

## 1: The Frontier Forts of Texas | Texas Almanac

*A Guide to the Microfiche Edition of THE INDIAN WARS OF THE WEST AND FRONTIER ARMY LIFE, Official Histories and Personal Narratives Project Editor and Guide Compiled by.*

Ruins at Fort McKavett. Photo by Robert Plocheck. After the Republic of Texas was annexed to the United States in late 1845, Texans had high hopes that the federal government would do what the impoverished Republic had been unable to do: Instead, the annexation of Texas soon precipitated the Mexican War, which kept the United States Army preoccupied with events south of the Rio Grande until 1848. Location of fort sites. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the war in 1848 and transferred ownership of the present American Southwest and California from Mexico to the United States, also placed an obligation upon the U. S. The Comanches and Kiowas, ferocious South Plains horsemen who had wreaked havoc on Texas frontier settlements for 20 years, had from time immemorial considered northern Mexican towns and haciendas their personal raiding ground and commissary. Nor could it effectively protect its own settlers on the wild western edge of Texas settlement. But in October 1848, it set about trying. Brooke, commanding the 8th Military Department at San Antonio, ordered the establishment of a line of forts along the Rio Grande from Brownsville to Eagle Pass, and northward from there to the Red River. Westward Expansion When Gen. Brooke issued his order, the California gold rush was under way. The hopeful pilgrims traveling that cruel road across the Chihuahuan and Sonoran deserts had to be protected, too. As Anglo settlement quickly pressed beyond the first forts, some of which were still under construction, the U. S. Army in 1852 began establishing a second line of posts about 100 miles west of the first. While the new forts were being erected, many of the older ones were abandoned or consolidated with the newer ones. By 1855, about one-third of the U. S. Army was stationed in Texas, many of the troops serving in primitive, undermanned outposts along the border and the western frontier. William Grigsby Freeman set out in June of that year on the first inspection tour of those new forts and later wrote a detailed report to the assistant adjutant general in Washington. His report paints a vivid picture of the earliest U. S. Army installations on Texas soil and the kind of life the soldiers endured in them. A Thorough Inspection The first post Freeman inspected was Fort Ewell, "situated on the right, or south, bank of the Nueces River at the point where it is crossed by the road leading from San Antonio to Laredo. It lacked timber and stone for building and grazing for the animals. The soldiers had been unable even to get a kitchen garden to grow. When he was about to depart Ewell, a rainstorm flooded the marsh around the post and held him prisoner for five days, "and even then I was compelled to swim my animals to get away. The damp colonel made a quick trip to Fort Merrill, about 60 miles northwest of Corpus Christi, then on to Fort Brown, situated just below Brownsville on the Rio Grande. The site of Fort Brown had been thought to be a healthful one, he wrote, but in the last two years "it has been visited by four epidemics â€” yellow fever, cholera and the dengue twice. Ringgold Barracks, upriver from Brownsville, seemed in a more healthful location. It stood on a high bank of the Rio Grande within half a mile of a village of souls called Rio Grande City, "a place of some notoriety in the late frontier disturbances. It was called "New Laredo. Freeman discovered a number of sick men in the post hospital, "but no citizen physician could be obtained in the neighborhood. Maverick of San Antonio. The colonel liked what he saw: It ought to have a strong garrison of horse and foot, and it is well fitted for a Cavalry station, timber for building stables being convenient, and an abundance of excellent grazing in the immediate vicinity. Fort Clark would be an important post throughout the Indian wars and beyond. After the Civil War, it would be home for the intrepid Seminole-Negro Indian Scouts, or Black Seminole Scouts, descendants of slaves who had escaped into the Florida Everglades many years earlier and had been adopted into the Seminole tribe. When the government removed the Seminoles to a reservation in Oklahoma, their black tribesmen went with them. They won renown as trackers and would prove invaluable to the U. S. Army throughout West Texas during the wars against the Plains tribes and the Apaches. Fort Clark remained a major post until 1892, when it was deactivated. It was one of the last horse cavalry posts to go. Freeman was less impressed with nearby Fort Inge on the Frio

River. These, besides being insufficient, are in a wretched state of dilapidation. Part of the troops also live in tents. He began at Fort Martin Scott, a tiny post near Fredericksburg that served mainly as a forage depot for wagon trains supplying the upper posts, and then in mid-August he continued to Fort Mason, 23 miles from San Saba. By November, the army had decided to abandon it, but Fort Mason did not finally close until Three Comanche bands led by Yellow Wolf, Ketunseh and San-a-co were living on the Concho River and at the headwaters of the Colorado, within 60 to miles of the post. The men at McKavett were "variously armed and clothed, which besides the inconvenience attending its instruction, greatly detracts from its appearance on parade occasions. The nearest post office was at San Antonio, miles away. The best thing Freeman found at Fort Terrett was the band, which "though small, is quite good, and does much to relieve the monotony of garrison life at an isolated, frontier station. It was a four-day journey. Except for the officers, who lived in "two or three rude, jacal huts," the troops there were still living in tents. They have no permanent camps, but for the last year the band of San-a-co, one of the principal chiefs, has lived within 50 or 60 miles of the post. To complete the dismal scene: They are now in a dilapidated condition. The company quarters will, in all probability, fall down during the prevalence of the severe northers of the coming winter. There was plenty of good stone and brick clay for construction; the post stood over a field of bituminous coal that could be dug for fuel, and excellent springs were only a few hundred yards away. When Freeman arrived there in September, its commander had gotten orders to abandon the post and move his troops to Fort Belknap. Merrill informs me that most of his men belong to the temperance society, and that he has rarely occasion to confine any one of them. With a few exceptions, most of the other posts he visited would follow them into oblivion within a few years. Settlers already were pushing the frontier miles beyond their usefulness. They never had enough troops or the right equipment to perform their mission. Most of their troops were infantry. To expect them to chase down on foot the greatest horsemen in the world was sheer governmental folly. The Comanches and Kiowas who visited the forts and took a look around must have had a good laugh when they returned to their camps. Why did the army keep its mounted troops at its eastern forts, far from the frontier, while sending its infantry to the western posts, where the Indian horsemen roamed? Persifor Smith, commander of the Department of Texas, had decided to quarter his horses where the forage was best. And there was more grass in the east. Its mission would be to defend the border and protect California-bound travelers and the few local settlers from Indian attack. Jefferson Van Horne and soldiers arrived there in September. The troops occupied several sites along the river, but in they were ordered to withdraw to Fort Fillmore, 40 miles to the north in New Mexico. In January the border post was re-established and named Fort Bliss. The road intersected several war trails traveled by the Comanches and Apaches on their raids into and out of Mexico. In October, Gen. Smith personally selected "for its "pure water and salubrious climate" " the site of Fort Davis named for the secretary of war near Limpia Creek at the southern base of the Davis Mountains also named for the secretary. Six companies of infantry under Lt. Washington Seawell constructed a primitive post of mud and wood in a box canyon near the creek. In August, Capt. Stephen Carpenter and two infantry companies established Fort Lancaster on Live Oak Creek above its confluence with the Pecos River near the present-day town of Sheffield. In September, Capt. Lee and his infantry command established Fort Quitman on a barren plain of the Rio Grande, 80 miles downstream from Fort Bliss. The Civil War Years Before the soldiers at the Trans-Pecos forts could build permanent, comfortable quarters for themselves and their animals, Texas seceded from the Union in and joined the Confederacy. Twiggs, commander of the 8th U. Military District, ordered the federal garrisons to evacuate all the posts and surrender them to Confederate authorities. Elements of the 2nd Regiment of the Texas Mounted Rifles occupied most of the West Texas forts, some for a few months, some for a year or more. During the year that Col. Baylor and Confederate troops manned Fort Davis, a detachment of cavalry gave chase to an Apache raiding party. Thinking he had overtaken the raiders somewhere in the Big Bend, Lt. Reuben Mays and his 13 men rode into an ambush. The Apaches wiped out the soldiers, and only a Mexican guide escaped. In, the soldiers from the Trans-Pecos posts marched on to Fort Bliss and were part of the army led by Brig. The deserted forts fell into ruin. Apaches looted and burned

much of Fort Davis. Except for Fort Bliss, which Union troops reoccupied after Glorieta, the war left the frontier settlements and travelers as naked to Indian attack as they had been before Texas joined the Union. Many families abandoned their homes and pulled back to more populous areas. Others "forted up" together and depended on a few companies of Texas Rangers and minuteman volunteers to protect them. Army returned to Texas, this time to stay until the frontier was tamed. In and , federal troops reoccupied Fort Davis, Fort Stockton, Fort Lancaster and Fort Quitman, this time building permanent housing and facilities of stone and adobe to replace the uncomfortable and unsanitary pre-war jacales. In addition, the army built a trio of new forts to contend with the Comanche threat east of the Pecos.

## 2: Army on the Frontier - Wikipedia

*The Indian wars of the West and frontier army life, official histories and personal narratives. The Indian wars of the West and frontier army life.*

Frontier Forts Main Texas and the Western Frontier It is not probable that white settlements will be made here for a century to come, if ever. Area of settlements at the edge of the western frontier circa to and the U. Within a short time, settlers moved beyond the lines of defense and into unprotected lands. Photo by William S. Bison, traditional sustenance for the Plains tribes and later a rich commodity for Anglo hide traders, were to come perilously close to extinction by the end of the nineteenth century. Photo courtesy Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The fertile terraces of the Brazos River attracted settlers who began small farms in the Peters Colony of northwest Texas. Western settlers being attacked by Indians. Small communities on the edge of the frontier suffered the brunt of Indian attacks in early years and served as a buffer for the larger towns. Detail from Harpers Weekly, ca. Note the stations at army forts across Texas. Diseases took as great a toll on settlers as they did on Indians in some years, particularly young children and the elderly. Gravestones, such as this one marking the death of a child in the s central Texas community of Hoover Valley, are a poignant reminder of the harsh frontier conditions. Anglo Texans greeted the end of the U. All too quickly the lure of nearly free and unbroken land attracted a multitude of pioneers. In response, the U. Army in began establishing a new line of forts a hundred miles beyond the original vanguard. For Hispanics and Indians, who also claimed much of this wild land as their home, the years of early statehood left them struggling merely to survive. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that ended the late war cast many Tejanos into a perilous future, with their new citizenship shadowed by an alien legal system and powerful economic forces. Some would fight to hold what they had, and find their recourse outside the law. The situation for the Comanches was even more ominous. The effects of contact had visited the Penateka southern bands with lethal consequences. Dependence on the material goods of Anglos and a taste for alcohol broke both tradition and will. Ecological changes, moreover, upset the annual migration of the great bison herds, a condition that would persist into the years of the Civil War. Armed with superior weaponry and well tutored in double-dealing, they further contracted the kingdom of these one-time Lords of the Plains. To Anglos, so many unrestrained Indian tribes and disgruntled Tejanos posed a psychological threat illuminated by the very real prospect of actual raids. Northern Comanches, joined by Kiowas and individuals from other tribes, splashed across the Red River from the Indian Territory and often probed the length of the frontier line, keeping settlers on constant alert. Additionally, the usual run of rootless and lawless whites took advantage of frontier conditions to prey upon the livestock of isolated settlers. Settlers bet their lives and property on the wager that chaos would quickly give way to order. In the estimation of these plucky newcomers, the prospective rewards were certainly worth the risks. Like their predecessors, the Spanish colonists who in the s had settled the borderlands along the Rio Grande, they learned that all manner of hardships might be survived with a bit of luck and the support of neighbors, though often far afield. As the s unfolded, signs of progress offered encouragement. However meager, any number of villages sprang up between the first and second line of U. This expansive watershed came to be known as Northwest Texas. Settlements such as Fredericksburg, New Braunfels and Castroville provided a bit of European culture on the frontier in spite of continued threats of Indian attacks. In the Southern Overland Mail, better known as the Butterfield stage, began cutting a path across the plains and prairies between its terminals at Saint Louis and San Francisco. From Sherman to El Paso a series of stations presented anchors around which communities seemed surely to emerge. Other newcomers to northern Texas learned that the Western Cross Timbers, a veritable "cast iron forest," provided natural fencing. Just when it seemed as if the frontier was beginning to join the mainstream of Texan society, Anglo-Indian conflicts and the Civil War reversed most of this material progress. For their part, the state and federal governments were often at odds, flip-flopping between policies of peace and war. Adding to the sense of anxiety, the federal

government in leased four leagues of land for an Indian reservation along the Brazos River below Fort Belknap. That spring, Texans led by ranger captain Rip Ford reported the defeat of over determined warriors at the Battle of the Washita, in Indian Territory. Not far from there, near Wichita Village, U. Meanwhile, The White Man grew ever more vocal. Words grew into deeds, climaxing in the Reservation War of that pitted militiamen of Northwest Texas against the Indians on both reservations. While no pitched battles ensued, the affair resulted in the expulsion of the native peoples. At last it seemed as if Anglo Texans had gained control of the frontier. The Civil War cost pioneer folk both the protection of the federal troops and much of its home guard, as many militiamen took up arms and marched east to defend the South. Indians, revitalized by feelings of revenge, took advantage of the situation and attempted to reclaim their former homeland and hunting grounds. Rio Grande City, circa This peaceful scene belies the violence that frequently erupted in this and other early Texas border towns. As the artist-soldier Capt. Lee wrote, Rio Grande City "could boast more crimes of murder, robbery, assassination, and outlawry generally, than all the rest of the Texas cities. Click for full image. For many Tejanos, however, the treaty brought an alien legal system along with a change in citizenship. Some victims of the new economic and political order fought back outside the law. Treaty page 1 , courtesy the Library of Congress. Image courtesy of the Library of Congress. As settlers pushed farther west on the Texas frontier in the s, new army posts were constructed to provide a measure of protection. Substantial houses of stone and plaster with a European flair were built in early settlements such as Castroville. The house shown is that of Henri Castro, founder of the s colony west of San Antonio. Click to see full image. The threat of Indian raids was a constant source of anxiety for settlers on the Texas frontier, particularly after U. Perhaps no pioneers in the history of the American West experienced such trying conditions as those who remained on the Texas frontier during the Civil War years. Flag raising at Fort Davis, a community fort on the Brazos River. Settlers who "forted up" in family compounds during the Civil War years found time for celebrations amid worry over Indian raids and lack of supplies. Longhorn cattle, a hardy hybrid of Spanish criollo stock and English cattle," thrived on the Texas plains and prairies, giving rise to the occupation known as "cow hunting. While markets in the interior went begging for goods to send to the Confederate army, there was little the pioneers could produce in bulk. The scarcity of supplies and hard currency, moreover, left them to their own ingenuity. The one commodity they enjoyed in abundance was beef. From the brush country of South Texas to the grassy rolling plains of Northwest Texas, the lean, hardy breed of longhorn cattle proliferated. Belknap has declared unfit to inhabit. Most observers of the Civil War years claimed the Comanches and Kiowas rolled back the frontier a hundred miles in places; certainly the population thinned considerably. Even so, cow hunters actually extended their reach, adapting to the unfamiliar environment, even against the mortal peril of Indian raids. One outfit, near old Camp Cooper, was reportedly tending a herd of 25, head of longhorn when warriors forced them to flee. Most of the war parties were small in number, and the raids were short and sharp, but not all one-sided. An overburdened state cavalry and what was left of the local militias sporadically patrolled the frontier and kept their adversaries on guard. The single most serious incident during these years came in the fall of The "Elm Creek Raid" in Young County reportedly involved a party of between five hundred and a thousand Comanches and Kiowas who raided the middle Brazos, virtually denuding the range of cattle and horses and besieging the citizen post Fort Murrah. If not for some of the home guard and a few isolated but well armed settlers who engaged the warriors, the death toll of the Texas pioneers would have been much worse. Along with the livestock, the war party returned to Indian Territory with almost a dozen women and children captives. Moreover, they forbid frontierspeople to raise arms and organize. The raids continued, bringing so many reports of depredations that their very scale created disbelief. Map adapted from Donald Frazier in Cashion Clear Fork pioneers Judge J. The bride, shown at the age of 15, was born on the westernmost edge of the Texas frontier as the Civil War broke out. Click for more detail. After the Civil War, federal troops returned to man their posts on a frontier that had become more volatile during their absence. The small north Texas town of Jacksboro, shown here in , was charged with new life when Fort Richardson was established nearby and still thrives. Thousands of Longhorns were herded along the dusty trails across

Texas during the latter half of the nineteenth century bringing herds from as far south as the Rio Grande to markets in Kansas and other points. Notorious river boat gambling queen Lottie Deno parried her skills at the game into a profitable business at the Fort Griffin Flat. Tonkawa Indians, such as these young boys, were a common sight in the town of Fort Griffin, given its proximity to their village on the Clear Fork of the Brazos. Tonkawa men served as scouts for the U. S. Army, however, a line of federal forts approximating the antebellum configuration arose anew on the Texas frontier. Some, like Forts Richardson and Bliss, breathed life into towns such as Jacksboro and El Paso, respectively, while entirely new communities sprang up alongside other federal posts. Of these, a few survived their tumultuous frontier beginnings, such as Saint Angela now San Angelo, alongside Fort Concho and Fort Stockton in the shadow of the post that bore the same name. As long as the soldiers patrolled the frontier, however, all the "fort towns" thrived by providing goods and services to the military. Most of those who settled near the posts were earnest pioneers who came west to take advantage of legitimate business opportunities. From the surrounding countryside they provided forage for army horses and mules and foodstuffs for the soldiers.

## 3: Weapons of the Indian Wars - Stone Age into the Industrial Age | True West Magazine

*The Indian Wars of the West and Frontier Army Life, Official Histories and Personal Narratives [Wyoming State Library, University Publications of America (Firm), Robert Lester] on [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com) \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers.*

Crook, to whom I wish to surrender. He may have captured the rifle from a buffalo hide hunter, as rifles of this ilk were generally too expensive for Indians to purchase, and its ammunition could be difficult and costly to obtain. His story was common among warriors during the Indian Wars. Indians fought white adversaries with guns provided by them, through federally-sanctioned trades, government annuities or as spoils of war. One of the earliest accounts of firearms possession by Indians out West dates to the s, in New Mexico, where French traders cited a brisk exchange of flintlocks to the Wichitas and Comanches for their horses. By the Lewis and Clark expedition, the firearms trade with many Western tribes was already firmly established along the Missouri River. Firearms, or in some cases the lack of them, played a major role in Indian life from the time they were first introduced to the end of the Indian Wars of the 19th century. Those tribes that possessed both horses and guns were far better equipped to forage for food, wage war or defend themselves than were those who had neither. Together, the horse and the gun combined to make the Indian of the Great Plains the finest light cavalryman the world had ever seen. In skilled hands, bows could be formidable weaponsâ€”capable of a fairly rapid rate of fire with reasonable accuracy and range. During the early days of the frontier, Indian bows were equivalent to primitive smoothbore muzzleloaders carried by trappers and traders. Indians also relied on lances, knives and war clubs for weapons. Improvements in firearms made Indians covet themâ€”especially when waging war. Even the federal Office of Indian Trade purchased fusees from abroad to satisfy Indian preferences. Distinguishable from other flinters of the era, these trade guns were fitted with a part-octagon and part-round smoothbore barrel that measured from 30 to 48 inches in length. The ruggedly built, lightweight and economically manufactured Northwest Gun could be loaded with either a single ball or a charge of shot. The full-stocked arm employed barrel pins to hold the stock and barrel together in the manner of military muskets. A large sheet iron trigger guard allowed the user to wear mittens while shooting. At other times, an improperly loaded firearm caused a burst muzzle. Women utilized this thin-edged piece of iron or brass as a hide scraper. When gun stocks split, forearms burst or wood and metal parts got damaged, Indians wrapped the damaged part with tightly bound wet rawhide, then let it dry so that it shrunk to form an ironclad-like mend. Sometimes they hammered in iron or brass nails to hold together a broken stock, but usually they reserved such hardware to decorate the firearm. As the American fur trade grew, so did the Indian gun trade, despite occasional hostilities. While the smoothbore Northwest Guns remained the most typical Indian arm throughout the s, more and more tribes demanded rifled longarms. With more frequent contact with trappers and explorers, some Indians began to learn the basics of rifle shooting and slowly adopted the ways of experienced white hunters and soldiers. American rifle makers quickly recognized this growing market for their products. Gunmakers such as Henry Deringer, H. Henry, Jacob Forney and the Tryon brothers of Philadelphia led the way with their flintlock, and later percussion, rifles. These Eastern firms filled many of the government contracts for Indian trade guns in the early West. For some time after the appearance of the percussion ignition system in the s, Indians, like many white frontiersmen, clung to the more familiar flintlocksâ€”partially because of the availability of new flints, as compared to the percussion caps in the early years of the caplock system. For example, after receiving a delivery of percussion rifles in a trade, the Choctaw tribe in Fort Smith, Arkansas, exchanged of them for flintlocks. In another instance, a band of Osages refused percussion arms in , not only because of an abundant supply of flint stones, but also because of a gunsmith, made available to them by the U. Whether flint or caplock, Indian trade guns of this period were usually full-stocked arms of. But since these firearms carried a much higher price tag, they were less commonly found among Indians. The Utes in Colorado had well-made firearms when frontiersman J.

Campion crossed their path in the late s. By the end of the Civil War, successful percussion cartridge and metallic cartridge firearms were becoming available in greater numbers on the frontier, and Indians were eager customers, as they began feeling the effects of the Westward migration. The period from the mids through the late s was one of the most difficult times for our first Americans. The tracks of the ever-increasing stream of emigrants from the East were covering the ancient buffalo trails forever. The Indian was being coerced to live according to white custom, in agricultural reservations, rather than to live the free, nomadic lives of hunters and warriors, an existence they had relished for centuries. To add to their discontent, they were constantly faced with transgressions of their sacred lands and broken treaties. With each new violation, their reservation boundaries shrunk, the wild game became scarcer and Indians became dependent on a largely uncaring government. Through trade, whether sanctioned by the government or illicit, Indians received firearms as battle trophies or as gifts presented as part of annuity payments, new treaties or redrawn reservation boundaries. Ammunition became a problem tribes had not faced during the days of muzzleloading firearms. As long as a warrior had powder and lead, a few flints or percussion caps, he could rely on his firearm. This crude method of charging a muzzleloader did not bother the Indians because marksmanship was not one of their strong points at that time. The use of bright muzzle and buckhorn sights proves this. He steals upon his quarry and fires at it. They were expert horsemen and generally relied on snap, or point, shooting. When Indians were able to obtain fixed ammunition, they often paid exorbitant prices. Many reported incidents document Indians purchasing or trading for cartridges at greatly inflated selling prices. One such incident occurred in at Fort Berthold, Dakota Territory, when a lone Indian made a futile effort to trade three ponies for a box of about 50 cartridges. In many instances, frontier Army officer Col. Dodge watched Indians offer one well-tanned buffalo robe for just three cartridges! He buys from the trader a box of the smallest percussion caps, andâ€forces the cap in [to the shell] until it is flush. Powder and lead can always be obtained from the traders; or, in default of these, cartridges of other calibre are broken up and the materials used in reloading his shells. Indians say that the shells thus reloaded are nearly as good as the original cartridges, and that the shells are frequently reloaded forty or fifty times. As with the shoulder arms, many of these were purchased through official sources too. Through the years, historians have turned up several authenticated Indian-owned handguns that, like their long guns, had been embellished with tacks, rawhide strips and other available materials. Time and again, military inventories of captured Indian weapons revealed their firepower generally consisted of flintlocks, percussion arms and repeating metallic cartridge shoulder arms and handguns, not to mention the bows and arrows of those unable to procure a firearm. Despite the heroic struggles and strong resistance the Indian warrior offered his white foes, enemy tribes, Indian military scouts and others hostile to him, at best he could only fight a slow retreat. Having been hurtled from the Stone Age into the Industrial Age in just a couple of generations, the wild, free nomad of the Plains was pushed to the brink of annihilation. But in the end, frontier Indian warriors often left their people, and all Americans, with a legacy of pride, bravery and ingenuity in their use of armaments alien to their culture. In war, each was a fierce and resourceful fighter.

Photo Gallery Posed as if waiting in ambush, this Apache scout in early Tucson, Arizona Territory, holds a government-issued,. In the photo at left, these late Indian Wars-era Apache scouts for the U. Army looked for signs on the trail. They are armed with Model Springfield Trapdoor carbines, featuring improved Buffington rear sights. Model horse pistol. Although a single-shot weapon, this caplock pistol packed plenty of power and made for a deadly fighting arm. He not only holds his tacked percussion rifle, but also a combination tack embellished riding quirt and war club, and he wears a belt and knife scabbard heavily adorned with tacks. He looks ready to fight! This photo of Geronimo and some of his braves, taken shortly after their surrender in , displays an array of breechloading guns using metal cased ammunition. He also packed a military-issue, four-screw-frame, Colt Army. Both Indians and whites carried weapons that used modern metallic cased ammunition along with their older percussion arms. Its 62, serial range dates the. The Sioux chief learned to write his name in Canada. The below circa Parker, Field flintlock musket bears his name, crudely carved into the left side of the stock right , while the right side is adorned with tacks in the four winds pattern. Two years

later, this photo was taken of him at the Spotted Tail Agency in Nebraska, after he surrendered with his people. He holds a heavy-barreled Remington Rolling Block rifle and an Colt Cavalry revolver also check out his military garrison belt.

## 4: The Price of Freedom: Printable Exhibition

*The strength of this army, about one half of the Regular Army in time of peace, ranged from 1, troops in in the Northwest Territory to over 26, in , which was the height of the Indian wars on the Great Plains. The frontier posts had, on average, a garrison of troops.*

Many of these conflicts occurred during and after the Civil War until the closing of the frontier in about 1890. Various statistics have been developed concerning the devastation of these wars on the peoples involved. His work includes almost nothing on "Indian war parties", and he states that "army records are often incomplete". Also, Arizona ranked highest of the states in deaths from the wars. At least 4, people were killed, including both the settlers and the Indians, over twice as many as occurred in Texas, the second highest-ranking state. Most of the deaths in Arizona were caused by the Apaches. Michno also says that 51 percent of the battles took place in Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico between 1846 and 1880, as well as 37 percent of the casualties in the country west of the Mississippi River. Relations between American Immigrants and Native Americans were generally peaceful. Signed in 1806 between the United States and the plains Indians and the Indians of the northern Rocky Mountains, the treaty allowed passage by immigrants and the building of roads and the stationing of troops along the Oregon Trail. Advancing settlement following the passage of the Homestead Act and the building of the transcontinental railways following the Civil War further destabilized the situation, placing white settlers into direct competition for the land and resources of the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountain West. But the Sioux of the Northern Plains and the Apache of the Southwest provided the most celebrated opposition to encroachment on tribal lands. Led by resolute, militant leaders, such as Red Cloud and Crazy Horse, the Sioux were skilled at high-speed mounted warfare. The Sioux were relatively new arrivals on the Plains, as, previously, they had been sedentary farmers in the Great Lakes region. Once they learned to capture and ride horses, they moved west, displacing other Indian tribes and became feared warriors. Historically the Apache bands supplemented their economy by raiding others and practiced warfare to avenge a death of a kinsman. The Apache bands were adept at fighting and highly elusive in the environments of desert and canyons. During the American Civil War, U. Army units were withdrawn to fight the war in the east. They were replaced by the volunteer infantry and cavalry raised by the states of California and Oregon, by the western territorial governments or the local militias. These units fought the Indians besides keeping open communications with the east, holding the west for the Union and defeating the Confederate attempt to capture the New Mexico Territory. After national policy called for all Indians either to assimilate into the general population as citizens, or to live peacefully on reservations. Raids and wars between tribes were not allowed, and armed Indian bands off a reservation were the responsibility of the Army to round up and return.

Texas's Indian wars In the 18th century, Spanish settlers in Texas came into conflict with the Apache, Comanche, and Karankawa, among other tribes. Large numbers of Anglo-American settlers reached Texas in the 1820s, and from that point until the 1850s, a series of armed confrontations broke out, mostly between Texans and Comanches. During the same period the Comanche and their allies raided hundreds of miles deep into Mexico see Comanche's Mexico Wars. Battles, army posts, and the general location of tribes in the American West

The first notable battle was the Fort Parker massacre in 1858, in which a huge war party of Comanches, Kiowa, Wichita, and Delawares attacked the Texan outpost at Fort Parker. Once the Republic of Texas was declared and had secured some sovereignty in their war with Mexico, the Texas government under President Sam Houston pursued a policy of engagement with the Comanches and Kiowa. Ironically, since Houston had lived with the Cherokee, the republic faced a conflict called the Cordova Rebellion, in which Cherokees appear to have joined with Mexican forces to fight the fledgling country. Houston resolved the conflict without resorting to arms, refusing to believe that the Cherokee would take up arms against his government. Under Lamar, Texas removed the Cherokee to the west, and then sought to deport the Comanche and Kiowa. This led to a series of battles, including the Council House Fight in 1836, in which, at a peace parley, the Texas militia killed 33

Comanche chiefs. The Lamar Administration was known for its failed and expensive Indian policy; the cost of the war with the Indians exceeded the annual revenue of the government throughout his four-year term. It was followed by a second Houston administration, which resumed the previous policy of diplomacy. Texas signed treaties with all of the tribes, including the Comanche. The Comanche and their allies shifted most of their raiding activities to Mexico, using Texas as a safe haven from Mexican retaliation. After Texas joined the Union in 1845, the struggle between the Plains Indians and the settlers was taken up by the federal government and the state of Texas. The years 1850-1860 were particularly vicious and bloody on the Texas frontier, as settlers continued to expand their settlements into the Comanche homeland, the Comancheria, and was marked by the first Texan incursion into the heart of the Comancheria, the so-called Antelope Hills Expedition, marked by the Battle of Little Robe Creek. This battle signaled the beginning of the end of the Comanche as an independent nation, as, for the first time, they were attacked in the heart of their domain, in force. The battles between settlers and Indians continued and in 1860, at the Battle of Pease River, Texas militia destroyed an Indian camp. In the aftermath of the battle, the Texans learned that they had recaptured Cynthia Ann Parker, the little girl captured by the Comanche in 1835. She returned to live with the Parkers, but missed her children, including her son Quanah Parker. As chief of the Quahadi Comanches, he finally surrendered to the overwhelming force of the federal government and in 1865 moved to a reservation in southwestern Oklahoma. Among the causes of conflict were a sudden immigration to the region and a series of gold rushes throughout the Pacific Northwest. The Cayuse were defeated in 1811, but by then the conflict had expanded and continued in what became known as the Yakima War, 1855-1859. One of the triggers of the Yakima War was the creation of Washington Territory and the effort of its first governor, Isaac Stevens, to compel tribes to sign treaties ceding land and establishing reservations. The Yakama signed one of the treaties negotiated during the Walla Walla Council of 1855, and the Yakama Indian Reservation was established. The treaties were poorly received by the native peoples and served mainly to intensify hostilities. Gold discoveries near Fort Colville resulted in many miners crossing Yakama lands via Naches Pass, and conflicts rapidly escalated into violence. It took several years for the US Army to defeat the Yakama, during which time war spread to the Puget Sound region west of the Cascades. The Puget Sound War of 1857-1859 was triggered in part by the Yakima War and in part by the use of intimidation to compel tribes to sign land cession treaties. The Treaty of Medicine Creek, signed in 1854, established an unrealistically small reservation on poor land for the Nisqually and Puyallup people. Violence broke out in the White River valley, along the route to Naches Pass, which connected Nisqually and Yakama lands. Although limited in its magnitude, territorial impact and losses in terms of lives, the Puget Sound War is often remembered in connection with the Battle of Seattle and the execution of a central figure of the war, Nisqually Chief Leschi. In 1858, the fighting on the east side of the Cascades spread. The California Gold Rush helped fuel a large increase in the number of people traveling south through the Rogue River Valley. Gold discoveries continued to trigger violent conflict between prospectors and indigenous peoples. Although this conflict occurred in what is now Canada, the militias involved were formed mostly of Americans. Due to the discovery of gold in Idaho and Oregon in the 1840s, similar conflicts arose that culminated in the Bear River Massacre in 1843 and Snake War from 1842 to 1843. In the late 1870s another series of armed conflicts occurred in Oregon and Idaho, spreading east into Wyoming and Montana. The Nez Perce War of 1877 is known particularly for Chief Joseph and the four-month, 1,100-mile fighting retreat of a band of about Nez Perce, including women and children. As with the other wars in the Pacific Northwest, the Nez Perce War was caused by a large influx of settlers, the appropriation of Indian lands, and a gold rush—this time in Idaho. The Nez Perce engaged 2,000 American soldiers of different military units, as well as their Indian auxiliaries. The Nez Perce fought "eighteen engagements, including four major battles and at least four fiercely contested skirmishes". The Sheepeater Indian War in 1879 was the last conflict in the area. These conflicts with the United States involved every non-pueblo tribe in the region and often were a continuation of Mexican-Spanish conflicts. The Navajo Wars and Apache Wars are perhaps the best known. The last major campaign of the U. S. Army garrison west of the Rockies, and the economic and political effects of the California Gold Rush, most of the early conflicts

## THE INDIAN WARS OF THE WEST AND FRONTIER ARMY LIFE, 1862-1898

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with the mostly unwarlike California Indians involved local parties of miners or settlers. Occasionally companies of the California Militia were involved, whose actions were dignified with the name of an "Expedition" or a "War". The first of these, the Gila Expedition in , was a dismal failure and nearly bankrupted the state.

## 5: Class and Race in the Frontier Army: Military Life in the West, Book Reviews

*To the Army, soon after the Civil War, fell the task of exterminating, or at least evicting, the savage tribes overall this unvalued and unknown Middle West. This was a process not altogether simple. This was a process not altogether simple.*

Painting by Melvin Warren; image courtesy of Mrs. In Texas, the army had to position its troops not only to face Indians from the west and north, but to protect the international border with Mexico. General William Jenkins Worth, shown at the battle of Bishops Palace during the Mexican War, was soon to become the first commander of what later became the military Department of Texas. Courtesy Library of Congress. The annexation of Texas and the acquisition of the Southwest following the war against Mexico posed significant challenges for the United States army in the west. Previously, idealistic policy-makers had assumed that expansion would occur from east to west, in a gradual, predictable process. To protect this westward movement, the army had attempted to establish military posts at strategic points. Indians would be relocated west of these garrisons. Separating the two groups might limit the opportunity for mischief on both sides. In practice, the War Department had never fully implemented these plans. The army never had enough troops to be everywhere at once, and political and economic pressures rather than sound military principles often dictated the location of frontier posts. In any event, the new western realities shattered traditional thinking. Lured by the discovery of gold in California, tens of thousands of civilians rushed west, ruining any hopes of an orderly American occupation of the newly acquired territories. And in Texas, the army had to position its troops not only to face Indians from the west and north, but to protect the international border with Mexico. In the absence of a comprehensive national strategy, the first two commanders of what evolved into the military Department of Texas, Maj. Worth and Maj. George Mercer Brooke, vice Brig Gen. An map of Mexico and Texas shows the perceived location of Texas boundaries prior to the end of the Mexican War as well as the range and locations of various Indian groups across the region. Click for more detail. Courtesy David Rumsey Map Collection. Lured by the discovery of gold in California, thousands of emigrants rushed westward across the frontier. In this s drawing, emigrants are shown fording the Pecos River in southwest Texas. Drill on parade ground, Fort Davis. Click to see full image. To help plug gaps in the northwest, Camp Cooper was erected in On paper, the scheme looked grand indeed. Posts would be located in areas where there was access to good water, forage, and construction materials. The troops themselves would do much of the building, thus holding construction costs to a minimum. Since Indians almost never attacked the forts, no defensive walls were necessary. Infantry based on the outer cordon of the Worth-Brooke-Smith defensive line would alert mounted troops, stationed in the inner line to reduce the high costs of their upkeep, of the presence of Indians or outlaws in their midst. In reality, the forts were too far apart and their garrisons too small in , for instance, the fourteen military posts in Texas had an average strength of just less than ninety men each to completely patrol the immensity of the Lone Star state. As one traveler put it upon observing a frontier garrison, "a parade of the entire force would sometimes diminish our feeling of security. Some posts were poorly situated; inadequate water supplies at Phantom Hill and Belknap, for example, forced their abandonment. Furthermore, the plans provided no protection for the tenuous overland routes to Chihuahua, Santa Fe, and California. To shield these vital lines, Fort Bliss, first established in , was reactivated five years later. General Persifor Smith oversaw construction of eight Texas forts during the s. Soldiers at the Texas forts did much of the building, saving on construction costs. Painting courtesy Texas Parks and Wildlife. Many forts were poorly positioned and saw only brief service. Fort Phantom Hill near present-day Abilene was forced to close due to inadequate water supplies. Today only a few chimneys and outbuildings remain. Photo by Steve Dial. Fort Lancaster was constructed in , one of several posts in the far southwestern Texas frontier assigned to protect vital mail and emigrant routes to Chihuahua and California. An unknown government draftsman sketched this view from the south around Texas during the Civil War. In , the Texas legislature created the Frontier Regiment to guard

frontier settlements. They occupied several abandoned federal posts and established a line of 16 camps through the center of the state. Map courtesy Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Prior to that time, the majority of troops were foreign born, including Irish, German, and Italian emigrants. Finally, the inexorable expansion of non-Indian settlement meant that the lines of posts would be temporary. Although members of several garrisons made their way to the safety of New Mexico, the Indian territory, Kansas, or were evacuated from coastal ports, nearly four hundred troops from stations west of San Antonio were forced to surrender to state authorities. Texas or Confederate troops occupied several of the abandoned posts, especially in northwest Texas, but Indians burned and looted some of the others, such as Fort Davis. In the absence of federal troops, some Texans tried to defend themselves by "forting up" in rude blockhouses or walled positions. Sheridan, military commander of Texas and Louisiana. But as reports of depredations attributed to Indians escalated, in the regulars in blue began marching west. Many garrisons also tended sub-posts to help them patrol the long, sparsely settled distances of west Texas; in some cases, such as the Fort Davis subposts of Camp Pena Colorado and Fort Hancock, these former sub-posts evolved into semi-permanent forts that outlived their mother bases. After the Civil War, he and other federal leaders sought to reassert federal authority in Texas: Following the Civil War, reports of escalating Indian depredations finally convinced military leaders to take action. Abandoned forts were re-activated and new posts established in the north and west. Tracking the enemy on the frontier. In reality, Texas forts were too far apart and garrisons too small to adequately patrol the vast Lone Star state. A total of engagements between the army and the Indians in Texas can be documented; of these, can be classified into the categories shown. Total strength of the U. School class at Fort McKavett, Texas, Schools, roads, churches and jobs were among the many benefits brought by the U. Frontier forts served as bases from which scouts, pursuits, large-scale offensives, and escorts or guards were launched. Before the Civil War, most common was combat resulting from a successful pursuit, triggered by information gleaned by post or detachment commanders that Indians had been discovered. Following the war, however, most engagements stemmed from routine scouts, sent to interdict likely avenues of approach or widely used trails or waterholes. Most of the successful large-scale expeditions, involving several companies engaged in campaigns that were projected to take longer and involve greater distances, also came after Combat involving mail parties, stagecoaches, and construction teams accounted for less than 10 percent of all engagements. The overwhelming majority of the fights were short and badly fragmented skirmishes involving about three dozen combatants per side. Sixty-four soldiers were killed and wounded during these clashes; the army reported Indians killed, wounded, and taken prisoner. Assessing the true military effectiveness of the frontier forts in Texas is difficult. As historian Robert Utley has noted, many officers saw the wars against the Indians as a "fleeting bother," not worthy of the time or energy it would take to develop tactics or strategy suitable to such conflicts. Successful officers developed methods through personal observation, by trial and error, by word of mouth, or by individual ingenuity rather than through recognized army doctrine. The vast majority of scouts, pursuits, and large-scale campaigns found no Indians. Pointing to the futility of such efforts, Texans often charged that the federal government never devoted sufficient resources to their state. Although such claims often made for good politics with the folks back home, in reality Texas probably exceeded its fair share of War Department resources; in , for example, fully twenty-five percent of the entire army was based in Texas. More telling, if less politically popular, was the argument that the army was simply too small to carry out all the responsibilities expected of it. In addition to fighting Indians, regulars garrisoned coastal defensive fortifications, provided assistance to civilians in times of crisis, helped to maintain domestic order, patrolled national parks, conducted scientific research, and engaged in civil engineering jobs. Despite these shortfalls, the frontier forts had an enormous impact on Texas history. As one observer exclaimed, army forts served "as the oasis in the desert" for many a weary traveler. The forts also provided a tremendous economic stimulus. And with the army often came schools, churches, roads, and surveys. Their presence also boosted the chances of existing sites like San Antonio usually the site of department headquarters , Eagle Pass, Brownsville, and El Paso. As a legendary Texas historian once put it, "No story of the Texas heritage can be complete without

telling the role its forts played in making that heritage possible. In Texas, most of the successful large-scale expeditions came after A stagecoach mired in the mud, on mail route east of Fort Stockton, March 12, Escort duty was a critical assignment for frontier troops. An army encampment near Santa Rosa Springs, circa No story of the Texas heritage can be complete without telling the role its forts played in making that heritage possible. Families disembark their wagons for a welcome rest at Fort Concho. As one observer has noted, army forts served "as the oasis in the desert" for many a weary traveler. Credits and Sources U. Maps and graphics, unless otherwise noted, were composed by Clayton Drescher. Southwestern Historical Quarterly A Research Guide to the U. Army in Nineteenth-Century Texas. Texas State Historical Association, Austin.

## 6: The Army In The Indian Wars, "Legends of America

*Winning the West: The Army in the Indian Wars, Perhaps because of a tendency to view the record of a military establishment in terms of conflict, the U.S. Army's operational experience in the quarter century following the Civil War has come to be known as the Indian wars.*

Previous struggles with the Indian, dating back to colonial times, had been limited as to scope and opponent and took place in a period when the Indian could withdraw or be pushed into vast reaches of uninhabited and as yet unwanted territory to westward. By this safety valve was fast disappearing; routes of travel and pockets of settlement had multiplied across the western two-thirds of the nation, and as the Civil War closed, white Americans in greater numbers and with greater energy than before resumed the quest for land, gold, commerce, and adventure that had been largely interrupted by the war. Kansas Buffalo The showdown between the older Americans and the new "between two ways of life that were basically incompatible" was at hand. The besieged red man, with white civilization pressing in and a main source of livelihood "the buffalo" threatened with extinction, was faced with a fundamental choice: Given its central role in dealing with the Indian, the Army made a major contribution to continental consolidation. The Setting and the Challenge After Appomattox, the Army had to muster out over a million volunteers and reconstitute a Regular establishment that had languished during the Civil War when bounties and short enlistments made service in the volunteers more profitable. There were operational commitments to sustain during and after the transition, some an outgrowth of the war just ended, others the product of internal and external situations that could not be ignored. But these and other later involvements were passing concerns. The conflict with the red man was the overriding consideration in the next twenty-five years until Indian power was broken. Unfortunately, the military assets released from other tasks were lost through reductions in force instead of being diverted to frontier defense. For even though the country during the Indian campaigns could not be said to be at peace, neither Congress nor the war-weary citizens in the populous Atlantic states were prepared to consider it in a state of war. And in any case, there was strong sentiment against a large standing army as well as a widely held belief that the Indian problem could be settled by other than military means. As the postwar Army took shape, its strength began a decade of decline, dropping from an level of about 57, to half that in the year that General Custer was killed, then leveling off at an average of about 26, for the remaining years up to the War with Spain. Effective strength always lay somewhere below authorized strength, seriously impaired, for example, by high rates of sickness and desertion. The Army was, therefore, organized on a territorial basis, with geographical segments variously designated as divisions, departments, and districts. There were frequent modifications of organization, rearrangements of boundaries, and transfers of troops and posts to meet changing conditions. Development of a basic defense system in the trans-Mississippi West had followed the course of empire; territorial acquisition and exploration succeeded by emigration and settlement brought the whites increasingly into collision with the Indians and progressively raised the need for military posts along the transcontinental trails and in settled areas. The annexation of Texas in , the settlement of the Oregon boundary dispute in , and the successful conclusion of the Mexican War with the cession to the United States in of vast areas of land, all drew the outlines of the major task facing the Army in the West in the middle of the nineteenth century. During the period between the Mexican and Civil Wars, the Army established a reasonably comprehensive system of forts to protect the arteries of white travel and areas of white settlement across the frontier. At the same time, operations were launched against Indian tribes that represented actual or potential threats to movement and settlement. Militarily successful in some cases, these operations nevertheless hardened Indian opposition, prompted wider red provocation, and led to the delineation of an Indian barrier to westward expansion extending down the Great Plains from the Canadian to the Mexican border. Brigadier General William S. Harney, for example, responded to the massacre of Lieutenant John L. Farther south Colonel Edwin V. There were various expeditions against various branches of the elusive

Apache involving hard campaigning but few conclusive engagements such as the one at Rio Gila in It was in this region in that Lieutenant George N. Bascom moved against Chief Cochise , precipitating events that opened a quarter century of hostilities with the Chiricahua Apache. Their general character was similar to operations elsewhere: The Army, often at odds with civil authority and public opinion in the area, found it necessary on occasion to protect Indians from whites as well as the other way around. Although the red man demonstrated an awareness of what was going on and took some satisfaction from the fact that white men were fighting each other, there is little evidence that he took advantage of the transition period between removal of the Regulars and deployment of the volunteers. The so-called Great Sioux Uprising in Minnesota in that produced active campaigning in the Upper Missouri River region in and was spontaneous, and other clashes around the West were the result, not of the withdrawal of the Regular Army from the West, but of the play of more fundamental and established forces.

## 7: Frontier Forts > Texas and the Western Frontier

*Bringing the American Civil War to life, one experience at a time. Welcome to the website of the Second United States Cavalry Regiment (reenactors) located in Southern California. While the unit is known as the Second Cavalry, our legal corporate name is "The Frontier Army of the West, Reenactors, ".*

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: WestWeb: Western Military History

*The army took the lead role in Oregon and Washington, using the Rogue River (), Yakima (), and Spokane () wars to force several tribes onto reservations.*

American Indian Wars Indian wars have occurred throughout the United States though the conflicts are generally separated into two categories; the Indian wars east of the Mississippi River and the Indian wars west of the Mississippi. Bureau of the Census provided an estimate of deaths: The Indian wars under the government of the United States have been more than 40 in number. They have cost the lives of about 19, white men, women and children, including those killed in individual combats, and the lives of about 30, Indians. The actual number of killed and wounded Indians must be very much higher than the given Fifty percent additional would be a safe estimate Scores of Indian wars and campaigns were fought by the Army. Some of the more notable Indian wars were: These wars were fought by the regular infantry and cavalry regiments, occasionally aided by state militia and volunteers. The frontier soldiers were usually stationed in posts at strategic points defending the routes of communications, settlements and Indian reservations. The strength of this army, about one half of the Regular Army in time of peace, ranged from 1, troops in in the Northwest Territory to over 26, in , which was the height of the Indian wars on the Great Plains. The frontier posts had, on average, a garrison of troops. By , over posts were scattered throughout the West. As the Indian wars ended after , these posts were rapidly abandoned. The difficulty of supplying these remote Army posts encouraged farming and urban enterprises around the posts, the beginning of permanent settlements. The daily life of the frontier soldier was a hardy one. The soldiers built their shelter, escorted travelers, emigrants, and wagon trains on the trails, aided and protected surveying parties, constructed thousands of miles of trails and roads, supplied needy emigrants, patrolled trails and railroad lines, guarded river navigation, protected government and private property from hostile Indians and outlaws, assisted and fed friendly Indians, fought hostile Indians and gave police assistance to the weak civil authorities on the frontier. Their shelters were usually log, stone, adobe or sod huts constructed largely by their own labor. The hardships of the soldiers, the miserable quarters, inferior food and the lonely life encouraged many desertions. The Army on the Frontier disagreed with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the frontier civil authorities over the Indian policy. The frontiersmen in general demanded the destruction or removal of the Indians see Indian removal. The Indian Bureau attempted to protect the Indians, and the Army to coerce them. When the Indians revolted, the U. Army made war upon the entire Indian tribe, punishing the innocent with the guilty, even to the extent of killing women and children in raids on villages or camps. The Indian Bureau and the Army officials accused each other of being responsible for the Indian wars.

**9: Frontier Army of the West - Home**

*In the quarter century following the Civil War, the Army's operational experience came to be known as the Indian Wars era. In the years preceding the Civil War, expressions of the urge to expand into the Western frontier can be found in publications of the day.*

Indian Wars of the Frontier West By Emerson Hough in Lakota Sioux Camp, by John Graybill, The land between the Missouri River and the Rockies , along the Great Plains and the high foothills, was crossed over and forgotten by the men who were forging on into farther countries in search of lands where fortune was swift and easy. California , Oregon , all the early farming and timbering lands of the distant Northwest " these lay far beyond the Plains; and as we have noted, they were sought for, even before gold was dreamed of upon the Pacific Slope. So here, somewhere between the Missouri River and the Rockies advancing, gaining and losing, changing a little more every decade " and at last so rapidly changed as to be outworn and abolished in one swift decade all its own. This unsettled land so long held in small repute by the early Americans, was, as we have pointed out, the buffalo range and the country of the Horse Indians " the Plains tribes who lived upon the buffalo. For a long time, it was this Indian population which held back the white settlements of Kansas , Nebraska , the Dakotas , Montana , Wyoming , Colorado. But as men began to work farther and farther westward in search of homes in Oregon , or in quest of gold in California or Idaho or Montana , the Indian question came to be a serious one. To the Army, soon after the Civil War , fell the task of exterminating, or at least evicting, the savage tribes overall this unvalued and unknown Middle West. This was a process not altogether simple. For a considerable time, the Indians themselves were able to offer very effective resistance to the enterprise. They were accustomed to living upon that country, and did not need to bring in their own supplies; hence the Army fought them at a certain disadvantage. In sooth, the Army had to learn to become half Indian before it could fight the Indians on anything like even terms. We seem not so much to have coveted the lands in the first Indian-fighting days; we fought rather for the trails than for the soil. The Indians themselves had lived there all their lives, had conquered their environment, and were happy in it. They made a bitter fight; nor are they to be blamed for doing so. The greatest of our Indian wars have taken place since our own Civil War; and perhaps the most notable of all the battles are those which were fought on the old cow range " in the land of our last frontier. We do not lack abundant records of this time of our history. Soon after the Civil War, the railroads began edging out into the Plains. They brought, besides many new settlers, an abundance of chroniclers and historians and writers of hectic fiction or supposed fact. A multitude of books came out at this time of our history, most of which were accepted as truth. That was the time when we set up as Wild West heroes rough skin-clad hunters and so-called scouts, each of whom was allowed to tell his own story and to have it accepted at par. It was easy to write of a past which every one now was too new, too ignorant, or too busy critically to remember. Even as early as , Colonel Marcy, an experienced army officer, and Indian-fighter, took the attitude of writing about a vanishing phase of American life. I am persuaded that excuse may be found in the simple fact that all these peoples of my description " men, conditions of life, races of aboriginal inhabitants and adventurous hunters and pioneers " are passing away. A few years more and the prairie will be transformed into farms. The mountain ravines will be the abodes of busy manufacturers, and the gigantic power of American civilization will have taken possession of the land from the great river of the West to the very shores of the Pacific. The world is fast filling up. I trust I am not in error when I venture to place some value, however small, on everything which goes to form the truthful history of a condition of men incident to the advances of civilization over the continent " a condition which forms peculiar types of character, breeds remarkable developments of human nature " a condition also which can hardly again exist on this or any other continent, and which has, therefore, a special value in the sum of human history. It is in books such as this, then, that we may find something about the last stages of the clearing of the frontier. He himself as an Army officer looked at the matter philosophically, but

his estimate of conditions was exact. Long ago as he wrote, his conclusions were such as might have been given forty years later. The white man is advancing with rapid strides upon all sides of them, and they are forced to give way to his encroachments. The time is not far distant when the buffalo will become extinct, and they will then be compelled to adopt some other mode of life than the chase for a subsistence. No man will quietly submit to starvation when food is within his reach, and if he cannot obtain it honestly he will steal it or take it by force. If therefore, we do not induce them to engage in agricultural avocations we shall in a few years have before us the alternative of exterminating them or fighting them perpetually. That they are destined ultimately to extinction does not in my mind admit of a doubt. For the reasons above mentioned it may at first be necessary for our government to assert its authority over them by a prompt and vigorous exercise of the military arm. The tendency of the policy I have indicated will be to assemble these people in communities where they will be more readily controlled, and I predict from it the most gratifying results. As a first step toward an understanding of his character, we must get at his standpoint of morality. As a child, he is not brought up. From the dawn of intelligence, his own will is his law. There is no right and no wrong to him. No dread of punishment restrains him from any act that boyish fun or fury may prompt. No lessons inculcating the beauty and sure reward of goodness or the hideousness and certain punishment of vice are ever wasted on him. The men by whom he is surrounded, and to whom he looks as models for his future life, are great and renowned just in proportion to their ferocity, to the scalps they have taken, or the thefts they have committed. His earliest boyish memory is probably a dance of rejoicing over the scalps of strangers, all of whom he is taught to regard as enemies. The lessons of his mother awaken only a desire to take his place as soon as possible in fight and foray. The instruction of his father is only such as is calculated to fit him best to act a prominent part in the chase, in theft, and in murder. Virtue, morality, generosity, honor, are words not only absolutely without significance to him, but are not accurately translatable, into any Indian language on the Plains.

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