

1: This site is dedicated to Medicine Lodge and Barber County

A Travel Guide to the Plains Indians Wars provides a general overview of the Plains Indian wars; but it is particularly helpful for anyone planning a visit to the military posts and sites of battle. Stan Hoig has divided this writing into two distinct parts: first is a narrative of the conflicts between American Indians and the U.S. cavalry.

This video can be found here: Yet, the Great Plains consisted of complex, intricate civilizations. Many were organized into agrarian societies. However, others were nomadic tribes, such as the Sioux and Cheyenne. This meant they traveled constantly following animals, like buffalo. From the era of Exploration to the late s, European interaction with the Native Americans had drastically changed their way of life. The Spanish brought horses at the end of the 16th century. Native Americans did not invent the wheel or use horses before this era. Horse riding, guns, other inventions and innovations changed life forever. Many agrarian cultures became nomads. Buffalo provided clothing, food, shelter for the Native Americans and the expansion of whites westward depleted the buffalo population. This caused conflict in the west. There were unique cultural traits with the Native Americans that lived in the West. Extended families of Native Americans cohabitated. Men hunted and women prepared the food. Women sometimes chose their husband in matriarchal societies. Shamans were religious leaders for animistic religions. Most tribes were ruled by counsels with multiple leaders. These economic, social, and religious differences between the Native Americans of the West and the American citizens of European descent lead to culture clash. Some Americans felt God wanted America to expand west and own the land. In Colorado, in , gold rushes pushed people to the West. Many felt that, if they went to the West, they could strike it rich quickly. Others wanted to profit by providing goods and services to those relocating to the West. German, Polish, Irish, Chinese, and African American peoples tried to profit from Westward Expansion and these groups intermingled in the region. The western Great Plains were intended to be reservations for the Native Americans. Yet, in the s, the railroads proved to be efficient means of travel. This led to many white Americans traveling to the West and increased hostilities between American citizens and Native Americans. What is inside this lesson plan? Most of our plans include the contents of this list. Please see the photo above for actual contents.

2: Red River War - Wikipedia

A Travel Guide to the Plains Indians Wars provides a general overview of time and weather have taken their tolls, and many would have no traces left were it not for the worthy attention of local groups and city, state, and federal authorities.

Renewed development, particularly an influx of settlers who staked claims under the Homestead Act of 1862, reignited tensions in the region. In the Sioux Uprising of the same year Santee bands that had remained in Minnesota sought to drive away settlers whom they considered their enemies. Early conflicts The initial major confrontation, sometimes known as the First Sioux War, broke out in the Dakota Territory near Fort Laramie in present-day Wyoming following a dispute over a killed cow between white settlers traveling to the far west and the local Lakota a Western Sioux group. On August 19, 1862, brevet Second Lieut. Grattan set out from the post with 30 men and two cannons and, after rashly demanding that a far superior Indian force turn over the suspected culprit, he opened fire. In response, the Lakota killed Grattan and his entire assembly. Most Lakota denied the legitimacy of this war, however, effectively isolating those who had been directly involved in the Grattan affair. On September 3, 1862, brevet Brig. Gen. Sully led a force of 100 men and 2 cannons, and the following year, open conflict spread southward. Leading about 100 cavalrymen on July 29, 1863, Col. Sumner encountered an equal force of mounted Cheyenne near the south fork of the Solomon River, Kansas Territory. As both sides thundered forward, Sumner gave the unusual order for his men to draw their sabres; the stunned Cheyenne, whose medicine did not cover the steel blades, fled in disarray, leading to a period of relative peace in the central Plains. The atmosphere was not so quiet, however, in Comanche territory along the northern borders of Texas. On May 12, 1864, Capt. Van Dorn led a force of 100 men and 2 cannons. In October 1864, Maj. Van Dorn struck the wrong village, for these people represented the vanguard of the Comanche peace faction. The violence thus continued, with Van Dorn, having recovered from arrow wounds received at Rush Spring, trapping or killing about a hundred Comanche the following May at Crooked Creek, Kansas Territory. The Civil War on the Plains Secession of Texas and 10 other Southern states from the Union in 1861 brought no end to the military contest in the southern Plains. The Comanche launched particularly devastating raids into north Texas December 1864 and against a settlement at Elm Creek October 13, 1865. On January 8, 1866, a group of Kickapoo that was migrating south to Mexico defeated more than 100 Texas volunteers at Dove Creek. In Minnesota, meanwhile, Dakota a Sioux group tribes had during the 1860s given up claims to most of their lands in return for yearly annuities and life on reserved lands, overseen by the U.S. The continuing onslaught of westward-moving white populations and the mismanagement of the reservations by government officials, however, spawned great bitterness among the Dakota, and in August their most influential leader, Little Crow Taoyateduta, led attacks that brought the demise of hundreds of white settlers in a single week. The bloodshed sparked a massive backlash, and on September 23, 1862, Col. Peace factions then regained the ascendancy in many circles, and, as a result, hundreds of those who had been involved in the early attacks were surrendered to the white authorities. The government subsequently hanged 38 Indian prisoners at Mankato. Little Crow and others who were determined to fight had in the meantime fled west, only to be pursued by the army in mid-1863. In present-day North Dakota, Sibley, now a brigadier general, fought pitched battles at Big Mound July 24, Dead Buffalo Lake July 26, and Stony Lake July 28 and claimed to have inflicted over 100 casualties and destroyed huge quantities of winter stores in the process. Alfred Sully descended on roughly 100 Dakota at Whitestone Hill on September 3, killing a few hundred warriors and capturing about as many women and children. The army continued the blows into 1864, with Sully and 200 men driving off Indian attacks at Killdeer Mountain July 28 and torching another massive stockpile of supplies and equipment. In response to the turmoil in the northern Plains, nervous officials in the Colorado Territory convinced themselves that the bloodbath would spread to the southwest. During the first half of 1864, regulars and volunteers thus engaged in a series of skirmishes with Kiowa, Apache, Cheyenne, and Arapaho mounted parties. Chivington then determined to take matters into his own hands, reportedly hoping that a victory over the Indians would jump-start his political career. Camped near Sand Creek, Colorado Territory, were about 100 Cheyenne and Arapaho followers of Black Kettle, who was known to be attempting to make peace. They were slaughtered between August 28 and September 1, 1864, mutilating most of the corpses in the process. News of the Sand Creek

Massacre ignited a full-scale war. Attacks against non-Indian travelers increased in early , and for a month that spring all contact between the city of Denver and points east was severed. Tribal economies could not long support such a conflict, however, and most native peoples of the central Plains soon returned to their normal patterns of life, the raids having satisfied their need for revenge. Midyear offensives by the army, in turn, failed to locate significant numbers of Indians. The prohibitive costs of the U. Defeat of the Plains Indians The treaties of did not hold, as the Indians who signed the documents had no authority over all of the individualistic Plains peoples, and the government had no practical or politically palatable means of controlling a tide of white pioneers eager to exploit western opportunities. Red Cloud , a charismatic Oglala a Sioux group chief, gathered a coalition of Lakota also Sioux , Northern Cheyenne , and Arapaho to keep those lands from white intruders. As Indian raids grew more frequent, tensions ran particularly high at Fort Phil Kearny, the closest military post to the Bighorn Mountains. On December 21, , when Capt. Fetterman led some 80 men from the fort out to relieve a wood-gathering party, he blundered into a well-laid ambush, and not a single man survived. The army wanted revenge, but as part of a broader peace initiative the government agreed to abandon its Bozeman Trail posts in the second Treaty of Fort Laramie, in In Kansas , Nebraska, and Colorado Territory, a large army expedition in had burned an abandoned village without engaging significant numbers of Indians. In October of that year an accord was reached at Medicine Lodge Creek, whereby the Indians were to live on reservations in western Indian Territory and refrain from attacking white settlers in return for government annuities and the right to hunt buffalo south of the Arkansas River. Neither side, however, seemed enthusiastic about fulfilling either the spirit or the letter of the agreements. Following several Indian strikes against western Kansas and northern Texas , the army again girded for war in , with Maj. On November 27 Lieut. Custer destroyed the Washita River encampment of the luckless Black Kettle, who was killed along with scores of his followers. On December 25, Christmas Day, Maj. Evans dealt a sharp blow to the Comanche at Soldier Spring. Army columns continually scoured Kansas, the Indian Territory, and northern Texas for the next eight months. Emotionally exhausted and with their economies shattered by the constant flight, many Kiowa, Comanche, Arapaho, and southern Cheyenne consented to try life on reservations. Despite the territorial confinement of many of the native Plains peoples, peace was not at hand. The division of authority between the Department of the Interior , which oversaw the reservations, and the War Department, which was responsible for maintaining security, rarely worked well; meanwhile, the Indians, restless with the cultural and economic poverty of reservation life, continued to launch raids into Texas. In a roving war party nearly killed commanding general William T. Sherman and his small escort outside Fort Richardson. The army then received permission in July to initiate another offensive. In the resulting Red River Indian War , five army columns marched on Indians declared hostile by the federal government. Cavalry overran a Kiowa , Comanche, and Southern Cheyenne encampment. Most of the Indians successfully broke for safety, but the soldiers destroyed their village and slaughtered over 1, of their horses. By midyear the military power of the southern Plains tribes was shattered. Meanwhile, in the northern Plains, growing interest in the Yellowstone River country now Wyoming and Montana was upsetting the uneasy peace that had been negotiated at Fort Laramie. Beginning in , government-sponsored surveying expeditions for the Northern Pacific Railroad pressed through the area, some with dozens of scientists and hundreds of military escorts. Amid mounting pressure to secure the region, the Department of the Interior authorized the use of military force in November , paving the way for what some have called the Great Sioux War. An early offensive quickly fizzled, but by May three large army columns were converging on the Yellowstone River valley. Sheridan was wrong, for the Lakota and Cheyenne, inspired by such talented military and spiritual leaders as Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull , had assembled and agreed to fight together. Eight days later another detachment met an even bigger defeat at the Little Bighorn , where Custer and nearly half of the 7th Cavalry Regiment were annihilated. Although stunned by the defeat, soldiers soon began combing the region once more. Expeditions led by Col. Miles maintained the pressure throughout the winter and well into the following year, with the sharpest fights coming at Wolf Mountain January 8, and Muddy Creek May 7. A few hundred Indians fled with Sitting Bull into Canada ; the remaining Plains peoples, however, agreed to move to reservations. Desperate attempts by the Cheyenne in the late s to return to their former homelands failed, often

with heavy casualties, and the Plains Wars came to a close. The scene depicts U. Indians typically sought to engage in battle only when conditions seemed most favourable to success with minimal losses. The element of surprise offered tremendous tactical advantages; determined to seize this edge, combatants on both sides frequently attacked entire communities without warning, leading to high casualties, particularly among women and children. The Plains Wars have remained a source of controversy in the American historical memory. The disproportionately high numbers of noncombatant casualties led to intense bitterness, and the sharp cultural divides made it difficult for either side to understand the actions of the other. Military prowess had been a significant and sought-after element of Plains Indian life; loss of a channel through which to gain military prestige, along with the restrictions of reservation life, often had devastating psychological effects on Native Americans. These effects, coupled with the divisions generated between native peoples and the U. Meanwhile, the long years of unconventional frontier warfare had relatively little impact on the manner in which the U. Indeed, lessons learned during counterinsurgency operations against the Indians would have to be relearned in the international conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries.

3: Travel Guide to the Plains Indian Wars : Stan Edward Hoig :

This book is interesting reading just as a reference on the Plains Indian Wars. I have traveled to some of the battlegrounds and the information is very helpful in choosing locations and finding them.

History[edit] Nomadic tribes historically survived on hunting and gathering. People hunted the American Bison or buffalo to make items used in everyday life, such as food, cups, decorations, crafting tools, knives, and clothing. The tribes followed the seasonal grazing and migration of the bison. The Plains Indians lived in teepees because they were easily disassembled and allowed the nomadic life of following game. While searching for a reputedly wealthy land called Quivira in , Coronado came across the Querechos in the Texas panhandle. The Querechos were the people later called Apache. According to the Spaniards, the Querechos lived "in tents made of the tanned skins of the cows bison. They dry the flesh in the sun, cutting it thin like a leaf, and when dry they grind it like meal to keep it and make a sort of sea soup of it to eat They season it with fat, which they always try to secure when they kill a cow. They empty a large gut and fill it with blood, and carry this around the neck to drink when they are thirsty. The horse[edit] Blackfoot warrior, painted between and by Karl Bodmer The Plains Indians found by Coronado had not yet obtained horses; it was the introduction of the horse that revolutionized Plains culture. When horses were obtained, the Plains tribes rapidly integrated them into their daily lives. People in the southwest began to acquire horses in the 16th century by trading or stealing them from Spanish colonists in New Mexico. As horse culture moved northward, the Comanche were among the first to commit to a fully mounted nomadic lifestyle. This occurred by the s, when they had acquired enough horses to put all their people on horseback. Riders were able to travel faster and farther in search of bison herds and to transport more goods, thus making it possible to enjoy a richer material environment than their pedestrian ancestors. For the Plains peoples, the horse became an item of prestige as well as utility. They were extravagantly fond of their horses and the lifestyle they permitted. Coronado brought horses with him on his " expedition. At the time, the Indians of these regions had never seen a horse, although they had probably[according to whom? His horse herd included mares as well as stallions. Stump Horn and his family Cheyenne with a horse and travois , c. The Spanish attempted to keep knowledge of riding away from Native people, but nonetheless, they learned and some fled their servitude to their Spanish employers"and took horses with them. Some horses were obtained through trade in spite of prohibitions against it. Other horses escaped captivity for a feral existence and were captured by Native people. In all cases the horse was adopted into their culture and herds multiplied. By , the Navajo from northwestern New Mexico were raiding the Spanish colonies to steal horses. By , the Apache were trading captives from other tribes to the Spanish for horses. The real beginning of the horse culture of the plains began with the expulsion of the Spanish from New Mexico in when the victorious Pueblo people captured thousands of horses and other livestock. They traded many horses north to the Plains Indians. In , a few horses were found by the Spanish among the Indians living at the mouth of the Colorado River of Texas and the Caddo of eastern Texas had a sizeable number. Another Frenchman, Bourgmont , could only buy seven at a high price from the Kaw in , indicating that horses were still scarce among tribes in Kansas. While the distribution of horses proceeded slowly northward on the Great Plains, it moved more rapidly through the Rocky Mountains and the Great Basin. The Shoshone in Wyoming had horses by about and the Blackfoot people , the most northerly of the large Plains tribes, acquired horses in the s. Soon afterwards pressure from Europeans on all sides and European diseases caused its decline. It was the Comanche, coming to the attention of the Spanish in New Mexico in , who first realized the potential of the horse. As pure nomads, hunters, and pastoralists, well supplied with horses, they swept most of the mixed-economy Apaches from the plains and by the s were dominant in the Great Plains south of the Arkansas River. The southern Plains Indians acquired vast numbers of horses. By the 19th century, Comanche and Kiowa families owned an average of 35 horses and mules each " and only six or seven were necessary for transport and war. The horses extracted a toll on the environment as well as required labor to care for the herd. Formerly egalitarian societies became more divided by wealth with a negative impact on the role of women. The richest men would have several wives and captives who

would help manage their possessions, especially horses. The scarcity of horses in the north encouraged raiding and warfare in competition for the relatively small number of horses that survived the severe winters. They had relatively small horse herds, thus having less impact on their ecosystem. At the same time, they occupied the heart of prime bison range which was also an excellent region for furs, which could be sold to French and American traders for goods such as guns. The Lakota became the most powerful of the Plains tribes. By the 19th century, the typical year of the Lakota and other northern nomads was a communal buffalo hunt as early in spring as their horses had recovered from the rigors of the winter. In June and July the scattered bands of the tribes gathered together into large encampments, which included ceremonies such as the Sun Dance. These gatherings afforded leaders to meet to make political decisions, plan movements, arbitrate disputes, and organize and launch raiding expeditions or war parties. In the fall, people would split up into smaller bands to facilitate hunting to procure meat for the long winter. Between the fall hunt and the onset of winter was a time when Lakota warriors could undertake raiding and warfare. With the coming of winter snows, the Lakota settled into winter camps, where activities of the season ceremonies and dances as well as trying to ensure adequate winter feed for their horses. Without bison, the people were forced to move onto reservations or starve. A pile of bison skulls in the s. The railroad industry also wanted bison herds culled or eliminated. Herds of bison on tracks could damage locomotives when the trains failed to stop in time. Herds often took shelter in the artificial cuts formed by the grade of the track winding through hills and mountains in harsh winter conditions. As a result, bison herds could delay a train for days. Buffalo Bill Cody , among others, spoke in favor of protecting the bison because he saw that the pressure on the species was too great. But these were discouraged since it was recognized that the Plains Indians, often at war with the United States, depended on bison for their way of life. In , President Ulysses S. Grant " pocket vetoed " a Federal bill to protect the dwindling bison herds, and in General Philip Sheridan pleaded to a joint session of Congress to slaughter the herds, to deprive the Plains Indians of their source of food. American Indian Wars The Ghost Dance ritual, which the Lakota believed would reunite the living with spirits of the dead, cause the white invaders to vanish, and bring peace, prosperity, and unity to Indian peoples throughout the region Armed conflicts intensified in the late 19th Century between Native American nations on the plains and the U. Expressing the frontier anti-Indian sentiment, Theodore Roosevelt believed the Indians were destined to vanish under the pressure of white civilization, stating in an lecture: The dance was part of a religious movement founded by the Northern Paiute spiritual leader Wovoka that told of the return of the Messiah to relieve the suffering of Native Americans and promised that if they would live righteous lives and perform the Ghost Dance properly, the European American colonists would vanish, the bison would return, and the living and the dead would be reunited in an Edenic world.

4: Table of contents for A travel guide to the Plains Indian wars

Get this from a library! A travel guide to the Plains Indian wars. [Stan Hoig] -- "The historical remains of nineteenth-century Western frontier military posts and battle sites of the Plains Indian wars are disappearing.

There were great numbers of people who needed land, and the Indians were selfishly trying to keep it for themselves. This was wide-open, unforgiving terrain with little water, harsh winters, hot summers, tornadoes, and grasshopper plagues. Some small towns in Kansas have been abandoned altogether. Others, such as the Mandan, hunted buffalo without horses and guns for centuries before Whites or Great Lakes Indians arrived. In the northern plains of Montana, Mandan and Blackfeet herded bison through drive lanes of rocks and brush over cliffs, where other hunters waited with clubs and spears. This technique was called a buffalo jump. The Plains were too dry to easily yield crops and inhabited by formidable Indian tribes that blocked white settlement. As we saw in Chapter 16, early maps of the area referred to the Great American Desert as being almost uninhabitable. The Plains were the last area in the Lower 48 where Indians lived independently before being forced onto reservations. The same Union Army that fought Confederates was fighting a simultaneous war against Plains Indians, and even employed the same total war tactics used in W. On the Southern Plains, Comanche rode roughshod over anyone and everyone, be they Whites or other Indians, in and around a huge swath of land the Spanish called Comancheria, the southeastern border of which included Austin. Then, the ruckus over slavery in Kansas in the s impeded settlement. But, without Southerners in Congress, the Union government promoted western expansion during the Civil War, giving away land to farmers with the Homestead Act of and, through the Morrill Act, land grants for states in the Midwest and Plains to build colleges. Abraham Lincoln and the Republicans of the s synthesized rugged individualism with the idea of the collective. Lincoln believed in self-reliance, but self-reliance within a society that provided opportunities for hard workers through subsidized land, public schools, railroads, etc. In rare cases, Exodusters won land grants. The five transcontinental railroads still in existence today all came into being between the Civil War and These projects, along with the discovery of gold in the northern Plains and Rockies, forced the final showdown between the U. Indians interfered with railroad construction, killing workers. And the buffalo Indians counted on for survival for beef, robes, tools, etc. Consequently, the government wanted to push Indians to either side of the transcontinental routes, moving them onto reservations. Killing buffalo in droves served the dual purpose of clearing the tracks and undermining Indian economies. Army soldiers killed buffalo and passenger trains even stopped amidst herds so travelers could pull out their rifles and fire away. When they were done, they moved on, leaving the carcasses behind. So many buffalo died that, at times, their rotting flesh could be smelled throughout the region. Then the Army marched them to northern Oklahoma with many dying along the way. When their chief, Standing Bear, returned to Nebraska to press their case, authorities arrested and imprisoned him. He sued with the help of local pro bono attorneys and, in *Standing Bear v. Crook*, a district court ruled for the first time in history that Indians have legal rights in the U. It was an important first step toward citizenship, attained for Indians nationwide in Southwestern Indians presented a similar obstacle to Whites. East of there, the combined forces of diseases mainly cholera and smallpox and more Whites moving into Texas weakened the once mighty Comanches. John Milton Chivington, U. After the smoke cleared, soldiers rode over to pump him full of more bullets. These macabre trophies hung for months at the Apollo Theater and in local saloons. Not all Americans approved of the attacks and the government court-martialed Chivington. Jis to think of that dog Chivington and his dirty hounds, up thar at Sand Creek. His men shot down squaws, and blew the brains out of little innocent children. You call sich soldiers Christians, do ye? What der yer spose our Heavenly Father, who made both them and us, thinks of these things? But I never yet drew a bead on a squaw or papoose, and I despise the man who would. And many of the very tribal elders who advocated for peace were murdered in the massacre. Historian Ari Kelman researched how living descendants, local residents, and the National Park Service worked together to construct an appropriate memorial. They beheaded, disemboweled, scalped, and castrated all troops except for one young bugler, whom they respectfully covered with a buffalo robe after his futile attempts to fend off attacks

with his horn. Such mutilations were traditional among American Indians, just as they were in Europe, early America, and around the world. In the resulting Treaty of Fort Laramie, the vast lands granted to the major Plains tribes in the Treaty of the same name shrunk considerably, ostensibly to ensure civilization. Lakotas occupied the Black Hills after pushing out Kiowas and Crows in the 18th century. Holdouts led by Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse refused to move onto the reservations, condemning those who took wasichus Whites up on their offers of free food and supplies. However, documents in the Library of Congress and U. Military Academy Library demonstrate how gold motivated Grant to condone war in behind the back of Congress and the public and undermine the Fort Laramie Treaty. He cherry-picked a hawkish inner cabal that circumvented the normal chain-of-command, avoiding those like W. Renewed war ensued that included perhaps the most ignominious battle defeat in U. George Armstrong Custer, ca. From the National Archives Unlike many of the earlier cavalry attacks, the warriors were well armed this time. Unlike the single-shot Springfield s used by the 7th Cavalry, these repeating rifles could fire off magazines of twelve to sixteen rounds before having to be reloaded. A skilled soldier was lucky to shoot that many rounds in a minute with the Springfield and, when it jammed, he could only use it as a club. There will be plenty of fighting left for us to do. In , the Supreme Court awarded damages to Lakotas for their lost land, an unclaimed settlement now worth over a billion dollars with accrued interest. They hope someday to reclaim the Black Hills instead. Sioux Ghost Dance, ca. They hoped Indians would disavow coffee, sugar, and bacon, for instance, or other items they relied on Whites for. Ghost dances offended Whites and, in , the Army mowed down Sioux dancers at Wounded Knee, South Dakota with a Gatling gun, an early automatic weapon, and buried them in a mass grave. Wounded Knee marked the end of 19th-century Indian resistance on the Plains. Adding insult to injury, reservations shrank in size. In , the government opened up much of Oklahoma, originally set aside as one large reservation, in one of the great land rushes in history. Sooners, or Boomers, were white squatters who rushed across the border to claim land before it officially opened. Many that left reservations had trouble adjusting, especially those in big cities surrounded by noise, lights, and crowded streets. Alcoholism and poverty plagued many that left or stayed on reservations. The Dawes Act of allowed Indians to take farmland and gain citizenship if they chose, but that farmland was carved out of the reservations, making them yet smaller. Academics studied Indians hoping to document native culture before it evaporated altogether. Well-intentioned Whites provided tuition for some Indians to attend off-reservation boarding schools designed to drum Indian culture out of them and convert them to white dress, behavior, and thinking. Thorpe, Canton Bulldogs, ca. He then spent six years in the major leagues and ten playing pro football. Pawnee Bill Wild West Show, ca. Not long after, early Hollywood movies filmed in the deserts outside Los Angeles mythologized the West even before many of its original heroes had died. Wyatt Earp lived to see movies about himself. The relative openness and lawlessness of Western mythology attracted audiences to carnivals that reenacted famous scenes. Along with rodeo events and sharpshooters like Annie Oakley, these shows employed Indians, too. Army veterans led by Wes Clark, Jr. In an emotional ceremony at its casino, they bowed to Sioux tribal leaders to atone for the pain caused to Indians by the U. Many of us, me particularly, are from the units that have hurt you over the many years. We took your land. We signed treaties that we broke. We stole minerals from your sacred hills. We blasted the faces of our presidents [Mt. Rushmore] onto your sacred mountain. Then we took still more land and then we took your children and then we tried to take your language and we tried to eliminate your language that God gave you, and the Creator gave you. We are at your service and we beg for your forgiveness.

5: Last Plains Indian war chief dies at age - CBS News

An overview of the wars that is useful for a visit to the military posts and sites of battle. This work describes conflicts between American Indians and the US cavalry, Texas Rangers, the various.

The direct result of these passions was the rise of guerilla warfare. During the period from the mid s all the way through , both the Indians and the white forces committed many atrocities. In the Cheyennes and Arapahos of southern Colorado sued for peace and made camp by Sand Creek to wait for a response. There they were brutally slaughtered by the Colorado militia, which continued its onslaught, killing women and children, even after the Indians had raised a white flag in surrender. In , the Teton Sioux in Wyoming attacked troops working on the construction of the Bozeman Trail a road between Wyoming and Montana , killing and mutilating the 80 soldiers at work. Events such as these led to the rise of bitter hatred between the two contending groups, which continuously spilled over into brutality and violence as the prolonged conflict went on. Not all whites, however, were employed in the direct destruction of the Indians. Many took a more beneficent view of the Plains Indians, seeing it as their duty to Christianize and modernize the "savages" on the reservations. To this end, the Board of Indian Commissioners delegated the task of reform to Protestant leaders. Though cloaked in goodwill, this effort served the more practical purpose of breaking the nomadic tradition of the Indians and making them into permanent and productive members of the reservations. Other attempts were made throughout the late s to "save" the Indians. Pratt founded the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania to equip Indians with the skills and culture necessary for integration into white society. However, the school uprooted Indians from their homes and made no pretense of respecting Indian culture. This sort of cultural reeducation assaulted the Indian way of life as viciously as the hunters who had slaughtered the buffalo. The movement to "civilize" the Indians was infused with a sense of cultural superiority. Pratt explained that that goal of the Carlisle School was to "kill the Indian and save the man. These concerns were expressed in the Dawes Severalty Act. The Dawes Act called for the breakup of the reservations and the treatment of Indians as individuals rather than tribes. While some Indians benefited from the Dawes Act, still others became dependent upon federal aid. After Indian resistance died out, many did try to adapt to non-Indian ways. Few succeeded completely, and many were emotionally devastated at being forced to abandoned age-old traditions. On reservations, the Plains Indians were almost totally dependent upon the federal government. Indian traditions, social organization, and modes of survival were broken down. By , the Plains Indian population had fallen from almost , to only slightly more than , However, the population began to stabilize and slowly rise again, and the traditions of the Plains Indians were maintained as best they could be, considering the situation. In the period following the Civil War non-Indian settlers pursued a strategy involving a mixture of benevolence, coercion cloaked in legality, and blind violence to change the Indian lifestyle in the name of civilization and progress. Many white Americans felt only contempt toward the Indians, but others viewed themselves as divinely chosen to uplift and Christianize the Indians. Both groups participated equally in the destruction of the Native American culture, however, and the fate of the Indians continues to rest heavy on the American conscience.

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July 17, A pile of American bison skulls in the mids. The last rail is laid; the last spike driven; the Pacific Railroad is completed. The point of junction is miles west of the Missouri river and miles east of Sacramento City. After more than six years of backbreaking labor, east officially met west with the driving of a ceremonial golden spike. In City Hall Park in Manhattan, the announcement was greeted with the firing of guns. Bells were rung across the country, from Washington, D. Business was suspended in Chicago as people rushed to the streets, celebrating to the sounding of steam whistles and cannons booming. Back in Utah, railroad officials and politicians posed for pictures aboard locomotives, shaking hands and breaking bottles of champagne on the engines as Chinese laborers from the West and Irish, German and Italian laborers from the East were budged from view. Celebration of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad, May 10, Ten millions of emigrants will settle in this golden land in twenty years. For in its wake, the lives of countless Native Americans were destroyed, and tens of millions of buffalo, which had roamed freely upon the Great Plains since the last ice age 10, years ago, were nearly driven to extinction in a massive slaughter made possible by the railroad. Following the Civil War, after deadly European diseases and hundreds of wars with the white man had already wiped out untold numbers of Native Americans, the U. But as the Gold Rush, the pressures of Manifest Destiny , and land grants for railroad construction led to greater expansion in the West, the majority of these treaties were broken. In , he wrote to Gen. On the ground in the West, Gen. Early on, Sheridan bemoaned a lack of troops: The consequence was that every engagement was a forlorn hope. As the railways expanded, they allowed the rapid transport of troops and supplies to areas where battles were being waged. Sheridan was soon able to mount the kind of offensive he desired. Custer later reported more than Indian deaths, including that of Chief Black Kettle and his wife, Medicine Woman Later, shot in the back as they attempted to ride away on a pony. Philip Sheridan photographed by Matthew Brady. In the midth century, it was estimated that 30 milion to 60 million buffalo roamed the plains. In mid-century, trappers who had depleted the beaver populations of the Midwest began trading in buffalo robes and tongues; an estimated , buffalo were killed annually. Then the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad accelerated the decimation of the species. Massive hunting parties began to arrive in the West by train, with thousands of men packing. Unlike the Native Americans or Buffalo Bill, who killed for food, clothing and shelter, the hunters from the East killed mostly for sport. Native Americans looked on with horror as landscapes and prairies were littered with rotting buffalo carcasses. Hundreds of men aboard the trains climbed to the roofs and took aim, or fired from their windows, leaving countless 1,pound animals where they died. Nearly every railroad train which leaves or arrives at Fort Hays on the Kansas Pacific Railroad has its race with these herds of buffalo; and a most interesting and exciting scene is the result. Frequently a young bull will turn at bay for a moment. His exhibition of courage is generally his death-warrant, for the whole fire of the train is turned upon him, either killing him or some member of the herd in his immediate vicinity. Hunters began killing buffalo by the hundreds of thousands in the winter months. One hunter, Orlando Brown brought down nearly 6, buffalo by himself and lost hearing in one ear from the constant firing of his. The Texas legislature, sensing the buffalo were in danger of being wiped out, proposed a bill to protect the species. And it is a well known fact that an army losing its base of supplies is placed at a great disadvantage. Then your prairies can be covered with speckled cattle. Wikipedia The devastation of the buffalo population signaled the end of the Indian Wars, and Native Americans were pushed into reservations. By the end of the 19th century, only buffalo were left in the wild. Congress finally took action, outlawing the killing of any birds or animals in Yellowstone National Park, where the only surviving buffalo herd could be protected. Conservationists established more wildlife preserves, and the species slowly rebounded. Today, there are more than , bison in North America. Sheridan acknowledged the role of the railroad in changing the face of the American West, and in his Annual Report of

the General of the U. Army in , he acknowledged that the Native Americans were scuttled to reservations with no compensation beyond the promise of religious instruction and basic supplies of food and clothingâ€”promises, he wrote, which were never fulfilled. Could any one expect less? Then, why wonder at Indian difficulties? Annual Report of the General of the U. Angevine, The Railroad and the State: A People and a Nation:

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The Plains' population was likewise sparse compared to most of the country after the Civil War. Before farmers and ranchers fenced in their homesteads with barbed wire, "cattle herders" drove cows across the range to railheads in towns like Abilene and Dodge City, Kansas.

Visit Website Indians were also a key factor in the imperial rivalries among France, Spain, and England. Meanwhile, the English and their trading partners, the Chickasaws and often the Cherokees, battled the French and associated tribes for control of the lower Mississippi River valley and the Spanish in western Florida. More decisive was the French and Indian War. Particularly serious was the near-annihilation of Gen. But with English minister William Pitt infusing new life into the war effort, British regulars and provincial militias overwhelmed the French and absorbed all of Canada. Visit Website But eighteenth-century conflicts were not limited to the European wars for empire. In Virginia and the Carolinas, English-speaking colonists pushed aside the Tuscaroras, the Yamasees, and the Cherokees. In , an Ottawa chief, Pontiac, forged a powerful confederation against British expansion into the Old Northwest. Most of the Indians east of the Mississippi River now perceived the colonial pioneers as a greater threat than the British government. Thus northern tribes, especially those influenced by Mohawk chief Thayendanegea Joseph Brant , generally sided with the Crown during the American War for Independence. Leger in upstate New York. Western Pennsylvania and New York became savage battlegrounds as the conflict spread to the Wyoming and Cherry valleys. Strong American forces finally penetrated the heart of Iroquois territory, leaving a wide swath of destruction in their wake. The Americans resumed the initiative in , when Clark marched northwest into Shawnee and Delaware country, ransacking villages and inflicting several stinging defeats upon the Indians. To the south, the British backed resistance among the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Choctaws but quickly forgot their former allies following the signing of the Treaty of Paris. By setting the boundaries of the newly recognized United States at the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes, that treaty virtually ensured future conflicts between whites and resident tribes. Yet resistance to white expansion in the Old Northwest continued as a Shawnee chief, Tecumseh , molded a large Indian confederation based at Prophetstown. While Tecumseh was away seeking additional support, William Henry Harrison burned the village after a stalemate at the Battle of Tippecanoe in . Indian raids, often encouraged by the British, were influential in causing the United States to declare war on Great Britain in . Several hundred American prisoners were killed following a skirmish at the River Raisin in early . But Harrison pushed into Canada and won the Battle of the Thames, which saw the death of Tecumseh and the collapse of his confederation. In the Southeast, the Creeks gained a major triumph against American forces at Fort Sims, killing many of their prisoners in the process. Andrew Jackson led the counterthrust, winning victories at Tallasahatchee and Talladega before crushing the Creeks at Horseshoe Bend in . Alaska and Florida were also the scenes of bitter conflicts. Native peoples strongly contested the Russian occupation of Alaska. The Aleuts were defeated during the eighteenth century, but the Russians found it impossible to prevent Tlingit harassment of their hunting parties and trading posts. But the Seminole Indians and runaway slaves refused to relocate, and the Second Seminole War saw fierce guerrilla-style actions from to Osceola, perhaps the greatest Seminole leader, was captured during peace talks in , and nearly three thousand Seminoles were eventually removed. The Third Seminole War stamped out all but a handful of the remaining members of the tribe. In the United States, the removal policy met only sporadic armed resistance as whites pushed into the Mississippi River valley during the s and s. The acquisition of Texas and the Southwest during the s, however, sparked a new series of Indian-white conflicts. On the Pacific Coast, attacks against the native peoples accompanied the flood of immigrants to gold-laden California. Disease, malnutrition, and warfare combined with the poor lands set aside as reservations to reduce the Indian population of that state from , in to 35, in . The army took the lead role in Oregon and Washington, using the Rogue River , Yakima , and Spokane wars to force several tribes onto reservations. Sporadic conflicts also plagued Arizona and New Mexico throughout the s as the army struggled to establish its presence. On the southern plains, mounted warriors posed an even more formidable challenge to white expansion. Strikes

against the Sioux, Cheyennes, Arapahos, Comanches, and Kiowas during the decade only hinted at the deadlier conflicts of years to come. The Civil War saw the removal of the Regulars and an accompanying increase in the number and intensity of white-Indian conflicts. Disputes on the southern plains culminated in the Sand Creek massacre , during which John M. In Minnesota , attacks by the Eastern Sioux prompted counterattacks by the volunteer forces of Henry H. Sibley, after which the tribes were removed to the Dakotas. The conflict became general when John Pope mounted a series of unsuccessful expeditions onto the plains in Regular units, including four regiments of black troops, returned west following the Confederate collapse. Railroad expansion, new mining ventures, the destruction of the buffalo, and ever-increasing white demand for land exacerbated the centuries-old tensions. The mounted warriors of the Great Plains posed an especially thorny problem for an army plagued by a chronic shortage of cavalry and a government policy that demanded Indian removal on the cheap. Using a series of converging columns, Philip Sheridan achieved more success in his winter campaigns of , but only with the Red River War of were the tribes broken. But arable lands and rumors of gold in the Dakotas continued to attract white migration; the government opened a major new war in A series of army columns took the field that fall and again the following spring. By campaigning through much of the winter, harassing Indian villages, and winning battles like that at Wolf Mountain , Nelson A. Miles proved particularly effective. Another outbreak among the Sioux and Northern Cheyennes, precipitated by government corruption, shrinking reservations, and the spread of the Ghost Dance, culminated in a grisly encounter at Wounded Knee , in which casualties totaled over two hundred Indians and sixty-four soldiers. Less spectacular but equally deadly were conflicts in the Pacific Northwest. In a desperate effort to secure a new reservation on the tribal homelands, a Modoc chief assassinated Edward R. Canby during an abortive peace conference in Also unsuccessful was armed resistance among the Bannocks, Paiutes, Sheepeaters, and Utes in To the far southwest, Cochise , Victorio, and Geronimo led various Apache bands in resisting white and Hispanic encroachments, crossing and recrossing the border into Mexico with seeming impunity. Only after lengthy campaigning, during which army columns frequently entered Mexico, were the Apaches forced to surrender in the mids. The army remained wary of potential trouble as incidental violence continued. Yet, with the exception of another clash in during which protesters temporarily seized control of Wounded Knee, the major Indian-white conflicts in the United States had ended. Militarily, several trends had become apparent. New technology often gave the whites a temporary advantage. But this edge was not universal; Indian warriors carrying repeating weapons during the latter nineteenth century sometimes outgunned their army opponents, who were equipped with cheaper but often more reliable single-shot rifles and carbines. As the scene shifted from the eastern woodlands to the western plains, white armies found it increasingly difficult to initiate fights with their Indian rivals. To force action, army columns converged upon Indian villages from several directions. This dangerous tactic had worked well at the Battle of the Washita but could produce disastrous results when large numbers of tribesmen chose to stand and fight, as at the Little Bighorn. Throughout the centuries of conflict, both sides had taken the wars to the enemy populace, and the conflicts had exacted a heavy toll among noncombatants. Whites had been particularly effective in exploiting tribal rivalries; indeed, Indian scouts and auxiliaries were often essential in defeating tribes deemed hostile by white governments. In the end, however, military force alone had not destroyed Indian resistance. Only in conjunction with railroad expansion, the destruction of the buffalo, increased numbers of non-Indian settlers, and the determination of successive governments to crush any challenge to their sovereignty had white armies overwhelmed the tribes. Eric Foner and John A.

8: SparkNotes: Westward Expansion (): The Plains Indians

Plains Wars, series of conflicts from the early s through the late s between Native Americans and the United States, along with its Indian allies, over control of the Great Plains between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains.

Traditional culture Linguistic organization Six distinct American Indian language families or stocks were represented in the Plains. Those speaking the same language are generally referred to as a tribe or nation, but this naming convention frequently masks the existence of a number of completely autonomous political divisions, or bands, within a given tribe. For instance, the Blackfoot Blackfeet tribe included three independent bands, the Piegan officially spelled Peigan in Canada , Blood, and Blackfoot proper Northern Blackfoot. Each language family included groups that lived in other culture areas, and the speakers of the several languages within a stock were not always geographically contiguous. Thus the speakers of Algonquian languages included the Blackfoot , Arapaho , Atsina , Plains Cree , and Saulteaux Plains Ojibwa , all in the northern Plains, while Cheyenne , also an Algonquian language, was spoken in the central Plains. Two other communication systems bear mention. Michif was spoken over a wide area. This was a system of fixed hand and finger positions symbolizing ideas, the meanings of which were known to the majority of the tribes of the area. The role of the horse in Plains life The introduction of the horse had a profound effect on the material life of the Plains peoples. Horses greatly increased human mobility and productivity in the region—so much so that many scholars divide Plains history into two periods, one before and one after the arrival of the horse. Horses became available gradually over the course of at least a century; before ad horses were fairly rare, and by they had become relatively common. Buffalo Hunt, Chase, painting by George Catlin, Typical of hunting and gathering cultures worldwide, Plains residents lived in small family-based groups, usually of no more than a few dozen individuals, and foraged widely over the landscape. The peoples of deep prehistory in this region are referred to as Paleo-Indians, Archaic cultures , and Plains Woodland cultures see Native American: By approximately ad , some residents of the central Plains had shifted from foraging to farming for a significant portion of their subsistence and were living in settlements comprising a number of large earth-berm homes. As early as , and no later than about , most Plains residents had made this shift and were living in substantial villages and hamlets along the Missouri River and its tributaries; from north to south these groups eventually included the Hidatsa, Mandan, Arikara, Ponca, Omaha, Pawnee, Kansa, Osage, and Wichita. Some villages reached populations of up to a few thousand people. These groups, known as Plains Village cultures , grew corn maize , beans, squash, and sunflowers in the easily tilled land along the river bottoms. Women were responsible for agricultural production and cultivated their crops using antler rakes, wooden digging sticks, and hoes made from the shoulder blades of elk or buffalo. Women also collected medicinal plants and wild produce such as prairie turnips and chokecherries. Men grew tobacco and hunted bison, elk, deer, and other game; whole communities would also participate in driving herds of big game over cliffs. Fish, fowl, and small game were also eaten. Until the horse the only domesticated animals were dogs ; these were sometimes eaten but were mostly used as draft animals. Dogs drew the travois, a vehicle consisting of two poles in the shape of a V, with the open end of the V dragging on the ground; burdens were placed on a platform that bridged the two poles. Because of the limitations inherent in using only dogs and people to carry loads, Plains peoples did not generally engage in extensive travel before the horse. Before horses became available, intertribal warfare was relatively rare and few battles were deadly. However, a period of exceptional conflict occurred in the 14th century, probably due to the same kinds of drought-induced crop failure that caused the dispersal of the Ancestral Pueblo and Hohokam cultures of the Southwest at approximately the same time. Indigenous communities in the path of destruction fled, displacing their neighbours and creating a kind of domino effect in which nearly every Northeast Indian tribe shifted location; eventually groups as far inland as present-day Minnesota and Ontario were displaced westward to the Plains. By the midth century horses had also arrived, coming from the Southwest via trade with the Spanish and the expansion of herds of escaped animals. Guns were also entering the Plains, via the fur trade. Plains peoples, whether established residents or newcomers, quickly combined horses and guns to their advantage. Most hunters initially chose to use bows

and arrows in the mounted hunt, as these provided greater accuracy than early guns. However, as firearms became more accurate, they were readily adopted. As tribes became more reliant on equestrian hunting, they adjusted their annual round to match that of their primary food source, the buffalo. As a rule, the largest bands or tribes came together en masse only in late spring and summer. During this period the buffalo congregated for calving, allowing hunters to supply enough food to support extensive gatherings of people. During the remainder of the year, the buffalo dispersed into smaller herds, and the nomadic tribes and bands followed suit. The seasonal round of the village groups may be illustrated by the Arikara, who planted their crops in the spring, spent the summer as nomadic hunters, and returned to their villages in the autumn for the harvest. After a brief period of hunting in the late autumn, they moved to winter hamlets of a few homes each in the wooded bottomlands, which provided shelter from winter storms. They returned to their villages in the spring to begin the cycle anew. Dogs continued to be used as draft animals, particularly for mundane and short-distance tasks such as hauling water and firewood from a valley to a nearby village or camp; horses were generally considered too valuable for these activities. Settlement patterns and housing All Plains peoples used tepees, although villagers resided for most of the year in earth lodges. The tepee is a conical tent, its foundation being either three or four poles; other poles placed around these formed a roughly circular base. Before the horse, tepees averaged about 10 feet in diameter, encompassing approximately 80 square feet. A tepee would usually house a two- or three-generation family. The cover was made from dressed buffalo skins carefully fitted and sewn together and often painted with representations of the visions or war exploits of the eldest male resident. Entrance was through an opening in the tent wall, with a flap of the tent covering serving as a door; early travelers reported that one scratched or rubbed on the tent wall in lieu of knocking. A hearth in the centre provided heat and light; a smoke hole at the top could be closed in bad weather and in warm weather the sides could be rolled up for additional ventilation. When a large group assembled, a camp circle was usually formed, leaving the space in the centre for ceremonial structures. Among some peoples, such as the Cheyenne and Atsina, each subgroup had a defined place in the circle. Among many tribes, too, the orientation of the lodges and the opening of the circle were toward the rising sun. The earth lodge, the dwelling used by most village tribes, was much larger than a tepee. Earth lodges averaged 40 to 60 feet 12 to 18 metres in diameter, encompassing approximately 1, to 2, square feet to square metres, and generally housed three-generation families. Like tepees, they had a roughly circular floor plan; unlike tepees, they were dome-shaped, roofed and walled with earth, and entered by means of a covered passage. A rattle made of deer hooves often served as a door knocker in these residences. The placement of an earth lodge within a village varied from one tribe to the next and often was determined by the eldest male resident; however, the homes themselves typically belonged to the women of the household. Earth lodge villages were generally protected by a defensive ditch and palisade. The construction of Osage and Wichita houses was similar to that of the wickiup of the Northeast. The dwellings of the Osage were oval in ground plan, composed of upright poles arched over on top, interlaced with horizontal withes, and covered with mats or skins. Wichita houses were more conical in shape and thatched with grass. They were otherwise similar in size and occupancy to earth lodges. Wichita grass lodge, photograph by Edward S. LC-USZ Material culture and trade On the northern Plains men wore a shirt, leggings reaching to the hips, moccasins, and in cold weather, a buffalo robe painted to depict the war deeds of the owner. Among the villagers and some southern nomads, men traditionally left the upper part of the body bare and frequently tattooed the chest, shoulders, and arms. Clothes were decorated with porcupine-quill embroidery, fringe, and in later times, beadwork. Billed caps and fur hats were used for protection from the bright sun and the cold. Elaborate headgear and other regalia were reserved for ceremonial occasions. Hidatsa buffalo robe characteristic of those exchanged during the fur trade, c. Pipe bowls were usually of stone but could also be ceramic, and pipe stems were generally made of wood. Receptacles of various kinds were made from rawhide, leather, and fascia such as the pericardium, which was used as a tough, collapsible bucket. Basketry and pottery were characteristic products of the villagers, although nomadic groups such as the Cheyenne, Comanche, and Arapaho made basketry gambling trays. A few nomadic tribes, such as the Atsina, Blackfoot, and Cree, claimed to have made earthenware in the past but to have given up the practice because the resulting vessels were too fragile for travois transport. Tools were made of fibre, bone,

horn, antler, stone; many traditional tools, including hide scrapers, cooking vessels, knives, and arrowheads, were made from metal once it became available through the fur trade. Plains bullboats, in Mih-tutta-Hangkusch, a Mandan Village, one of a series of aquatint engravings by Karl Bodmer, "Library of Congress, Washington, D. Differences in wealth arose from the increased productivity enabled by the horse. The man who had many horses could use this wealth for a variety of purposes, such as giving them to those in need, offering them as bridewealth, or trading them for other materials. Because most material goods other than horses were readily available to all members of a given community, there was very little intratribal trade in them; there was, however, much exchange of ritual knowledge and other intangibles. Knowledge of war medicine and of curing rites was a valuable asset, and in almost all of the tribes the acquisition of this information was costly. Apprenticeships in craft production were also purchased. Hidatsa customs, for instance, required men who wished to learn to chip flint arrowheads to purchase instruction from the guardians of the bundles associated with arrow-making songs; similarly, women who wished to learn to make pottery or earth lodges had to purchase apprenticeships from recognized craft and ritual specialists. Trade between members of different tribes was common and often involved an exchange of products between nomads and villagers, as in the trade of buffalo robes for corn. The Cheyenne were middlemen in the trade of horses between the tribes of the southern Plains and those of the north-central Plains, while the Assiniboin, Hidatsa, Mandan, Arikara, and later some eastern Sioux groups brokered the guns and other materials such as blankets, beads, cloth, and kettles that flowed from the British and French for pelts and buffalo robes from groups to the west. Conflicts often stemmed from competition among tribes that wished the sole control of a specific trade route. Political organization The political structures of most Plains tribes functioned at the level of the band. Bands were fluid groups that could range in size from a few dozen to a few hundred people who lived, worked, and traveled together. Nomadic tribes generally comprised several large independent bands that coalesced and dispersed over the course of the year. Village groups functioned similarly; a group of related villages might coalesce for a band-level hunt, while smaller groups were the more usual parties for work and socializing. Band organization relied upon a combination of individual leaders and military societies. Military societies, in turn, kept the general order and enforced the decisions of leaders. Each band centred its activities in a loosely defined area within a broader tribal territory. The bands within a tribe did not fight one another, but the degree to which they acted in concert varied. Among the nomadic Comanche, for instance, bands changed membership with ease and the people chose not to have a formal tribal council. Similarly, residency in each of the three Hidatsa villages was quite fluid, but each village nonetheless identified itself as a band and remained politically independent from the others. In contrast, the Skidi band of the Pawnee lived in 19 separate villages that were united in maintaining their political independence from the other three bands within the Pawnee nation. The Cheyenne were the most politically hierarchical Plains group; their 10 bands sent representatives to a council of 44 peace chiefs, whose decrees were binding on the entire tribe. Kinship and family Some Plains cultures reckoned descent bilaterally, or equally in both the male and female lines. This did not mean that there was no recognition of the other parent and his or her relatives; to the contrary, both parents and their kin usually had specific roles to fill. Frequently a child was treated indulgently by lineal or clan relatives, who taught him ordinary life skills such as hunting for boys or agriculture for girls, while nonlineal relatives were more authoritarian and acted as spiritual mentors.

9: American-Indian Wars - HISTORY

"A Travel Guide to the Plains Indians Wars" provides a general overview of the Plains Indian wars; but it is particularly helpful for anyone planning a visit to the military posts and sites of battle.

Imagine him, for example, as a young man on horseback. Almost without effort, the image conjures up full-blown narratives of buffalo hunts and mounted warfare. Make the "he" into a young woman and imagine romantic tragedies of forced marriage and unrequited love. And while the images can be easily moved to the Hollywood backlot, those real people are not so easily detached from the Great Plains themselves, for this difficult environment framed ongoing historical transformations in Native political organization, social relations, economy, and culture. Along with the nomadic bison hunting popularized in the movies, Native Americans engaged in raiding, trading, pastoralism, agriculture, diplomacy, politics, religious innovation and syncretism, warfare, migration, wage labor, lawsuits, lobbying, and gaming. Through these adaptive strategies, the Plains peoples worked to protect and enhance their political power and their ability to sustain themselves economically, and to maintain their cultural distinctiveness. Longevity in the Plains Although some peoples came to the Plains earlier than others, Native Americans have lived there for a long time. Evidence from the Agate Basin site in eastern Wyoming, for example, indicates that humans lived in the Plains at least as early as B. Radiocarbon dating of material from the Lewisville site near Dallas, Texas, suggests Indians and their precursors may have been in the Plains for at least 38, years. The oral histories of some tribes refer to long-extinct mammoths and other megafauna. Some scholars assert that the Sioux peoples originated in the Great Lakes region and only began moving onto the Plains in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Many Lakotas, however, trace the origins of their people to Wind Cave in the Black Hills and suggest that they were simply in the middle of a long, slow migration home after living elsewhere for a time. Clarity on this issue will probably not be forthcoming. Environmental Adaptations Their extended tenure in the Plains allowed Native peoples to experience significant alterations in the environment. Between 11, and 11., precipitation declined, the range of temperatures increased, and free-flowing streams began to turn into small lakes and marshes, eventually becoming part of the expanding grassland. Species adapted to the wetter worldâ€”such as mammoths, camels, and horsesâ€”died out, opening ecological niches in the Plains grassland. Most of these niches were filled by bison, which were becoming smaller and more mobile in order to be more effective in the drier climate. Plains peoples adjusted to these changes as well. Around the time that the larger game disappeared, nomadic hunters shifted from Clovis-style spear points and arrowheads to the smaller Folsom points and heads, which were used until about b. Like more recent Native peoples, Folsom hunters and their successors depended heavily upon the bison and relied upon the more sophisticated social organization necessary for group hunting. Such organization allowed for the creation and use of "buffalo jumps," a large funnel of trees, rocks, poles, and people designed to channel stampeding bison over a cliff. Plains hunters used buffalo jumps like the Head-Smashed-In site in southwestern Alberta as early as 5, years ago. Plains residents began experimenting with pottery and more sedentary villages at least as early as 2, years ago. Ancestors of the Mandans and Hidatsas eventually settled in fortified villages along the Missouri River, where they raised corn, beans, and squash. These villages generally ranged in size from ten to ninety lodges and were built from bracing poles and packed earthen cover. Some of the crops these villagers grew became part of the extensive trade networks that linked the horticulturalists with Plains hunters and with peoples outside the Plains. Both material goods agricultural products, dried meat, flint, and animal hides and cultural products songs and dances traded hands. Migrations While the rise of sedentary villages and agriculture stood out as a key way that Plains peoples adapted to and shaped their environment, migration played an equally important role in the lives of many Indians. It seems that Plains societies were both amalgamating and splitting apart, and that mobility constituted a common response to both social and environmental factors. The groups that came to be known as Apaches, for example, separated from people in the Northern Plains as early as A. They moved south, sojourning in Nebraska before moving into the Southern Plains between and By the late s they and their Kiowa allies had staked out a territory ranging from northwestern Texas to Wyoming and the Black

Hills. At the same time, Shoshones moved east from the Great Basin to eastern Montana. Such migrations accelerated after , as some groups left the Plains and others entered the region. Moving from what is now eastern Montana, a branch of Shoshones that would come to be known as Comanches swept the Apaches south and by forced them from the Plains entirely. Cheyennes and Arapahos migrated west from the Great Lakes region. Crees and Assiniboines gradually moved into the Canadian Prairies. Horses, Guns, and Diseases Migrations also brought Europeans to the Plains, beginning in the sixteenth century. The newcomers brought both opportunities and perils for the Plains peoples in the forms of trade and disease. Horses and firearms were the most important European trade items. The Spanish reintroduced horses into the Plains, in part through trading networks that connected Plains peoples with the Pueblos and Apaches. Horses had existed in the Americas at one time, but they had become extinct. Indians acted as middlemen and traded horses to more distant Plains peoples. By the late s, for example, Kiowas and Kiowa Apaches traded horses to the Caddos. Comanches often acquired horses by raiding Spanish and Apache settlements and then traded the animals to other tribes. Utes, Cheyennes, and Arapahos moved horses to the north. Because Spanish law forbade the selling or trading of firearms to Natives, the Plains peoples turned to the English and French for guns, and middleman relationships developed with both mobile traders and trade centers in the Arkansas, Missouri, and Red River valleys. Access to horses and weaponry came at a high cost. European traders brought European epidemic diseases to which Plains Indians had not been exposed and to which they had limited immunity. Even Natives who had never met a European became ill as a result of contact with Native middlemen in the trade who inadvertently exposed them to smallpox, measles, whooping cough, and many other diseases. Regardless of the source, European diseases spread through the Plains and decimated Native populations, especially those concentrated in villages. The Hidatsas, Mandans, Omahas, Poncas, and other relatively sedentary tribes also suffered great losses. The combination of European diseases and trade items had a complex impact upon the Plains. Access to horses allowed for the more effective killing and transportation of bison. Consequently, many tribes—such as the Lakota Sioux—rejected a sedentary and horticultural lifestyle and devoted less time to trapping beaver and more time to the hunting of bison. Tribes with the greatest access to horses and firearms could expand their territory and power at the expense of those tribes with fewer guns and horses. The relative power of the nomads was actually increased by disease: Europeans Unlike their horses, guns, and pathogens, Europeans themselves initially had a relatively limited presence in the Plains. The Spanish first penetrated the region between and looking for "cities of gold. Spain did sponsor an expedition to the Plains under Pedro de Villasur in , but it suffered a military defeat at the hands of the Pawnees and Otoes. The French expanded into the Southern and Central Plains by the early eighteenth century from bases in the Mississippi Valley. They negotiated commercial and military agreements with Plains tribes. Through these agreements, the French traded with Indians for furs, while using Plains peoples as a defense against rival Europeans and Indians. Few in number and often nomadic themselves, the French posed no threat to Indian autonomy. In the late eighteenth century, British fur traders from Canada pushed into the Prairie Provinces. Unlike the individualistic French traders, the large British companies built numerous trading posts among the Assiniboines, Plains Crees, Blackfoot, and Gros Ventres, drawing them into market relations. Alcohol, the credit system, and intermarriage created strong linkages and dependencies, but the number of the British and the volume of their trade were too small to dramatically alter the Native cultures. Like the other Plains groups, the Indians of the Canadian Prairies managed to keep their subsistence, political, and cultural systems largely intact until the second half of the nineteenth century. Americans When the British, French, and Spanish entered the Plains, they tended to seek peaceful relations with Indian people. In truth, Europeans lacked the power to do otherwise. The same cannot be said, however, of the United States. American expansion into the Plains in the nineteenth century involved the purposeful or incidental destruction and control of those Plains resources upon which Native Americans depended. Nevertheless, by the end of the century, Native peoples had seen their populations decline precipitously, had lost control over much of their land and other economic resources, and faced the prospect of seeing their societies and cultures forcibly annihilated by outsiders. Fur traders were the first Americans to enter the Northern and Central Plains in significant numbers in the first four decades of the nineteenth century. In the s large numbers of emigrants

passed through the Great Plains on their way to Oregon, Utah, and the California goldfields. The construction of railroads across the Plains after the Civil War made accessible a region with limited navigable rivers, and the Homestead Act and other laws drew settlers to the Plains by providing land at a relatively small cost. The influx presented significant problems for the Plains peoples. Migration along these trails destroyed the ecosystems of the Platte and Arkansas Valleys. The emigrants drove the bison away, churned the grasslands into mile-wide dust swathes, stripped wood from river bottoms, and polluted water sources—often with diseases such as cholera. Native peoples who depended upon the resources of these areas, such as the Sioux and Pawnees in the north and the Comanches and Kiowas in the south, demanded compensation for this damage and sought substitutes for the lost game. The Comanches and Kiowas, for example, took to raiding for cattle and other items. This led to an escalating series of threats, a cycle of raids, and occasional reprisals by whites. In the federal government created a Permanent Indian Frontier. Encompassing much of modern-day Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma, it was to serve as a home for displaced eastern tribes. Tribes already in the area, such as the Kansas, Wichitas, Osages, and Pawnees, ceded lands to make room for tribes removed from the east, such as the Delawares and Kickapoos. But this was not a Permanent Indian Frontier. In the Kansas-Nebraska Act opened up vast areas for American settlement. In a flurry of treaty signing in the second half of the 1850s many Indigenous groups ceded their ancestral lands, retaining only small reservations. On their reservations Plains Indians were placed under great pressure to change. They experimented with new strategies of resistance but enjoyed limited success. Pawnees in Nebraska and Osages in Kansas, for example, found their livelihoods threatened by Sioux raids and by non-Indian migrants who drove off game. The Indians responded by trying to levy tolls of sugar and coffee on emigrants and by occasionally resorting to harassment and cattle raids. By the mid-1860s the Pawnees and many of the other Native peoples in Kansas and Nebraska had been relocated to Indian Territory now Oklahoma, the remnant of the Permanent Indian Frontier. Many Plains peoples engaged in diplomacy with the United States and other tribes as a strategy to deal with the American newcomers. These treaties called for peaceful relations, delineated which tribes got which lands, and stipulated that tribes would be given supplies and services to make up for the destruction of game by non-Indians. Wars The treaties did not end threats to Indian lifeways and thus failed to forestall violence for long. In the two years after the discovery of gold in Colorado, thousands of gold seekers flocked into Arapaho territory, violating the treaty. Some Arapahos responded by moving north of the Platte. In response, members of these tribes, along with some Sioux, Comanches, and Kiowas, resorted to war.

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