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The Study of Indian Raids In Northwest Kansas, 1864-1878

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A STUDY OF INDIAN RAIDS IN NORTHWEST KANSAS, 1864-1878

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science

by

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Date July 19, 1950

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of this study, Northwest Kansas is defined as that area lying to the north and west of Saline County, Kansas. The area is bounded on the south by the northern boundaries of Mc Pherson, Rice, Barton, Rush, Ness, Lane, Scott, Wichita and Greeley Counties. On the east it is bounded by the western boundaries of Dickinson, Clay, and Washington Counties. The area is bounded on the west by Colorado and on the north by Nebraska. One Indian battle described in the study, that of Forsyth's command on the Arickaree, occurred outside the defined area. This battle is included because of its close relation to the Indian difficulties in Northwest Kansas.

In a study of this nature, in which the events occurred over seventy years ago, one finds it difficult to verify absolutely every event that is said to have occurred. Accounts of some raids appear in this study based mainly on secondary sources. Wherever possible their accuracy has been verified by checking such accounts of the same raid against each other and by checking such primary source references as may be available. Primary source accounts of these raids are probably not absolutely accurate in every detail. Eyewitnesses to the same event

often relate stories differing in detail. Particularly would this be true of an event as stirring as an Indian raid. The men on the frontier lived in a state of constant suspense during the summer months when the Indians raided. An event occurring in May, 1867, on the Smoky Hill Trail indicates the difficulty in ascertaining the true facts about these raids. During that month the grass again became green, and ranch stations along the Smoky Hill Trail reported depredations. One of the ranchers rode in one afternoon to Fort Hays reporting that he had seen about two hundred Indians in the vicinity of Lookout Station. When he investigated he found them to be Cheyennes, so he stated. Later in his story he said the Indians numbered four or five hundred. He claimed he approached to within sixty yards of them and had barely escaped capture. General George A. Custer decided to make a night attack on this band. Proceeding to Lookout Station, he found the station alerted, but he found no soldier who had seen the Indians. He found the stage men and carpenters busily engaged in a poker game in one cave. One of them stated he had seen what he took to be Indians. A close investigation of the spot where the Indians had reportedly been, disclosed nothing except tracks left by a herd of buffalo.¹

1. Theodore R. Davis, "A Summer on the Plains," Harper's New Monthly, XXXVI, (February, 1868), 298.

The purpose of this study is to explore a portion of the frontier history of Kansas. In doing this, an appreciation for the sacrifices made by the frontiersmen, the army, and the settlers in opening Northwest Kansas for settlement should be attained. The study will also treat the relation of this particular problem of Indian raids to the Indian problem as a whole. This will show that the right of the controversy was not always on the side of the white man.

The modern reader may find it difficult to visualize a country of virgin grassland where today there are cultivated fields. He may find it hard to picture streams of clear water running only off grassy land. A vivid imagination would be required to conjure up a buffalo herd in the mind's eye, or to see a country not cut up by roads and highways. All of these things, and more, must the reader imagine if he is to re-live the stirring episodes described in this work. General Philip Sheridan gives a good description of the plains area in general which it might be well to bear in mind while reading.

. . . With the exception of a half-dozen military posts and a few stations on the two overland emigrant routes . . . this country was unsettled waste known only to the Indians and a few trappers. There were neither roads nor well-marked trails, and the only timber to be found--which generally grew only along the

streams--was so scraggy and worthless as hardly to deserve the name. Nor was water by any means plentiful, even though the section is traversed by important streams, the Republican, the Smoky Hill, the Arkansas, the Cimarron, and the Canadian all flowing eastwardly, as do also their tributaries in the main. These feeders are sometimes long and crooked, but as a general thing the volume of water is insignificant except after rain falls. Then, because of unimpeded drainage, the little streams fill up rapidly with torrents of water, which quickly flows or sinks into the sand, leaving only an occasional pool without visible inlet or outlet.²

2. Philip H. Sheridan, Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan: General United States Army (New York: Charles L. Webster and Company, 1888), II, pp. 296-297. Hereafter cited: Sheridan, Memoirs.

Chapter II

CAUSES FOR INDIAN UPRISINGS

Indian Policy of the Federal Government

The government of the United States from its inception had treated Indians as nations not as individuals. Chiefs signed treaties which they lacked the authority to enforce. General William T. Sherman in 1867 characterized the Indian government as a "pure democracy" in which each man did as he pleased regardless of the chiefs. He warned that it was foolish to make treaties with the chiefs then acknowledge the tribe as peaceful. He wanted laws binding on all Indians alike thus making it possible for the military to know what to enforce.¹

After treaties were made the Interior Department, with its civilian agents, handled money disbursement and distribution of presents under the treaties. This department also managed the Indian reservations. The military, however, was responsible for the protection of settlements and transportation routes. Their attitude toward the

1. Letter to Secretary of War, July 1, 1867, in Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1867, found in "Annual Message of the President." 40 Cong., 2 Sess., House Executive Document No. 1, v. II, Pt. I, p. 67.

management of Indians was well stated by General Sherman:

. . . the entire management of the Indians should be controlled by the military authorities, and . . . the commanding officers of the troops should have not only the surveillance of these Indians, but should supervise and control the disbursement of moneys and distribution of presents to the tribes under past and future treaties. . . .

This quarrel between the military and the civilian agents of the government continued throughout the period under study. Divided control made an effective policy impossible. When Indian troubles did break out each agency tried to place the responsibility for the trouble on the other.

Another fundamental fault of the national government's Indian policy was the removal of Indians from areas into which white settlers were moving. The Indian Peace Commission, appointed under Act of Congress, July 20, 1867, to establish peace with certain hostile Indian tribes, said of this policy: "Surely the policy was not designed to perpetuate barbarism, but such has been its effect."³ Under the policy the Indians were placed in

2. Report from Hdq. Mil. Div. of Missouri St. Louis, Nov. 5, 1866, Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1866 found in "Annual Message of the President, 39 Cong., 2 Sess., House Executive Document No. 1, v. III, p. 20.

3. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," 40 Cong., 2 Sess., House Executive Document No. 97 (January 14, 1868), p. 17.

regions beyond where agriculture was practiced. In such a region, contended the commission, the Indians could only chase game.⁴ A nomadic hunting people could not readily be converted to a settled agricultural people when they were forced onto land which even the whites felt was not suitable for farming.

Agreements with the Indians were not always kept. In 1851 a treaty was negotiated setting the boundaries of Cheyenne and Arapahoe lands so they included a large part of the territory of Colorado and most of western Kansas. The Indians granted to the United States the right to establish roads and military posts. The treaty as negotiated would have given the Indians \$50,000 annually for fifty years from the federal treasury. The Senate substituted "ten years" for "fifty years" and authorized the president to continue payments five years longer.⁵ The Indian regarded this as a breach of faith.

Between 1851 and 1861 the white man had discovered gold and silver in Colorado and had taken possession of lands for mining. They had founded cities, established farms, and opened roads. By 1861 they had driven the

4. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," p. 17.

5. Ibid., p. 6.

Cheyennes and Arapahoes down upon the headwaters of the Arkansas River. The treaty signed in 1851 had said:

"The United States bind themselves to protect the aforesaid Indian nations against the commission of all depredations by the people of the United States after the ratification of this treaty."⁶

The action of the white settlers was in violation of the treaty provisions yet the federal government took no action to enforce treaty provisions.

In a treaty signed February 18, 1861, at Fort Wise, Kansas, the whites confined the Arapahoe and Cheyenne Indians to a smaller district "beginning at the mouth of the Purgatory River to the northern boundary of the Territory of New Mexico; thence west along said boundary to the Sandy Fork to the place of the beginning."⁷ This gave the Indians a reservation on both sides of the Arkansas River and included the territory around Fort Lyon, Colorado. This same treaty promised the United States would protect the Indians "in the quiet and peaceable possession" of this new territory. The United States

6. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," p. 7.

7. Ibid.

would pay each tribe \$30,000 per annum for fifteen years. The treaty also provided that houses should be built, lands broken up and fenced, and stock animals and agricultural tools furnished.⁸

There followed November 29, 1864, Colonel Chivington's massacre of the Indians near Fort Lyons Colorado. After this came the Indian raids on settlements and transportation routes in 1865. In an attempt to put down the Indians by force, the federal government killed fifteen or twenty Indians at an expense of more than a million dollars apiece. Added to this expense was the loss of soldiers and settlers plus the property destroyed by the Indians. The futility of a conquering peace was evident. In October, 1865, Generals Harney, Sanborn and others called a council of the hostiles at the mouth of the Little Arkansas. They asked that the Cheyennes and the Arapahoes give up their reservation on the upper Arkansas and accept in return a reservation partly in southern Arkansas and partly in Indian territory immediately south of Forts Larned and Zarah. According to the third article of this treaty the Indians were to be permitted to hunt between the Arkansas and Platte rivers. This

8. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," p. 7.

was the territory the two tribes claimed as originally theirs. When the treaty went to the Senate, the Kansas legislature insisted that the president designate a reservation outside of Kansas for the tribes and not allow them to go on the reservation of any other Indians without their consent. This complied with, all that was left for these Indian tribes was the hunting privilege.⁹ They were not welcomed on the reservations in the Indian territory, and the treaty excluded them from southern Kansas. Immediately after the ratification of this treaty, however, there was comparative peace on the frontier. General William T. Sherman was able to travel through the area without escort.¹⁰

In November, 1866, General Sherman proposed to keep the Sioux Indians north of the Platte River, west of the Missouri River, and east of the new road for Montana which started from Laramie for Virginia City by way of Forts Reno, Philip, Kearney, and C. F. Smith. He proposed also to keep the Arapahoes, Cheyennes, Comanches, Kiowas, Apaches, and Navajoes south of the

9. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," pp. 9, 10.

10. Ibid., p. 10.

Arkansas river and east of Fort Union. This would leave a broad belt between the Platte and the Arkansas rivers uninhabited by Indians.¹¹ Sherman proposed this plan providing there were no treaties preventing its execution. This is proof that the military were not kept as well informed as they should have been by the federal government regarding Indian policy and the treaties made. The treaty of 1856 obviously prevented such a scheme being put into operation.¹²

The floundering, uncoordinated, unrealistic policy of the United States government clearly was partially responsible for the Indian depredations committed on the frontier. It left the Cheyennes and Arapahoes without a home and with hunting privileges in a region soon to be settled. The policy instilled in the Indian a distrust of government officials. It left military officials, charged with protecting the frontier, ignorant of the treaties already negotiated. Moreover, the policy treated with Indian tribes as nations having a responsible government, when as a matter of fact, Indian chieftains lacked the authority often ascribed to them by white men.

11. Annual report of the Secretary of War, 1866,
p. 21.

12. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," pp. 13,
14.

Disappearance of the Buffalo

The threat of being deprived of his main sustenance, the buffalo, by the encroachment of white settlers and hunters on his hunting grounds so concerned the plains Indian that it was a factor sometimes responsible for his going on a rampage. Transportation routes into the area also were a threat to the herd since they divided the herd, and were a means of shipping the hides to the East where they were much in demand.

The buffalo represented food, shelter, clothing, and heat to the nomadic hunting tribes, the flesh being used for food, the skin for tepees and clothing, and the chips for fuel. Theodore Davis who observed the culture of the plains Indian stated that ". . . there is scarcely a manufactured article, that the aborigine used but what one may discover that some portion of the buffalo has been used in the construction of it."¹³ Little wonder then that the Indian resented the encroachment of the whites on his hunting ground.

Theodore Davis traveled by stage on the Smoky Hill Route in November, 1865. He mentioned passing Ellsworth, Kansas, in the evening of November 18, 1865, and being in

13. Theodore R. Davis, "Buffalo range," Harper's New Monthly, XXXVIII (December, 1868), 153.

buffalo country before sunrise. He sighted thousands of buffalo his first day in Indian country.¹⁴ Mr. Davis in a later trip expressed his amusement at old hunters who tried to calculate the exact number of buffalo remaining. He noted that the number had certainly decreased after 1858. They had been pressed westward in Kansas and Nebraska a hundred miles. They were no longer ranging up to the Platte in the great numbers they once had. Further Mr. Davis emphasized that:

". . . the Indians are ever bringing forward the fact in their powwows with commissioners, that soon the buffalo will be gone, and the red brother must keep peace with the white and eat his "spotted Buffalo" (Indian for domestic cattle). . . .¹⁵

Davis believed that the Indians and buffalo had been moved about as far west as they could well go.¹⁶

In 1868 there were large numbers of buffalo in western Kansas. Travelers on the Kansas Pacific railroad saw almost an unbroken herd of buffalo from the time they left Ellsworth until they arrived at Sheridan near the Colorado border. Trains had to stop to wait

14. Theodore K. Davis, "A Stage Ride to Colorado," Harper's New Monthly, CXXV (July, 1867), 140, 141.

15. Davis, "Buffalo Range," p. 152.

16. Ibid., p. 153.

for unusually large herds to pass over the tracks.¹⁷

In the summer of 1870 Mrs. George A. Custer, wife of the famed Indian fighter, said that it was necessary to travel some miles from Fort Hays to find buffalo in abundance.¹⁸

In 1868-69 the universal herd of buffalo had been divided by the Union Pacific main line. A strip fifty miles wide, with the railroad in the center, was barren of buffalo. Thus were the buffalo divided into north and south herds.¹⁹ The most prized feeding ground of the southern herd became the area between the South Platte and Arkansas Rivers. Many wintered there while others went south for the winter.²⁰ Colonel R. I. Dodge in his Plains of the Great West told of traveling through a herd of buffalo on a trip from Old Fort Zarah to Fort Larned on the Arkansas in May, 1871. At least twenty-five miles of the distance of thirty-four miles was through an immense

17. William F. Hornaday, "The Extermination of the American Bison . . ." Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution, Part II, 1887 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), p. 391. Hereafter cited Hornaday, Extermination of American Bison.

18. Mrs. Elizabeth (Bacon) Custer, Following the Guidon (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1890), p. 219.

19. Hornaday, Extermination of American Bison, p. 492.

20. Ibid., p. 493. Citing Colonel R. I. Dodge, Plains of the Great West.

herd of buffalo made up of smaller herds. Colonel Dodge wrote to Mr. Hornaday September 21, 1887, giving figures which the latter used in estimating that the total number of buffalo in that one vast herd would have been nearly a half million and could not have been less than four hundred thousand.²¹

As late as 1870 there were several million head of buffalo. Up to that time the white man had killed mainly for meat. With the building of three railroad lines through the main buffalo country there was a great demand for robes and hides. New breech-loading rifles with fixed ammunition facilitated the slaughter. The great southern herd was "literally cut to pieces" by the Kansas Division of the Union Pacific. These railroads also made the herd easily accessible.²² Table I shows the slaughter for three years based on estimates of Colonel Dodge. During the period covered by the table the Indians killed 390,000 buffalo while the settlers and mountain Indians accounted for 150,000 of them. This added to the 3,158,730 accounted for by the table would make a total for the three year period of 3,698,730.²³

21. Hornaday, Extermination of American Bison, pp. 390, 391.

22. Ibid., p. 493.

23. Ibid., p. 499.

TABLE I. EXTERMINATION OF SOUTHERN BUFFALO HERD, 1872-1874²⁴

Year	Hides shipped by S. F. Railway	Hides shipped by other roads (estimated)	Total number of Buffalo utilized	Total number killed and wasted	Total of Buffalo killed by whites
1872	165,721	331,442	497,163	994,326	1,491,489
1873	251,443	502,886	754,329	754,329	1,508,658
1874	42,289	84,578	126,867	31,716	158,583
Total	459,453	918,906	1,378,359	1,780,461	3,158,730

The extermination of the buffalo, regarded by the plains Indians as a threat to their way of life, was regarded by the white man as a means of helping to solve the Indian problem. The Indian Peace Commission in 1868 stated that "when the buffalo is gone the Indians will cease to hunt. A few years of peace and the game will have disappeared."²⁵ When the Texas legislature contemplated the passage of a bill to protect the buffalo, General Sheridan appeared before a joint session to protest its passage. He is said to have emphasized the good done by the hunters in exterminating buffalo and recommended they be given a medal. He felt that this destruction would help make possible an advanced civilization:

These men have done in the last two years and will do more in the next year, to settle the

24. Hornaday, Extirpation of American Bison, p. 493.

25. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," p. 25.

vexed Indian question, than the entire regular army has done in the last thirty years. They are destroying the Indians' Commissary; and it is a well-known fact that an army losing its base of supplies is placed at a great disadvantage. Send them powder and lead, if you will; but for the sake of a lasting peace, let them kill, skin, and sell until the buffalo are exterminated. Then your prairies can be covered with speckled cattle, and the festive cowboy, who follows the hunter as a second forerunner of an advanced civilization.²⁶

Indians, particularly young braves, did go on the war path while hunting buffalo. Also as long as there were buffalo in plentiful supply the Indian was not content to settle down to a simple agricultural existence.

Chivington's Massacre

One of the causes for the outbreaks of Indian violence in the latter half of the 1860's was considered to be the attack of Colonel J. M. Chivington on the Indians near Fort Lyons, Colorado, November 29, 1864.²⁷

Several minor skirmishes led up to the massacre. A ranchman named Ripley claimed that Indians stole stock from him on the South Platte April 12, 1864. An army force commanded by a Lieutenant Dunn went with Ripley who

26. John R. Cook, The Border and the Buffalo: An Untold Story of the Southwest Plains (Topeka: Crane and Company, 1907), p. 113.

27. "The Indian War," Harper's Weekly, (June 15, 1867), p. 371.

claimed certain stock when they came upon Indians. The Lieutenant asked certain Indians to come foreward and ordered them disarmed. A struggle ensued. Following this in May, Major Downing of the First Colorado Cavalry destroyed Cedar Bluffs, an Indian village. Still later the whites murdered an Indian chief under a flag of truce. After these altercations, Black Kettle and other chiefs of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe nations sent word to Fort Lyon that war had been forced upon them and they desired peace. Major E. W. Wynkoop of the First Colorado Cavalry thereupon gave a pledge of military protection. He went with seven of the chiefs to confer with the governor of Colorado regarding peace. The governor proved unyielding and Wynkoop later in sworn testimony stated the governor had said that, "the third regiment of Colorado troops had been raised on his representations at Washington, to kill Indians and Indians they must kill."²⁸ Major Wynkoop returned to Fort Lyon and ordered the Indians to move the villages with their wives and children nearer to the fort. In November Wynkoop was removed from his command and was replaced by Major Anthony of the First Colorado Cavalry. He repeated the promises of protection made by his predecessor.

28. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," p. 9.

It was here, near Fort Lyon, at daylight on November 20, 1864, that the Third Colorado Cavalry and a part of the First Colorado Cavalry under Colonel J. M. Chivington's command slaughtered the Indians. Speaking of the infamous event the Indian Peace Commissioners said:

It is enough to say, that it scarcely has its parallel in the records of Indian barbarity. Fleeing women holding up their hands and praying for mercy were brutally shot down; infants were killed and scalped in derision, men were tortured and mutilated in a manner that would put to shame the savage ingenuity of interior Africa.²⁹

Of the eight commissioners, one was a Lieutenant General of the United States army and three were breveted major generals. If military men, who believed that the only way to stop the Indians was by force, could sign their names to this report then the event must have been fully as brutal as it was described. No wonder the Indian went on the warpath.

Extent of Settlement

Trouble with the Indians usually occurred on the sparsely settled frontier in cases where they actually attacked settlements. Settlers on the frontier were often

29. "Report of the Indian Peace Commissioners," p. 9.

isolated in regions not densely enough populated to protect themselves. Their livestock became easy prey for marauding redskins. The Indians at first raided settlements primarily for the livestock. Wandering bands of young braves, not easily controlled by tribal leaders, sometimes committed atrocities and murders. The prospect of ransom money for captives appealed also to the Indians. One historian attributes the main cause for the Indian raids to their desire to gain wealth from raids:

. . . The prospect of ransom money for stolen women and children, and the trade and tribal value of stolen horses and mules, created an ever-present incentive for raids. The profit to be derived far out-weighed Indian grievances---misdeeds of the whites, slaughter of the buffalo, and settler occupation of favorite hunting grounds---as a motive for raids and outbreaks. This was unfortunate for there is little doubt that the warrior's raiding and kidnappin greatly retarded frontier development
 . . . ³⁰

This was an important motive, no doubt, but one must also consider that Indian grievances were real. No man, white or Indian, stands idly by while land he claims is occupied by another and his source of livelihood is deprived from him.

30. Carl Coke Rister, Border Captives: The Traffic in Prisoners by Southern Plains Indians, 1835-1875 (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1940), viii.

In general the eastern tier of counties under study were settled first. Some of the counties were settled earlier than the date shown in table II, but the settlements were not considered permanent. Buffalo hunters came into the area early. An occasional hunter settled early in some of the counties. Sometimes a few settlers moved into a county only to be driven back by the Indian raids or by other hardships of the pioneer life.

TABLE II. SETTLEMENT OF NORTHWEST KANSAS ³¹

County	First Permanent Settlement	Date Org.	Pop. 1870	Pop. 1875
Saline	1857	1859	4,246	6,360
Ottawa	1855	1866	2,127	4,429
Cloud	1860	1866	2,323	7,170
Republic	1861	1868	1,281	8,048
Jewell	1868-69	1870	207	7,651
Mitchell	1867	1870	485	5,370
Lincoln		1870	516	2,493
Ellsworth	1865	1867	1,185	1,758
Russell	1871	1872	156	1,212
Osborne	1870	1871	33	3,467

(Cont'd on next page)

(Cont'd from p. 21)

County	First Permanent Settlement	Date Org.	Pop. 1870	Pop. 1875
Smith	1870	1872	66	3,876
Phillips	1869	1872		2,813
Rooks	1871	1872		567
Ellis		1867	1,336	940
Trego	1877-78	1879		
Graham	1872	1880		
Norton	1872	1872		
Decatur	1872	1879	950 (estimated in 1878)	
Sheridan		1880	170 (voted 1880)	
Rawlins	April 1875	1881		

31. Compiled from Fourth Annual Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, 1875, et passim; First Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, 1878 et passim; Second Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, 1880, et passim; and W. G. Cutler, ed./ Andreas' History of the State of Kansas (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883), et passim. Hereafter the latter work will be cited: Andreas' History of Kansas. Those counties not in the table but encompassed by the study are Gove, Thomas, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace and Logan. The latter county, during the period of this study, was called St. John. Statistics were not shown for these westernmost counties in the works cited above.

Chapter III

RAIDS ON TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

Smoky Hill Route

Attacks, November, 1865

Indian attacks on the stages and stations along the Smoky Hill route were a constant problem from the time the route started until it was finally supplanted by the railroad. The Indians raided the stages and stations to obtain livestock and other articles mainly, though no doubt some of them resented the white man's establishment of a road through their hunting ground. It was an encroachment they could not have relished. Sometimes service was justifiably interrupted by Indian raids. At other times it seems that danger of raids was used as an excuse not to resume service.

Some of the earliest raids on the Smoky Hill route occurred in November, 1865, when the stage line was being operated by the Butterfield Overland Dispatch Company. Theodore Davis, who wrote articles which were illustrated by his own sketches for Harper's magazine, was a passenger on the stage line when some of these attacks occurred. The coach in which he was riding had reached Fort Fletcher, about fifteen miles southeast of where the city of Hays

now is, the afternoon of November 19, 1865. Before dark the coach reached Ruthton Station about twenty-two miles west of Fort Fletcher. That night west of Ruthton they met a white man, an occupant of the coach preceding theirs, who reported that his coach had been attacked at Downer Station. The attack had occurred at 2:00 p. m. that day. The station hands had all retreated to the adobe station. The half-breed son of Bill Bent was recognized as one of the Indian leaders. The Indians asked if the treaty had been signed. The reply to this question was, "Yes," whereupon the Indians desired to "shake" to show their friendship and peaceful intentions. They then drove the station's mules back and pretended to let the stage coach proceed without molestation. This ruse worked well; the Indians attacked the moment the coach got under way. Express messenger, Fred Merwin, was instantly killed. The rest of the party managed to escape to a Buffalo wallow where they fought off the Indians and made their escape. Two stock tenders of the Butterfield Overland Dispatch Company were captured.¹ Lieutenant Colonel W. Tamblyn, commanding Fort Fletcher, later reported the stock tenders had been burned alive. The Indians cut one of the

1. Davis, "A Stage Ride to Colorado," pp. 143, 144.

men's tongues out before they burned him. The same day, November 19, a party of sixty Cheyennes and Arapahoes, apparently the same band of outlaw Indians, had attacked Bluffton and Donner Stations. They had destroyed all property at Bluffton. Also on the same day these Indians killed three employees of the stage company four and one-half miles west of Downer's Station.² After gaining a military escort Mr. Davis' stage proceeded on its trip to Colorado. The magazine author and artist told of reaching Downer's station the afternoon of November 21, 1865, to find that the coach and everything combustible had been burned.³

The Davis party found all stations west of Downer's deserted, but they found no signs of Indian visitations. At noon of November 22, they arrived at a station where they found a government train which had been attacked by Indians.⁴ The Indians killed one soldier and wounded and

2. Report of W. Tamblyn, Lieut. Col. 1st Reg., U. S. Inf., commanding Ft. Fletcher to Capt. J. E. Jacobs, A.A.G. Dist. of Kansas, Nov. 28, 1865, found in "Records of the United States Army Commands, Selected Pages from Vol. 456 Department of the Missouri," "Microfilm," Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hereafter cited as "Selected Pages from v. 456 Dept. of the Missouri."

3. Davis "A Stage Ride to Colorado," p. 145.

4. Colonel Tamblyn stated that the depredation had occurred Monday, November 20, 1865, one-half mile west of Chalk Bluff. Report of Col. Tamblyn, in "Selected Pages from v. 456 Dept. of the Missouri."

scalped another. The wounded soldier lived, but had a permanent bald spot. The men with the government train told of passing Downer's Station the day after the attack and burying the bodies of the messenger and the two stock tenders.⁵

When notified of the depredations, Colonel Tamblyn dispatched one company of infantry from Fort Fletcher leaving detachments of soldiers at different stations along the route. Eighty Indians attacked a detachment of twenty men left at Downer's under a Captain Bleadenheiser, the attack resulting in six dead Indians and a number wounded. On Saturday, November 25, these Indians attacked two coaches and twelve men of "B" Company of the Seventeenth Illinois Volunteer Cavalry under a Lieutenant Scott. Two of the men were wounded in this attack. The same afternoon at five o'clock Tamblyn and his escort of twelve men were attacked. The Indians were forced to retreat after trying to steal his stock. Tamblyn felt that he could put down the disorders if he could get more cavalry.⁶

The Davis party left Monument Station November 25, 1865, with an escort of five soldiers. They also had with

5. Davis "A Stage Ride to Colorado," p. 145.

6. "Selected Pages From v. 456 Dept. of the Missouri."

them an ambulance, a doctor, and four more soldiers. Smoky Hill Springs Station hove in sight at about 11:00 a. m. The ambulance driver started to take a short cut into the station while the cavalrymen galloped on in. Indians appeared attacking both the coach and the ambulance. The doctor and the men in the ambulance left it, and were able to go through the Indians to meet the cavalrymen who were coming back from the station. When the Indians took their eyes from the ambulance and the horses pulling it, their chance to capture the men was gone. The cavalrymen, with the rest of the party were able to drive the Indians off and retreat to the station.⁷ The doctor felt he had done something to make them pay for their deed.

. . . he was one of the gamest of little men. 'Ah!' quoth he as he gazed through the glass at the crowd of Indians about the ambulance, 'I put the contents of the tartar emetic into the flour before I left the ambulance, and if that does not disorder their stomachs I won't say anything -- I wish that it had been strychnine!'⁸

The Indians were not through. They fired the grass in an attempt to burn the station. The defenders were able to beat out the fires with blankets. Several were wounded by arrows when they exposed themselves. At nightfall the

7. Davis, "A Stage Ride to Colorado," pp. 147, 148.

8. Ibid., p. 148.

Indians withdrew only to return again in three hours. Flights of arrows poured in on the station with the besieged men afraid to fire for fear of disclosing their position. Finally an old hunter went out to the point from which the arrows were coming and fired almost point-blank at the Indians. Startled by these tactics the Indians stampeded and the rest of the night was peaceful.

The next morning the Indians again attacked Smoky Hill Springs Station, but they withdrew as the first shots were fired. A company of infantry with a small number of cavalry came into the station expecting to bury the people there. They reported the attack on Monument Station the previous day. Attacks had occurred along the whole line for two hundred fifty miles. In the attacks the Stage company lost eight men and two hundred mules while the government lost several men and one hundred mules. The Indians were a group on their way to Fort Zarah to get presents promised them by treaty.⁹ A Lieutenant Evans returned to Fort Fletcher December 1, 1865, and reported no Indians between Downer's Station and Fletcher. He believed that they were all leaving the Smoky Hill Route and were heading for the Santa Fe Trail.¹⁰ On December 18, however,

9. Davis, "A Stage Ride to Colorado," pp. 148, 150.

10. Letter, Lieut. Col. Tambllyn to Capt. J. E. Jacobs, A.A.G. District of Kansas, Dec. 2, 1865, in "Selected Pages from v. 456 Dept. of the Missouri."

Colonel Tamblyn reported that Indians the night before had stolen five horses and four mules of the Second United States Cavalry and three horses of Company "F," Thirteenth Missouri Cavalry. He stated he would pursue the Indians when the weather moderated, and reiterated that he needed at least one more company.¹¹

Attacks, 1866

Indians were still in the vicinity of the Smoky Hill route in January, 1866. Colonel Tamblyn reported a large body of Indians attacked a wagon and six men of the Butterfield Overland Dispatch Company on January 20, 1866. The attack occurred half way between Fossil Creek and Walkers Creek ten miles east of Fort Fletcher. The men had left Fossil Creek and had come about five miles toward the military post. The Indians fired into them killing two men and wounding three. Two of the wounded men and one uninjured man escaped and reached the fort. The other wounded man was unable to reach the post. All available cavalry were sent out and the man was brought in badly frozen. The cavalry found the bodies of the

11. Letter, Lieut. Col. Tamblyn to Cap. J. E. Jacobs, A.A.G. District of Kansas, January 18, 1865, found in "Selected Pages v 456 Dept. of Missouri."

other two men. The following morning the well mounted Indians were sighted headed for the Republican River. Again the post commander was hampered by having insufficient cavalry on hand to pursue the Indians.¹² It was comparatively peaceful on the Kansas plains through the winter and summer of 1866. So peaceful, in fact, that General Sherman felt secure enough from attack to travel without escort.¹³

Attacks, 1867

Theodore Davis again went to the plains in April, 1867, prepared to go with General W. S. Hancock on his expedition to the Indians. He wrote in his diary the prediction of a stage coach messenger that trouble would ensue that spring and summer:

There had never been . . . such preparations for an Indian outbreak as the redskins had been making during the past winter. All they are waiting for now is the grass, and when that is sufficiently grown to subsist the ponies you will see some Indian deviltry, and the soldiers will learn what nonsense it is to undertake to fight the Indians during the summer season. Now is the time to go for their villages. They know that they can't escape, because their ponies are too poor to carry them: so they will stay by and

12. Letter Lieut. Col. Tamblin to Major G. W. Smith, A.A.G. District of Kansas, January 21, 1866, found in "Selected Pages v. 456 Dept. of Missouri."

13. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," p. 10.

fight. If the Indians are whipped at this time of the year there will be some show for peace during the rest of the summer; otherwise they will fight all summer and make peace in the fall.¹⁴

The expedition of General W. S. Hancock to the Arkansas River in the spring of 1867 is sometimes blamed for the trouble with the Indians in the spring and summer of that year. The expedition and the general's note to the Indians was based on false information of alleged Indian atrocities contained in an affidavit of F. F. Jones, Kiowa interpreter, which was filed with a Major Douglas at Fort Dodge, Kansas. The information reached General Hancock who on March 11, 1867, wrote to the agent of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes stating that he was getting a force ready. His object was to teach the Indians not to molest travelers crossing the plains. He asked the agent to tell the Indians that he came prepared for peace or war. The Indians, he insisted should keep off the main line of travel.¹⁵ Obviously this was not according to treaty terms, for the Indians still had hunting privileges in the area between the Arkansas and Platte Rivers.

General Hancock found the Indians encamped near

14. Davis, "A Summer on the Plains," pp. 293, 294.

15. "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners," p. 12.

Fort Larned. The Indians fearing the troops and remembering the Chivington massacre left camp after nightfall when the troops drew near. Only an idiotic girl of eight or nine years was left in the deserted camp. In their flight northward the Indians destroyed a station on the Smoky Hill road. Learning of this, Hancock burnt the Indian village. The superintendent of an express company¹⁶ issued a circular to agents and employees of the company in the following language:

You will hold no communications with Indians whatever. If Indians come within shooting distance shoot them. Show them no mercy for they will show you none General Hancock will protect you and our property.¹⁷

This statement was not conducive to peace. The war was on in earnest.

In fairness to General Hancock it is well to note that he held council with the Cheyennes April 13, 1867, at Fort Larned, two days before they deserted their village.¹⁸ Also, he did not destroy the village until he was notified that actual depredations had been committed. The first

16. Probably Wells Fargo Company.

17. "Report of the Indian Peace Commissioners," p. 12.

18. "Monthly Record of Current Events: Indian War," Harper's New Monthly, XXXV (June, 1867), 128.

paragraph of Hancock's special field order read:

II. As a punishment for bad faith practised [sic] by the Cheyennes and Sioux who occupied the Indian village at this place, and as chastisement for murders and depredations committed since the arrival of the command at this point, by the people of these tribes, the village recently occupied by them which is now in our hands will be utterly destroyed.¹⁹

Theodore Davis said of the burning of the village:

. . . The village was burned but not before a careful inventory had been taken of all the property to be destroyed. I have heard some estimates of the value of this property that were ludicrously large. The loss inflicted upon the Indians could easily be made good by them in a single summer.²⁰

The Indian Affairs Commissioner in 1867 had traced the causes for the ensuing trouble to Major General Hancock's expedition to Fort Larned and the burning of the Indian village. To this General Sherman replied by stating that unmistakable signs of trouble and positive threats of violence came from the Indians prior to the Hancock expedition.²¹ In another communication he stated:

19. [George A. Custer], Wild Life on the Plains and Horrors of Indian Warfare . . . (St. Louis: The Excelsior Publishing Company, [c 1891]), p. 60.

20. Davis "A Summer on the Plains," p. 296.

21. Letter from Lieut. General Sherman, July 1, 1867, in Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1867, p. 66.

. . . Very early in the season the Indians of the Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Arapahoe bands had unreservedly notified the commanding officers of posts and the stage drivers and agents that, as soon as the grass grew, they would insist on withdrawing from those roads.²²

The fundamental cause for the trouble that followed Hancock's expedition was undoubtedly the deep seated animosity of the Indians for the encroachment of the whites on their hunting grounds. The trouble was precipitated by Hancock's march on the Indians who feared another Sand Creek massacre, and by the unfortunate order of the express company superintendent telling his employees to shoot Indians on sighting them.

General Hancock sent General²³ George A. Custer after the fleeing Indians when he discovered they had left the village. Custer started in pursuit with four squadrons of the Seventh Cavalry on April 15, at 5:00 a.m. He struck the Smoky Hill route April 16, at Downer's Station.²⁴ Proceeding eastward along the route toward

22. Report of Lieut. Gen. Sherman, Headquarters Military Division of the Missouri, October 1, 1867, in Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1867, p. 34.

23. General Custer was brevetted a major general during the Civil War. His highest permanent rank was that of Lieutenant colonel.

24. William Elsey Connelly, Wild Bill and His Era . . . (New York: The Press of the Pioneers, 1933), p. 98.

Hays, Custer found only about every fourth station occupied. Men had abandoned stations in order to repair to a station where their combined numbers would enable them to put up a better defense.²⁵ The stations along the route were ten or fifteen miles apart. The stables and buildings had strong doors, and dugouts were connected to the stables by tunnels. It would have been possible to fight off the Indians from a station had they not prepared flaming arrows to set fire to the hay. When the station was fired the men retreated to the dugouts.²⁶ General Custer found Lookout Station a smoking ruins. The bodies of the three station keepers were found disembowelled and burned. The Indians in passing fired into another station and tried to gain admittance to a third. The men at some of these stations recognized the Indians as Sioux and Cheyennes.²⁷

Raids on the route continued through the summer of 1867 as is revealed by the lists showing United States

25. Custer, Wild Life on the Plains, p. 60.

26. Mrs. Elizabeth (Bacon) Custer, Tenting on the Plains (New York: Harper and Brothers Publisher, [c 1887]), p. 341.

27. Custer, Wild Life on the Plains, p. 60.

Express Company property destroyed on the route and also the table showing collisions of United States Troops with Indians 1867.²⁸ On June 26, 1867, Roman Nose and his Cheyenne Indians attacked a station two miles from Fort Wallace running off the stock of the Overland Stage Company. The same party of Indians started to advance on Fort Wallace but were charged by Company G of the Seventh Cavalry. The charge resulted in seven Indians killed, several wounded, and half of the horses captured or killed. The danger from raids still had not passed by July 9, 1867, as is revealed in a special order issued that date at New Fort Hays. On that date forces were dispatched to Big Creek, Lookout, Swamp Hollow, and White Rock. They were to erect temporary fortifications against hostile Indians.²⁹

General Sherman investigated conditions along the railroad and the stage route in July, 1867. He found that no stages had made the trip from the end of the railroad to Denver in July and that only one stage had made the trip in June. He suspected that Indian depredations were not the real reason for the poor service, but that Wells

28. See Appendix, A and B.

29. Special Order No. 36, Headquarters New Fort Hays, July 9, 1867, "Microfilm of Fort Hays Records," Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College.

Fargo Company could make more money by not running the stages because they were getting government subsidies. Sherman pointed out that at the same time the stages were not running: "Trains of wagons go with light escort and even single, carriers run from post to post."³⁰ Sherman believed that the stage company officials showed their cowardice and selfishness by not resuming service. Service was finally resumed on the stage line July 27, 1867.³¹

Theodore Davis writing from Fort Harker August 3, 1867, told of a squad of negro soldiers, under a colored sergeant, holding off Indian attacks on Wilson Creek Station. Indians attacked three times. The sergeant was able to lead his men to a ravine where they met the third attack. The Indians fled when the colored troops opened fire. In the sergeant's official report was this statement:

All the boys done Bully but Corporal Johnson he flinked. The way he flinked was to stay back until the boys had drove the Injuns two miles then he hollered give it to 'em, [sic] me and the boys don't think that a man that would flink that way ought to have a corporal's stripes.³²

30. Marvin H. Garfield, "The Military Post a Factor in the Frontier Defense of Kansas, 1865-1869," Kansas Historical Quarterly, I (1932), p. 334.

31. Ibid.

32. "Indian War," Harper's Weekly, (September 7, 1867), 564.

Thirty miles out from Fort Hays in the summer of 1867, Wild Bill Hickock and Jack Harvey found a man wounded and scalped. He died within a few minutes after they discovered him. Fifteen Indians had attacked a party of six men. The mortally wounded man did not know what had happened to the rest of his party. As they left the man, Hickock and Harvey sighted Indians to the north. Waiting in a ravine, they were able to kill five of the Indians when they approached. The Indians feigned retreat, and the two scouts went on down the ravine. Upon emerging at the other end the Indians bore down upon them. They were able to kill two more Indians; after which, they reported, they whirled and charged the Indians, who scattered.³³

On a trip to Fort Harker from Fort Wallace for supplies, Custer in the summer of 1867 found many stations along the Smoky Hill route abandoned. He found men gathered at some of the stations for defense. He found it necessary to travel at night because the men manning them were so jittery. On this trip Custer noted the first sign of Indians near Downer's Station. Here he stopped to rest his horses. Some of the men had halted some distance back

33. Connelly, Wild Bill and His Era, pp. 105, 106.

without authorization. They suddenly rode forward rapidly reporting an attack by twenty or thirty Indians. Two of the soldiers were killed. There was a detachment of soldiers at the station so Custer pushed on toward Fort Harker.³⁴

Attacks, 1868

Attacks on the stage line occurred late in the summer of 1868. A Denver stage was attacked August 23, between Pond Creek and Lake Station. Indians had raided Comstock's ranch the night of August 20. The men there fled to Pond Creek. One of the men was wounded in the raid and died at Fort Wallace August 21.³⁵ These attacks appeared in a tabular statement of depredations officially reported to the Department of the Missouri. Both Raids were reported under the date of August 23, 1868. According to this statement, besides attacking the coach and the ranch, the Indians burned a house and murdered one more person.³⁶

34. Custer, Wild Life on the Plains, pp. 111, 112.

35. Report of General Philip Sheridan, Sept. 26, 1868, Appended list, in Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, found in "Annual Message of the President," 40 Cong., 3 sess., House Executive Document No. 1, pt. 2, Vol. I, Serial no. 1367, p. 13.

36. Copy of table in Custer, Wild Life on the Plains, p. 121.

The Indians raided Kiowa Station August 28, 1868. Here according to the official record, they murdered three people, destroyed a wagon train, and stole fifty cattle.³⁷ Another report, apparently of the same raid, stated that thirty horses were captured, and a woman and child carried off. Their remains were later found shockingly mutilated. This account said the raid occurred August 23.³⁸ Other raids occurred during August and September as is shown in table III. These raids caused work to be temporarily suspended on the Union Pacific Railroad Eastern Division. After the 1868 raids the railroad had been built through Kansas and the stages which had traversed the old Smoky Hill route were no longer used in Kansas.

37. Copy of table in Custer Wild Life on the Plains, p. 121.

38. "The Indian War," Harpers Weekly (Sept. 19, 1868), 606. The raid actually may have occurred August 23, but may not have been reported until August 28. Note the slight discrepancy between Sherman's Report and the tabular statement in the raid immediately preceding.

TABLE III. TABULAR STATEMENT
OF DEPREDACTIONS ON THE SMOKY HILL ROUTE, 1868
(Exclusive of Military Engagements)³⁹

Date	Place Raided	Nature of Raid
Aug. 23	Pond Creek and Lake Station	2 murdered, 1 house burned and plundered, 1 stage coach attacked and impeded
Aug. 27	Big Springs Station	1 scout murdered (Will Comstock)
Aug. 28	Kiowa Station	3 murdered, 50 cattle stolen, Wagon train attacked, destroyed
Aug. 31	Kiowa Creek (Near)	200 horses and mules stolen, 40 cattle stolen, 2 stage coaches attacked and impeded
Sept. 1	West of Lake Station	2 murdered, 2 scalped, 30 cattle stolen
Sept. 8	Turkey Creek near Sheridan	2 murdered, 2 scalped, 76 horses and mules stolen
Sept. 9	Between Sheridan and Wallace	6 murdered, 1 house attacked, burned, and plundered
Sept. 10	Near Wallace	1 stage coach attacked and impeded
Sept. 19	Big Timber's Station	1 house attacked

39. Constructed from copy of table in Custer, Wild Life on the Plains, p. 121.

Union Pacific Railroad Eastern Division

Attacks, 1867

The Union Pacific Railroad Eastern Division had reached Fort Harker by July 1, 1867.⁴⁰ By September 18, 1867, it had reached the 275 mile post to within just ten miles of Fort Hays.⁴¹ The attacks in the summer of 1867 occurred between Fort Harker and Fort Hays. Workers were perforce constantly alerted for trouble. Besides their picks and spades the workers had as tools Springfields and bowies. Sentinels and guards were as necessary to the building of the road as were the engineers and surveyors.⁴² The number of employees who fell while working on the railroad will never be known. They were buried where they fell, and no one bothered to mark their graves in many instances.⁴³

Attacks on the railroad workers continued throughout the summer and fall. A band of Kiowas attacked railroad men fifteen miles west of Fort Harker on Thursday,

40. Annual Report of Secretary of War, 1867, p. 36.

41. Garfield, "Defense of the Frontier," p. 330.

42. Harper's Weekly, (Sept. 7, 1867), 564.

43. Adolph Roenigk, Pioneer History of Kansas (Adolph Roenigk, publisher, [c 1933/], p. 207.

June 27, 1867, killing one engineer and wounding an employee. Work on the road was almost entirely stopped at this time.⁴⁴ One thousand laborers on seventy-five miles of line were kept from working. The railroad company appealed to Governor Crawford for help. Crawford made an appeal to the War Department for arms and ammunition for the workers and was successful in obtaining them. Henceforth the workers were armed and work on the railroad was resumed.⁴⁵

General Sherman made his investigation of the railroad, as well as the stage coach line, in July, 1867, finding that railroad construction was proceeding slowly. He blamed the heavy rainfall, which in many cases had been responsible for floods washing away the grade, rather than the Indian attacks for the slow progress of the road building.⁴⁶ General Sherman, adamant in his refusal to allow Governor Crawford to call out volunteer cavalry, finally had relented and the governor called out the Eighteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry. The General, upon

44. Letter Governor S. J. Crawford to U. S. Senator Ross, June 29, 1867, in State Record Extra, (Topeka, July 5, 1868 [1867]), found in Governor (S. J. Crawford), 1865-1868, "Correspondence: Subject File: Indians, 1867, 1868" (Archives Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka). Hereafter cited Gov. S. J. Crawford, "Correspondence."

45. Garfield, "Defense of the Frontier," p. 330.

46. Ibid., 334

investigating actual conditions, concluded that the state troops had not been needed, but it was too late to rescind his action.⁴⁷ Despite Sherman's optimistic view of the situation, the army still was taking every precaution to guard the rail and stage lines with the small number of men available. This is revealed in an order detailing one sergeant and twelve men of Company "A", Thirty-eighth Infantry to proceed from Fort Hays to Fossil Creek, Kansas, to take post. They were to be provided with fifteen days rations and one hundred rounds of ammunition per man.⁴⁸

In September 1867, a settler reported to Governor Crawford:

In accordance with your request to communicate to you any facts as to Indian outrages, I just want to say that, on the same afternoon where you and I were talking Sharp and Shaw's camp was attack [sic]. One man killed, three horses taken yesterday [sic]. Parks Camp was attacked. Parks & two other men killed two others wounded. Some stock taken [sic].
⁴⁹

According to this letter the attacks referred to occurred on September 28, 1867. Parks' camp was at the western end of the railroad line. The camp was saved by the

47. Garfield, "Defense of the Frontier," p. 330.

48. Special Order No. 27, Headquarters New Fort Hays, July 1, 1867, "Microfilm of Fort Hays Records," Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College. See also reference to Special Order No. 36 on p. 36 above.

49. Letter, R. M. Fish to Gov. Crawford, Big Creek Kansas, Sept. 29, 1867, in Gov. S. J. Crawford, "Correspondence."

Thirty-Eighth Infantry. According to another account, a soldier and a teamster were killed at the camp. A man named Parks, in charge of the camp, and two soldiers were returning with the camp stock when the raid took place. The Indians killed Parks and wounded both soldiers.⁵⁰

Other attacks occurred along the roadway during the summer and fall of 1867. Mr. Adolph Roenigk, who worked for the railroad one year after it had been built, mentioned some of the graves along the right-of-way. Two graves were located east of Fossil Creek Station, now Russell, one of them being one and one-half mile and the other being two and one half miles from the station. Another grave was located about two and one-half miles west of the station. These graves were unmarked. Another grave, located on the west bank of Walker's Creek and on the south side of the track was marked by a limestone tablet. Forty-four years later in 1911 while going over the track with Mr. W. K. Beach, Mr. Roenigk learned that

50. "Complete Story of the Founding of Rome." from Simon Motz, Historical and Biographical Sketches, "Ellis County Clippings 1873-1930," I, (Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka), p. 203. The attack on Parks' camp may have been the one referred to as occurring September 19, in Garfield "Frontier Defense of Kansas," p. 349. Garfield mentions a contractor and three men having been killed.

the man buried there was Theodore Goeckler.⁵¹ Mr. Beach had worked with the man, and gave the following account of his death:

Goeckler, with a team of mules, was hauling building rock from a quarry located some distance north. It was about 12:30 as the stone haulers were rather late that day in getting back with their loads of rock at noon. The rest of us were getting dinner when he was attacked. He was unarmed. He saw the Indians coming and managed to get one of his mules loose and mounted him, but was shot by an Indian and fell to the ground. He got to his feet again and made an effort to get away but was speared by an Indian. This happened about where the Catholic church stands today at Gorham, Kansas.⁵²

Near Victoria, Kansas, on a grassy knoll lying on the west bank of the North Fork of Big Creek, south of the railroad and north of Highway 40, is an inclosure fenced with wooden posts and iron pipes. The inclosure contains seven marked graves and a memorial granite stone erected by the Union Pacific Railroad Company. The bronze tablet on the granite boulder states:

This stone marks the burial place of six track laborers who were in the employ of the Union Pacific Railway Eastern Division and, while on duty, about one mile west of here were massacred by a band of Cheyenne Indians, October, 1867.

51. Roenigk, Pioneer History of Kansas, p. 207. The raids in which these men were killed occurred June 21, 1867.

52. Ibid., p. 210

Seven graves lie in a row on the east side of the inclosure. The marker to the south has carved on it these words:

In Memoriam of R. M. Donney [word illegible]
 Mass. [illegible] persons here to me unknown.
 To thier [sic] memory I've carved this stone.
 Killed by Indians in the year 1867. Dock Williams
 carver.⁵³

Another of the stones is deeply carved with the words, "Here Lies T," as though the carver, interrupted, never again had opportunity to finish the carving. On the stone farthest north is a deeply engraved cross. The others are barren of any markings. Mr. Roenigk claimed that the inclosure contained eleven graves, six of which are accounted for by the granite boulder.⁵⁴ No trace of the four unmarked graves remains today, but the inclosure contains ample room for four more graves.⁵⁵

53. Mr. Roenigk said this epitaph was: "In memoriam Henry Mc Donney of Cambridge, Mass. Five persons here to me unknown. To their Memory I've carved this stone. Killed by Indians in the year 1867. Dock Williams." Ibid., 208.

54. Ibid., p. 207 footnote.

55. Simon Motz stated that on June 6, 1867, six railway workers were killed at a cut immediately east of the railroad crossing over the North fork of Big Creek. See "Ellis County Clippings," 1873-1930, I, (Kansas Historical Society Library, Topeka), p. 203. Another article in the "Ellis County Clippings," I, p. 113, stated that fourteen members of a grading party were killed at about the same place in early June, 1867, by Satanta, the Kiowa chief. The event referred to must be the same one mentioned on the monument erected by the railroad at Victoria. Mr. Roenigk, who worked on the railroad in

Attacks, 1868

The year 1868 was a busy year for the army. Forty raids took place over widely dispersed places in the Department of the Missouri. General Philip Sheridan felt that it was best to remain on the defensive throughout the summer only trying to protect the people of the new settlements and on the overland routes until winter. He knew the Indians would be easier to catch when winter came. He had a force of only 2,600 men, 1,200 mounted and 1,400 foot troops. The latter could only be used as defensive troops. The mounted troops were the Seventh and Tenth cavalry regiments. The foot troops were the Third and Fifth Infantry regiments plus four companies of the Thirty-eighth infantry regiment. Every available man was kept busy from mid-August till November.⁵⁶

the vicinity of these incidents only one year later, when the graves were still fresh, sums up the casualties by stating that in the two years from 1867-1869, thirteen railroad men and one stock tender were killed by Indians from Fossil Creek Station to the north fork of Big Creek. See Roenick, Pioneer History of Kansas. p. 211. This would certainly seem to indicate that the account of fourteen deaths just west of the north fork of Big Creek is erroneous.

56. Sheridan, Memoirs, pp. 297, 298.

A band of ten Indians during the first part of May, 1868, set on fire and burned two box cars and one flat car about twenty miles west of Coyote. They fastened three hundred feet of telegraph wire across the track and spiked chains across the rails so as to derail the engine. They approached to within a short distance of the water tank about three miles east of where the depredations occurred, but a group of armed laborers met them and they left after making a circuit around the laborers. No one was injured in the attack.⁵⁷ May 11, 1868, men were dispatched from Fort Hays to protect the railroad bridge over the north fork of Big Creek. The same order sent Major Yard and Captain Graham of the Tenth United States Cavalry to the end of the track to inquire into the burning of the three cars mentioned above.⁵⁸

Five men were left at each water tank along the track to keep them from being destroyed. The lieutenant in charge of posting the new guard and withdrawing the old guard in a report dated July 2, 1868, mentioned Indian movements across the tracks. At Grinnell Station he met Chief Spotted Wolf of the Cheyennes, who professed

57. Report of J. W. Claws, 38th Inf., to Fort Hays, May 8, 1868, in "Fort Hays Letter File" 1867, '68, '69, National Archives Washington D. C.

58. Special Orders No. 83, Headquarters Fort Hays, May 11, 1868, "Microfilm of Fort Hays Records," Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College.

friendship with the whites and stated that he and all of his people were moving north to visit friends. The sergeant in command at this tank reported two or three hundred Indians had been in to see him during the preceding week. Among them was Tall Bull and a band of Cheyennes. They also were moving north and seemed very friendly. When the lieutenant came back through Grinnell station after posting guards at the next tank east, the sergeant there reported that a conductor of a mail train had supplied an Indian of Spotted Wolf's band with whiskey on June 30. The sergeant warned him of the illegality of the act, but the conductor seemed unconcerned.⁵⁹ This movement in mass to the north by the Cheyenne Indians was quite peaceful, no major disturbance having resulted from it. A report from Fort Harker to Fort Hays July 14, 1868, stated some Cheyennes had left Fort Harker and moved north. Officials at Harker feared they might do mischief.⁶⁰ On July 16, 1868, the commanding officer at Fort Harker complained to the commanding officer of Fort Hays that soldiers guarding the water tanks fired on Indians or persons as if enemies. He urged caution and asked that single Indians and citizens be allowed to approach. He recommended that only one Indian

59. Report of I. M. Kelley, 1st Lt., 38th U. S. Infy, to Captain J. W. Claus, 38th U. S. Infy, commanding forces at end of track, July 2, 1868, in "Ft. Hays Letter File," 1867, '68, '69.

60. In Ibid.

be allowed to approach from a body of Indians.⁶¹

General Sheridan issued a general order August 24, which served as a declaration of war. He had only eight hundred cavalry to garrison the forts and protect the line of travel on the railroad for two hundred miles; to protect the stage routes and lines of travel from the railway terminus to Denver and into New Mexico; as well as to protect the settlements on the Solomon, Saline, and Smoky Hill. In order to do this it became necessary to recruit the Nineteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry under Governor Crawford.⁶² The latter organization is best known for the part it took in the winter campaign of 1869.

Colonel Carpenter and his Tenth United States Cavalry were attacked by Cheyennes and Arapahoes October 18, at Buffalo station. In the ensuing battle nine Indians were killed and thirty wounded. The Indians wounded three of Carpenter's men.⁶³ On October 30, six cars of an

61. Report of I. M. Kelley, 1st Lt, 38th U. S. Infy, to Captain J. W. Claus, 38th U. S. Infy, commanding forces at end of track, July 2, 1868, in "Ft. Hays Letter File," 1867, '68, '69.

62. Randolph De B. Keim, Sheridan's Troopers on the Borders: A Winter Campaign on the Plains (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remson, and Haffelinger, 1870), pp. 34-36.

63. Garfield, "Defense of the Frontier," p. 463. The list appended to Sheridan's Report of Sept. 26, 1868, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, states that the battle occurred on Beaver Creek with four hundred Indians participating. Besides the three wounded it also mentions Carpenter's loss of two horses killed. p. 16.

train were derailed by the Indians near Grinnell, Kansas. No one was injured in the attack. Colored troops drove off the Indians.⁶⁴

Fossil Creek Station, 1869

An account in Harper's Weekly contains a brief story of what happened at Fossil Creek Station--where Russell, Kansas now is--on May 28, 1869.

The Kansas Pacific Railroad was attacked by Indians at Fossil Creek station May 28. Two men were killed and four wounded. The railroad track was torn up and thrown a considerable distance from the grading.⁶⁵

For a more vivid, detailed account of the raid one must refer to a member in the party attacked, Mr. Roenigk.

Fossil Creek Station was a small station, between the small frontier towns of Ellsworth and Hays, consisting of a water tank, a small box house shaped like a freight car, and dugout dwellings for the employees.

64. Garfield, "Defense of the Frontier," p. 463.

65. "Domestic Intelligence," Harper's Weekly (June 19, 1869), 387.

The Kansas Pacific⁶⁶ furnished employees rifles of an unusual caliber. The ammunition supply was insufficient and the men wasted what they had.⁶⁷

The men at Fossil Creek had been warned by a government employee on May 20 that the Indians had broken out in Indian Territory and were headed north. May 28, when the men went to work Mr. Roenigk, George Selly, and Charley Sylvester carried Spencer carbines. These were seven shot carbines. Three others in the party, a man named Taylor, one named McKeefer, and one named Lynch carried no rifles. Another member of the party, not named in the account, had a rifle; but he had left his ammunition at the station rendering his weapon useless. The men worked on the track three fourths of a mile west of the station. They were just three hundred yards east of a ravine called "Kits Fork." The ravine afforded Indians a chance for a sneak attack, and they used it. They came from the side and attacked the men. Roenigk had to run thirty yards for the handcar with bullets whizzing around him. He had trouble with his Spencer having put one too many cartridges in it.

66. The company was reorganized and the name changed to Kansas Pacific during the winter of 1868-69. Roenigk, Pioneer History of Kansas, p. 166.

67. Ibid., pp. 168, 169.

Other Indians appeared in front of them. The men were able to get the hand-car through the Indians because the Indians were firing from all around and had to withhold their fire temporarily. The hand-car was slowed down by the fact that part of the men had to use rifles leaving fewer of them to man the car. The Indians killed Mc Keefer and Lynch at a point about halfway to the station. Their bodies toppled off the car. Seely was struck in the thigh by an arrow. A bullet struck Roenigk in the center of his chest seriously wounding him. Sylvester and Taylor also were wounded, and John Cook, the station agent, kept watch over the wounded when the party attained the shelter of a dugout.

Cook and the other man kept those wounded informed of what was occurring along the rail line. Two miles east of the station the Indians tore up the tracks by breaking the heads of the spikes. A train from the west approached, took to the siding slowing down and averting trouble. The train from the east, consisting of freight cars and one passenger car containing twelve passengers, was ditched but no one was killed. While the Indians tore up the track a herd of buffalo came in view from the south. Leaving their destructive work, the Indians hid themselves and were able to kill five of the hapless creatures with spears and arrows within five minutes. The train from the west remained

on the siding all night. The Indians killed two men on it, stripped, mutilated, and scalped them. They also ran telegraph wire through the calves of their legs and other parts of their body. The Indians then departed with their buffalo meat, camping that night on the Saline River to the north.⁶⁸ The wounded men eventually recovered from the wounds received in the raid. Fossil Creek Station was temporarily abandoned.⁶⁹

The completion of the Kansas Pacific and Union Pacific railroad facilitated the movement of troops and accounts for the fewer Indian difficulties after 1869. The area between the railroads, a choice hunting ground, could not be reached without crossing the rails. When this occurred the alarm could be speeded by telegraph, and the army could soon move in.⁷⁰

The German Family, 1874

Although not raids on the transportation routes, two other raids occurring along the railroad should be noted. September 15, 1874, there occurred an attack on

68. Roenigk, Pioneer History of Kansas, pp. 170-177.

69. Ibid., p. 181.

70. Report of General John Pope, Hdqrs. Dept. of the Missouri, Oct. 31, 1870 in Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1870, found in "Annual Message of the President," 41 Cong., 3 Sess., House Executive Document No. 1, Pt. 2, I, Serial 1446, p. 11.

a party of one man and two small boys near Buffalo Station. The man was a Mr. Stowell of Russell County, Kansas. The party had two wagons. The Indians stole two mules and captured a boy thirteen years old. The boy was later found dead a short distance away. He had been scalped. A scouting party sent out from Fort Hays went by train to Buffalo Station, starting from there at noon September 15, in an attempt to bring the Indians to justice. The scouts covered the territory north of the station, thence south to the Arkansas and back to the Smoky Hill River, arriving back at the fort September 28, 1874, having traveled 426 miles in fourteen days. The scouting party of twenty-seven men of the Sixth United States Cavalry were on the trail of the Indians several times, but were forced to abandon their efforts because horses and men were exhausted, and the Indians scattered.⁷¹

What was believed to have been the same band of Indians attacked a family named German on the north fork of the Smoky Hill River shortly after the Stowell boy was killed. John and Catherine German and two [should be

71. Report of 1st. Lt. J. B. Kerr, Sept. 28, 1874, in "Old Letter File, Fort Hays, Kansas, 1869-70" [in wrong file], (National Archives, Washington, D. C.). See also Kansas Adjutant General, Annual Report, 1873-74, p. 27.

three] of the children were brutally murdered. The four remaining children, Catherine, Sophia, Johanna [Julia] and Nancy were all carried into captivity.⁷²

The family was en route from Elgin, Kansas, to Colorado. They came to the railroad at a point near Hays, Kansas, intending to follow the Kansas Pacific. When they camped near Ellis, Kansas, someone informed them that the old stage road was better because water would be more easily obtained along it. He also told the family that the chance of trouble with Indians was slight. They decided to try the river road, and traveled several days making about eighteen miles per day. On one afternoon two hunters met them and gave them some antelope meat. The hunters had seen no signs of trouble, and the family decided to travel until night fall in order to make Wallace the next day. They camped that night on the bank of the Smoky Hill. The next morning Catherine and Stephen went up a ravine to get the cattle preparatory to moving on the road again. They sighted some antelope, and Stephen wanting to get a shot at them told Catherine to take the cattle in. Just then the two children heard yelling, and

72. Adjutant General's Report, 1873-74, p. 28. This report is in error because Catherine (German) Swerdfeger mentioned five as having been killed, and four captured. See next footnote.

the Indians dashed down shooting as they came. Catherine believed she ran for one-fourth to one-half a mile before being overtaken. They shot an arrow into her left thigh, whereupon a big burly savage caught her, drew out the arrow and kicked her a few times. Two others rushed after Stephen, killing him, while Catherine's captor put her behind him on his horse. They rode up to the site of the camp in time to see Joana felled by an arrow. Catherine felt Joana was killed because she looked older than the other sisters, though she was actually younger than Catherine. The younger children, three in number, told Catherine that their mother, father, and sister Jane were gone. They had been killed by the Indians. The four sisters carried into captivity were later recovered from the Indians.⁷³

73. "Letter," Catherine (German) Swerdfeger to L. W. Hubbell, Jetmore, Kansas, December 31, 1927.

Chapter IV

RAIDS IN THE VICINITY OF FORT WALLACE¹

Early Raids

Before Fort Wallace was founded a raid occurred on May 16, 1864. Judging from its description the raid must have occurred in present Logan County, Kansas. The official report of the raid follows:

I have the honor to inform you that on the 16th instant, when within 3 miles of the Smoky Hill, I was attacked by Cheyenne Indians, about 400 strong, and after a persistent fight of seven and one-half hours succeeded in driving them from the field. They lost 3 chiefs and 25 warriors killed; the wounded I am unable to estimate. My own loss is 4 men killed and 3 wounded. My animals are exhausted. I will remain at this post until further orders.²

Later the commanding officer of Fort Lyon, reported that the attack occurred at a point on the Smoky Hill Fork.

1. Some raids in the vicinity of Fort Wallace were recounted in the previous chapter in connection with the transportation routes. They will not appear in this chapter. For a good account of the Fort Wallace and the part it played in protecting the frontier see Mrs. Frank C. Montgomery, "Fort Wallace and its Relation to the Frontier," Kansas Historical Collections, XVII (1928), 189-283.

2. Report, Lieut. George S. Eayre, McClain's Colorado Battery, to Col. J. M. Chivington, District of Colorado, May 19, 1864, in Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series I, XXIV, Part I, "Reports." (Washington: Government Printing office, 1891), p. 935. The letter was written from Fort Larned.

He also stated that Black Kettle had been reported killed in the raid.³ This reported death of Black Kettle was in error, for that famous Chief survived Chivington's raid the following fall and was still alive until the battle of Washita in the winter of 1869.

The first fight of the Seventh Cavalry occurred at Fort Wallace in June, 1867. Three hundred Cheyennes under Roman Nose advanced on the fort. The cavalry rode out to meet them. In the ensuing battle the negro infantry troops who had gone out with the cavalry were conspicuously gallant.⁴ Seven Indians were killed, several were wounded, and half of the horses were captured or killed.⁵

Attack on wagon train supplying Custer

In mid-summer, 1867, Custer was ordered to proceed north from Fort Hays to the Platte River. He was encamped for a time on the Republican River. While there supplies were sent to him from Fort Wallace. Custer described the attack on one of the trains supplying him as

3. Report of Maj. Edward W. Wynkoop, May 27, 1864, in ibid., p. 934.

4. Mrs. Custer, Tenting on the Plains, p. 387.

5. "Late Indian Outrages," Harper's Weekly, (July 27, 1867), 468. See above p. 36.

it had been related to him. Six to seven hundred Indians were supposed to have attacked the train. The raid was meant to be a surprise but fortunately Will Comstock, the famous scout was along and sighted the Indians before they attacked. The train kept moving in two columns. Every fourth trooper was on the inside of the column to keep the lead horses going. The rest of the troopers formed a circle around the train and walked with it. When the Indians first attacked, the troopers held fire until they came close then greeted them with volleys of lead. The Indians were driven back, but returned again, circling and fighting individually. The attack continued for three hours with the wagon train moving forward constantly. The troopers leading the horses were replaced at intervals from among the skirmishers so that all could participate in the fight. Custer had sent Colonel West and some of the Seventh Cavalry to protect the train. When they came into view the Indians retreated hastily. Five warriors were known to have been killed in the skirmish and several soldiers were wounded.⁶

6. Custer, Wild Life on the Plains, pp. 89-96.

Kidder Massacre

General Custer, while encamped on the Republican River, ordered more supplies from Fort Wallace on June 27, 1867, fully expecting to push on to the Platte River. By this time the trouble on the Platte had subsided. General Sherman sent dispatches to Fort Sedgwick ordering Custer to proceed south toward Wallace looking for Indians as they were reported heading south. Lieutenant F. H. Kidder was sent from Fort Sedgwick to find Custer and to give him Sherman's message. Meanwhile Custer had left his camp and had gone to Fort Sedgwick where he picked up the message.⁷ He departed for Fort Wallace looking for Lieutenant Kidder on the way.

Custer and the Seventh Cavalry found the bodies of Lieutenant Kidder and his ten men on Beaver Creek along the wagon trail from Custer's camp on the Republican to Fort Wallace. Custer reasoned that Lieutenant Kidder had arrived at the Republican River camp site and found the trail to Fort Wallace, then following it in the dark had failed to see where Custer's fainter trail to Sedgwick diverged from the main trail.⁸

7. Report of General Sherman, Oct. 1, 1867, in Annual Report of Secretary of War, 1867, p. 35.

8. Custer, Wild Life on the Plains, pp. 98, 99. The same conclusion was reached in a report "Indian War Scenes," Harper's Weekly (Aug. 17, 1867), 512.

The Cavalrymen found all of the men in the Kidder party had been scalped and the skulls of all of them had been broken. The Indians had also cleanly scalped the Sioux Chief, Red Bead, scout for the party. His scalp was lying near by. Scout Will Comstock said that this was because the Indians would not bear off the scalp of one of their own tribe. From this bit of information he surmized that the Sioux, probably led by Pawnee Killer, had attacked the party. Most of the men's clothing had been carried away. Some of the bodies lay in beds of ashes. Sinews of their arms and legs had been cut away, their noses hacked off, and their features defaced. Each body contained from twenty-five to fifty arrows. The cavalrymen buried them all in a common trench.⁹

Attack on Wood-cutters

August 27, 1868, two hundred fifty Indians threatened the train of a Captain Butler, Fifth Infantry, causing him to return to Big Springs. Twenty-five Indians attacked two citizens one and one-half miles west of Sheridan at about 11:00 a. m. on September 7. On September 9, they burned the same ranch burned two weeks

9. Custer, Wild Life on the Plains, pp. 107, 108.

previously, six miles from Sheridan on the road to Wallace. The occupants of the ranch were killed.¹⁰ On the same date, one of the citizens at Pond City reported to Governor Crawford that the condition of the settlers there was past endurance. The Indians he stated were complete masters of the situation, the settlers having no horses or arms. He reported three teamsters were killed by Indians and listed their names as Johnny O'Neil, Isaac Burwick, and Pat Maloney. He also stated that a Mr. Maginis had been killed at Big Timbers.¹¹ Another account of the raid stated that the above men were wood-choppers. About thirty Indians had attacked the group of twelve wood-choppers on Twin Butte Creek on September 19, 1868. Three of the party were killed and nine of them were cut off from escape to Fort Wallace. At six o'clock the next morning Lieutenant Grenville Lewis of the Fifth Infantry found the bodies of John Mc Neil, Andrew Pratt, and Isaac Burwick.¹²

10. Report of Sheridan, Appended List, in Report of Secretary of War, 1868, pp. 13-15.

11. Letter, Aug. 27, 1868, in Gov. S. J. Crawford "Correspondence."

12. This account differs from the preceding one in that the other report listed among those dead Johnny O'Neil, rather than John Mc Neil and Pat Malone, rather than Andrew Pratt. Both accounts agree, however, as to the number killed.

All of the animals had been driven off. A man named Jones, the wood contractor, in the course of the attack had abandoned his horse. He hid in plum trees in a ravine and went to camp in the darkness of night.¹³

Battle of the Arickaree

Depredations on the settlements reached a high point in the summer of 1868. General Sheridan was unable to spare men from his command to pursue raiding Indians and inflict punishment on them in retaliation for their raids on the settlements.¹⁴ All that could be done was to defend the settlements and the transportation lines as well as possible. In order to punish offending Indians, however, other measures were necessary. The need existed for a striking force to track down and punish Indians who committed depredations. A company of fifty select volunteers was picked to accomplish this task. The full complement of the force was to be forty-seven men and three officers. Brevet Colonel George A. Forsyth was to command the organization with Lieutenant F. H. Beecher as his second in command. The men composing the rest of

13. Report of Sheridan, Appended List, in Report of Secretary of War, 1868, p. 13. See also, Homer W. Wheeler, Buffalo Days (Indianapolis, The Bobbs-Merrill Company [c 1923, c 1925]), p. 8.

14. See above p. 48.

the small force were scouts familiar with the ways of the wily redskin. This select group was recruited at Fort Harker and Fort Hays.

When the company had reached its complement, Forsyth set out for Fort Wallace. The scouts moved across the Saline and South Solomon rivers to Beaver Creek. From there they proceeded to Fort Wallace arriving there September 5, 1868. A message from the governor awaited asking them to move to Bison Basin to protect the settlers. On the way to that place Forsyth received news of an attack at Sheridan on a freighter's train near there. About twenty or thirty Indians, a scouting party from the main body of Indians, had killed two teamsters and captured the teams.¹⁵ It was the incident near Fort Wallace which was to lead to the battle of Arickaree, a valiant fight never to be forgotten in the West. In the words of General Sheridan:

. . . This unexpected raid made Forsythe [sic] hot to go for the marauders and he telegraphed me for permission, which I as promptly gave him¹⁶

Forsyth and his company proceeded on the trail of the Indians. The first signs of an Indian encampment

15. General G. A. Forsythe, [sic] "A Frontier Fight," Harper's New Monthly, XCI (June, 1895), 44.

16. Sheridan, Memoirs, p. 303.

revealed that they were on the trail of a larger group of Indians than they had expected to find. They encamped on the sixteenth of September on the Arickaree Fork of the Republican River in Colorado. Here on the morning of September 17, they were forewarned of attack when the Indians stampeded a few of their horses stealing some of them before the scouts could reach them. The scouts retreated to a small island in the center of the creek to await the expected attack of the Indians.¹⁷ The stream was not running, the channel on one side of the island being dry and on the other side containing about one foot of water. The Indians, estimated in the official report of the incident to have numbered about seven hundred, made several attacks.¹⁸ The attacks continued until nearly midnight. The first wave of attackers swept by the island on both sides facing a withering fire from the besieged men. The next attack was attempted from one side where there was tall grass. The Indians expected to approach the island unseen. Many of them appeared on the hill shouting and firing to draw attention from those

17. "Attack on Colonel Forsyth's Command," Harper's Weekly, (October 17, 1868), 669.

18. Report of General Sheridan, In the Field, Fort Hays, Kansas, Oct. 15, 1868, in Report of Secretary of War, 1868, p. 18.

going through the grass. While waiting for this attack, the men had dug in. They noticed the Indians approaching and whenever one appeared through the grass he was hit with a bullet.¹⁹

At midnight Scouts Trudell and Stilwell volunteered to start for Wallace for aid. The fort was only eighty-five miles away, but the men, in order to circumvent the Indians, were forced to go a distance of one hundred twenty-five miles. By dawn they had covered only about three miles of the distance, and were forced to hide all of that day, September 18. They heard firing from the island all day. They set off again at night. Several times they encountered Indians but were able to hide before being seen. About fifteen miles from Fort Wallace they met two colored scouts with messages for Colonel Carpenter of H Troop, Tenth United States Cavalry, at Lake Station seventy miles from the Arickaree. The soldiers hastened to Carpenter with the message of the scouts. Trudell and Stilwell reached Wallace September 20, to get troops to go to the relief of Forsyth.²⁰

Meanwhile, fearing that the first two scouts did not get through with the message, Forsyth allowed two more volunteers, Scouts Jack Donovan and A. J. Pliley

19. Winfield Freeman, "The Battle of the Arickaree," Kansas Historical Collections, VI (1900), p. 350.

20. Ibid., pp. 354--356.

to start for Wallace. They met Colonel Carpenter who was on a scout attempting to locate Forsyth's command. They led him to the camp on the morning of the ninth day after the initial assault.²¹ The actual fighting which had lasted four days resulted in a loss to Forsyth's command of Lieutenant Beecher, a man named Moore who was a civilian doctor from Fort Wallace, and scouts Culver and Farley.²² The dead were buried in a shallow grave on the island. Various estimates of the number of Indians participating in the battle and the number of Indians killed have been made but the official report giving the number of Indians as seven hundred and the number actually killed as thirty-five has never been successfully controverted. The official report also stated many Indians were wounded; Colonel Forsyth was wounded twice early in the battle, but was able to direct operations from his trench in the sand. Fifteen of the scouts suffered wounds. While waiting for relief the men subsisted for eight days on horseflesh, which by the time relief came was spoiled.²³

Lieutenant E. Bubler of the Fifth Infantry with

21. Freeman, "Battle of the Arickaree," p. 350.

22. Ibid., p. 354.

23. Report of General Sheridan, Oct. 15, 1868, Report of Secretary of War, 1868, p. 18.

eighty-six men of Companies E and B of the Fifth Infantry went to the battle site in December, 1868, to recover the body of Lieutenant Beecher. The expedition left Wallace December 20. The weather was cold with snow lying on the level from four to six inches deep. Sharp Grover, the scout on the trip, estimated that there were eight hundred lodges in the region or twenty-four hundred warriors. When the party reached the scene of the massacre they found the bodies disinterred. The Indians they contacted claimed they knew nothing about the bodies having been disinterred or interferred with. The body of Lieutenant Beecher was secured after it was identified by some clothing he wore. The party returned to Fort Wallace December 28, 1868.²⁴ This was the sequel to a great Indian battle, one of the greatest fought on the plains.²⁵

24. Report of Lieutenant E. Buber at Fort Wallace December 28, 1868," in "Fort Hays Letter File 1867, '68, '69," (National Archives Washington, D. C.).

25. The site of the battle ground is marked by a monument. The island on which the fight took place has ever since the battle been called Beecher's Island in honor of Lieutenant Beecher. The site of the monument may be reached by proceeding eighteen miles west of St. Francis, Kansas, on United States Highway 36 to the junction with Colorado Highway 53, thence north nine miles.

Chapter V

RAIDS ON SOLOMON AND SALINE RIVER VALLEYS

Attacks 1864

Danger from Indian attacks was a real worry to settlers on the frontier in 1864. The bulk of the United States government troops were engaged in the Civil War, leaving a minimum number of troops to guard the vast frontier. In this year attacks were taking place on the Overland Route along the Platte River in Nebraska. Any day the settlers of northern Kansas expected to be engulfed by a red tide from the north. Some raids did occur in the spring of 1864, for six settlers were reported to have been killed in Saline, Ottawa, and Mitchell Counties. The same spring a number of settlers banded together and built Fort Solomon on the Solomon River in Ottawa County. The majority of the people in the county lived in houses within the enclosure from the summer of 1864 to the spring of 1865.¹ In the forepart of August, 1864, the citizens of Republic and Washington Counties asked protection from Indian depredations. They recommended the arming of the settlers and the establishment of a post of

1. Andreas' History of Kansas, p. 1425.

one or two squadrons of cavalry near Lake Sibley in southwest Republic County.² Action was not taken on this request, probably because the cavalry could not be spared, and the result was that every citizen, except a settler named Conrad Meyers, left Republic County in 1864 because of an Indian scare. In September, 1864, the settlers of Clay, Cloud, Washington, and Republic Counties formed a militia with headquarters at Elk Creek, (now Clyde), in Cloud County.³

Buffalo hunters on Beaver Creek

Indians attacked and killed a party of four men, buffalo hunters, on Beaver Creek on the north bank of the Saline River about forty miles from Salina on August 6, 1864. Two of the men were brothers named Moffitt. With them were two other men, one Tyler and one Hueston. They had started from their ranch to kill buffalo for meat taking a two horse team with them. When they reached the top of a hill about three-quarters of a mile from the house

2. Letter, James G. Blunt, Major General Hdqrs. Dist. of the Upper Arkansas to Major General S. R. Curtis, Commanding Dept. of Kansas, Aug. 10, 1864, in Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series I, XII, Part I, "Reports," p. 642.

3. Andreas' History of Kansas, p. 1032.

the Indians were discovered rushing down upon them. The men apparently drove the team to a ledge of rocks, where they prepared for the assault. They appeared to have fought desperately, perhaps killing some Indians. The Indians scalped three of the men killed, but they left one scalp lying close by. The horses, probably the object of the attack, had been shot through the head. No doubt the ranchers did this to prevent their falling into the hands of the Indians.

After burning the wagon, the Indians descended upon the ranch house occupied by an old man and an old woman. When the man shot through a hole in the wall hitting one of the Indians, they all fled. The old man and woman believed the Indians numbered about one hundred.

When a messenger reported the news of the attack to Salina, twelve citizens of that place led by Sergeant Reynolds of "H" Company, Seventh Iowa Cavalry went to the scene. They reported the facts of the incident, as nearly as they could determine from the evidence of the struggle, to army headquarters at Salina.⁴

4. Letter, Capt. Henry Booth, to Major General Blunt, August 11, 1864 in Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series I, XLI, Part II, "Correspondence," pp. 659-660.

Skirmish near Smoky Hill Crossing

From one hundred to three hundred Indians attacked six soldiers of the Seventh Iowa Cavalry near Smoky Hill Crossing on Elm Creek⁵ at 4:00 p. m. August 16, 1864. The Indians massacred four of the men, but two men escaped. A messenger with dispatches sent from Salina and proceeding to Fort Harned, met the two men at Woodward's ranch coming back with them to Salina. The Indians in the attacking party were a group moving south from the Fort Kearney and Denver road. A Lieutenant Booth had been sent out from Salina with ten men to scout the Republican River valley. That there was a large body of Indians between the Smoky Hill and Saline Rivers was known, but, with the scouting expedition gone, there were no horses with which to investigate the incident at Smoky Hill Crossing.⁶ This reveals the meager protection afforded the frontier in 1864, when the first consideration of the government was the resolving of the civil conflict.

5. An article in The Republican Journal [Salina], January 31, 1902, found in "Indian Battles and Depredations," Clippings, I, (Kansas State Historical Society Library, Topeka), p. 140, locates this event as having occurred on Elm Creek just west of Brookville.

6. Reports of Major General James G. Blunt, August 18, 1864, in Official Records of the War of Rebellion, Series I, XLI, Part I, pp. 263, 264.

White Rock, Jewell County, 1866

Pioneers had first attempted to settle Jewell county in 1862. This attempt was frustrated by the Indian menace, and the settlers left before suffering any casualties. The second attempt at settlement came in 1866 in the spring and summer when several families settled near White Rock Creek in northwestern Jewell County. One evening in the latter part of July a party of about forty Indians, claiming to be Sioux and Cheyenne swept down upon the claim of John Marling. The Indians were well equipped with revolvers, carbines, and sabers, part of them even wearing United States military uniforms. They warned Marling that the whites must leave their hunting grounds and chased him down the creek. He evaded their eyes by crawling down the creek through brush on his hands and knees. A horrible sight met his eyes when he approached his home site. The Indians had plundered the tent in which the family lived while they awaited the completion of their cabin. They had loaded all of the provisions, bedding, and clothing from the tent and wagon and had packed them on their horses. They dragged Mrs. Marling out, tore the clothing from her body, and ravished

her. They took her young baby from her, playing with the child by dangling beads in front of it. Marling, was able to get to one of his horses and rode to the stockade near where White Rock City later stood spreading the alarm as he went. The next day he returned with some of the settlers from the stockade. They found the nearly finished cabin had been sacked and burned. Mrs. Marling they found wandering about in a dazed condition. They finally quieted her and she gradually regained her rationality.⁷ The settlers believing a general massacre had occurred fled first to a stockade in Republic County then to one at Clyde in Cloud County. They returned to the settlement two weeks later.⁸

In October, 1866, settlers from the White Rock Creek settlement and sportsmen from Nemaka County were led on a hunting expedition by S. M. Fisher, of Republic County. They went southwest to Limestone Creek. There eighty Indians surrounded the party. The hunters offered no resistance to the Indians who stripped them of their provisions, revolvers and revolver ammunition, allowing them to keep their rifles and ammunition. The Indians

7. Harvey E. Ross, What Price White Rock? (Burr Oak, Kansas: The Burr Oak Herald /1937/), pp. 9, 10. Apparently the Marling child was killed. The account made no mention of what happened to it.

8. Ibid., p. 10

warned the settlers to cease hunting in the area. They took the advice and started home. They had to camp out that night. The next morning a lone Indian rode into camp. He demanded John Marling's powder horn. Marling started to struggle, but Fisher persuaded him to give it up peaceably. The Indian took the powder horn, and as he left he shot Fisher in the back. Fisher, not mortally wounded, would not allow Marling to retaliate. This probably averted a massacre because undoubtedly the other Indians were near by.⁹

Other Raids in the Area, 1866

Indians of uncertain number and of unknown tribes made raids on the frontier settlements in the summer and fall of 1866. On August 13, Indians killed August Millet, a farmer living on the Solomon River. Men named Haynes, Roberts, Fallman, Castle and two brothers named Collins were killed while hunting near Lake Sibley on the Republican River May 20, 1866. In August Indians, thought to be Pawnees and Omahas raided on Lulu Creek, a tributary of the Solomon, driving off the settlers and destroying

9. Ross, What Price White Rock?, pp. 10, 11.

their fields of grain. In the fall a hunter named Fox was killed near Lake Sibley.¹⁰

Attacks, 1867

Attacks on Settlers

Attacks on settlers in the river valleys started in June, 1867. Governor S. J. Crawford reported June 29, 1867, that nine Indians had gone into a small settlement west of Lake Sibley and committed depredations. They murdered and scalped two men and one boy, wounded another boy, and took two women prisoners. They outraged one of the women, then tomakawked her to death. The other woman was taken as a prisoner.¹¹ The governor

10. Report of Major General Cloud, Hdgrs. Kansas State Militia, Topeka, Kansas, November 30, 1866, in Kansas Adjutant General, Annual Report, 1866, p. 4. The massacre of the six hunters near Sibley is reported as having occurred about May 6, 1865, in Andreas' History of Kansas, p. 1015. Daniel W. Wilder, The Annals of Kansas, (Topeka: G. W. Martin, 1875), p. 433, concurs in the date of May 20, 1866. Wilder also lists the death of a settler west of Lake Sibley, October, 1866. This was probably the hunter named Fox referred to in the Adjutant General's Report. See Wilder, Annals of Kansas, p. 442.

11. To Senator Ross, Gov. Crawford, "Correspondence," 1867, 1868. This letter was to protest the revoking of Governor Crawford's authority for raising troops by Generals Sherman and Smith the day before. He was afterward authorized to form four companies of volunteers the 18th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry.

gave no clues as to the names of the individuals killed or captured in the above raid, but fortunately another letter gives clues to their names. It lists those killed on the Republican for May 1866. The six hunters killed near Lake Sibley are mentioned by name; hence their names may be eliminated from consideration. Also listed is a man named John Fott who may be the man named Fox killed near Lake Sibley in 1866. This leaves the names Mr. Smith, Mr. Ward, Mrs. Setson and her son, and a Mr. Bartlett. They are listed as having been slain. Ward's wife was the one taken prisoner according to this report.¹² Another account blames the Cheyennes for the raid, setting the date of the raid as April, 1867. This account states that the raid was on the White Rock settlers and lists Erastus Bartlett, Nicholas Ward, a Mrs. Sutzer, and her little son as those killed. Mrs. Ward, a young woman twenty-two years old, was taken prisoner and the adopted son of the Wards was wounded and left for dead.¹³

12. Letter, John G. Haynes, Clifton, Kansas, to Gov. Crawford, October 6, 1867, in Gov. Crawford, "Correspondence."

13. Ross, What Price White Rock?, p. 12. This account leaves only the name Mr. Smith listed in the above letter unaccounted for. This Mr. Smith could have been the individual referred to as Millet, killed on the Solomon River in 1866. See above p. 77.

The Indians came to Mrs. Sutzer's cabin asking for dinner. While she prepared it, she sent her son to inform the Wards that Indians were present. Bartlett worked for Mrs. Sutzer. While returning to the house he was tomakawked and killed. Mrs. Sutzer was found dead thirty yards from the cabin, obviously having run when Bartlett was killed. The Indians then went to Wards demanding dinner. They ate, then talked pleasantly while smoking their pipes. One of them asked Ward's opinion of his rifle, then leveled it at him shooting him through the heart. The Ward and Sutzer boy started to run, the Indians followed killing the Sutzer boy and wounding the Ward boy. They then returned and took Mrs. Ward captive. Her fate was unknown, no trace of her ever having been uncovered. This raid caused the settlers to leave Jewell County, only one of the group ever returning.¹⁴

W. E. Webb, who was on what he termed a "semi-scientific expedition" to the West, told of finding the body of Dr. Rose near Waconda on the Solomon River in Mitchell County. He said that the Indians had raided on the creek below the night before.¹⁵ Jacob Meek, an old settler and buffalo hunter, explained about a pile of

14. Ross, What Price White Rock? pp. 12, 13.

15. W. E. Webb, Buffalo Land, (Cincinnati and Chicago: Hannaford and Company, 1873), pp. 396-397.

stones called "Old Settlers Grave" near Glen Elder, Mitchell County. He said it was the grave of Dr. Rose, who when killed, was on his way to his homestead claim. Meek was with two other buffalo hunters, and they met Dr. Rose going to his claim just thirty minutes before his death. A Catholic priest had joined the buffalo hunters for protection. They met a group of Indians led by Black Kettle, so said Meek, at a bend in the Solomon River. The chief told them to go home, sending ten of his Indians to accompany them along the way. The priest claimed his presence in the party saved them from death. On the way home they met four buffalo hunters and asked them to accompany them on the road home. They refused to go and Meek said that they were killed the same day. This action Meek remembered as having occurred May 13, 1867.¹⁶

There was still a chance of Indian attacks in the early fall of 1867. A settler in the Saline Valley, Ottawa County, notified the governor September 23, 1867, that there were squads of Indians on the headwaters of Beaver and Salt Creeks. Buffalo, he pointed out, were plentiful which was reason enough for Indians to be in the vicinity. He asked that the citizens be given arms and ammunition to protect themselves from possible attacks.¹⁷

16. "Indian Battles and Depredations," clippings, I (Kansas State Historical Society Library), p. 125.

17. Letter, R. D. Mobley to Gov. Crawford, in Gov. Crawford, "Correspondence."

Battle on Beaver Creek

On August 12, 1867, Captain George A. Armes, Commanding Companies "B" and "C" of the First Battalion of the Eighteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry and Company "F" of the Tenth United States Cavalry started on a scouting expedition from Fort Hays. The expedition went northward to the Saline River, thence northeast to the Solomon River and scouted all of its tributaries westward for forty miles. Captain Armes found a large trail running westward. He left his command on the Saline and went with three men to Fort Hays for supplies. August 18, he rejoined his command and the next day started on the trail which led the troops on a seventy mile expedition to Beaver Creek which was reached August 21. Armes halted his command there to await a Captain Lewis¹⁸ [Jenness] and several scouts who had been sent out to scout for Indians.

While eating breakfast, one of the mounted sentinels was attacked by a single Indian. Armes moved out believing more Indians to be in the vicinity. The wagons were left

18. Report of Capt. George A. Armes, 19th U. S. Cavalry, to H. C. Corbin, commanding Fort Hays, Kansas, in "Fort Hays Letter File, 1867, '68, '69." The name, Lewis, probably was incorrectly copied. See copy of same report in George B. Jenness, "The Battle on Beaver Creek," Kansas Historical Collections, IX (1906), 452, footnote.

in charge of a Lieutenant Price with sixty-five men of the Eighteenth Kansas. Fearing that Price might follow too close, Armes sent two sergeants with twenty men back with instructions. This group had not gone three miles when they met Captain Lewis [Jenness] and the scouts. Captain Lewis [Jenness] assumed command of the party of twenty nine men. He intended to overtake Captain Armes but was attacked by Indians.

Captain Armes reported fighting Indians from three o'clock to nine o'clock in the afternoon August 21, suffering eight men wounded.¹⁹ Captain Lewis [Jenness] meanwhile had fought off a large number of Indians suffering one killed; one mortally wounded, who later died at Fort Hays; and sixteen wounded. Out of twenty-nine men, one scout and one commissioned officer there were only twelve men unhurt.²⁰ Captain Armes with about seventy cavalymen battled an estimated eight hundred Indians. The captain believed his force had killed fifty Indians and wounded one hundred-fifty more.

19. Report of Capt. Armes, "Fort Hays Letter File, 1867, '68, '69."

20. Jenness, "The Battle on Beaver Creek," p. 452. In his report Capt. Armes reported one dead, twenty-four wounded, and eleven missing.

Attacks 1868

In a telegram to Governor S. J. Crawford of Kansas, General P. H. Sheridan proved a very poor prophet when he said:

I am very well posted as to the position and feelings of the main portion of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, and if any confidence can be placed in their protestations they do not intend to engage in hostilities. It is small prowling bands that may give us trouble.

It was not small prowling parties that gave the settlers trouble in 1868.²¹

The general did keep himself well posted and did try to prevent trouble from occurring. In the spring of 1868, he went to Dodge City to investigate the discontent of the young braves. He found them chafing and turbulent. The Chiefs requested a conference, but Sheridan was unable to comply with their demands because the Peace Commission had been appointed by Congress to have charge of the whole matter of treating with them. When the Indians found that Sheridan could not treat with them, they became more reckless and defiant. Sheridan feared trouble when the Buffalo returned to their summer feeding grounds. He fed the Indians freely and tried to control them through scouts and interpreters, William

21. Telegram, June 16, 1868, in Gov. Crawford, "Correspondence."

[Will] Comstock, Abner S. Grover [Sharp Grover], and Richard Pare. Before he returned to Fort Leavenworth, Sheridan left the mediators in the charge of Lt. F. H. Beecher. Comstock and Grover kept in contact with the Cheyennes while Parr kept in contact with the Kiowas and Comanches. Beecher, in contact with the scouts, relayed the information they uncovered to Sheridan. Troubles did occur along the railroad and stage routes occasionally, but it was, said Sheridan, "satisfactorily adjusted."²²

The encampments of the Indians near Fort Dodge began breaking up in July, but instead of moving toward their reservations the Indians moved north of the Arkansas River. They raided the Paw Indians near Council Grove and stole their horses. They robbed the houses of whites in that vicinity. This was the actual beginning of the Indian difficulties of 1868. The issue of arms to the Indians was to be suspended until reparations were made for the raids. When the Indian agent at Larned offered the Indians annuities without guns and pistols, they refused to accept them. The young men held pow-wows and war dances. When Brigadier General Sully informed Sheridan of these activities, he was ordered to act against the Indians. Proceeding to Larned, he found what he

22. Sheridan, Memoirs, pp. 283-288.

thought to be chances for peace. The Indians came to him stating that only a few bad young men had caused trouble, and everything would be all right if the agent would issue them arms and ammunition. Sully ordered the arms turned over. Even while the delivery was in progress warriors had made their raid on the Saline settlements.²³ The Indian agent, Wynkoop, felt that the refusal of the Indian department to issue arms earlier might have caused the raids. He also believed:

. . . that a medicine man of the Sioux, who had great influence, might have succeeded in making them believe that they could compel the white people to abandon the Smoky Hill Country as they, the Sioux, had compelled the abandonment of the Powder River country.²⁴

In July, General Sheridan's optimistic prophecy of June 16, seemed unfounded. The Adjutant General of Kansas reported:

In the month of July I made a tour of the Solomon and Republican River settlements to ascertain the condition of affairs there, and from those long and well acquainted with frontier life and Indian habits was fully satisfied that their fears and apprehensions of danger were not unwarranted and consequently made application to General Sully, commanding at Fort Harker, for one company of cavalry to each valley for protection. He appeared as apprehensive of danger

23. Sheridan, Memoirs, pp. 288-290.

24. Report of General Sheridan, Sept. 26, 1868, in Report of Secretary of War, 1868, p. 12.

in those valleys as the settlers, but assured me he could not spare any soldiers, that all were actively engaged along the Arkansas River watching Indian movements. He bitterly condemned the policy of issuing arms to the Indians.²⁵

Raids on Saline and Solomon settlements

About August 3, 1868, nearly two hundred Cheyennes, four Arapahoes, and about twenty Sioux, who had been visiting their friends, the Cheyennes, left their camps along Pawnee Creek.²⁶ Indians made a raid on Asher Creek a tributary of the Solomon River, in Mitchell County, August 13, 1868. David Bogardus and his family, settlers on the creek had company that day. Their nieces Margaret and Esther Jane Bell from Willow Springs, and Bracken Bell, his wife, and baby daughter Ella were visiting them. Margaret, age six, and Esther, age four, playing on the creek bank, sighted dust in the west. They soon noticed that the dust cloud moved, and as it came closer, they saw that it was made by mounted Indians. The rest of the family, also noticing the approaching marauders, stepped into the yard to await their coming. The Indians wore war

25. Adjutant Generals' Report, 1868, p. 6.

26. Report of Lt. Gen. Sherman, Nov. 1, 1868, in Report of Secretary of War, 1868, p. 3.

paint and carried rifles, bows, and arrows, shields, and lances.²⁷ The women prepared food for the Indians and, knowing they liked coffee, gave some to them in tin cups. They pretended to be offended by the tin cups and threw the coffee in the women's faces. The bloodshed then started.²⁸ The Indians first shot Bracken Bell. When David Bogardus started for the house to get his rifle, he was felled by a volley of shots. Mrs. Bell tried to assist her husband and was wounded, living for two weeks after the massacre. The Indians then tried to get Mrs. Bogardus on a horse, but failed when the Bell's dog, Major, intervened. Mrs. Bogardus cried, "Soldiers, soldiers!" and the Indians hastily left. They had placed Margaret and Esther on horses, but left before they could get the two Bogardus boys mounted. One of the warriors attempted to scalp Ella, the baby, but fled after slashing a wound in her scalp. The murdering band carried the two small girls south all a ternoon. They changed their course southwesterly late in the evening. At noon the next day, they decided to leave the girls behind. The girls walked northeastward toward home. They subsisted three days on

27. Paul I. Wellman, "Indian Wars, Clippings," III, (Kansas State Historical Society Library, Topeka), p. 196.

28. Report of Sherman, Nov. 1, 1868, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, p. 3.

berries and the water from pools and creeks.²⁹ They were found near Spillman Creek, Lincoln County, by Mart Hendrickson. He took them home until their father Aaron Bell came for them.³⁰

Other raids occurred on Asher Creek. Old settlers D. R. Watstaff, A. M. Campbell, and M. D. Sampson of Saline County told of going in a party of twenty-five men to the rescue of the settlers near where Glasco, Cloud County, now is. Governor Crawford joined the party at Delphos. They found about one hundred Asher Creek settlers huddled in Scotsman Tom Huey's stone corral. Wagstaff and a half dozen of the men went out to recover the bodies of three boys named Marshall and a man named Thompson.³¹ When the Indians had appeared in the vicinity, Miss Jeannie Paxton, a school teacher herded her young charges to a nearby farm house, getting all of them there safely except a son of W. C. Snyder. He was wounded by the Indians and

29. Wellman, "Indian Wars, Clippings," III, pp. 196-198.

30. Roenigk, Pioneer History of Kansas, pp. 96, 97. General Sheridan stated that the two little Bell girls had never been heard of since their capture, Sheridan, Memoirs, p. 291. Wellman states in his article that their father went to Fort Harker for them, but credits Mr. Hendrickson with having found them. Wellman, "Indian Wars, Clippings," III, p. 199.

31. "Indian Battles and Depredations," Clippings, I, pp. 138, 139.

left for dead. He later recovered.³² Also at this same time Benjamin White, a settler living in northwestern Cloud County was killed, and his daughter Sarah, eighteen years old, was taken prisoner.³³ The same day Gordon Winbigler of Jewell County was killed near a fort in the northern part of Republic County. He was cutting hay with a group of men who ran for the fort when they saw Indians coming. Winbigler stopped to pick up his hat and was killed when an Indian lance pierced his jugular vein.³⁴

This same summer, apparently at the time of the above raids, Johnny Owens, a Lieutenant Higgins, and another man whose name was unknown, were hunting buffalo in Osborne County. They had halted their covered wagon on the west side of Oak Creek about six miles from its mouth, when suddenly a band of Indian warriors came down upon them. Lieutenant Higgins and the other man were killed. Owens was able to kill the leader of the band. While the braves gathered around their fallen leader, Owens ran for the brush. He went down stream and hid under a log beneath a

32. Andreas' History of Kansas, p. 1015.

33. Ibid., p. 1016. Other accounts consulted agree as to the death of Mr. White and the capture of his daughter, but they do not agree as to the location. The Adjutant General's Report, 1868, p. 6, locates the incident on Buffalo Creek, a tributary of the Saline in Jewell County. Roenigk, in his Pioneer History of Kansas, p. 132, locates the incident at White Rock Creek in Jewell County.

34. Andreas' History of Kansas, p. 1032.

pile of drift-wood. The Indians were unable to find him. On the second day he reached help at the stockade, near the present site of Glasco. Owens led a party back to the scene of the outrage where they found Lieutenant Higgins' remains, scalped. They buried him on a bluff that still bore his name in 1896.³⁵

The report of the raid on the settlements reached Fort Zarah near the present site of Great Bend. Colonel Benteen and a company of the Seventh Cavalry went to the rescue. They rode seventy-three miles in about twenty-three and one-half hours.³⁶ When they reached the Saline River in Lincoln County they surprised the Indians who were attacking the house of a Mr. Shermerhorn, where a few settlers had gathered for defense. When the troopers appeared the Indians scattered leaving no distinctive trail.³⁷

Mart Hendrickson told Mr. Roenigk of another outrage committed in the northwest corner of Lincoln County in the summer of 1868. The Indians, whom he believed to have been

35. "Osborne County Clippings," II, (Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka), pp. 1a, 2. Clipping from The Downs Times May 28, 1896.

36. "Indian Battles and Depredations", III, p. 43.

37. Report of General Sheridan, Sept. 26, 1868, in Report of Secretary of War, 1868, p. 11.

Pawnees, frightened the settlers, stole their horses, and captured three women. The raid was on the home of a family named Bacon living on Bacon Creek. Mr. Bacon hid in a hollow log and escaped from the Indians. His wife was one of the three women captured. All of them either escaped or were set free. Hendrickson found Mrs. Bacon wandering alone on the prairie with only the yoke of her bodice remaining on her body. She had either fallen off her horse or the Indians had set her free. Giving her his coat Hendrickson held her on his horse and carried her to his home. She recovered and went to her home in the east.³⁸

A party of Indians raided the Solomon Valley in Ottawa County, October 13, 1868, killing four men,³⁹ wounding a man named Morgan, and carrying his wife into captivity. This was the only depredation committed within the area after the state troops, the Nineteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry took to the field.⁴⁰ Morgan had been gathering corn on a neighbor's farm close to

38. Roenigk, Pioneer History of Kansas, pp. 94, 95.

39. Andreas' History of Kansas, p. 1425, lists the names of these four victims as: Peter Karns, old Mr. Smith, John Andrews, and Alexander Smith.

40. Adjutant General's Report, 1868, p. 9.

the river in the northern part of the county. When he saw the Indians approaching he tried to unhitch his team. He had to make a dash for the river without getting his horses unhitched. The Indians wounded him, but he fell over the bank, and the Indians left him for dead. One of the horses freed himself and started for home. Mrs. Morgan, seeing the horse, feared that the team had run away and that her husband was dead. She hurried to the field, and the Indians took her captive.⁴¹

The atrocities committed in the Solomon and Saline valley in 1868 resulted in fifteen of the settlers losing their lives. Three women and two girls were captured, but either escaped or were released. Miss White and Mrs. Morgan were also captured and remained captives until after the battle of the Washita November 27, 1868.

Battles, Norton County

Major Carr and Company "L" of the Fifth United States Cavalry camped on Prairie Dog Creek in Norton County where Calvert is now located October 11, 1868. An all day battle occurred with the Indians on this site. Two soldiers were killed, but the number of Indian fatalities was not known. In the same month, October 16, Whistler's band of Sioux Indians surprised a Lieutenant Valkamar and three companies of the Fifth United States

41. Andreas' History of Kansas, p. 1425.

Cavalry. The attack started at daybreak. In the ensuing battle Lieutenant Valkamar lost twelve soldiers killed. The cavalry succeeded in driving off the Indians and capturing two hundred horses. The fight is believed to have occurred on a small tributary of the North Solomon, Skull Creek, in Norton County. Bones and skulls were found there after the county was settled.⁴²

Murder of Will Comstock, 1868

Just after the raid on the Solomon and Saline River valleys Will Comstock, famous western scout was brutally murdered by Indians near Big Springs Station on the headwaters of the Solomon River. Of this incident the official report says:

Lieutenant Beecher, who was with his scouts on Walnut Creek, hearing there was trouble on the Solomon and Saline, but without knowing its nature, dispatched Comstock and Grover to the camp of Turkey Leg, on the Solomon, to be ready to explain in case the white people were at fault. They were ordered out of Turkey Leg's camp, and were followed by a party of seven Indians, professing friendship and while conversing with them were both shot in the back--Comstock killed instantly and Grover instantly [sic] wounded; but by lying on the ground, making a defense of Comstock's body he kept the Indians off and made his escape in the darkness of the night.⁴³

42. Darius N. Bowers, Seventy Years in Norton County, Kansas, 1872-1942 (Norton, Kansas: The Norton County Champion, 1942), pp. 3, 4.

43. Report of Sheridan, Sept. 26, 1868, in Report of Secretary of War, 1868, p. 11.

Custer in speaking of this incident stated that Comstock with previous knowledge and experience did what he would have cautioned others against in going into the Indian Camp with only one other companion.⁴⁴ Custer apparently forgot that the men were only obeying orders. Custer also stated that the object of the attack was to obtain Comstock's white, ivory handled, beautifully finished revolver.⁴⁵ Sharp Grover, the wounded scout, spent the next day after the attack in a ravine nearby, and the following night set out for Fort Wallace arriving there the following day.⁴⁶

Guilt for the raids of 1868

General Sheridan delayed striking the Indian camps until he had fulfilled treaty terms by asking delivery of the perpetrators of the crimes through Colonel Wynkoop agent of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes. When asked by Wynkoop to give up the outlaws, the Indians refused because they were unwilling to give up so many of their young men. Instead of doing as requested they started general warfare along the Smoky Hill and Arkansas roads.⁴⁷

44. Custer, Wild Life on the Plains, p. 135.

45. Ibid., p. 136.

46. Sheridan, Memoirs, p. 294.

47. Report of Sherman, Nov., 1868, in Report of Secretary of War, 1868, p. 4.

Black Kettle's tribe of Cheyennes were believed by the military to have been engaged in many of the raids. Items found after the destruction of Black Kettle's village on the Washita River in the Indian Territory would seem to confirm this belief. These were listed by General Sheridan in the following paragraph from his report:

We found in Black Kettle's village photographs and daguerreotypes, clothing, and bedding, from the houses of the persons massacred on the Solomon and Saline. . . . also a large blank [sic] book, with Indian illustrations of the different fights which Black Kettle's band had been engaged in, especially about Fort Wallace and on the line of the Denver stages; showing when the fight had been with the colored troops--when with white; also, when trains had been captured and women killed in wagons.⁴⁸

The affidavit of Edmund Guerriere, educated half-breed, who was with the tribes at the time of the raids made in the summer of 1868, adds to the evidence against the Cheyenne Indians.

Personally appeared before me, Edmund Guerriere, who resides on the Purgatoire River, Colorado Territory, who being duly sworn, testifies as follows:

I was with the Cheyenne Indians at the time of the massacre on the Solomon and Saline Rivers, in Kansas, the early part or middle of last August, and I was living at this time with Little Rock's band.

The war party who started for the Solomon and Saline was Little Rock's, Black Kettle's, Medicine

48. Report of General Sheridan, Hdqrs. Mil. Div. of the Missouri, Nov. 1, 1869 in Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1869, found in "Annual Message of the President," 41 Cong., 2 Sess., House Executive Document No. 1, Part 2, I, Serial no. 1412, p. 48.

Arrow's, and Bull Bear's bands; and, as near as I can remember, nearly all the different bands of Cheyennes had some of their young men in this war party which committed the outrages and murders on the Solomon and Saline. Red Nose, and The-man-who-breaks-the-marrow-bones, (Ho-ek-a-mo-a-hoe,) were the two leaders in this massacre; the former belonging to the Dob Soldiers, and the latter to Black Kettle's band. As soon as we heard the news by runners, who came on ahead to Black Kettle, saying that they had already commenced fighting, we moved from our camp on Buckner's Fork of the Pawnee, near its headwaters, down to North Fork, where we met Big Jake's band, and then moved across the Arkansas River; and when we got to the Cimmaron, George Bent and I left them, and went to our homes on the Purgatoire.

/s/ Edmund Geurriere

Witness:

J. Schuyler Crosby,
Bvt. Lieut. Col. U. S. A., Aide-de-Camp.⁴⁹

One should remember, before condemning Black Kettle and the other chiefs of the Cheyenne Indians, that contrary to popular opinion they did not have the authority over their tribes that has been ascribed to them. Another point to consider in viewing the guilt for these raids is that in none of them were all of the Indians of a tribe involved. Futhermore, it is rather surprising in the light of the government's Indian policy, the Chivington massacre, and invasion of their hunting ground by the whites, that the Indians did not wage a more general war upon the whites.

49. Affidavit of Edmund Guerriere, Feb. 9, 1869, in Report of General Sheridan, Nov. 1, 1869, in Annual Report of Secretary of War, 1869, p. 46.

Effect of raids on settlements

The people in the area raided in the summer of 1868 were particularly hard pressed. Many of them were considering the abandonment of their homes. It was necessary for the state to aid them and help them through the winter. This need is shown in the following statement:

The parties in the Western portion of the State crediting the State for forage, transportation, services & c. [sic] are all in needy circumstances from the loss of crops and Indian depredations, and it is but an act of justice to them that provision be made at an early day for their payment.

If provision was [sic] made for their payment during the month of January [1869] it would relieve many families now suffering for the necessaries of life; and enable them to make the necessary preparations for spring farming; without which many of them must abandon their homes.⁵⁰

Soon after the raids the settlers in Ottawa County sent a petition signed by twenty-eight heads of families, to Governor Crawford. In it they requested relief made necessary by the Indian depredations. They pointed out that they could not leave their families and go far enough east to get work to support them.⁵¹ One of the settlers protested in September that his settlement, Delphos, was not receiving provisions. He stated that Representatives

50. Adjutant General's Report, 1868, p. 11.

51. Petition of Ottawa County settlers, August 26, 1868, in Gov. Crawford, "Correspondence," 1867, 1868.

Potts and Dalrymple had distributed five or six tons of provisions to the settlement above them, but they had received nothing.⁵²

Raids of 1869

Mulberry Skirmish

The Indians were not the only ones who could be brutal and could commit deliberate mass murder. On February 1, 1869, a group of Pawnee Indians came to a settlement in Lincoln County. They forced a woman named Mrs. Skinner to cook for them. Settlers John Alverson, Eli Ziegler, and Charles Smith went to get troops at nearby Lincoln. A lieutenant with a dozen soldiers went back to the settlement with the men the following morning. They found the Indians at the home of Charles Martin where they were begging for food and tobacco. The advance scouts sent out by the party of settlers and soldiers failed to hold the Indians who immediately scattered. Four of them raised up from where they were hiding. One of them showed his discharge papers from the Union Army. John Alverson fired on them killing one. The Indians then started firing.

52. Letter, Alex C. Smith to Gov. S. J. Crawford, Sept. 8, 1868, in Gov. Crawford, "Correspondence," 1867, 1868.

The lieutenant at first decided to capture them and take them to Harker, but the settlers insisted that they be killed. An arrow hit the lieutenant's horse apparently causing him to change his mind concerning the disposition of the Indians. Sixteen Indians took refuge in a cave from which they were smoked out by the settlers. All but three of them were killed as they came from the cave. Two of them were overtaken and killed. The Lieutenant captured the survivor and took him to Fort Harker. In the fray a soldier was wounded, dying later, and Eli Ziegler was wounded. The day following the massacre Ziegler and Alverson saw a lone Indian whom they surmised was the lieutenant's captive on his way back to the Nebraska reservation. These two brave men took no chances, but went out and dispatched the Indian.⁵³ To the settlers and to the average man the only good Indian was a dead Indian. Apparently it did not matter if they were killed without provocation.

Attacks on settlements

An attack occurred in May, 1869, in the northern part of Republic County on White Rock Creek. One account

53. Roenigk, Pioneer History of Kansas, p. 128.

states that the Indians, numbering fifty, attacked the settlement and killed six men. One woman and two boys were missing. Thirteen horses were run off and property of all kinds destroyed. The Indians were driven off by the settlers.⁵⁴ Another account of this same incident shows that the whites killed were asking for trouble. Seven hunters from Waterville were near the mouth of White Rock Creek when they sighted Indians on the divide north of the stream. They playfully fired at the Indians from a distance; whereupon the Indians disappeared. That night May 25, 1869, the hunters camped on the west bank of the creek. The following morning they were attacked as they left camp. The Indians killed two of the men when they sought to cross the creek. One more they killed after he crossed the creek. The others they butchered in the timber on the west side of the creek. Only one of the party a J. Mc Chesney escaped. This he accomplished by jumping and falling into the water feigning death, then crawling along the river under an overhanging bank. He escaped and got safely to Scandia.⁵⁵

After raiding Fossil Creek Station May 28, 1869,⁵⁶ the same band of Indians raided settlements on the Saline

54. Adjutant General's Report, 1869, p. 7.

55. Andreas' History of Kansas, p. 1032.

56. See above pp 52-55.

River in Lincoln County. Tall Bull's Dog soldiers did the raiding. They killed and wounded thirteen men, women, and children. They carried into captivity Mrs. Susan Alderdice and baby and Mr. George Weichel. Alderdice, the husband of Mrs. Alderdice, returned from Salina after the raid to find two of his children, ages eight and nine years old killed; and one little boy pierced with two arrows.⁵⁷ The Weichels were immigrants from Hanover, Germany. They had a gardner named Mayerhoff with them. They had taken a claim on Spillman Creek among the Danes who could speak German. Sunday May 30, 1869, they went to the garden and were there attacked by Indians. The two men defended themselves but were killed. Mrs. Weichel was captured, as related above.⁵⁸ Brigadier General Eugene A. Carr started trailing Tall Bull and his outlaw Indians. He destroyed Tall Bull's Village at Summit Springs (near Sterling, Colorado) and drove off the warriors July 11, 1869. In their flight the braves killed Mrs. Alderdice and left Mrs. Weichel for dead, but she recovered. Mrs. Alderdice's baby had been strangled the third day after her capture.⁵⁹

57. Adjutant General's Report, 1869, pp. 7, 8.

58. Roenigk, Pioneer History of Kansas, pp. 112, 113.

59. Rister, Border Captives, p. 162.

On June 9, 1869, Indians raided Summerville in Ottawa County. They surrounded the house of a Captain Pierce. His son and Ben Markley held them off. The Indians burned the Smithville postoffice and killed two young men at that place named Dyer and John Wier. The aim of the braves was principally plunder. The settlers gathered a force and pursued the warriors killing one of them as they fled.⁶⁰

The Fifth United States Cavalry under Colonel Duncan along with their Pawnee scouts had a fight with Whistler's band of Sioux at the mouth of the South Fork of Prairie Dog Creek, near where Alma now stands in Norton County. They drove the Indians away, killed many, and burned their village. William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody, wrote long after the battle concerning the events leading up to it:

On September 16, 1869, while enroute from Ft. Hays to Ft. McPherson with dispatches, as I rode down on the Prairie Dog, I heard firing and riding up to a high bluff overlooking the valley, and being within a few hundred yards of the river and about thirty-five miles above the mouth of the stream, I discovered a band of Indians massacreing [sic] a surveying party. I was discovered by the Indians, a party of them numbering about twenty mounted their ponies and started after me. I started south at no slow pace, I assure you; being well mounted I soon left them far behind. I returned to

60. Andreas' History of Kansas, p. 1425.

Ft. Hays and escorted three companies of the 5 cavalry and two companies of Pawnee scouts back to the place where we found an Indian village consisting of five hundred lodges with more than a thousand warriors, besides squaws and papooses.⁶¹

Colonel Duncan in his report of the battle and circumstances surrounding it, stated that the surveying party, numbering thirteen, were all slain. A man named Buck was in charge of this party, and the massacre has been termed the "Buck Massacre."⁶²

Limestone Creek, 1870

Twenty or twenty-five Indians in May, 1870, attacked settlers living in Mitchell County on Limestone Creek, a tributary of the Solomon River. They killed three men who had been cut off from their dugout which lay across the creek. They were without arms and were killed while trying to cross the river. One of the settlers, John Grier was shot and in addition was tomahawked. The raiders disposed of Solomon Miser with five arrows and killed William Kenyon with two revolver shots. The identity of the Indians was unknown.⁶³ This raid was

61. Letter, W. F. Cody to Darius N. Bowers, Jan., 1894, in Bowers, Seventy Years in Norton County Kansas, p. 4.

62. Ibid., pp. 4, 5.

63. Adjutant General's Report, 1870, pp. 5, 6.

apparently the one which caused Major J. G. Tilford of the Seventh United States Cavalry to write the Commanding Officer at Fort Hays explaining why he had kept Captain Brewster and thirty men of "H" Company, Seventh Cavalry out longer than the commanding officer might think necessary. He stated that it had been urgent that Brewster's force be used to strengthen forces on the Solomon River, to keep down depredations that had started there. The major did not feel that the force should be removed, but he bowed to the orders of his superiors and returned them to Hays.⁶⁴

After 1870 it became relatively quiet on the frontier. There were minor plundering raids and several Indian scares, but settlement by the whites was no longer vigorously challenged. The buffalo were being thinned out, and the railroads helped make retribution for any raids swift and nearly certain. Thus it remained peaceful and quiet, for the most part, until 1878.

64. Letter, May 22, 1870, in "Old Letter File, Fort Hays, Kansas, 1869-70," (National Archives, Washington D. C.).

Chapter VI

THE LAST INDIAN RAID IN KANSAS

Probable Causes

In the fall of 1878 a party of three hundred northern Cheyennes left the reservation in Indian territory and started north to join their friends the Sioux. In their wake they left a trail of death and destruction culminating in the raid on Sappa Creek in Decatur County and the raid on Beaver Creek in Rawlins County. One of the causes for the raid was the Indian's dissatisfaction with reservation life.

The northern Cheyennes had agreed September 26, 1876, to move to the Cheyenne and Arapahoe agency in the Indian Territory. Nine hundred thirty-seven of them arrived in Indian Territory August 5, 1877. The party of three hundred led by Dull Knife left the agency September 9, 1878. Their agent reported that they left because they were dissatisfied. They had not liked the system of issuing rations to heads of families and to individual Indians. The warriors had at first taken what they wanted of the women's supplies. They claimed they had not been party to the agreement of September 26, 1876, and would only remain on the reservation as long as they chose to do so.

The agent in charge of their agency claimed that the Indians had been given ample rations and that they had been given no diseased meat. He reported that during the time they were at the agency Dull Knife's band should have received 1,420,589 pounds of subsistence supplies. They actually received 1,475,320 pounds, a surplus of 54,731 pounds over the minimum required by treaty. The agent had attempted to enforce a congressional provision that "all able-bodied Indians between the ages of eighteen and forty-five" should be assigned duties on the reservation. This was done by withholding supplies to those Indians who refused to work, as had also been provided in the act of congress. The agent stated that the only supplies he withheld at any time were coffee, sugar and tobacco.

The Indian Commissioner concluded that the responsibility for the raid of 1878 should rest with the army for its failure to disarm Dull Knife's band before bringing them down to the reservation from the north. At the time they were brought down he pointed out that they were carrying Springfield carbines captured in the battle at Little Big Horn.¹

1. Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior, 1878 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878), pp. xxii-xxiv.

A reason why the marauding band picked the Sappa Creek settlement in Decatur County as a place to pillage and murder may lie in the vengeance motive. It was here on Sappa Creek April 23, 1875, that a company of soldiers under Lieutenant A. Hanley, aided by Buffalo hunters under Hank Campbell had surrounded Bull Hump's village of Cheyennes and had killed twenty-two of them including the chief, Bull Hump.² The idea that the Indians were seeking vengeance for this attack in their murderous raid on the settlement was concurred in by one of the settlers, John E. Love.³

Raid on Sappa Creek, Decatur County

At the time of the raid, September 30, 1878, Oberlin, Kansas, was a small village consisting of two stores, a blacksmith shop, and half a dozen dwellings. Mrs. Emmett Martin, daughter of George B. Street, a settler on the Sappa told of the raid. Mrs. Kiefer, a widow with five or six small children, lived six or seven miles south of the Streets. A traveler had stopped at Mrs. Kiefer's place for dinner. The Indians approached the house during

2. Paul I. Wellman, article for Kansas City Times, May 28, 1939, found in "Indian Battles and Depredations," IV, p. 59.

3. Article in Topeka Capital, Jan. 30, 1938, in ibid., p. 5.

the noon hour. They had two girls named Van Cleave with them. They allowed the girls to go ahead of them to the Kiefer house. The girls were admitted into the house; but when the Indians sought to enter, the traveler shot wounding one Indian and causing them all to flee. The Van Cleave girls had been on the way to the railroad station. They were relatives of William Laing and his two sons who were taking them to the station in a wagon. The marauders had killed Mr. Laing and the two boys. They had captured the girls.

Fleeing from the Kiefer home the Indians proceeded two miles to the home of Ferdinand Westphalen who had a wife, and six children. They all tried to escape. The murderous band, however, killed the father and eldest son. They also took a sum of money from Mrs. Westphalen, wounded her with an arrow, then let the family go.

They next killed E. P. Humphrey and wounded his son, John. While the Indians stopped to prepare and eat their noon meal in an empty farm house, John went ahead to the Streets warning them of the impending danger. The Streets all took refuge in a rock cave on a cliff. They went into the cave on Monday and did not come out until Wednesday.⁴

In the raid on the Sappa at least eleven more men were killed than were mentioned in the above report. In

4. "Indian Battles and Depredations," IV., pp. 60, 61.

addition to William Laing and two sons the official report lists another son, making a total of four killed in the Laing family. The official report also lists John Humphrey as dead, he no doubt having died from the wounds he suffered.⁵

Raid on Beaver Creek, Rawlins County

A report from Beaver Creek in Rawlins county stated that after the Northern Cheyennes raided October 1, 1878, the settlement was virtually wiped out. A Mr. Stiner and his son were reportedly killed.⁶ The Indians ran Mrs. Stiner into the woods and abused her. The report further stated that every man down the creek to Abbott's place from the Stiner place was killed. Abbott's son was killed.⁷ The writer also mentioned that all of the horses of the settlement were stolen, and that the Indians killed all other animals, even cats. Two of the reporter's children, both boys, were taken by the Indians. They related that the Indians asked where their mother was. They replied

5. For lists of those killed and letter of William D. Street see Appendix C, D, and E.

6. The official report lists Antone Stenner as killed in Rawlins County. See Appendix C. This is probably the Stiner referred to. No reference is made to his son.

7. This was George H. Abbot. See list in Appendix C.

that they had none. When asked where they lived the boys replied, "Way down East where there are lots of white men." The Indian band forced the boys to eat dinner with them then turned them toward the east and said, "Go." The boys lost no time in leaving.⁸ A total of twelve men were killed on Beaver Creek.⁹ Another man was wounded on the North Solomon and died on Prairie Dog Creek, September 29, 1878. A total of at least thirty men were killed in northwest Kansas in this one raid.¹⁰

Settlement of Claims

A commission was appointed to investigate claims against the United States government for loss and damage to property by reason of the raid of 1878. Notices of the meetings of the commission were published in papers in the northwest part of the state. Meetings were held in Dodge City, Hays City, and Norton. The commission allowed a total of \$101,766.83 in claims.¹¹

8. Letter of woman living in Sappa country, October 5, 1878, in The Press /Wellington, November 7, 1878, as copied from the Denver Tribune, found in "Indian Pamphlets, 1855-1885," I, (Kansas State Historical Society Library, Topeka).

9. For names of others killed see Appendix C.

10. Letter, William D. Street to G. W. Martin, Sept. 28, 1910. Copy in Appendix, pp. 120, 121.

11. Adjutant General's Report, 1879, 1880, p. 55.

Indians Brought to Trial

Dull Knife's band was pursued by the United States Army and all except about seven of the braves were killed near Fort Robinson, Nebraska.¹² The following Indians were turned over to the state of Kansas by the army in February, 1879: Wild Hog, Old Crow, Big Head, Left Hand, Blacksmith, Porcupine and Nose Walker.¹³ The trial was to have been held at Dodge City, in Ford County, but a change of venue moved the trial to Lawrence in Douglas County. Old Crow was discharged from the custody of the state when a nolle prosequi was entered by the county attorney of Ford County in his case. Old Crow had served in the Union Army during the Civil War, and he claimed that he had been forced to go on the raid.¹⁴

A letter from Dodge City explained the technicalities involved in trying the six remaining Indians:

As the case of the Cheyenne prisoners now stands, Wild Hog, Old Man, [sic], Left Hand, Frizzly Head [sic], Porcupine, and Blacksmith will be tried at Lawrence, Kansas, in October, 1879, or sooner, if ordered, for the high crime and misdemeanor of murdering citizens of Kansas in Sept. [sic] and October 1878. This trick

12. "Indian Pamphlets," 1855-1885, I, clipping from the Topeka Commonwealth, Feb. 26, 1879.

13. Adjutant General's Report, 1879, 1880, p. 55.

14. "Indian Pamphlets," 1855-1885, I, clipping from Atchison, Kansas, Champion, June 29, 1879.

is one I think but little understood [sic] by the generality of the citizens of Kansas. The general understanding of the people of the country at large was, I think, that the trial of the Cheyenne Indian prisoners was for all the crimes, murders, etc. committed in the whole state in the late raid. It now appears that each Judicial District, through the county attorney of each county in said Judicial District takes cognizance at law for the crimes committed in the several counties of each said Judicial District. This mode of judicial procedure in the case of the Cheyenne Indian murderers is equivalent to a positive acquittal of the prisoners.¹⁵

The Indians at the close of their trial were released and returned to their reservations.¹⁶

15. "Indian Pamphlets," 1855-1885, I, letter in Atchison, Kansas, Champion, June 29, 1879.

16. Adjutant General's Report, 1879, 1880, p. 55.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

Cost of the Raids

Between 1864 and 1878 approximately 160 civilians were killed in northwestern Kansas. Of this number about forty-three were killed along the transportation lines, the Smoky Hill route and the Kansas Pacific Railroad. Most of them were employees of either the railroad or of the stage and freight lines operating on the Smoky Hill route. The remainder of the 160 civilian deaths resulted mainly from Indian raids on settlements. During this same period at least forty-four soldiers were killed while trying to protect the settlements and the transportation lines from the marauding bands.

In their raids the Indians took numerous captives, usually releasing them before leaving the vicinity of the raid. In this study there are mentioned nine captives who were taken with the Indians when they left the site of their raids. Of these nine captives all except two women were subsequently released after a period in captivity. Those released through the aid of the United States Army were the four German girls, Miss Sarah White, Mrs. Morgan, and Mrs. Weichel. The fate of Mrs. Ward another captive, is unknown. Mrs. Alderdice who was captured by the same

tribe as Mrs. Weichel was killed by Tall Bull's band at Summit Springs, Colorado, before the military could effect her release.

Besides those dead and captured a large number were wounded in these raids. Livestock including cattle, horses, and mules were either killed or stolen by the raiding Indians. In many cases homes and transportation stations were burned. The total cost of all these raids were not assessed in terms of monetary values, but some appreciation for the total cost may be gained by noting that \$101,766.83 in claims against the United States government were allowed for damages and loss of property sustained by the settlers in the Dull Knife raid.

In reckoning the cost of the raids the fact that the Indians also suffered losses in dead and wounded should not be overlooked. The exact number of Indians who lost their lives will probably never be known. Even the approximate number can not be calculated. Unlike the whites, the Indians kept no records. The bodies of the braves were seldom left where they fell for the whites to count; consequently most accounts of the number of Indians killed in a battle are only guesses made by the whites.

The great loss of life on both sides, the large number wounded, and the loss and damage to property must

all be counted as a part of cost of opening up the frontier for settlement. Without the building of the Union Pacific railroad main line and the building of the Union Pacific Eastern Division, later termed Kansas Pacific, settlement would have been much slower. Some of the cost of building the last named railroad has been recounted in this study. Certainly the people who inhabit this region today owe a debt of gratitude to those intrepid railroad laborers, soldiers, and pioneer settlers who faced the rigors of frontier life to build a solid foundation for future growth and progress.

Recommendations for Further Study

In the period after 1869 up to 1878 when it was relatively quiet in northwestern Kansas there were a number of raids in southwestern Kansas. A study similar to this one for that area would be a fruitful field for research. Similar studies could be made for the eastern half of the state. Some idea of the total number of people killed by Indians within the state's borders would then be available. Another study suggesting itself as a result of this study is the need for a general study of the whole problem of building the Union Pacific Railroad Eastern Division.

APPENDIX A

Collisions of U. S. troops with Indians, 1867¹

	Mission	In Command	Place	Losses
May 23	Stage Escort	Non-com	Big Timbers	One non-com wounded
May 27	7 Cavalry	Capt. Keogh	Pond Cr. Sta.	Cont. herd run off 5 head cattle slaughtered
June 10	Stage Escort	Not known	3 mi. W. Big Timbers	One E. M. killed, 1 wounded
June 11	Stage Escort	Not known	Smoky Hill Route	One E. M. killed guarding mail coach
June 21	Det. 7 Cav.	Not known	Fort Wallace	Wagons going to quarry attacked 2 E M killed, 2 wounded, 1 wag. 2 cav. horses & 7 mules captured.
June 22	Det. 3rd Inf.	Lt. J. Hale	Fort Wallace	2 E M killed, 2 wounded
June 22	Det. 37th Inf.	Sgt. Mc Donald	Goose Cr. Sta.	2 E M wounded
June 26	Co. G. & Cav.	Capt. A. Baintz	3 mi. W. Fort Wallace	Indians attempting run off stock fr. Pond Cr. Sta. 6 E M killed & 6 wounded
Aug. 2	18 Kans. Cav.	Capt. G. A. Ames	Saline River	1 E M killed, 1 Off.

1. From table in Annual Report of Secretary of War, 1867, p. 46.

Aug. 21	10 Cav. & 18 Kansas Cav.	Ames	Beaver Cr.	3 E M killed 35 wounded 40 horses lost
Sept. 19	Det. 5 Inf.	Lt. Mason Howard	Walkers Cr. 35 mi. from Fort Parker	2 ind. killed; slv. wounded 1 E M killed; 3 wounded
June 14	Det. 37 Inf.	Not known	Grinnell Springs	1 E M killed

APPENDIX B

List of United States Express Company destroyed
by Indians on the Smoky Hill Route²

Date	Place	Property	How Destroyed	Remarks
1867				
Apr. 15	Lookout Station	8 horses	Stolen	
		2 sets Harness	Burned	
		40 tons Hay	"	
		140 bus. Corn	"	
		13 Bus Oats	"	
		1 Freight Wagon	"	
		Fixtures for Station	Burned	
16	On the Road	10 mules	Stolen	
		Load of Commissary	Stolen	
17	Chalk Bluff	24 Horses	"	Stock bunched
		6 Sts Harness	Cut to pieces	
18	Walkers Creek	Station	Burned	
		65 Tons Hay	"	
		130 Bush. Corn	"	
		100 Bush. Oats	"	
		Stable Fixtures	"	
21	Chalk Bluff	8 Horses	Stolen	
24	Russells Springs	8 Horses	"	
		1 Mule	"	
		2 set Harness	Burned	
		150 Tons Hay	"	
Apl. 29	Goose Creek	260 Bus. Corn	Burned	
		175 Bus. Oats	"	
		20 Cords Wood	"	
		Fixtures for Station	Burned	
		Fixtures for House	Burned	
May 9	Monuments	75 Tons Hay	"	
	Willow Springs	8 Horses	Stolen	
		2 Mules	"	

2. "Fort Hays Letter File, 1867, '68, '69."

Date	Place	Property	How Destroyed	Remarks
1867				
May 12	Lake Station	14 Horses	Burned	1 Man Killed
		110 Tons Hay	"	
		250 Bush. Corn	"	
		200 Bush. Oats	"	
		2 Buggies	"	
		3 Sets Harness	"	
		Store House and Contents	"	Commissary Stores
		2 Cows	"	
		2 Ox Wagons	"	
		2 Frgt "	"	
June 4	Henshaw	8 Horses	Stolen	
10	Goose Creek	8 Mules	"	
12	Hugo Springs	10 Horses	"	
	Cedar point	8 Horses	"	
June 15	Deerings Wells	9 Horses	Stolen	
	On Road	4 Mules	"	
16	Russell Springs	4 Horses	"	1 Killed
		4 Mules	"	
June 21	Henshaws Spgs	9 Horses	Stolen	
26	Pond Creek	8 Horses	"	
	On Road	4 Mules	"	Soldier and Driver Killed
		1 Set Harness		
June 26	Bunker Hill	4 Horses	Stolen	
	Fossile Creek	4 Horses	"	
	More or less of coaches have been fired into and injured.			

One passenger Killed and two wounded

1 Mail guard Killed.

Three Soldiers on coaches Killed.

Five " " " wounded

Two Employees of Co Killed.

A true copy
C. McKeever
Asst. Adj. General

APPENDIX C

Persons Killed in Raid of 1878³

	Name	Age	Home Address
1.	Reuben Buston	21	Comanche Co Ks
2.	Fred Clark		
3.	Frank T. Dow	23	Boston, Mass.
4.	Washington O'Conner		Chicago
5.	John Evans	30	Kentucky
6.	Geo. Simmons		Tennessee
7.	William Laing	53	Decatur County Ks.
8.	John C. Laing	20	" "
9.	William Laing	17	" "
10.	Freeman Laing	15	" "
11.	John C. Hudson		Jackson Co Iowa
12.	Jas. G. Smith	50	Smith Co Ks.
13.	Antone Stenner	41	Rawlins Co Ks.
14.	Frederick Hamper	41	Decatur Co Ks.
15.	E. P. Humphrey	60	Decatur Co Ms.
16.	John Humphrey	30	" "
17.	Rudolph Springler	41	Rawlins Co. Ms.
18.	Geo. H. Abbot	19	Rawlins Co Ks.
19.	Ger. Walters		Decatur Co Ks.
20.	Hynek Janosek	44	Rawlins Co Ms.
21.	Peter Janosek	38	Bohemia
22.	Frank Sochar		Rawlins Co Ks.
23.	Arnold Kubitz		Rawlins Co. Ks.
24.	Marcellus Felt		Moved East
25.	Moses Abernathy	56	Norton Co Ks.
26.	Ed Wiskelley		Gove Co Ms.
27.	Albert Foster	25	Unknown
28.	Unknown killed in		Clark Co Ks.
29.	Unknown killed in		Barbour Co. Ks
30.	Unknown " "		" "
31.	Unknown " "		" "
32.	Unknown " "		" "

3. Report of the Commission . . . Relating to Losses Sustained by Kansas Citizens . . ., 1878, (Topeka: Geo. W. Martin, Kansas Publishing House, 1879) found in "Indian Pamphlets," 1855-1885, I. Punctuation same as original.

APPENDIX D

Letter Regarding Casualties in Raid of 1878

In relation to the number killed in the last Indian raid through Kansas during the month of September and Oct. 1st, 1878.

The report of the Indian Commission that investigated losses during that raid places the number killed at 32! Later investigation by private parties fixes the loss, including those who died of their wounds at not less than 41 men.

The first six names on the list as made up by the Commission were killed in the South part of the state	6.
Wounded on North Solomon, dies on Prairie Dog Creek, Sept. 29,	1.
On Sappa creek, in Decatur County Sept. 30.	17.
On Beaver creek in Rawlins county Oct. 1st,	12.
Unknown in Clark county,	1.
Unknown in Barber county,	4.
Total in Kansas, not less than	41.

The name of Albert Foster, unknown, as given in the report of the Indian Commission, is probably counted in the number killed in Rawlins Co., name given as Alexander Foster. If this should be the case, the number given above is possible correct, though there may have been other names omitted from the loss in the south part of the state, as in the north part. If the above is not one and the same person then the loss would be at least 42.

The names of the killed not given in list reported by the Indian Commission, follows:

John Your, wounded on North Solomon, Died on Prairie Dog Creek.

Mr. Lull.

Ferdinand Westfall (or Westphalen) and son.

John Irwin and John Wright, killed on Sappa creek in Decatur county.

Henry Schilder, W. J. Marshall and Rev. George Fennberg, Alexander Foster, killed on Beaver creek in Rawlins co.

Above information furnished by, Wm. D. Street
Oberlin Kansas.

(In his letter to G. W. Martin, Sept. 28, 1910)⁴

4. Typed copy found in "Indian Pamphlets," 1855-1885, I. Copy pasted in the front of the Commission Report cited in preceding note.

APPENDIX E

List of Those Killed in Decatur County in Dull Knife's Raid,
1878⁵

Wm. Laing
John C. Laing
Wm. Laing, Jr.
Freeman Laing
J. G. Smith
Frederick Hamper
Ed Miskelley
Mr. Wright
E. P. Humphrey
John Humphrey
Moses Abernathy
George F. Walters
Marcellus Felt
Ferdinand Westphaled & son
Mr. Lull
Mr. Irwin

5. Andreas', History of Kansas, p. 1613.

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