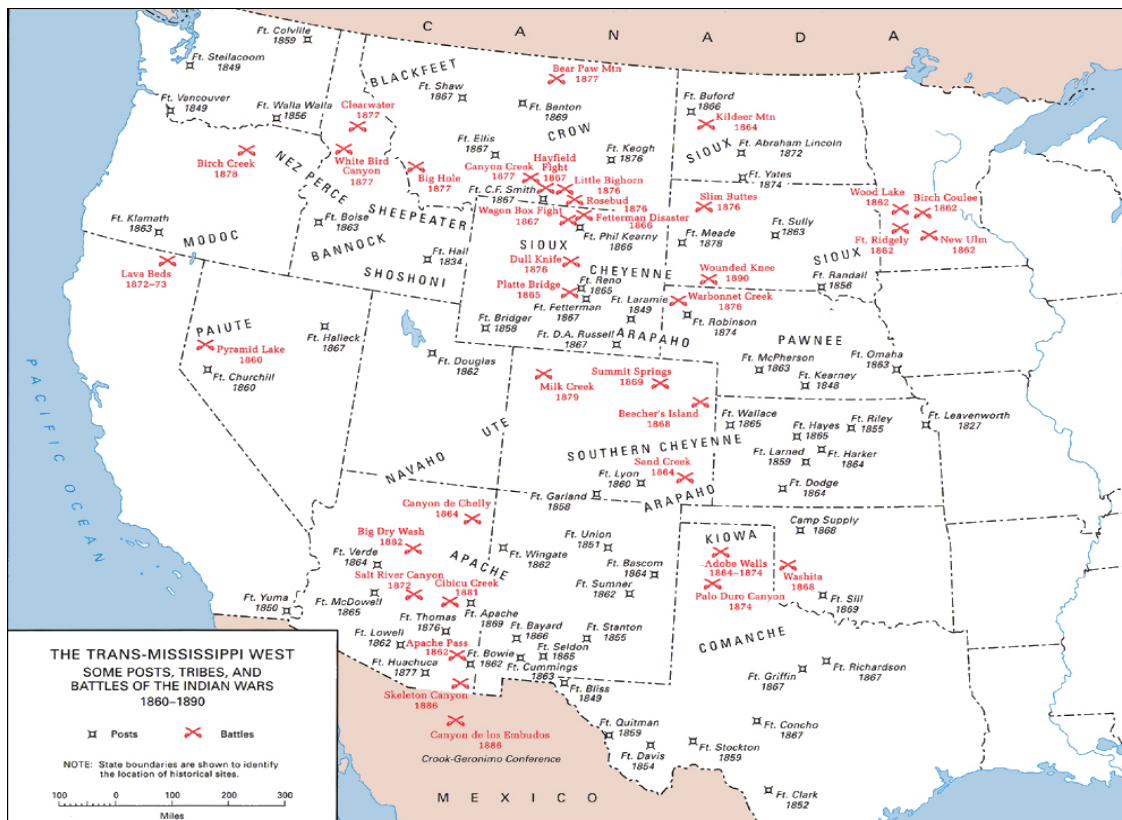
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<sup>77</sup> William W. Belknap, Secretary of War and William T. Sherman, Commanding General of the Army in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1870*, vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870), v, 157, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078451>; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 8–9; Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*, 306.

<sup>78</sup> W.T. Sherman and John Pope, Commanding Department of the Missouri in United States, *ARSW 1870*, 1:4, 19, 21; Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 58; Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*, 238, 251–52.

Indian resistance, violence between communities routinely resulted. When incidents of violence achieved proportions that could not be denied by the executive and legislative branches, the army was mobilized as the government's agent to end the conflict and implement solutions to mitigate future outbreaks. The battles and campaigns waged by the army to settle outbreaks of violence between settler and American Indian communities constitute the Indian Wars fought for control of the territory claimed by the United States.<sup>79</sup>

The Indian Wars of the trans-Mississippi West represent a distinct set of armed conflicts that occurred between 1865 and 1890. These conflicts found four distinct forces in competition



Source: *American Military History, Vol 1: The United States Army and the Forging of a Nation, 1775-1917*. Richard W. Stewart, General Editor (Washington DC, Government Printing Office, 2005), p.325. Accessed at <http://www.history.army.mil/books/AMH-V1/index.htm>

<sup>79</sup> Smith, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1873*, 1:55; Irwin Unger, *These United States: The Questions of Our Past* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2003), 456–60; West, *The Contested Plains West's* thesis explains the Indian-settler conflict cycle well; Allan Reed Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 239; Utley and Washburn, *Indian Wars*; Bill Yenne, *Indian Wars: The Campaign for the American West* (Yardley: Westholme, 2006).

for power. Each force was influenced by the others – American Indians, Euro-American settlers, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the army. None of these groups held a singular understanding of the other groups. Only the United States Army had a central set of guiding principles to focus their efforts and even that common approach became distorted under the realities faced by its members struggling to meet the challenges posed by their mission upon the Plains.

The Indian Wars, between 1866 and 1890, include ten events officially designated as military campaigns by the army, and over one thousand violent but lesser encounters recorded as combat engagements between soldiers and Indians within the trans-Mississippi West. In general terms, what sets these conflicts apart from the other Indian Wars of United States history is the breadth and difficulty of the physical geography involved, the mobility of the populations engaged, and the quantity of manpower and animal and material resources mobilized by the army to conduct the campaigns of these wars against the diminishing Indian populations that resisted Federal authority.<sup>80</sup>

Phases of the Indian Wars can be categorized geographically and temporally. The Central and Northern Plains were the focus of conflict between 1865 and 1870. One well-known episode in this period was Red Cloud's War, fought by a confederation of Northern tribes that successfully resisted the encroachment of settlers into territory formally acknowledged as Indian lands by treaty. The Southern Plains saw campaigns in 1868 and then again from 1874 to 1875 that resulted in the subjugation of the Southern Plains Confederation of tribes (Comanche, Kiowa, and Southern Cheyenne) in the Red River War. Large scale warfare returned to the

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<sup>80</sup> Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 58–59 The US Army Center for Military History recognizes ten post-Civil War Indian War campaigns as part of their unit lineage and honors program. They include: Comanches 1867-1875, Modocs 1872-1873, Apaches 1873 and 1885-1886, Little Big Horn 1876-1877, Nez Percés 1877, Bannocks 1878, Cheyennes 1878-1879, Utes Sept 1879-Nov 1880, Pine Ridge Nov 1890-Jan 1891. Found at: [https://history.army.mil/html/reference/army\\_flag/iw.html](https://history.army.mil/html/reference/army_flag/iw.html).

Northern Plains in 1876 and 1877 with the Great Sioux War that saw the Sioux and their allies subdued, including the most famous event of the Indian Wars, the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Although beginning as early as the 1840's, the Apache Wars fought in the Southwest region included campaigns from 1871-1874, and again in 1885-1886. The 1871-1874 campaign proved most consequential in subjugating the Apache people while the 1885-1886 campaign ended with the surrender and imprisonment of Geronimo, his band of followers, and controversially, most of the Chiricahua tribe, despite many of the men having served as scouts for the army during the conflict. War in the Plateau region saw campaigns in 1877 and 1878 including the Nez Perce War, which spilled over the Continental Divide and carried on across the Northern Plains until ending at the border with Canada. Smaller scale disturbances continued sporadically in the Northern Plains until the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890 ended the cycle of American Indian collective armed resistance to federal authority.

### **Life in the Line: Societal Disruption and the Brutality of Consolidation**

In their frontier campaigns, the army focused on developing, employing, and sustaining formations using well proven organizational competencies as their means to subdue resisting Indians and impose relative stability between tribes and local settler communities. These included sustaining forces in the field for extended periods in order to find a targeted tribe and conduct attacks that would result in the destruction or capture of the tribe's material and animal resources. The key competencies necessary to achieve these outcomes were an effective and sustainable logistical system (which it inherited from the Union army) and a formation capable of orienting, maneuvering, and synchronizing its collective firepower to pose an existential threat to a tribe and its resources. The frontier army became adept at these competencies and, aided by

river, rail, and road transportation development, ultimately proved capable of deploying and sustaining a fighting force anywhere in the trans-Mississippi West.<sup>81</sup>

The basis of nineteenth century army battlefield doctrine governing the tactical utilization of soldiers was based on the concept of linear formations that facilitated the maneuver of large numbers of soldiers in columns or lines. These tactics were intended to maximize both an officer's control of soldiers and an officer's capability to rapidly orient their collective firepower. Tactics were continually refined and by 1867 the army shifted from close-ordered formations formed by soldiers standing shoulder to shoulder in multiple ranks to open-order formations in which soldiers remained under the central direction of officers but were more widely dispersed and acted relatively independently. This conceptual evolution was well suited for war against Indians in the west. Officers too young to have experienced linear tactics during the Civil War learned this doctrine at West Point before joining the Frontier Army.<sup>82</sup>

Along with their grounding in linear tactics, army officers inherited a set of operational tenets and tactical techniques for the effective subjugation of Indian tribes. These tenets and techniques were passed down from one generation of American soldiers to the next beginning as

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<sup>81</sup> Not coincidentally, these competencies proved to be the foundation of American concepts of war against Indian communities, the rebellious southern states, and perceived European threats.

<sup>82</sup> Emory Upton, *A New System of Infantry Tactics, Double and Single Rank, Adapted to American Topography and Improved Fire-Arms* (New York: D. Appleton, 1874), 211–14, 297; Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 60–63; For a definition of linear warfare see Matloff, *American Military History*, 23–24 and for information on the officer corps Indian fighting experience following the Civil War see pp.304-306; The close connection between US Army and French Army doctrine is explained the preface to Wm. P Craighill, *The 1862 Army Officer's Pocket Companion: A Manual for Staff Officers in the Field* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2002); For infantry tactics see William Joseph Hardee, *United States Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics, for the Exercise and Maneuvers of Troops, When Acting as Light Infantry and Riflemen: Official Textbook for Officers and Privates*. (Glendale: Benchmark Publishing, 1970); Cavalry tactics can be found in Philip St. George Cooke, *The 1862 U.S. Cavalry Tactics: [Instructions, Formations, Manœuvres* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole, 2004); For book length analysis of linear tactics during the Civil War see Paddy Griffith, *Battle Tactics of the American Civil War* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989); For a fascinating assessment of the influence of culture on the employment of linear warfare see Grady MacWhiney and Perry D Jamieson, *Attack and Die: Civil War Military Tactics and the Southern Heritage* (Tuscalosa, Ala: University of Alabama Press, 1982).

early as the colonial period when settler militias fought Indians for control of coastal territories. The operational tenets most relevant to commanders managing campaigns at the division and department level included integrating Indian auxiliaries, campaigning in all seasons of the year, and employing multiple combat formations simultaneously against the same targeted population. The tactical techniques, of greatest relevance to the commanders and soldiers actually doing the fighting, included maintaining a continuous cycle of sentries whenever halted, distributing soldiers from a moving formation to ensure any Indians would encounter a small group regardless of approach direction (front, flanks, or rear), and, the most commented on in popular literature, conducting attacks at dawn when the limited visibility facilitated moving groups of soldiers close to a village or camp and the Indian occupants were most likely to be surprised.<sup>83</sup>

The army adapted these tenets to fit the conditions on the western frontier after the Civil War. The objective of most Indian War campaigns was to force resisting Indian tribes to move to or permanently remain within a geographically-defined, government-controlled enclave designated as the tribe's reservation. Officers in the trans-Mississippi West employed a strategy to disrupt all aspects of a targeted tribe's society and life style – hunting, gathering, farming, shelter, food preservation, seasonal migration, socializing, governance, and sleep. The method employed to implement societal disruption was simply to force resisting tribes to keep moving throughout the annual cycle of seasons. This involuntary movement denied resisting Indians opportunities to replenish the resources necessary to survive. In contrast, with the fiscal backing

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<sup>83</sup> The army's combat tenets and nature of Indian warfare ensured that when soldiers encountered tribes there was a high probability of casualties among an entire tribal population not just fighting age men. Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 37, 42, 45; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 51.

of Congress, the army could rely upon a sophisticated logistical system to sustain soldiers in the field year-round.<sup>84</sup>

The most common means of implementing the societal disruption strategy was to move multiple groups of soldiers, organized into multi-functional formations consisting of scouts, cavalry, infantry, and even artillery on occasion, and their necessary logistical stores, from an outer perimeter surrounding a targeted tribe's territory. These different formations were commonly referred to as "columns." The senior officer commanding these columns would direct the column commanders to maneuver their troops along major waterways or terrain features toward a central point. This method of "converging columns" maximized the soldiers' opportunities to make direct contact with the resisting tribes. The Indian leaders' fear of soldiers finding and directly attacking their villages kept them pushing their people to move.<sup>85</sup>

The army had an enormous advantage in firepower over its Indian adversaries. In an idealized confrontation, a column of soldiers might surprise a hostile camp and allow the army's overwhelming collective advantage in firepower to destroy any Indians who would stand and fight. But that scenario was both unlikely and unnecessary. It was unlikely because the Indian tribes were difficult to track and trap in the vastness of the trans-Mississippi West. It also proved

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<sup>84</sup> Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 7–16, 61; Chun, *U.S. Army in the Plains Indian Wars, 1865-91*, 14–16; Matloff, *American Military History*, 306; Utley and Washburn, *Indian Wars*, 199–201, 203–6, 210; Michael Richardson, "Keep 'em Moving" in Leo J Blanken, Hy S Rothstein, and Jason J Lepore, eds., *Assessing War the Challenge of Measuring Success and Failure* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2015); Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West 1846-1890.*, 161; Langdon Sully, *No Tears for the General: The Life of Alfred Sully, 1821-1879* (Palo Alto: American West Pub. Co., 1974), 174–78, 181–90.

<sup>85</sup> Richardson, "Keep 'Em Moving," 98. Converging columns were employed by General Sheridan during the 1868-69 and 1874-75 campaigns to subdue the southern Plains tribes and in the 1876 northern Plains campaign against the Sioux and their allies. Military historians conjecture that the destruction of nearly half the 7th Cavalry on the Little Big Horn would not have occurred if all the commanders (Crook, Gibbon, and Terry) followed Sheridan's guidance to keep their columns moving toward the rendezvous point in Montana.

to be unnecessary because the concept of societal disruption allowed the troops to degrade the ability of the Indians to resist without having large scale, combat engagements.<sup>86</sup>

Officers planned campaigns to be long-duration, relentless pursuits of a targeted tribe. Army leaders continually sought to achieve decisive outcomes and increase the efficiency of their forces during these campaigns because Congressional support, in terms of time and money, and positive public sentiment toward military operations often proved fleeting. Some skills that enhanced the efficiency of formations on campaign, such as learning the region's topography or the culture and habits of various tribes, proved too costly in manpower and time for the army to achieve and sustain organizational mastery. This was particularly true for many officers required to master other organizational competencies and most soldiers who were employed in a jack-of-all-trades manner. The continuous westward movement of the military and settlement frontier made achieving competency even more impractical to achieve. As a result, the recruiting, enlistment, and integration of allied Indians as scouts, knowledgeable of the landscape and peoples of the region, became the principle means to increase the efficiency of army formations in campaigns. The societal disruption strategy came to leverage the combination of army manpower and firepower with Indian scout knowledge and field craft as a means to subjugate a targeted population within fiscal, temporal, and social constraints imposed by Congress, the President, and competing public interest groups.<sup>87</sup>

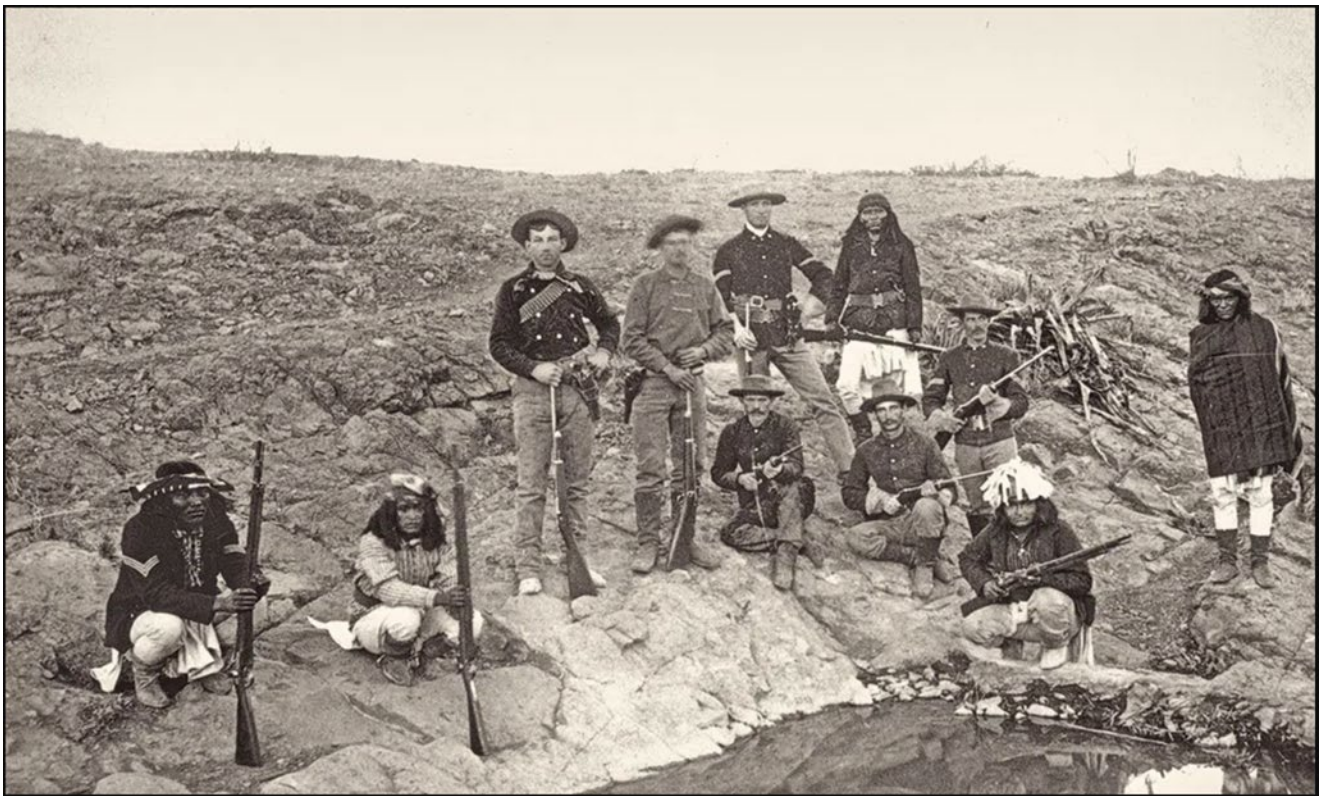
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<sup>86</sup> Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 65; Don Rickey, *War in the West; the Indian Campaigns*. (Crow Agency, Mont.: Custer Battlefield Historical and Museum Association, 1956).

<sup>87</sup> Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan - Volume 2*, 2:114–16; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 77–79; Van de Logt, *War Party in Blue*, 4; Downey and Jacobsen, *The Red/Bluecoats*, 11; Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 67–69; Paul Andrew Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 249–51.



The societal disruption strategy achieved effects by combining the army and Indian comparative advantages. The strategy presented targeted Indians with a dire dilemma. When targeted tribes set up their camps, army columns guided by Indian scouts could find and attack them. If the tribes kept moving, they would quickly exhaust their supplies. Without food and shelter, the Indians would be forced to fight or submit. When applied without restriction, the societal disruption strategy proved effective in every instance.<sup>88</sup>



Cavalry troopers and Apache scouts guarding a water hole during the Geronimo campaign, 1886.  
Courtesy of Arizona Historical Society, PC 1000 Tucson General Photo Collection, Subjects-Indians-Apache-Campaigns-Geronimo, #14325.

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<sup>88</sup> Rickey, *War in the West; the Indian Campaigns*. provides a generic description of an army campaign during the Plains Indian Wars, including preparation, movement, and battle; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 44–58 Utley gives his assessment of army strategy during the Plains Indian Wars in chapter three “The Problem of Doctrine” .

## Indian Scouts: A Key Component

With army officers focused on preparing their men for combat in linear formations, they did not seek to develop the skills for soldiers to serve as scouts, guides, or trailers. This lack of emphasis on complex individual skills was compounded by Congressionally-imposed resource constraints and limitations that often manifested as soldiers forgoing combat training for activities unrelated to martial skills such as construction, gardening, and animal husbandry. As a consequence, most soldiers lacked the skills necessary for navigating long distances across unmarked and unmapped terrain, thriving in or even surviving in the harsh climatic conditions of the west, communicating by sign or verbally with American Indians, differentiating between the variety of Indian tribes, or rapidly tracking targeted tribes. Even if a soldier was actively engaged with Indian peoples in proximity to their fort, due to their assigned combat roles, that knowledge was unlikely to prove of consequence during a campaign. The focus of soldiers' training was on marksmanship, collective drill, and developing discipline in the men to remain together in formation regardless of personal fear during an encounter with enemy combatants.<sup>89</sup>

The integration of Indian allies as scouts into columns of soldiers became a key component of army operations and strategy. The precedent was set as early as the Indian wars of the colonial period when Indian allies provided principal combatants as well as scouts. As the European colonial powers increased the size and professionalism of their military establishments

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<sup>89</sup> E. A. Bode, *A Dose of Frontier Soldiering: The Memoirs of Corporal E.A. Bode, Frontier Regular Infantry, 1877-1882*, ed. Thomas T Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 54, 64–65, 88, 157–58 Bode describes a number of experiences interacting and learning about Indian ways including a temporary assignment living among and supervising a tribe near Fort Sill but gives no indication that knowledge enhanced his fieldcraft or combat skills; William Earl Smith, *Sagebrush Soldier: Private William Earl Smith's View of the Sioux War of 1876*, ed. Sherry Lynn Smith (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001) As one of General Crook's enlisted orderlies, Smith relates regular observations of Indian scouts during the 1876 Powder River expedition; Don Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 270–73; Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 54–56, 59–61.

in North America, linear tactics became more influential in the battles and wars waged for dominance of the continent's eastern seaboard. As competence in linear tactics became more important to war in North America, Indian allies were no longer relied upon to provide principal combatants. As colonial and then American military forces penetrated further into the continent, the changing topography reshaped what they sought from Indian allies. Deeper penetration required a continuous search for new Indian allies knowledgeable of the changing topography and Indian cultures encountered.<sup>90</sup>

Following the Civil War, the frontier army systematically implemented the societal disruption strategy. Army officers understood that, even more than woodland and eastern seaboard Indians, the tribes of the trans-Mississippi West had very limited production capabilities which kept them existing close to subsistence level. Tribes could not sustain themselves without time to farm, hunt, gather, and process those staples in synchronization with the seasons. Disrupting the targeted tribe's way of life, therefore, hinged on inducing a rate of movement for the tribes such that survivable living conditions were unsustainable and consequently forcing the Indians to choose surrender instead of extinction.<sup>91</sup>

The strategy employed by the officers of the frontier army was predicated on the heavy use of Indian scouts who were highly skilled in field craft and knowledgeable of the targeted tribe's customs and the territory in which they lived. The scouts' employment could dramatically enhance the effectiveness of the army's strategy by increasing the efficiency of a column's movements, increasing the speed by which resisting tribes could be found and maintaining army

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<sup>90</sup> Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 40–42; Smith, *The View from Officers' Row*, 164–65; Smith, *Sagebrush Soldier* As one of General Crook's enlisted orderlies, Smith relates regular observations of Indian scouts during the 1876 Powder River expedition; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 11–20.

<sup>91</sup> Sherman, *Memoirs of General W.T. Sherman*, 783; Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan - Volume 2*, 2:115.

formations in proximity to those tribes once found. Indian scouts' tracking skills and unique knowledge of the land maximized the army's collective advantages against resisting tribes.<sup>92</sup>

The lifestyles of the American Indian peoples (nomadic, semi-nomadic or settled) of the trans-Mississippi West placed a premium on individual excellence in the arts and skills necessary to survive and thrive in the harsh western landscape. The result was that Indian men possessed attributes of value to the conduct of war and other military-related activities. With the growing pressure of competition for resources from tribal and settler migration west, the skills required to sustain themselves, their family, and tribe became ever more critical. Given the social norms and changing conditions, male Indians in general were recognized as highly effective individual hunters. Since many of those skills were directly transferable to warfare, most male Indians proved to be skilled individual combatants in comparison to individual United States soldiers.<sup>93</sup>

According to Captain John G. Bourke, Indians were superior in skills necessary for scouting during the Indian Wars. Based on his observations of Apache Indians serving as scouts during the latter Apache Wars (1870–1880s), Bourke concluded that, “the two great points of superiority of the native or savage soldier over the representative of civilized discipline are his absolute knowledge of the country and his perfect ability to take care of himself at all times and under all circumstances.”<sup>94</sup> Bourke was well-placed to make his observations. From 1871 To 1885, during the height of the Indian Wars, he served as Brigadier General George Crook's aid.

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<sup>92</sup> Richardson, “Keep 'Em Moving,” 96–97.

<sup>93</sup> Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 6; Van de Logt, *War Party in Blue*, 40.

<sup>94</sup> John Gregory Bourke, *Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1993), 3, 29–30.

Additionally, Bourke systematically studied American Indian cultures and his published findings remain valued ethnographies.<sup>95</sup>

Once integrated, Indian scouts enhanced the army formation's capabilities by leveraging Indians' extensive knowledge of the country and cultures, but this advantage was not always recognized in Washington. General Order No. 56 was published based on Congress' 1866 authorization of 1000 permanent Indian scouts for the army. Even with recognition of Indian scouts' value serving in campaigns of subjugation by officers like Sheridan, Crook, Custer, and Bourke, by 1874 the authorization was reduced to 300 full time scouts by a budget-conscious legislature. Where those 300 scouts served was determined between division and department commanders based on their operational needs. The vast majority of scouts were hired temporarily, either on a monthly basis or for the duration of a particular task or campaign.<sup>96</sup>

A small number of white men living in frontier settlements were also hired as full-time civilian employees of the army to augment Indian scout detachments either as interpreters or additional scouts. Often they performed both functions. White scouts were valued by their army employers for their knowledge of the local and regional Indian tribes and competence in their languages or the more universal Plains sign language. Many brought experience from hunting and trapping in various regions of the trans-Mississippi West, which made them useful for insight about the local topography and natural resources as well as skills to track animals and humans. White scouts were assigned duty at a particular post or with a particular regiment depending on whether they were hired by a post or regimental quartermaster officer. White

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<sup>95</sup> John Gregory Bourke, *The Diaries of John Gregory Bourke, Vol 1*, ed. Charles M Robinson, vol. 1 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003), 1–6.

<sup>96</sup> United States, *General Orders No. 56.*; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 2, 43–57; Downey and Jacobsen, *The Red/Bluecoats*, 11; Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*, 127–28.

scouts were expected to serve as messengers between commands and thus be capable of and willing to act independent of their command in hostile territory. Those whites who could meet these expectations generally possessed field craft and martial skills beyond the scope of most soldiers and officers. Although white scouts did much to augment the commands they served, they were small in number and their knowledge, skills and attributes seldom, if ever, proved comparable or exceeded those of Indians raised to manhood in the west.<sup>97</sup>

In their role as guides and trackers, scouts increased the overall efficiency of the force in traversing the land and finding targeted tribes or groups. Indian scouts, although capable of and routinely involved in fighting, generally assumed an auxiliary role in combat when directly supporting an army column. Scouts performed tactical actions (tasks) the regular soldiers were less suitable to perform, such as stampeding a targeted tribe's horse herd. Scouts seizing horses immediately preceding or simultaneously with the regulars' attack on the tribe would severely limit the targeted tribe's mobility, placing them at a significant disadvantage either in responding to or fleeing from the attack. Depriving a tribe of its herd, along with destroying the material resources left behind in a village proved a heavy blow limiting their mobility as well as undercutting the foundation of their economy and social incentive structure.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan - Volume 2*, 2:116, 125, 131 Sheridan states that many whites in the frontier towns claimed to be "scouts and Indian slayers" but found that few possessed the necessary courage, endurance, and knowledge of the land and the inhabitants to be useful as scouts. Scouts on annual contracts to the Army were employees of the Quartermaster Department because that was the only branch authorized to contract with civilians. This is in contrast to most Indians, and some whites, who were enlisted for periods when their services were most required; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 79; William "Buffalo Bill" Cody, associated with the 5th Cavalry, is the most famous white scout. Cody was known for some feats of endurance and courage but his fame is attributable more to his Wild West show. For information on Cody and the duties of white scouts see Don Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 80-81.

<sup>98</sup> Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 121; Van de Logt, *War Party in Blue*, 130.

Officers adjusted the size, composition, and mode of transport for their combat formations based on the nature of the tribe they pursued and the terrain they encountered. In the Southwest region of Arizona, New Mexico, west Texas, and northern Mexico, the army employed much smaller formations in their efforts to subdue Apache Indians who had fled their arid reservation into the mountains. A common combat formation departing for “a scout” consisted of approximately thirty soldiers, twenty scouts, and a small mule-based pack train carrying their supplies. The scouts who were employed primarily guided, tracked, and conducted reconnaissance while the soldiers were intended to serve as the primary combat force both in the event the scouts found a hostile encampment and to defend their pack train so critical to sustaining the contingent in the field. With the relatively small number of soldiers and scouts, everyone was expected to fight, if needed.<sup>99</sup>

Advantages of long-serving officers became readily apparent in the conduct of campaigns. Many of the company, field grade, and general officers leading the campaigns had extensive experience performing their specific duties, were very familiar with the capabilities of their forces, and had a general knowledge of Indian customs indigenous to the region they were assigned. Often officers, due to their long service in designated locations, had a knowledge of the local or regional Indian tribes they were ordered to subdue. Based on specific duties, or even

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<sup>99</sup> Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 74–75; Utley and Washburn, *Indian Wars*, 218–19; Knight, *Life & Manners*, 204–5 The composition & tactics described in each of these works demonstrate the universality of the societal disruption strategy. The same methods-converging columns, prepared for massed linear combat, conducting relentless pursuit - were applied while adjustments were made as to the scale, composition, and mode of transport for the column based on the terrain and enemy’s fighting characteristics. It’s all about a credible combat force staying in the field in close enough proximity to the targeted tribe.

personal interests, some officers developed professional and personal ties with tribes allied, neutral, or adversarial to the United States government.<sup>100</sup>

The officer's knowledge of terrain and tribal custom was important because it informed their tactical decisions and allowed them to better evaluate the performance of their scouts. This was particularly important when assessing risks such as when they approached sources of water and areas where they would be vulnerable to surprise attacks such as passes, defiles, and steep or rocky terrain that would restrict their observation or ability to maneuver their soldiers. Officers continuously balanced the welfare of their men and animals against the probabilities of successfully accomplishing their mission to find, capture, kill, or just force resisting Indians to keep moving.<sup>101</sup>

### **Seldom Evenly Matched**

The army was organized, manned, trained, and equipped to perform its various roles in the consolidation of federal authority across the Continental United States. The army was relatively well structured for implementing campaigns of subjugation utilizing the societal disruption strategy. Tactical disadvantages soldiers may have suffered in combat with Indian combatants (commonly referred to as warriors or braves) were offset by the operational and strategic advantages the army possessed as an institution.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West 1846-1890.*, 157–61; Coffman, *The Old Army*, 260–61; Smith, *The View from Officers' Row*, 168.

<sup>101</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 132; Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, 272, 276, 277.

<sup>102</sup> Matloff, *American Military History*, 305, 318; Millett and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*, 238.



By the 1860s Indians of the trans-Mississippi West pursued two forms of collective martial violence—raiding and war. The purpose for collective violence determined the goals and organization employed by the Indians involved.<sup>103</sup>

Raiding was pursued as an economic activity intended to enrich individuals, their families, and their tribe by stealing from others, whether Indian or settler. The most valued possession sought in raiding was the horse. Other items of value included tools, weapons, particularly firearms, food, and captives. The raiding parties were intentionally kept small because they intended to avoid combat and maintain stealth throughout their movement to, presence near, and departure from their targeted party. Plains raiders could travel by horse but as often raiders traveled by foot, especially during their final approach, to their intended target.

War was conducted for vengeance, population replacement, and/or territorial conquest. Vengeance was focused on killing members of another tribe or ethnic group in retaliation for the death, wrong, or perceived wrong of a tribal member by another tribe or group. Tribes with dwindling populations might make war on others as a means to maintain or increase their population. Territorial conquest was the focus of much endemic inter-tribal warfare. The Sioux, on the northern Plains, and the Comanche, in the southern Plains, are widely acknowledged for their conquest of large territories from neighboring tribes in their respective regions. Indians gathered in much larger groups to form war parties. Although focused on killing or capture, war

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<sup>103</sup> Bernard Mishkin, *Rank and Warfare Among the Plains Indians* (Lincoln, Bison Book, 1992), pp.28-30. Grenville Goodwin, *Western Apache Raiding and Warfare*. Edited by Keith H. Basso. (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1971), pp.16-18 and 256-263. Jack S. Williams and Robert L. Hoover. *Arms of the Apacheria: A Comparison of Apachean and Spanish Fighting Techniques in the Later Eighteenth Century* (Greeley, CO: University of Northern Colorado, 1983), for tactics and strategy of the Apache see pp.55-62. Brian Delay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), Delay relates that in the 1830 and 1840s the distinction between raiding and warfare collapsed in to a single construct for the Comanche and Kiowa in their wars against Mexicans, pp.123-126 and 131-135. Utley gives a brief description of the “Indian war complex” in *Frontier Regulars*, pp.6-7. NOTE: Guerrilla, asymmetric, unconventional, and irregular warfare are all terms associated with concepts of non-linear warfare.

party members also took advantage of economic opportunities to seize horses, material goods, or captives in a manner similar to raiding. Plains war parties maintained their advantage in mobility by traveling and fighting on horseback, while those of the more mountainous west regions often traveled and fought on foot to take advantage of terrain which restricted sight, sound, and movement.

There were many commonalities between raiding and war. In most Indian societies, raiding and war parties were led by a warrior trained, experienced, and already proven successful in one or more previous raids or wars. Raiders might only have single leader who determined the objective of the raid, guided the members, decided when and if to act, while a large war party would necessarily include other experienced warriors guiding some smaller component of the whole. Leaders of raiding and war parties never had complete control over the actions of members of their party because Indian societies incentivized individual action and achievement in war or raiding more than collective action. Both forms of warfare provided opportunities for individual social advancement through the completion of acts esteemed among their community generally involving conducting martial feats at the point of greatest risk or vulnerability to one's self such as touching, not necessarily killing, an enemy combatant or saving a comrade who was in perilous circumstances. This incentive further constrained a war leader's ability to specifically direct members of their party before or during combat. Leaders generally led by example or suggestion. Additionally, Indians societies were highly sensitive to battle casualties so warriors avoided combat unless success appeared guaranteed or an adversary forced the encounter. These social priorities ensured that individual men were highly effective combatants while simultaneously degrading the ability to standardize group activities to achieve predictable collective outcomes in combat.

Indian tactics—ambush, surprise, rapid attacks, and speedy withdrawals—played to their strengths. Warriors were experienced in moving with stealth on foot and mounted as well as utilizing terrain to facilitate their tactical plans. They used the terrain to mask their presence from a moving enemy and ambush them when they came within close range. They could also mask their total strength from an enemy while having a small number of their war party demonstrate in front of an enemy to lure them into the ambush. The terrain was also used to mask war or raiding parties' movement towards stationary adversaries. Once close enough an entire war party would make a rapid, unexpected attack while a raiding party would stealthfully abscond with horses or other intended plunder. In each case the party's leader would provide guidance that would bring the group toward their objective and then serve as a role model during the ensuing action but would trust to each member of their party to act on their own. If an enemy proved alert and on their guard, too powerful, or too resolute, it was likely the raid or attack would falter and the party would escape as best they could on their own or in small groups to reassemble at some previously designated location as a measure to confound pursuit by their adversaries.<sup>104</sup>

The methods of war employed by Indians of the trans-Mississippi West are characteristic of what today is termed 'guerrilla warfare.' These methods often placed the army at a tactical disadvantage on the western frontier. As historian John S. Gray points out, though, "Indians relied on the highly developed individual skills of the warrior, fostered by a whole way of life, while the army relied on the disciplined obedience of men acting in concert as their officers directed."<sup>105</sup> This reality demonstrated one of the strategic advantages the army held over

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<sup>104</sup> Various oral accounts of Indian warfare are provided by a number of works including *Two Leggings, Two Leggings the Making of a Crow Warrior*, 34–43; *Two Leggings*, 27–33; Jason Betzinez, *I Fought with Geronimo*, ed. Wilbur Sturtevant Nye (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska, 1987), 87–92; Rickey provides the soldiers' perspective on Indian warfare tactics and techniques Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, 276–79, 282–83.

<sup>105</sup> Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 86.

Indians—manpower reserves—soldiers killed in action could be replaced by new recruits in a matter of months while it took tribes a generation to replace warriors lost in battle.

In contrast to an Indian tribe or an alliance of tribes, Army formations operated with a singular focus and highly sophisticated division of labor. Beyond the battlefield and immediate area of the campaign (“area of operations”), access to rail and water transportation along with the telegraph and later heliograph, gave the army unparalleled mobility and communications capabilities over horse or foot bound Indians. Those capabilities further connected the army formations in the field with access to a nearly inexhaustible pool of manpower and material resources. These advantages ensured that whenever the federal government directed the army to apply lethal force to end Indian resistance the outcome was a foregone conclusion. When the commander of a campaign added the local expertise of Indian scouts to their existing comparative advantage over a targeted Indian tribe the results were more rapidly achieved.<sup>106</sup>

When comparing the army’s manpower and capabilities to those of individual Indian tribes or tribal confederations the conclusions are counter-intuitive. In most combat encounters between 1866 and 1890, the army brought more combatants to bear in combat than a resisting tribe despite tribal populations often outnumbering the troops by ten to one. This was due to the dispersion of tribes across the landscape, the various tribal relationships to the federal government (allied, neutral, or opposed) and Indian cultural approaches to warfare that favored individual action over collective action. There were, of course, exceptions where army forces were outnumbered and even defeated in a battle, the Little Big Horn being the most well-known of these instances but with the exception of Red Cloud’s War between 1866 and 1868 the army

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<sup>106</sup> Dunlay, 71; Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 40–41.

invariably achieved its objective against the tribe or confederation they were ordered to subdue.<sup>107</sup>

Twentieth-century military historians including Robert Utley and John McDermott concluded that the army lacked competency in fighting Indians. Even though these observers acknowledge that warfare with Indian tribes did not pose an existential threat to the federal government, they still concluded that army officers incorrectly focused their intellectual energies and educational opportunities during the post-Civil War era. These observers conclude that the lack of specialized strategies, tactics, and techniques for Indian warfare ultimately prolonged inter-tribal, Indian-settler violence, and army campaigns across the trans-Mississippi West. Utley contended that the army should have applied its available intellectual efforts on developing a comprehensive doctrine for the conduct of Indian warfare. What these observers discount is that the basis for the successful conduct of large-scale linear warfare were the same fundamentals required to conduct war against Indians.<sup>108</sup>

Utley and McDermott's conclusions are inadequate given the realities of the army's situation after the Civil War. A simple reason that army leaders did not expend effort to codify a unique Indian fighting doctrine was that from institutional memory they knew the method of subjugation was to physically and emotionally exhaust the targeted tribe while destroying their material resources. Yes, the method proved an unwieldy club, but it was a means that did not

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<sup>107</sup> Taylor, *ARCLIA, 1866*, 370-372. The Indian Bureau estimated the aggregate Indian population in 1866 as 295,774—nearly six times authorized strength of the frontier army in that year. On the southern Plains the Kiowa, Comanche, Arapaho, Southern Cheyenne, and Lipan were a combined 6800, in the north the combined Sioux population alone was estimated at 27,765 along with another 2600 Cheyenne and Arapaho, and in the southwest the various Apache tribes combined into a population of 11,550; Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 67.

<sup>108</sup> McDermott, *A Guide to the Indian Wars of the West*, 64–65; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 46–48.

require expertise other than logistics and the tactical command and control of an amalgamation of detachments, companies, and regiments to address the exigency at hand.<sup>109</sup>

The post-Civil War army did not achieve the level of expertise required to perform more complex activities and operations. Operations to proactively mitigate threats to settlers and settlement posed by Indians, akin to present concepts of counter-insurgency or counter-guerrilla warfare, were beyond the intellectual, political, and cultural horizons of both the army and the government which fielded it. This would have been true, even if a concept existed along with the political will to implement such a method, given the limitations of developing and sustaining individual and collective skills across the army. This would be particularly problematic among the enlisted corps who were performing so many duties unrelated to combat and suffered from an extraordinarily high annual turnover rate of soldiers. In 1891, the adjutant general reported that between 1867 and 1890 “it appears that over one-third of the number enlisted have deserted” with the average annual rate of 14.8 percent.<sup>110</sup> While reenlistment rates were equally abysmal for those soldiers completing their 5 year terms of service presumably because of low wages, difficult working conditions, and isolation from American society. The combined turnover rate of a company or regiment might reach as high as 40% in a given year when desertions, deaths, confinements, discharges for illness, and end of enlistments were combined. The regular movement of commands to new locations and demands to conduct activities that required other

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<sup>109</sup> Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 48–49; Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 18, 128; Two publications representing officers’ thinking on the topic of Indian warfare include Randolph B Marcy, *The Prairie Traveller: A Hand-Book for Overland Expeditions: With Maps, Illustrations, and Itineraries of the Principal Routes Between the Mississippi and the Pacific*, 1859; See also Edward S Farrow, *Mountain Scouting: A Hand-Book for Officers and Soldiers on the Frontiers: Profusely Illustrated and Containing Numerous Notes on the Art of Travel*, ed. Jerome A Greene (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000).

<sup>110</sup> J.C. Kelton, Report of the Adjutant General, dated Washington DC, October 1, 1891 in United States, *ARSW 1891*, 64.

than martial skills such as law enforcement, escort duty, civil relief, strike breaking all added up to a continuous outflow of experience requiring leaders to focus on achieving the most basic soldier competencies. These institutional limitations were, of course, compounded by the cycle of fiscal, material, and manpower constraints imposed by Congress.<sup>111</sup>

The frontier army inherited a highly sophisticated logistical system from the Union army. Major General Henry Halleck, the armies leading theorist, defined logistics as “the military art which embraces all the practical details of moving and supplying armies.”<sup>112</sup> This function was accomplished by commanders of the line regiments, individual forts, and the geographical departments and divisions, coordinating with their equivalent officers of the quartermaster department, to plan and implement procedures that ensured the fighting formations ordered to subdue Indians could move to and be sustained in almost any location and conditions across the trans-Mississippi West. Commanders and their regimental quartermasters sought mastery of this logistical system to meet the demands of deploying and sustaining army formations.<sup>113</sup>

Indians learned through personal experience or anecdotal evidence that the appearance of any sizeable army formation represented a latent threat to their survival and that of their tribe. According to officers the common instinctual response of a tribe was to break camp and move away as soon as a column of soldiers came into sight. A screen of fighters would emerge from the camp intent on delaying the soldiers’ advance long enough for the rest of the tribe to pack

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<sup>111</sup> Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, 336–37; Tate, *The American Army in Transition, 1865-1898*, 29.

<sup>112</sup> H. W Halleck, *Elements of Military Art and Science* (New York: Appleton, 1862), 81.

<sup>113</sup> Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan - Volume 2*, 2:114–15; Brigadier General Terry, Commander Department of the Dakota, dated St Paul, Minn, November 12, 1877 in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1877*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1877), 487–92, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078451> describe the logistics preparations and operations that sustained Colonel Nelson Miles’ and his Yellowstone Command during their successful campaign against the Sioux during the winter of 1876-1877. Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 48, 231.

and depart as quickly as possible. This response completely validated the army focus on linear warfare competency because the latent threat their formations posed represented the critical ingredient required to successfully implement the societal disruption strategy – movement. Whether the physical dislocation of a targeted tribe resulted from a perceived threat or in direct response to an attack was irrelevant. As long as the army could maintain a credible threat in proximity to the tribe that disrupted the peoples’ capability to hunt, gather, and process the food and material resources necessary to survive the societal disruption strategy would ultimately succeed.<sup>114</sup>

### **Measuring Progress: The Army Dilemma**

The pressure for army leaders to increase the efficiency of Indian War campaigns and provide a nearly continuous commentary on progress in those campaigns provided unanticipated opportunities for junior officers. Throughout the post-bellum period, members of the Washington establishment and political elite closely followed Indian War campaigns because of the significant ideological positions at stake. Members of the humanitarian movement sought evidence that military campaigns would fail to result in the effective subjugation of tribes. With equal ardor, those who supported a much harder policy toward Indians sought evidence to show that military operations were effective. The army, by standard procedure, regularly reported during and immediately following field of operations. Thus, the reports produced by the officers leading troops in the field were essential in sustaining the federal government's political will to

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<sup>114</sup> Chun, *U.S. Army in the Plains Indian Wars, 1865-91*, 19; Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, 288; Knight, *Life & Manners*, 238–39; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 76.



fund continuous military operations, in giving positive proof that subjugation would be achieved.<sup>115</sup>

From generations of Indian fighting, army leaders understood both how to subjugate tribes and how to assess progress toward that goal. Officers knew that the attrition of Indian resources was the means of subjugation and their reports reflected that knowledge. Officers, recognized that in addition to reporting troop movements, battles, and skirmishes the quantitative reporting of resources destroyed, and adversaries killed or captured, and, most importantly, the total number of Indians who surrendered and accepted federal control as symbolized by giving up their weapons and entering a reservation, was an accurate means to assess the progress of an ongoing campaign.<sup>116</sup>

Those reports were valued by several audiences. Sherman, in command at the strategic level, along with Sheridan or Pope commanding the divisions, tracked the progress of campaigns through these battle reports, campaign returns, and other campaign correspondence of their field commanders. Sherman, Sheridan, and Pope in turn, reported information from the battlefield to the War Department, the President, and Congress to inform them on the effectiveness of a campaign. This information was routinely disseminated beyond military and governmental officials to the competing interest groups and the general public through reporting by embedded

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<sup>115</sup> Richardson, "Keep 'Em Moving," 104–5.

<sup>116</sup> Richardson, 104. Today, those reports provide a valuable window for researchers to understand the role of Indian scouts and their officers in the broader context of army actions used to implement the process of consolidation. These metrics included: Contacts or engagements with "hostile" Indian warriors reported as an estimated number of combatants engaged and killed, wounded or captured; Total military-aged male Indians were the focus of US Army attention, but the elderly, women, and children were also included in counts of those captured and in some cases killed; Logistical stockpiles - meat, grain, corn, skins (largely buffalo), gunpowder, lead shot-all were often reported by gross tons seized or destroyed; Villages - the number of tepees or shelters seized (and generally destroyed by fire) was reported to indicate the significance of the location; Horses, mules, and livestock - reports included identifying captured livestock as Indian versus those clearly stolen (identified by brand markings) from settlers and the US government; Total Indians returned or surrendering to reservations.

news correspondents, the publication of personal correspondence provided to news outlets by army participants, and, often, in compiled format as part of the Secretary of War's Annual Report.<sup>117</sup>

Junior officers commanding Indian scouts, like their superiors commanding a column or the overall campaign, were expected to provide reports on their detachment's activities. The requirement to continuously report operational activity represented opportunities for those officers to gain notoriety within the army and, at times, with a national audience through their reporting from the field. Since Indian scouts were often the only members of a column to make contact with resisting tribes and were also often directly involved in negotiating the surrender of resisting Indians, a scout commander's report was often of particular interest. The environment junior officers found in the west led some astute officers to volunteer for duties that allowed them to enter the fray, feeding the information beast of the War Department, Washington politics, and national opinion.

### **Officers Leading Scouts: Making Societal Disruption Work**

The army needed a corps of officers who could effectively integrate Indian scouts with those military formations conducting campaigns of subjugation. The following section explores where these officers came from, what they did, and what they sought to achieve.

#### *Getting In*

Officers of the following the Civil War army gained their positions through a system that had four routes of entry: veterans of the Civil War appointed by a State Governor, graduation

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<sup>117</sup> Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan - Volume 2*, 2:127–29; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 51–52; Millett and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*, 238–39; Richardson, “Keep 'Em Moving,” 97.

from the United States Military Academy at West Point, appointment from civil life by the President, and promotion from the ranks of exceptional non-commissioned officers. Graduates from West Point and those appointed by governors made up the bulk of the post-Civil War officer corps.<sup>118</sup>

The first route was appointment by the governor of a state. Immediately following the Civil War, each state was allocated a number of officer appointments similar to the allocations provided states for appointments of young men to attend the Military Academy. Candidates were only considered if they could prove to have completed at least two years of exemplary military service during the Civil War. This state appointment system was the route of entry for two-thirds of lieutenants and captains, along with one-third of all majors to colonels entering new regiments in the years immediately following the Civil War. Richard Pratt and Gustavus Doane were both appointed to commissions through their states, Indiana and California, respectively.<sup>119</sup>

The second route was through graduation from the United States Military Academy at West Point. Senators and Congressmen were granted the power to nominate candidates to the Military Academy with a similar quotas allocation as state governors to appoint officers directly. The academy was the route of appointment for Charles Gatewood.

### *Manning the Army: Personnel and Officer Promotion*

The reorganization of the Regular Army by the Act of 1866 authorized the largest peacetime army to date. The increased size of the army required a comparable increase in size of the officer corps. The pre-war manpower picture gives a sense of the scale. In 1855, Congress

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<sup>118</sup> Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, 71–72.

<sup>119</sup> United States, *Military Act of 1866*, secs. 3–5.

authorized the army's strength at 1040 officers and 12,698 men. On the eve of the Civil War, the army stood at a combined strength of 15,215. In August 1861, Congress authorized 2009 officers and 37,264 enlisted men for the Regular Army. Regulars fought in every major campaign, but the war was ultimately fought by the volunteers. The Act of July 1866 authorized 3036 officers and 51,605 enlisted men. This was a 350% increase in the pre-war Army and a 150% increase in the wartime authorization. For those officers seeking appointment to these positions, their prospects for promotion during a career in the newly reorganized Regular Army looked promising.<sup>120</sup>

Those prospects for promotion began to narrow as early as 1869. The army reached its peak strength of 57,000 officers and men in September 1867. In 1869, though, Congress cut the overall authorization to 2277 officers and 35,036 enlisted men—a 31% overall cut and a 25% cut of the officer corps. The authorized strength fell again by 5% in 1870. Congress made further reductions in 1874. By 1876, army strength was down to 2151 officers and 25,000 enlisted, a 22% decrease in overall strength from 1870. Army authorized strength remained the same until 1898, with the exception of a temporary increase of 2500 enlisted men in the cavalry regiments following the near destruction of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry during the June 1876 battle on the Little Big Horn. The officer corps increased by 111 while the enlisted strength mushroomed to 62,473 men at the initiation of hostilities with Spain in April 1898. These authorizations were almost exclusively second lieutenants and privates to fill the fighting regiments to their intended 'wartime' strength.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Stanton in United States, *ARSW 1866*, 1:1; Francis B Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army from Its Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903, Vol II*, vol. 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903), 596–605.

<sup>121</sup> Matloff, *American Military History*, 282; Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol II*, 2:606–18.

Each decrease in authorized strength meant a corresponding decrease in the opportunity for promotion. With a relatively young post-Civil War officer corps, promotion was dictated by an officer's seniority in his regiment. Since a mandatory retirement age was not instituted until 1882, the opportunities for officer promotions became the exception rather than the rule; officers literally had to die to allow for any promotions to occur. Colonel George Crook, famed for his role in the Apache Wars, was the only officer promoted to brigadier general between 1869 and 1880. Crook's opportunity only came due to the death of Brigadier General Edward R.S. Canby during the Modoc War in April 1873. After 1866, most army officers waited decades for a promotion and would remain company grade officers—lieutenants or captains—for their entire careers. The rank of captain proving to be the ultimate rank for most officers who remained in the service.<sup>122</sup>

According to military historian Arthur Wade, with only one exception, it was statistically impossible for an officer starting as a lieutenant in the post-Civil War army to advance to the rank of Colonel. In his quantitative study exploring the officer corps before 1890, Wade found that an officer in the infantry or cavalry, those most likely to actually fight in the Indian wars, only had a 37% chance of promotion to Colonel, but only if he started out as a major or lieutenant colonel in 1866. Knowing that the formal professional incentive structure represented by the regimental seniority based promotion system never proved adequate for rewarding

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<sup>122</sup> Brig Gen Canby and Rev E. Thomas were killed on April 11, 1873 by members of Kintpuash's (Captain Jack) Modoc band. Report of Maj Gen John M. Schofield, Headquarters Military Division of the Pacific, November 3, 1873 in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1873*, vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1873), 51–52, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015035037863&view=1up&seq=71&skin=2021>; Max L Heyman, *Prudent Soldier: A Biography of Major General E.R.S. Canby, 1817-1873* (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark, 1959); Arthur Quinn, *Hell with the Fire Out: A History of the Modoc War* (Boston, Mass: Faber & Faber, 1997), 80, 170.

officers for long, often arduous, and ideally competent, service, one wonders just why the post-Civil War officer corps remained content enough to remain in the army.<sup>123</sup>

### *Why stay?*

There are many reasons an officer would remain in the army despite the limited prospects for promotion. Motivations included household economics, social status, unique duties, and even entrepreneurial opportunities.

The most practical reason for accepting and retaining an officer's commission in the army was personal economics. The US economy went through a cycle of booms and busts between 1860 and 1890. Although the nation's economic production rose by a factor of 8 between the end of the Civil War and the turn of the century, that change in wealth was not evenly distributed, with various industries and their work forces seeing dramatically differing results. In the west, where mining and agriculture were the two main components of the economic engine, there was a continuous cycle of boom and bust. John Lapham Bullis, a veteran of service in the volunteers emigrated west following the war to seek his fortune. He requested a commission in 1867, following the collapse of his second business endeavor. Bullis would become renowned as the leader of the Seminole-Negro Scouts of Fort Clark, Texas.<sup>124</sup>

Adding to the challenges of boom and bust, a depression struck in 1873, plaguing the global economy into the next decade. The depression dramatically narrowed work opportunities, particularly for the professional management class that emerged in the post-Civil War era, which

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<sup>123</sup> Arthur P Wade, "Roads to the Top--an Analysis of General-Officer Selection in the United States Army, 1789-1898," *Military Affairs* 40, no. 4 (1976): 157-63.

<sup>124</sup> Coffman, *The Old Army*, 153; Unger, *These United States*, 421-22; William F Haenn, "Bullis's Medal of Honor Fight at the Pecos River 25 August 1875, Val Verde County, Texas," *On Point* 19, no. 1 (2013): 6-13.

the army officer corps, with their technical and scientific skills, were closely aligned. Regardless of the local or national economies, officers were assured of fiscal remittance and subsistence for their service. Officers at every rank found the economic stability and security of the service life worth retaining even through economic good times.<sup>125</sup>

Officers and their families also held an elevated social status than many Americans. This status was particularly evident in an officer's work environment where there was an explicit separation between officers and enlisted men. Described as a "military caste system," the separation served to foster a climate of discipline.<sup>126</sup> Officers and wives were welcomed in the social circles of prominent members of their local frontier communities. Some communities were also known to recognize officers for their effectiveness, in mitigating real or perceived threats to their communities posed by Indians, bandits, or natural disasters. Arizonans feted both George Crook and Nelson Miles, along with many of their subordinate officers, for quelling the raiding of Apaches.<sup>127</sup>

Officers often found opportunities during their service that would not have been possible as a civilian. Serving in the nineteenth century army meant one was to truly be a jack of all trades. Officers and soldiers regularly explored and charted unmapped territories, built and

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<sup>125</sup> Arthur M Schlesinger, *The Cycles of American History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 243; Mark Wahlgren Summers, *The Gilded Age, or, the Hazard of New Functions* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1997), 83–84; Coffman, *The Old Army*, 247–50 Ironically in 1877 Congress' failed to pass an appropriation measure for the War Department. Soldiers and officers received no pay for six months while members of Congress worked through the impasse. The Army continued to function throughout the period which makes the case for the military life to be stable enough to retain soldiers and officers; Adams, *Class and Race*, 23.

<sup>126</sup> Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, 62–63, 65.

<sup>127</sup> Knight, *Life & Manners*, 227; Merrill John Mattes, *Indians, Infants, and Infantry: Andrew and Elizabeth Burt on the Frontier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 23, 26, 262–64; Tate, *The American Army in Transition, 1865-1898*, 67, 69, 75; Francis Cummins Lockwood, *The Apache Indians* (Lincoln; London: Univ. of Nebraska Pr., 1987), 201; Louis Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000), 211; Adams, *Class and Race*, 7, 42, 133.

repaired infrastructure, gathered scientific data and conducted experiments, supported territorial law enforcement, and provided and managed civil relief efforts. Meriwether Lewis and William Clarke's 1804 to 1806 trek with the Corps of Discovery across the continent set the precedent for army officers as explorers. The army conducted a number of unilaterally explorations while also providing scientific expertise and manpower to hundreds of federally sanctioned endeavors that prepared the way for settlement and exploitation of the trans-Mississippi West. Well-publicized post-Civil War examples include Lt Col George Armstrong Custer's 1874 leadership of the Black Hills exploration in the Dakota Territory and Lt George Wheeler's 1879 survey of the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian.<sup>128</sup>

Surprisingly, officers found time for entrepreneurial pursuits while on the frontier. Colonel Anson Mills experimented with various designs of ammunition carriers to increase the efficiency and lethality of his soldiers. The woven web ammunition belt that he patented was so effective that it became standard equipment for US and many European soldiers. Mills remained in the army for decades even after earning a fortune from his invention. John Bullis speculated in real estate. He amassed 60,000 acres of land in west Texas. Gustavus Doane patented a tent design to compete with the existing standard army tent. Unfortunately, for Doane, the army quartermaster board chose not to procure the tent despite several commanders' enthusiasm for his design. Charles King became a prolific writer primarily crafting dime novels based on his experience in the frontier army. His work found a wide and eager audience interested in romantic notions of frontier life.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*, 3–4, 10–13 Tate provides an overview of the variety of activities officers and soldiers performed as part of the consolidation of the American West; Adams, *Class and Race*, 38, 41–42; For the Army's role in the consolidation of the Old Northwest prior to the Civil War see Prucha, *Broadax and Bayonet*.

<sup>129</sup> Anson Mills, *My Story*, ed. C. H Claudy (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2003), 314–29; *The United States Army and Navy Journal and Gazette of the Regular and Volunteer Forces*, vol. 20 (New York: W.C. & F.



Examining the real and potential rewards that an officer and his family might find in the service provides an understanding of what would motivate a man to join the army as an officer and furthermore what motivation there might be to remain regardless of limited options for promotion. Given the economic and social circumstances of the post-Civil War era, having guaranteed income, housing and food, as well as the potential for unique professional and personal opportunities, appears to have been worth the cost of limited promotion. As the slow nature of and limitations on promotion in the post-Civil War became apparent, though, junior officers pursued alternative routes in search of rewards for their service. Leading Indian scouts was one of those routes.

### **Commanding Indian Scouts: What's in it for Me?**

Officers had a variety of reasons for commanding Indian scouts. One principal reason appears to have been seeking to differentiate themselves from peers. As a commander they would be afforded opportunities to draw attention to their unique contributions and exceptional performance by communicating directly with the most senior officers leading a campaign, authoring official reports and correspondence that, if published by the War Department, might also be read by elected officials and the wider public. An officer widely recognized for competence and valor might be offered opportunities for unique assignments or transfer to another regiment or branch with greater chance for promotion. Some officers sought independence from their company and regimental daily routine by leading an independent command such as a scout detachment. Others looked for more challenging responsibilities and

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Church, 1882), 237, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924069761629&view=1up&seq=7&skin=2021>; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 98–99, 107; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 200–201; Knight, *Life & Manners*, 9, 81, 200.

increased chances for combat action. Another reason was curiosity about Indians and their lifestyles, languages, and martial qualities. And finally, organizations have always had risk seekers and the army is no exception. Some officers in the trans-Mississippi West risked their reputations and often their lives to escape the prescribed parameters of their regimental routines and culture by leading Indian scouts.

Commanding Indian scouts, though, was not as simple as just volunteering. Officers needed to possess the character or desire to see beyond the “savage” stereotype of the Indian, or at least proved capable of suspending their cultural biases while leading scouts. Commanders recognized this fact and valued those officers who could communicate with Indians and in turn cultivate and maintain rapport with them long enough to be of value in a campaign. Reinforcing the importance of the Indian scout role, insightful senior officers, such as Generals Philip Sheridan, George Crook, and Nelson Miles readily selected junior officers adept at building rapport with Indians to lead them in the campaigns to subjugate Indian tribes in the West.<sup>130</sup>

In the years following the Civil War, Indians acting as scouts under the direction of officers became integral to campaigns. Just as officers sought to maximize the effectiveness of their soldiers’ rifle fire through linear organizational practices and centralized control measures, officers sought to maximize the effectiveness of their Indian allies. It was in this effort to harness the talents of Indian allies that officers learned methods of Indian warfare and blended those concepts with the army’s doctrine inculcated through experience in the Civil War or training at West Point.

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<sup>130</sup> Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 253; Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, 69; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 92–95.

## **The Rest of the Story**

Richard Pratt, Gustavus Doane, and Charles Gatewood exemplify the small corps of officers with the requisite characteristics to effectively integrate scouts into army formations. The following chapters, organized geographically and chronologically examine their experiences through their own perception of themselves and their work. Pratt's experiences on the southern Plains culminated in the 1873-74 Red River War and show his passion for assimilation transformed the political discourse on Indian Policy. Doane's adventures on the northern Plains including the 1876-77 campaign against the Sioux help explain how his obsession with exploration (and accompanying fame) redefined what consolidation meant for the federal government and its constituents. Finally, Gatewood's hazardous duty in the southwest during the climax of the Apache Wars made him a shepherd of what has grown into one aspect of the mythological west. Examining the experiences of these officers, particularly during the campaigns to subdue tribes resisting federal authority, provides a unique window onto the army's role in the process of consolidating federal authority across the trans-Mississippi West while also demonstrating how officers seeking to benefit from their professional performance simultaneously affected the results of and, even, how we understand the process of consolidation today. Examining why, how, and the results of Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood's efforts provides insight on the power of personal agency within a broader historical process. And we see in the shadow of these officers' influence that even today the army, other federal institutions, and the American people retain the same cultural characteristics that shaped the policies and implementation of the post-Civil War process of consolidation.



U.S. Apache Scouts at San Carlos, Arizona. 1890. Also pictured are Lt. Herbert O. Williams and Maryildo Grivalva (interpreter). Photo by Erwin Baer, Prescott, Arizona.  
Accessed at: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/527132331378688019/>

### III. Richard Henry Pratt: “Red Man’s Moses”<sup>131</sup>

*The Indian scouts, who were enlisted to perform the very highest functions of citizens, even giving their lives if need be to enforce these American purposes, were imprisoned on reservations throughout the country and were thus barred from these guaranteed opportunities which they only needed in order to develop, become equal, and able to compete as citizens in all the opportunities of American life.*<sup>132</sup>



Richard H. Pratt, 1886. Source: House Divided, The Civil War Era and Dickinson College (Draft Edition), accessed at <http://housedivided.dickinson.edu/main/index.php?q=node/16692> on May 12, 2010.

While serving on the Southern Great Plains between 1867 and 1875, Richard Henry Pratt advocated for the assimilation of Native Americans into white society, rejecting the Federal reservation system and recognizing the equality of all races. Born in the working class, his formal education ended at the age of 13. He apprenticed as a tinsmith, fought in the Civil War, and had little exposure to non-whites as a child. Yet one morning in June 1867, Pratt met a group

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<sup>131</sup> Eastman, *Pratt Goodale* was an influential assimilation advocate. She taught at the Carlisle Indian Institute with her husband Dr Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux) for several years. Pratt and the school were controversial even in their own time making Eastman’s claim that he was a prophet to a generation of Indians problematic at best. .

<sup>132</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904*, ed. Robert M Utley (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 7.

of Cherokee Indian scouts, and the course of his life changed. From that day until his retirement from active military service in 1904, Pratt was in nearly continuous contact with American Indians, either leading them as scouts for the army, overseeing their incarceration, or administering their education.<sup>133</sup>

Biographies of Pratt understandably focus on his years as the founder and longtime superintendent of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, a model of racial progressivism, and an advocate for reform of federal Indian policy, but they skim past Pratt's years on the Plains when, as an army officer, he led both African-American cavalymen and Indian scouts. Those years were decisive in Pratt's development as an Indian advocate and as an officer who could win the trust of his superiors, subordinates, allies, and even enemies. Indian scouts were a key element in the military campaigns to subjugate tribes that resisted federal government authority. Senior army leaders valued the officers who successfully raised and led Indian scouts. Prior to his career as an Indian educator, Pratt was considered an expert in winning the confidence of men from Indian tribes, often from the very tribes the army was fighting, organizing them into effective scouting and fighting units, and then leading them to assist army formations in breaking the will of resisting tribes.<sup>134</sup>

Pratt believed in the American democratic experiment, and his vision was all-inclusive. In his actions as an officer, he did not favor anyone by race. Although in thought and deed, Pratt developed a reputation as fair, he did assume that his own society was superior to tribal cultures represented by Indian and African peoples. Pratt meted out redemptive punishments intended to

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<sup>133</sup> Pratt and Utley, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 8.

<sup>134</sup> Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*; Downey and Jacobsen, *The Red/Bluecoats*; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*.

alter cultural characteristics that he believed denied Indians the benefits of white society. Pratt's founding of Carlisle exemplified his faith in the nation and Christianity. His efforts sought to bring Indians the benefits of both these worlds.<sup>135</sup>

Pratt conceived of a boarding school where young Indians would be taught to thrive in America. He convinced both the army and the federal government to support his vision. Even more telling, while many families were forced to send their children, Pratt convinced some Indian parents to voluntarily send their children to Carlisle. Pratt's ultimate contribution to the on-going consolidation of federal authority over Indians was reviving public debate on Indians in American society through his promotion of assimilation through education. Carlisle, though, is only one part of Pratt's story.<sup>136</sup>

## **Before the Plains**

The traits Pratt demonstrated throughout his life were modeled on his mother, Mary Herrick Pratt, and forged in the crucible of westward expansion and family tragedy. Richard Henry Pratt was born on December 6, 1840, in Rushford, New York, the oldest of three sons of

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<sup>135</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Its Origin, Purposes, Progress and the Difficulties Surmounted* (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Written for, printed by and circulated by the Hamilton Library Association, 1908) After its founding in 1879, Pratt's boarding school program also proved an effective mechanism for mitigating violent confrontations with future generations of Plains Indian peoples. A point which is at the heart of contemporary controversy surrounding the school; Studies of Carlisle and other off-reservation boarding schools demonstrate the injustice of these institutions, the manner in which they were intended to destroy tribal culture and its social bonds, their failure to provide appropriate education and vocational skills, and, most recently, proved disastrous to the health of thousands of Indian students. See David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1997); Thomas J. Denham, *A Historical Review of Curriculum in American Higher Education: 1636-1900*, 2002, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED471739>; Joy Meness, "The Curriculum of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School: An American Education" (Ph.D., United States -- Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania State University), accessed June 27, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/1988771896/abstract/7B0BB83E08B04C85PQ/1>; McBride, "A Lethal Education."

<sup>136</sup> White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own*, 113; Prucha, *The Great Father*, 235; H. Allen Anderson, "Pratt, Richard Henry (1840-1924)," Texas State Historical Association, Handbook of Texas, January 14, 2021, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/pratt-richard-henry>.

Richard Smalley Pratt and Mary Herrick. The Pratt family moved west to Logansport, Indiana in 1846, where the senior Richard pursued a construction contract on the Wabash and Erie Canal. Richard Pratt then caught the gold rush fever of 1849 and traveled to California, where he was killed by a fellow prospector. A passionate Methodist, Mary sustained herself and her son's with her spiritual fervor which inspired Pratt's own religious enthusiasm. In 1852, the twelve year old took his first paid job. At thirteen, Pratt ended his schooling and found work as a printer's assistant to help support his mother and brothers. By 1858, Pratt was apprenticed to a Logansport tinsmith and by 1860 he was prepared to open his own smithing business. His youth was shaped by his mother's emphasis on the values of honesty and integrity in word and deed that was matched with an abiding Christian faith, temperance, a penchant for redemptive discipline, and "sticktoitniveness."<sup>137</sup> The national division would further shape the man.<sup>138</sup>

Pratt's life trajectory was altered by the Civil War. On April 16, 1861, Pratt answered President Lincoln's call for volunteers following the bombardment of Fort Sumter, enlisting in the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, Indiana Volunteers. Pratt was appointed a corporal when the regiment mustered in Indianapolis. The regiment traveled to West Virginia, and saw action in five engagements before mustering out of service on August 2, 1861. Pratt then reenlisted as a sergeant in Company A of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Indiana Cavalry Regiment, which joined the Army of the Cumberland in the Western Theater, west of the Appalachian Mountains and east of the

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<sup>137</sup> Mason Delano Pratt, *Genealogy of Richard Henry Pratt and His Wife, Anna Laura Mason Pratt* (Self-Published, 1943), 6–7, <http://archive.org/details/genealogyofricha00prat>.

<sup>138</sup> Elaine Goodale Eastman, *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses*, Civilization of the American Indian Series. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1935), 14–16, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000559440> According to Eastman, Pratt learned the tinsmith trade well enough to instruct his own students in the craft decades later as Carlisle's superintendent.



Mississippi River. As a sergeant, Pratt led men in actions across Missouri, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama, including in the Battles of Stones River and Chickamauga.<sup>139</sup>

Pratt's correspondence shows he saw himself as a servant of Christ and a life-long adherent of the temperance movement. He filled diaries with references to theological debates and military duties, offering judgments on his comrades-in-arms and civilians he encountered along the way. His diaries reveal both his values and his belief in the soldier's role in the war to preserve the Union. Pratt's entry for March 22, 1862, illustrates his state of mind:

Had quite a conversation with Bro. Phelan on Doctrines and Theology in afternoon. His views of the Word. Spirit, different dispensations. Calvinism, as used by Presbyterians, Americanism as used by Methodists pleased me very much. In Evening had a continuation of last eve's Bible Class. Examined the whole of the first of Eph.[esians] in a different light from what we did last evening. The fullness of the expression and Doctrine. Some of the boys in the Mess got to playing Cards, which had been voted out of the Mess, when it was first formed. Indignation was at once expressed at the apparent disregard of the Law. Quite an excited debate ensued, which lasted several hours and resulted in the burning of the Cards.<sup>140</sup>

In August 9, 1862, he wrote "I saw John Burns, son of Mrs. Lania of Logan. He belongs to the 35 Reg't. Irish. He was so drunk he could hardly walk. I thought of the fall flower of promise

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<sup>139</sup> Pratt's muster in and out of the 9th Indiana Infantry is recorded in William H. H. Terrell and Indiana. Adjutant General's Office. cn, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana, Vol. IV. - 1861-1865. Roster of Enlisted Men*, vol. IV, 7 vols. (Indianapolis: Samuel Douglas, State Printer, 1866), <http://archive.org/details/reportofadjutant04indi>; Pratt's muster into the 2nd Indian Cavalry and promotion to 1st Lieutenant are recorded in William H. H. Terrell and Indiana. Adjutant General's Office, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana, Vol V. 1861-1865. Rosters of Enlisted Men.*, vol. V (Indianapolis, A. H. Conner [etc] State printer, 1866), 273, <http://archive.org/details/reportindiana05dougri>; Summaries of the actions and officers of the 9th Indiana Infantry Regiment (90 days), and the 2nd Indiana Cavalry Regiment are found in William H. H. Terrell and Indiana, Adjutant General's Office. cn, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana, Volume II. - 1861-1865. Roster of Officers.*, vol. 2 (Indianapolis: Indianapolis, A.H. Connor [etc.] State Printer, 1865), 21, 411, <http://archive.org/details/reportofadjutant02indi>; Everett Arthur Gilcreast, "Richard Henry Pratt and American Indian Policy, 1877-1906: A Study of the Assimilation Movement." (New Haven; [Ann Arbor, Yale University [University Microfilms], 1974), 17; Pratt, *Genealogy of Richard Henry Pratt and His Wife, Anna Laura Mason Pratt*, 33-34.

<sup>140</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, "War Diary 1 with Transcript, 1862," n.d., 4, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series III, Box: 19, Folder: 683, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Steven E Woodworth, *While God Is Marching on: The Religious World of the Civil War Soldiers* (Lawrence, Kn.: University Press of Kansas, 2003) provides an introduction to the influence of Evangelical Christianity on northern and southern soldiers.

blasted by the demon, intemperance. He might have been a useful citizen, and an ornament to Society, but for the curse."<sup>141</sup> The next day, Pratt noted that he and his commanding officer while in search of water “were abused most woefully by two women who were strong traitoresses.”<sup>142</sup>

Pratt’s Civil War experience brought him into contact with the institution of slavery and solidified his markedly Christian vision of the United States. Observing the Tennessee plantation of Gideon J. Pillow, a Mexican War veteran and Confederate general on March 30, 1862, he writes:

The Negro quarters are tastefully arranged, the houses of the same size and painted white are built in 2 rows with a wide Street between, with a wide sidewalk and Shade trees on each side. The house of the overseer is at the opposite end of the Street from the road, and in a very comfortable building. Convenient out-houses and a large Summer house, make up the buildings on the place. Several hundred acres of cleared land, watered by a little brook. Good Soil, and about 75 Negros to tend it, Make up the equipment of this man for living. With this property he enjoyed the protection of the best Government the Sun ever shined upon. Yet he was not satisfied, and rebelled against his protector. Like a child rebelling against Parental rule. However, he was punished and will be punished more.<sup>143</sup>

A chance wartime encounter convinced him that slavery had created the conditions that allowed Africans to join American society as productive citizens. In September 1863, following the Battle of Chickamauga, Pratt and his soldiers horses were hobbled by the loss of horseshoes. A freed man trained as a blacksmith offered to help. The man shod twenty-three horses in just three hours—an exceptional feat of skill, craftsmanship, strength, and endurance for a man of any race. Pratt was astounded. In a speech years later he claimed the incident brought him to the conclusion that transportation to America separated Africans from their tribal cultures; then the experience as farm hands, craftsmen, or mechanics provided individual blacks with

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<sup>141</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, “War Diary 3 with Transcript, 1862,” n.d., 4, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series III, Box: 19, Folder: 685, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>142</sup> Pratt, 5.

<sup>143</sup> Pratt, “Civil War Diary 1,” 7.

commercially relevant skills. According to Pratt, Africans in America were already integrated into the dominant white culture and the skills learned in slavery provided the foundation for Africans to become self-supporting, productive citizens following emancipation.<sup>144</sup> This naïve conclusion appears to make sense in light of Pratt's childhood experience.

Strong in conviction and conditioned to manual labor, Pratt proved himself an able soldier. He advanced to the rank of corporal with the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry. Appointed a sergeant in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry in the summer of 1861, by early 1863, Pratt was the senior sergeant in Company A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry. His superior officers recognized his effective leadership and high devotion to duty. In November 1863, Sergeant Pratt was ordered to Indiana on recruiting duty to fill the ranks of the newly forming 11<sup>th</sup> Indiana Cavalry Regiment to serve in the western theater.<sup>145</sup>

In Delphi, Indiana, he met Anna Laura Mason of Jamestown, New York, who was in town visiting her sister. The self-confident Anna spurned Pratt's advances, writing of her admiration for him but stating her preference for friendship over romance. Pratt, although acknowledging Anna's reluctance, persisted in his efforts over the months he was on duty in and around the town. He was rewarded when he and Anna were married in Delphi on April 12, 1864.

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<sup>144</sup> According to Pratt the blacksmith's vocational training and experience allowed him to be the best "horse-shoer of any race, black or white" in Richard Henry Pratt, "The Negro and Slavery Before a Colored Audience in Philadelphia" (1911), Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series III, Box: 19, Folder: 66, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 311–12.

<sup>145</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, "Special Orders No. 200, Dtd Washington, June 7, 1864" (Adjutant General's Office, 1864), Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series II, Box: 14, Folder: 598, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Richard Henry Pratt, "Special Orders No. 115, Dtd. Indianapolis, November 26, 1863" (Adjutant General's Office, 1863), Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series II, Box: 14, Folder: 598, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; In April 1863, Pratt requested leave to visit his ailing mother. When endorsing the request his company and battalion commander, Captain Kessler and Major Stewart, respectively, explicitly commented on how well deserved leave was for Pratt who had not requested since his initial enlistment in April 1861. See Richard Henry Pratt, "Leave Request and Authorization for First Sergeant Pratt from Captain John G. Kessler, Commander Co A, 2nd Indiana Cavalry to Major J. W. Stewart, Commander of 2nd Indiana Cavalry" (Adjutant General's Office, 1863), Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series III, Box: 14, Folder: 487, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Eight days later, having reached his recruiting requirement, Pratt was commissioned as a First Lieutenant in Company C, 11<sup>th</sup> Indiana Cavalry. The couple's honeymoon consisted of traveling to Indianapolis, where the regiment gathered and trained before departing for Nashville, Tennessee to join the Army of the Cumberland.<sup>146</sup>

Pratt returned to the Western Theater with his new regiment. They spent the first five months patrolling rail lines, then participated in the defense of Huntsville, the Battle of Franklin, the Battle of Nashville, and the pursuit of Hood's army. On September 1, 1864, Pratt was promoted to captain of volunteers and served as a staff officer. When Robert E. Lee surrendered to U.S. Grant at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, Captain Pratt was serving as the Inspector and Judge Advocate for the 5<sup>th</sup> Division, Cavalry Corps of the Military Division of the Mississippi.<sup>147</sup> Less than two months later, Pratt mustered out of the Union Army in Nashville, Tennessee on May 29, 1865. Pratt returned home to Anna and opened a hardware store in Logansport.<sup>148</sup>

Within two years, however, Pratt sought to rejoin the army. On March 12, 1867, Pratt requested appointment as a regular officer in the US Cavalry. He submitted a request to the Hon. Schyler Colfax of Indiana, then the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and sent an

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<sup>146</sup> William H. H. Terrell and Indiana, Adjutant General's Office. cn, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana, Volume III. - 1861-1865. Roster of Regiments.*, vol. 3 (Indianapolis: Samuel M. Douglas, State Printer, 1866), 257, <http://archive.org/details/reportofadjutant03indi>; Eastman, *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses*, 19 Pratt and Anna Mason were married on April 12, 1864 in Carroll County, Indiana. While their courtship was only months long their marriage lasted 60 years ending only with Pratt's death in 1924. The couple raised four children: Mason Delano Pratt, 1865; Marion Cora Pratt, 1868; Nana Laura Pratt, 1871; and Richenda Henrietta Pratt, 1882.

<sup>147</sup> Pratt, *Genealogy*, 32–33.

<sup>148</sup> Frederick H. Dyer, "Compendium of the War of the Rebellion: Regimental Histories, Indiana Volunteers., 11th Indiana Regiment Cavalry (126th Regiment Volunteers).," Academic, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 22, 2022, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>; Pratt, *Genealogy of Richard Henry Pratt and His Wife, Anna Laura Mason Pratt*, 32–33; Richard Henry Pratt, "Special Field Orders No. 45" (Adjutant General's Office, 1865), Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series II, Box: 14, Folder: 598, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Terrell and Indiana, Adjutant General's Office. cn, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana, Volume III. - 1861-1865. Roster of Regiments.*, 3:261; Bureau of Pensions, "Richard H Pratt Civil War Pension Record, US Civil War Pension Index, General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934. T288, 546 Rolls, Image 3823.," *Genealogy*, Fold3, April 28, 1924, <https://www.ancestry.com>.

application for a commission in the cavalry to Brigadier General Lorenzo Thomas, Adjutant General of the US Army. Pratt's request was granted. On May 18, 1867, at the Logansport-Cass County Courthouse, he accepted his appointment as a second lieutenant in the 10<sup>th</sup> United States Cavalry Regiment. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Pratt was back in uniform and on his way to join a new command.<sup>149</sup>

### **On the Plains: Meeting Indians**

Serving on the southern Great Plains between 1867 and 1875, Pratt's experience was unusual in two regards. First, his assignment was to the 10th United States Cavalry, one of four post-Civil War regiments authorized by Congress where black men filled the enlisted ranks, led by white officers. In this capacity, Pratt was one of the few officers responsible for leading African-American soldiers. Second, in addition to supervising soldiers, he was regularly assigned to lead Indian scouts. Pratt's curiosity and broad mindedness allowed him to work effectively with both "Buffalo Soldiers" and Indians.<sup>150</sup>

Pratt's superiors quickly recognized his ability to work with Indians. He regularly commanded scouts, often supervising them during patrols and campaigns against "hostile" Indians and white outlaws. From 1867 to 1870, Pratt commanded Wichita and Caddo scouts at Fort Arbuckle. By 1873, Pratt had also served with Indian scouts at Forts Cobb, Supply, and

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<sup>149</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, "Letter to the Hon. Schyler Colfax," March 12, 1867, Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (Pratt, Richard H., 1st Lt, 10th Cav), National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.; Richard Henry Pratt, "Richard Pratt to Anna Pratt, Dated December 7, 1868, Fort Cobb I.T.," December 7, 1868, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series II, Box: 18, Folder: 610, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Adjutant General's Office, "Oath of Office, Lieutenant R.H. Pratt" (May 18, 1867), Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (Pratt, Richard H., 1st Lt, 10th Cav), National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.; Pratt, *Genealogy of Richard Henry Pratt and His Wife, Anna Laura Mason Pratt*, 33; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, x.

<sup>150</sup> Edward L. N. Glass, *The History of the Tenth Cavalry, 1866-1921* (Tuscon: Acme Printing Company, 1921), 11–20, <http://archive.org/details/historyoftenthca00glasrich>. Pratt and Utley, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 2, note 4; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 6, 26–27.

Sill.<sup>151</sup> Pratt's duties with scouts progressively strengthened his relationships with the various tribes and affiliated bands on or near the forts where he was stationed. At each post, commanders depended on him to recruit Indian scout detachments as the need for the Indians knowledge and skills arose. The scouts Pratt led proved their value to the army during the final campaign to subjugate the tribes of the southern Plains.<sup>152</sup>

Pratt joined the regiment at Fort Gibson on June 20, 1867. Colonel John Grierson, who commanded the 10th Cavalry at the time of Pratt's appointment, set high standards for the recruitment of officers and men for the regiment. A small number of men who had served in the United States Colored Troops during the Civil War provided a foundation of experience among the recruits, although recently freed slaves provided the bulk of the regiment's recruits. As men enlisted in Grierson's regiment, they were sent to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the Regimental Headquarters, or on to Fort Gibson in the Indian Territory to be outfitted and begin training as soldiers.<sup>153</sup>

When Pratt arrived at Fort Gibson, he believed his role as a frontier army officer was to "deal with atrocious aborigines."<sup>154</sup> Established by the army in 1824, Fort Gibson was the first federal fort in the Indian Territory. Between its founding and abandonment in 1889, it would

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<sup>151</sup> Pratt, *Genealogy*, 33.

<sup>152</sup> Eastman, *Pratt*, 31–37.

<sup>153</sup> Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 13–14, 16–17, In May 1867, Captain Walsh was ordered by Colonel Grierson to form D Troop, 10th Cavalry from the men already arrived at Fort Gibson; Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:478; John Bigelow in Theophilus F. Rodenbough and William L. Haskin, *The Army of the United States: Historical Sketches of Staff and Line with Portraits of Generals-in-Chief* (New York : Maynard, Merrill, 1896), 289–90, <http://archive.org/details/cu31924030724391>; Glass, *The History of the Tenth Cavalry, 1866-1921*, 12–13, 19. The Indian Territory was established along with the Dakota Indian Territory by Act of Congress to serve as locations for the concentration and settlement of Eastern Woodland Indian tribes and those of the trans-Mississippi West on Bureau of Indian Affairs administered reservations.

<sup>154</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 5.

play a major role in nearly every phase of the consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West beginning with serving as a reception station for Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole Indians forced to migrate from their eastern homelands, a bulwark of defense for those tribes against the Plains Indians, the central hub of Union defense of the Indian Territory, and, during Pratt's tenure, a major point of departure for army expeditions against the southern Plains tribes.<sup>155</sup>

His first encounter with Indians shattered his stereotype of them as lesser human beings. On the evening of June 21, 1867, First Lieutenant L.F. Munson, the post adjutant, issued Pratt an order to escort Lieutenant Colonel John Davidson, acting commander of the District of the Indian Territory, from Fort Gibson to Fort Arbuckle. The two-hundred-mile journey was expected to take seven days. Pratt would lead a detachment consisting of twenty-one cavalymen, twenty-five Cherokee Indian Scouts, and three wagons. The entire detachment was expected to be across the nearby Arkansas River by 7 o'clock the next morning awaiting Davidson's arrival.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Established in 1824 Fort Gibson was the first federal fort in the Indian Territory. Turned over to the Cherokee Nation in 1857 federal forces returned to the fort in 1863 to serve as a bulwark against Confederate forces, see Bud Hannings, *Forts of the United States: An Historical Dictionary, 16th Through 19th Centuries* (Jefferson, North Carolina.: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers., 2006), 385–86. The Indian Territory corresponds closely to the present-day boundaries of Oklahoma and was formed along with the Dakota Indian Territory to serve as a location for the concentration and settlement of Indian tribes on government administered reservations. The goal of the reservations was to clear western lands for white settlement, deter conflict between Indians and settlers, and provide a site for the introduction of educational and vocational programs intended to assimilate the Indian peoples into American society.

<sup>156</sup> Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:355–56 Following the Civil War Lieutenant Colonel John W. Davidson was appointed the second in command of the 10th Cavalry Regiment under Colonel Benjamin Grierson. In the summer of 1867, though, Davidson was appointed the commanding general of the recently formed District of the Indian Territory. Later Davidson and Grierson switched their respective positions making Davidson Pratt's direct supervisor and commanding officer. Davidson held the brevet rank of Major General of Volunteers for his service during the Civil War and was referred to as general at the time of the escort. Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 17; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 2 Fort Arbuckle was established by Captain Randolph B. Marcy in 1851 on Wild Horse Creek, near Davis, Oklahoma as one of several outposts of Fort Gibson to assist in the protection of the Five Civilized tribes relocated to the eastern portion of the Indian Territory. Arbuckle was abandoned following the establishment of Fort Sill in 1869. ; James W. Walsh, "Muster Roll of Captain James W. Walsh, Company D, of the 10th Regiment of Cavalry, United States Army (Colonel Benjamin Grierson), from the Thirtieth Day of April, 1867 When Last Mustered to the Thirtieth of June 1867, 'On the March'" (United States Army, June 30, 1867), National Archives and Records Administration.

Pratt faced three complications in carrying out his orders. Having only arrived at Fort Gibson two days before, the lieutenant had no geographic knowledge of the Indian Territory. The selected men were just being introduced to life in a military unit, had little or no training as soldiers, and had not even been issued weapons, equipment, or horses. And, finally, Pratt had no experience with Indians.<sup>157</sup>

Pratt relied on others to overcome the complications he faced. With the assistance of his commanding officer, Captain James W. Walsh, Pratt issued arms, equipment, and horses to Sergeant Clark Dumas, Corporal Frank Coutts, and 19 privates of the company. On the morning of June 22, he found his soldiers preparing for departure but saw no sign of the Indian scouts. Even with adjutant's assistance, the Indians arrived too late to meet the Colonel's expectations. The frustrated lieutenant, however, realized his need to rely on the scouts. Maintaining his composure, Pratt ordered the escort out, guided by the Indian scout sergeant.<sup>158</sup>

Pratt's late arrival did not prove a harbinger of things to come. Although chastened by Colonel Davidson for the delay, Pratt succeeded in traveling across the Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma) from Fort Gibson to Fort Arbuckle despite some harrowing experiences that included extreme weather, insect infestations, a stampede of their horses, and Davidson's own return to Fort Gibson due to illness. The escort duty introduced Pratt to the major forces that

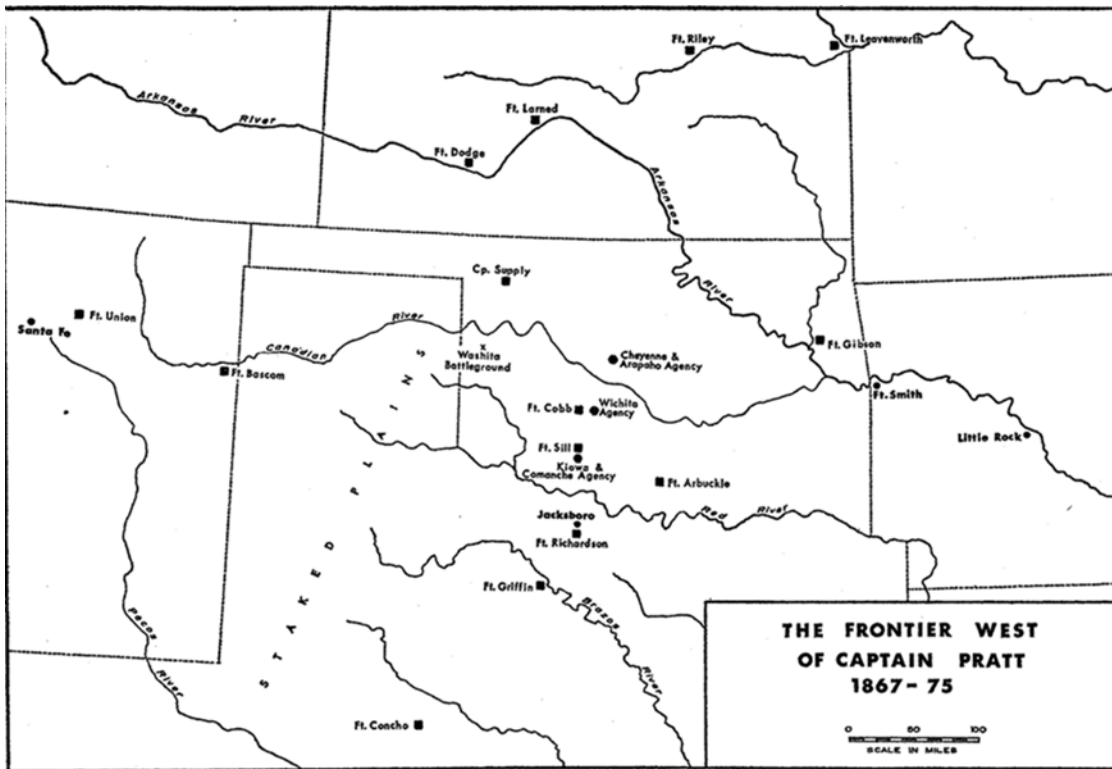
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<sup>157</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 2–3.

<sup>158</sup> Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:999; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 2-3, James William Walsh was an Irishman who served in the English Army before immigrating to the United States and enlisting on US Army. He had extensive antebellum experience campaigning in the trans-Mississippi West, served as volunteer officer in the Civil War, and accepted a commission in the Regular Army after the war. Walsh, "Muster Roll, Co D, 10th Cavalry" The muster roll identifies each member of the escort detachment with the statement "On detached Service Verbal order of Gen'l Davidson Escort Duty to Fort Arbuckle CN, June 22, 1867." This escort duty was the initial formation and deployment of D Troop. It is interesting to ponder the state of the Frontier Army knowing that commands were ordered onto the Plains just hours after being issued equipment and horses with no training or experience together. Pratt describes teaching his men basic horsemanship and cavalry tactics on the road to Fort Arbuckle.



would shape his life over the next eight years—African-American soldiers, the tightly bound post-Civil War officer corps, and most influential of all, Indians serving the army as scouts.<sup>159</sup>



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Pratt’s first encounter demonstrated why the army used Indian scouts as well as the influence Indians serving as scouts had upon officers. Despite their late arrival, the Cherokee scouts increased the detachment’s efficiency. Their knowledge of the route and topography of the region from Gibson to Arbuckle proved indispensable to the escort’s success. The scouts demonstrated other useful skills, including operating the river ferries, teaching the soldiers how to protect themselves and their animals from the swarms of insects, and supplementing the group’s rations by hunting and fishing.

<sup>159</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 1–8.

Pratt quickly came to trust the Indians to travel well in advance and to the flanks of the detachment. His assumptions regarding Native-American inferiority were immediately challenged when he quickly discovered that the Indian sergeant and many of the scouts spoke English. He was equally surprised to learn that the language was taught to the scouts as children while attending the tribally run school on the Cherokee reservation. Pratt recollected, “they had manly bearing and fine physiques. Their intelligence, civilization, and common sense was a revelation, because I had concluded that as an army officer I was there to deal with atrocious aborigines.”<sup>160</sup>

The harsh reality of cross-country travel on the Great Plains in the nineteenth century would shock the modern traveler. The travel and associated activities, likely second nature to the Cherokee scouts, made the difference between arriving at Fort Arbuckle within the prescribed time, still functional as a military force, and arriving late with the potential loss of wagons, horses, or soldiers. Without Cherokee assistance, Pratt and his new 10th Cavalry troopers may have failed in their escort duties altogether.

The duties performed by the scouts freed Pratt to focus on other activities. He had time to teach his men basic horsemanship and other skills necessary to be soldiers and cavalrymen. Pratt also recalled taking time to discuss the pending ratification of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution with General Davidson’s staff officers. He wondered how Indians could be brought to citizenship to share freedoms and equality guaranteed to whites under the Constitution

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<sup>160</sup> Pratt and Utley, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 4–5.

and then being extended to African-Americans. Pratt later claimed these conversations informed his future assimilation philosophy.<sup>161</sup>

Pratt resolved that all men, regardless of race, were worthy of entry into civilized society. He drew on his personal experiences as a child and Civil War veteran to consider how vocational education provided his own path to self-sufficiency and also facilitated freedmen's entry into American society. By the end of the escort, Pratt concluded that education would be the means to assimilate Indians into American society as well. Pratt's future actions leading soldiers and scouts would be informed by his conclusion from this escort duty.<sup>162</sup>

Many officers recognized the army's need for the skills Indians provided as scouts, but were not adept at recruiting or leading them in these roles. It appeared to take officers who had the strength of character, self-confidence, and a dash of humility to see beyond their sense of cultural superiority to lead scouts. Pratt, in contrast to many of his peers, demonstrated these qualities his first day on the job.<sup>163</sup>



"On the Plains of Indian Territory in 1868," from *The Genealogy of Richard Henry Pratt and Anna Laura Mason Pratt*, by Mason Delano Pratt, page 9, courtesy of the Allen County Library Genealogy Center.

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<sup>161</sup> Pratt, 6; Waldman, *Atlas of the North American Indian*, 31. Waldman estimates that by 1890 the Indian population was less than 250,000 which amounted to less than ½ % of the total population of the US. In contrast the African-American population was over 4 million by the end of the Civil War.

<sup>162</sup> Pratt, "Speech, 'The Negro and Slavery,'" 9–10; Eastman, *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses*, 30; Pratt's Indian educational philosophy is well articulated in two letters, Richard Henry Pratt, "Letter to President-Elect Taft," January 21, 1909, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series III, Box: 10, Folder: 353, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Richard Henry Pratt, "Letter to the Hon. Cato Sells, Commissioner of Indian Affairs," August 24, 1914, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series III, Box: 10, Folder: 362, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; See also Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, xi, 7–8.

<sup>163</sup> Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 91–107; Michael L. Tate, "Indian Scouting Detachments in the Red River War, 1874-1875," *Red River Valley Historical Review* III, no. 2 (Spring 1978): 215; Downey and Jacobsen, *The Red/Bluecoats*, 12–13.

## Managing Scouts: Learning the Trade

From 1867 to 1875, Pratt remained immersed in an environment often deeply at odds with the white culture becoming dominant across the trans-Mississippi West. A case in point was Pratt's participation in the 1867 Eureka Valley tribal counsel. Learning that a white boy was held captive and being ransomed by Kiowa Indians, Captain Walsh, Pratt, and the two 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry companies marched 70 miles from Fort Arbuckle to demand the boy's release. Walsh's command was quickly outnumbered by the gathering Kiowa, Comanche, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Kiowa-Apache.<sup>164</sup>

Walsh sought to secure the child's release without establishing a precedent of paying ransom. During the negotiations, Pratt witnessed these leaders of the same tribes take different stances. While some decried their treatment by whites, claiming the whites were the aggressors, other leaders were more conciliatory. Pratt witnessed their grievances and the social schisms within and between the tribes. These observations reinforced his conclusions that individual Indians had the capacity to participate in the "civilized" world but were held back by their tribal cultures, which promoted raiding and other undesirable lifestyles.

Pratt was also learning the army's methods of operation in the trans-Mississippi West. The Winter Campaign of 1868-1869 on the southern Plains introduced him to the societal disruption strategy. Following the Civil War, waves of settlers following the overland trails, either going over the Rockies or settling on the plains, coupled with increased railroad construction across Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, and northern Texas, resulted in violent resistance by Cheyenne, Kiowa, Arapaho, and Comanche Indians. General Sherman, then

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<sup>164</sup> Pratt and Utley, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 14–17; Robert M Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Lincoln: Bison Books, 2014), 144; Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 43.

commanding the Division of the Missouri, planned a three-phased operation in response to the escalating violence. He would use his senior officers, Generals Sheridan and Hazen, to present the Indians with a choice—war or peace. In phase one, Sheridan was ordered to employ his forces during the summer and fall of 1868 to defend the existing settlements and routes of transportation. With the onset of winter, General Hazen would implement phase two by establishing a temporary agency for “peaceful” Indians to gather for the winter. Phase three was a winter offensive campaign led by Sheridan, intended to punish all southern Plains Indians who failed to report to Hazen.<sup>165</sup>

Pratt assisted in the establishment and operation of Hazen’s agency. The agency was centrally located in the Indian Territory at Fort Cobb, a site abandoned before the Civil War. Pratt acted as the post adjutant, and continued as the commander of the Fort Arbuckle Caddo and Wichita scouts. Pratt’s scouts served throughout the campaign as guides, messengers, and advanced scouting elements for the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry and 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry soldiers manning Fort Cobb as well as informants who kept General Hazen aware of Indian activities and sentiment in and around the agency.<sup>166</sup>

Pratt was able to track the progression of the campaign from his post at Fort Cobb. From November 1868 until April 1869, General Sheridan kept three columns of soldiers moving between the Arkansas River in the north to the Red River in the south. One came from Fort Bascom, New Mexico in the west; one from Fort Lyon, Colorado in the northwest; and one from Fort Dodge, Kansas in the north. Supply depots were established to sustain the columns on the

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<sup>165</sup> Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan - Volume 2*, 2:110–12; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 30–31; Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 44; Utey, *Frontier Regulars*, 115, 119, 122–23, 148–49.

<sup>166</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 32–32; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 153.

move during the winter. On November 27, 1868, the Fort Dodge column composed of the 7th Cavalry led by George Custer, attacked and destroyed a Cheyenne village on the Washita River.

Pratt's conclusions about the massacre on the Washita reveal his initial thinking regarding the use of force against Indians. His clear lack of empathy is a far cry from his later advocacy for the peaceful assimilation of Indians into American society. In a letter to his wife, dated December 7, 1868, Pratt wrote, the "scouts say that about thirty of our men were killed, a great many more Indians were killed and thirty-seven taken prisoner. All the Indians horses were killed, their lodges destroyed and they completely routed." He further explained that the Cheyenne leader, Black Kettle, came to Fort Cobb days before the battle but was told "peace would not be made with the Cheyenne" because General Sheridan had "determined to give the them a thrashing that will be remembered for a few years, at least."<sup>167</sup> In 1868, Pratt was witness to the campaign methods employed to subjugate tribes in the trans-Mississippi West. He also understood that Sheridan was signaling to the Indians of the southern Plains that their raiding lifestyle would no longer be tolerated.<sup>168</sup>

Pratt observed that Sheridan's campaign strategy – winter pursuit and surprise attacks – were effective in subduing a tribe. He was familiar with campaigns of exhaustion from his participation in mounted pursuits of Confederate forces during the Civil War. The 1868 winter campaign proved to him the effectiveness of this method against Indian societies. The army's

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<sup>167</sup> Pratt, "Richard Pratt Letter to Anna Pratt," December 7, 1868, 2–3.

<sup>168</sup> "A Winter Campaign Against the Indians," *Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540 USA*, November 24, 1868, Chicago Tribune edition; The campaign was highly controversial. Agent Wynkoop of the Cheyenne and Kiowa agency resigned in protest over the massacre of Black Kettle, his wife, and members of his band. See "Resignation of Colonel Wynkoop, Agent of the Cheyennes-His Story Regarding Custer's Battle with Black Kettle's Band," *Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540 USA*, December 13, 1868, Chicago Tribune edition; Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan - Volume 2*, 2:130, 133; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 30–38; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 150–55; Gregory Michno, *Encyclopedia of Indian Wars: Western Battles and Skirmishes, 1850-1890* (Missoula, Mont.: Mountain Press Pub. Co., 2005), 150–55.

logistical system and preplanned depots, one of which he managed, provided a marked advantage against Indians who might actively resist.

Pratt's later discussion of battlefield tactics is revelatory. He claimed that war against Indian tribes in their home territories necessitated commanders to take decisive action to preserve their forces, "Army commands in pursuit of hostiles, by becoming remote from their supports and safety, often found it inevitable that sudden destruction of the enemy must be, else their own annihilation would follow."<sup>169</sup> Pratt further claimed the "responsibility for what happened" was not on the army but on the poor quality of "government supervision which precipitated the conflicts." Pratt's statement indicates his belief that the nature of war against Indians justified and absolved officers and soldiers for the indiscriminate massacre of children, women, the elderly, and those of fighting age as a means to ensure the safety of their command. Pratt's view on this matter appears representative of many frontier army officers. The lieutenant must have considered the later destruction of Custer's command on the Little Big Horn as validation for this belief.

Pratt's service on the Plains provided him evidence to doubt the reservation system as an effective tool to manage Indian affairs and inadequate for assimilating Indian peoples. Fort Cobb, for example, was poorly sited and so under-resourced that it gave little in the way of rations to the Indians who reported to Hazen. That temporary reservation provided no meaningful reason to give Indians confidence the government would provide for their future sustenance. By March 1868, Pratt and the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry were establishing Fort Sill thirty miles south to replace Fort Cobb. The new fort would serve as both an army post and the Indian

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<sup>169</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 35. Pratt adds, "The responsibility for what happened was therefore not on the aggressive and resisting units but in the quality of [government] supervision which precipitated the conflicts."

Bureau agency within the Kiowa-Comanche reservation. During the next two years, Pratt, the soldiers of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, and allied Indian scouts expended tremendous effort to disrupt the Kiowa, Comanche, Cheyenne, and Arapaho use of the Indian Territory reservations as points of departure for raids into Texas, Mexico, New Mexico, Colorado, and even Kansas. Not only did the Grant administration's Peace Policy deny Pratt and his superiors the ability to reconnoiter a reservation to identify when potential raiders were preparing to depart, they were also denied the authority to pursue any known raiders within the confines of the reservation itself. Like many of his fellow officers, Pratt concluded that the reservation system was a "city of refuge" for raiders and only compounded the difficulties in governing or assimilating Plains Indians.<sup>170</sup>

In early 1873, Pratt and his cavalry troop were transferred from Fort Sill to Fort Griffin, Texas. Pratt's experience at this post exemplifies his method of working with Indians. Upon arrival, he was assigned to command the fort's twenty-five Indian scouts. By regulation, most scouts were recruited for short durations and their commanders had little responsibility beyond equipping and leading them. The Tonkawa Indian tribe held a unique position on the southern Plains, though. As Indians who had practiced ritualistic cannibalism, the Tonkawa tribesmen were pariahs who the Caddo, Shawnees, and Delaware tribes attacked during the Civil War in an effort to wipe out the tribe. The surprise attack took the lives of 137 of the 300 members of the tribe. The survivors fled to Fort Griffin to seek protection from the garrison (Confederates soldiers at the time). The Tonkawa remained at Fort Griffin ever since providing scouts to the Army in exchange for provisions and protection.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Pratt, 65–66; Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 99, 168; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 49, 55–56, 73.

<sup>171</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 54; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 69; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 2, 44, 50, 56; United States, *Military Act of 1866*.



Because the Fort Griffin scouts maintained a special relationship with the Army, Pratt also served as the de facto Indian Agent to the tribe. In those capacities, he was direct and consistent with the them and sought to make a positive contribution to the scout detachment and to the tribe. Lieutenant Pratt commanded the Tonkawa scouts from March 1873 until July 1874 when D Troop moved back to Fort Sill. During this period, he learned more about Indian culture and lifestyles. Despite his close contact with the Tonkawa, Pratt never came to believe their culture and customs were as valid as his own, as evidenced by his persistent efforts to inculcate among the Tonkawa what he perceived as superior American social values.<sup>172</sup>

Pratt's effort to eliminate drunkenness among the Tonkawa men reveals demonstrates he perceived his role as much as a paternal obligation as military necessity. One day, seeing the tribe's chief passed out from drunkenness, Pratt had the man locked in the guard house to recover. After sobering up, the chief, who was also one of the full-time scouts, was brought before the lieutenant. Pratt explained that the next time the chief was drunk, he would be locked in the guardhouse again and have the additional penalty of seven days at manual labor. Pratt expected this penalty to shock the Tonkawa chief because in his culture, manual labor was considered women's work. According to Pratt, with each additional offense, the time of labor would be increased.

Two weeks later, Pratt came upon the chief in such an inebriated condition that he could not defend himself against a fellow drunken Tonkawa man. The lieutenant had both men arrested and sent to the guard house. After the chief sobered up, Pratt put him to manual labor for the prescribed seven days. To the second Indian, he gave the same speech delivered to the chief two weeks earlier. Members of the tribe were dismayed to see their chief laboring under guard.

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<sup>172</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 54–55; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 117–18; Tate, “Indian Scouting Detachments in the Red River War, 1874-1875,” 218–19.

Despite the pleas of Tonkawa men and the chief's wife's request to do the work for her husband, the lieutenant refused to commute the sentence. He told the chief on release that the tribe could not overcome their troubles unless they helped themselves. As commander of scouts, he instructed the chief to report whiskey traders whenever they came to the Tonkawa village.<sup>173</sup>

Pratt lived up to his word to help end the whiskey trade among the Tonkawa. When the chief brought news late one night that traders were in the village, the lieutenant led a squad of soldiers to the spot and captured two white men in the act of trading whiskey. Pratt ensured the culprits were prosecuted and imprisoned. The manual labor and arrests coupled with Pratt's military training, seem to have achieved the effect he desired, the development of esprit de corps among the Tonkawa scouts. Pratt claimed there was a renewed pride among the scouts and their tribe. He also believed his own stature rose among the Tonkawa people. Evidence suggests that the effects of Pratt's leadership and paternalistic efforts, whether the Tonkawa appreciated them or not, were beneficial in preparing the scouts to perform their duties well following the lieutenant's departure from Fort Griffin in the summer of 1874.<sup>174</sup>

### **"Keep 'Em Moving:" Campaigning on the Southern Plains<sup>175</sup>**

On June 27, 1874, while Pratt was at Fort Griffin, a large number of Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne warriors attacked Adobe Walls, a trading post serving buffalo hunters on the

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<sup>173</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 55–57 Pratt assumed his observation of the Tonkawas equated to an understanding of their social values, gender perceptions, and motivations. Even though he claimed his treatment of the chief resulted in a transformation in the Tonkawa scout morale there is no proof of a causal link.

<sup>174</sup> Pratt, 58–59; Tate, "Indian Scouting Detachments in the Red River War, 1874-1875," 218 According to historian Michael L. Tate, Pratt "had taken a demoralized scout unit and reshaped it into an excellent trailing and fighting force." ; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 119.

<sup>175</sup> Portions of this section were previously published as "Keep 'Em Moving: The Role of Assessment in US Cavalry Operations," in Blanken, Rothstein, and Lepore, *Assessing War*, 96–110.

Canadian River in the Texas Panhandle. Despite the small number of casualties, the attack provided justification for the federal government's response: a military campaign intended to completely subjugate the offending Comanche, Kiowa, and Southern Cheyenne tribes. The campaign would be officially recorded by the US Army as the Indian Territory Campaign, but came to be commonly referred to as the Red River War.<sup>176</sup>

Pratt watched relations between the southern Plains tribes and federal government agents steadily deteriorate since the Winter Campaign of 1868. The flagging relations were a direct consequence of overly ambitious terms made in the 1867 Medicine Lodge treaty, a lack of congressional funding to fulfill those treaty obligations, the neglect of local BIA agents, unscrupulous contractors, prejudice, continuous miscommunication, and simmering Indian anger over the Washita massacre. The final breakdown of the Medicine Lodge treaty was manifested in Indian depredations against hunters, survey parties, travelers, and settlements in Kansas, the Indian Territory, and Texas during the spring of 1874, which culminated in the massed attack on Adobe Walls.<sup>177</sup>

General Sheridan, now commanding the Division of the Missouri, requested authority to use special military commissions to try those Indians suspected of murdering settlers and

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<sup>176</sup> Ferris et al., *Soldier and Brave*, 22–23, 47. William Bent, a western trader, established an adobe trading post and saloon along the Canadian River in 1843 to facilitate commerce with the tribes of West Texas and the southern Plains. The location was abandoned by Bent in 1849. The first battle fought at Adobe Walls occurred between Kiowa and Comanche Indians and a Union Army command of Apache scouts and soldiers led by Brigadier General “Kit” Carson, on November 25, 1864. Gary Clayton Anderson, *The Conquest of Texas: Ethnic Cleansing in the Promised Land, 1820-1875* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), 357–58; Haley, *The Buffalo War*, 40–44. The buffalo hunters at Adobe Walls represented a relatively new phenomenon to confront the Plains Indians - whites who began the systematic slaughter of entire buffalo herds for the commercial exploitation of pelts in the early 1870s. The white hunters were a direct threat to the survival of the Indian peoples of the Great Plains because the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which by treaty was supposed to issue provisions for the sustenance of the tribes of the Southern Plains, rarely provided anything more than starvation rations.

<sup>177</sup> T. R. Fehrenbach, *Comanches: The Destruction of a People* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 526–32; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 63–64; Richard Henry Pratt, *Drastic Facts About Our Indians and Our Indian System*. (Berkeley: Berkeley Daily Gazette Print, 1917), 5, 8, 12.

committing other crimes. Beyond executing the Indians guilty of murder, Sheridan proposed incarcerating other Indian leaders and notable warriors in a prison located on the east coast, far from their homeland. The authority to execute Indians would be withheld, but the removal of the most recalcitrant men was expected to break the collective will of the resisting southern Plains tribes. Once on the reservations and under federal observation, the remaining Indians were expected to assume a more compliant attitude toward American migration across and settlement on the southern Plains.<sup>178</sup>

Permission for Sheridan to campaign without constraint, despite protests from eastern humanitarians, was an admission of the failure the Grant administration's Peace Policy. Sheridan was granted the authority to wage war on July 21, 1874. Approval by the General in Chief, Secretary of War, Secretary of the Interior, and President took less than two weeks. Sheridan and his soldiers were also granted authority to enter the reservations to prosecute combat actions against all Indians considered hostile. That authority had been withheld since the implementation of the Peace Policy in 1869 as a response to the political backlash resulting from the Washita massacre.<sup>179</sup>

The Red River War encompassed a larger geographic area and was executed with greater man, animal, and material resources than the Winter Campaign of 1868. Like the earlier

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<sup>178</sup> Pratt, *Drastic Facts About Our Indians and Our Indian System.*, 5, 8, 12; Thian, *Notes Illustrating the Military Geography of the United States, 1813-1880*, 24; United States, *ARSW 1866*, 1:6; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 63–64; Fehrenbach, *Comanches*, 526–32; Haley, *The Buffalo War*, 105–6; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 219, 229–30; Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 247–50, 255; Peter Cozzens, *Eyewitness to the Indian Wars, Vol 2, The Wars for the Pacific Northwest* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2002), 98–119; Edward E Hathaway, *The War Nobody Won: The Modoc War from the Army's Point of View* (Show Low, AZ: American Eagle Publications, 1995); Quinn, *Hell with the Fire Out*.

<sup>179</sup> Sheridan, *Record of Engagements*, 46–48; Haley, *The Buffalo War*, 12; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 214; Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 203; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 119.

campaign, the army's objective was to permanently force the resisting southern tribes back into the government-controlled enclaves. From General Sherman, commanding the army, to Pratt and other junior officers, army leaders understood that to break the will of the tribes meant keeping the Indians moving to deny them opportunities to replenish their foodstuffs and shelter before the notoriously brutal plains winter season arrived. Pratt described the plan as, “six columns of troops... kept constantly moving during the fall, winter, and spring... throughout the vast plains region...directed to pursue, attack, and compel their surrender.”<sup>180</sup> Sheridan’s soldiers, with the fiscal backing of Congress, could remain in the field indefinitely.<sup>181</sup>

For the officers and soldiers it was a matter of finding the tribal villages and campsites. Indian scouts were needed to maximize the army’s opportunities to find the tribes. The challenge was that, except for the Tonkawa scouts assigned to Fort Griffin and a small number of full-time white scouts, none of the columns included scout detachments. As part of the preparation for each column’s movement into the Red River drainage, officers—including Pratt—were detailed by their commanders to recruit and enlist Indians to serve as guides and scouts. Lieutenant Pratt would play an outsized role during the campaign based on his previous experience with the Cherokee, Caddo, Wichita, and Tonkawa.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 66.

<sup>181</sup> Rodenbough and Haskin, *The Army of the United States*, 294; Uteley, *Frontier Regulars*, 75; Matloff, *American Military History*, 330–31; Uteley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West 1846-1890.*, 161; Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 249, 251, 253; White, *It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own*, 106.

<sup>182</sup> For Sheridan’s observations on the role of whites as scouts see Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan - Volume 2*, 2:113; see also Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill*, 80–81; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 43–47; Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 211; Tate, “Indian Scouting Detachments in the Red River War, 1874-1875,” 215–16; Downey and Jacobsen, *The Red/Bluecoats*, 11; Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 254, 260.

## Preparing for the Campaign

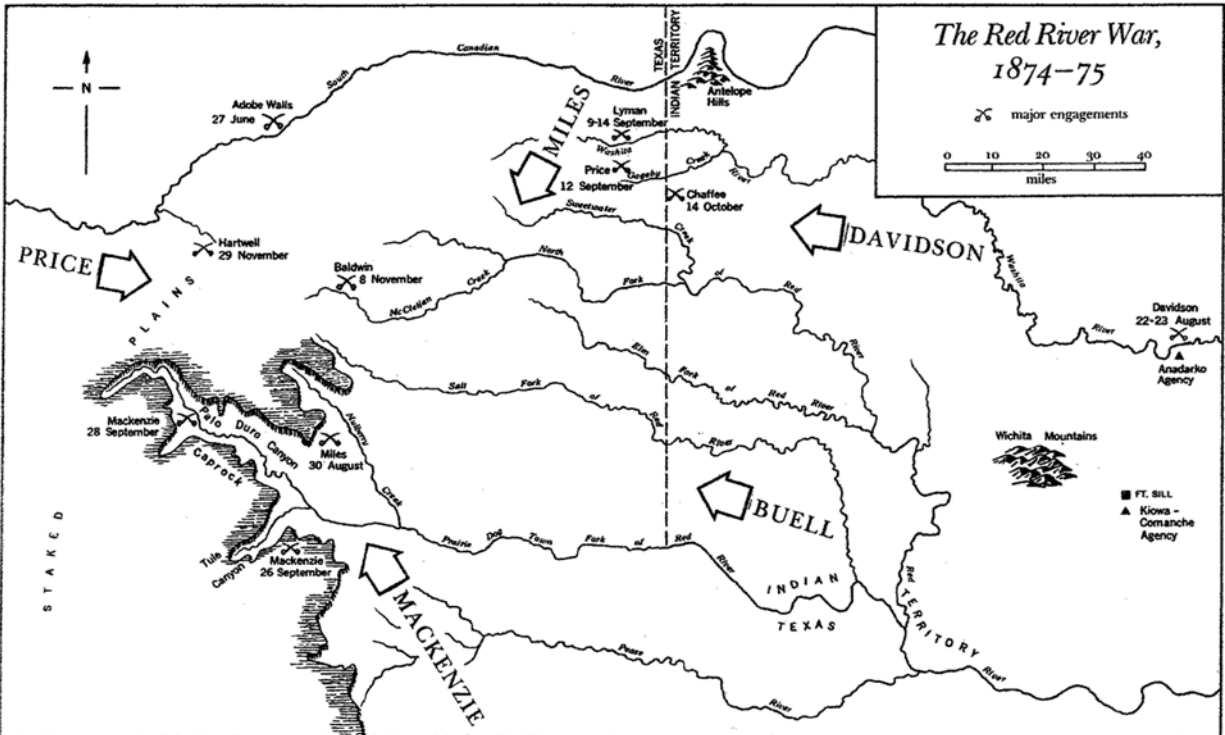
The rapid approval of major military operations was unprecedented for the Indian Wars. The regiments responsible for conducting the campaign were widely dispersed and lacked adequate supplies. General Sheridan immediately issued orders for the consolidation of men and supplies at posts in Texas, New Mexico, and the Indian Territory. Out of the Department of the Missouri came Colonel Nelson A. Miles and Major William R. Price who would move from Camp Supply, Indian Territory and Fort Bascom, New Mexico, respectively. From the Department of Texas came Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie from Fort Concho, Colonel George P. Buell, from Fort Griffin, both in Texas, and Lieutenant Colonel John Davidson from Fort Sill.<sup>183</sup>

By July 25, 1874, Lieutenant Pratt and D Troop, along with other cavalry, infantry, and artillery units throughout the Division of the Missouri and Department of Texas, were preparing for the campaign. Pratt and his troop, still at Fort Griffin, were ordered to consolidate with the main body of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry at Fort Sill. The regiment would make up the backbone of Colonel Davidson's column. Pratt departed while the Tonkawa scouts awaited a new commander. The Tonkawa would provide scouts for both Colonel Mackenzie and Lieutenant Colonel Buell's columns.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 211.

<sup>184</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Davidson assumed command of the 10th Cavalry from 1873-1875 while Colonel Grierson commanded the Mounted Service recruiting Depot in Jefferson Barracks Missouri. Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 60; Haley, *The Buffalo War*, 105–6; Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 250–51; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 113–14.



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Richard Pratt expected to lead his cavalry troop during the campaign but upon arrival at Fort Sill found Colonel Davidson had a different plan for the him. Pratt recalled that Davidson ordered him to take over an effort to recruit local Indian as scouts. According to Pratt, an infantry Captain spent a week trying to recruit twenty-five scouts but failed because “the Indians do not know him and he does not know the Indians.”<sup>185</sup> Pratt immediately set out to visit the villages and camps of the chiefs he knew from his previous service at Sill. In just seventy-two hours, he had recruited, enlisted, and equipped the full detachment.<sup>186</sup>

Lieutenant Pratt was proud of Davidson’s recognition. On August 30, 1874 he wrote his wife, Anna, that Davidson authorized him to invite "from twenty to fifty volunteers " to

<sup>185</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 67.

<sup>186</sup> Tate, “Indian Scouting Detachments in the Red River War, 1874-1875,” 218.

accompany the column in addition to the scouts he was authorized to enlist for the duration of the campaign. The volunteers included "a number of my old Caddo Scouts as volunteers and in the number [I] have already men from the Wichitas, Kechies, Tawankawas, Wacoes, Pawnees, and Delawares. And they are as fine a lot as I could wish: quite a number of the leading men, or the sons of Chiefs. As the General would only agree to take a limited number they sent their best men." Pratt noted in his letter that these volunteers "expect to pay themselves from the plunder" of the campaign.<sup>187</sup>

This response demonstrates the status tribal leaders granted to the lieutenant. Enlisting men as scouts, whether Indian or white, was primarily a transactional relationship. Contracted service to a regiment or post was a matter of food, equipment, and pay for guiding and scouting. With no expectation of guaranteed return, volunteering signified a different type of relationship. In this case, the tribes near Fort Sill granted Pratt the status akin to a tribal war chief. Tribal leaders' knowledge of Pratt's exploits entitled the lieutenant to invite warriors to follow him in raiding and war. The scouts and volunteers included men from tribes familiar with the region's topography and the knowledgeable of the resisting tribes of the Red River Basin and Staked Plains. Even more valuable, several of the scouts were related by blood or marriage to Indians from the resisting tribes. The intimate knowledge that these scouts and volunteers possessed of tribal patterns and individual Indians represented another major contribution that scouts brought with them to Davidson's column.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, "Richard Pratt to Anna Pratt, Dated August 30, 1874, Fort Sill, I.T.," August 30, 1874, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series II, Box: 18, Folder: 611, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Pratt referred to Davidson by his brevet rank of major general of volunteers earned during the Civil War.

<sup>188</sup> Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 181.



The lieutenant's volunteers in turn demonstrated Sheridan's commitment to execute the campaign with little constraint. As Pratt indicated, the volunteers would be paid through the plunder they could expect to take if they found the resisting tribes. Pratt and other officers knew Plains Indian culture well enough to understand that volunteers would seek personal honor and glory through combat with men from the resisting tribes. The army exploited the Plains culture to the strategic advantage of the federal government. Although integrating Indian volunteers posed significant risk—the Pawnee as mortal enemies of the Comanche, for instance—could incite greater resistance among the targeted tribes and potential atrocities would provide anecdotes for sensational news accounts in the eastern press—the unanimous support by the nation's leaders assured Sheridan and his subordinates that the risk was worth taking. Decisively subjugating the tribes would be rewarded.<sup>189</sup>

### **Pratt and His Scouts**

Pratt set out the day after enlisting his scouts and gathering volunteers to exercise his new detachment before their departure with Colonel Davidson on their first expedition along the Red River drainage. He wrote Anna about riding across Fort Sill's parade ground leading those scouts whom he had "organized and equipped in a manner eminently satisfactory (to myself) and must say I am not without pride in it. Think of a command of forty only two of whom can understand their commander and in which five nationalities are represented."<sup>190</sup> Pratt was clearly motivated

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<sup>189</sup> Tate, "Indian Scouting Detachments in the Red River War, 1874-1875," 225; Fehrenbach, *Comanches*, 543; Thomas W Dunlay, "Friends and Allies: The Tonkawa Indians and the Anglo-Americans, 1823-1884," *Great Plains Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (1981): 155.

<sup>190</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, "Richard Pratt to Anna Pratt, Dated September 9, 1874, Fort Sill, I.T.," September 9, 1874, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series II, Box: 18, Folder: 611, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

to command this diverse group of Wachita, Kechie, Waco, Towankawa, Pawnee, and Delaware men to war.

Pratt's scouts proved critical to the progress of Davidson's column from September 10 to October 19, 1874. In the nearly six-week march from Fort Sill to the Staked Plains and back, the lieutenant's scouts were the only men in the column to make contact with hostile Indians. In one incident, Pratt was surprised by his scouts racing "pell-mell to the rear" while scouting along the Washita River. Upon investigating he found a lone, weary Cheyenne warrior between two of his scouts arguing over which of them could claim "had the honor of touching him first" and thus "had all the rights to kill and scalp or do otherwise as he pleased."<sup>191</sup> Pratt convinced the scouts they could settle the matter after Colonel Davidson interrogated the captive. The Cheyenne revealed to the colonel that he had been with a war party raiding along the Kansas border and had attacked a family in which everyone was killed except for four young sisters, who were taken captive. This information proved consequential and diverted the focus of the campaign as all the columns set off to find the captive girls. Finally, after exhausting most of their supplies, Davidson ordered the scouts to lead his column back to Fort Sill.<sup>192</sup>

Davidson's column returned to find General Sheridan at Fort Sill. The general summoned Pratt. Sheridan was impressed by the lieutenant's success with the scouts and ordered him to enlist an additional sixty Indians for a total of eighty-five scouts to support Davidson's second expedition. The order surprised Pratt in its breadth of fiscal authority, since scouts were paid the same thirteen dollars a month as soldiers. That Sheridan expected results in just one day was

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<sup>191</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 68.

<sup>192</sup> Pratt, 69-70. The attack was on the German family. Col. Nelson Miles and his column ultimately secured release of two of the German sisters.

even more surprising. Off the lieutenant went and, in less than twenty-four hours, rode eighty miles "drumming scouts together" from the tribes around Fort Sill, then selecting, enlisting, and provisioning them.<sup>193</sup> More than two hundred men responded to the call. Pratt gained Sheridan's consent to issue rations to all the men who came to Fort Sill as a means to avoid resentment by those not selected as scouts. This action also further distanced these men psychologically from the resisting tribes.<sup>194</sup>

Davidson's column made another great sweep from Fort Sill to the Staked Plains and back between October 21 and November 29, 1874 with Pratt and all his scouts leading the way. During that march, the scouts found several Indian camps abandoned by fleeing hostile tribes. To maximize the effect of the societal disruption strategy, the soldiers destroyed everything in the camps including teepees, clothing, food, and cooking equipment. Pratt sent his scouts in small parties to lead soldiers from the column to accept the surrender of bands as large as four hundred people. They were making progress toward the campaign's ultimate objective with each Indian's surrender.<sup>195</sup>

On November 8, 1874, Pratt's scouts led the column into a recently abandoned Cheyenne village of seventy-five lodges. The fires were still hot and a freshly made trail led west. The scouts had effectively brought hundreds of soldiers and dozens of wagons close enough to cause the entire band to depart in haste. To sustain the momentum, Davidson ordered an immediate pursuit. Pratt and his scouts took up the chase, leading a reduced portion of the column

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<sup>193</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, "Richard Pratt to Anna Pratt, Dated October 22, 1874, from Camp near Old Fort Cobb, I.T.," October 22, 1874, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series II, Box: 18, Folder: 611, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>194</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 70–72; Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 253–54.

<sup>195</sup> Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 134.

commanded by Captain Viele. The scouts trailed the Cheyenne for over ninety miles, always keeping them in sight and continuously moving. The captain ordered an end to the pursuit on November 10, in the face of an approaching "Norther" winter storm, confident the storm would sap what little resources the band retained after being driven from their campsite and pursued for forty-eight hours.<sup>196</sup>

In the gathering storm, Pratt's scouts again displayed the skills the army so valued in their Indian allies. Two scouts broke from the winding trail they came on and, in less than a day, brought Pratt, Viele, and all the soldiers directly across the featureless landscape back to Davidson's camp now hidden below the escarpment which marked the eastern boundary of the Staked Plains. The scouts then led Davidson's entire column back to Fort Sill where they would recuperate over the winter. In contrast, the Cheyenne band the column had chased remained on the Staked Plains in the gathering winter.<sup>197</sup>

Pratt knew the scouts' performance during the campaign warranted recognition. In his November 29, 1874 report to Colonel Davidson on scouting during the campaign, the lieutenant identified five Indians, Kista, Tony, Big Spotted Horse, Nehe-de-so-sicla, and Long Horn, for their especially meritorious performance as scouts. Pratt explained that the men "bore the severe cold and hardships" without complaint or observable degradation in their performance despite having only "the meager garb they wear in their camps" due to the haste of their enlistment. Of their performance he wrote:

Always covering the front and both flanks of the column for a distance of from five to ten miles, no trail or object worthy of note escaped their observation. Considering the brief time allowed them to become familiar with their duties and military methods they have

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<sup>196</sup> Leckie and Leckie, 133–34; Pratt brought 50 scouts to guide Captain Viele and 120 cavalymen. The weather phenomenon called a "Norther" is described by Pratt in Pratt and Utley, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 49.

<sup>197</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 75–77.

been subordinate and serviceable to a degree ~~not surpassed by recruits from any other class of men within my experience~~ creditable to their understanding and race.<sup>198</sup>

Quite telling that in 1874, Pratt was almost prepared to communicate his conclusion that Indians were as good as the best professional soldiers in official correspondence as revealed by the statement he crossed out. That level of public affirmation would have to wait until later at Fort Marion when Pratt dismissed the regular soldiers of the garrison from guard duty and replaced them with the very Indians who were imprisoned at the fort.<sup>199</sup>

Davidson's column, in concert with the other columns, was effective in achieving General Sheridan's objective. They exhausted the hostile Indians by keeping the tribes constantly moving during the fall and winter. Davidson's column alone captured hundreds of Kiowa, Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Comanche people, along with weapons and ponies, and destroyed thousands of pounds of food, lodges, clothing, and equipment during the course of the campaign. Davidson, along with Mackenzie and Buell, owed much of their success to Pratt and his work during the campaign and for the years leading up to it, recruiting, organizing, and fielding scouts from at least eight different tribes including the Tonkawa, Caddo, Wichita, Kechie, Tawankawa, Waco, Pawnee, and Delaware. Pratt's scouts effectively guided the columns from their forts and camps to the hostile villages and back again throughout the campaign.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, "Report on Scouting during the Red River War, November 1874" (Fort Sill, I.T., November 1874), 7, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series I, Box: 14, Folder: 488, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

<sup>199</sup> Pratt correspondence with General Sheridan and General Sherman found in Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 170, 175, 177.

<sup>200</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, "Richard Pratt to Anna Pratt, Dated October 25, 1874, from Seventh Cavalry Creek, I.T.," Letter, October 25, 1874, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series II, Box: 18, Folder: 611, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Richard Henry Pratt, "Richard Pratt to Anna Pratt, Dated November 7, 1874, from Gageby Creek, I.T.," Letter, November 7, 1874, Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, WA MSS S-1174, Series II, Box: 18, Folder: 611, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; see also Homer K Davidson, *Black Jack Davidson, a Cavalry Commander on the Western Frontier: The Life of General John W. Davidson* (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1974), 193–94.

## The Results of the Campaign

The Red River War of 1874-75 completed the subjugation of the confederation of southern Plains Indians. The campaign consisted of just two dozen combat actions but the columns, led by Pratt's scouts, succeeded in breaking the will of the Kiowa, Comanche, Southern Cheyenne, and Arapaho to further resist federal authority. Following the campaign, those tribes acquiesced to life on the reservations designated for them in the Medicine Lodge treaties of 1868.<sup>201</sup>

General Sheridan claimed the Red River War was the most important and successful campaign against the Indians since Europeans began settling North America.<sup>202</sup> It proved decisive in ending the threat of Indian attacks on American emigrants and settlements of the southern Plains including Kansas, Texas, the Indian Territory (Oklahoma), and southeastern Colorado. According to historian Robert M. Utley, "had success been measured in enemy casualties, the Red River offensive would be counted a dismal failure. But as measured by the mass surrenders of early 1875, it was a resounding triumph." Sheridan's strategy proved effective. The tribes had "been constantly on the move, constantly in fear of surprise attack," suffered an unbearable loss of resources and "had come to view the detested reservation as

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<sup>201</sup> Thompson, William A. "Scouting with Mackenzie," in Peter Cozzens, *Eyewitness to the Indian Wars, Vol 3, Conquering the Southern Plains* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2003), 431; United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1875-1876*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), 20, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078451>.

<sup>202</sup> LtGen Philip Sheridan in United States, *ARSW 1875-76*, 1:58; Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 261; Utley and Washburn, *Indian Wars*, 44-57; Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage, 1999) The Pequot tribe threatened the existence of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. King Phillip's War ended with the virtual extermination of the Pequot people by colonists and their Indian allies, thus eliminating the last existential threat to any Anglo-American colony.

preferable to the terrible insecurity and discomfort of fugitive life in a frozen country swarming with soldiers.”<sup>203</sup>

Colonel Ranald Mackenzie, one of the five principal field commanders, highlighted the role of Pratt’s former men, praised the Tonkawa scouts. He claimed they were indispensable for any campaign in the Texas Panhandle and Indian Territory. Mackenzie’s column had broken the resistance of the largest concentration of resistors with an attack on a combined Kiowa, Cheyenne, and Comanche village in Palo Duro Canyon on September 28, 1874. That attack was made possible by four Tonkawa scouts. The scouts found the village, guided Mackenzie’s column to the canyon, and led the attack. Although most of the Indians escaped from the canyon, they lost virtually all their possessions, including their herd of horses. Some of the horses went to the Tonkawa scouts as a reward, but most were shot by Mackenzie’s soldiers. The destruction of the herd was a double blow to the tribes, severely limiting their mobility and destroying much of their accumulated wealth.<sup>204</sup>

## Closing the Campaign

Without the skill of Pratt’s scouts, the societal disruption strategy would have been difficult to implement; commanders would not have been able to locate the hostile tribes quickly

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<sup>203</sup> Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 230.

<sup>204</sup> Charles P. Ray, “Special Order No.221, Dated December 30th, 1874, Fort Sill, I.T.” (Special Order, Fort Sill, December 30, 1874), Records Group 94, Fort Sill Records, Special Orders, No 55, 1874 to No 168, 1877, Entry 53; Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1780-1917, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. SO #221 states, “The verbal order given by the Post Commander to Captain H.C. Beach, 11th Infantry, to expend 450 rounds of ammunition in shooting Indian ponies is confirmed.” The order is indicative of the army’s systematic approach to destroying the Indian means to resist consolidation. Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 223; Fehrenbach, *Comanches*, 542; J. Brett Cruse, *Battles of the Red River War: Archeological Perspectives on the Indian Campaign of 1874* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2008), 107; Thompson, “Scouting with Mackenzie,” Cozzens, *Eyewitness to the Indian Wars, Vol 3, Conquering the Southern Plains*; Haley, *The Buffalo War*, 175–82; Tate, “Indian Scouting Detachments in the Red River War, 1874-1875,” 215; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 118.

enough. Pratt's work was pivotal because his understanding of Indian society and its fragile, subsistence-level productivity was crucial to ending the tribes' ability to resist. Field reports that included the numbers of Indians surrendered, livestock captured, material and food destroyed, along with minor engagements, allowed Sheridan and Sherman to track progress toward exhausting the enemy and at the same time ensure Congress' continued political and financial support.

Warriors risked intertribal conflict by choosing to enlist under Pratt's leadership. Yet the evidence shows those who volunteered believed they would not suffer any consequences for serving the army. Indeed, Pratt's recruitment of more than a hundred Indians for duty as scouts or volunteers indicated that power had shifted from the Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne confederation to the federal government. These men recognized the opportunity to fight with Pratt as a legitimate means to advance their social and political standing within their tribal communities. Their numbers indicate that the smaller tribes believed the army would break the power of the confederation. This realization brought a large number of Indians to Fort Sill even as the threat of hostility arose from "peaceful" factions of the confederation tribes that remained encamped nearby. Pratt's offer to pay, provision, and arm men as scouts provided non-resisting Indians greater opportunities for social advancement through federally sanctioned war making than anything the hostile Indian tribes could offer at the time.<sup>205</sup>

Breaking with army regulation, which specified that army rations were to be issued only to soldiers or those directly in the employ of the army, Pratt issued rations to those men who volunteered but were not selected. This illustrates Pratt's insight: he directly provided benefits to

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<sup>205</sup> Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 114; Mishkin, "Rank and Warfare Among the Plains Indians"; Haley, *The Buffalo War*, 109 The threat of intertribal conflict rose significantly following the attack on Adobe Walls.



the Indians for their willingness to serve as scouts while also further separating the allied or neutral tribes from the resisting tribes. Each time Davidson's column marched through the Red River Valley and up to the Staked Plains, they found more villages abandoned. The resisting tribes were losing their cohesiveness under the pressure of relentless pursuit. As Pratt and his scouts chased the Cheyenne band onto the Staked Plains in the midst of a growing winter storm, it was clear the southern confederation's fight was ending.<sup>206</sup>

## Outcome

The final part of Sheridan's plan to eliminate future resistance occurred when exhausted tribes surrendered. Suspected leaders of the Indian resistance were arrested. In April 1874, Sheridan ordered seventy-four of those prisoners transported to Fort Marion in Saint Augustine, Florida. Except for Quanah Parker's Quahadi Comanche band, which remained on the Staked Plains until its surrender in July 1875, the departure of the selected prisoners for Florida marked the complete military subjugation of the southern Plains tribes.<sup>207</sup>

Pratt's eight years of experience among the southern Plains tribes gave him a role in this final phase of the campaign. Sheridan specifically needed an officer whose confidence among the local Indian tribes would allow him to gather information needed to identify the tribal leaders

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<sup>206</sup> Brigadier General John Pope blamed the cause of the Red River War on the failure of the Congress and Indian Bureau to provide adequate food to the Indians expected to remain on reservations. See Pope's remarks in United States, *ARSW 1875-76*, 1:77-78; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 82-83 Issuing rations to Indians from army quartermaster stores is also evidence of Pratt's disdain for the reservation system and one of several that Pratt presented as proof that the reservation system was the greatest obstacle to the Indian peoples' integration into American culture. Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 225-27; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 228; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 134-35.

<sup>207</sup> Anderson, *The Conquest of Texas*, 358-59; Leckie and Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers a Narrative of the Black Cavalry in the West*, 134.

most responsible for encouraging violence. Pratt had the necessary character, experience, and rapport to get the job done.<sup>208</sup>

On December 14, 1874, Pratt received orders from Colonel Davidson to investigate who had led the Indian resistance. Pratt worked to identify those Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne leaders responsible for precipitating the war. He also sought out Indians whose incarceration was expected to mitigate future violent resistance. The list of Indians that Pratt ultimately prepared included those known for leading attacks and agitating violence against whites as well as lesser figures who only participated in the resistance.<sup>209</sup>

Lieutenant Pratt now recognized an opportunity for himself in Sheridan's plan. Sheridan's means to permanently end Indian resistance provided Pratt an alternate route for reward of his command of scouts. The lieutenant advocated for duty as the officer to escort the prisoners to Fort Marion. On December 31, 1874, Colonel Davidson's adjutant issued Special Order #222, stating that "1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. R.H. Pratt 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry will here after take charge of the Indian prisoners at the Post with reference to their rations, fuel, et cetera."<sup>210</sup> Pratt then volunteered to serve as the officer overseeing the Indians' imprisonment in Florida. Colonel Davidson and General Sheridan endorsed the request and the War Department issued orders for Lieutenant Pratt to serve as the warden for the men imprisoned at Fort Marion.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 258.

<sup>209</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 91–92; Nye, *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, 231; Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 259.

<sup>210</sup> Charles P. Ray, "Special Order No.222, Dated December 31, 1874, Fort Sill, I.T." (Special Order, Fort Sill, December 30, 1874), Records Group 94, Fort Sill Records, Special Orders, No 55, 1874 to No 168, 1877, Entry 53; Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780-1917, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

<sup>211</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, "Some Indian Experiences," *Cavalry Journal* XVI (July 1905): 217; Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army*, 260; Pratt, *Drastic Facts About Our Indians and Our Indian System*.

Pratt's move to St. Augustine provided other opportunities to the lieutenant. The move was Colonel Davidson and General Sheridan's reward to Pratt for his role in subjugating the southern Plains tribes. Serving in St Augustine, though, provided Pratt ample opportunities to network with congressmen, federal officials, and affluent members of the Indian assimilation movement. His views mirrored those of other racial progressives, and he would over time become an influential member of the Friends of the Indian movement. Pratt's reward for performance at Fort Marion would be sponsorship by the Secretary of War and Secretary of the Interior for assignment to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In that capacity he founded the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in 1879.<sup>212</sup>

In this latter role, Pratt transformed the debate over and implementation of United States Indian policy. Pratt's education-based assimilation philosophy provided an additional method for completing, albeit indirectly, the process of federal political consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West. Western Indians who had children attending Carlisle were unlikely to continue resistance to the reservation system. Additionally, Pratt's educational methods were intended to undermine the strength of tribal customs by introducing an alternative set of values and cultural practices. The social and cultural consequences of the off reservation boarding school, so controversial today, proved effective in mitigating many impulses to violently resist. By the last 1870's, the federal government found the boarding school method a cost-effective and less

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<sup>212</sup> Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:805 Pratt's promotions were nearly all while he was leading the Carlisle. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant on March 7, 1867 and promoted to First Lieutenant on July 31, 1867. Promoted to Captain on February 17, 1883, four years after he founded Carlisle. Promoted to Major on July 1, 1898; Lieutenant Colonel on February 2, 1901. Consistent with Army promotion practices of the period, Pratt was promoted to Colonel on January 24, 1903 and then retired on February 17, 1903. He was promoted to Brigadier General in 1904 after Congress passed legislation to advance all officers on the retired list with Civil War service by one rank.

politically charged alternative among many of their constituents to the continuation of large-scale warfare.<sup>213</sup>

The role Richard Pratt performed as part of the consolidation of federal authority over the trans-Mississippi West changed dramatically over the course of his career. Lieutenant Pratt's natural curiosity coupled with his chance assignment to lead Indian scouts began his transformation from a regimental line officer into a national advocate for Indian assimilation. Rewards for his service commanding scouts gave him a national platform to pursue his vision for Indian assimilation into American society. In 1874, Lieutenant Pratt and eighty-five scouts spent nine months assisting in the brutal subjugation of several thousand Indians of the southern Plains. By 1890, Captain Pratt and his staff of fifty-nine people were administering an institution with over a thousand Indian children, teens, and young adults. The publicly espoused goal of the institution being to provide the Indians practical knowledge and skills that would allow them to integrate into the American society coming to dominate their homelands.<sup>214</sup>

The Carlisle School was and remains controversial. For the American people, Pratt's effort to educate Indian children came to mean more than its parts. Carlisle, and Pratt's shameless promotion of the school, through publications and speaking engagements brought the subject of Indian assimilation back into the mainstream public dialogue at a time when the topic had faded. The public debate also lost much of its extermination rhetoric in this period, shifting

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<sup>213</sup> Prucha, *The Great Father*, 235, 237; K. Tsianina Lomawaima and Jeffrey Ostler, "Reconsidering Richard Henry Pratt: Cultural Genocide and Native Liberation in an Era of Racial Oppression," *Journal of American Indian Education* 57, no. 1 (2018): 81–82, <https://doi.org/10.5749/jamerindieduc.57.1.0079> Charla Bear, "American Indian Boarding Schools Haunt Many," National Public Radio, May 12, 2008 and "American Indian School a Far Cry from the Past," National Public Radio, May 13, 2008, Found at: <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=17645287>. Bear suggests the concept of a shared cultural consciousness of "Native Americans" may have its origin in the forced collective acculturation of Indian children and teenagers in the off-reservation boarding schools pioneered by Carlisle.

<sup>214</sup> "BIA-Annual-Report\_1889\_EmployeeTable.Pdf," 416, 417, accessed February 23, 2022, [https://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs\\_ledgers/BIA-Annual-Report\\_1889\\_EmployeeTable.pdf](https://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs_ledgers/BIA-Annual-Report_1889_EmployeeTable.pdf).

to how Indians would transition from wards of the state to productive citizens. However clearly misguided, painful, and destructive Carlisle's impact was on individual Indian children, young adults, and their families in our understanding today, Lieutenant Pratt, a former commander of Indian scouts, helped to reenergize the debate about the place of Indians in American society. A debate which had largely been forgotten as the Civil War and its aftermath became the focus of the American people and their government.

#### IV. Gustavus Cheyney Doane: A Life of Peculiar Characteristics

*It is something to march under the guidance of the star of empire, and feel that a mighty nation follows on your trail... A poor subaltern, yet unknown, while traversing with weary steps the barren wilderness, of scaling the mighty summits from which the waters part and flow, may stumble, under fortune's favor, upon some new discovery, the merit of which will secure to him all that history vouchsafes to greatness—a paragraph in the encyclopaedia[sic] of the human race.<sup>215</sup>*



Gustavus C. Doane, 1875.

Source: Wikimedia Commons at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:GustavusCDoane.jpg>

First Lieutenant Gustavus Cheyney Doane played a significant role in the consolidation of the northern Great Plains under federal authority. Doane, commanding Crow scouts, ensured the Crow tribe acted in a manner advantageous to the United States Army during the Great Sioux and the Nez Percé wars. The lieutenant enhanced the efficiency of both campaigns by organizing Crow scout detachments to guide and augment the army regiments in their search for the resisting tribes. In coordination with the army, he also assisted the Crow to occupy land situated

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<sup>215</sup> Gustavus C. Doane, “Personal Recollections – Two Yellowstone Expeditions” in Theophilus Francis Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry* (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 405.

in the buffalo hunting grounds of the northern Plains. This occupation, combined with Crow hunting parties continuously scouring the landscape, effectively denied the area, its resources, and its protective isolation to the resisting Sioux, Cheyenne, and Nez Percé tribes. In the case of the Nez Percé, Doane's role further denied the tribe the benefit of moral and material support from the Crow people, who were their historic allies.

Lieutenant Doane's experience provides a well-documented but largely ignored perspective on the process of consolidating federal authority over the northern Plains. We know of Doane primarily for his participation in the massacre of Piegan Indians and destruction of their village along the Marias River in 1870 and his subsequent scientific explorations of the upper Yellowstone River area that became the nation's first national park. Those activities remain lightning rods for historic interpretation. The man's influence was as consequential, though, in the campaigns that subjugated the Sioux, Northern Cheyenne, and Nez Percé tribes in 1877.

Doane's experience also sheds insight on the role and influence of personal agency in the outcomes of national processes. He, like other officers who led Indian scouts, was bound in a synergistic relationship with the institution he served. As an officer, he was also one of many agents of empire, responsible for the implementation of policies that reorganized the continental United States. The same activities Doane performed to advance the process of federal consolidation simultaneously advanced his professional reputation and facilitated his personal interests.

This chapter begins with an introduction to Gustavus Doane before his arrival on the Plains. It then follows him through his experience of warfare at Marias River and during the Great Sioux and Nez Percé wars, along with the rewards he sought and received for participating

in those campaigns—exploration of Yellowstone, Judith Basin, and the Snake River. The outcome of each of these events set conditions for the further consolidation of federal authority across the northern Plains.

### **Early Years: The Education of a Frontiersmen**

Gustavus Cheyney Doane's early life did not indicate he would be an army officer, much less one that would lead Indian scouts. He was born in Galesburg, Illinois on August 29, 1840 to Solomon and Nancy Davis Doane. Not surprisingly, his parents deeply influenced his life. Yet, even his name—his parents and siblings, referred to him as Cheyney, while the young man preferred Gustavus and “G.C. Doane” for signed documents—indicated he would follow his own path.<sup>216</sup>

Solomon Doane was both industrious and a dreamer. He trained as a carpenter and furniture maker but found farming his most successful undertaking. Solomon's dream was to strike it rich in the west. That dream led the family in a succession of moves further west in search of prosperity. First to St Louis, Missouri in 1844 where Solomon plied his carpentry trade. Two years later, they moved by wagon train along the Overland Trail to Oregon. Solomon took up farming in Oak Grove just outside of Portland. He was then struck with the gold fever of 1849 and moved the family by boat to San Francisco, California. The elder Doane found no opportunity in the gold fields, though, and moved the family to the Santa Clara Valley south of

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<sup>216</sup> Gustavus C Doane, “Personal Biography in ‘Surgeon’s Certificate of Disability in the Case of Mr. G.C. Doane.’ Carlisle Barracks, Dated July 2, 1868” (Carlisle Barracks, July 2, 1868), Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (Records for G.C. Doane, 1st Lt, 2nd Cav), File 1 of 4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 3, note 1.; “George Doane to Cheyney Doane, Dated San Francisco, July 18, 1865;” “Nancy Doane to Cheyney Doane, Dated San Francisco, October 2, 1865,” in “Gustavus C. Doane Papers” (Collection, Montana State University, 1881), Personal Correspondence December 1864 to June 1865, Box 1, File 1; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 6.



San Francisco where he returned to farming. The Doane family grew along the journey. James was born in Oregon, while Anna, George, Charles, and John joined the family in California.<sup>217</sup>

Nancy Doane valued education. Her goal was to provide her children opportunities beyond manual labor and farming. Nancy worked to ensure Cheyney and his siblings received the best education available. She tutored them when there were no schools or teachers available. She saw success in her efforts with Cheyney, who was reading and demonstrating an aptitude for natural observation by age seven. When the family was in Santa Clara, Nancy convinced Solomon to invest in a bond for the newly founded University of the Pacific. Nancy and Solomon's one-hundred-dollar investment allowed their oldest son to enter the university in 1857 at the age of seventeen.<sup>218</sup>

Doane's education at the University of the Pacific achieved his mother's desire. The university provided Cheyney a curriculum that included ancient and modern languages, literature, philosophy, rhetoric, composition, and the physical sciences. His studies refined his writing skills and gave him tools to examine the natural world. The classical and scientific education he received was similar to that of West Point, absent a program in civil engineering and military sciences. On June 13, 1861, two months after South Carolina militia bombarded Fort Sumter, Doane graduated from the university with a Bachelor of Arts degree. As a new graduate Doane would have to wait to make the most of the education his mother so cherished. After commencement Cheyney returned to work on his father's farm.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Doane, "Personal Biography"; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 3–5; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 6–9.

<sup>218</sup> University of the Pacific, *Catalog of the University of the Pacific for the Academic Year, 1856-1857* (San Francisco: Whitton, Towne & Co's Excelsior Steam Presses, 1857), 5, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1295294:2203>; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 5; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 10–11.

<sup>219</sup> University of the Pacific, *Catalog of the University of the Pacific for the Academic Year, 1856-1857*, 13–14; University of the Pacific, *Catalog of the University of the Pacific, Santa Clara, California, 1860-1861* (San

Doane's early years formed the characteristics to propel his life. He grew into an imposing figure at six feet tall with "a big bony frame covered with powerful sinews without a pound of superfluous flesh" who "wore long dark hair," and "cultivated a long and heavy moustache."<sup>220</sup> Gustavus' walk across the Plains and Rocky Mountains with his parents gave him a passion for the landscape, a comfort traversing the land, and a desire to explore new territory. Throughout his life, he envisioned achieving fame and fortune through exploration of the west like John C. Frémont, whose expedition reports captivated the nation during the 1850s. Doane inherited his father's work ethic and mechanical aptitude along with his mother's respect for education. These attributes proved valuable to him. Working for his father, though, made the young man realize farming was not the vocation for him.<sup>221</sup>

### **Civil War: Fighting on the Fringes**

Doane served as an army officer for nearly three decades, but he began his military career

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Francisco: Towne & Bacon Printers, 1861), 10–11, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1295294:2203>; United States Military Academy, *Official Register of Officers and Cadets of the United States Military Academy, 1857* (New York: United States Military Academy Printing Office, 1857), 16–18, <https://usmalibrary.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16919coll3/id/1854/rec/60>; United States Military Academy, *Official Register of Officers and Cadets of the United States Military Academy, 1860* (New York: United States Military Academy Printing Office, 1860), 17–19, <https://usmalibrary.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16919coll3/id/1854/rec/60>; In 1861, the university awarded Bachelors of Arts degrees to those students who completed both the Classical and Scientific courses of study. A Bachelor of Science was conferred to those only completing the Scientific course. In addition to his regular studies Doane was member of the university's Archanian Literary Society that met weekly for composition, speech, and debate. See "Catalogue of the University of the Pacific, 1860-1861, Commencement - June 13, 1861" (Carlisle Barracks, June 13, 1861), Martin G. Burlingame Special Collections, Gustavus C. Doane Papers, Box 3, File 2, Subject Files, 1860-1893, University of the Pacific, Montana State University.

<sup>220</sup> William Henry White, *Custer, Cavalry & Crows: The Story of William White as Told to Thomas Marquis*, ed. Thomas Bailey Marquis (Ft. Collins, Colo.: Old Army Press, 1975), 38; Thomas M. Leforge, *Memoirs of a White Crow Indian*, ed. Thomas B Marquis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974), 46.

<sup>221</sup> Annie Doane, "Annie Doane to Cheyney Doane, Dated San Francisco, December 1864," Collection, December 1865, Martin G. Burlingame Special Collections, Gustavus C. Doane Papers, Personal Correspondence December 1864 to June 1865, Box 1, File 1, Montana State University; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 5–6; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 15–17.

as a private, the most junior rank. On October 30, 1862, he enlisted in the “California Hundred,” a cavalry company formed by James Sewall Reed, a native of Massachusetts. Reed established the company in San Francisco under an agreement with John A. Andrew, the Governor of Massachusetts, to fill a portion of the state’s federal quota for manpower to support the Union war effort. Doane remained with the California Hundred for sixteen months before transferring to the Mississippi Marine Brigade as a lieutenant. By the time of his discharge, Doane was experienced in the conduct of war on the periphery of the great Civil War armies.<sup>222</sup>

Doane and the California Hundred were assigned as Company A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Cavalry upon their arrival in Massachusetts on January 4, 1863. Colonel Charles Russell Lowell commanded the regiment during Doane’s tenure.<sup>223</sup> In his “Autobiography and Reminiscence” provided to the Society of California Pioneers, Doane scarcely acknowledged the complexity of

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<sup>222</sup> Reed came to California in 1849. The men he recruited for the California Hundred were valued for their horsemanship. Skills that were sorely needed in the Union cavalry early in the war. Reed was killed on February 22, 1864 near Dranesville, Virginia in a skirmish that typified the irregular conflict in Northern Virginia. Reed and his men were searching for Mosby’s guerrillas when they in turn were ambushed. Reed’s body was stripped and left where he fell. Gustavus C. Doane, “Autobiography and Reminiscence of Capt. Gustavus C. Doane, 2nd Cavalry-Cal.-Vol.” (San Francisco, 1901), 2, <https://oac.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/kt9g50242r/?order=3&brand=oac4>; Wayne Colwell, “The California Hundred,” *The Pacific Historian* 13, no. 3 (January 1, 1969): 64, 68; Leo P. Kibby, “California Soldiers in the Civil War,” *California Historical Society Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (1961): 345, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25155431>; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 17, 29; James McLean, *California Sabers: The 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry in the Civil War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Thomas E Parson, *Bear Flag and Bay State in the Civil War: The Californians of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001), 203.

<sup>223</sup> Lowell, a Massachusetts native, entered the Regular Army in June 1861, serving in the cavalry and as an aid to General McClellan before raising the 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry. He was an excellent tactician and courageous leader who found subduing Mosby’s guerrillas frustrating. Lowell was mortally wounded on October 19, 1864 while leading a cavalry charge at the Battle of Cedar Creek, Virginia. He was promoted to Brigadier General the next day and died of his wounds on October 21st, 1864. Adjutant General’s Office, “Report of the Second Regiment of Cavalry for 1864,” in *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts* (Boston: Wright & Potter, State Printers, 1864), 930, <https://www.ancestry.com>; Adjutant General’s Office, “Report of the Second Regiment of Cavalry for 1863,” in *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts* (Boston: Wright & Potter, State Printers, 1863), 950, <https://www.ancestry.com>; Carol Bundy, *The Nature of Sacrifice: A Biography of Charles Russell Lowell, Jr., 1935-64* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 255–58, 319; Joan Waugh, “New England Cavalier: Charles Russell Lowell and the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864,” in *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864*, ed. Gary W Gallagher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 299, 331.

war he experienced. Of the Civil War in Virginia, he states: “Served summer of 1863 on [James] Peninsula above Gloucester Point and Yorktown. In action at capture of South Anna Bridge (Col Spear’s expedition) and in various raids. Winter of 1863 and spring of 1864 at Vienna C.H. operating against Mosby’s Command and on defences [sic] of Washington, Guerrilla warfare.”<sup>224</sup>

Doane’s experience as a wartime raider and guerilla fighter was up close and violent. As raiders on the James Peninsula the men destroyed rebel fortifications, buildings, telegraph lines, and supplies. They were also expected to search every building, including private homes. During their return from the South Anna bridge, the regiment surprised and captured Brigadier General William H. Lee, the son of Robert E. Lee, who was convalescing at the home of his wife’s parents.<sup>225</sup>

While fighting Mosby’s Rangers, Doane had many close encounters with rebel soldiers and civilians. The Rangers enjoyed the active support of civilian residents of Northern Virginia and Mosby’s men regularly masqueraded as civilians to deceive the Union soldiers. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts responded with their own guerrilla warfare methods. Lowell and Reed’s men made surprise attacks, applied mass punishment to the local populace, and even conducted extrajudicial killings of captured Rangers. Mosby’s men reciprocated in kind. Doane found himself captured by the Rangers one morning and only escaped execution by feigning to be from a different regiment. Doane would not see the end of Mosby’s Rangers. On March 22, 1864, he was discharged from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts. The next day he was commissioned as a First

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<sup>224</sup> Doane, “Autobiography and Reminiscence,” 2.

<sup>225</sup> Adjutant General’s Office, “Report of the Second Regiment of Cavalry for 1863”; John A. Dix, “Expedition to South Anna Bridge, Virginia, Dated December 15, 1863,” in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Series 1, Vol 27, Part 1, Reports, Ch XXXIX*, vol. 27, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. (Washington: GPO, n.d.), 18–19; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 22–24.

Lieutenant and ordered to Vicksburg, Mississippi.<sup>226</sup>

On April 21, 1864, Doane reported to the Mississippi Marine Brigade's Cavalry Battalion. The brigade was an unusual organization consisting of cavalry, infantry, and artillery operating from a fleet of ram warships. Its principal role was to suppress Confederate guerrillas hampering Union forces along the Mississippi River. The brigade gained a reputation for brutality in addition to profiteering. Given his experience fighting Mosby's men, it appears the new lieutenant fit right in. Doane simply acknowledged he fought "in various raids in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas. In action, command of Cavalry advance at Chicot Lake, June 15<sup>th</sup>, and in command of Cavalry Battalion, July 4<sup>th</sup>, back of Rodney, Miss. And in various skirmishes." He was mustered out of the Union Army on January 23, 1865, the same month the brigade was disbanded.<sup>227</sup>

Gustavus Cheyney Doane experienced the full brutality of war outside of the Victorian era's perceived norms of honorable, heroic, and manly combat. His experience fighting Mosby's Rangers and Mississippi guerrillas was characterized by the lack of identifiable geographic boundaries between opposing forces; poor distinction between combatants and non-combatants; long marches; limited but short, brutal clashes; and a general incompatibility of cultures between

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<sup>226</sup> Doane, "Autobiography and Reminiscence," 2; Adjutant General's Office, "Special Order 71, Department of Washington, Dated March 22nd 1864" and Gustavus C Doane, "Statement of Volunteer Record During the War of the Rebellion, Lieutenant Gustavus C. Doane, Fort Ellis, M.T., Dated November 1, 1872" (Fort Ellis, M.T., November 1, 1872), both found in, Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (Records for G.C. Doane, 1st Lt, 2nd Cav), File 1 of 4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 28–29; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 7–8.

<sup>227</sup> Doane, "Autobiography and Reminiscence," 2; Doane, "Statement of Volunteer Record"; For additional information on the Mississippi Marine Brigade see John S.C. Abbott, *Heroic Deeds of Heroic Men* (Harper's Magazine Foundation, 1866), 295–312; Warren Daniel Crandall and Isaac Denison Newell, *History of the Ram Fleet and the Mississippi Marine Brigade in the War for the Union on the Mississippi and Its Tributaries: The Story of the Ellets and Their Men* (Press of Buschart brothers, 1907); Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 36–37 Scott claims that "just as during the first months with the California Hundred at Gloucester Point, the unruly malcontents of Doane's cavalry command fought a shadow enemy in nasty little bushwacking forays."

the combatants. For Doane, stealth, surprise, deception, and brutality were critical to survival. Success in much of the fighting he experienced required an intimate knowledge of the terrain and its inhabitants as well as quick actions taken by small groups of men acting independently from their regiments and their commanders. The fluid and ferocious nature of war Gustavus experienced fighting fellow whites provided precedent for his later actions in conflicts with Plains Indians.<sup>228</sup>

Gustavus Doane returned to Mississippi following the war. In the summer of 1865, he joined Richard Ellet, a college friend and former fellow officer of the Marine Brigade, in opening a mercantile business in Yazoo City. In July 1865, George Doane wrote his older brother, 'Cheyney,' to wish him better luck doing business in Yazoo than San Francisco where the city and bay region were undergoing an economic downturn. In addition to business, Gustavus found opportunities to socialize, too. On May 12, 1866, he married Amelia Link, the daughter of a local plantation owner.<sup>229</sup>

Gustavus' professional fortunes ebbed and flowed. When his business failed he farmed his father-in-law's land. In September 1867, he entertained political aspirations with a speech he prepared to "appeal to the working-men of the south. The farmer, the tradesman, the artisan, the laborer, white or colored" and not "the slave oligarchy."<sup>230</sup> His literary effort was to no avail,

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<sup>228</sup> For nineteenth century perspectives on guerrilla warfare see Johann von Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, ed. Robert A Selig and David Curtis Skaggs (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992); Dennis H. Mahan, *Advanced-Guard, Out-Post, and Detachment Service of Troops* (New York: Wiley and Son, 1870), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/012305164>.

<sup>229</sup> George E. Doane, "George Doane to Cheyney Doane, Dated San Francisco, July 18, 1865," Collection, July 18, 1865, Martin G. Burlingame Special Collections, Gustavus C. Doane Papers, Personal Correspondence December 1864 to June 1865, Box 1, File 1, Montana State University George closed his letter asking that his brother write him a long letter back but not "in Latin or something else I can't read.;" Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 13; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 40, 44.

<sup>230</sup> Gustavus C Doane, "Republican Speech to the Working Men of the South by G.C. Doane, Yazoo City, Miss," Collection, September 20, 1867, 3, Doane Papers, Personal Correspondence December 1864 to June 1865, Box 1, File 1, Montana State University.

because the gathering crowd was dispersed by the sheriff when anti-reconstruction agitators pelted the group with stones. In December 1867, Doane was appointed Yazoo City mayor by order of General Edward O.C. Ord, Commander of the Fourth Military District. The enterprising new mayor also assumed a position as one of Yazoo County's magistrates. His work as a magistrate, which included enforcing a ban on carrying firearms, placed him at odds with local residents. An incident with Tom Bell, a white resident, resulted in Doane seeking clarification from the district headquarters. Major General Alvan Gillem, the commander, confirmed that confiscation of firearms and fining of the individual found in possession "is expected of you in similar cases where either whites or the blacks are concerned." The general's message further explained, "The blacks, who are imitative in their habits, will quit the practice of carrying arms, as soon as they see the whites whom they imitate have ceased or are prevented from doing so."<sup>231</sup> By the spring of 1868, Mayor Doane appears to have decided that Yazoo City no longer represented opportunity for him. He resigned as mayor and magistrate on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of May, respectively. Then he and Amelia departed Mississippi.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> O.D. Greene, "O.D. Greene to Doane, AAG, Office of Civil Affairs, HQ 4th Military District (Mississippi and Arkansas)" (Holly Springs, Mississippi, January 4, 1868), Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (G.C. Doane, 1st Lt, 2nd Cav), File 2 of 4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

<sup>232</sup> O.D. Greene, "Special Orders No.199, Headquarters 4th Military District, Doane Appointment and Commission as Mayor of Yazoo City, Mississippi, O.d. Greene, Assistant Adjutant General" (Vicksburg, Mississippi, December 6, 1867); O.D. Greene, "Special Orders No.7, HQ 4th Military District, G.C. Doane Appointment and Commission as Magistrate for Beat No.3, Yazoo County" (Collection, Vicksburg, Mississippi, January 9, 1868); O.D. Greene, "Special Orders No.106, Appointment of A.S. Wood to Replace Doane (Resigned) as Mayor of Yazoo City, Mississippi, O.D. Greene, Assistant Adjutant General, Headquarters 4th Military District" (Collection, Vicksburg, Mississippi, May 18, 1867); O.D. Greene, "Special Orders No.108, A.S. Wood Appointed Magistrate for Beat No. 3, Yazoo County, State of Mississippi. To Replace Doane (Resigned), O.D. Greene, AAG, HQ 4th Military District" (Collection, Vicksburg, Mississippi, May 20, 1868), all four records found in Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (G.C. Doane, 1st Lt, 2nd Cav), File 2 of 4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

## **Into the Territories: Doane and the Frontier Army**

Doane acted quickly following his departure from Yazoo City. On June 15, 1868, he wrote to Major General Lorenzo Thomas, the Adjutant General of the Army, to “solicit a commission in the Regular Cavalry.”<sup>233</sup> On the same day, California Senator John Conness sent a letter to Major General Schofield, then acting Secretary of War, recommending Doane for a commission in the cavalry, stating his qualifications as a former volunteer officer and a “young gentleman of high character and ability, and was selected by General Gillem [Commander, District of Mississippi] as Mayor of Yazoo City, the duties of which he performed with fidelity and ability.”<sup>234</sup> On August 1, 1868, Gustavus C. Doane was offered and accepted an appointment as a second lieutenant in the 2<sup>nd</sup> United States Cavalry Regiment. He would serve in that regiment for the next twenty-four years.<sup>235</sup>

The Doanes moved to Fort D.A. Russell, Wyoming. On August 20, 1868, Lieutenant Doane was assigned to Company H, one of three 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry companies stationed at the post.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Gustavus C Doane, “Mr G.C. Doane to Major General Lorenzo Thomas, Adjutant General, ‘For a Commission in the U.S. Army. Recommended by the Hon John Conness, et Al’” (Washington DC, June 15, 1868), Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (G.C. Doane, 1st Lt, 2nd Cav), File 1 of 4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

<sup>234</sup> John Conness, “John Conness to Major General John M. Schofield, Secretary of War, ‘Recommendation of Mr G.C. Doane for Commission’” (Washington DC, June 15, 1868), Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (G.C. Doane, 1st Lt, 2nd Cav), File 1 of 4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

<sup>235</sup> Gustavus C Doane, “Mr G.C. Doane to Major General Lorenzo Thomas, Adjutant General, ‘Accepts Conditional Appointment’” (Washington DC, June 25, 1868); John P. Hatch, “Major, 4th Cavalry, President of the Board to Adjutant General U.S. Army, ‘Board of Examination, US Cavalry Officers Transmits Proceedings in the Case of G.C. Doane, Appt’d 2 Lieut. U.S. Cavalry and Report That He Has Passed a Satisfactory Examination,’” (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, July 6, 1868); Adjutant General’s Office, “Oath of Office, Lieutenant Gustavus C. Doane” (Fort D.A. Russell, W.T., August 1, 1868), all three documents found in Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (G.C. Doane, 1st Lt, 2nd Cav), File 1 of 4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

<sup>236</sup> Post Return of Fort D.A. Russell, Wyoming Territory, August 1868. Adjutant General’s Office, “U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916, Wyoming, Fort D.A. Russell, 1867 Sep-1875 Dec,” Ancestry.com, 28, accessed March 1, 2022, [https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1571/images/32169\\_126734-00035?treid=&personid=&rc=&usePUB=true&pId=3924388](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1571/images/32169_126734-00035?treid=&personid=&rc=&usePUB=true&pId=3924388) hereafter cited as Post Return of Fort D.A. Russell.



Gustavus performed various duties including three months service at Fort Sedgwick, Colorado where he participated in “the relief of General Forsyth on the Arickaree Forks,” spent a month “on scout against Indians,” and served as the regiment’s quartermaster that he proudly recorded as, “in charge of supply camp... made 47 miles with loaded train in 18 hours, to relieve command out of rations.”<sup>237</sup> Doane later claimed that while at Fort Russell he requested but was denied permission to lead a survey expedition down the Green and Colorado rivers. He wryly noted, “route afterwards taken by Major Powell.”<sup>238</sup>

On May 15, 1869, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Doane and companies E, F, H, and L, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry left Fort Russell on their way to Fort Ellis located near the town of Bozeman in western Montana Territory. Amelia Doane chose to accompany her husband to Fort Ellis. She was the only woman on the 600-mile journey.<sup>239</sup>

Montana’s progression to territorial status demonstrated the ongoing process of consolidation in the trans-Mississippi West. Lewis and Clark’s Corps of Discovery in 1804 had been the first federal representatives to enter the region. The Corps’ initial encounter with the Blackfeet confederacy, consisting of the Blackfeet, Blood, and Piegan tribes, set off a history of violent opposition to American activities when one of the Corps’ members shot and killed a Blackfeet raider attempting to steal horses from the expedition. In the succeeding decades, a

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<sup>237</sup> The episode Doane refers to is known as the Battle of Beecher’s Island, September 17-25, 1868. Doane, “Autobiography and Reminiscence,” 2; Adjutant General’s Office, “Fort D.A. Russell Post Return,” 39.

<sup>238</sup> Doane, “Autobiography and Reminiscence,” 3. No documentary evidence was found for Doane’s claim that he requested authority in 1868 to explore the Green or Colorado Rivers. This does not mean he did not conceive of the idea or discuss it with his commander. It is more likely, though that Doane saw himself as a leading thinker on western exploration and intended to project that image in his legacy. John Wesley Powell was a geologist, explorer, soldier, the second director of the U.S. Geological Survey, and a man Doane considered a competitor. See John F. Ross, *The Promise of the Grand Canyon: John Wesley Powell's Perilous Journey and His Vision for the American West* (New York: Viking, 2018).

<sup>239</sup> Post Return, May 1869, Adjutant General’s Office, “Fort D.A. Russell Post Return,” 45; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 20.

series of deadly encounters between the Blackfeet, trappers, and traders strengthened this mutual animosity.<sup>240</sup> Before the Civil War, conflict in the region remained limited because settler encroachment was minimal. During this period, the death of a white frontiersman in the region evoked little or no response from the federal government.

Mineral strikes in the 1860s changed the dynamic. Montana was organized as a territory in 1864 to govern the influx of miners, ranchers, and farmers. The federal government could no longer ignore the conflicts between the newcomers and the various Indian tribes. Fort Ellis was established in 1867 as part of the federal response. The fort served as the western-most army presence on the Bozeman Trail and protected new arrivals settling the fertile Gallatin Valley.

Settlers remained wary of the Blackfeet people and other tribes even as control and dominance of the region transitioned from Indian, to settler, to the federal government. General Sherman, commanding the army, in his October 1869 annual report to Congress summed up the situation in Montana simply as, “it has a large number of Indians within its limits; most of those west of the Missouri [river] may be safely classed as hostile. A great many settlers in Montana have been murdered, and five or six hundred head of stock captured and run off within the last fifty days, and much bitter complaint has been made by the settlers on account of non-protection, the few troops stationed in Montana being insufficient to meet the wants of the case.”<sup>241</sup>

When Gustavus and Amelia arrived at Fort Ellis on July 1, 1869, animosity and distrust between white settlers and the regions Indians was high. In particular, the Piegan tribe raided the western Montana settlements, points along the Bozeman Trail, and the Crow agency with

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<sup>240</sup> Barry Pritzker, *A Native American Encyclopedia: History, Culture, and Peoples* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 303.

<sup>241</sup> William T. Sherman, General of the Army, in United States, *ARSW 1869*, 1:34.

relative impunity. BIA agents and federal marshals who attempted to arrest or otherwise deter the raiders found themselves without influence or power over the Piegans. White settlers, in turn, inflamed tensions with indiscriminate killings and violence against Indians regardless of tribe or band.<sup>242</sup>

Lieutenant Doane was busy in the months following his arrival. Only two weeks after arriving, he kissed his wife goodbye and departed on an expedition “designed for the survey of a road from Fort Ellis, M.T. to the mouth of the Musselshell river” in central Montana.<sup>243</sup> The expedition lasted two months and covered over five hundred miles. On September 9, the same day he returned from the expedition, Doane assumed duties as the post Acting Assistant Quartermaster and Acting Commissary of Subsistence. Ten days later those duties saw him busy issuing equipment and rations to two-hundred, twenty-seven newly arrived recruits.

Gustavus’ responsibilities increased later that month when his company commander, Captain O.O.G. Robinson, was placed under arrest for insubordination on September 29. Amelia would have wondered what she got herself into when her husband was once more absent, this time under subpoena to testify at Captain Robinson’s court martial from October 23 to November 8. The trial was held one-hundred and eighty miles away at Fort Shaw, the Montana district headquarters. The lieutenant and his wife enjoyed a short respite in November when he was relieved of duty as the assistant quartermaster, but on December 7<sup>th</sup> when the General Court

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<sup>242</sup> Waldman, *Atlas of the North American Indian*, 169.

<sup>243</sup> Post Returns, July and August 1869, Adjutant General’s Office, “U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916, Montana, Fort Ellis, 1867 Aug - 1876 Dec,” Ancestry.com, accessed March 10, 2022, [https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1571/images/32169\\_126031-00064?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=d3d1a14f49b5469e8804a7040040d107&usePUB=true&usePUBJs=true&pId=4067233](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1571/images/32169_126031-00064?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=d3d1a14f49b5469e8804a7040040d107&usePUB=true&usePUBJs=true&pId=4067233).

Martial sentenced Captain Robinson to suspension of command for two months, Doane took charge of the company.<sup>244</sup>

### **Marias River: War without Empathy**

While the lieutenant jumped from one task to the next, an incident occurred that initiated federal action against the Piegan tribe. On August 17, 1869, Piegan men murdered Malcom Clark, a well-known fur-trader and rancher. In the same attack they also attempted to murder Clark's son, Horace. The attack was only one incident in the years of mounting tensions but Clark's notoriety served as a catalyst for the community to demand action.<sup>245</sup>

Initially, Clarke's murder appeared to follow the same pattern of impunity. While Lieutenant Doane was on the Musselshell road survey expedition, William F. Wheeler, the Federal Marshall for Montana Territory, completed an investigation that identified suspects who were subsequently indicted for Clarke's murder. Colonel Alfred Sully, an officer acting as the BIA special agent for Montana, agitated through the Department of Interior to be given command of a military force to arrest the indicted Indians and intimidate the Piegan tribe, while Colonel Philip R. de Trobriand, the army's district commander at Fort Shaw resisted military action as vigorously through the War Department. In November, William Belknap, Secretary of War, along with Generals Sherman and Sheridan finally agreed to act against the Piegans.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Fort Ellis Post Returns, September to December 1869, Adjutant General's Office; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 20, 22.

<sup>245</sup> Clarke arrived in Montana Territory in 1839 as a clerk for the American Fur Company. During the course of his career he married a Piegan women. By the late 1860s he was a wealthy man and in charge of the company's fur operations in western Montana. Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 25–26; Robert J Ege, *Tell Baker to Strike Them Hard: Incident on the Marias, 23 Jan. 1870*, (Bellevue, Neb.: Old Army Press, 1970), 1–3, 16–17; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 64–65; Ronald V. Rockwell, *The U.S. Army in Frontier Montana*, First edition (Helena, MT: Ronald Rockwell, 2009), 170–78.

<sup>246</sup> Ege, *Strike Them Hard*, 22–23; Rockwell, *The U.S. Army in Frontier Montana*, 174.

Sheridan's plan for addressing the Piegan issue meant that Doane, along with the officers and men at Fort Ellis, got a new commander. On December 1, 1869, Major Eugene M. Baker arrived and assumed command of the fort, along with the four-companies of the 2d Cavalry, now referred to as the regiment's "Montana Battalion." The major, an 1854 graduate of the Military Academy, was a career cavalry officer breveted to the rank of Colonel for conspicuous gallantry during the Civil War and combat against Indians on the northern Plains after the war. He was also known for heavy drinking and cordial interaction with his soldiers. He served under General Sheridan's command during much of the Civil War and it was to Baker that the general entrusted the Piegan mission.<sup>247</sup>

Sheridan directed Baker to lead an expedition against the Piegan tribe. The expedition had two goals: to capture the men accused of Clarke's murder and to deter future raiding by Piegans. Baker gathered his men and supplies at Fort Shaw, Montana. Sheridan's final instructions for the expedition, telegraphed to Colonel de Trobriand at Fort Shaw on January 15, emphasized lethal action, stating, "if the lives and property of the citizens of Montana can best be protected by striking Mountain Chief's [Piegan] band, I want them struck. Tell Baker to strike them hard."<sup>248</sup>

Baker acted decisively. The resulting expedition introduced Doane and the Montana Battalion to war on the northern Plains. On January 19, 1870, the major led Doane and the battalion, along with two companies of the 13<sup>th</sup> Infantry, and four civilian guides out of Fort Shaw. The command returned to Fort Shaw on January 29. In the course of those nine days, they

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<sup>247</sup> Post Return, December 1869, Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Ellis Post Return"; Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:184; Paul A. Hutton, "Phil Sheridan's Pyrrhic Victory: The Piegan Massacre, Army Politics, and the Transfer Debate," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 32, no. 2 (1982): 37.

<sup>248</sup> Ege, *Strike Them Hard*, 118–19; Hutton, "Phil Sheridan's Pyrrhic Victory," 38; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 65.

traveled over 200 miles, at times through deep snow, during one of the coldest winters on record in Montana, with temperatures dropping as low as minus 44 degrees Fahrenheit. They had reached the Marias River and destroyed a Piegan camp in an attack which would be both hailed as a major victory and denounced as a massacre. The expedition and attack would come to define Doane.<sup>249</sup>

On the morning of January 23, Baker's command surrounded a Piegan village on the Marias River. Doane, leading Company F, played a prominent role in the action. He claimed to be "the first and last man in the Piegan camp."<sup>250</sup> The attack lasted an hour after which Major Baker ordered Lt Doane and his company to remain at the scene while he led the rest of the command further up the river in an effort to find another camp where he expected to find Mountain Chief and other Piegans indicted for Clarke's murder.

The lieutenant took stock of the situation after Baker's departure. He directed some of his men to guard the survivors while he had others burn all the lodges and supplies. The lieutenant tallied the immediate toll as one-hundred and seventy-three Piegans and one soldier killed along with 140 prisoners and over three hundred horses captured. Doane also learned that some of the captives were suffering from smallpox. The next morning, after consulting with Major Baker, Doane released all the prisoners. As the soldiers departed they left the stunned, surviving Piegans in the now desolate landscape with a meager assortment of rations.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Theophilus Francis Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry: An Authentic Account of Service in Florida, Mexico, Virginia, and the Indian Country ; Including the Personal Recollections of Prominent Officers ; with an Appendix, Containing Orders, Reports and Correspondence, Military Records, Etc. ... 1836-1875* (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 401-403, 552-53; Ege, *Tell Baker to Strike Them Hard; Incident on the Marias, 23 Jan. 1870*, 39-41.

<sup>250</sup> Doane, "Autobiography and Reminiscence," 3.

<sup>251</sup> There is no speculation regarding the total number of Piegans killed but there is speculation about the identity, age, and sex of some. According to Major Baker's report, Red Horn and Big Horn, two of the three Piegan leaders, indicted for Clarke's murder were killed in the camp. Mountain Chief, who was the third leader sought, was not in

Major Baker's attack drew both intense criticism and praise. Colonel Sully, who had agitated for army action, strongly condemned the attack while absolving himself of responsibility. He, along with his assistant, Major Pease, produced unflattering accounts of the attack based on solicited testimony from a variety of Indian and civilian sources. Sully's superior, Elias S. Parker, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, himself a Seneca Indian, had mixed feelings about the action, crediting the attack with "completely subduing the [Piegan] Indians," while simultaneously criticizing the action as "deplorable" for the killing of women and children.<sup>252</sup> Vincent Collyer, secretary to the Board of Indian Commissioners, using Sully and Pease's accounts, led the eastern humanitarian movement's condemnation of Baker and his command in the *New York Herald*.<sup>253</sup>

The Marias River massacre had long term consequences for the army. Members of Congress, including Representative John Logan, condemned the attack in Congress: "I heard the history of the Piegan massacre, as reported by an Army officer, and I say now to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the country, that it made my blood run cold in my veins."<sup>254</sup> The negative publicity resulted in the defeat of a proposal before Congress to return control of the Indian Bureau to the army. As historian Robert Wooster notes, the Marias River attack ensured the

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the village. In addition to the death of so many woman and children, detractors of the attack focused on the fact that Heavy Runner, the Piegan leader whom Alfred Sully reported was at peace with settlers, was also killed. That the village included Piegans suspected of murder as well as those considered peaceful was emblematic of the difficulty that confronted army leaders on the frontier. Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 23; Ege, *Strike Them Hard*, 43–44; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 67–68.

<sup>252</sup> Pritzker, *A Native American*, 466; Ege, *Strike Them Hard*, 60.

<sup>253</sup> Mr Vincent Collyer, Secretary, Board of Indian Commissioners, "Letter to the Editor *New York Herald*," February 23, 1879, found in Rockwell, *The U.S. Army in Frontier Montana*, 209, 211; Ege, *Strike Them Hard*, 136–37.

<sup>254</sup> United States, *The Congressional Globe, 41st Congress, 2d Session, March 10, 1870*, Congressional Globe (Permanent Edition) (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1870), 150, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001719526>.

army continued to be the final arbiter of the federal government's failing Indian policies into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, even though it was not responsible for developing or implementing those policies.<sup>255</sup>

Others supported Baker, Doane, and the soldiers for their actions at the Marias River. The settler communities of Montana celebrated the news. For them, the large death toll represented blood for past grievances and an end to large-scale resistance by the Piegan, Blood, and Blackfeet tribes. The staff of *The New North West* captured the territorial sentiment: "All Montana says Baker did right" and "Baker's course was justified by every circumstance and precedent as essential."<sup>256</sup> General Sheridan commended Baker and his command in his February 12, 1870 general order that expressed both his admiration for the soldiers and justification for the expedition. The general wrote he "cannot commend too highly the spirit and conduct of the troops and their commander; the difficulties and hardships they experienced in the inclemency of the weather" meting out "a carefully prepared and well-merited blow in the middle of winter, with the thermometer below zero" upon the Piegans "whose proximity to the British line has furnished them an easy and safe protection against attack" and "have hitherto murdered and stolen with comparative impunity, in defiance and contempt of the authority of the Government."<sup>257</sup>

The Piegan response validated Sheridan's intent. The surviving tribal leaders met after

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<sup>255</sup> Sheridan Papers "Sheridan to Gherman Jan 29, 1870"; Boxes Report of Parker, Oct 31, Sec Interior, Annual Report 1870, p. 467; Sully to Parker, February 10, 1870 House Ex Doc 85, 41st Cong., 2nd Session, VI, series 1418, p. Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*, 145; Hutton, "Phil Sheridan's Pyrrhic Victory"; Paul Andrew Hutton, "The Indians' Last Stand: A Review Essay," *New Mexico Historical Review* 59, no. 3 (1984): 9; John M. Gates, "The Alleged Isolation of US Army Officers in the Late 19th Century," *Parameters* 10, no. 1 (September 1980): 32; Ege, *Strike Them Hard*, 51.

<sup>256</sup> Editorial Staff, "What It Involves," *The New North-West.*, April 8, 1870, 2.

<sup>257</sup> Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 403-4.



the massacre to decide how they should respond. The chiefs acknowledged the proximate cause of the massacre: tribal members raiding white settlements. They also acknowledged that the army had proven surprisingly capable of finding and attacking them in the dead of winter. This shattered their confidence in winter's protection. Just as importantly, they recognized that soldiers' willingness to kill so many represented an existential threat to the tribe.<sup>258</sup>

In contrast to their cultural norm, the chiefs decided not retaliate. Instead, they ceased raiding the Montana settlements. Father C. Imoda, a Catholic missionary who met with the surviving Piegan chiefs in late January, wrote that one whose "family has been nearly extinguished in the late fight...desired to make peace," while another chief wanted "the past be forgotten and a good peace made with the whites," and a third who, "was stripped of his lodge and made poor...is satisfied that his young men have been beaten...and will not go any more to trouble the whites."<sup>259</sup> The Piegans adapted their way of life to mitigate the now clear and present threat posed by the army.<sup>260</sup>

Doane believed he acted morally in treatment of the Piegan. His recollections demonstrate he saw himself on the right side of history. As a soldier and officer, that sense of moral direction explains his willingness to kill without regard those he saw as on the wrong side of history. Like many soldiers of his generation, his commitment to the Union inured him to the brutality and mass violence he experienced and, in turn, dealt out. First, to southerners during the Civil War and later, as the lieutenant's experience on the Marias River demonstrated, with even greater ferocity to Indians of the west.

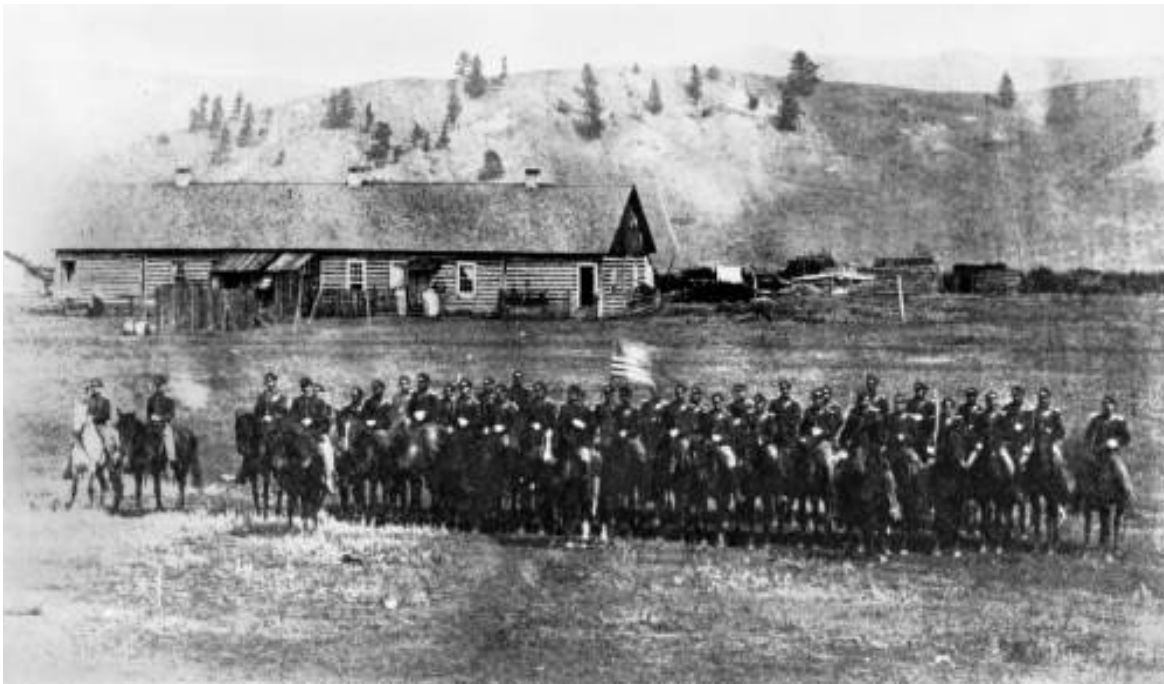
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<sup>258</sup> Ewers, *The Blackfeet*, 252.

<sup>259</sup> Editorial Staff, "The Piegans. Letter from a Catholic Missionary-The Indians Wish Peace.," *The New North-West.*, May 20, 1870.

<sup>260</sup> Ewers, *The Blackfeet*, 252; Rockwell, *The U.S. Army in Frontier Montana*, 220.

Marias River firmly established Doane's sense of himself and his reputation as a frontier army officer. Among the officer corps and the soldiers he led, Doane proved he had fortitude, competence, and could lead soldiers unperturbed by the brutality of an action and regardless of how it would be perceived by those who disagreed with the methods or results. Doane's prominent role in the Marias River would also establish his reputation among the Indians of western Montana. This would be particularly important with the Crow, historic enemies of the Blackfeet, who had suffered from that tribe's incessant raiding. Finally, Doane's written recollections of the Marias massacre form the basis of his interpretation as a villain today.



Troop F, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment, Fort Ellis, Montana Territory, 1870s  
Courtesy of the Montana Memory Project, Montana State Historical Society.

The prominent role Doane played in the Marias River massacre and its aftermath, despite the controversy, advanced his interests in exploration. The lieutenant supported Major Baker during the ensuing political and social outcry by humanitarians and anti-army politicians. That support was reciprocated, most immediately by Baker's approval of Doane's participation in the 1870 Washburn expedition of the Yellowstone region just four months after the Marias River.

## **Yellowstone, Judith Basin and the Snake River: Shaping the Meaning of Consolidation**

Throughout his career, Lieutenant Doane requested assignments to command exploratory expeditions. Doane's experiences demonstrated the synergistic nature of his relationship with the army. His reward for performance as a leader was the authority and resourcing to participate in exploratory and survey expeditions. Doane's participation as an active observer, guide, and commander of military escorts for expeditions also demonstrated the Army's broader role in consolidation. The army, in need of officers capable of completing scientific observations, was willing to accommodate the lieutenant's dream to gain fame as an explorer. Doane ultimately participated in five expeditions including two surveys of the Yellowstone Valley, a survey of Montana's Judith Basin, an attempted winter survey of the Snake River, and finally, the failed Howgate Arctic expedition. Doane was not the first Euro-American to explore these places, but in two cases he was the first to write scientifically-based observation reports about them.<sup>261</sup>

Gustavus Doane's personal passion contributed to the consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West despite the emotion and controversy his name presently raises as a symbol of settler colonialism. His 1870 report on the Yellowstone Valley focused on the area's geomorphology and topography. Doane's report was considered influential based on its eloquent, yet scientific descriptions of the valley. The geologist Ferdinand V. Hayden wrote that "for graphic description and thrilling interest it has not been surpassed by any official report made to

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<sup>261</sup> Doane made his boldest proposal in January 1875, requesting to lead an expedition in search of the source of the Nile river. See Gustavus C Doane, "Application for Three Months Extension of Leave to Remain in Washington Endeavoring to Get an Appropriation from Congress to Be Extended under Direction of the Sec of War to Make an Exploration of the Zambezi in Africa" (Washington DC, January 18, 1875), Records Group 94, 1113 ACP 1877 (Records for G.C. Doane, 1st Lt, 2nd Cav), File 1 of 4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.; Doane made a number of interesting contributions to the federal government's efforts to consolidate control of the western territories. One example is found in his January 13, 1873 report "Navigation of the Yellowstone" based on his several trips down the river. Doane's recommendations encouraged more settlement of the Gallatin valley and his proposed river-borne logistical concept foreshadowed how contractors supported the army during the Great Sioux War of 1876. Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 41.

our government since the times of Lewis and Clarke.”<sup>262</sup> Doane’s exercise of independence advanced the cause being debated in the federal government regarding the creation of a completely new construct within the process of consolidation—the national park.<sup>263</sup>

An entry in his report for the expedition on August 24, 1870 exemplifies his rhetorical style and breadth of interest for observing nature:

The Yellowstone trout are peculiar, being the largest variety of the genus caught in waters flowing east. Their numbers are perfectly fabulous, but their appetites extremely dainty. One may fish with the finest tackle of eastern sportsmen, when the water appears alive with them, all day long, without a bite. Grasshoppers are their peculiar weakness, and using them for bait, the most awkward angler can fill a champagne basket in an hour or two. They do not bite with the spiteful greediness of eastern brook trout, but amount to much more in the way of subsistence when caught. Their flesh is of a bright yellow color on the inside of the body and of a flavor unsurpassed. The barometer stood here 24.20 [25.10]; thermometer, 58’ [40’]; elevation 4,387 feet.<sup>264</sup>

Doane’s observations of the Indian and settler communities, though unpalatable in the present day, indicate he was a perceptive observer of the human condition and the interplay between communities. His inclusion of ethnographic information about the Crow people gained him a reputation in the army as an expert on the tribe. He included observations regarding the state of

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<sup>262</sup> Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories (U.S.), F. V. (Ferdinand Vandever) Hayden, and Cyrus Thomas, *Preliminary Report of the United States Geological Survey of Montana, and Portions of Adjacent Territories: Being a Fifth Annual Report of Progress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 8, <http://archive.org/details/preliminaryrepor00geol>.

<sup>263</sup> For an introduction to settler colonialism see W. Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, 1st edition (Routledge, 2016); Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience*, Fourth edition (Lanham, Md: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2010); Richard West Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Ian R Tyrrell, “America’s National Parks: The Transnational Creation of National Space in the Progressive Era,” *Journal of American Studies* 46, no. 1 (2012): 1–21; Paul S. Suttor, “The Trouble with ‘America’s National Parks’; or, Going Back to the Wrong Historiography: A Response to Ian Tyrrell,” *Journal of American Studies* 46, no. 1 (2012): 23–29.

<sup>264</sup> Gustavus Cheyney Doane, *Letter from the Secretary of War, Communicating the Report of Lieutenant Gustavus C. Doane Upon the so-Called Yellowstone Expedition of 1870*, ed. United States. War Department (Washington DC: United States. War Department, G.P.O., 1873), 3, <http://archive.org/details/letterfromsecret1873unit>; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 232.

inter-tribal and Indian-white raiding demonstrating his understanding of the collision between cultures. His 1874 report portrays the Plains Indians in the context of a changing environment:

The deep ravines, in which the Musselshell flows from Porcupine Creek, to its junction with the Missouri, is a Forest of cottonwood timber. And being completely sheltered by the high sandstone bluffs is a favorite camping place, for the Indians. Moreover, it is “par Excellent” their hunting ground, and the very heart of the present Buffalo Range. At the time of our visit,...the bend of the river was alive with buffalo; and large parties of the Indians were there among them, making a great slaughter for robes.<sup>265</sup>

Later, on his winter 1876-77 travels to survey of the Snake River, Doane describes the effect of consolidation on the Yellowstone drainage:

Farther up, the banks become lower and of alluvial soil, the channel widens, groups of islands appear, grown up with groves of cottonwood and fringed with willows, formerly favorite treats of elk in their breeding season, but now inhabited by pioneer settlers who safely dwell where savages roamed at will but seven years before, and where buffalo skulls are strewn by thousands - mementos of a wild and romantic past.<sup>266</sup>

Doane’s survey efforts advanced the consolidation of federal authority over the land. His reports informed the public and federal government’s penetration into under-governed space before they were degraded by uncontrolled commercial exploitation and settlement.<sup>267</sup> In contrast, reports from the Black Hills survey of 1874 resulted in a spasm of efforts to extract natural resources and motivated the abrogation of treaty assurances with the most warlike northern Plains Indian tribes led by the Sioux.<sup>268</sup> Setting aside rich territory for the recreation and enjoyment of citizens in perpetuity, was an anomaly. As Gustavus exercised his independence,

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<sup>265</sup> Gustavus C. Doane, “Judith Basin Survey” (Fort Ellis, M.T., February 19, 1877), 15, Doane Papers, Burlingame Research Notes, Box 6, File 7, Montana State University.

<sup>266</sup> Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 459.

<sup>267</sup> H. Duane Hampton, “Opposition to National Parks,” *Journal of Forest History* 25, no. 1 (1981): 38–39, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4004651>.

<sup>268</sup> Barry Mackintosh, Janet A. McDonnell, and John H. Sprinkle, “The National Parks: Shaping the System,” *The George Wright Forum* 35, no. 2 (2018): 5–8; Hine, Faragher, and Coleman, *The American West*, 252; White, *It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own*, 104.

he wrote his “paragraph in the encyclopaedia [sic] of the human race,” shaped the public perception of the trans-Mississippi West, and created his own professional opportunities.<sup>269</sup>



US Geological Survey Pack Train along the Yellowstone River, 1871; Lt Doane is on the far right.  
Source: Library of Congress, accessed at: <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a21405/>

### **Campaigning on the Northern Plains: Strengthening a Reputation**

Lieutenant Doane’s reputation as a Crow Indian expert led to his assignment to command Crow scouts in 1877. That year proved a particularly active one for the lieutenant with him shepherding Crow participation in two campaigns. The first was the continuation of the Great Sioux War, begun in 1876, and the second was the pursuit of non-treaty bands of Nez Percé Indians fleeing their Idaho homeland. Doane succeeded in employing Crow scouts to act

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<sup>269</sup> Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 406.

independently of and at times in conjunction with the various regiments. The two campaigns posed unique challenges for Doane and the Crow, but, in both instances, their often-tenuous partnership resulted in positive outcomes for each and simultaneously achieved the army's goals.<sup>270</sup>

Friction between the federal government and Sioux tribes precipitated the Great Sioux War of 1876-1877. Neither the federal government nor the Sioux had abided by the terms outlined in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, negotiated to end Red Cloud's War.<sup>271</sup> Negotiators intended for the treaty to mitigate future conflict between the Sioux, along with other northern Plains tribes, and the federal government and its settler constituents by defining each party's rights to the lands.<sup>272</sup>

It did not take long for the expectations of each party to conflict with the treaty stipulations. Beginning in the 1870's, the Grant administration sought to gain control over the Black Hills mineral deposits in the Dakota territory, an area of spiritual and economic importance to the Sioux. In turn, the Sioux and their allies often disrupted development of the Northern Pacific Railway, considered vital to the internal improvements agenda of the federal government. The Sioux people, like other northern Plains tribes, including the Crow, depended on unhindered access to the buffalo hunting lands. The federal government, acknowledging the Sioux right to roam, attempted twice to renegotiate the terms of the treaty, offering to purchase these lands from the Sioux first in 1873 and again in 1875. On both occasions, the Sioux

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<sup>270</sup> AAG, "Special Field Orders No. 6, Headquarters Battalion 2nd Cavalry" (In Camp on Yellowstone, April 12, 1877), Doane Papers, Military Papers, April 1877, Box 2, File 6, Montana State University; An overview of the conflict is found in Utey, *Frontier Regulars*, 99–107, 136; John D McDermott, *Red Cloud's War: The Bozeman Trail, 1866-1868* (Norman, Okla.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2010).

<sup>272</sup> Francis Paul Prucha, *Documents of United States Indian Policy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 110–14.

refused.<sup>273</sup>

Those refusals exasperated tensions within the federal government between hawks and doves. The hawks, represented by General Sheridan, advocated abrogating the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. Francis Walker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs (1872- 1873), who represented the doves, "would tolerate any provocation by the Sioux and their allies to buy time for railroads and settlement to solve the problem."<sup>274</sup> Indian Bureau Inspector E. C. Watkins broke this internal tension with his November 1875 inspection report on the Great Sioux Reservation. Watkins claimed that "certain wild and hostile bands" under the major Sioux leaders occupied much of the buffalo hunting territory referred to in the Fort Laramie Treaty as unceded Indian territory. Watkins reported they "make war on... steal horses, and plunder from all the surrounding tribes [including the Crow and other tribes friendly to the United States] as well as frontier settlers and luckless white hunters or emigrants who are not in sufficient force to resist them."<sup>275</sup> In Watkins' judgement, "the true policy...is to send troops against them in the winter...and whip them into submission."<sup>276</sup>

Lieutenant Doane and his men were performing duties at Fort Ellis when BIA agents gave the Sioux and their Northern Cheyenne allies an ultimatum to move to a reservation by

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<sup>273</sup> William T. Sherman in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1876*, vol. 1 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1886), 27, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078451>; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 245; Hedren, *Great Sioux War Orders of Battle*, 23–24; Colin G Calloway, *First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History* (Boston; New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008), 329–31.

<sup>274</sup> Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 246.

<sup>275</sup> "Senate Executive Document # 81, July 13, 1876," accessed May 13, 2021, <http://www.littlebighorn.info/Articles/gra8876.htm>; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 247.

<sup>276</sup> "Senate Executive Document # 81, July 13, 1876"; Peter Cozzens, "Ulysses S. Grant Launched an Illegal War Against the Plains Indians, Then Lied About It," *Smithsonian Magazine*, November 2016, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/ulysses-grant-launched-illegal-war-plains-indians-180960787/>.



January 31, 1876 or “a military force would be sent to compel them.”<sup>277</sup> Sheridan planned the campaign on his southern Plains model—three converging columns to drive the Sioux and Cheyenne relentlessly during all seasons of the coming year. Each of the three columns would operate independently but was expected to converge in the buffalo hunting grounds of southeastern Montana Territory, where Sheridan anticipated the greatest concentration of Sioux would spend the winter season. The general expected the presence of soldiers in the hunting grounds would, at the very least, keep the targeted tribes moving, quickly wearing down their livestock and expending their winter supplies of food. Ideally, the tribes would be forced into battle with one of the columns to hasten their exhaustion and willingness to surrender.<sup>278</sup>

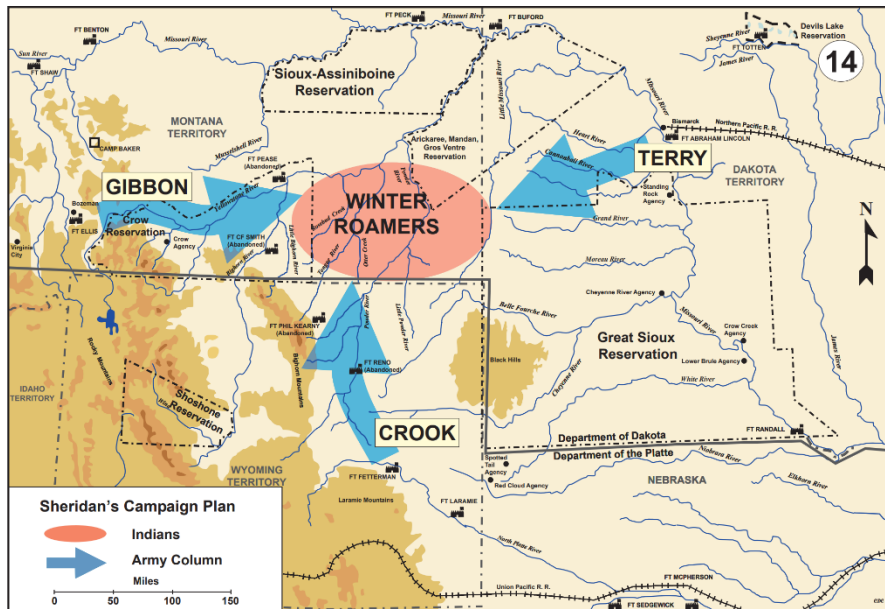
The campaign, referred to as the Great Sioux War, did not progress as intended. For Lieutenant Doane, Sheridan’s campaign progressed in three distinct phases. The first phase was from February to September 1876. The lieutenant saw all three commands in the field, but a lack of effective coordination resulted in the disaster on the Little Bighorn, the aftermath of which Doane witnessed. The second phase, from October 1876 to February 1877, was conducted by a much smaller force of soldiers, yet proved the most effective in achieving Sheridan’s goals. G.C. Doane did not participate in this phase; instead, he led a survey expedition. And the third phase, from March to August 1877, was principally focused on denying the Sioux and Cheyenne access to the hunting grounds while continuing to pursue and force the surrender of individual bands of Indians. Doane was very active in this phase. The Nez Percé campaign overshadowed this final phase when it spilled over the Rocky Mountains onto the northern Plains from the Idaho Territory in early August.

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<sup>277</sup> Sherman in United States, *ARSW 1876*, 1:28.

<sup>278</sup> Sherman in United States, 1:29; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 252–53.

On February 10, 1876, Sheridan informed Brigadier Generals, Alfred Terry and George Crook, commanding the Districts of the Dakota and Platte, respectively, “to commence operations against the hostile Sioux.”<sup>279</sup> Crook’s force, designated the Wyoming Column, included more than a thousand cavalry and infantry men. Terry led the similarly-sized Dakota Column from Fort Abraham Lincoln in the east. The Dakota column included Lieutenant Colonel George Custer and the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry. Colonel John Gibbon commanded the third and smallest column of just under four hundred-fifty soldiers that included Lieutenant Doane. Gibbon and his men, designated the “Montana Column,” came from Forts Shaw and Ellis in the west.<sup>280</sup>



Sheridan's Campaign Plan  
 Source: Charles D. Collins, *Atlas of the Sioux Wars*, 2nd ed., p.43.

<sup>279</sup> Brigadier General Alfred Terry, Commander Department of Dakota, Saint Paul Minnesota, November 21, 1876 in United States, *ARSW 1876*, 1:459.

<sup>280</sup> Sherman in United States, 1:30; Hedren, *Great Sioux War Orders of Battle*, 40–41; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 248–51; Charles D Collins, William Glenn Robertson, and Combat Studies Institute (U.S.), *Atlas of the Sioux Wars* (Fort Leavenworth, KS.: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 42–43, <https://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/LPS121357>.

Lieutenant Doane departed Fort Ellis with his company on April 1, 1876. Doane was occupied with a myriad of duties as the senior lieutenant in his company and the battalion's Acting Assistant Quartermaster. He led soldiers on patrols, oversaw the requisitioning and distribution of supplies, and assisted in hunting parties to supplement the men's rations. The lieutenant, considered the officer with the most experience exploring the region, was also often consulted as a guide for Gibbon's column and sent on scouting missions in the absence of the scouts enlisted for the campaign. Doane, marching with the advance company of the column, met General Terry aboard the steamer *Far West* at the junction of the Yellowstone and Powder Rivers on June 8.<sup>281</sup>

Lieutenant G.C. Doane was present for the meetings on the *Far West* that determined the plan resulting in the Battle of the Little Bighorn. General Terry and Colonel Gibbon reorganized their command after a large camp of Sioux and Cheyenne were presumed to be located on the Little Bighorn River. Doane listened in on Terry's direction for Lieutenant Colonel George Custer to lead his 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry far south of the Yellowstone and then drive any Indians he found north toward the junction of the Bighorn and Little Bighorn rivers, where Gibbon was directed to proceed with the remainder of the combined command. If all went well, the two forces would meet on June 26 after breaking the military capability of the Sioux and Cheyenne in a sharp fight that would force the tribes to sue for peace.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Post Return for April 1876 Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Ellis Post Return"; James H Bradley, *The March of the Montana Column: A Prelude to the Custer Disaster*, ed. Edgar Irving Stewart (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), 136–37, 146, 151; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 53; White, *Custer, Cavalry & Crows*, 35.

<sup>282</sup> Bradley, *The March of the Montana Column*, 150–51; Rickard A Ross, *First to Arrive on Custer's Battlefield with the Montana Column: Frederick E. Server, Montana Pioneer, Soldier, and Explorer, His 1876-1877 Journal of Exploration of the Snake River and Pursuit of the Nez Percé* (El Segundo, Calif.: Upton and Sons, 2010), 48. The Big Horn and Little Big Horn rivers were in the heart of the Crow Territory and much of the Great Sioux War was fought in or around the Crow Reservation and hunting grounds. The Crow regularly fought for access to hunt in the unceded territory and for control of their own reservation against the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne.

Gustavus Doane was with his company marching toward the Little Bighorn on June 26 when Crow scouts brought the unbelievable news of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry's defeat. The day before, Custer had led the regiment into an encounter with a gathering of Sioux and Cheyenne people of unprecedented size. During the ensuing battle, Indians surrounded and killed Custer along with two-hundred and forty officers, soldiers, and civilians—almost half of the regiment. Another fifty-two soldiers were wounded.<sup>283</sup>

Lieutenant Doane made a memorable contribution to the campaign at this point. Gustavus had evacuated injured men by horse and mule on improvised litters twice before. He now applied this method on a large scale to evacuate the wounded men. The lieutenant instructed the soldiers to build these litters from the battlefield's refuse, including tepee poles, buffalo robes, rope, and even the skins of animals killed during the fighting. By June 30, Doane had all the wounded successfully transported to the *Far West*, now located at the junction of the Big Horn and Little Bighorn Rivers, twenty challenging miles from the battlefield.<sup>284</sup>

News of the Custer defeat shocked the nation. The political will of the President and Congress were galvanized. Congress authorized the army to replace every man lost during that year's campaign and recruit an additional twenty-five hundred soldiers to fill the ranks of each cavalry regiment serving on the frontier. Funds to sustain troops in the field were allocated. The

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<sup>283</sup> Sherman in United States, *ARSW 1876*, 1:31; Charles A. Eastman, "The Indian Version of Custer's Last Battle," *Chautauqua* 31, July 1900 in Peter Cozzens, *Eyewitness to the Indian Wars, Vol 4, the Long War for the Northern Plains* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2004), 299–309; Theodore W. Goldin, "On the Little Bighorn with General Custer," *Army Magazine* 4, June and July 1894, in Cozzens, 310–37; White, *Custer, Cavalry & Crows*, 74; Hedren, *Great Sioux War Orders of Battle*, 211.

<sup>284</sup> Report of Major General Terry, dated Saint Paul, Minnesota, November 21, 1876 in United States, *ARSW 1876*, 1:464, 474; White, *Custer, Cavalry & Crows*, 72, 74, 78, 81; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 59–63; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 112–13; Hedren, *Great Sioux War Orders of Battle*, 63, 119–21, 123–25; Ross, *First to Arrive*, 71.

army was given all the necessary resources and political backing to complete their campaign against the Sioux and their Cheyenne and construct two new forts in the unceded territory.<sup>285</sup>

The battlefield disaster positioned Lieutenant Doane well to pursue his passion. General Terry and Colonel Gibbon had identified Gustavus as an energetic and innovative officer. The general considered spreading knowledge of Doane's mule-litters important and directed the lieutenant to prepare a memorandum describing their construction. The general, in turn, submitted Doane's memorandum to General Sheridan and the Surgeon General of the Army. Terry summarized his observations of Doane's role in the campaign in his note to General Sheridan, stating "I believe that I speak the sentiments of every officer...when I say that I feel the most hearty admiration for the zeal, skill, and energy displayed by this accomplished gentlemen and soldier."<sup>286</sup> Colonel Gibbon, in his annual report for 1876, noted "the litters worked so admirably as to call forth the most unbounded commendation in praise of the skill and energy displayed by Lieutenant Doane."<sup>287</sup> This published praise for Doane indicates the positive professional relationship that had developed between Gustavus and his senior officers.<sup>288</sup>

Doane recognized the strength of his credibility with General Terry. Sensing an opportunity, he presented an audacious and reckless proposal to the general. Drawing on his notoriety from the 1870 Yellowstone report, he proposed to survey the Snake River, the last

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<sup>285</sup> Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:621–22; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 264–65.

<sup>286</sup> Brigadier General Terry to Assistant Adjutant General, Headquarters Military Division of the Missouri, dated Saint Paul, Minn, December 7, 1876, Box 6, File 9, Campaign Report, in "Doane Papers."

<sup>287</sup> Colonel John Gibbon, Headquarters District of Montana, Fort Shaw, Montana, October 17, 1876 in United States, *ARSW 1876*, 1:474.

<sup>288</sup> Lieutenant Gustavus Cheyney Doane to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of Dakota, dated Camp on Yellowstone River, July 11th, 1876, "Mule-litter Memorandum of Construction" is found in Box 3, File 8, Campaign Report 1876, in "Doane Papers."

major unsurveyed river of the west. The Snake River originates on the plateau west of Yellowstone Lake (today known as Two Oceans Plateau). From there, the river flows west through Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, where it joins the Columbia River and empties into the Pacific. The proposal was audacious because the river has spectacular rapids and traverses unsettled areas where no assistance would be available in the event of a calamity. And reckless because the lieutenant proposed to complete the journey during the winter. The severity of winter in the region dramatically increased the difficulties and danger involved in just surviving the journey, much less completing a detailed survey. The proposal was especially audacious because Gustavus had not presented the idea to his new commander, Major James Brisbin, before discussing it with the general.<sup>289</sup>

In early September 1876, General Terry released most of the regiments under his command to return to their posts for the winter. Doane and his company returned to Fort Ellis on September 29, 1876. Five days later, General Terry's office sent a telegram to Fort Ellis authorizing Lieutenant Doane to explore the Snake River. Terry's confidence in Lieutenant Doane must have been high. The general released the lieutenant from his battalion and post duties with the Sioux campaign still undecided and without even informing Major Brisbin.<sup>290</sup>

The Snake River expedition demonstrated Doane's self-confidence traversing the wilderness and his obsession to explore it. With eight years in Montana, Gustavus understood the

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<sup>289</sup> Brisbin had assumed command of Fort Ellis just before the start of the Sioux campaign. He was commissioned in the army at the outbreak of the Civil War, rose to the rank of Brigadier General of Volunteers by 1865, and in the post-war reduction rejoined the cavalry as a major. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:264.

<sup>290</sup> Captain Ball, the acting commander of Fort Ellis, signed the order in the absence of Major Brisbin, who did not return from the field until after Doane and his men departed. See Telegram General Terry, Headquarters, Department of Dakota to Major James Brisbin, Fort Ellis, October 4, 1876, and Military Special Order No. 110, dated Department of the Dakota, October 6, 1876 in "Doane Papers"; Post Returns for September, October, and November 1876, Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Ellis Post Return," 230, 232, 233, 237; Fort Ellis Special Order #142, October 7, 1876, Box 2, File 4 in "Doane Papers."

risk of a winter expedition but saw the expedition as a fleeting opportunity before returning in the spring to the campaign against the Sioux. Gustavus must have considered the potential reward worth the physical, personal, and professional risks. On October 16, 1876, the lieutenant set out from Fort Ellis with Sergeant Fred Server and privates Fowler Applegate, Daniel Starr, William White, John Warren, and C.B. Davis. The party led a mule-drawn wagon stuffed with provisions and a collapsible boat that Gustavus had designed toward the Yellowstone Basin where they planned to enter the Snake River. The expedition proved a disaster. Doane's overconfidence led to the destruction of much of the expedition's equipment and nearly to the death of his party through exposure and starvation. On January 27, 1877, Doane and four of his men were back at Fort Ellis. Server and White returned on February 2. They had failed to descend or survey the river due to a combination of the lieutenant overestimating their abilities, bad luck, and the punishment winter doled out to them.<sup>291</sup>

The trip likely cost Doane his marriage and further ran him afoul of his superior. Gustavus had spent only short periods of time with Amelia since their arrival at Fort Ellis in 1868. Doane's decision to leave his wife alone for another winter likely precipitated their slide to divorce, which began in the summer of 1877 and was finalized in September 1878.<sup>292</sup> Lieutenant Doane also knew that not consulting Major Brisbin before departing on the expedition risked

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<sup>291</sup> Post Return for October 1876 Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Ellis Post Return," 232; Special Order #142 in "Doane Papers"; Lt G.C. Dane's Snake River Journal of 1876 found in Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 536–41; White, *Custer, Cavalry & Crows*, 105, 107–8; Ross, *First to Arrive*, 104–5; Post Return for January 1877 Adjutant General's Office, "U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916, Montana, Fort Ellis, 1877 Jan-1886 Nov," Ancestry.com, 2, accessed March 18, 2022, [https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1571/images/32169\\_126032-00009?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=d3d1a14f49b5469e8804a7040040d107&usePUB=true&usePUBJs=true&pId=4067233](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1571/images/32169_126032-00009?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=d3d1a14f49b5469e8804a7040040d107&usePUB=true&usePUBJs=true&pId=4067233).

<sup>292</sup> "Doane Divorce, ID#199652, Salt Lake City (Utah). Probate Court Divorce Docket.," Genealogy, Western States Marriage Record Index, accessed March 1, 2022, <https://abish.byui.edu/specialCollections/westernStates/westernStatesRecordDetail.cfm?recordID=199652>; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 95; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 181, 193.

putting him at odds with the man who would be his battalion commander for years to come.

Doane was right.

On March 3, 1877, Lieutenant Doane and his company were back in the field marching east to the newly established Tongue River Cantonment on the Yellowstone River.<sup>293</sup>

### **Campaigning with the Crow: Leading Like a Chief**

While Doane and his detachment of explorers struggled through the mountains, snow, ice, and waters along the Snake River, the campaign against the Sioux and Cheyenne had continued. In the summer of 1876, General Sheridan directed that forts be established in the heart of the Montana Territory buffalo hunting grounds as a means to deny the area to the Sioux and Cheyenne resistors. Colonel Nelson A. Miles and the soldiers of the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment established a temporary fort, known as a cantonment, on August 28, 1876, at the junctions of the Yellowstone and Tongue Rivers. By October 1876, the Tongue River Cantonment had buildings to house the troops, their animals, and provisions for the winter.<sup>294</sup>

From the cantonment on the Tongue River, Miles and his soldiers spent the winter

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<sup>293</sup> Fort Ellis Post Return for March 1877, Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Ellis Post Return," 6; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 433–569 includes Doane's report of the expedition; Ross, *First to Arrive*, 83–105 provides Sergeant Server's journal entries during the expedition that formed the basis of Doane's report; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 103–28.

<sup>294</sup> Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:708–9 Nelson A. Miles was a Civil War volunteer officer who proved exceptionally talented as a field commander. He was also extraordinarily ambitious, rising from second lieutenant to Major General of Volunteers. He was commissioned a colonel after the war. Miles achieved his ultimate ambition serving as the last Commanding General of the Army from 1895-1903. The position was changed Army Chief of Staff after Miles' retirement; Post Returns for September and October 1878, Adjutant General's Office, "U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916, Montana, Fort Keogh, 1876 Sep-1886 Dec," Ancestry.com, 1–8, accessed March 21, 2022, [162](https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/3557088:1571?_phcmd=u(%27https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1571/?name=Nelson_Miles&event=1876_montana-usa_29&count=50&name_x=psi_1&successSource=Search&queryId=4c48d0f7de8c63ac7dc9b9a6e8b72b17%27,%27successSource%27); Utley, <i>Frontier Regulars</i>, 272–73.</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)



relentlessly harassing any resistors they found on the Plains. In unison with Miles' field efforts, BIA agents managing the Sioux and Cheyenne agencies, backed by soldiers, disarmed and unhorsed Indians returning to the reservations for the winter. Further afield, the army's logistical and personnel systems amassed material and manpower to support Doane, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry, and all the other regiments to campaign against the remaining Sioux or Cheyenne resistors in the coming spring.<sup>295</sup>

Lieutenant Doane met Colonel Miles shortly after the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry arrived to reinforce General Terry's command following the Custer disaster. G.C. Doane the explorer, apparently made a favorable impression on Colonel Miles, the innovative and driven field commander. Their relationship would see Lieutenant Doane assigned to command Crow scouts for the colonel during the 1877 phase of the campaign and, later, the campaign against the Nez Percé.<sup>296</sup>

On April 5, 1877, Major Brisbin received instructions from Colonel Miles to recruit Crow men as scouts for continuation of the Sioux campaign. Miles' instructions stated, "I wish all [the Indians] that can be brought down to move in concert with your command. You had better send an Officer—Lieut Doane—let him enlist seventy (70) with La Forge and take as many others as will go as allies...those not enlisted can be supplied ammunition and food."<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> Post Returns for November 1876 to March 1877 Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Keogh Post Return," 6–14; Sherman in United States, *ARSW 1876*, 1:37; Nelson Miles in United States, *ARSW 1877*, 1:492–97; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 273–75; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 54–55 Miles and his men found and fought Sitting Bull's band twice in October 1876 and again in December driving them to seek refuge in Canada, In January 1877, Miles and his men accepted a challenge posed by Crazy Horse's band meeting them in battle on the 8th along the Tongue River. Although the battle was tactically indecisive, Crazy Horse's band never fought again.

<sup>296</sup> Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 62; Ross, *First to Arrive*, 81.

<sup>297</sup> Nelson A. Miles to James S. Brisbin, "Letter of Instructions," dated Headquarters Yellowstone Command, Cantonment on Tongue River, April 5, 1877, "Doane Papers" Box 2, File 6; Thomas Leforge was a white man from Ohio who joined the Crow tribe through marriage. He was employed as an interpreter at the Crow Agency and served in that capacity for Crow scout detachments throughout the Great Sioux War. See Leforge, *Memoirs of a White Crow Indian*, vi–viii. Colonel Miles understood that providing food and ammunition would make a favorable impression upon the Crow.

Brisbin's headquarters, in turn, issued Special Order No. 6 on April 12, directing "1st Lieut G.C. Doane will at once proceed to the Crow Agency, M.T. for the purpose of securing Indian Scouts and conducting them to the Cantonment."<sup>298</sup>

Miles' composed instructions for Major Brisbin and Doane on April 5. In the note to Doane, Miles explained, in a collegial tone, the instructions given to Brisbin and set his initial expectations for the lieutenant's role in command of scouts. Miles wrote "as you come down you can make a good scout up the Little Big Horn, and down the Rosebud, but will have to be as expeditious as possible, as I wish the whole command here on the arrival of the first boat with grain."<sup>299</sup> Miles would send similar messages to Doane on April 19<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> suggesting locations for Crow scouts to operate and urging "rapid" action. Miles's expectations were high and proved unrealistic for Doane to achieve as he began his mission.

Lieutenant Doane's dispatching of Crow scouts and mobilization of the entire tribe would ultimately assist Colonel Miles efforts against the Sioux and Cheyenne. Colonel Miles deployed his command along the Yellowstone with the intent to deny Sitting Bull's band, now in Canada, from gaining access to any of the Sioux or Cheyenne bands located on the reservations in Dakota Territory. Miles also directed columns of soldier to patrol the unceded territory to deny Sioux and Cheyenne the freedom to hunt buffalo and other animals. According to General Terry, Miles was aided in this final phase of the campaign by "a force of four hundred friendly Crow Indians [that] was organized, under Lieutenant Doane, of the Second Cavalry."<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> Special Field Order No.6 (extract), dated Headquarters Battalion 2nd Cavalry, in camp on Yellowstone, April 12, 1877, "Doane Papers" Box 2, File 6.

<sup>299</sup> Miles to Doane, "Letter of Instructions," April 5, 1877 "Doane Papers" Box 2, File 6.

<sup>300</sup> Brigadier General Alfred Terry, Headquarters Department of the Dakota, November 12, 1877 in United States, *ARSW 1877*, 1:499.

Doane's assignment pleased him, especially because he reported directly to Colonel Miles. That command arrangement worked well for Doane since it appears his relationship with Major Brisbin had fully blossomed into a mutual dislike. Gustavus found himself further alienated from his commander as the assignment progressed but in the near term that was of small consequence. The orders from his battalion also assigned four men to accompany him on his new mission. Three of those men —Sergeant Server, and Privates Applegate and White—had attempted the Snake River with Doane. The assignment afforded Gustavus the opportunity to act independently while leading his now regular band of hand-picked men on another adventure. What could be better?<sup>301</sup>

The soldiers with Doane reciprocated the lieutenant's confidence in them. Fred Server arrived at Fort Ellis in 1873 and had participated in each of Doane's explorations beginning with the Judith Basin in December of that year.<sup>302</sup> William White summarized Doane's manner and character:

The language he used was not delicate. His manner of speech was loud, rough, slow, and drawling. Some of the more polished officers thought of him as uncouth. But it seemed his ample stock of native common sense and his utterly honest and brave heart more than compensated for all deficiencies in mental elegance. Leading some small band of scouting or exploring men—his favorite kind of military duty—he always shared with his men every hardship, never claimed any special provision for his personal comfort, mingled with and conversed with his followers as human equals. Yet, no enlisted man ever forgot that Doane was boss. Or, if any one of them did forget momentarily he was shocked by a prompt reminder.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> Doane to Post Adjutant Fort Ellis, dated Crow Agency, May 22, 1877, "Doane Papers" Box 2, File 7; AAG, "Special Field Orders No. 6, Headquarters Battalion 2nd Cavalry" in Doane Papers Box 2, File 6; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 65; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 134–35.

<sup>302</sup> Ross, *First to Arrive*, 18, 197; Ross based his work on Server's field diary that he kept throughout his decade of service 1876-1877. Eight of Server's adventures with Doane are identified in this work.

<sup>303</sup> White, *Custer, Cavalry & Crows*, 38.

White also remembered that Doane “saved a lot of red-tape exactitude” in his duties, but unlike some officers or civilians who avoided accountability and bureaucratic procedures there was “never heard any insinuation of corrupt intent on his part. Universally, it was known he was not that kind of man.”<sup>304</sup> Lieutenant Doane also abstained from drinking alcohol. His example surely influenced Server and White’s decision to join Lincoln Lodge No. 40 of the Independent Order of the Good Templars, a secret fraternal temperance society hosted on Fort Ellis.<sup>305</sup> Even Thomas LaForge, the interpreter that Colonel Miles sent ahead of Doane to the Crow agency, recognized the lieutenant was different than the other officers, recalling that he “appeared not to know the feeling of fear under any circumstances, so the soldiers adored him.”<sup>306</sup>

Lieutenant Doane brought something more into his relationship with the Crow than what his soldiers saw in him. By 1877, several prominent Crow men had known him for years including Blackfoot, Iron Bull, Shot-in-the-Jaw, Pretty Lodge, Bear Wolf, and Old Crow. Three had accompanied Doane on some portion of his 1873 Judith Basin survey.<sup>307</sup> The chiefs knew he was a warrior, like themselves, and that he was one of the officers who led the attack on the Piegans in 1870. That attack slackened the Piegan threat to the Crow people much as it did for Montana settlers. The Sioux, like the Piegan, were now their mutual enemy. Doane’s

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<sup>304</sup> White, 35.

<sup>305</sup> Ross, *First to Arrive*, 20.

<sup>306</sup> Leforge, *Memoirs of a White Crow Indian*, 48, 209–11, 230, 280–81 In contrast to Doane, Leforge described Lieutenant Bradley, who commanded the Crow scouts in 1876, as “a clean and fine young man, held in respect...but it appeared to me he often interjected red-tape formality into situations where the contingencies of Indian warfare rendered the tedious procedure an actual hindrance to efficiency.” One example was Bradley having Leforge arrested for failing to inform him that he and the Crow scouts were leaving camp to chase Sioux raiders attacking a group of nearby soldiers. Leforge countered that reporting before departure would ensure the Sioux escaped unscathed. Bradley remained adamant Leforge and the scouts were wrong in not following procedures. Indian scouts clearly recognized differences in experience, personalities, and attributes of officers.

<sup>307</sup> Gustavus C. Doane, Judith Basin Report, “Doane Papers,” 7-8, Box 6, File 7.

participation in the Marias River massacre laid the foundation for his authority to recruit and command Crow scouts.

Gustavus began his efforts to bring the Crow into the campaign with high expectations. He arrived at the tribe's agency on April 16, 1877. The next day he sent a request for 12,000 rations and 30 boxes of ammunition to Lieutenant Charles A. Worden, the Fort Ellis acting Post Adjutant. Doane's instructions for the rations be sent "exclusive of meats," with flour but "no hard bread" and to "please sell the vinegar and enough soap to purchase yeast powder" speaks to his practical nature. His insistence that circumstances "necessitate the utmost speed in getting the supplies here" proved he was also thinking wishfully.<sup>308</sup>

For Doane the reality of communicating with, motivating, supplying, and shepherding Crow warriors proved much harder and took much longer than he expected. That reality included factors such an unexpectedly late winter storm system that impeded travel across western Montana, dependence on communications and supplies that traveled across hundreds of miles at the pace of a horse, the inherent delays of bureaucratic procedures, and a contractor-dependent logistical system just for starters. Highlighting this reality on April 27, Lieutenant Worden informed Doane by dispatch that his requested supplies departed by bull train the day before after having been delayed by a snowstorm. Worden estimated the supply train would arrive in ten days. The supplies did not reach Doane until May 16, twenty-one days later, a full month after his original request.<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> Doane to Lieutenant Baird, Post Adjutant Cantonment on Tongue River, dated Crow Agency, May 22, 1877, in "Doane Papers," 1, Box 2, File 7; Doane to Lt Charles A. Worden, Acting AAG and ACS, Fort Ellis, dated Crow Agency, April 17, 1877, "Doane Papers" Box 2, File 6, April 1877.

<sup>309</sup> Gordon to Doane, dated Fort Ellis, April 27, 1877 in "Doane Papers," Box 2, File 6; Doane to Baird, dated May 22, 1877, "Doane Papers," 2, Box 2, File 7.

Doane would learn soon after his arrival at the agency that the Crow were reticent to enlist as scouts for Miles. The previous December, Crow scouts serving the Yellowstone Command surprised and killed a party of Cheyenne peace emissaries coming to speak with Miles. The colonel's reaction was swift and angry; the responsible warriors and many of the other one-hundred Crow scouts fled the cantonment. Miles had the weapons, equipment, and property of the Crow detachment seized. The incident was a dishonor to the tribe and the leaders negotiating with Doane must have been concerned whether the tribe would be forgiven by Miles.<sup>310</sup>

Apparently Doane was able to address the tribal leaders concerns. After initial negotiations that focused on provisions and annuities, the tribe agreed to send a large war party out to hunt Sioux. In return, Doane agreed to provide ammunition and provisions and to remain with the main village as it moved throughout the buffalo hunting season. The war party characterized much of the Crow effort for Miles' command that summer. Doane reported the warriors "penetrated as far as the Little Missouri [River]" in the Dakota Territory and searched "all along the foot of Bighorn and Wolf Mtns but found no Sioux."<sup>311</sup> The war party rode deep into the unceded territory where they expected to encounter hundreds of Sioux and Cheyenne Indians to raid. The movement achieved little for the warriors but signaled the dramatic change in control over the region to Miles and General Terry. The ride and Doane's agreement to move with the main village also demonstrated the tribe's determination to participate in the campaign on their own terms.

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<sup>310</sup> Leforge, *Memoirs of a White Crow Indian*, 270.

<sup>311</sup> Doane to Baird, dated May 22, 1877, "Doane Papers," 3, Box 2, File 7.

Doane received a steady, but belated, stream of correspondence from Miles' Yellowstone Command. On April 29, Lt G.H. Baird, the command's Adjutant, sent a message informing Doane that Colonel Miles would depart the cantonment the next day leading a column "to the Head Waters of the Rosebud and Tongue River...should the Crows desire to go to that region to hunt the Sioux they can keep in that direction and join the command but under no circumstances molest or interfere with the Indians who have surrendered given up their arms and ponies and are now at this place."<sup>312</sup> Miles wrote Doane on May 15, "this command attacked and destroyed on the 7<sup>th</sup> instant, a village of fifty one (51) lodges, situated on an eastern affluent of the Rosebud...nearly all the ponies were captured, several Indians—including the Chief, Lame Deer, and Head Soldier, Iron Star, were left dead on the field, and the band thoroughly routed. Should any of the Crows desire to operate with the troops in waging war against the hostile Sioux, their best opportunity would be to join the command now."<sup>313</sup> Lt Baird's May 23 message on behalf of Miles urged Doane to have scouts join Captain Ball's command "as speedily as possible...to clear the country or discover any camp that may be south of the Yellowstone" after which "we can turn our attention northward."<sup>314</sup>

For Doane, developing the habit of effectively communicating with the Crow and, in turn, translating their needs and goals into action of value to Miles' during the campaign proved the greatest challenge to overcome. The lieutenant was forced to reconcile his general disdain for Indian culture. At points in his correspondence he characterized the Crow as "like little children

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<sup>312</sup> Baird to Doane, April 29, 1877, "Doane Papers" Box 2, File 6.

<sup>313</sup> Miles to Doane, "Letter of Instructions," dated Cantonment on Tongue River, May 15, 1877, "Doane Papers" Box 2, File 7; Colonel Nelson A. Miles to AAG Department of Dakota, dated Cantonment at Tongue River, May 16, 1877 found in United States, *ARSW 1877*, 1:498.

<sup>314</sup> Baird to Doane, May 23, 1877, "Doane Papers" Box 2, File 7.

and cannot understand matters,” that “draws terribly on one’s patience” as well as “stupid” because “they believe nothing they do not see.”<sup>315</sup> For Doane, self-possessed and lacking empathy, it took considerable humility to reframe his thinking and method of communicating with both the Crow leaders and Colonel Miles. His May 22 correspondence includes a request for a return of “all the property belonging to the Crows” confiscated in December as well as authority to utilize the river steamers to transport the tribe across the Bighorn River.

Doane’s June 22 correspondence to Lt Baird further reflects the shift in his sense of himself in relationship to the Crow tribe. Doane reported that when presented a collection of fifty-eight buffalo robes during a meeting with the principal leaders of the tribe that he had “amazed” the chiefs by accepting “them on behalf of the ‘Great Father’” explaining “that I could not accept them to convert to my own use and benefit, but would sell them” and “apply the proceeds to the purchase of sugar and matches which I would then give to the Crows by lodges so that the poor might be benefited equally with the rich.” According to Doane his declaration stood in contrast to the BIA agents who routinely personally profited from their interaction with the tribe. He concluded that the chiefs must have thought “I was a greater fool than they had taken me for” because “if pecuniary gain were my object I could have made a thousand dollars a month...without apparently injuring their cause” since “the opportunity has been wonderful.”<sup>316</sup> Doane had learned to communicate Miles’ objectives to the Crow leaders and then negotiate with them to take actions in support of those goals. It just took weeks and months to achieve that clarity.

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<sup>315</sup> Doane to Baird, May 22, 1877, “Doane Papers,” 4; Doane to Baird, June 13, 1877, “Doane Papers,” 2, 4; Box 2, File 8; On Doane’s attitudes towards the Crow see Doane to Miles, June 13, 1877 in “Doane Papers,” Box 8, File 8; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 135, 137, 156.

<sup>316</sup> Doane to Baird, June 22, 1877, in “Doane Papers,” Box 2, File 8.



On June 10, Doane organized and facilitated a noteworthy meeting of the Crow leaders. The topic of discussion was “a proposed adoption of the surrendered Sioux, Cheyenne and other Indians lately hostile, now at Tongue River Cantonment.”<sup>317</sup> By Doane’s tally, forty-seven of the principal chiefs representing all but two-hundred members of the Mountain and River Crow were present. The lieutenant submitted to the group that almost three hundred Indians had surrendered with their families to Colonel Miles at Tongue River. Of the forty warriors among the prisoners many had enlisted as scouts to guide Miles’ regiments (in the absence of Crow scouts). As scouts, some had participated in combat against their former comrades, including the recent Lame Deer fight in which they played prominent roles. According to Doane, “they have told on their own people, who are fighting us, and are afraid they will be killed if they return to their agencies” and “they desire to [now] make peace with the Crows.” Doane recorded Chief Blackfoot as saying, we “have been going to war to get Sioux for our tribe. You are going to give us some. That is good. I think they will come and join us and eat Buffalo with us.”<sup>318</sup> The chiefs voted in favor of adoption. The Sioux and Cheyenne remained at Tongue River but the council discussion clearly demonstrated the power of the army to break the social cohesion of a targeted people and the Crow willingness to take advantage of the results.<sup>319</sup>

Doane ultimately engaged the Crow to perform three principal activities to enable Terry and Miles’ campaign plan: occupation, hunting, and guiding. By summer, the tribe was camping at prime hunting locations along the Yellowstone and its tributaries. Hunting parties increased the territory that the tribe physically controlled, ensuring no resisting Indians prospered from the

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<sup>317</sup> Doane to Miles, “Proceedings of Council of Crow Chiefs, a Certified Report,” dated June 10, 1877, “Doane Papers,” 1, Box 2, File 8.

<sup>318</sup> Doane to Miles, “Proceedings” dated June 10, 1877, “Doane Papers,” 2, Box 2, File 8.

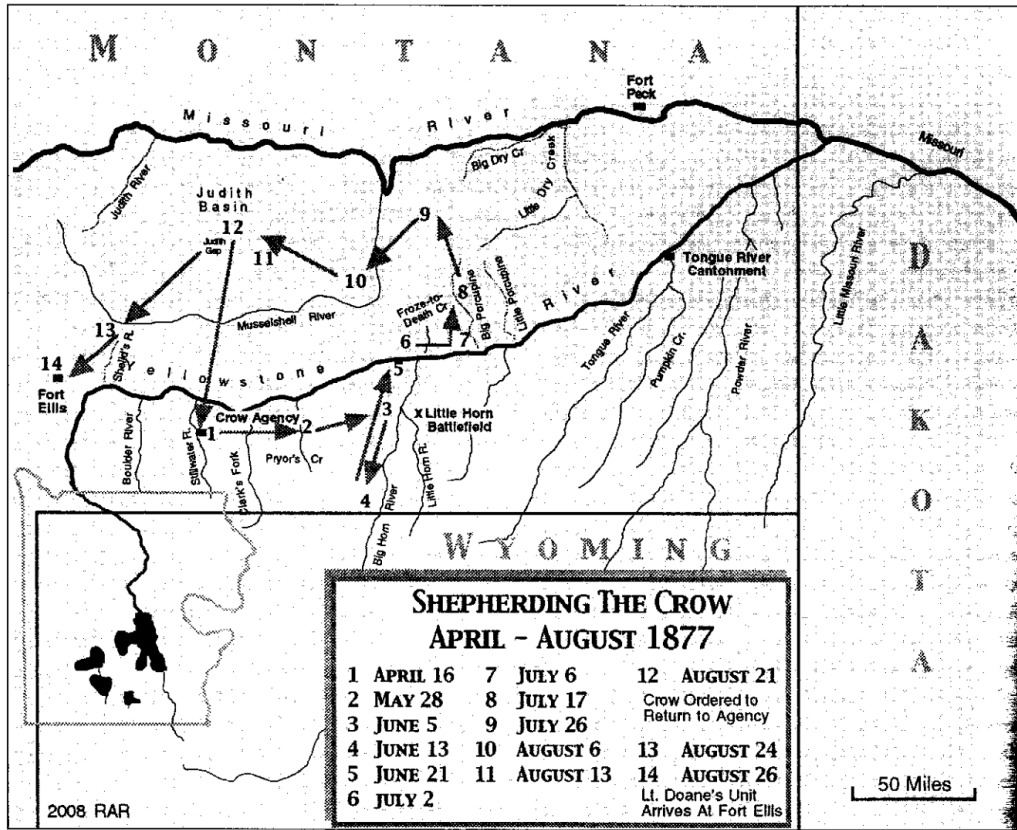
<sup>319</sup> Ross, *First to Arrive*, 121–22.

buffalo herds. The lieutenant was also dispatching parties of Crow to scout for and guide the movements of the Yellowstone Command. Doane's scouts supported the two most significant troop movements of the season. On July 27, Doane dispatched seventy Crow scouts to join Major Henry M. Lazelle's command scouring eastern Montana for resisters. Two days later "some 60 more warriors proceeded down the river in the steamer Fanchon to join Major Brisbin's command, singing their war songs and clashing their arms as they went."<sup>320</sup> Brisbin and his cavalry joined with the Lazelle to pursue the remnants of Lame Deer's band in the last major action of the campaign. Brisbin reported, "We could not overhaul the Indians, but compelled them to drop their lodges and camp-fixtures, many of their ponies, and forced them to go into the Red Cloud agency [Dakota Territory] and surrender. This was one of the hardest marches I ever made, and I doubt if a harder one has ever been made." If not for the Crow scouts, Brisbin and his men would probably not have been able to find or follow their quarry.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> Major George Gibson, Commanding Cantonment, Headquarters Cantonment at Tongue River, Montana, October 1, 1877 in United States, *ARSW 1877*, 1:545.

<sup>321</sup> Major H.M. Lazelle, "Reconnaissance in Country East of Powder River," dated Headquarters Battalion First Infantry, Camp on Yellowstone River, September 5, 1877, in United States, *ARSW 1877*; Major James A. Brisbin, Report, dated Fort Ellis, October 26, 1877, in United States, 1:552; Hedren, *Great Sioux War Orders of Battle*, 72–73, 156. Hedren states the Indians surrendered at the Spotted Tail Agency. Ross, *First to Arrive*, 122.



Reproduced from *First to Arrive on Custer's Battlefield* by Rickard A. Ross, p.122 by permission of Paragon Press. Copyright 2010 by Rickard A. Ross.

Doane's role as commander of scouts represented a strategic capability for the army. The lieutenant, his four-man detachment, eighteen-thousand rations, and seventy-thousand rounds of metallic cartridge ammunition proved a cost-effective means to subjugate resisters and consolidate federal authority over the northern Plains. The Crow added as many as seven hundred additional male combatants into the forces opposing the Sioux and Cheyenne. In military terms, the tribe fielded more manpower than a cavalry regiment. Those men were also skilled combatants who conducted reconnaissance and screening operations for the army across a broad area. Even if not occupying the optimal locations envisioned by Colonel Miles, for a modicum of resources, the Crow's presence and preparedness for war and raiding augmented the overall effort to deny the few remaining Sioux and Cheyenne freedom of movement in the prime

buffalo hunting range. This was the reality of leveraging the indigenous populations to achieve the federal government's goal of subduing recalcitrant tribes.<sup>322</sup>

As Lieutenant Doane and other officers orchestrated the final maneuvers to complete the subjugation of the Sioux, a new conflict was emerging. On June 17, 1877, several bands of the Nez Percé tribe soundly defeated an attack on their village by soldiers and militiamen at White Bird Canyon in Idaho Territory. The ensuing three-month long campaign was unusual for the Indian Wars. From that first battle until the campaign's end at the battle of the Bears Paw Mountains, Montana Territory, the resisting Nez Percé fought much more collectively under the guidance of their leaders than other Indians who resisted consolidation. In several of their battles the Nez Percé proved themselves tactically superior to their army opponents.

Most unusual of all, the Nez Percé chose to flee their homeland in search of allies and sanctuary. The tribe traveled nearly twelve-hundred miles, crossing the Rocky Mountains and many of the army's administrative boundaries in the process. The physical obstacles proved challenging to all involved, while the administrative boundaries complicated the response of the various commands responsible for those areas. Despite the many successes they achieved in battles, the Nez Percé were bound to suffer terribly as the path they chose to follow took them into the greatest concentration of soldiers on the continent. And with the Sioux essentially subjugated, those soldiers were now available to apply themselves against the Nez Percé.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> For the benefit of comparison, a fully manned cavalry regiment of 529 officers and men cost approximately \$15,408 per month in pay and rations alone while the rations, ammunition, and scout pay issued to the Crow over their six months working with Doane cost the government \$12,931. See United States. Adjutant General, *Official Army Register for 1876* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1876), 261C, <http://archive.org/details/officialarmyregi1876unit>; Lt G.C. Doane, Report of Ammunition Expended by Crow Indian Scouts in the year 1877 under authority of the Commanding Officer, District of the Yellowstone, "Doane Papers," Box 3, Files 12.

<sup>323</sup> The Nez Perce historically maintained peaceful relations with the United States since the passage of Lewis and Clark's expedition in 1803-1804. For the story of Nez Perce grievances that triggered violent resistance and the ensuing campaign see Mark Herbert Brown, *The Flight of the Nez Perce* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press,

The campaign against the Nez Percé was the payoff for Doane's Indian scouting experience. He, his soldiers, and the Crow achieved two useful objectives during the campaign. The first was simply the Crow tribe not assisting the Nez Percé. The second was a small military demonstration at the northern exit from Yellowstone National Park. Both benefited the army while disadvantaging the Nez Percé. The path leading to both these objectives was laid during the Sioux campaign.

The Nez Percé presented Doane and his comrades a different challenge than the Sioux. While the ongoing Sioux campaign was a grinding campaign of exhaustion, the Nez Percé War proved a fast-paced campaign of pursuit. It was the breaking of Sioux resistance, though, that ensured the army regiments in Montana were able to react quickly to the arrival of the Nez Percé. The soldiers in the district of Montana were already mobilized, supplied, and well-conditioned to working in the field. Their tactics and procedures were also ingrained from their long slog against the Sioux.

Lieutenant Doane and the Crow, too, were ready to perform their parts in the campaign. By the end of July, the two parties were located in the Buffalo range north of the Yellowstone and settled into a routine of hunting, scouting, and moving the camp weekly. This routine was mutually beneficial to the Crow, who were enjoying a bountiful, unhindered hunting season, and Miles' command, who were benefiting from the Crow presence that ensured any large movement of Sioux or Cheyenne resisters in central Montana would not go unchallenged.

The most important preparation Doane completed before the arrival of the Nez Percé, was signaling the army's commitment to manifest their alliance with the Crow. The benefits of

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1982); Jerome A Greene, *Nez Perce Summer, 1877: The U.S. Army and the Nee-Me-Poo Crisis* (Helena, Mont.: Montana Historical Society Press, 2000); West, *The Last Indian War*.

Doane's efforts to supply the tribe, with arms, ammunition, rations, and river transportation reinforced the tribe's general policy of cooperating with the army. Additionally, he strengthened relationships with Crow leaders. Doane's most important relationship was with Iron Bull, one of the three leaders of the Mountain Crow division of the tribe. William White observed that "Doane lived at Iron Bull's lodge...the most influential of the chiefs among us" and "a strong factor in keeping the Crows on friendly terms with the whites" whose "influence was increased when the white man soldier chief made his abiding place at this particular lodge." White assumed that "Doane may have considered it good policy to tie himself thus intimately with the most important chief." The relationship paid dividends since "Iron Bull usually supported whatever proposition Doane made."<sup>324</sup>

The great obstacle to Doane and the army rapidly subduing the Nez Percé continued to be effective communication among the various columns. Doane's role in directly confronting the Nez Percé would be limited due to this issue. The telegraph linked many of the forts and towns together for rapid communications, but the commanders remained at the mercy of communications moving at the pace of man or horse once they were in the field. This challenge was exasperated because the campaign unfolded in the Department of the Columbia under the command of Brigadier General Oliver O. Howard. When the Nez Percé crossed the Bitterroot Mountains in August, 1877, they entered General Terry's Department of the Dakota.<sup>325</sup>

This put the resources and the generals of two departments into the race to subdue the

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<sup>324</sup> White, *Custer, Cavalry & Crows*, 128–29; Keith Alger, *The Crow and the Eagle: A Tribal History from Lewis & Clark to Custer* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, 1993), 191–92.

<sup>325</sup> Colonel Miles' Yellowstone Command at the time was experimenting with the heliograph system to transmit message in 15 minutes from the Tongue River Cantonment to the newly established Bighorn Post (to be renamed Fort Custer). The system would play a far more significant role in Arizona during the final stage of the Geronimo campaign in 1886.

tribe. This combined effort proved successful against the Nez Percé but the compounded challenge of communication ensured the distribution and coordination of troops was terribly inefficient. General Howard and his soldiers remained on the Nez Percé trail throughout the entire campaign crossing much of the District of Montana in their pursuit. The difficulty for General Terry's regiments was anticipating the tribe's route across Montana Territory in time to move a force into their path that was large enough to stop and subdue them or delay them long enough for Howard to arrive.

By August, the Crow proved more obliging and responsive to Colonel Miles' direction channeled through Doane. Miles, who kept abreast of Howard's pursuit, anticipated the need to have forces ready to intercept the Nez Percé if they came into Montana. The colonel recognized the Judith Basin, rich in buffalo, as the right location to catch the Nez Percé. The Crow interest in following the buffalo herd for hunting and Miles' intention to have a force occupy Judith Basin coincided. On August 2, Miles assigned Lieutenant Doane command of a 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry company and further ordered him to move them with the tribe to "the vicinity of the Musselshell River...scouting thoroughly the country south of the Missouri River...keeping yourself informed of any movements of hostile Indians that may be made north of the Missouri."<sup>326</sup> On August 3, Miles provided more explicit instructions to Doane, writing "you will use every effort to intercept, capture or destroy the Nez Percés Band...who will doubtless, if defeated [by Howard's command], endeavor to retreat and take refuge in the Judith Basin or vicinity."<sup>327</sup>

Lieutenant Doane demonstrated a clear understanding of what was needed to implement

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<sup>326</sup> Special Order.96, dated Cantonment on the Tongue River, August 2, 1877, "Doane Papers," Box 2, File 10 The order directed Lt DeRudio and Company E to report to Doane. Previously they were guarding the main Crow village.

<sup>327</sup> Col Nelson Miles to Lt G.C. Doane, August 3, 1877 "Doane Papers," Box 2, File 10.

Miles' instructions. The same day he received Miles' note he forwarded a request for additional rations and ammunition to be landed at Carroll's Landing along the route he anticipated following if pursuit of the Nez Percé was required north of Judith Basin. Doane explained:

Owing to the uncertainty of all Indian movement I am unable to exactly state what minor movements can be carried into effect but shall endeavor to keep the present camp of 258 lodges together...scouting along the Missouri and across the track of the Oregon [Nez Percé] Indian lines of approaching the Buffalo range and keeping such general outlook as shall I hope be of assistance without interfering with the main objects as expressed in instructions received.<sup>328</sup>

Lieutenant Hugh L. Scott, one of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry officers now accompanying Doane, recollected that "he [Doane] knew that country and the habits of the Indians so well that he could predict everything they did."<sup>329</sup>

By August 6, Doane, Iron Bull, and the tribe were camped in Judith Basin. By August 13, the village occupied the Judith Gap. The gap bisected the primary north-south movement corridor in central Montana. While in the gap, Doane received instructions forwarded from Colonel Gibbon who was then convalescing from a wound he received on August 9 during a battle with the Nez Perce at Big Hole, Montana. Gibbon's instructions directed Doane and the Crow scouts to occupy Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River where the colonel anticipated the Nez Percés would exit Yellowstone park. Even though Doane was under Colonel Miles' command, he chose to follow Gibbon's instructions. Doane informed Iron Bull and the other chiefs of the news. He called for warriors to accompany him to Clarks Fork and then told the chiefs to move the main Crow camp and the families back to their agency.<sup>330</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> Doane to Baird, AAAG Yellowstone Command, August 3, 1877, "Doane Papers," Box 2, File 10.

<sup>329</sup> Scott, *Some Memories of a Soldier.*, 60.

<sup>330</sup> Doane to Baird, August 3, 1877, "Doane Papers"; Baird to Doane, August 11, 1877, "Doane Papers," Box 2, File 10.; Ross, *First to Arrive*, 122 The Nez Percé passed through Judith Gap on September 21, 1877, one month after Doane and the Crow departed.



Doane departed Judith Gap on August 21, with his men, the cavalry company, and one hundred Crow warriors. After picking up supplies at Fort Ellis, “Lieutenant Doane, in obedience to his orders [from Gibbon], proceeded with his command up the Yellowstone” providing assistance to fleeing civilians along the way.<sup>331</sup> Doane and his command entered Yellowstone Park on August 30. The next day they encountered and chased a group of eighteen Nez Percés raiders scouting the Yellowstone River from the opposite direction. Little fighting was done, but the brief encounter made an impact. According to Lieutenant Scott, “the little chase...had momentous consequences we little dreamed of and surely never intended, since with us it was mostly a lark.” Scott claims that Chief Joseph later told him that his tribe “intended to follow the Yellowstone Valley, [out of the park] leaving the mountains where the river turns northeast...but they diverted by seeing us in front...the Nez Percés had enough to think about with General Howard on their trail, and they did not wish to encounter any more troops on their front, with the risk of being caught between two forces.”<sup>332</sup>

On September 2, Doane intended to join and support Howard’s command further up the Yellowstone River. He was, though, intercepted by Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Gilbert, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry, accompanied by another company of cavalry. Gilbert, waving instructions he had solicited directly from General Sherman, took command of Doane, his soldiers, and scouts. Against Doane’s advice and pleading, Gilbert marched the command twelve miles backwards on their trail and then “deflected to the westward, and after passing through a very rough and

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<sup>331</sup> Gibbon in United States, *ARSW 1877*, 1:506.

<sup>332</sup> Doane to General O.O. Howard, September 1, 1877 “Doane Papers,” Box 2, File 10; Scott, *Some Memories of a Soldier.*, 64; William L. Lang, “Where Did the Nez Percés Go in Yellowstone in 1877?,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 40, no. 1 (1990): 24.

difficult country struck the trail of General Howard's column in the Geyser Basin" four days later.<sup>333</sup> Doane had anticipated joining Howard in twenty-four hours. Gilbert got them eight days behind. The colonel then drove the command so mercilessly through the mountains that they were reduced from several hundred men and horses to only twenty-one, including Doane and Server. They never caught up with Howard.<sup>334</sup>

The Nez Percé were long gone on September 11, when Doane, Server, and Gilbert stumbled out the east side of Yellowstone Park along Clarks Fork River. Even in Doane's absence, the Crow continued to perform service of value to the army. Crow warriors individually and in groups arrived from their agency to join General Howard's command. They eventually outnumbered the Bannock scouts who accompanied the general from Idaho. On September 14, Colonel Sturgis, while pursuing the Nez Percé north of the Judith Gap, was happily surprised by the arrival of "a considerable number of Crow Indians gaudily arrayed in war costume" who he sent ahead to "overtake the enemy" and "rendered good service" by pushing the Nez Percé "so rapidly as to force the abandonment of over 400 more ponies, and kept up a lively skirmish with their rearguard killing five of them during the day."<sup>335</sup> Doane noted the Crow loyalty in his September 28 report to Miles' Yellowstone Command, stating that almost all the Crows had "gotten [to the Agency] in time to prevent the Nez Percés meeting them on the Musselshell, the result of which might have been doubtful. As it is however they have done quite well having

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<sup>333</sup> Ross, *First to Arrive*, 134.

<sup>334</sup> Gilbert to Doane, Hendersons Ranch, September 2, 1877; Gilbeet to Doane, Fort Ellis, M.T. September 21, 1877; Doane to Baird, Fort ELLis, September 28, 1877 "Doane Papers," Box 2, File 10.

<sup>335</sup> Colonel Samuel D. Sturgis, Commander 7th Cavalry, to Lieutenant Baird, AAAG, Cantonment on the Tongue River, in United States, *ARSW 1877*, 1:512.

taken several scalps and stolen a good many ponies. Their loyalty is assured.”<sup>336</sup>

On September 17, Colonel Miles was ordered to join the effort. Miles led a column of cavalry, mounted infantry, and artillery on a course to intercept the Nez Percé, while Doane, his scouts, and men were winding down from their fruitless four-hundred-mile march with Gilbert. On September 30, Miles and his command attacked the exhausted Nez Percé just 30 miles south of the Canadian border along the Snake River near the Bears Paw Mountains in Montana. After their initial assault was thwarted the command did their best to surround the Indians. The campaign ended on October 5, 1877, when Joseph, the remaining chief, negotiated surrender terms and then gave up his rifle to Colonel Miles. The mission given Doane of ensuring the Nez Percé found no support from the Crow tribe proved more consequentially than any tactical action, the lieutenant could have performed.<sup>337</sup>

### **Outcome:**

Gustavus Doane’s story provides a window on the complexity of human interaction underlying the consolidation of federal authority over the northern Plains. Doane’s work proved valuable. The significance of his effort was demonstrated by the continuous presence of the Crow tribe in the Montana buffalo hunting grounds and the breadth of ground the Crow warriors covered acting independently and as scouts in conjunction with soldiers. Doane provides an example of how officers sought to influence Indians to serve as scouts and then act in ways advantageous to the Army. He also demonstrates those means were much more by negotiation

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<sup>336</sup> Doane to Baird, September 28, 1877 “Doane Papers” Box 2, File 11; Ross, *First to Arrive*, 136; Leforge, *Memoirs of a White Crow Indian*, 140.

<sup>337</sup> West, *The Last Indian War*, 244; Wooster, *The Military and the United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*, 175–78; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 260–63.

than direction. By learning to negotiate, Doane facilitated the process of consolidating federal authority through the scouts.<sup>338</sup>

The Sioux, Cheyenne, and later the Nez Percé tribes suffered from their loss of freedom to hunt or rest in the lands that sustained them. This method of area denial was a perfectly suited and cost-effective means to complement the campaign strategy to disrupt the tribe's societal rhythms. Both campaigns were ultimately concluded on terms dictated by the federal government. Those terms resulted in an end to collective violent resistance to settlement and development on the northern Plains that further facilitated the integration of the region into the social, economic, and political systems of the United States.

Lieutenant Doane's roles in the campaigns, including leading soldiers, guiding scouts, and influencing the Crow tribe's annual migration route, proved valuable components of army activities which paved the way for the social and economic order that replaced the migratory lifestyle common on the northern Plains before 1870. This new order changed the established power structure among the Indian tribes of the northern Plains. The Crow, allied with the US Army, ascended in influence over the Sioux and Cheyenne, who resisted federal authority. Today, as debate over the legacy of the Marias River massacre, place names within Yellowstone National Park, and the role of Indian tribes in the process of consolidation continues, Doane's

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<sup>338</sup> Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 54–55; Leforge, *Memoirs of a White Crow Indian*, 138; Bonney and Bonney, *Battle Drums and Geysers*, 68–79; West, *The Last Indian War*, 250 Historian Elliott West states Doane was just a white officer holding “a familiar trump card”—the offer of guns and horses—or a combination of the two; Scott, *Yellowstone Denied*, 132–37, 177, 215 According to Scott, Doane never had the trust and confidence of the Crow, nor did he care what Indians thought of him. Scott is probably correct the Crow did not trust Doane as they would a member or adopted member of their tribe. He fails, though, to acknowledge the Crow were active agents in shaping their relationship with the army, federal government, and territorial officials. The Crow leaders and their people chose to interact with Doane because they recognized what he was offering. For everything they did, or did not do, they received or at least expected to achieve an outcome of benefit to them collectively or individually. In this regard, Doane was likely looked on as most agents of the federal government - an opportunity to advance the interests of the Crow people. In that setting, one can assume the Crow had little or no expectations to have an affinity for any federal representative.

story illuminates the interplay between the army and Indians that led to the consolidation of federal authority over the trans-Mississippi West.<sup>339</sup>

Doane's correspondence with Colonel Miles and other officers during the campaign is revelatory. Read literally, their dialogue demonstrates the officer's initial unrealistic expectations and disappointment in Crow support for Miles' combat formations. The same correspondence read in light of the ongoing campaign, though, reveals the complexity of mobilizing the tribe and, importantly, the dramatic shift in fortunes of the northern Plains tribes as the army advanced federal control and authority over the region.

The Crow people and their leaders appear to have been pragmatists. Given their powerful Indian enemies and the unknown future they confronted, what Doane offered advanced their interests. The Crow chiefs qualified their participation in the campaign as a means to manipulate the outcomes to serve their interests. This line of reasoning explains Gustavus Doane's experience with the Crow during both campaigns. Many of the Crow men were ambivalent towards service with the army but many still accompanied the lieutenant in the campaigns to subjugate the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Nez Percé under the yoke of federal authority.

As Doane's relationship developed with the Crow, his actions appear to have made him recognizable in their own culture. The Crow response to the lieutenant's request is comparable to the response they would have toward one of their own war chiefs. Doane presented opportunities to war against worthy adversaries with all the potential for social advancement and material rewards. A few chose to follow the lieutenant at the time the opportunity was presented, while others decided to participate later, and still others chose not to accompany Doane or take part in

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<sup>339</sup> Osbourne, "Calls for Mount Doane Rename"; Associated Press, "Yellowstone Mountain That Honored Massacre Leader Renamed"; David D. Smits, "Indian Scouts and Indian Allies in the Frontier Army," in *Major Problems in American Indian History Documents and Essays*, ed. Albert L. Hurtado and Peter Iverson, 2nd ed. (Boston; New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001), 331–32; Van de Logt, *War Party in Blue*, 7, 246.

any direct action against either the Sioux or the Nez Percé. Such an array of responses by Indian men to a war chief's admonitions to go war or raid appears common. We can see that even if Doane were Crow, he could not and would not expect unquestioned compliance. Like Richard Pratt with tribes on the southern Plains, Doane represented the attributes of a war chief. He was just white and dressed in army blue.<sup>340</sup>

Historians' current interpretation of Gustavus Doane is heavily influenced by a view which characterizes frontier army activities to subdue tribes as unjust and therefore the soldiers who participated as acting outside of American societal parameters perpetrating unwarranted violence and, even, genocide against benevolent aboriginal societies. The documentary evidence indicates that Doane acted well within the professional standards of the army of his day, though. Further, his perceptions of Indians, Indian culture, and the future of Indian societies differed little from that of his peers and many Americans. He was no champion of Indian claims but certainly was more aware of the Indian societies and cultures than many officers, BIA agents, and much more so than the American populace and most of its elected or appointed government officials. Doane successfully accomplished his role to gain and employ Crow assistance for the army's 1877 campaigns on the northern Plains through his knowledge, pragmatism, persistence, and reputation.

The army shifted its focus to other regions following the subjugation of the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne. Commands campaigned in 1878 against the Bannock and 1879 against the Sheepeaters and Utes. It was the Warm Springs and Chiricahua Apache in the Southwest, though, that remained the greatest challenge for the army to subjugate. The army employed vast

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<sup>340</sup> Leforge, *Memoirs of a White Crow Indian*, 205–6; Betzinez, *I Fought with Geronimo*, 129–30; Goodwin, *Western Apache Raiding and Warfare*, 85; Ewers, *The Blackfeet*, 128–29; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 91–92, 95.

resources and manpower, including thousands of Indian scouts, over decades to finally subdue the Apache. Officers commanding scouts in the southwest found differences and similarities in their duties to what Pratt and Doane encountered. Charles Gatewood serves as a useful window onto that final chapter in the consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West.

## V. Charles Bare Gatewood: Keeping the Faith

*The scouts of one year would be turning the Territory topsy-turvy the next, and the officer commanding a company would be pursuing a party of ex-scouts with an assortment of ex-hostiles. They could be relied on provided due care was taken to make enlistments from those who had old scores to settle with the renegades.*<sup>341</sup>



Charles B Gatewood, USMA Class of 1877

Courtesy of the United States Military Academy, Special Collections and Archives

In 1886, Lieutenant Charles Gatewood proved the unlikely protector of the last group of Indians militarily resisting federal authority. Gatewood graduated from West Point in June 1877 and served with the 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment in the Southwest region from 1878 to 1886. There, he led Apache Indian scouts during campaigns to return hostile Apache to their reservations and, finally, end their defiance while also ensuring their survival.

Charles Gatewood provided future generations of Americans with two symbols. The first is the reconciliation of the post-Civil War officer corps. Gatewood, the son of a Confederate

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<sup>341</sup> Charles B Gatewood, *Lt. Charles Gatewood & His Apache Wars Memoir*, ed. Louis Kraft (Lincoln, Neb.; Chesham: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 24. Further cited as Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*.



soldier, joined the sons of Union soldiers, to reconstitute an officer corps dedicated to the nation over state or sectional differences. That officer corps then returned to the foundational purposes of the American army to defend the nation from external threat while simultaneously serving as the primary mechanism of the internal consolidation of federal authority. The second symbol Gatewood provides is represented by Geronimo, the Chiricahua Apache shaman. Gatewood would be a primary actor in protecting Geronimo during the period of the shaman's greatest vulnerability. Geronimo today symbolizes both resistance and conquest giving Americans a narrative that explains the chaos and costs of the Indian Wars of the trans-Mississippi West and the ensuing consolidation of federal authority over the region.

Gatewood's character and life trajectory prepared him well to deliver these symbols. As a child, he learned to adapt to the challenges posed by the sectional crisis, war, and reconstruction that transformed his family's way of life. He learned the scientific methods of war at the United States Military Academy at West Point. As an officer, Civil War veterans taught him warfighting. And finally, he learned the nuances of guerilla warfare from the Apaches, some who served with him as Army scouts and some that he pursued and fought. Gatewood's long association with Indian scouts gained him a reputation as an "Apache-man" among the officer corps.

His reputation also earned him a summons from Brigadier General Nelson Miles in July 1886, when the general needed to end the campaign against the band of Chiricahua Apache, led by Geronimo. Miles offered to reassign Gatewood to easier duty in return for leading the effort to find and negotiate with Geronimo and his band. The lieutenant did just that. He, his descendants, and contemporary historians claim sole credit to Gatewood for negotiating with Geronimo, but that role was shared with Kayitah and Martine, the Apache men who scouted for

his party. Gatewood contributed to the negotiation by effectively proposing to Geronimo and the other Chiricahua that there was an alternative to the total destruction of their band. His crucial role proved to be shepherding the Chiricahua through the threats that challenged their safe return to the United States from Mexico. Gatewood's role as their protector culminated the decades-long campaign for federal authority over the trans-Mississippi West. As a southern born officer who protected the last band of Chiricahua raiders, Geronimo chief among them, Gatewood gave America two of its enduring symbols of the post-Civil War era.

This chapter explores Charles Gatewood's experience as a shepherd for today's myth of the West. First, by considering Charles lineage and childhood to understand his early life influences. Followed by a review of his years at the United States Military Academy which reveals his institutional preparation to serve the nation. After his graduation the chapter examines the lieutenant's introduction to the trans-Mississippi West and the army's role in overseeing some Indian bands while warring against others. And finally, an examination of Charles Gatewood's campaign experiences that led him to be Geronimo's shepherd.

### **Youth: A Son of the South**

Charles Bare Gatewood was born on April 6, 1853 in Woodstock, Virginia, the fourth of six children born to John and Emily (Bare) Gatewood. The family had early roots in the region, settling in Shenandoah County at its founding in 1772. Gatewood men served in the Virginia legislature from 1782 until 1863, and Gatewood's grandfather, Charles Peter Gatewood, served as a lieutenant in the 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment Virginia Militia during the War of 1812. Gatewood's family

were slaveholders, politically engaged, and devotees of the southern culture of honor which valued integrity, loyalty, martial spirit, and had a contempt for cowardice.<sup>342</sup>

Gatewood's father, John, was a printer who came to prominence in 1848 as the editor and publisher of *The Tenth Legion*, a regional newspaper. In 1857, John Gatewood's neighbors elected him to represent Shenandoah County in the Virginia House of Delegates, where he deliberated the sectional crisis. John Gatewood supported secession, was reelected to the House after Virginia left the Union, and served until 1863.<sup>343</sup>

In 1861, John recruited a group of men in Woodstock and formed Company C, 33<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Volunteer Infantry Regiment. He had chosen violence to manifest his political and social ideals like so many other southern men. The regiment was assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, Army of the Shenandoah, under the command of Brigadier General Thomas J. Jackson. On July 21, 1861, just six weeks after departing Woodstock, the men of Company C, their regiment,

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<sup>342</sup> US Census Bureau, "1860 Census, Charles B Gatewood," in *1860 United States Federal Census [Woodstock, Shenandoah, Virginia]* (National Archives and Records Administration, 1860), 851, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/34471879:7667>; US Census Bureau, "1790 Census, Phillip Gatewood," in *1790 Census: Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790* (Government Printing Office, 1908), 64, <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1907/dec/heads-of-families.html>; Virginia House Clerk's Office, "Gatewood's and the Virginia House of Delegates," House History, 1996, <https://history.house.virginia.gov>; "Lt. Charles Peter Gatewood, Genealogy Profile and Family Tree," geni\_family\_tree, 2014, <https://www.geni.com/people/Lt-Charles-Peter-Gatewood/6000000006179096040>.

<sup>343</sup> The Tenth Legion was acquired after the war by John H. Grabill, another former Confederate officer of the Stonewall Brigade. Grabill changed the name to the Shenandoah Herald and under that name the paper continued publication until 1974. "The Tenth Legion (Woodstock, Va.) 1848-1865," Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540 USA, accessed December 5, 2021, <https://www.loc.gov/item/sn86092553/>; Virginia House Clerk's Office, "John Gatewood and Virginia House of Delegates, 1857-1858," House History, 151, accessed February 16, 2022, <https://history.house.virginia.gov/sessions/151>; House Clerk's Office, "John Gatewood and Virginia House of Delegates, 1861-1863," House History, accessed February 16, 2022, <https://history.house.virginia.gov/sessions/153>; Virginia and Va ) Virginia State Convention of 1861 (Richmond, *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Virginia, Passed in 1861, in the Eighty-Fifth Year of the Commonwealth* (Richmond, W. F. Ritchie, public printer, 1861), <http://archive.org/details/actsofgeneralas00virg>.

brigade, and commander would earn fame and the sobriquet “The Stonewall Brigade” for their actions at the First Battle of Manassas.<sup>344</sup>

For young Charles Gatewood, the reality of war came home quickly. Of the four-hundred and fifty men in his father’s regiment who went into battle at Manassas, forty-three were killed and one-hundred and forty more wounded. Charles must have witnessed wounded men returning home to convalesce as well as memorials and funerals in town for those killed. In 1862, Captain John Gatewood resigned his commission to resume his role in the legislature. During this period, the Gatewoods witnessed two devastating campaigns fought for control of the Shenandoah Valley and its rich agricultural lands. The elder Gatewood, who survived the war, witnessed the destruction of his valley and Virginia’s capital city, the dissolution of the Confederacy, and the implementation of reconstruction.<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> The 33rd Infantry Regiment was organized during the early summer of 1861 with men from the counties of Hampshire, Shenandoah, Frederick, Hardy, Page, and Rockingham. John Gatewood organized the Tenth Legion Minutemen at Woodstock, Shenandoah County, Virginia, on 29 April, 1861. The company was accepted in state service on 3 June, 1861, assigned to the 33rd Virginia Infantry as Company C on 26 June, 1861, and mustered into Confederate service at Camp E K Smith, on 12 July, 1861. Lowell Reidenbaugh, *33rd Virginia Infantry*, 1st ed., Virginia Regimental Histories Series (Lynchburg, Va: H.E. Howard, 1987); See also “33rd Virginia Infantry | First Bull Run | The Manassas Campaign, Virginia, July 21, 1861,” accessed October 25, 2021, <http://www.firstbullrun.co.uk/Shenandoah/First%20Brigade/33rd-virginia-infantry.html>.

<sup>345</sup> John O. (John Overton) Casler, *Four Years in the Stonewall Brigade* (Guthrie, Okla. : State Capital Print. Co., 1893), 43, <http://archive.org/details/01474842.3433.emory.edu>; William C Davis, *Battle at Bull Run: A History of the First Major Campaign of the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989); U.S. National Park Service, “33rd Virginia, Infantry Regiment, Battle Unit Details - The Civil War,” accessed December 5, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/civilwar/search-battle-units-detail.htm>; Gatewood submitted his resignation on July 24, 1862. It was endorsed by his chain of command including General T.J. Jackson and then forwarded to Adjutant General of the Confederate States Army. “Captain John B. Gatewood, Civil War Service Records (CMSR) - Confederate - Virginia,” Genealogy, Fold3, accessed October 24, 2021, <http://www.fold3.com:9292/image/13299665?terms=33,gatewood,infantry,virginia,thirty,third>.



SHERIDAN'S ARMY ON THE MARCH UP THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY.--SKETCHED BY A. R. WAUD.--[SEE PAGE 686.]

Source: Harper's Weekly, October 22, 1864, accessed at:  
<https://archive.org/details/harpersweeklyv8bonn/page/680/mode/2up?view=theater>

The teenaged Gatewood endured the chaos and ambiguity of post-war reconstruction. Following the war, Virginia was bankrupt, its economy shattered, and much of its transportation and agricultural infrastructure destroyed. Military administration was implemented in 1866. The Virginia legislature, angered by the imposition of federal authority and the implications of granting citizenship and equal protection to formerly enslaved Virginians, initially refused to ratify the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Only after the seating of a mixed-race legislature and constitutional convention were the requirements met for Virginia to rejoin the Union in 1870. John Gatewood, who died in the early 1870s, did not live to see prosperity return.<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>346</sup> Virginia General Assembly, "1870 Constitution of Virginia," George Mason University (Academic), Virginia Places, accessed January 13, 2022, <http://www.virginiaplaces.org/government/constitution1870.html>; Eric Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction, 1863-1877* (New York: Perennial Library, 1990), 54–55, 94, 97, 127, 137, 140, 170; Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 403–5, 411; "Library of Virginia : Civil War Research Guide - Reconstruction," accessed February 17, 2022,

Charles Gatewood took advantage of his father's political connections in seeking an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1873. Even with the family's military lineage, donning army blue must have been a challenge so soon after the war, but Gatewood may have found the security of a stable environment and assured pay more inviting than his current prospects. Virginia Congressman John T. Harris, a Democrat, secured Gatewood's appointment.<sup>347</sup>

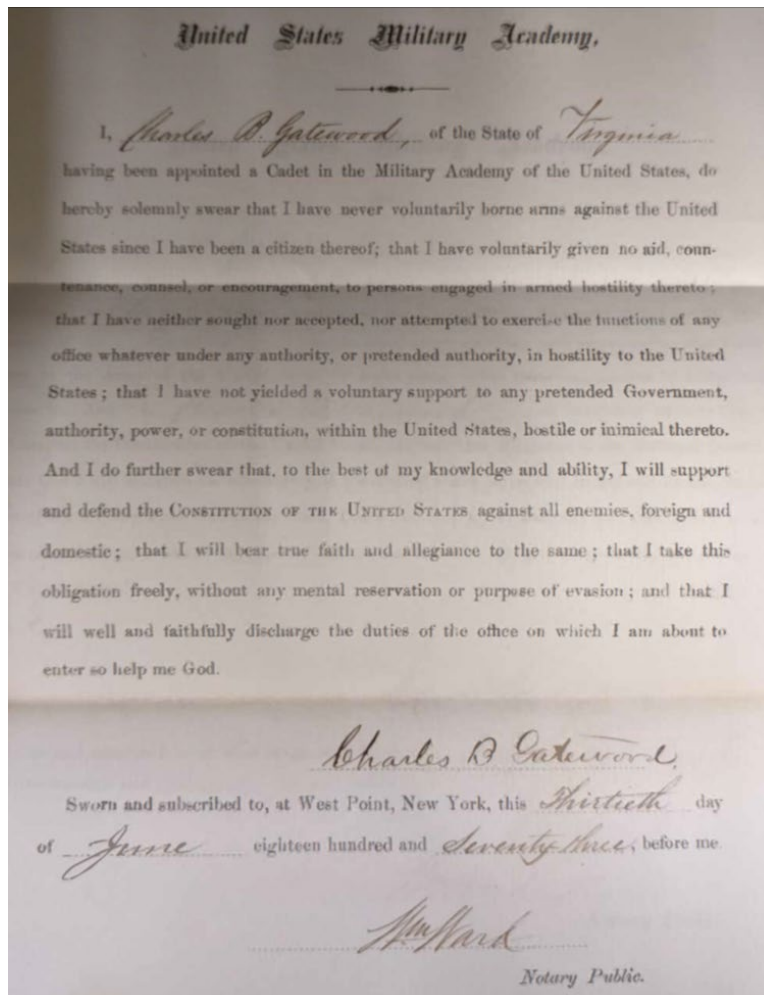
On June 13, 1873, Charles B. Gatewood signed his Cadet Oath attesting that he voluntarily gave no aid or support to anyone who bore arms against the United States. From the wreckage of post-war life, Gatewood chose to retain his family's values of honor and service while his act of joining the army repudiated his father's adherence to sectionalism and slavery. Accepting the conditions of the "ironclad oath" meant that Gatewood chose to attach himself to the future, not the past. At the Military Academy, Gatewood would demonstrate the discipline and motivation to serve the nation.<sup>348</sup>

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<https://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/guides/Civil-War/Reconstruction.htm>. No documentary evidence was found for John Gatewood's death. Census records were utilized to determine he died between 1870 and 1880.

<sup>347</sup> Gatewood received his appointment on February 28, 1873. United States Military Academy, "Charles B. Gatewood, US Military Academy Cadet Application Papers," Genealogical, Fold3, 62, accessed February 17, 2022, <http://www.fold3.com:9292/image?rec=612320343&terms=gatewood,charles>; "Harris, John T. Papers, 1771-1937 (Bulk 1850-1900) : JMU Libraries," accessed February 16, 2022, <https://www.lib.jmu.edu/special/manuscripts/2025harris/>.

<sup>348</sup> USMA Adjutant General's Office, "Charles B. Gatewood, United States Military Academy Cadet Oath of Office" (United States Military Academy at West Point, June 30, 1873), USMA Library, Archives and Special Collections Division Electronic copy furnished as attachment to correspondence with the USMA Library, Archives and Special Collections Division, on November 3, 2021.



Charles B. Gatewood's Cadet Oath, June 30, 1873  
Source: United States Military Academy, Special Collections and Archives

## West Point: Preparing for War in a Peacetime Army

Gatewood's admission to the Corps of Cadets began his journey as a military professional. President Thomas Jefferson founded the academy in 1802 to build an officer corps trained in the application of scientific methods and educated to be rigidly non-partisan. The Military Academy was also intended to socially level and ideologically nationalize generations of army officers. Graduates were expected to serve the nation in civic and business leadership roles in addition to providing military leadership. Cadet Nathaniel Chambliss declared "no one

cares for their social positions or political friends, but that they must establish a position by their own qualities, and it makes men of them.”<sup>349</sup>

When Gatewood arrived, the Corps of Cadets performed an important function in the post-conflict nation—reestablishing a cohesive core of officers. The Civil War’s demand for men to choose section or nation had caused a great schism in the officer corps that required mending. The Republican Congress excluded southern Democrats, the backbone of the Confederacy and reconstruction resisters, from political influence during and immediately following the war. That control amounted to withholding appointments of cadets and membership on the Board of Visitors at the Academy. Gatewood’s appointment represented the reintegration of cadets appointed by southern Democratic politicians. Additionally, Radical Republicans in Congress sought to add social equality to Jefferson’s founding ideals for the Academy. The Academy was expected to forge the new officer corps out of a more diverse population, including both former slaves and the sons of their former masters. The *New York Herald* reported that Gatewood’s Class of 1877 had “in its ranks a son of General B. F. Butler, Hon. John Bigelow's son, and sons of two ex-Confederate officers,” along with “Flipper, the colored cadet.”<sup>350</sup>

The climate of the Academy appeared to serve Gatewood well. Gatewood’s academic and disciplinary records demonstrated his ability to adapt and make the best of his situation.

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<sup>349</sup> Jefferson’s vision was for the academy to educate the foundation of an officer corps with specialized expertise, a responsibility to perform functions to the benefit of society, as well as a sense of corporateness and self-consciousness to set them apart as professionals to serve the nation as explorers of the continent & engineers to supervise internal improvements. Millett and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*; William B Skelton, *American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 177, 401 note #35 Also see the USMA site at: <https://www.westpoint.edu/about/history-of-west-point>.

<sup>350</sup> James W. Smith, “Society’s Sacrifice: The First Black Cadet at West Point James Webster Smith” (United States Military Academy at West Point, December 1993), 5, <https://digital-library.usma.edu/digital/collection/p16919coll1/id/23>; Stephen E. Ambrose, *Duty, Honor, Country: A History of West Point* (JHU Press, 1999), 231–32; The New York Herald, April 28, 1877 in Henry Ossian Flipper, *The Colored Cadet at West Point. Autobiography of Lieut. Henry Ossian Flipper, U. S. A., First Graduate of Color from the U. S. Military Academy* (New York: H. Lee & co., 1878), 239, <http://archive.org/details/coloredcadetatwe00flip>.



Gatewood did well, ranking twenty-third overall in his class of seventy-six cadets. He had found his place among the officer corps regardless of any possible discomfort he faced as the son of a former Confederate officer and Virginia state legislator in a nominally racially integrated environment.<sup>351</sup>

Gatewood and his classmates graduated on June 14, 1877. They immediately joined the ranks of a new post-Civil War professional army that was transforming America. For their part, the graduates would be charged with implementing a two-part agenda: controlling violence and securing black civil rights in the former Confederate states and removing Native American tribes to reservations in the west as the chosen means to clear the way for the establishment of railroads, settlements, mass agriculture, and commercial resource extraction efforts.<sup>352</sup>

## **Apache Wars**

As Americans settled the Southwest, establishing farms, ranches, mines, and the transportation infrastructure to support trade, they displaced or disturbed the patterns of the region's Indian communities. Following the annexation of Texas, the Mexican cession, and the Gadsden purchase in 1854, the army fought, negotiated with, and subjugated the Apache and other Indian tribes. As in other regions, when encounters between Indians and settlers proved

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<sup>351</sup> United States Military Academy, *Official Register of the Officers and Cadets*, Registers - Library Digital Collections (West Point, New York: United States Military Academy Printing Office, 1877), 12–14, <https://usmalibrary.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16919coll3/id/1854/rec/60>; During Gatewood's tenure at the USMA three black cadets were enrolled. James W. Smith who was dismissed for failing an examination after enduring four years of turbulence and social trauma. John W. Williams was dismissed for academic deficiency. And Henry O. Flipper who graduated with Gatewood in 1877. Smith, "Society's Sacrifice," 13, 14.

<sup>352</sup> Millett and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*, 126–27; Gatewood joined a very small group of southern born officers. At the time of his commissioning less than 5% of officers were from the former Confederate states. Mark R. Grandstaff, "Preserving the 'Habits and Usages of War': William Tecumseh Sherman, Professional Reform, and the U.S. Army Officer Corps, 1865-1881, Revisited," *The Journal of Military History* 62, no. 3 (1998): 126–27, <https://doi.org/10.2307/120436>; Adams, *Class and Race*, 21.

violent, the federal government ordered the army to restore stability on the terms of the settler communities and their territorial governments. By the time Gatewood arrived in the Arizona Territory in 1878, the army had been struggling to subdue the Apache for nearly thirty years.<sup>353</sup>

Some background on the Apache people is necessary. Seven tribes—the Jicarilla, Lipan, Mescalero, Chiricahua, Navajo, Kiowa-Apache, and Western Apache—comprised the Apache. Each tribe further consisted of sub-tribes often named in association with the location of their homeland. Over time, the tribes had migrated to the arid and mountainous zones of Arizona and New Mexico in the American Southwest and Chihuahua and Sonora of Northern Mexico for protection from their more numerous, well-armed, and mobile cousins. The Apache people developed a warrior culture out of necessity. They also shared the Athapascan language but bands were independent of and often hostile to each other.<sup>354</sup>

The cycle of violence between the Apache and the army so common across the trans-Mississippi West proved the norm in the Southwest, too. Raiding played a major social and economic function for the Apache, particularly for those bands, like the central and southern Chiricahua, who inhabited locations with little arable land. Spanish, then Mexican and American settler populations became their primary prey, although they also raided other tribes. Settlement, mining, and the federal Indian policy of centralizing southwestern tribes on a single reservation propelled the army-Apache encounters. As each band was subdued or allied itself with the army,

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<sup>353</sup> An early history of the Apache Wars is Dan L Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria* (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1988); a recent overview is Hutton, *The Apache Wars*; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 168–74, 344–96.

<sup>354</sup> Goodwin, *Western Apache Raiding and Warfare* Basso's introduction provides a general overview of Apache social organization and culture. The individual narratives Goodwin reproduced along with his subject chapters are instructive providing one of the most authoritative works introducing readers to the Apache perspective on these conflicts. ; Lockwood, *The Apache Indians*, 1–8.

officers recruited their men to serve as scouts. The Apache scouts proved highly effective in campaigns against other bands, including other Apache.<sup>355</sup>

The Chiricahua Apache proved a particular challenge to subdue. Well-adapted to their arid and mountainous homelands and living in small groups, they were highly skilled fighters, known for their stamina, ferocity, and independence. They continuously resisted reservation confinement. After every cycle of violence—raid, pursuit, exhaustion, negotiation and confinement to the reservation—Chiricahua members, longing for their traditional lifestyle, would agitate some or all of their band to begin the cycle of violence again. This pattern would govern war with the Apache through Gatewood’s tenure in the southwest.<sup>356</sup>

In September 1877, Second Lieutenant Gatewood enjoyed his graduation leave at home. While Charles visited with his family, Victorio, leader of the Warm Springs Apache band, became disgusted with life at the San Carlos reservation and fled with over three-hundred Warm Springs and Chiricahua people. Campaigning against Victorio would introduce Gatewood to the Apache way of warfare and the challenging life of an army officer in the southwest.<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>355</sup> Colonel August V Kautz, Commanding Department of Arizona in United States, *ARSW 1877*, 1:148; George Crook, *Resumé of Operations against Apache Indians, 1882 to 1886*, Operations against Apache Indians, 1882 to 1886 (Omaha, Neb.: G. Crook, 1886), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/100072347>; George Crook, *General George Crook: His Autobiography*, ed. Martin F Schmitt (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Pr., 1986), 180, 248, 250; John Bigelow, *On the Bloody Trail of Geronimo*, ed. Arthur Woodward (New York: Tower, 1968), 58; Bourke, *On the Border with Crook.*, 137–38, 202–3, 452–453, 467–468; Goodwin, *Western Apache Raiding and Warfare*, 13; Lockwood, *The Apache Indians*, 57–61, 166–68; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 165–68.

<sup>356</sup> Ferris et al., *Soldier and Brave*, 69; White, *It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own*, 107; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 391–92.

<sup>357</sup> Annual Report of Colonel O.B. Willcox in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War 1878*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1878), 193, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078451>; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Acheria*, 177; Lockwood, *The Apache Indians*, 228; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 359.

## Fort Apache: Southwestern Arrival

Gatewood arrived at Fort Apache, Arizona Territory on February 5, 1878 after a journey by train and stage coach from Virginia. The fort, founded in 1869 and located inside the White Mountain Apache Reservation, was typical for the frontier army, boasting a corral, kitchen, warehouse, hospital, headquarters, barracks, and officer's quarters. Four companies of soldiers, two cavalry and two infantry, and one company of Indian scouts manned the fort. The month Charles arrived the muster roll indicated a total complement of 277 men. As a new lieutenant, he was assigned to Company D, 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, and quickly incorporated into the fort's routine. He performed company duties and served on the Fort Apache staff, conducting daily formations, exercises, and inspections with his company and keeping their records. Lt. Gatewood also served as the Acting Assistant Quartermaster, Acting Commissary of Subsistence, and Post Adjutant, overseeing the issue of supplies and rations, as well as writing, receiving, and cataloging orders and official correspondence for the post commander.<sup>358</sup>

Gatewood was introduced to the Indian scouts of Company A during the course of his staff duties. The company consisted of twenty-five White Mountain Apache men organized as four sergeants, two corporals, and nineteen privates commanded by a lieutenant for routine duty. A civilian chief of scouts and an interpreter assisted the lieutenant. During outbreaks of violence

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<sup>358</sup> The White Mountain Apache reservation was established by Executive Order on December 14, 1871. The reservation constituted the heart of the White Mountain tribe's homeland. George Crook, who commanded the Department of Arizona from 1872-1875 and again from 1882-1886, came to depend on the White Mountain tribe to man the Indian scout companies at Fort Apache. See Post Returns for February, March, and October 1878 in Adjutant General's Office, "U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916 Arizona, Fort Apache, 1870 May - 1887 Dec," Fold3, accessed January 17, 2022, <https://www.ancestry.com>; Irving McDowell, "Distribution of Troops Serving in the Division of the Pacific, Officers of the 6th Cavalry" (Military, Presidio of San Francisco, California, October 1878), 9, RG 94, M666. Roll 0451, Unbound letters, with their enclosures, received by the Adjutant General, 1871-1880., National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., <http://www.fold3.com:9292/image/300175182>; Constance Wynn Altshuler, *Chains of Command: Arizona and the Army, 1856-1875* (Phoenix: Arizona Historical Society, 1981), 172; Ferris et al., *Soldier and Brave*, 166-67; Lockwood, *The Apache Indians*, 184; Clayton R Newell, "Fort Apache Arizona," *On Point* 17, no. 3 (2012): 44, 46.

the lieutenant was authorized to enlist additional scouts. In March 1878, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt William H. Carter, Troop E, 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry commanded the company. The fort's personnel record, known as the post return and completed on a monthly basis, reveals that Lt. Carter and the company were scouting along the Arizona and New Mexico borders. Gatewood would have issued the scouts rations and ammunition before their departure and received damaged equipment upon their return. Carter and his scouts returned in April, having traveled seven-hundred miles to find "no trails of renegade Indians."<sup>359</sup> Gatewood was assigned command of Company A, Indian Scouts, on September 13, 1878.<sup>360</sup>

The scout companies in Arizona performed escort, guide, and trailing duties along with patrolling routes of travel, especially in difficult terrain where travelers were most vulnerable, along telegraph lines, and often on the border with Mexico. Gatewood's company scouted the boundaries of the White Mountain reservation to protect their tribe and the sovereignty of their lands. The Fort Apache Post Returns for December 1878 through February 1879, indicate that three Indian scouts accompanied Gatewood to survey a more direct route from Fort Apache to Fort Thomas, Arizona. In April, Gatewood led his first scouting mission "in pursuit of renegade Indians."<sup>361</sup> He departed Fort Apache with Company A on April 23, 1879 in pursuit of Victorio's band.<sup>362</sup>

Gatewood got to know many of the White Mountain men while performing field duty with them. He learned to speak their language and much about their culture and way of war.

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<sup>359</sup> Post Return for April 1878 in Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Apache Post Return."

<sup>360</sup> Gatewood was "Commanding Co A Indian scouts since September 13, 1878, per General Order #103, Department of Arizona '78." See Post Return for September 1878, Adjutant General's Office.

<sup>361</sup> Post Return for April 1879, Adjutant General's Office.

<sup>362</sup> Post Returns for December 1878 through February 1879, Adjutant General's Office.

Charles came to respect his scouts' physical stamina and courage. He witnessed the challenges they faced trying to adopt a new manner of living while American settlers, entrepreneurs and politicians sought to profit off the tribe and its lands. The White Mountain scouts and people, in turn, learned about Gatewood. He secured a reputation with them as an honest and principled man. His actions also demonstrated that he considered their welfare important, placing a priority on their benefit over the settler and territorial communities and, at times, his own superiors. The White Mountain people saw Gatewood as a trustworthy and consistent person during most of his time with them. His reputation spread among the other Apache, including the Chiricahua.<sup>363</sup>

Gatewood's fellow 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry officers also heralded him for enduring a near continuous cycle of grueling, often fruitless pursuits of "renegade Indians" reported off of reservations. The twenty-six year-old Gatewood excelled in these duties, remaining in command of scouts for years, while his peers preferred to move on to other duties after a year or less. Gatewood was persistent and eminently practical in his approach to commanding scouts. "I am convinced, he wrote, "that Indians are no different from other persons" while at the same time revealing the prevailing cultural attitudes of the white population "the Apache respects nothing, believes in nothing, and bows to nothing but force."<sup>364</sup>

Charles Gatewood reported responding to an outbreak of violence led by Victorio in April 1879. The Fort Apache Post Return for May read:

In compliance with Order #54 of Fort Apache, A.T. 2Lt CB Gatewood, 6<sup>th</sup> Cav'y with Co A Indian Scouts and detail of Co D & E 6<sup>th</sup> Cav'y left the post April 23, 1879 in pursuit of renegade Warm Springs Indians. Scouted country between here and Ojo Caliente, N.M. Found trail of Victorio Band May 10<sup>th</sup>, ten days old. Followed trail until May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1870 to edge of San Carlos Indian Reservation thence back to Eagle Creek when trail was

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<sup>363</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 8, 26, 30, 33; Albert E. Wratten, "George Wratten Friend of the Apaches," *The Journal of Arizona History* 27, no. 1 (1986): 98.

<sup>364</sup> Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 2.

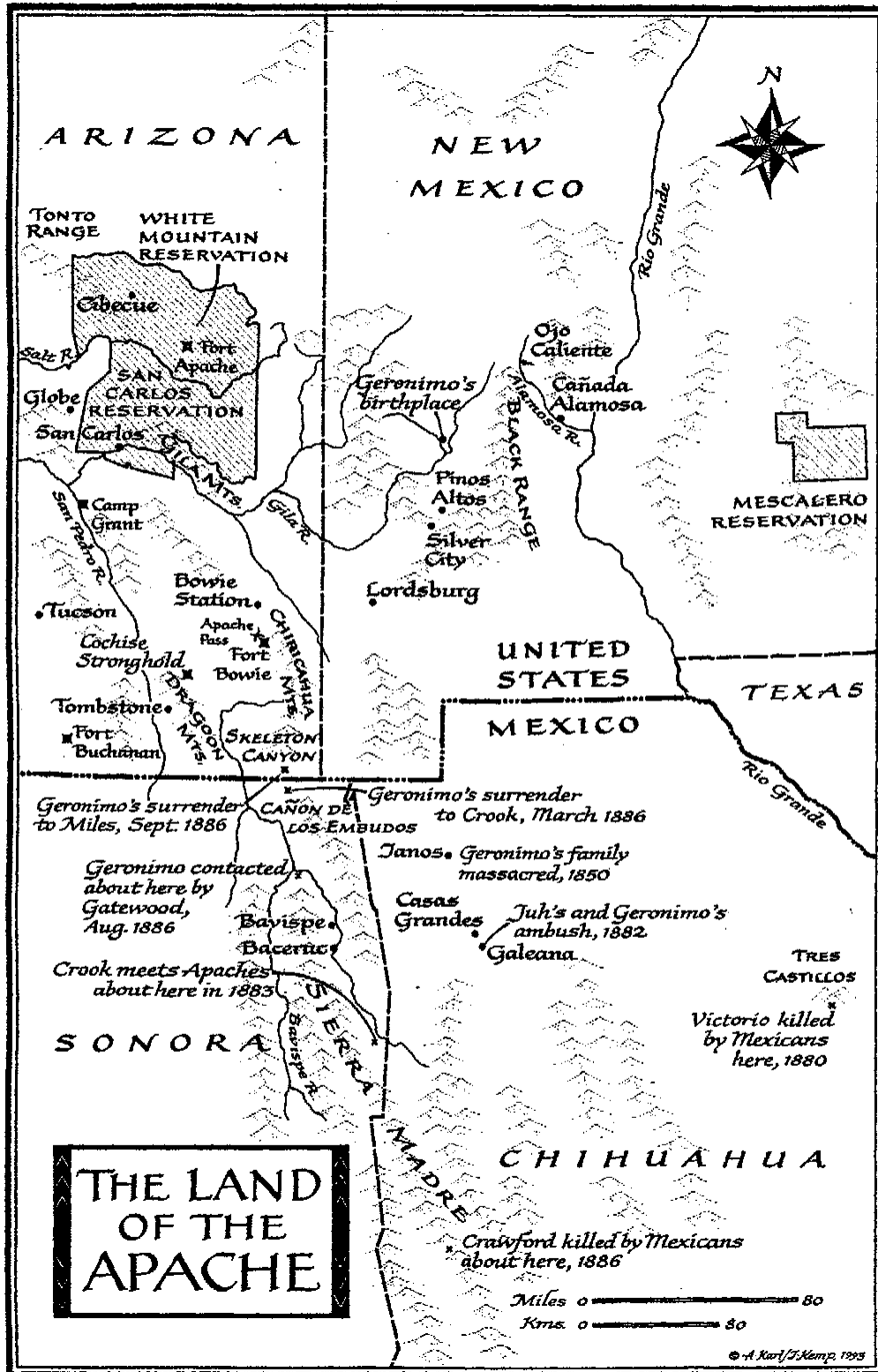
taken up by fresh scouts and animals. Returned to post May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1879. Distance traveled 311 miles.<sup>365</sup>

Upon his return, Gatewood dismissed his scouts, enlisted another twenty-five men and returned to the field in June. Post returns for the first eight months of 1879 indicate a near continuous presence of scouts and soldiers in the field pursuing Apache raiders and other ‘renegades.’ On September 4, 1879, Victorio and his band killed eight soldiers and stole a herd of horses as they broke away from the Mescalero Apache reservation in New Mexico. The Indians killed the soldiers despite knowing that the act would bring the full weight of the army onto their trail.<sup>366</sup>

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<sup>365</sup> Post Return for May 1879, Adjutant General’s Office, “Fort Apache Post Return.”

<sup>366</sup> Charles B. Gatewood, “‘Campaigning Against Victorio in 1879,’ The Great Divide Magazine, 1893,” in *Eyewitness to the Indian Wars, Vol 1, The Struggle for Apacheria*, vol. I (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2001), 213; General John Pope, Commanding the Department of Missouri, in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1880*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880), 86–89, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078451>; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 182.



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## **Victorio: Learning the Trade**

The thirteen-month Victorio Campaign was fought on both sides of the Mexican border with the army deploying more troops, scouts, and other resources than in any previous operations against the Apache. Colonel Benjamin Grierson, commanding the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, exemplified the evolution in army's societal disruption methods. Grierson acknowledged that the Apache's strength in mobility was also a significant weakness. The Apache traveled extremely light and, like the soldiers, were dependent on just a few water sources. Grierson and the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, familiar with the principal routes the Apache traversed to conduct their raids, placed small teams of soldiers to guard the water holes and passes that the Apache would have to cross. Soldiers at these outposts complemented the roving patrols Grierson sent in search of Victorio and other raiders.<sup>367</sup>

By this time, few commands operated without local Indian scouts. The army fielded nearly two-thousand soldiers and hundreds more scouts during the operation while Victorio's complement of fighting men fluctuated between eighty and one-hundred-fifty. The Indians generally raided in smaller groups and seldom gathered the entire band in one place. Under these circumstances, army contingents were rarely outnumbered, and when they were, their use of surprise or defending a prepared position advantaged the soldiers and scouts. Pursuing commands regularly found themselves challenged by trying to follow a multitude of faint trails in search of their prey. The combination of swift pursuit complemented by the small units

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<sup>367</sup> Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 204–6; Robert N. Watt, "A Reevaluation of Colonel Benjamin H. Grierson's Trans-Pecos Campaign against Victorio, July–August 1880," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 118, no. 3 (2015): 260–61.

defending critical points, although time consuming, eventually exhausted Victorio and his raiders.<sup>368</sup>

The deployment of Company A on September 8, 1879 in response to Victorio's break typifies the experience of scouting for Gatewood. At first they patrolled San Carlos to keep Victorio from recruiting any of his Warm Springs companions now living on the reservation. Then, with another scout company, they joined Major A.P. Morrow and his 9<sup>th</sup> Cavalry battalion at Fort Bayard to pursue Victorio and his band. The major had requested the Apache scouts from Arizona to serve as trailers and fighting men after deciding the Navajo scouts at Fort Bayard were not fit for the expected difficulties of the campaign. Gatewood, too, acknowledged the difference in capabilities among the tribes, dismissing the Navajo men as being of the "coffee cooler class of scouts" claiming only Apache scouts possessed the stamina, skill, and courage to fight Apache raiders.<sup>369</sup>

Gatewood's scouts followed Victorio's trail directly into the Black Range Mountains while Morrow led the rest of the command by road toward a rendezvous. Gatewood wrote that he and the scouts "laid over in the daytime, concealing ourselves in the narrow gorges and canyons. It rained every minute of the time, and as we dared to build only the very smallest of fires to do our cooking by, there was no chance to dry our clothing and the few blankets in the party."<sup>370</sup> The rain also destroyed the small amount of food the men carried. He recorded their

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<sup>368</sup> Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 169; Kendall D Gott, *In Search of an Elusive Enemy: The Victorio Campaign* (Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), 11, 17–18; Lockwood, *The Apache Indians*, 231.

<sup>369</sup> Post Return for September 1879, Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Apache Post Return"; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 182; Gatewood, "Campaigning Against Victorio," 214–15.

<sup>370</sup> Gatewood, "Campaigning Against Victorio," 214.

hunger was only partly relieved by eating the food and animals discarded by the renegades in their haste to stay ahead of the scouts.

As the command reunited, the weather changed. Gatewood recalled “soaking wet one day and suffering from thirst the next” as finding water joined their list of challenges. Yet the scouts succeeded in keeping the command on Victorio’s trail.<sup>371</sup> “We knew from the character of the trail and signs along it,” he wrote, “that we were gradually approaching the hostiles and without their knowledge of our approach.”<sup>372</sup> In the evening of September 28, the scouts found Victorio’s band in a canyon.

Gatewood’s description of the action suggests some of the intimacy and gallows humor he experienced during combat. He recalled that “before sundown our scouts in advance located Mr. Victorio and his outfit encamped in a deep canyon. They saw each other about the same time, and the fun began.” Victorio’s men only saw a few scouts at first. Assuming they would quickly dispatch the White Mountain scouts they “became saucy and facetious, daring them to come closer and even inviting them to supper.” The scouts’ senior sergeant, known to Gatewood as, Dick, “answered, ‘We are coming.’” Victorio’s men scattered and fled when they “saw forty-odd scouts and as many soldiers, white and colored, coming tumbling down the side of the canyon into their camp.”<sup>373</sup>

The next morning, Morrow’s command was the recipient of an age-old guerrilla fighter’s tactic. The scouts were already following the trail of the main renegade group when a number of Victorio’s men backtracked and attacked Morrow’s men still eating breakfast. The scene quickly

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<sup>371</sup> Gatewood, 215.

<sup>372</sup> Gatewood, 215.

<sup>373</sup> Gatewood, 215–16.

turned to “pandemonium that was enough to set a nervous man wild” when shots mixed with shouted commands echoed throughout the canyon.<sup>374</sup> With the scouts miles away, Gatewood and the soldiers near him ran to assist Morrow. Charles remembered “more noise and more excitement, until I didn’t believe there was a sane man in the country except the corporal, who coolly informed me after a while that I was on the wrong side of a rock to be safe from a cross fire. Up to that time, it seemed we would all be killed, for every man had lost his head and was yelling with all his might and shooting in the air. But once anchored on the right side of the rock, I was astonished to see how cool they were and how steady was their aim, some even laughing and joking.”<sup>375</sup> At the sound of the gunfire, the scouts began running the several miles back to aid the command. The scouts unexpected counterattack on the flank and rear of the raiders drove them away for a second time. Victorio’s men scattered back into the mountains.

The pursuit of Victorio continued through October. When they crossed the Rio Grande river into Mexico on October 24<sup>th</sup>, Morrow, determined to catch Victorio, boldly followed the band across the border despite lacking the authority to do so. Traveling along the Guzman Mountains, they ran out of water forcing the little command to abandon or kill horses and mules that could not keep up. Gatewood remembered that “men began to offer a month’s pay, or all they had, for just one swallow of water” and that even the scouts “who always march on foot, were more used to hardships and could stand it better than others... began to show the effects of marching under such conditions.”<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> Gatewood, 216.

<sup>375</sup> Gatewood, 216.

<sup>376</sup> Philip H Sheridan, “Sheridan to Adjutant General, October 8, 1879, Letters Received by the Adjutant General, 1871-1880,” Genealogy, Fold3, October 8, 1879, 48, <http://www.fold3.com>; Gatewood, “Campaigning Against Victorio,” 218–19; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 186–87.

On the third day with no water, they encountered Victorio on the Corralitos River, one-hundred miles inside Mexico. Morrow, intending to maintain the pursuit after drawing water from the river, made the decision to continue moving during the night even though the rough terrain was to Victorio's advantage. Gatewood surmised the raiders "must have chuckled to themselves" as the command moved toward their would-be ambushers, "but they didn't chuckle for long!"<sup>377</sup> Some of the White Mountain scouts snuck behind Victorio's line of men. The raiders retreated after the scouts fired a volley from behind and the soldiers rushed forward.

The soldiers' attack stalled despite their initial success. The retreating raiders ascended a cliff and in the darkness sporadically illuminated by the flashes of gunfire the soldiers found they could not advance after them. Major Morrow ordered Gatewood and some scouts to lead a flank attack but none of the soldiers followed. Morrow and his officers now recognized the men were too exhausted to continue. The major ordered a withdrawal even though it meant abandoning the pursuit and, worse, they still had no water. In the darkness the men and animals were gathered together. Gatewood's scouts then led the command on a forced march in search of a spring one of them knew of at a ranch nearly twenty miles away.<sup>378</sup>

Gatewood recalled the scene vividly: some of the scouts proceeded the command in search of the spring. Once found, the scouts illuminated it with a series of fires for the soldiers to find. Then "white, colored, and red men, horses and mules, all rushed pell-mell for the water. They drank it, they rolled in it, they got out of it, and returned to it. They wept and cheered and

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<sup>377</sup> Gatewood, "Campaigning Against Victorio," 220.

<sup>378</sup> Gott, *In Search of an Elusive Enemy*, 24–25.

danced in it, and the mud they made made no difference in drinking it.”<sup>379</sup> After two days of rest, the command re-crossed the border.

Gatewood and Company A joined Morrow and the 9<sup>th</sup> Cavalry again in spring 1880 for another march against Victorio. This time in Hembrillo Canyon, New Mexico. There, on April 6, the command began a two-day battle with Victorio’s band to control the local spring. Victorio and most of his men escaped the canyon but the army’s continuous pursuit was taking a toll.<sup>380</sup>

After Hembrillo, Victorio took to the mountains again, hounded by Morrow and Gatewood. The raider’s Mescalero allies, now disarmed and guarded by soldiers on their reservation, could provide no support. Then in May, Victorio was caught off guard by Apache scouts who surprised his camp, wounding him and killing thirty men, women, and children from his band in the process. The survivors ran for Mexico with Morrow close behind. A skirmish at the border cost Victorio his son, an accomplished raider in his own right. In June, Lieutenant Thomas Cruse relieved Gatewood in command of Company A. Charles returned to Fort Apache to recuperate from the physical demands of the campaign.<sup>381</sup>

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<sup>379</sup> Gatewood, “Campaigning Against Victorio,” 222–23.

<sup>380</sup> Colonel Edward Hatch praised Gatewood for “gallantry and soldierly bearing” during action in the canyon. Gatewood with scouts arrived on the second day and succeeded in capturing the water hole. The command traveled 1,031 miles during their pursuit of Victorio. See Hatch “Annual Report,” dated August 5, 1880 in United States, *ARSW 1880*, 1:95; John Conline, “The Campaign Against Victorio,” in *Eyewitness to the Indian Wars, Vol 1, The Struggle for Apacheria*, vol. I, V vols. (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2001), 224–26; Gott, *In Search of an Elusive Enemy*, 30–31; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 194–96; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 361–62.

<sup>381</sup> General Sherman was enraged by the discontinuity of federal policy as the Victorio campaign dragged on. He decried that the army was ordered to pursue Indian raiders, while the BIA cared for their families, and those families in turn supported the raiders with additional manpower as well as the food and ammunition provided by the BIA. On April 12, 1880, the War Department authorized the army to disarm the Indians on the Mescalero reservation. Afterwards soldiers remained to guard the reservation from Victorio’s band and his raiders. Denying access to the reservation population impacted the raiders ability to sustain their activities. Colonel Hatch “Report” and H.K. Parker, Chief of Scouts, “Report to Colonel Hatch, Commanding District of New Mexico,” dated May 26, 1880. Both found in United States, *ARSW 1880*, 1:96, 99–100; Post Return for June 1880, Adjutant General’s Office, “Fort Apache Post Return”; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 361–62; Gott, *In Search of an Elusive Enemy*, 31, 33; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 197–98.

Gatewood resumed command in September as Victorio's time ran out. On October 15, 1880, Victorio and his band were surrounded and attacked by Mexican soldiers and scouts at Tres Castillos in Chihuahua, Mexico. In this clash, many in the band died with the remainder taken captive by the Mexicans. Several men who fought alongside Victorio during Morrow and Gatewood's pursuit were not present at Tres Castillos. Their passion to resist remained strong. One of those men was the Chiricahua shaman, Geronimo.<sup>382</sup>

Gatewood had learned much about the Apache people and warfare during the campaign. Charles's White Mountain scouts also learned much about their commander. He proved worthy, enduring their hardships, respecting their war fighting methods, seeking their counsel, applying their advice, and sharing in their triumphs. Their near continuous presence in the field also resulted in the lieutenant's recognition as an effective commander of scouts. That recognition would influence his future endeavors.

Lt Gatewood performed well during the campaign in spite of the physical toll it took on him. Charles was now suffering from rheumatism, a chronic pain in his joints, that would plague him for the remainder of his life. After the campaign he requested a month of leave and returned to the east coast. Later he was granted a five-month extension for sick leave. During those months he attended to a most important matter—marriage. On June 23, 1881 he married Georgia McCullough of Frostburg, Maryland. The event must have been spectacular; Gatewood was due back to Fort Apache on July 5 but did not report until September 7.<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheia*, 208–9; Gott, *In Search of an Elusive Enemy*, 41–42; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 364.

<sup>383</sup> The Fort Apache adjutant reported Gatewood as “absent without leave” in July and August. See Post Returns for January to September 1881, Adjutant General's Office, “Fort Apache Post Return”; Adjutant General's Office, “Charles B. Gatewood, Summary of Reports by Commanding Officers, Letters Received by Commission Branch, 1874-1894,” Fold3, accessed April 25, 2022, <http://www.fold3.com>; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, xxv; Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 6 Charles and Georgia had three children – Charles Baehr Jr, Hugh McCulloh (died as an infant), and Emily Natalie.

## The Sierra Madre Campaign: Mastery

Throughout the Apache wars, Geronimo gained experience resisting settlement. He became a central figure in the Bedonkohe band of Chiricahua but only formally led his family clan. Geronimo's influence among his people came mainly from his exploits as a raider, his force of personality, and his position as a shaman. He was committed to his family and way of life. So strong was Geronimo's commitment that he was known at times to be deceitful and intimidating to his people, even threatening murder to ensure compliance when he thought it necessary. His reputation was even more fierce among Mexicans and Americans. He led raids in Mexico, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas across decades and regularly fought American and Mexican soldiers. A common reaction to Apache raiding was armed pursuit, while another practice by communities threatened by Apache was feigned accommodation. Community leaders would invite Apache bands to join a celebration with the goal of catching the Indians off guard and killing as many as possible while they were either inebriated or asleep. Geronimo survived such massacres by Mexicans more than once in his life, each time losing family members and friends. He and his followers ferocious reactions to these incidents heightened the cycle of violence.<sup>384</sup>

Gatewood came to know Geronimo initially by witnessing the results of his raiding. He learned that the Apache leader was as elusive and fierce as any Chiricahua. And finally, during Geronimo's sporadic periods living on the San Carlos and Fort Apache reservations, Gatewood befriended him. He observed that Geronimo was intelligent, resourceful, courageous, cunning,

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<sup>384</sup> Geronimo, *Geronimo: His Own Story*, ed. S. M Barrett (New York: Meridian, 1996), 24, 28, 77, 89–90, 106, 129; Betzinez, *I Fought with Geronimo*, 17, 50, 56, 58.; Samuel E. Kenoi, "A Chiricahua Apache's Account of the Geronimo Campaign of 1886," ed. Morris E. Opler, *The Journal of Arizona History* 27, no. 1 (1986): 71–72; Roberts, *Once They Moved Like the Wind*, 109, 210, 314.



brutal, and ruthlessly committed to preserving his way of life while rejecting the agrarian lifestyle expected of reservation Indians. This rejection set the stage for the next conflict.<sup>385</sup>

After Victorio's death, the Chiricahua negotiated for resettlement at San Carlos. They remained on that reservation until August 1881. In that month, the 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry clashed with Cibecue Apache Indians, including several scouts from the tribe, while attempting to detain one of the Cibecue spiritual leaders, himself a former scout. The fight left an officer and six soldiers, along with the spiritual leader and half a dozen other Cibecue, dead. The army flooded the area with soldiers to quickly quell what turned into a general uprising by the tribe.<sup>386</sup>

The presence of so many soldiers disturbed Geronimo. The shaman was already deeply suspicious of the reservation's rival Apache bands and frustrated by the reservation policies that struck at the heart of Chiricahua life style. At the end of September 1881, Geronimo fled the reservation to Mexico with a group of Chiricahua men and their families. In April 1882, he led a raid of Arizona settlements and along the way the raiders struck the San Carlos reservation. There they forced the remaining seven hundred Chiricahua to accompany them back to Mexico. The decision led directly to the death of at least one-hundred Chiricahua when the group crossed the international border and were ambushed by the Mexican army. Geronimo and his warriors were too focused on delaying the American soldiers and failed to detect the Mexicans. Despite

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<sup>385</sup> Kraft, *Gateway & Geronimo*, 53; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 75–76.

<sup>386</sup> Brigadier General John Pope, Commanding Department of the Missouri, "Annual Report for 1881," dated September 22, 1881 in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1881*, vol. 1, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1881), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org>; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 221–25; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 372–73; Lockwood, *The Apache Indians*, 236–37; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 170–74.

their losses the Chiricahua continued raiding. The resulting political pressure in the United States forced the army to make changes.<sup>387</sup>

In September 1882, General Sherman assigned Brigadier General George Crook to command the Department of Arizona. George Crook was knowledgeable of the Chiricahua having already commanded the department from 1871-1875. Upon his return, Crook conducted an inspection and determined that most of the trouble emanated from reservation mismanagement. This was particularly aggravated by the overcrowding of Apache bands on San Carlos. Crook adopted a three pronged strategy to bring stability to Arizona: “the maintenance of control over the Indians remaining on the reservations, the protection of life and property of citizens, and the subjugation of the hostiles.”<sup>388</sup>

General Crook began his effort to gain control of the reservation populations, appointing officers to serve as agents to the tribes in November 1882. Crook described the role as “one of the greatest delicacy and danger, where the slightest indiscretion would have proved fatal to them” and summarized that “these officers constantly carried their lives in their hands.”<sup>389</sup> The twenty-nine year old Charles Gatewood, now a First Lieutenant, with four years among the White Mountain Apache, was an obvious choice. He joined Captain Emmett Crawford and Second Lieutenant Britton Davis as military agents to the Apache. Crawford and Davis overseeing San Carlos, while Gatewood assumed responsibility for the White Mountain band

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<sup>387</sup> Lockwood, *The Apache Indians*, 243–44, 248; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 232–34, 236; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 374–75.

<sup>388</sup> Brigadier General Crook, “Annual Report” in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1883*, vol. 1 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), 159, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078451>; Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary, Vol I*, 1:340; Crook, *Resumé of Operations against Apache Indians, 1882 to 1886*, 1; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 23.

<sup>389</sup> Crook, *Resumé of Operations*, 5.

and their reservation surrounding Fort Apache. The trio enjoyed an elevated status, now receiving orders from and reporting directly to General Crook.<sup>390</sup>

Lt Gatewood proved an able administrator of Indian affairs. He oversaw the White Mountain tribe's governance and justice systems, the distribution of food and materials, and the enforcement of federal regulations. Along with the other military agents, he implemented measures intended to control the reservation populations and disrupt the various Apache bands' societal norms. Under General Crook's direction Gatewood issued numbered metal discs to each male member of the tribe, created a corresponding list describing each male, overseeing a daily roll call, and recruiting Apaches as "secret service scouts" to keep him informed about the sentiment and intentions of other reservation Apache.<sup>391</sup>

Once the reservation Apache were under control, Crook launched a campaign to subdue the Chiricahua in Mexico who remained a threat. He adapted the societal disruption method to the terrain and to his new adversary. The general organized large contingents of regulars to secure the border, deny the Chiricahua access to the reservations, and defend population centers in Arizona. From that foundation, he launched a force into Mexico that would pursue the raiders into their mountain retreat.<sup>392</sup>

General Crook chose Apache scouts for the majority of his pursuit force. According to Lieutenant John Bourke, "the two great points of superiority of the native or savage soldier over the representative of civilized discipline are his absolute knowledge of the country and his

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<sup>390</sup> Crook in United States, *ARSW 1883*, 1:162; Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo.*, 32, 93.

<sup>391</sup> Crook, General Orders No.13, dtd July 24, 1883, Appendix G, in United States, *ARSW 1883*, 1:161, 179; Crook, *Resumé of Operations against Apache Indians, 1882 to 1886*, 4–5; Bourke, *Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre.*, 24–26; Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo.*, 38–39; Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 19.

<sup>392</sup> Bourke, *Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre.*, 20–21; Bourke, *On the Border with Crook.*, 453; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 275–77.

perfect ability to take care of himself at all times and under all circumstances.”<sup>393</sup> The command included one company of cavalry to serve as a rallying point for the command and to guard supplies. George Crook personally led the command totaling one hundred ninety-three scouts and forty-six officers and soldiers. Once the command entered the mountains, the Apache served as both scouts and the main combat force.<sup>394</sup>

By the spring of 1883, Gatewood’s expertise was widely recognized. He was known to be imminently practical in all he did, including not wearing the standard uniform which proved unsuitable for long periods of field service. He only wore the sturdiest clothing and his appearance was anything but that of an army officer. While preparing for the campaign, Lieutenant G.J. Fieberger, asked by some civilian passersby to point out an “Arizona bad man,” quickly singled out Gatewood. According to Fieberger, “Gatewood was as tough a looking specimen as we had.”<sup>395</sup> The visitors were duly impressed.

In preparation for the campaign, Gatewood augmented the standing scout companies by enlisting an additional hundred men from various Apache bands. He had little trouble in recruiting the number because the Chiricahua had many enemies. Gatewood also applied the well-proven incentive of authorizing the men to retain plunder captured during the campaign, on top of adventure, vengeance, and each scout’s thirteen dollar per month salary.<sup>396</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> Bourke, *Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre.*, 29–30.

<sup>394</sup> Crook in United States, *ARSW 1883*, 1:166–67; Crook, *General George Crook*, 247; Bourke, *On the Border with Crook.*, 35–36, 253; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 177.

<sup>395</sup> G.J. Fieberger, “Campaigning with Crook in Old Mexico in 1883: Events Leading Up to It and Personal Experiences in the Campaign,” in *The Papers of the Order of Indian Wars*, ed. John M Carroll (Ft. Collins, Colo.: Old Army Press, 1975), 198.

<sup>396</sup> Crook in United States, *ARSW 1883*, 1:174; Crook, *General George Crook*, 246; Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 27.

On May 1, 1883, Gatewood, Crawford, and the scouts led the command across the border into Mexico. Crawford commanded with Gatewood as his deputy. The scouts performed essential duties. Bourke observed that “the loose, straggling methods of the Apache scouts would appear startling, and yet no soldier would fail to appreciate at a glance that the Apache was the perfect, the ideal, scout of the whole world.”<sup>397</sup> Bourke also noted that because the Apache dread surprise they were sure to observe and control every possible approach. Gatewood, in his role as deputy, ensured the scouts kept Crawford and Crook informed.<sup>398</sup>

Throughout their forty-two days in the field, Gatewood conferred with the scouts and took their counsel when making decisions. On May 12, 1883 as the signs of Chiricahua presence—food caches, slaughtered animals, the remains of cooking fires and camps—appeared all around them, the scouts recommended that they separate from the main body of soldiers and pack trains as a means to maintain the element of surprise. Some commanders might have rejected this advice, but Gatewood brought the matter, and the sergeants, directly to Crawford, and then Crook, who promptly ordered the command to separate.<sup>399</sup>

Once separated from the main body, Gatewood demonstrated his own tactical prowess. Each day, more signs indicated that the Chiricahua were of unaware the scouts’ presence. On the fourth morning, scouts found a large Chiricahua camp but two of the scouts opened fire before

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<sup>397</sup> Bourke, *Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre.*, 22.

<sup>398</sup> The Chiricahua hideouts in the Sierra Madre Mountains were so remote that even the White Mountain scouts needed aid. Fortunately, Britton Davis captured Tzoe, a Chiricahua raider who returned home to his family just before the campaign. Tzoe’ rapid interrogation and enlistment as a scout is a good example of the dynamics of guerrilla warfare and also demonstrates how effectively Crook’s officers controlled the reservation Indians. See Crook in United States, *ARSW 1883*, 1:175; Bourke, *Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre.*, 29–30, 59, 62, 67; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 276–77, 284–85; Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 28.

<sup>399</sup> United States, *ARSW 1883*, 1:178; Bourke, *Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre.*, 70; Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 29–30.

the camp was surrounded. The gun fire alerted the camp and the inhabitants began to flee. Gatewood, along with Crawford, scrambled to launch an immediate rush into the camp. Their quick action ensured that those who were not captured could escape with nothing more than what they could grab. The scouts killed nine Chiricahua during the assault but more importantly their surprise arrival demoralized the women, men, and children who managed to escape. This was especially true because there were Chiricahua men in the ranks. This psychological dimension proved critical in bringing the raiders in to negotiate with Crook. Over several days of often stormy negotiation, the Chiricahua leaders agreed to return to San Carlos but on the condition they come at their own pace.<sup>400</sup>

The Sierra Madre campaign was a landmark for Charles Gatewood. General Crook commended Crawford, Gatewood, and their men in orders “for the courage and ability displayed in this action.”<sup>401</sup> The campaign also enhanced Gatewood’s bond with his scouts and their people. Those Apache men not yet familiar with Gatewood learned that he respected them, trusted their judgment on tactical matters and, most especially, believed what they said about other Apache bands. Gatewood’s actions burnished his reputation with the White Mountain and the other Apache with whom he worked or fought. They came to recognize him as a white man willing to listen to their side of a story and join them in their toughest journeys, even risking his professional reputation, and deep in Chiricahua territory, risking his life.<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> Bourke, *Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre.*, 85–88, 95–96; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 286–87, 289; Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 31–32, 34–35.

<sup>401</sup> United States. Adjutant General’s Office, “Memorandum of Services of Charles B. Gatewood, Late of the U.S. Army, Page 310 Letters Received by Commission Branch, 1874-1894,” Fold3, accessed April 24, 2022, <https://www.fold3.com/image/303576505>.

<sup>402</sup> Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 304; Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 34; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 48–49.

The scouts commanded by Gatewood and Crawford enabled Crook's bold plan. Although it would be ten months before Geronimo finally returned to the San Carlos reservation, and a year before all of the Chiricahua came in, the immediate raiding spree came to an end.<sup>403</sup> It would take another long campaign to push the Apache Wars toward their finale.



Lt. Gatewood (center), First Sergeant Alchesay (left of Gatewood), Interpreter Sam Bowman, directly behind, with Co A, Apache Scouts, 1885. Courtesy of Arizona Historical Society, PC 1000 Tucson General Photo Collection, Subjects-Indians-Apache-Scouts, #19763.

## The Geronimo Campaign

On his return from the Sierra Madre, Charles Gatewood resumed his duties as the White Mountain military agent. Geronimo and other Chiricahua continued to find life on the reservation difficult. Crook chose to resettle them on the Fort Apache reservation instead of San Carlos. Gatewood advised the general against this move because he and his White Mountain charges distrusted the Chiricahua. Adding Geronimo's band would be too much of a burden. Lt

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<sup>403</sup> Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheia*, 293; Bourke, *On the Border with Crook.*, 454–55.

Gatewood was blunt in his correspondence with Crook, “I do not desire to have charge of them and be held responsible for their conduct.”<sup>404</sup>

Gatewood’s biggest headache, though, was protecting the White Mountain people’s progress toward self-sufficiency in the new commerce-centric settler order. The traits that gave him influence with the Apache also made him enemies among territorial officials and settlers. Gatewood, under Crook’s direction, sought to guide the Apache onto a path toward agricultural self-sufficiency. That meant protecting their fledgling efforts from encroachment by whites and defending the Indians rights against the territorial legal system. This effort to protect the Indians and see them become independent placed the agent’s Indian charges in direct competition with Arizona settlers, business interests, and territorial politicians.<sup>405</sup>

The lieutenant’s protection of Indian rights resulted in confrontation with the local settler community. Charles, who as agent served as commander, sheriff, and judge for the tribe, explained that “among the multi-farious duties required of the ‘Judge’ by orders and laws...was that of protecting both red and white men in their rights on the reservation.” The position he claimed “occasioned considerable trouble, and somewhat of [an] embarrassment too, to one who is obliged to act as a buffer between two antagonistic races.”<sup>406</sup>

In his zeal to protect his charges Gatewood became embroiled in a dispute with Francis M. Zuck, a territorial judge, merchant, and land owner from the town of Holbrook, Arizona, near Fort Apache. Initially, Gatewood refused to approve a request by Zuck and his associates to

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<sup>404</sup> Post Returns for May and June 1883, Adjutant General’s Office, “Fort Apache Post Return”; Crook in United States, *ARSW 1883*, 1:163; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheia*, 303; Lockwood, *The Apache Indians*, 274–75; Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 42; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 63.

<sup>405</sup> Crook in United States, *ARSW 1883*, 1:164, 181–82; Crook, *Resumé of Operations against Apache Indians, 1882 to 1886*, 5–6; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 7–9, 84, 86, 88, 90–92.

<sup>406</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 85.



build a rest station on the White Mountain Reservation for their mail carriers crossing the reservation. The judge appealed to General Crook who overruled the lieutenant and granted approval. Lt Gatewood was wary of Zuck and two of his associates pursuit of further self-serving opportunities. At one point, Charles had the men arrested and put in the guard house for trespassing on the White Mountain reservation by the scouts, who also served as reservation's police force. The white men were acquitted of all wrong doing by another local judge. The vengeful Zuck retaliated by having Gatewood charged with "'false imprisonment against the dignity of the Territory &tc.'"<sup>407</sup>

Zuck's charge would become a multi-year legal struggle for Charles. The strain of court proceedings took an emotional and financial toll on him. Worse yet, he lost George Crook's patronage, because the general's plan for managing the department required the support of Arizona politicians and businessmen. In contrast, Gatewood's demonstration that he would stand up for their rights strengthened his reputation among the reservation Apache.,<sup>408</sup>

While Gatewood struggled to balance his duties as Indian agent and commander of scouts with preparing a legal defense, Geronimo and other Chiricahua men were finding that accepting of an alien way of life based on the values and norms of white society was too much for them. Britton Davis, assigned as the Chiricahua agent, observed that moratoriums on drinking tizwin, a traditional Apache distilled alcohol, and wife beating were the clearest frustrations among the Chiricahua men. Batsinas, a cousin of Geronimo's, claimed that the ensuing Chiricahua unrest

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<sup>407</sup> Gatewood, 86–87.

<sup>408</sup> Charles B. Gatewood, "Gatewood to Adjutant General, 'Request for Counsel to Defend Him in Suits Brought against Him by F.M. Zuck, J.C. Kay, and T. Jones Who Were Ejected from the White Mountain Indian Reservation for Unlawfully Cutting Hay'" Dated August 16th, 1885, Pages 1-14, Letters Received by the Adjutant General, 1881-1889," Genealogy, Fold3, August 16, 1885, <http://www.fold3.com:9292/image/632702269>; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 97–99, 103–4, 107.

had a much simpler explanation, stating “they really hadn’t been mistreated at Fort Apache but weren’t yet ready to settle down.”<sup>409</sup>

On May 15, 1886, Geronimo and other Chiricahua men demonstrated their lack of respect for Crook’s rules. That morning they taunted Davis that they’d been drinking heavily the night before and demanded to know what the lieutenant would do about it. Davis responded by saying that the question must be presented to General Crook. He promptly sent a telegram addressed to Crook requesting instructions. The telegram was routed through Davis’ new superior, Captain Francis Pierce, at San Carlos. Pierce, unfamiliar with the volatility of the Chiricahua, did not forward the message to the general. With no reply, Geronimo assumed that Crook was preparing to move against him. On May 17, he left Fort Apache with his band headed for Mexico, again.<sup>410</sup>

Crook, when informed, was furious and ordered an immediate pursuit. Gatewood and the White Mountain scouts were on Geronimo’s trail soon after. They were accompanied by the Fort Apache cavalry and Britton Davis, leading a scout company composed of Chiricahua men from other families. The scouts and soldiers moved rapidly but were not able to intercept the fleeing band. According to General Crook “the vigor of the pursuit may be understood from the fact that probably 150 horses and mules were found on the different trails, which had been worn out and

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<sup>409</sup> Batsinas was a Chiricahua whose mother was the cousin of Geronimo. Batsinas, along with his mother and sister were imprisoned in 1886 at Fort Marion with the rest of the band. He took the name, Jason Betzinez, while attending the Carlisle Indian Industrial School where he met and befriended the superintendent, Captain Richard H. Pratt. Betzinez, *I Fought with Geronimo*, 129–30; Geronimo, *Geronimo*, 132; Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo.*, 139–42; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 101.

<sup>410</sup> Crook reported that 34 men, 8 “well-grown boys,” and 92 women and children led by Geronimo and the sub-chief, Mangas, fled Fort Apache on May 17, 1885. See Crook in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1885*, vol. 1 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1885), 169, 178, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078451>; Davis stated that he identified the number of Chiricahua who fled as “Thirty-five men, eight tagged boys (those old enough to bear arms), and 101 women and children.” See Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo.*, 149, 152.

killed or abandoned by the Indians in their flight.”<sup>411</sup> The final campaign of the Apache Wars had just begun, but Gatewood’s participation was already ebbing.<sup>412</sup>

After the initial pursuit, General Crook assigned Lt Gatewood less demanding, less important roles in the campaign. The general had lost confidence in his subordinate. Crook disagreed with Gatewood’s impetuous and self-righteous approach to the local community. Furthermore, the lieutenant’s prolonged legal difficulties had disrupted his routine duties and the publicity had threatened to bring unwanted political scrutiny on Crook’s control of the Apache reservations and de facto government policy regarding the tribe. In June, the general sent Gatewood orders that took him in the opposite direction of the fight. Charles enlisted one hundred additional Indians at Fort Apache and scouted the Mogollon Rim and Black Range Mountains “to determine whether any Indians were remaining in that region.”<sup>413</sup> Other officers assumed Gatewood’s former position as Crawford’s trusted second in command during the succeeding expeditions into Mexico’s Sierra Madre Mountains.<sup>414</sup>

Making matters worse, Agent Gatewood also jeopardized his relationship with the White Mountain people. In November 1885, a small group from Geronimo’s band came through the Fort Apache reservation killing all the women and children of a White Mountain family clan.

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<sup>411</sup> Crook in United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1886*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1886), 149, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000078451>.

<sup>412</sup> Post Return for May 1885, Adjutant General’s Office, “Fort Apache Post Return,” 404–5; Crook in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:147; Betzinez, *I Fought with Geronimo*, 131.

<sup>413</sup> On June 9, 1885, Crook was authorized to add 200 more scouts to his payroll. Crook in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:149.

<sup>414</sup> Indicating Gatewood’s loss rapport is the fact that Crook did not include Gatewood in his accolades for the officers leading scouts during the eleven months of the campaign. Since the annual reports were a primary means officers received professional and public recognition for their performance this would have been a blow to Gatewood. Britton Davis and later Lieutenant Marion P. Maus would be Crawford’s deputy. See Crook in *ARSW 1886*, United States, 1:155.

The family was only survived by the grandfather who was out hunting and the men who were serving as scouts. In retaliation, White Mountain leaders planned to kill members of the Chiricahua who had remained on the reservation. Gatewood, aware of the plot, moved those Chiricahua in to Fort Apache proper as a measure to protect them. He then informed the White Mountain leaders “they might rest assured that their scheme of revenge would not be carried out.”<sup>415</sup>

To Gatewood, the White Mountain leaders’ intention to murder the Chiricahua was a step backward in their assimilation. He also reasoned that the murder of Chiricahua on the reservation would poison any efforts to negotiate with Geronimo. Gatewood’s defense of the reservation Chiricahua cost him the respect and trust of the White Mountain band. Gatewood was called out on this action by Sanchez, one of the band’s most prominent leaders. Sanchez accused Gatewood of disloyalty saying that “you’ve gone back on us...Now we are convinced that you are a Chiricahua. Our hearts are bleeding.”<sup>416</sup> Gatewood’s credibility as agent was irretrievably compromised. Crook released him from duty in December 1885.<sup>417</sup>

Lt Charles Gatewood rejoined D Company now stationed at Fort Stanton, New Mexico. Captain C.G. Gordon, his company commander, had formally requested Gatewood’s return as early as 1884. Gatewood now returned to a group of officers and men he hardly knew. The 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, though, still valued scouts. With little to connect him with his soldiers, Gatewood was

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<sup>415</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 78–79.

<sup>416</sup> Gatewood, 80.

<sup>417</sup> Gatewood requested relief from duty as the White Mountain agent in summer 1885. Although Crook endorsed the request, he retained Gatewood in the position until December 1885, when Lieutenant James Lockett replaced him. See Post Return for December 1885, Adjutant General’s Office, “Fort Apache Post Return”; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 104.

ordered to Fort Wingate, New Mexico in January 1886 to recruit a scout company from the local Navajo people. That company never saw no action or, even, received weapons.

In March 1886, Gatewood returned to court to find a newly appointed judge hearing the case. The judge with no commitment to the local community dismissed the charges. Charles' stated the decision "was to the effect that the court had no jurisdiction" and "that practically settled a trouble that had lasted a year and a half, with great expense...all because of an effort to defend the Indian in his rights and to bring wrong-doers to justice."<sup>418</sup> Charles was relieved but the dismissal must have left him bitter. He had suffered on behalf of the White Mountain tribe but they no longer considered him part of their family.<sup>419</sup>

While Gatewood performed his duties in New Mexico, the campaign to subdue Geronimo's band took a turn for the worse. In January 1886, Captain Crawford was in Mexico on his third pursuit of the Chiricahua with Lt Marion P. Maus serving as second in command. On January 10, 1886, Crawford, Maus, and their scouts attacked Geronimo's camp deep in the Mexican state of Chihuahua. The band barely escaped, losing all of their animals and possessions in their flight. Exhausted, they concluded their only option was to negotiate terms of surrender. Before the negotiation could proceed, Mexican militia attacked Crawford's command, mortally wounding the Captain. Geronimo persisted and through Maus set a date to meet with Crook.<sup>420</sup>

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<sup>418</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 110–11.

<sup>419</sup> Post Return for December 1885, Adjutant General's Office, "U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916, New Mexico, Fort Stanton, 1878 Jan - 1887 Dec," Ancestry.com, 212, accessed February 19, 2022, <https://www.ancestry.com>; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 104–5.

<sup>420</sup> Britton Davis resigned his commission in September 1885. By 1886 was managing operations for the Corralitos Mining and Cattle Company in Chihuahua, Mexico. See Marion P. Maus, "Report of Lieutenant Maus," dated February 23, 1886 and Brigadier General Crook "Annual Report" both in United States, *ARSW 1886*.

On March 25, 1886, the day Gatewood's trial was dismissed, Crook met Geronimo in Canon de Embudos, Sonora, Mexico. The three-day negotiation appeared successful and Crook quickly departed to wire the news to General Sheridan. Geronimo proved Crook wrong. The shaman and thirty-three others bolted south. General Sheridan dismissed Crook's recent negotiations with Geronimo and ordered the seventy Chiricahua remaining with Lt Maus to be sent as prisoners of war to Fort Marion, Florida. General Crook requested to be relieved of command now that he faced criticism directly from Sheridan in addition to hostile press reporting. General Sheridan accepted the resignation and immediately appointed Brigadier General Nelson Miles to replace Crook.<sup>421</sup>

Miles assumed command of the Department of Arizona on April 12, 1886. Miles, as Crook's principal rival for promotion, was determined to succeed where his predecessor had failed. General Sheridan stated that, "General Miles went to work with commendable zeal."<sup>422</sup> Although Miles lacked campaign experience in the Southwest, he had proven innovative in forcing the surrender of tribes in campaigns on the southern Plains in 1873-74 and the northern Plains in 1876-77. Miles would employ every resource and stratagem available to him.<sup>423</sup>

General Miles' singular focus was to end Geronimo's raiding and permanently subdue the entire Chiricahua people. Miles' knew that ending Apache raiding would give him excellent

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<sup>421</sup> Post Return for March 1886, Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Stanton Post Return," 220; United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:152; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 343-45; Lockwood, *The Apache Indians*, 286-89; John P. Clum, "The Greatness of Geronimo in Former Years," *Arizona Weekly Citizen*, April 12, 1884; "Press Comments on the Recent Outbreak of the Apache Indians," *The St. Johns Herald*, June 11, 1885, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn94051692/1885-06-11/ed-1/seq-1/>; J.O. Dunbar, "Our Charge Against Crook," *Daily Tombstone Epitaph*, February 4, 1886, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn96060682/1886-02-04/ed-1/seq-2/>; Aaron H. Hackney, "Geronimo's Ability," *Arizona Silver Belt*, September 25, 1886, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84021913/1886-09-25/ed-1/seq-2/>.

<sup>422</sup> Phillip Sheridan in "Report of the Lieutenant General of the Army", dated October 10, 1886, in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:149.

<sup>423</sup> Nelson Miles "Report of Brigadier General Miles" dated September 18, 1886, in United States, 1:165.

publicity and, possibly, an advantage in the competition for promotion to major general. Miles would apply the same basic principles—relentless pursuit, rapid strikes, and destruction of resources—as Crook did to exhaust the Chiricahua but he would change the narrative about the campaign in his official reporting to differentiate himself from his predecessor. No longer would he emphasize the role of Apache and other scouts. Miles would focus his reports on the contribution of regulars and downplay the significance of Indian participants. This narrative appealed to General Sheridan, now the army's Commanding General, who disliked how Crook regularly emphasized the role of his Indian scouts over those of the regulars in his official reporting and discussions with reporters. Downplaying the Indian scouts would also mitigate a major criticism the Arizona settler community had of Crook. Miles' decision ensured that officers leading regulars received high praise at the expense of those, including Gatewood, who commanded scouts and thus were deeply involved with the more controversial aspects of the army's societal disruption methods.<sup>424</sup>

Nelson Miles, unlike Crook, was unconstrained by loyalties to either the Arizona settler community or the Apache. Because of this he considered a broader range of options, than his predecessor. General Miles took advantage of the political moment in Washington and the national publicity surrounding Geronimo's flight to increase the manpower available along the border and sustain army forces pursuing the Chiricahua in Mexico. The total number of soldiers rose from 3000 to 5000, giving Miles command of roughly one-quarter of the entire U.S. Army. The general integrated a network of heliograph stations, which used mirrors to transmit messages by Morse code, along the border with Mexico to keep track of the movement of Chiricahua

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<sup>424</sup> Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo.*, 221–22, 231–32; Bourke, *On the Border with Crook.*, 484–85; Uteley, *Frontier Regulars*, 392–93; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 355.

raiders and increase his soldiers' responsiveness to their border crossings. Miles' stated goal was "to capture or destroy" the Chiricahua resistors, but he retained the option to negotiate.<sup>425</sup> And finally, Miles considered transporting the entire Chiricahua people, whether living on or off their reservation, out of Arizona as a means to permanently end raiding. Crook had refused to consider this last option.<sup>426</sup>

In July 1886, General Miles determined the time was right to open negotiations. His two strike forces in Mexico had pursued Geronimo's band for months, attacking his camp a half-dozen times but without destroying the entire band. On July 13, Lt Gatewood, the last remaining of Crook's Apache-men, was summoned from Fort Stanton to speak with General Miles. The general ordered Gatewood to serve as his emissary to Geronimo. The lieutenant initially refused but Miles persisted, and, as an incentive, offered Gatewood the post of aid de camp, if successful. Charles knew there were additional benefits as an aid including a break from continuous field duty, increased pay, and the prospect of an elevated social position for his family. Gatewood could also expect professional recognition and public praise. Moreover, his ambitions for promotion or even transfer to a less demanding branch of the army could be realized, especially with Miles as his new patron. Gatewood accepted the mission.<sup>427</sup>

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<sup>425</sup> Miles in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:166 The Apache Wars were not fought in isolation. Negotiating a tribe's surrender after proving the army's power and persistence was common throughout the Indian Wars. Miles, Crook, Howard, Custer, MacKenzie, Gibbon, and other officers regularly conducted negotiations in efforts to end campaigns as efficiently as possible. Negotiating with tribal leaders was an effective means to lower the cost in ending violent resistance. The Chiricahua proved particularly challenging to subdue because their degree of self-reliance and social decentralization.

<sup>426</sup> William C. Endicott "Report of the Secretary of War" and Nelson Miles "Annual Report" both in United States, 1:8, 168–69; Crook in United States, *ARSW 1883*, 1:167; Bruno J. Rolak, "General Miles' Mirrors: The Heliograph in the Geronimo Campaign of 1886," *The Journal of Arizona History* 16, no. 2 (1975): 148, 153–54 The Chiricahua understood the mirrors were used to send signals. Once they were aware of the heliograph stations they limited daylight movement near the border. This was one way the heliograph contributed to the campaign.

<sup>427</sup> Miles in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:172; Post Return for July 1886, Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Stanton Post Return," 230. Gatewood was in the field "on duty with Navajo Scouts.," Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*,



Charles joined Kayitah and Martine, two Chiricahua men who had remained on the reservation. They, too, had accepted Miles' request for assistance. Together, the three were to find Geronimo and demand his unconditional surrender. Kayitah and Martine were good candidates for the mission because they were related to members of Geronimo's band. As Betzinez observed, "They knew they were risking quick death to go near the renegades."<sup>428</sup> If the two survived first contact, their personal relationships might ensure that Miles' negotiation could proceed. Indeed, Lt Gatewood dubbed the group a "peace commission."<sup>429</sup>

Gatewood's party first had to find Geronimo. On July 16, Gatewood, Kayitah, and Martine, joined by an interpreter, a courier, a pack master, and a small mule train departed Fort Bowie, Arizona. Their initial goal was to find Captain Henry Lawton's command who were Miles' main effort to destroy the Chiricahua. Lawton's force was well supplied and had pursued Geronimo's band since April. Importantly, they were expected to have the most knowledge of the band's location and to be a good starting point for the peace commission to reach the shaman.<sup>430</sup>

Gatewood's little group joined Lawton on August 3. Their initial meeting was lukewarm at best. Lawton stated, "I am ordered to hunt Geronimo down and kill him. I cannot treat with

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121; Craighill, *The 1862 Army Officer's Pocket Companion*, 45, 51; August V Kautz, *The 1865 Customs of Service for Officers of the Army* (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 2002), 238.

<sup>428</sup> Betzinez, *I Fought with Geronimo*, 137.

<sup>429</sup> General Miles and his aid visited Fort Apache on July 8, 1886. See Post Return for July 1886, Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Apache Post Return," 230; Betzinez, *I Fought with Geronimo*, 136; Kenoi, "A Chiricahua Apache's Account of the Geronimo Campaign of 1886," 74; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 132.

<sup>430</sup> Post Return for July 1886, Adjutant General's Office, "U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916, Arizona, Fort Bowie, 1883 Jan-1894 Oct," Ancestry.com, accessed February 20, 2022, <https://www.ancestry.com> The return does not include reference to Gatewood's presence; Miles in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:167; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 124.

him.”<sup>431</sup> Gatewood, suffering from rheumatism and the heat, chose to remain even though he disagreed with Lawton’s plan. “I put myself under Lawton’s orders, with the understanding, however, that whenever he approached the hostiles, and circumstances permitted, I should be allowed to execute my mission.”<sup>432</sup> The two commands remained together for the rest of the campaign.<sup>433</sup>

Lawton’s command made a lasting impression on Gatewood. He noted that despite the challenges posed by their adversaries and the harsh environment, “there was no murmur of discontent.” Gatewood recalled,

If you had seen those officers and soldiers, you would never have taken them for regulars of the U.S. or any country. Their attire consisted of a tattered woolen shirt, canvas trousers whose original color had long since disappeared and whose variety of patches would put to shame the celebrated coat of Joseph,..week after week and month after month, from fifteen to thirty miles a day, they toiled along the trail over the [Sierra Madre] mountains...wading, swimming, and rafting the rivers—across the arid sandy plains that become hot (enough) under the scorching sun to blister the feet and making it exceedingly uncomfortable to rest on at night.<sup>434</sup>

Gatewood was proud of the men, remembering that, “the American soldier was on his metal...and the result was that the wily, fiery, red man with all his boasted wariness and endurance gave up the fight and made his bow to the only foe that ever conquered him.”<sup>435</sup>

Gatewood was confident that these tough, experienced, and committed soldiers would continue the pursuit regardless of obstacles.

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<sup>431</sup> James Parker, ““The Geronimo Campaign,”” in *The Papers of the Order of Indian Wars*, ed. John M Carroll (Ft. Collins, Colo.: Old Army Press, 1975), 98.

<sup>432</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 127.

<sup>433</sup> Leonard Wood, *Chasing Geronimo: The Journal of Leonard Wood, May - September 1886*, ed. Jack C Lane (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 88, 98–99.

<sup>434</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 127.

<sup>435</sup> Gatewood, 128; Miles, too, provides an account of Lawton’s command and their arduous pursuit of Geronimo’s band. See Miles in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:169–70.

After three weeks, the scouts found Geronimo's trail. The peace commission took the lead. Kayitah and Martine, scouting ahead, made contact with Geronimo's band on August 23. Kayitah delivered Miles' message—surrender and go to Florida with your families or the army will keep hunting you. This pre-negotiation set the tone for Gatewood. The lieutenant's character and years of service with Apaches would be put to the test. Kayitah likely told the band that Gatewood had protected the Chiricahua families still on the reservation. More importantly, he would have told them about the lieutenant's break with the White Mountain people. Gatewood, exhausted, doubtful, and nervous, needed every possible advantage to proceed with his part.<sup>436</sup>

Kayitah found Geronimo and his band prepared to negotiate. The Chiricahua were worn down from Lawton's relentless pursuit that kept them awake and moving nearly continuously. The band's inability to cross the border undetected exasperated the effect of their dwindling resources. On August 24, Gatewood, Kayitah, Martine, an interpreter, and four soldiers walked a short distance to meet with Geronimo. The shaman brought all the remaining members of the band with him—twenty-three men and fourteen women and children. Gatewood, although conversant in the Chiricahua language, chose to work through his interpreter because "it was a poor time to risk anything."<sup>437</sup> With a well-armed Geronimo sitting next to him, he again conveyed Miles' offer. The band must surrender to spare their lives. Then they would be sent to

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<sup>436</sup> Henry W. Lawton "Report of Captain Lawton," and Miles "Annual Report" in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:172, 179 Miles acknowledges Kayitah and Martine's pre-negotiation as well as the courage required of Gatewood to follow them, stating, that he "boldly rode into their presence, at the risk of his life.," Betzinez, *I Fought with Geronimo*, 138; Kenoi, "A Chiricahua Apache's Account of the Geronimo Campaign of 1886," 76–77; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 132–33; Charles B. Gatewood, Jr, "Lieutenant Charles B. Gatewood, 6th Cavalry, and the Surrender of Geronimo," in *The Papers of the Order of Indian Wars*, ed. John M Carroll (Ft. Collins, Colo.: Old Army Press, 1975), 106.

<sup>437</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 138.

Florida with their families to await the President's decision on their final disposition. "Accept these terms or fight to the bitter end" said Gatewood.<sup>438</sup>

The negotiation was tense. Geronimo countered, saying they would stop their raiding only on the condition that they return to their farms and be exempted from prosecution. Gatewood reminded Geronimo that these were General Miles' conditions for surrender and that he could not alter them. The lieutenant then revealed to the Chiricahua that even if he could return them to the reservation, where their farms were located, they would be living among their enemies, the White Mountain people. Earlier, while the peace commission was searching for Geronimo, Miles had ordered the detention of all the Chiricahua remaining on the reservation and their transportation to Florida. This news transformed the dynamic of the negotiation. Eventually, Geronimo asked Charles what he would do—surrender or fight? Gatewood responded, "Trust General Miles and take him at his word."<sup>439</sup>

After delivering Miles' message, the lieutenant anticipated that his responsibilities would diminish. Alas, Geronimo and his band had other ideas. They were determined that only Gatewood, not Captain Lawton, could ensure their safety in the walk to the U.S. border from the triple threats posed by the Mexicans, vigilantes in Arizona and New Mexico, and the army. Gatewood respected the Chiricahua as shrewd negotiators. He was practiced in the art of give and take in negotiation but likely did not realize just how well the Chiricahua understood him, too. Geronimo knew the lieutenant, as Indian agent and scout commander, prided himself on being truthful and living up to his word to the White Mountain band. Geronimo was betting that

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<sup>438</sup> Wratten, "George Wratten Friend of the Apaches," 97–98; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 138.

<sup>439</sup> Miles in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:174–75; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 140, 142; Betzinez, *I Fought with Geronimo*, 141; Gatewood, Jr, "Gatewood and the Surrender of Geronimo," 110; Charles Byars, "Gatewood Reports to His Wife from Geronimo's Camp," *The Journal of Arizona History* 7, no. 2 (1966): 78–80.

Gatewood would remain consistent and honor any commitment the Chiricahua could negotiate with him.

After the day's negotiations ended both parties returned to their camps. When the lieutenant departed for Lawton's camp, Geronimo's son, Chappo, caught up with him. Chappo explained to Gatewood that his father gave him permission to stay with the lieutenant in the soldiers' camp. Gatewood knew the scouts would not hesitate to kill Chappo, even with him present. He did his best to tactfully convince the young man to return to his father's camp. In his memoir, Gatewood claims his action to protect Chappo from harm "had a good effect on them."<sup>440</sup> It certainly set the stage for the second day of negotiations.

The next morning the groups met, again. Geronimo told Gatewood that if certain conditions were accepted "they would meet the general [Miles] at some point in the United States, talk the matter over with him, and surrender to him in person."<sup>441</sup> Geronimo's conditions included having Captain Lawton's command protect the band from attack during their journey to meet Miles, the Chiricahua retaining their arms until surrendering, and Gatewood marching with the Chiricahua and sleeping in their camp along the way.

Charles now realized that ending the campaign and, in turn, Chiricahua raiding was within his grasp. He knew ensuring Geronimo surrendered to General Miles would be his crowning achievement. Charles wanted to be rewarded for all his years of toil and effort with the Apache. This was his chance to achieve his ambitions. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Gatewood, the Apache-man, also now understood both sides would blame him if anything went wrong.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 143; Gatewood, Jr, "Gatewood and the Surrender of Geronimo," 110.

<sup>441</sup> Kraft, *Gatewood & Geronimo*, 144.

<sup>442</sup> Kraft, 152.

Gatewood knew he had to be extra vigilant to safely shepherd the Chiricahua to the border. He saw that both the Indians and the Americans were spent by this time in the campaign. Not only were they physically and mentally drained but with the anticipation of the end to hostilities they were letting their guard down. Charles drew on his ingrained sense of honor, professionalism, and burning ambition to force himself to remain alert, to maintain Geronimo's trust through some of the greatest vulnerabilities he had faced, yet.

Lieutenant Gatewood's commitment to ensure Geronimo and his band's safety were tested throughout their eleven-day journey together. The lieutenant's first act of protection had been keeping Chappo out of harm's way. The second act of protection came after the two parties started traveling north together. The soldiers, scouts, and Chiricahua failed to post adequate guards outside their camps. On their second morning together they were surprised by the rapid approach of Mexican militia. As the Mexicans bore down on their camps, Gatewood advised Lawton that he would race ahead with Geronimo and his people leaving Lawton to meet with the Mexicans.<sup>443</sup>

At their meeting, the militia commander proved obstinate. He refused to accept Lawton's explanation that Geronimo was in American custody and demanded to see him in person. To avoid combat, Lawton agreed to arrange a meeting for the Mexican commander with Geronimo. Gatewood found "it took not a little persuasion" to bring the wary Geronimo back.<sup>444</sup> The meeting was tense but abbreviated once the Mexican commander recognized he would be fighting a combined American and Apache party if he tried to detain Geronimo. Afterwards,

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<sup>443</sup> Miles in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:172.

<sup>444</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 147; Gatewood, Jr, "Gatewood and the Surrender of Geronimo," 111.

Gatewood convinced both Lawton and Geronimo that it was best for him to speed north with the Chiricahua to avoid any further Mexican interruptions.<sup>445</sup>

Lastly, Gatewood acted forcefully to divert the ire of Lawton's officers. On August 31, Lieutenant Abiel Smith was in command of the soldiers and scouts, while Captain Lawton was away from the column sending a telegram to General Miles from the nearest town. Smith appeared intent on attacking the Chiricahua as they neared Guadalupe Canyon. It was in the canyon where Geronimo's band had killed some of Lawton's men earlier in the campaign. As tempers flared, Gatewood confronted Smith, accusing him of plotting to trap and murder Geronimo's band. At the height of tensions, Gatewood drew his pistol and threatened to shoot Smith or any other man who continued moving toward the Chiricahua.<sup>446</sup>

Throughout the journey, one of Gatewood's greatest challenges was to protect Geronimo from his own self-destructive proclivities. As overt threats diminished, relatively easy days loomed. Gatewood recognized that was the environment in which Crook had lost Geronimo before. Charles recognized the dangers of an inactive Geronimo. After they arrived at Skeleton Canyon, New Mexico, on September 2 to await Miles, Gatewood opened a dialogue with the shaman to keep him from becoming unnerved in the presence of hundreds of soldiers and Indian scouts. Gatewood also did everything in his power to limit Geronimo's access to alcohol, a major factor in his flight from Crook the previous year.<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>445</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 148.

<sup>446</sup> Henry Daly, "The Capture of Geronimo," *The American Legion Monthly* 8, no. 6 (June 1930): 45, <https://archive.legion.org/handle/20.500.12203/3320>; Wood, *Chasing Geronimo*, 108–9; Gatewood, Jr, "Gatewood and the Surrender of Geronimo," 111–12; Louis Kraft in Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 151.

<sup>447</sup> Gatewood, Jr, "Gatewood and the Surrender of Geronimo," 112; Wood, *Chasing Geronimo*, 108.

General Miles arrived on September 3. Geronimo immediately met the general, after which, to Gatewood's great relief, "Geronimo turned to me, smiled, and said in Apache, 'Good, you told the truth!'"<sup>448</sup> The final negotiation was completed the next day. Miles, not willing to risk losing sight of Geronimo, departed with the shaman for Fort Bowie early the next morning. Miles, Geronimo, and Natchez, the hereditary leader of the band, rode together in a buggy surrounded by Miles's staff and a company of cavalry, covering the seventy-mile distance in one day. The rest of the Chiricahua, escorted by Gatewood, Kayitah, Martine, and Lawton's soldiers arrived at Fort Bowie two days later. On September 8, 1886, the last of the Chiricahua in Arizona were placed on a train bound for the east coast. The cycle of Apache raiding and warfare begun in the 1860s was broken. The Apache Wars were over.<sup>449</sup>

## Outcome

As soon as Geronimo and his band departed Arizona, a scramble began to claim credit for his surrender. The seniority-based promotion system still drove officers to seek public recognition, now particularly acute because this would be the last campaign of the Indian Wars with significant combat.<sup>450</sup> Subjugating the various Indian populations of the Southwest was a massive undertaking. Now the army's active campaigning to consolidate the trans-Mississippi

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<sup>448</sup> Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 153; Gatewood, Jr, "Gatewood and the Surrender of Geronimo," 112; Wood, *Chasing Geronimo*, 109.

<sup>449</sup> Miles in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:173 There were 465 Chiricahua confined: 404 at Fort Marion, 17 at Fort Pickens including Geronimo, while 44 children and young adults were reported at the Carlisle Indian Industrial Institute. See page 50, *ARSW 1886*; Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 153; Thomas J. Clay, "'Some Unwritten Incidents of the Geronimo Campaign,'" in *The Papers of the Order of Indian Wars*, ed. John M Carroll (Ft. Collins, Colo.: Old Army Press, 1975), 115; Post Return for September 1886 Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Bowie Post Return."

<sup>450</sup> The army continued to respond to violent resistance in the trans-Mississippi West the most significant of which was the Ghost Dance movement that resulted in the massacre at Wounded Knee. The army designated that event as the "Pine Ridge, November 1890-January 1891" campaign. See U.S. Army Center of Military History at: [https://history.army.mil/html/reference/campaigns.html#CAMPind\\_war](https://history.army.mil/html/reference/campaigns.html#CAMPind_war)



West was coming to an end. The intra-army fight over credit showed the lack of an adequate system for recognizing officers and soldiers' meritorious performance.<sup>451</sup>

Gatewood, too, expected reward and recognition. General Miles fulfilled his promise and had the first lieutenant assigned as his aid de camp on September 14, 1886, just ten days after Geronimo's surrender. Miles even endorsed Gatewood's request for transfer to the Quartermaster branch and promotion to Captain. The transfer was denied because there were no quartermaster officer vacancies at the time. As aid de camp, though, Gatewood did receive his extra pay and was no longer on extended field duty. He and his family moved from Fort Apache to the Department of Arizona headquarters at Fort Whipple near Prescott, Arizona. When the headquarters moved to Santa Monica, California, the Gatewoods went, too.<sup>452</sup>

Service as Miles' aid positioned Gatewood to develop a relationship with the general. Miles, like many other generals, was known to advocate on behalf of his loyal subordinates. However, Lieutenant Gatewood sacrificed his chances of further advocacy by accusing General Miles of corruption. Georgia Gatewood would later claim that Miles' jealousy of her husband's role in the surrender of Geronimo began the rift between the men, but it was Gatewood's accusation that the general misappropriated government funds to pay his personal servants that

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<sup>451</sup> Nelson Miles "Annual Report" in United States, *ARSW 1886*, 1:173–74; Nelson Appleton Miles, *Personal Recollections and Observations of General Nelson A. Miles* (Chicago: Werner, 1897), 521–22, <http://archive.org/details/personalrecollec00milerich>; Crook, *Resumé of Operations against Apache Indians, 1882 to 1886*, 24, Crook boldly claimed credit for himself, writing "the campaign was closed only by a return to the methods which constituted the distinctive feature of the policy adopted and followed by me." Crook went on to disparage the regulars, even though he had deployed 3000 of them, stating of Geronimo's surrender to Miles, "One fact however, is certain, the efforts of the troops in the field, had little or nothing to do with it."; See also Crook, *General George Crook*, 265; Bourke, *On the Border with Crook.*, 480–85; Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo.*, 232–34.

<sup>452</sup> Post Returns for September and October, Adjutant General's Office, "Fort Stanton Post Return"; United States. Adjutant General, *Official Register for 1876*, 261C. Aids to Brigadier Generals received an annual stipend of \$150 equivalent to 5 weeks additional pay for a 1st Lt. Gatewood, Jr, "Gatewood and the Surrender of Geronimo," 116; Thrapp, *The Conquest of Apacheria*, 304; Kraft in Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 159; "1880 California Voter Registers, Charles B. Gatewood," in *Los Angeles County, California, U.S., Voter Registers, 1866-1898*, Great Registers, 1866–1898. (Sacramento, California: California State Library, 1888), 40, <https://www.ancestry.com>.

ended the chance for a beneficial relationship. Lieutenant Gatewood, as Miles' aid, refused to consider that the servants might be legitimately on the pay voucher or to seek a more appropriate means for the employees to be paid. Charles had found what he believed was a moral fault in Miles and flatly refused to approve or take action on the payments.<sup>453</sup>

It was the same stubborn approach that damaged his relationship with others. Earlier it was General Crook whom Charles thought had deserted him to maintain a good relationship with the settler community. And then it was the White Mountain scouts, who demanded retribution against the reservation Chiricahua in response to their suffering at the hands of Geronimo's raiders. Gatewood found what he perceived as moral faults in all these people. In each case, he stubbornly refused to consider alternative explanations, motives, or responses to their actions. Charles was not shy in explaining their faults and when they did not rectify his perceived failings to his satisfaction, he no longer considered them worthy of his respect.

Gatewood possessed an unwavering moral compass along with a strong work ethic and high professional standards. These traits proved a strength allowing him to gain and retain for years a choice assignment leading scouts before becoming agent to the White Mountain. Those assignments gave him great professional responsibility, latitude, and stability in addition to a sense of power – having command over dozens of fighting men and an Indian community of nineteen-hundred people. Charles also routinely interacted with senior officers and government officials in these assignments. Those interactions afforded him greater influence over the implementation of his duties and federal policy than his peers and often his regimental superiors.

Charles strong character traits also proved to be a weakness. Gatewood's life experience prepared him to succeed as a leader of scouts and to navigate the moral dilemmas he faced

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<sup>453</sup> Kraft in Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 161–62, 265 note 16.

implementing the process of consolidation. He was less able to adapt himself to the reality of army social and bureaucratic cultures. The lieutenant's lack of perceptiveness and empathy proved detrimental to his own ambitions. His desire for promotion ahead of his peers and further choice assignments would go unfulfilled following his opportunities with Generals Crook and Miles. Lt Gatewood would remain assigned to his regiment on the rigid, seniority based promotion system for the rest of his career.<sup>454</sup>

Lt Gatewood's contributions to fulfilling the army's role in consolidation were significant but, personally, his only benefit would be a four-year respite from field duty. He returned to duty with his regiment in October 1890. His continuing rheumatism prevented him from joining his men in the field during the Ghost Dance unrest that ended at Wounded Knee. Then in May 1892, Charles was severely injured in an explosion. He went home to Virginia on extended leave to await retirement after being found physically unfit for duty. The strength of Gatewood's reputation was demonstrated by the fact he was retained on his regiment's roster and continued to receive full pay. Charles B. Gatewood died of stomach cancer on May 20, 1896, aged 53, in the Fort Monroe, Virginia hospital.<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> The year before his death Gatewood was the senior First Lieutenant in the 6th Cavalry Regiment, the fifteenth most senior in the Cavalry Branch, and the one-hundred-nineteenth most senior in the entire army. This may seem unusual but one example illustrates that he was on par with his peers. Augustus P. Blocksom, Charles' classmate at West Point and fellow 6th Cavalry officer, outranked Gatewood by one position on the graduation order of merit list. Blocksom was only promoted to Captain in November 1894, two years after Gatewood was found unfit for service. Blocksom remained in the army ultimately retiring as a major general after participating in the Spanish-American and First World Wars. United States. Adjutant General's Office, *Official Army Register for 1895* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1894), 68, 276, <http://archive.org/details/officialarmyregi1895unit>.

<sup>455</sup> Gatewood was injured on May 18, 1892, while he was fighting a large fire and the explosives he was placing to demolish a building exploded prematurely. See Adjutant General's Office, "U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916, Wyoming, Fort McKinney, 1888 Jan - 1894 Nov," Ancestry.com, 142, accessed February 20, 2022, <https://www.ancestry.com>; Adjutant General's Office, "Charles B. Gatewood, Record of Service in Letters Received by Appointment, Commission and Personnel Branch (ACP), 1874-1894," Fold3, 297, accessed April 24, 2022, <http://www.fold3.com:9292/image/303575868?terms=gatewood,b,charles>; Post Return for May 1896, Adjutant General's Office, "U.S., Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916, Virginia, Fort Meyer, 1891 Jan - 1904 Dec," Genealogy, Ancestry.com, 150, accessed January 17, 2022, <https://www.ancestry.com>; Bureau of Pensions, "Georgia Gatewood Indian War Pension Application, Index to Indian Wars Pension Files, 1892-1926," Genealogy,

Charles Gatewood never received the recognition he sought. In April 1891, the Adjutant General published General Orders No.39 recognizing soldiers and officers who in 1886 “distinguished themselves by meritorious acts or conduct in service.” The citation for August 24, 1886 reads, “1st Lieut. Charles B. Gatewood, 6th Cavalry, commanding Chiricahua Indian Scouts - For bravery in boldly and alone riding in to Geronimo’s camp of hostile Apache Indians in Arizona, and demanding their surrender.”<sup>456</sup> Unsatisfied, Gatewood sought more prestigious recognition. Gatewood’s classmate, August Blocksom, nominated him for the Medal of Honor in 1895. General Miles endorsed the award recommendation but the honor was not approved by Joseph Doe, the Assistant Secretary of War, on the grounds that the Gatewood’s negotiation with Geronimo was not considered to have occurred “in action.”<sup>457</sup> Even in the years after his death, echoing the post-campaign struggle for recognition, campaign participants published accounts claiming Gatewood alone deserved credit for Geronimo’s surrender in 1886.<sup>458</sup>

Charles Gatewood deserved credit for his distinctive role in ending the Geronimo campaign. He and his supporters sole focus on winning him credit for Geronimo’s surrender, though, missed the significance of the more central role he played in consolidation. The

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Fold3, accessed February 20, 2022, <http://www.fold3.com:9292/image/624182809>; Kraft in Gatewood, *Apache Wars Memoir*, 164–65.

<sup>456</sup> Adjutant General’s Office, “General Orders No. 39, Publishing Names of Army Officers for Distinguished Service in 1886,” Fold3, April 9, 1891, 4, <https://www.fold3.com/image/636460155>.

<sup>457</sup> Augustus P. Blocksom, “Medal of Honor Recommendation for Lt C.B. Gatewood, Letters Received by ACP Branch, 1874-1894,” Fold3, May 2, 1895, <http://www.fold3.com:9292/image/303576123>; Joseph E. Doe, “Asst Sec of War to Gen’l Miles, Disapproval for Medal of Honor Recommendation, Letters Received by ACP Branch, 1874-1894,” Fold3, June 25, 1895, <http://www.fold3.com:9292/image/303576123>.

<sup>458</sup> Anton Mazzanovich, “Lieutenant Charles B. Gatewood, Services Ignored,” *Arizona Historical Review*, 1926, 86; Daly, “The Capture of Geronimo,” 46; Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo.*, 229 Davis states that Miles and Lawton do not deserve credit for capturing Geronimo because so many other officers, soldiers, and scouts were involved over months pursuing or guarding against the band’s raids. Ironic considering it was the same basic method Crook employed – with more manpower.

lieutenant's experience as an officer was symbolic and included much more than a single act of negotiation. Gatewood, the son of a Southern aristocrat and Confederate officer, educated at West Point, wearing army blue, faithfully served in the Southwest symbolizing the initial reconciliation of the officer corps following the Civil War. Gatewood and his classmates further represented and assisted in fulfilling Lincoln's vision for the reconciliation of the nation through the process of western consolidation.

Gatewood's more obvious contribution was assuring Geronimo's survival by shepherding the shaman back from the Sierra Madre. In doing so, Gatewood was not being just humane. He was acting in accordance with the sense of personal honor instilled during his childhood, following the professional code he was taught at West Point, and seeking reward for completing the mission he was given. He never realized his actions set the stage for the final act of consolidation—mythmaking.

Geronimo was an infamous murderer to settlers, an enemy to other Apache, a rival among his own band, a spiritual leader, and much more to his family. He would have retained that persona if killed during the campaign. Gatewood's protection forced the federal government to make a choice. That the government chose to isolate Geronimo matters more than any result that could be achieved by his death. Not killing Geronimo allowed his image and life story to symbolize the federal government's power and magnanimity as conquerors of the peoples and territories across the trans-Mississippi West. Geronimo was transformed into a trophy of conquest and redeemed captive for national consumption. Over time, his image was magnified out of proportion to the reality of his life. As a symbol of the West, he was widely sought and

participated in events such as the Chicago International Exposition, Bill Cody's Wild West Show, and even Theodore Roosevelt's 1905 inaugural parade.<sup>459</sup>

For many Americans and the nation's political elite, Geronimo would come to symbolize the essence of resistance by Indians to settlement of the West. His image as a brutal renegade justified the Indian Wars fought to wrest control of the region while his existence as a celebrated prisoner came to justify policies of forced assimilation and acculturation. Gatewood's role as Geronimo's shepherd gave the shaman a place in the nation's identity and helped justify the larger process of consolidation. In June 2022, Geronimo's legend was appropriated once more by the federal government. The authors of the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative's initial investigative report employed Geronimo's narrative and words as the opening and closing epigraphs for their report, ironically, as a means to demonstrate the government's commitment to redress historic wrongs committed to the Native American community by previous generations of federal representatives—both military and civilian.<sup>460</sup>

It is to Lieutenant Charles B. Gatewood's faithfulness that we owe credit for Geronimo's ascendancy within our stories of the West.

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<sup>459</sup> Roberts, *Once They Moved Like the Wind*, 111–12; Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn*, 240–41; John W. Ragsdale, "Values in Transition: The Chiricahua Apache from 1886-1914," *American Indian Law Review* 35, no. 1 (2010): 45, 96; Hine, Faragher, and Coleman, *The American West*, 292–93.

<sup>460</sup> Ruth Underhill, *Red Man's America*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 247–48; Edward Holland Spicer, *A Short History of the Indians of the United States* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1969), 96; Angie Debo, *A History of the Indians of the United States* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), 282; Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn*, 235; C. L. Sonnichsen, "From Savage to Saint: A New Image for Geronimo," *The Journal of Arizona History* 27, no. 1 (1986): 6, 8; Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, 380–87; Angie Debo, *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place* (London: Pimlico, 2005); Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (Yale University Press, 2012), Preface; Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, 2015, 150–51; Newland, "Indian Boarding School Report," 1, 101.

## VI. Conclusion

*I now regard the Indians as substantially eliminated from the problem of the Army. There may be spasmodic and temporary alarms, but such wars as have hitherto disturbed the public peace and tranquility are not probable. The Army has been a large factor in producing this result, but it is not the only one.*

William Tecumseh Sherman in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1883*<sup>461</sup>

### Representatives of their time.

Whatever we think of their actions—good or bad—Richard Pratt, Gustavus Doane, and Charles Gatewood were each committed to the idea of national expansion, including domination of the trans-Mississippi West. They were also committed to the transformation of the Native American people and their societies remaining in the West. In these ideas they reflected the institutional values of the army and federal government as well as the popular beliefs of most Americans.

Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood possessed a number of common characteristics. They were educated men, who displayed persistence, courage, and a penchant for action when confronted by ambiguity. These men were all moralistic, self-motivated, selfish, and exhibited a common belief in the superiority of their way of life, governance, and society. All three possessed a strong sense of duty and social responsibility.

These attributes suited them for military service. The three shared a common logic for joining the army—personal economics. As army officers they represented the emerging professional, managerial class in American society. They lived by a common set of personal and

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<sup>461</sup> William Tecumseh Sherman, “Report of The General of the Army,” dated Washington DC, October 27, 1883 in Lincoln Robert and United States, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1883*, 45–46, accessed January 24, 2022, <https://congressional-proquest-com.libproxy.nps.edu/congressional/result/congressional/congdocumentview?accountid=12702&groupid=100340&parmId=17DF54C87E7&rsId=17DF54B80B6#1176>.

professional standards and their long service demonstrated a commitment to the army values and lifestyle. They produced and maintained extensive written correspondence. Their personalities also facilitated their roles implementing a vision of America shared across the army, the federal government, and the constituents they served.

### **Commanding Scouts.**

None of these men joined the army expressly to command scouts or to fight Indians. The paths that led them to command of scouts reflect the tension inherent to the officer corps created by the juxtaposition of their *raison d'être*—combat leadership against restraint by the federal government, institutionally imposed uniformity, and the inadequacy of the promotion system. Pratt, Doan, and Gatewood found a means to balance the tension between their institutional responsibilities, desire for autonomy, and the means for self-promotion through commanding scouts.

How each officer performed his role as scout commander reflected his personality and skills, the circumstances affecting the army need to integrate scouts, and the nature of his relationship with the tribes from which he sought recruits. Each performed his role differently but each managed to conform in some way to existing roles within Plains and Southwest Indian tribal customs that lent them just enough credibility and authority to recruit men for war. They met Native Americans in a manner, often intimately, that only a limited number of officers did and even fewer civilians encountered. Pratt and Gatewood appear committed to commanding scouts, while Doane did not. Each, though, made opportunities out of their command of scouts.

They held differing perceptions of the tribes they interacted with and the scouts they recruited. Richard Pratt appears interested in them as individuals and possessed a paternalistic



commitment to their welfare. In the near term, that included providing for their subsistence and protecting them from what he considered the unsavory attributes of American culture, particularly alcohol. In the long term, that meant facilitating the transition of individual Indians from their communal subsistence lifestyles to an individual-centric industrial age way of life. That idea grew into Carlisle, an immersive, all-encompassing, tribe shattering, and soul-wracking transformation conducted on Pratt and the federal government's terms.

Lieutenant Doane appears initially averse to the army's Crow allies. His reporting over time demonstrates a growing knowledge of the tribe's needs and an emerging conscious advocacy on their behalf. Gustavus was cognizant enough to realize and communicate the importance of the army meeting the tribe's expectations. They needed transportation, materials, and other necessities to prolong their support of Colonel Miles' command, but more importantly, they required assurance that they mattered as a people. Doane deserves some credit for the tribe's presence, scouting, and raiding during the Great Sioux War and, importantly, for their neutrality and limited assistance during the Nez Percé War. There is no indication that Doane believed he held any commitment to advance the interests of his scouts or their tribe following his service with them.

For Charles Gatewood, command of scouts in the field was a give and take affair. This is not surprising based on his practical nature and acknowledgment of Apache superiority in irregular warfare. His service as the White Mountain agent was different. He ran the agency on his terms and based on the federal vision for Indian assimilation through the assumption of an agrarian lifestyle. Gatewood's actions as agent were tempered as much by his perception of morality as the other professional roles he performed. The correspondence, reports, and written works associated with him give no indication that he demonstrated favoritism to any tribe or

clan. He also left no evidence that he felt any commitment to assisting the White Mountain Apache other than during the periods he was assigned duty as their scout commander and military agent. To observers not familiar with irregular war, that point may seem galling, considering many White Mountain men fought and bled for Gatewood.

### **Seeking Rewards.**

The fundamental reward these men sought during their service was to define their professional destiny and influence, even control, the path that took them there. Rank was the signifier of an officer's success inside and outside the army. In nineteenth century America military rank served as social currency for these men and their families. It granted them progressively higher status and opportunities as they advanced. The stagnation imposed by the regimental seniority-based personnel and promotion system explains much about the decisions and actions of officers on the frontier. With limitations on promotion, officers sought other means to advance their status, often in assignments that provided a degree of career fluidity and enabled them to overtly differentiate themselves from their peers. Independent command from their regimental seniors was the most desirable path. Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood found commanding scouts suited their personalities and provided the career fluidity they sought to achieve their aspirations, especially the desire to act independently.

In the case of Pratt, Indian scouts provided him the vehicle to achieve greater autonomy as a junior officer and an avenue for assignment not afforded his peers. General Sheridan's dependence on Pratt to recruit more scouts over time launched the lieutenant on a trajectory that allowed him to steer a career path nearly independent of the army hierarchy. After departing the Plains, Pratt took advantage of his independence to cultivate relationships with other influential

military and civil leaders. Pratt's evangelism of assimilation through education, coupled with the relationships he developed, progressively facilitated his path to found and lead Carlisle. Pratt, relieved of the demands of daily regimental life and the physical toll of soldiering in the west, benefited from the army's seniority-based promotion system throughout the rest of his long career and life. He retired in 1903 with the rank of Colonel. In 1904, he was advanced to Brigadier General on the retired list when Congress passed legislation advancing all surviving Civil War veteran officers one rank in recognition of their service to the nation. Command of scouts proved highly rewarding for Richard Pratt.

Gustavus Doane appears the most focused on self-promotion. He commanded scouts with the intent to pursue other duties, although his work with the Crow did not provide him a direct path to a desirable assignment. It did bring him immediate relief from and the satisfaction of independence from Major Brisbin, his battalion commander, whom he disliked. Doane's self-promotion was done overtly and at the expense of two of his most important life relationships, his wife and his commander. Despite all his efforts, Doane served the longest as a line officer campaigning in the field. The most valuable benefit he gained through scouting was his relationship with Colonel Nelson Miles, which he used to gain further respite from Brisbin. After Miles was promoted to general, Doane had his support in a failed bid to be appointed Superintendent of Yellowstone Park. Gustavus was promoted to Captain and took command of a cavalry company in 1884. Captain Doane died of heart failure in 1892 while on sick leave at home in Montana. It was an anticlimactic end to twenty-four years of duty in the west.

Charles Gatewood seemed the least focused on self-promotion of these officers. Yet, the trajectory of his memory represented by the evolution of his memoir indicates he held high expectations for reward. Gatewood's memory is heavy with disappointment as his wife and son

blamed General Miles and General George Crook for the lieutenant's lack of promotion or transfer to the less physically demanding army staff. The blame was misplaced though, since neither general was in a position to control the outcomes of either the promotion or transfer processes during Charles' lifetime. Ironically, Gatewood took a number of medical leaves of absence at his home near Washington DC to recover from the physical toll of scouting, but it does not appear he used those periods to advocate for himself with the staff bureaus or Congressional offices. He also did not pursue economic, social, or intellectual opportunities external to the army. In this regard, Gatewood differs from Pratt, Doane, and other officers who vigorously pursued opportunity and advantage during their leaves and non-duty time on the frontier. We may just lack evidence of Gatewood's pursuit of external advantage but his reserved personality, the intensive nature of his work, and the model set by his immediate superior, the "untiring...ideal cavalryman" Captain Emmett Crawford, may explain his ambivalence toward overt self-promotion.<sup>462</sup> Lt Gatewood's reticence might also signify that he felt it unworthy as a southern gentleman to pursue economic or political advantage or that, as the son of a Confederate, he would not be welcomed in the offices of the War Department or Congress.

### **The Army.**

Following the Civil War, the army adapted its institutional culture to accommodate the official integration of Indians as scouts. Initially, Indian scout units on the Plains were generally temporary organizations designated in correspondence as detachments or just scouts.<sup>463</sup> By the 1870's, Department commanders maintained Indian scouts on a permanent basis in the

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<sup>462</sup> Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo.*, 31.

<sup>463</sup> The Tonkawa scouts of Fort Griffith on the southern Plains and the Pawnee Battalion serving in the north are arguable exceptions.

southwest, based on their need for near-continuous response to violent outbreaks. Officers in charge of these scouts reported their detachments as companies, the same as done with regular soldiers. The designation of “company” is a clear indication army norms had evolved to consider Indian scouts valuable enough to be acknowledged as a part of the regular force structure.

Officers responsible for scouts, in turn, identified themselves as “Commanders” of the various companies. An officer’s reference in official correspondence to his leadership of Indians changed from “Commanding scouts” to “Commanding Company, Indian Scouts.” This was a subtle but still significant indicator of the institutional change occurring along with the more systematic integration of Indian allies into all military operations.

Charles Gatewood’s long period in command of Company A, Indian Scouts is illustrative. The company was headquartered at Fort Apache and primarily enlisted White Mountain Apache men whose tribe inhabited the reservation surrounding the fort. The standing integration of scout companies facilitated the development of more intimate relationships between officers and scouts. If those relationships did not always result in relationships of trust and confidence between commanders and scouts, the greater familiarity between them overcame issues with the transactional nature of short-term enlistment as a manpower mechanism. Long serving scout company commanders continuously reenlisting warriors from the same tribe made the employment of scouts more efficient and effective overall during campaigns.

Ironically, the public was critical of the army’s field performance. Yet it was their ingrained campaign methods, encompassing far more than individual combat actions, that ensured that Indian raiding or even battlefield victories, could not guarantee a tribes’ goal of freedom from white encroachment and domination. Gustavus Doane and the Crow failure to intercept the Nez Percé exemplifies this fact. Authors often mistake the tactical success of Indian

peoples against army commands as an indicator of their military superiority. The reality was individual prowess and tactical success never amounted to the capability to stave off military defeat and ultimate subjugation to the political authority of the federal government.

Commanding Indian scouts appears more appropriate terminology than leading. Officers generally directed their scouts to perform duties and thus commanded from a distance. Even in the restrictive terrain of the southwest where formations became tightly compressed, scouts were intended to operate in front, to the flanks, or rear as a means to protect the formation from surprise or to ensure no sign of adversaries was missed. There were of course exceptions, particularly during General Crook's command in Arizona, when scouts were employed as primary combatants conducting direct attacks on resisting Indians. In these cases, officers were expected to closely accompany their scouts as a means to minimize post combat fatalities and violence. An officer explained that General Crook "makes of his Indian auxiliaries, not soldiers, but more formidable Indians."<sup>464</sup> Gatewood and his peers surely possessed great fortitude working by, with, and through more formidable Indians to achieve Crook's objectives.

### **Indian Scouts.**

The grand irony for the United States is that accomplishing the consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West and transfer of the territory from Indian tribes to settlers necessitated military alliances and partnerships with Indian tribes.

While an officer's service commanding scouts provided rewards, the results of those campaigns might provide mixed results for a scout and his tribe. Results for the Tonkawa tribe were perhaps typical. They benefited both materially and in respect (or stature) among the

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<sup>464</sup> Bigelow, *On the Bloody Trail of Geronimo*, 58.

regiment's that employed their services during the period Richard Pratt commanded. The tribe remained valued by soldiers at Fort Griffith during the succeeding years tracking rustlers, illegal traders, and the occasional small party of Indians fleeing their reservation to hunt or raid but support and recognition waned in the years following the conclusion of campaigns on the southern Plains.

Crow leaders were savvy. Chief Iron Bull hosted Gustavus Doane throughout the Great Sioux War. He shrewdly negotiated with the lieutenant about where and when to dispatch men as scouts or move the tribe's main village. In return, Doane requisitioned material necessities and river boat transportation valued by the tribe. To Iron Bull and the other Crow leaders, Doane was one of many officers over time who recruited scouts from the tribe. For the Crow, manifesting their alliance with the federal government by having their men ride alongside Lt Doane and other officers was part of a grander calculation to establish a strong position for ongoing negotiations with federal officials in other settings during the final stages of consolidation.

The White Mountain Apache, like the Crow, were pragmatists. Decades before Gatewood arrived in Arizona they had sought and established a relationship with the army and BIA as a means to protect their homeland from white encroachment. Even while the tribe integrated more intensive farming methods into their lifestyle, they pursued scouting as a means for their men to advance socially and economically through war exploits. Alchesay, a tribal leader, was not only one of the tribe's most renown warriors but was also held in the highest regard by the army. He was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1875 for gallantry during a campaign led by General Crook. Chief Sanchez' later confrontation with Lt Gatewood over retribution for murders committed by the Chiricahua shows that loyalty to the army and close relations with its officers did not guarantee tribal norms and values were respected.

## **The Nation.**

Each officer's campaign experiences indicate the progressive advance of political and territorial consolidation. Pratt's campaigning saw the large nomadic tribes of the southern Plains lose their independence. The techniques that proved effective against the Comanche, Southern Cheyenne, and Arapahoe, including enlisting hundreds of Indian scouts and the destruction of horse and buffalo herds, were applied during the campaign Doane participated in to subjugate the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne. Afterwards much of the army and federal government's attention focused on securing the Southwest. Gatewood would take the field with army commands that applied the same principle of exhaustion through relentless pursuit but used techniques more suited to the rugged terrain and small bands of Apache being sought. The army's successive campaigns against the Plains and then Southwestern Indian tribes coincided with increasing resource extraction from and settlement of these regions.

The contributions of each officer also mirror the progress of consolidation. Doane's reporting on the Yellowstone region complimented reports of previous explorers, gave credence to a growing discourse on redefining the possible dispositions of western lands, and assisted Montana territorial leaders in coalescing national political will to establish Yellowstone as a park and worked to their economic advantage. This act redefined the possible meanings and outcomes for territory in the west while still excluding nomadic Indian lifestyles from those lands. Richard Pratt found War and Interior Department officials open to his Indian assimilation concepts as demands grew to mitigate future violent resistance and enhance efforts to transform Indian peoples already confined to reservation life. Gatewood, himself a symbol of national reunification, assured Geronimo would survive and his legacy flourish. That legacy casts a long shadow. In 1886, Geronimo's legend justified the conduct, costs, and outcomes as the United



States' wars of subjugation came to an end, while in 2022 it symbolizes "an opportunity...to reorient our Federal policies to support the revitalization of Tribal languages and cultural practices."<sup>465</sup>

## **Memory.**

Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood were each remembered differently by their own and subsequent generations, as represented in the succession of biographies and other materials published about each man. Pratt, formerly a model racial progressive thinker with his passion for assimilation, is today demonized as a master of cultural extermination and Carlisle the scene of thousands of personal tragedies.<sup>466</sup> Doane, the undaunted wilderness adventurer and pioneer according to the press in his own time, is now a "horrible man who actively engaged in violence towards Native People" and a model executor of genocide.<sup>467</sup> These differences represent as much about changing political and social values of Americans since the nineteenth century than they do about the actions and written words of each man.

Richard Pratt, Gustavus Doane, and Charles Gatewood, though, represented their society and nation within the values and norms structure imposed upon them. What makes their stories accessible is that they documented the decisions they made and actions they took which shaped the implementation and understanding of federal policies. Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood's decisions and actions were founded in their beliefs and on their shared vision of a

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<sup>465</sup> Newland, "Indian Boarding School Report," ii, 1, 100.

<sup>466</sup> Ironically political theorists who espouse bloodless victories would consider Pratt a master of indirect means of subjugating others without resort to offensive military operations.

<sup>467</sup> Osbourne, "Calls for Mount Doane Rename."

transcontinental nation. Their memories have been adapted over time to suit evolving public values and norms of each succeeding generation.

Reexamining Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood's experiences provides insight into the dynamics officers faced in the trans-Mississippi West. Acknowledging their choices were made in keeping with the opportunities and constraints of their profession and society grants a degree of empathy that allows an understanding of the logic guiding their actions. This knowledge also indicates how they sought to shape their reputations and later memories through their reporting and correspondence.

Interpretation of their experience as officers illustrates the change in American values and ideals across time. The current interpretation of Richard Pratt, Gustavus Doane, and Charles Gatewood, though, mischaracterizes them given the historic context in which they lived and the expectations of their profession at the time. If Pratt and Doane were purveyors of genocide, then so too was Gatewood and the rest of the officer corps, as were the institutions and people they served. This includes the army, federal government, a vast movement of citizens and immigrants seeking riches from land, and a larger segment of the American populace who anticipated and participated in the integration of the trans-Mississippi West into the nation's political and economic structure.

### **Relevance.**

The memory of the frontier army matters now because America's army remains employed as a police force but on a global scale.

The army is much different today than in the late nineteenth century, yet, commonalities remain. Today's army remains the largest, most widely dispersed agent of the federal government, and one of its most well-resourced. Like its frontier predecessor, and in complement

with its sister services, the army remains a principle tool for the implementation of federal policies. For instance, the prosecution of American wars of choice, other armed conflicts, and police actions from 1945 to the present have largely fallen upon the army. Since the end of conscription in 1973, service members are all volunteers. Officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers have structured promotion and reward paths that influence their behavior. The institution retains a fixation on perfecting war at the expense of all other purposes including establishing peace and enabling civil government. While the method of working by, with, and through allies, while uncomfortable for many officers, remains the army's principal means for conducting war below the threshold of large-scale warfare against nation state adversaries.

Colonial settlement is no longer the driving force in federal policy. Yet, American cultural demands to dominate new frontiers or defend perceived external frontiers, whether political, mineral, commercial, or religious, place continuous demands on the army and its sister services to act. Since 2001 the United States government and people have prosecuted a global war on terrorism. The idea of a war against a concept as ephemeral as terrorism was by its very nature never a conflict that could be won nor was it a problem with a military solution. Yet, like the consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West, the military, led by the army, was the principle tool employed by the federal government to attempt to find or establish a path to end terrorism.

Historian Robert Utley is one of the few to speculate on an alternative military history for consolidation of the trans-Mississippi West. He suggested a robust, competent, well-resourced, well-led Indian Bureau with an army trained as police would have been a more appropriate, and less destructive, mechanism to implement federal policy in the west. Utley's suggestion seems so logical to the 21<sup>st</sup> century audience that we can only wonder why federal officials would not have

implemented such a thoughtful approach across the trans-Mississippi West. The answer lies in human nature, American culture, and the myopia of each generation.

The American response to the attacks of September 11, 2001 exemplifies these characteristics. Americans wanted to regain a sense of security and to exact justice on the perpetrators. The federal government, intent on rapidly reassuring its constituents, immediately applied lethal military power instead of considering alternatives. As weeks and months turned to years following the invasion of Afghanistan (and, later, Iraq) no one reconsidered alternatives to indefinite military occupation. The annual reports of the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction which identified the very occupation as a continuing source of instability between 2005 and 2021 emphasizes the point. Utley's suggestion to use appropriate institutions to implement federal policy, even if they need to be reinvented for the purpose, was as relevant in 2001 as it was in 1866. Yet the nation and its army took a similar course.

Seeing the trajectory of Pratt, Doane, and Gatewood's memory raises the question: how will our officer corps today be interpreted by future historians?

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