



Fort Robinson, Outpost on the Plains

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Article Summary: Granger describes military activity at Fort Robinson during the Sioux Wars and includes details of garrison life in more peaceful times. Those stationed at the fort responded to the Cheyennes' attempt to return from Indian Territory, the Cheyenne outbreak, and the Ghost Dance troubles. The fort was used for military purposes until after World War II.

Note: A list of major buildings constructed at Fort Robinson 1874-1912 appears at the end of the article.

Cataloging Information:

Names: P H Sheridan, Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, J J Saville, John W Dear, Red Cloud, Old Man Afraid of His Horses, Young Man Afraid of His Horses, Frank Appleton, J E Smith, Levi H Robinson, William Hobart Hare, Toussaint Kensler, O C Marsh, Moses Milner ("California Joe"), Big Bat Pourier, Frank Grouard, Valentine T McGillycuddy, Randal Mackenzie, Frank and Luther North, Little Big Man, Spotted Tail, Touch the Clouds, J M Lee, John G Bourke, Emmet Crawford, Little Wolf, Guy V Henry, M A Batson

Indian Tribes: Sioux (Oglala, Wajaja, Minniconjou bands), Cheyenne, Arapaho

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Photographs / Images: Red Cloud Agency (*Harper's Weekly*, November 13, 1875); distributing goods (*Harper's Weekly* May 13, 1876); officer's quarters, constructed 1874; log barracks, constructed c. 1883; Red Cloud, Oglala Sioux chief, 1875; Little Big Man, Sioux; Woman's Dress, Sioux, in the uniform of a US Army Scout; He Dog, Oglala Sioux; Baptiste Garnier (Little Bat), Half-Breed Scout and his family at Fort Robinson; Camp of Young Man Afraid of His Horses, Oglala Sioux; I Troop, Tenth Cavalry; Headquarters Building, constructed 1905 (now the NSHS Fort Robinson Museum); Captain Thomsen on Dakota; training dogs at Fort Robinson, 1943; Fort Robinson c. 1955

Schematic Map: Fort Robinson buildings

FORT ROBINSON OUTPOST ON THE PLAINS

BY ROGER T. GRANGE, JR.

AS men of the Sioux Expedition marched out of Fort Laramie in the cold March weather of 1874 they probably had more than a few misgivings about the outcome of their adventure. They were headed for one of the hottest spots on the Plains—Red Cloud Indian Agency. General Sheridan hoped that the 949 man expedition was large enough to intimidate the Indians and permit a peaceful occupation of the agency, but it was his belief that “were it any other than this inclement season . . . hostilities would have commenced at the crossing of the North Platte River.”¹ Even with the large force and bad weather, open war with the hostile Sioux Indians was a distinct possibility and officers warned their men that straggling in camp or

¹ Lt. Gen. P. H. Sheridan to Gen. W. T. Sherman, March 3, 1874, Office of the Adjutant General, Records of the War Department, Document File 563-AGO-1874 (National Archives and Record Service, Record Group 94, Ms., microfilm). Hereafter these documents will be cited as NARS, RG 94.

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Museum, Nebraska State Historical Society.*

on the march might well be fatal. They kept all Indians away from their camps and marching column and warned their men not to fire at either game or Indians, unless in an unmistakable attack, lest injudicious gunfire needlessly start a battle.

RED CLOUD AGENCY

The treaty of 1868 had guaranteed the Sioux and other tribes food and supplies in exchange for lands ceded to the United States. The annuity goods granted the Oglala Sioux by this treaty were issued at the Red Cloud Agency which was located on the Platte River until 1873.²

In June 1873 approximately 13,000 Indians were present at Red Cloud Agency to receive issue goods. There were 1,858 lodges, mostly of the Oglala, Wajaja and other Sioux bands regularly supplied at Red Cloud, but including 168 lodges of Cheyenne, 237 lodges of Arapaho, and another 262 lodges of Miniconjou and other northern Sioux.

Among the Indians living at the agency a small faction was friendly to white men while the majority, depending upon the circumstances, wavered between friendliness and hostility. There was also an openly hostile faction consisting primarily of the northern Sioux, but Oglala warriors, including the already famed Crazy Horse, were among the hostile war parties pursued by cavalry patrols from nearby Fort Laramie.

The Platte River location of Red Cloud Agency was in the unceded hunting territory defined by the treaty of 1868. Although the government desired to relocate the agency on the permanent Dakota reservation, the Oglala stubbornly refused to leave the Platte Valley.

During the summer of 1873, while the more recalci-

² Located in Wyoming on the Platte River just west of the Nebraska line near the present town of Henry, Nebraska.

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trant Indians were off on a buffalo hunt,³ Indian Agent Daniels induced those remaining at the agency to agree to move northward to a new site on the White River. Such leaders as Sitting Bull of the South⁴ were incensed at losing the line of the Platte River but were unable to prevent it. The accomplishment earned Daniels a promotion by the Episcopal Church, which nominated agents under the Peace Policy, and Dr. J. J. Saville was appointed as the new agent.

Dr. Saville arrived to assume his duties while the move was in progress. During the summer and fall Saville was busy organizing his agency and staff. He removed Jules Ecoffey as agency trader, giving the appointment to his friend J. W. Dear. Construction contracts for buildings at the new site were given to A. R. Appleton, Saville's brother-in-law.

The summer and fall were relatively quiet at the agency, but winter brought increasing problems for Saville. He was troubled particularly by the hostile, northern Sioux who came to the agency for the winter. They objected to his efforts to obtain an actual count of Indians present so that issue supplies could be ordered.

On one occasion, when Saville rode out on a counting attempt, a group of northern warriors led by Little Big Man and Pretty Bear surrounded him. They forcibly returned him to his office, and there held an impromptu court-martial which might have cost Saville his life had not Red Cloud intervened. Undaunted by this experience, Saville gave a feast for the Indian leaders at the agency on Christmas Day in another effort to gain assent to the counting. At this meeting he found that not only the northern Indians,

³ During the buffalo hunt the Sioux discovered and defeated a hunting party of their traditional Pawnee enemies on August 5, 1873. The site of the Battle of Massacre Canyon is near the present town of Trenton, Nebraska.

⁴ Sitting Bull of the South (or Sitting Bull the Oglala), head soldier of the Kiyuksa Oglala band, is not to be confused with the Sitting Bull (the Hunkpapa) of Custer Battle fame.

but the chiefs he thought of as his supporters all opposed the counting. Saville's other troubles included the jealousies of various chiefs and the overbearing attitude of the younger warriors who raised trouble during the issue of beef, annoyed agency workmen, and demanded payment for wood cut for use at the agency.

On another occasion a group of about three hundred warriors from Red Cloud Agency threatened a group of cowboys returning to the Platte River country to pick up a herd of cattle to be delivered to the agencies. James H. Cook, one of the cowboy group, turned the potentially violent meeting into a friendly encounter by convincing the war leader that an attack on the cattlemen would have serious results. Such incidents, although causing no direct harm, created tensions around the agency.

Saville's problems were increased by government misunderstanding of the complexities of social organization among the Indians at Red Cloud Agency. Red Cloud, for whom the agency was named, was recognized by the government as its chief, but after the Christmas feast Saville reported to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that Old Man Afraid of His Horses was both the leader of the sincerely peaceful faction and the legitimate head chief recognized by the Oglala. In more than one desperate crisis at the agency Red Cloud either refused to assist the agent or was powerless to act. At such times Saville looked for aid from Old Man Afraid of His Horses, his son Young Man Afraid of His Horses,⁵ Sitting Bull of the South, and other friendly Indians. The failure to make more effective use of the political power and social control of the Indian leaders was an important factor in prolonging difficulties at the agency.

Military authorities, aware of the troubles at the agency, discussed stationing troops there as early as mid-

⁵ Man Afraid of His Horses (the elder) led the Hunkpatila band. Both he and his son were prominent in affairs at Red Cloud Agency. For a detailed discussion of the position of these and other Indian leaders, see George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk* (Norman, Okla., 1937).

January, 1874. General Sheridan opposed the move since he believed such an effort would result in open war. He was also unwilling to dispatch troops until April or May because of the severity of winter weather. Moreover, neither the agent nor the Indian Bureau had yet requested military assistance.

Events in early February made military assistance necessary. A large hostile war party in full regalia rode through the unfinished stockade at Red Cloud Agency, shot out the windows, and left on a raiding expedition. On February 6 teamster Edward Gray, headed for the agency with freight, was killed by Indians on the Running Water (Niobrara River). Three days later, on February 9, while Saville was at nearby Spotted Tail Agency for a conference with Agent Howard regarding the tense situation, Frank Appleton, acting agent at Red Cloud, was shot and killed by a hostile Miniconjou warrior who had entered the agency. On the same night fourteen mules were stolen from a government contractor near the agency. The troubles were not confined to Red Cloud. The Indians at Spotted Tail Agency drove off the beef herders there and did their own issuing. An attempt to shoot Agent Howard was prevented by Black Crow.

Saville reported Frank Appleton's death and the departure of the large war party to Colonel Smith at Fort Laramie, saying at the same time "I do not anticipate any more trouble."⁶ His employees did not share his optimism as shown by the agency physician, Dr. Grove, who took Appleton's body to Fort Laramie and declared his lack of desire to return to Red Cloud to be "made a target of."

On February 9, the same day Frank Appleton was shot, the Army at Fort Laramie experienced losses at the hands of hostiles from Red Cloud Agency when a large war party ambushed Lt. Levi H. Robinson, Corporal Coleman, and

⁶ J. J. Saville to Gen. J. E. Smith, February 9, 1874, NARS, RG 94.

⁷ *Omaha Weekly Bee*, February 18, 1874.

Private Noll. The three men had separated themselves from a wood train and were attacked on Little Cottonwood Creek some twelve miles east of Laramie Peak. Lieutenant Robinson and Corporal Coleman were killed, but Private Noll managed to escape from the forty to fifty hostile warriors.

J. W. Dear, the agency trader, reported the situation at the agency to Colonel Smith, commander at Fort Laramie, and to Mr. Unthank, a personal friend and the telegrapher at Fort Laramie. Dear said that the Indians were all going about with guns loaded and bows strung, and even he dared not go outdoors at night. The hostiles had established a war camp called Soldiers Lodge up on the Powder River, and Sioux warriors were reported raiding in every direction. It was clear that Red Cloud Agency had become a virtual powder keg.

While Saville told Colonel Smith that he did not expect any more trouble, he had taken steps to protect the agency. He had his men complete the construction of the stockade and move the steam sawmill inside to prevent its destruction. He also arranged for sufficient arms for his men to protect the agency, and a group of Indian policemen led by Pumpkin Seed was organized to help.

THE SIOUX EXPEDITION

Very shortly after Frank Appleton's death, Agent Saville requested that troops be sent to Red Cloud Agency, but his communications, sent to Colonel Smith at Fort Laramie, were contradictory ones. He told Colonel Smith that Crazy Horse had declared for war. Saville also told the Colonel that although some of the hostiles were leaving and all was quiet at the agency he wanted to have troops to protect the agency and its personnel because affairs among the Sioux were too complex to trust the Indians for protection. He suggested that because of the departure of the hostiles it was a good time to get troops to the agency without trouble but cautioned the Colonel to send a force

sufficient to deal with an estimated 2,000 warriors. The agent detailed a plan of march by which he thought the military column could avoid detection by the Indians. However, he admitted that Indian scouts were stationed all along the Platte.

A request for troops to be stationed at the agency was an admission of the failure of the Peace Policy. Saville's reluctance to ask for help was apparently overcome by his alarm over the serious troubles at the agency. His action was later investigated and approved by Bishop Hare.

The Sioux Expedition was organized by the Army in response to Saville's request for troops. The arrival of the troops at the agency was delayed by the intense cold, but the tension there had eased enough that officers, as well as Saville himself, felt that they could hold out until the soldiers arrived.

Cold weather was not the Army's only problem; the call for extra supplies and ammunition had caught them unprepared. Two hundred rounds of ammunition per man were specified in the orders. To get this amount, Fort Leavenworth was drained of supplies, and requisitions had to be forwarded to Frankfort Arsenal. The lack of ammunition set off some bitter correspondence between responsible officers. The Chief of Ordnance reported to the Adjutant General ". . . that the want of ammunition in the present seeming emergency can not be attributed to the failure of this bureau to provide, but rather to the neglect of the users to make the proper requisition at the proper time."^s

The Sioux Expedition got under way when eight infantry and four cavalry companies marched from Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming Territory, to Fort Laramie. The troops reached Fort Laramie on February 26 and 27, 1874 after suffering severely from frost bite in the 38° below zero cold.

^s S. V. Benet, Acting Chief of Ordnance, to Adjutant General, U. S. Army, February 16, 1874, NARS, RG 94.

At Fort Laramie four more companies of cavalry were added to the expedition. At Fort D. A. Russell the Sioux Expedition had been divided into two battalions, one cavalry and one infantry.⁹

The 547 cavalymen, led by Major Baker, left Fort Laramie on March 2, 1874 and reached Red Cloud Agency on the fifth. Captain Lazelle and his battalion of 402 infantrymen left Fort Laramie on March 3, arriving at the agency on the seventh. Each battalion had a Gatling gun, and the column was provisioned by a supply train of fifty civilian and seventy government wagons. The supply train carried ten days' rations and five days' forage and included a beef herd.

Generals Sheridan and Ord were on hand for the departure of the Sioux Expedition from Fort Laramie. The officers considered keeping the expedition route a secret, but it was apparent that the Indians were certain to discover such a large force. The troops took the obvious route, following the well known Fort Laramie to Fort Pierre fur trade trail. On reaching the headwaters of the White River the expedition was forced to ford the stream thirteen times.¹⁰ As the expedition neared the agency the troops passed abandoned Indian camps and when they reached Red Cloud they found the northern troublemakers had all departed for a new camp on nearby Hat Creek.

When the troops arrived at the agency Saville was undecided about the establishment of the military camp. His first suggestion was that a single camp be established at a point equidistant from the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail Agencies. By the next day he had changed his mind and

⁹ Companies B and G, Third Cavalry and Companies A, C, E, I, M and K, Second Cavalry, made up the cavalry battalion. Companies B, C, F, H, and K, Eighth Infantry, Companies B and K, Thirteenth Infantry, and Company F, Fourteenth Infantry, composed the infantry battalion.

¹⁰ As a result the expedition returned via a different route. Later the road between Fort Laramie and Red Cloud Agency was partially relocated and necessary bridges built.

wanted the soldiers at Red Cloud, so the tent camp was established alongside the blockhouse of the agency.

Four companies of infantry and one of cavalry were left at Camp Red Cloud Agency, and the remainder of the Sioux Expedition marched on to Spotted Tail Agency to establish a camp there. The camp at Spotted Tail was named Camp Sheridan and on March 29, 1874, the name of Camp Red Cloud Agency was changed to Camp Robinson in honor of Lt. Levi H. Robinson, who had been killed at Little Cottonwood Creek the previous month.

Owing to heavy snow and lack of grass for cavalry horses, most of the cavalry did not stay at the agencies. Each camp was garrisoned by four companies of infantry, one of cavalry, and a Gatling gun was left at each camp.¹¹ The other six cavalry companies returned to Fort Laramie on March 16. Lieutenant Ray and the supply train left with the returning cavalry to get another load of supplies for the two garrisons at the agencies.

The garrisons left behind at the agencies began the work of getting settled. By mutual agreement Spotted Tail and Captain Lazelle, post commander at Camp Sheridan, forbade intercamp visits at that agency. Lazelle had his men dig rifle pits in front of their tent camp. Although the Brule leaders Spotted Tail, Swift Bear, Standing Elk, and Two Strike said they would not help the troops in the event of war with the hostile faction, Colonel Smith reported that the Brules at Spotted Tail Agency seemed resigned to the presence of soldiers.

In contrast, Colonel Smith reported that a sullen attitude towards soldiers persisted at Red Cloud Agency where apparently even the friendly faction was being difficult. When Dr. Saville ordered all friendly Indians to camp on the south side of the White River he had to threaten the loss of issue rations to enforce his order. The Indians de-

¹¹ Camp Robinson: Company G, Third Cavalry; Company H, Eighth Infantry; Company F, Fourteenth Infantry; Companies B and K, Thirteenth Infantry.

clared the north bank of the White River a deadline for all white men, thus making necessary a longer wagon haul for needed wood supplies.

The hostiles broke camp on Hat Creek and moved to Spotted Tail Agency. Colonel Forsyth's official report of the Sioux Expedition lists Lone Horn of the North, White Bull, Roman Nose and Stooping Bear as the principal chiefs among the northern Indians at Spotted Tail Agency. The principal warriors among this faction were also listed by Colonel Forsyth; they were Turtle Ribs, Thunder Hawk, High Bear, Dog Back, and Crazy Horse.¹² Despite the return of the hostiles, the relative quiet at the agencies and ease of occupation by the troops prompted General Sheridan erroneously to predict "any war we may have with Sioux Indians will be simply the pursuit of small raiding parties."¹³

CAMP ROBINSON

Difficulties continued at Red Cloud. Interpreter Rowland, who had delivered Saville's message calling for troops, attempted to conceal his part in the arrival of the Sioux Expedition but was unable to do so. A Cheyenne, Crawls in the Water, attempted to shoot Rowland but was himself killed. Rowland fled to the military camp for protection, and agency employees rescued his wife and children while the hostiles burned his house and haystack.

The young warriors amused themselves by shooting over the military tents and Colonel Smith warned that he would attack the Indian village if any of his men were injured. Troops from Camp Robinson generally carried arms, and the daily wood train was under heavy escort.

¹² Band chiefs and "soldiers" (camp police) had authority only in their own camp. The four men selected to have supreme authority during the annual tribal encampment were not chiefs but prominent warriors. For a discussion of some of the differences in authority between chiefs and prominent warriors, see Hyde, *op. cit.*, pp. 308-315.

¹³ Lt. Gen. P. H. Sheridan to Gen. W. T. Sherman, March 3, 1874, NARS, RG 94.

Gradually the Indians became more reconciled to the presence of troops, and when the annual Sun Dance was held at Red Cloud in the early summer, Lieutenant Carter was able to arrange for J. Tavernier, a French artist employed by *Harper's Weekly*, to attend the dance. Unfortunately, lightning struck the sacred pole during the height of the ceremonies. This was interpreted by the Indians as supernatural disapproval of their visitors, and the artist and officer hastily left the scene.

The infantry at Camp Robinson had their camp alongside the agency stockade while Lt. Emmet Crawford's troop of Third Cavalry camped a short distance away in the bottomlands of the White River. By spring it was evident that the location of Camp Robinson in close proximity to Red Cloud Agency was not an ideal arrangement. Daily contact invited friction between soldiers and Indian warriors, but an even more serious problem was the lack of sufficient grass for the cavalry horses. When warm weather made the rotting refuse of butchered issue beef "difficult to bear" the need for relocating the encampment became critical. In May 1874 Colonel Smith moved Camp Robinson a mile and a half west of the agency; there near the confluence of Soldier Creek and the White River the permanent post was later built. The troops remained in tents throughout the first summer.

Soon after Camp Robinson was moved to its new site the Indian warriors made an attack on the military encampment. This very serious affair occurred as the result of the arrest of an escaped convict, Toussaint Kenssler, by Lieutenants Crawford and Ray at Red Cloud Agency. Kenssler had escaped from a jail in Wyoming Territory and hidden among his Indian friends. While at Red Cloud he threatened the agent, his employees, and the Army officer who had originally arrested him. He attempted to assault a man who had been a witness during his trial and on one occasion delayed the Camp Robinson mail carrier for several hours. When the officers identified Kenssler they tried to apprehend him. He attempted to escape and Lieutenant Ray

shot him through the legs. This action incensed many of the Indians and the two officers experienced some tense moments before they got their prisoner safely from the agency to Camp Robinson.

About midnight the Indians made an attempt to rescue the prisoner by attacking the military camp. The soldiers formed a skirmish line and moved out towards the flashing Indian guns. The warriors fell back in the face of the soldiers' gunfire and the troops withdrew to their camp only to discover that their entire supply of beef on the hoof had been driven off by other Indians during the brief engagement. Lieutenant Crawford and the cavalry troop recovered a large number of the stolen cattle.

The Kenssler affair was a demonstration that despite the small size of the garrisons the troops were not going to allow themselves to be intimidated by the Indian warriors. Rifle target practice was held at Camp Robinson, and at Camp Sheridan target practice with the Gatling gun was held in July. Such impressive demonstrations of military power must have had a tempering effect on the Indians at the agency.

Other activities also occupied the post garrison. For example, in July Lieutenant Crawford spent a great deal of time giving assistance to homesteaders in the Loup Valley of Nebraska where a serious plague of grasshoppers struck.

Since neither of the two agencies was on the permanent Sioux reservation, the military hesitated to begin construction of winter quarters. An Indian commission headed by Bishop Hare arrived to investigate the recent troubles at the agency and to settle this problem, and during July and August troops from Camp Robinson escorted the commissioners. Bishop Hare decided that Red Cloud Agency would remain at its White River location despite the fact that it was not within the limits of the permanent reservation. After considerable discussion Spotted Tail agreed to the relocation of his agency and both the Spotted Tail Agency

and its associated military establishment, Camp Sheridan, were moved to a more favorable site on Beaver Creek. With the location question settled, the Army began construction of permanent quarters for the troops.

In June 1874 Capt. W. H. Jordan and Companies A and I of the Ninth Infantry arrived at Camp Robinson, replacing Company F, Eighth Infantry and Company F of the Fourteenth Infantry. Post Commander Jordan soon issued orders to start cutting logs and to begin construction of barracks. Ten wagons and sixty mules were employed in hauling materials, and the sawmill at Red Cloud Agency was made available for use by the troops. By November, although barracks and urgently needed warehouses were ready, only two sets of the adobe officers' quarters were completed. The post surgeon complained bitterly of "criminal neglect"¹⁴ when the delivery of heating stoves was unnecessarily delayed.

The northern hostiles, absent during much of the summer, began returning to Red Cloud Agency in October 1874 in anticipation of the issue of annuity goods in November. With their arrival came new troubles at the agency, and it almost seemed as if the agent was trying to create problems for himself and the Army. Saville requested the aid of the soldiers at Camp Robinson in arresting those responsible for killing Frank Appleton the previous February, but when he found that the military commander was instructed that his function was to protect the agency and not to make arrests, Saville gave up the idea. It was just as well that military help was denied because an attempt to make such an arrest would surely have had serious results.

Next Saville decided to erect a flagpole at the agency and for this purpose had a tall pine cut and brought inside the agency stockade. The chiefs were opposed to the flagpole, but Saville did not take their objections seriously. The

¹⁴ "Record of the Medical History of Post [Fort Robinson], Medical Department, U. S. Army" (Ms. copy), Tablet No. 31, Ricker Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society.

northern faction was strongly opposed to the flagpole and on October 23, 1874 a group of armed warriors entered the agency stockade while Saville was inside his office talking to Red Cloud and Red Dog. He was called out just in time to see the flagpole being chopped to bits by the warriors, led by the same men who had made him a prisoner in his own office the year before.

Saville immediately sent a messenger to Camp Robinson with a request for a troop of cavalry, but he neglected to inform the commanding officer of the serious nature of the disturbance then in progress. Shorthanded because some of the cavalry were off on an escort mission, Captain Jordan sent only twenty-two men, led by Lt. Emmet Crawford. When Lieutenants Crawford and Steever and their men reached the agency they were immediately surrounded by some four hundred Indian warriors.

A group of Akicita or Indian camp police arrived on the scene, led by Sitting Bull of the South who carried a distinctive three-bladed club. These Indians rushed between the troops and the angry warriors and with their clubs beat the hostiles back, clearing a path so that the soldiers could gain the safety of the agency stockade. Old Man Afraid of His Horses then dispelled the crowd after a long harangue, and several other agency leaders were helpful in preventing further trouble.¹⁵

One report of the affair stated that flagpoles at Indian agencies were both unusual and unnecessary. The flagpole incident caused considerable ill feeling between the agent and the military men, the latter believing the agent had needlessly put the soldiers in a very serious position.

Whether or not it had anything to do with the flagpole incident at Red Cloud Agency in 1874, the American flag was not raised over Camp Robinson until Washington's Birthday, 1876. The honor of raising the flag on that oc-

¹⁵ Hyde, *op. cit.*, pp. 221, 222; J. J. Saville to Hon. E. P. Smith, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 24, 1874 and Capt. W. H. Jordan to Gen. George D. Ruggles, October 29, 1874, NARS, RG 94.

casion went to Sgt. John Kailey, Ninth Infantry, whose twenty-seven years of service were the longest of any man then stationed at the post.¹⁶

Indian Agent Saville's efforts to get a count of the Indians receiving supplies at Red Cloud were finally crowned with success on November 30, 1874. Two factors combined to produce this result. First, Saville announced that no more rations would be issued until the Indians submitted to counting. In the face of this threat Old Man Afraid of His Horses changed his mind and counting began. He is also reported to have compelled Red Cloud to withdraw his opposition. The enumeration revealed a total of about 12,000 Indians: 9,339 Sioux, 1202 Cheyenne and 1092 Arapaho.¹⁷

Events at the agency and the camp still did not go well. Indian leaders were quick to sense the divided opinions of various authorities and would complain to the Army officers about the agent's handling of their affairs. When officers listened, the agent regarded it as interference on the part of the military. Many soldiers did not agree with the aims and methods of the Grant Peace Policy of agency administration under which various church groups nominated Indian Agents. As one officer put it, the efforts were to "civilize these people immediately whether they are willing or not. This may be good church theory but it is very impractical. These Indians had better by far be left alone at their agency than to be forced into hostilities by being forced to accept civilization and a religion they can't understand and don't want to understand."¹⁸ Another officer assessed the plans to convert the Sioux to peaceful farmers in the following way: "... it is not easy to see how they

¹⁶ General Orders No. 13, February 21, 1876, Fort Robinson, Nebraska Selected Post Orders, 1874-97, U. S. Army Commands, Records of the War Department, NARS, RG 98.

¹⁷ About eight hundred more Sioux were hunting south of the Platte River.

¹⁸ Capt. H. M. Lazelle to Gen. John E. Smith, April 6, 1874, NARS, RG 94.

are to become farmers when they have no good farming land to work on. . . ."¹⁹

Red Cloud Agency had many visitors, including Professor O. C. Marsh whose paleontological expedition into the nearby fossil area was furnished with a military escort. Professor Marsh was instrumental in focusing national attention on Red Cloud Agency. In the course of securing permission of the Indians to excavate fossils in their land Marsh became acquainted with Chief Red Cloud. He was given samples of particularly foul supplies which he was told were normal issue goods. The professor's evidence of frauds at the agency was given wide publicity, and Red Cloud Agency became a political as well as a military hot-spot. A full scale investigation of agency affairs followed, and newspaper accounts of the hearings were full of possible frauds by the supply and freight contractors. Although Agent Saville was exonerated, he was removed from his post and replaced by J. S. Hastings.

Although war with the Sioux had been a latent possibility during some of the more serious difficulties at Red Cloud Agency, it had been avoided. While incidents at the agency failed to spark a general conflict, events not too far off were developing into a situation which led to war with the hostile Indians in 1876.

The Sidney Trail was developed to supply the agencies and the military posts; it also became a major route to the Black Hills following the discovery of gold there by the Custer Expedition in 1874. Men from Camps Robinson and Sheridan were called upon to check the illegal influx of miners into the Black Hills, an area guaranteed to the Indians by treaty. Although the soldiers frequently removed parties from the Hills there were far too few troops to cope with the situation. Soldiers from Camp Robinson took regular turns at the base camp near Harney Peak, and at the subpost on Hat Creek.

¹⁹ A. G. Brackett, "The Sioux or Dakota Indians," Smithsonian Institution, *Annual Report*, 1876, pp. 466-474.

The Black Hills patrols from Camp Robinson produced one of the heroic marches of the period. On the day after Christmas, 1874, Capt. Guy V. Henry was ordered to take his troop of Third Cavalry, accompanied by Lieutenant Carpenter and fifteen men of the Ninth Infantry, to the Black Hills in search of gold miners. They failed to find the miners, but on their return the command was caught in a severe blizzard and would have perished but for Captain Henry's leadership. Nearly all of the men were badly frozen and on their return to Camp Robinson in January 1875 the new additions brought the sick list to over 50 per cent of the garrison. As late as January 20 Mr. Raymond, the scout, was still in the hospital.

Some miners, like California Joe, served the Army as scouts and used the time thus spent in the Black Hills to prospect future claims. California Joe served as guide for the 1875 Jenney geological expedition escorted by Col. R. I. Dodge and eight companies of troops.

Indians were not the only persons contributing to the troubles at Red Cloud Agency which occupied the attention of the soldiers from Camp Robinson. Many horse thieves such as "Doc" Middleton's gang hung out in the area and stole Indian mounts. The agency became "a mighty tough place" according to George Colhoff, an employee at the Yates Trading Company. It was a road agents' rendezvous, with men like Black Doak, Fly Speck Billy, Lame Johnny, Paddy Simons, Tom Reed and Herman Leisner frequenting the agency between their attacks on the stagecoaches traveling the Sidney-Deadwood and Cheyenne-Deadwood trails.²⁰

Excitement still prevailed at Red Cloud Agency during the winter of 1875-76 when the agent, Hastings, reported considerable trouble with whiskey runners. Some of the Army's valuable scouts, Big Bat Pourier and Frank Grouard, were involved in fights at the agency as well. The camp Robinson mail carriers were killed by Indians on December

²⁰ Interview by Judge E. S. Ricker with George Colhoff, Tablet No. 17, Ms, Ricker Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society.

25, 1876, and in the spring the Indians not only ran off the agency beef herd in broad daylight but killed Charles Clarke, the civilian mail driver, near the White River. Agency trader J. W. Dear recovered Clarke's body and mentioned in a description of the affair that the Indians had also run off stock at his ranch and attacked the wagon train of the Yates Trading Company.

WAR WITH THE HOSTILE INDIANS

The attempt by the Allison commission to purchase the gold-rich Black Hills from the Sioux, in a treaty conference near Camp Robinson in September 1875, developed into another incident in the almost incredible series of near disasters which plagued dealings with the Indians at Red Cloud Agency.

The first meeting of the commission was held on September 17 in the council room of the agency, but the Indians refused to attend, saying they would sign no treaty under duress. Despite Spotted Tail's warnings of possible trouble, the commission agreed to move the treaty site to a point some eight miles east of Camp Robinson where a meeting was held under a lone cottonwood tree. The assembled throng of Indians numbered several thousand, with large numbers from each of the several Sioux agencies. A troop of cavalry lined each side of the canvas shelter provided for the commissioners. Young Man Afraid of His Horses ranged his friendly camp police behind the hostile Indian warriors, and his assistance in the ensuing troubles was credited with preventing disaster once again.

Both Red Cloud and Spotted Tail were scheduled to speak in favor of selling the Black Hills but just as Red Cloud began to make his oration Little Big Man, armed to the teeth, threatened to shoot the first Indian who spoke in favor of ceding the Black Hills to the white men. Spotted Tail advised the commissioners to return to the safety of Camp Robinson immediately—advice which they took.

The dismal failure of the treaty effort almost assured a war with the hostile Sioux. The coming campaigns were to be led by the Army's supreme Indian fighter, General George Crook, who had taken command of the critical Department of the Platte the previous spring and had immediately set about to bring the companies of the Third Cavalry up to full strength.

General Crook's first campaign against the hostiles was no more successful than the Black Hills treaty efforts had been. When cavalymen led by Colonel Reynolds attacked and managed to destroy the greater part of a hostile camp on the Little Powder River on March 17, 1876 they were forced to withdraw rapidly from the captured village. In an ensuing running fight the captured Indian horse herd changed hands so many times that General Crook had the remaining ponies killed to prevent their recapture. The destruction of the property of one camp did not drive the hostiles to the agencies in submission; if anything it stiffened their resistance.

With the spring campaigns inconclusive, Crook prepared for the summer. The summer campaign of 1876 was designed to trap the hostiles between three columns: Gibbon from the west, Terry and Custer from the east, and Crook from the south. Crook's force numbered 1,774 men and Terry had 1,873. To raise these columns all posts in the Departments of the Platte and Dakota were stripped of their garrisons. Crook's column met Crazy Horse and the hostiles on June 17, 1876 in the Battle of Rosebud Creek and, although the General claimed a victory when the Indians left the field, he fell back to his base camp to await reinforcements. On June 25 at the Little Big Horn, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, and Black Moon led the same hostiles and crushed Custer's command. Even before the Omaha Military Headquarters had heard of Custer's defeat, the Indians at Red Cloud Agency were discussing it. Frank Yates, one of the traders at the agency, was a brother of the Captain Yates who fell with Custer. When the rumors were reported to him he went to Camp Robinson where

officers rejected the possibility of such a disaster. They telegraphed Omaha but no word had yet reached officers there.

On July 17, 1876, seventeen officers and 346 men of the Fifth Cavalry commanded by Col. Wesley Merritt passed through Camp Robinson on their way to reinforce Crook. They paused long enough to intercept a group of about eight hundred Cheyenne Indians who were leaving Red Cloud Agency. The Indians claimed to be going on a buffalo hunt, but it was feared that they were attempting to join the victorious hostiles. Met by the troops, the Indians were forced to return to the agency after a brief skirmish. During the fighting Yellow Hand was killed by gunfire and the scout "Buffalo Bill" Cody took his scalp in an incident which was later much publicized and embellished.

The great Indian victories brought an end to the Peace Policy, and on July 22, 1876 control of the Indian agencies was transferred from the Department of the Interior to the War Department and on June 31 Lt. O. Elting of Camp Robinson became the acting agent at Red Cloud Indian Agency. In August the officers discovered a serious shortage in Indian Department funds and the Army had to loan needed supplies for issue to the Indians at the agency.

Crook's column remained in the field throughout the summer, following the battles of the Rosebud and the Little Big Horn. In September, while marching towards the Black Hills, Crook found that his supplies were exhausted, and his men ate their dying mounts in the famed "Horsemeat March." A small detachment was sent ahead to obtain supplies. Led by Capt. Anson Mills and including Lieutenant Crawford of the Third Cavalry, the advance party discovered and captured a Sioux camp in the Battle of Slim Buttes, obtaining a considerable supply of meat. Additional supplies were taken by troops from Camp Robinson to meet the expedition in the Black Hills. Crook and his staff left the troops, came in to Robinson, and went on to Fort Laramie. On October 23 and 24, 1876 the men of his command reached Camp Robinson, where the expedition was dis-

banded. The sick and wounded were placed in the post hospital, and Contract Surgeon Valentine T. McGillicuddy was assigned to duty there.

Col. Ranald Mackenzie had come to Camp Robinson with eight companies of cavalry in August. Mackenzie assumed the command of the post and the additional troops were quartered in three temporary cantonments. One of these, Camp Canby, was the original Sioux Expedition cavalry camp. The others were called Camp Custer and Camp of the Second Battalion, Fourth Cavalry. In October groups of recruits of 85 and 224 men arrived to bring the companies up to strength. Colonel Forsyth reported some companies consisted of nearly two-thirds recruits, owing to recent discharges of disabled soldiers.

For the brief period when the men of both Crook's and Mackenzie's commands were there, Camp Robinson and its cantonments were very crowded. General Crook took advantage of the temporary presence of the fifty-three companies of troops at the post to hold a conference with Indian leaders at Red Cloud Agency and in no uncertain terms demanded loyal behavior of them.

Upon the arrival of Mackenzie's forces, Red Cloud and Red Leaf had moved their camps some twenty-five miles away from the agency to Chadron Creek. In October, in preparation for the coming winter campaign, Colonel Mackenzie sent two battalions of cavalry and the newly arrived Pawnee Scout battalion, led by Nebraskans, Frank and Luther North, to disarm these bands and to prevent their joining the hostiles. Two hundred thirty-nine Indians and 722 ponies were captured. The friendly Arapaho and Cut-Off Sioux were not disarmed. Crook noted that this was the first time in the history of Red Cloud Agency that the friendly Indians were treated better than the stubborn ones.

Preparations for the winter campaign were observed by a visiting delegation of Japanese army officers at Camp Robinson before Crook and Mackenzie moved their forces to Fort Fetterman where the campaign would begin. In

the meantime General Miles transported fresh troops to the northern plains by Missouri River steamboat. Miles fought several engagements with Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. Crook sent Mackenzie and the cavalry and Pawnee Scouts on ahead of his main column and in late November they routed and destroyed Dull Knife's Cheyenne village, moving relentlessly to crush the hostiles' resistance.

In September 1876, long before the winter victories, the successful purchase of the Black Hills was negotiated by a new commission headed by George Manypenny. This Black Hills treaty was signed at Red Cloud Agency September 26. The commission met the Indians at each agency separately, thus depriving them of the solidarity of numbers. It also took advantage of the fact that the hostiles were not present to create confusion. The Indians later claimed that the use of whiskey, bribes, threats of loss of all rations and false impressions of the terms of the treaty were methods employed by the commission, and the validity of the treaty was questioned. The treaty of 1868 had provided for a specific proportion of signatures to validate future treaties, and in 1876 only forty Indian signatures were obtained at Red Cloud, whereas it was later estimated some 2,267 were needed. However, the Black Hills passed to U. S. ownership.

THE HOSTILES SURRENDER

The winter successes of the Crook-Mackenzie and Miles campaigns foreshadowed the end of the Sioux War. In April one thousand Sioux hostiles led by Touch the Clouds surrendered at Spotted Tail Agency and Dull Knife brought his Cheyenne in to Camp Robinson. The final total of hostiles who surrendered at Camps Robinson and Sheridan reached almost 4,500 people.²¹

²¹ The names of Camp Robinson and Red Cloud Agency, and Camp Sheridan and Spotted Tail Agency were frequently employed as synonyms because of the proximity of the military posts to the respective agencies; hence a group surrendering at Red Cloud Agency could also be spoken of as surrendering at Camp Robinson.

Emissaries to the hostile camps brought back word that Crazy Horse was on the way in and on May 6, 1877 he and his followers, 889 men, women and children, surrendered at Camp Robinson. They gave up some 2,000 ponies, and the 217 men turned in 117 guns and pistols. The impressive surrender march of Crazy Horse's band was described by the officer who met the hostiles:

When the Sioux Chief Crazy Horse came in and surrendered in 1877, he formed all of his warriors in line, in advance of the women and children; then, in front of this line, also mounted, he had some ten of his headmen; and then in front of these he rode alone. I had been sent with Indian scouts to meet him. He sent me word requesting a similar formation on our part, and asked that I should ride on in advance alone. Then we were to dismount and first shake hands, while seated on the ground, *that the peace might be solid*. After all this had been done his headmen came up, the peacepipe was produced, and we solemnly smoked. One of his headmen put a scalp-jacket and war-bonnet on me, and presented me the pipe with which peace had been made.²²

What to do with the surrendering hostiles was a problem. Crazy Horse and some of the other warriors were enrolled as scouts, and a grand review was held for General Crook. Nevertheless, in General Sheridan's opinion these hostiles should be given the same treatment as troublesome Kiowa and Cheyenne warriors who had been imprisoned at Fort Marion, near St. Augustine, Florida, following previous campaigns.

Too, Crazy Horse acted in a manner which aroused suspicion on the part of the military authorities at Camp Robinson. The soldiers described his attitude as sullen and restless despite his expressed desire to live peacefully. Some chiefs of the agency bands also found his increasing popularity among their followers a threat to their positions.

Indian opposition to Crazy Horse was intensified after a council with seventy leaders was held at Red Cloud Agency on July 27, 1877. General Crook sent word that the Indians were free to go on the forty day buffalo hunt he had prom-

²² W. P. Clark, *The Indian Sign Language* (Philadelphia, 1885), p. 296.

ised them, and they in turn were to give their word to return to the agency after the hunt. A delegation to Washington, D. C. was also discussed. A feast was a usual part of such an important meeting, and when Young Man Afraid of His Horses suggested that the feast be held at the camp of Crazy Horse and Little Big Man no one objected, but Red Cloud and his followers left the council room. Later that night the Red Cloud faction voiced their objections to feasting at Crazy Horse's camp to Agent Irwin. They said Crazy Horse was unreconstructed, tricky, unfaithful and waiting for his chance to escape from the agency. Because the possibility that the hostiles would flee, rejoin Sitting Bull in Canada, and begin the war anew was not a pleasant prospect, the buffalo hunt was cancelled as a precautionary measure.

Crazy Horse had continued to speak in favor of the new northern agency for his people once promised by General Crook. This was contrary to the 1877 government plan to move the agencies to the Missouri River where supplies could be more economically delivered by river boat, an arrangement favored by army officers.

Crazy Horse further alienated the Army, now involved in a new Indian campaign, this time the outbreak of Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce tribe. Efforts were made to obtain Indian scouts for the new campaign from among the former hostiles at Red Cloud Agency. At first Crazy Horse opposed their enlistment on the grounds that they would be used to fight Sitting Bull and their Sioux friends rather than Chief Joseph's people. Finally Crazy Horse consented to fight the Nez Perce but Frank Grouard, acting as interpreter, made an error in translation and reported that Crazy Horse said he would fight until not a white man was left. Whether this error was an honest mistake or a deliberate one,²³ the mistranslation reinforced the rumors that Crazy

²³ Before becoming a scout for the army Grouard had lived for several years in the camps of the hostiles Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. His later action in leading soldiers in the campaigns was unfavorable to his former friends. It has been suggested that he therefore had reason to fear Crazy Horse.

Horse planned to murder Crook and other officers and that he planned to go on the warpath again. General Crook directed that the famed warrior be apprehended and "sent out of harms way."²⁴

A cavalry battalion from Camp Robinson and a large party of Indians (including Crazy Horse's personal enemy, No Water, with whom he had had a squabble over a woman) rode to Crazy Horse's camp nearby to arrest him. They succeeded in capturing many of his band, but Crazy Horse escaped and fled to Spotted Tail Agency, seeking refuge in the camp of his friend Touch the Clouds. His arrival caused considerable excitement in that camp, but loyal Brules interceded and restored order. Touch the Clouds and about 300 warriors then escorted Crazy Horse towards Camp Sheridan. Halfway there they were met by Lt. J. M. Lee, acting agent at Spotted Tail Agency, two other officials, and an interpreter. Just as this group reached the post parade ground Chief Spotted Tail arrived with an equally large number of his Brule warriors. This support for the small Camp Sheridan garrison turned the balance in their favor. With Spotted Tail backing the Americans, Crazy Horse apparently realized his position was not a strong one.

The crowd finally was dispersed and Lee and a few others had a conference with Crazy Horse who explained his desire to transfer to the Spotted Tail Agency. An attempt was made by interpreter Louis Bordeaux to correct Grouard's mistranslation of Crazy Horse's statement about fighting the Nez Perce. Lieutenant Lee and Major Burke assured Crazy Horse that he would not be harmed. In response to Lee's persuasion Crazy Horse agreed to return to Camp Robinson the next day on condition that he be allowed to explain how he had been misunderstood and misinterpreted and that he wanted peace, not trouble. By this time, however, most officers, particularly those at Camp Robinson, completely distrusted him.

²⁴ General Crook to Gen. E. D. Townsend, Adjutant General, September 5, 1877, NARS, RG 94.

On their arrival at Camp Robinson, the post commander, Colonel Bradley, refused to hold a council with Crazy Horse despite Lee's efforts to arrange one. Bradley's orders gave him no alternative except to imprison Crazy Horse, and an effort was made to put him in the guard-house. When he saw the cells inside Crazy Horse drew a knife and attempted to free himself but he was bayoneted by one of the guards during the struggle. Little Big Man was injured while trying to restrain Crazy Horse. Both friendly and hostile Indians were in the excited crowd of witnesses, and the friendly Indians prevented Crazy Horse's friends from firing at the guard. When another attempt to put the mortally wounded warrior into the guardhouse was made, the Indians seemed so close to an outbreak that Colonel Bradley reluctantly agreed to Surgeon McGillycuddy's suggested compromise and Crazy Horse was taken next door to the adjutant's office where he died shortly before midnight on September 5, 1877.²⁵

Great excitement developed among the Indians around Camp Robinson as a result of the killing of Crazy Horse and serious trouble was threatened, but the efforts of Indian leaders prevented a violent outbreak. In a report of the incident Lt. W. P. Clarke listed the Arapaho, Black Coal and Sharp Nose, and the Sioux leaders Red Cloud, Young Man Afraid of His Horses, American Horse, Yellow Bear, Little Big Man, Big Road, No Water, Three Bears, and No Flesh as the men who prevented an outbreak by controlling their people. That so important a man as Crazy Horse could be killed in such a way without any more serious consequences than a few days uproar was an indication that the war with the Sioux was about over.

After Crazy Horse was killed the plan to relocate Red Cloud Agency on the Missouri River went ahead rapidly. On October 25, 1877 the move was begun, with troops from Camp Robinson escorting the Red Cloud Indians and those

²⁵ The death of Crazy Horse is a complex event and both eyewitness descriptions and reconstructions of it vary in detail. This account is a brief summary rather than an analysis.

from Camp Sheridan escorting the Spotted Tail Indians and the hostiles of the late Crazy Horse's camp. Although seemingly subdued, the hostiles still managed to embarrass the soldiers. Before the two columns had proceeded very far the northern Indians broke away from the Spotted Tail column and joined the Red Cloud group. Then they broke away from that column, and, carrying Crazy Horse's bones, fled north to join Sitting Bull in Canada, pausing on the way to raid in the Black Hills and along the Bismarck stage line. The first report was that some 1,700 Indians had escaped, but a recheck cut the figure to 800.

The soldiers from Camp Robinson who escorted the Indians built and formed the garrison of a military post at New Red Cloud Agency,²⁶ but the new location was used for only a short time. The Oglala refused to go to the new agency site and set up their camp seventy-five miles away. In 1878 the government gave up the Missouri River plan and the agency was moved west again to become the present Pine Ridge Agency about fifty miles northeast of Fort Robinson in South Dakota.

GARRISON LIFE

Camp Robinson was renamed Fort Robinson in January 1878. It remained an important post and its garrison was called upon in several Indian emergencies after the death of Crazy Horse.

Garrison life was normal at the post, with the officers' families joining them as soon as quarters were available. The first women to come to live at Camp Robinson in the winter of 1874-1875 were the wives of Capt. W. H. Jordan, the post commander, and Lt. J. M. Lee, both Ninth Infantry officers.

Social activities included picnics, walks to the nearby

²⁶ In the fall of 1877 New Red Cloud Agency was located on the Missouri River in Dakota Territory at the mouth of Yellow Medicine Creek.

buttes, long horseback rides, visits to Indian camps and dances, and fossil hunting in the nearby Bad Lands. Company dances were held with some regularity and social calling was an important part of the daily routine of officers and their ladies. Not all of the women were well impressed by the post. When Surgeon Valentine T. McGillicuddy's wife joined him at Camp Robinson on December 13, 1876 she noted in her diary: "Commenced enjoying the camp. Finished."²⁷ Mrs. McGillicuddy later tempered this first judgment of the post with diary entries that indicate her enjoyment of horseback rides and social calls by such notables as General Crook. Surgeon McGillicuddy's wife even went along with her husband and a detachment of troops on an extended stay in the Black Hills in 1877.

The officers often entertained prominent Indian chiefs like Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, inviting such leaders to join them for lunch. Lt. John G. Bourke, General Crook's aide, spent hours learning Indian languages from his native friends. Bourke once had an amusing contest with the Cheyenne medicine man High Wolf. Lieutenant Bourke used an old static electricity generator to deliver a shock to Indians he tempted to reach into a pail of water. The trap was baited with coins. In imitation of songs sung by Indian medicine men, Bourke sang "Pat Malloy" while operating the generator and acquired a reputation for having powerful "medicine." A challenge match was arranged to test the relative powers of Bourke and High Wolf. There was a liberal prize and side bets by spectators. High Wolf received such a strong electrical charge on his first attempt that he fell and damaged Bourke's machine. He shrewdly demanded a second chance and won the contest.

Despite the efforts of the post surgeon, medical care was sometimes inadequate to cope with the hazards of the

²⁷ Notebook kept by Dr. V. T. McGillicuddy, M.D., while a member of the Yellowstone and Big Horn Expedition May 26 to December 13, 1876 and notes kept by his wife Fanny at Camp Robinson December 13, 1876-February 22, 1877 and with the army on an expedition to the Black Hills, February 23-April 11, 1877, typed copy, Nebraska State Historical Society. See entry for December 13, 1876.

frontier; an August whooping cough epidemic in 1876 claimed the lives of two children at Camp Robinson and was much more severe in the nearby Indian camps. The post surgeon noted in his medical history that "among the remedies employed vaccination has seemed to be very serviceable."²⁸

Some deaths at Fort Robinson were due to disease or natural causes, while others were the result of violence. The first burial at Camp Robinson, on July 3, 1875, was that of Pvt. James Brogan, Company A, Ninth Infantry, who died of "congestion of the brain." Several victims of gunfights were also buried in the post cemetery. In 1876 "California Joe" (Moses Milner), a civilian hired as a scout for the Mackenzie expedition, was shot and killed by Tom Newcomb. The killing was the result of the scout's efforts to publicly blame Newcomb for a murder he himself had probably committed. Sgt. Frank Owens, Ninth Infantry, killed Pvt. Eugene Carlton of his company while at a ranch nearby, and Surgeon McGillicuddy was unable to save the life of a Sergeant Casey mortally wounded by a trooper at Camp Canby.

The main center of entertainment for the men of the garrison was the post trader's store and saloon. When the Sioux Expedition first established Camp Robinson, Mr. John T. Collins, post trader at Fort Laramie, was appointed acting trader by the expedition commander Col. John Smith. Later Major Paddock became post trader at Camp Robinson and held the position until the 1890's. In efforts to control the results of drinking sprees which accounted for most of the courtmartial offenses, the post trader at Camp Robinson was required to keep a list of men buying drinks. Enlisted men were allowed only two drinks a day and those were to be three hours apart. Unauthorized sources of whiskey and entertainment, available just off the military reservation, made enforcement of this rule difficult. Holidays were marked by excesses among officers as well as

²⁸ "Record of the Medical History of Post," *op. cit.*

enlisted men; Mrs. McGillicuddy's diary records, in connection with the New Year period in 1876, "Outfit all drunk."²⁹

Standards of discipline changed with commanding officers. When he became post commander at Camp Robinson Colonel Mackenzie directed that the officers' billiard room in the post trader's store would be closed and no cards or billiards would be played on Sundays. Court-martials of enlisted men were frequent and punishment sometimes went beyond simple hard labor. One thirty day sentence provided that for twelve days the prisoner was to "stand on a barrel from reveille to retreat allowing one half hour for each meal." Some sentences were for relatively minor infractions. At Camp Sheridan a musician was court-martialed for disobeying an order relative to the key in which he played "First Call."³⁰ Men of the garrison worked six days a week, their routine beginning and ending with the rising and setting sun. On Sunday morning there was a full dress parade and inspection.³¹

²⁹ McGillicuddy, *op. cit.*, entry for December 28-31, 1876.

³⁰ General Orders No. 23, March 24, 1877, Fort Robinson, Nebraska Selected Post Orders, 1874-97, NARS, RG 98. General Orders No. 43, December 29, 1874, Camp Sheridan, Nebraska Orders, 1874-1881, NARS.

³¹ General Orders No. 16, Fort Robinson, Nebraska, January 24, 1888 give this routine:

I. Hereafter the calls of this post will be sounded as follows:

First Call.....	15 minutes before sunrise
March.....	10 minutes before sunrise
Reveille and Assembly.....	Sunrise
Breakfast Call.....	Immediately after reveille
Sick Call.....	7:30 A.M.
Fatigue Call.....	7:45 A.M.
Guard Mounting....	Assembly of Trumpeters 9:00 A.M.
Guard Mounting.....	Assembly of Details 9:05 A.M.
Guard Mounting.....	Adjutants Call 9:10 A.M.
School Call (for children).....	9:00 A.M.
Drill Call Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays	9:30 A.M.
Water Call.....	9:45 A.M.
Recall from Drill.....	10:30 A.M.
Recall from Fatigue.....	11:45 A.M.
1st Sergeants Call.....	11:45 A.M.
Dinner Call.....	12:00 M
Fatigue and School Call	
(School call for children).....	1:00 P.M.
Drill Call.....	1:30 P.M.
Recall from Drill.....	3:00 P.M.

Beef and bread, supplemented by wild game and vegetables grown by the soldiers in company gardens, were the main items of diet, although the issued foods included pork, bacon, flour, cornmeal, beans, peas, rice, hominy, coffee, sugar, vinegar, salt and pepper. Beef was often eaten twice a day; steak for breakfast and roast for lunch, with the evening meal consisting of pancakes or stewed dried apples. Both officers and men could purchase additional foods at the post commissary which carried canned tomatoes, raisins, hams and other items. In addition to post trader Pad-dock's store at Camp Robinson, Clay Dear's store at Camp Canby and J. W. Dear's at Red Cloud Agency were sources of delicacies. Mrs. McGillycuddy describes her efforts to obtain oysters from these suppliers.

A major problem of the Army during the Indian Wars was desertion. Some men enlisted merely to obtain shelter for the winter or transportation to the West and others became dissatisfied with the rigors of Army life. In contrast were the enlisted men who devoted their lives to the service and formed the noncommissioned core of the Army. Sergeants and corporals often had to back up their commands with more than their chevrons when dealing with

Water Call (which shall be recall for cavalry from fatigue).....	3:30 P.M.
Stable Call.....	3:45 P.M.
Recall from Fatigue.....	5:00 P.M.
Retreat First Call..5 minutes before sunset	
Retreat Assembly.....Sunset	
Tattoo First Call.....	8:45 P.M.
Tattoo March.....	8:55 P.M.
Tattoo and Assembly.....	9:00 P.M.
Taps	9:30 P.M.
Dress Parade...15 minutes before sunset	
Dress Parade, Assembly 5 minutes after sunset	
School Call for Soldiers (Saturday and Sunday excepted).....	7:00 P.M.
School Call for Officers Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday....	1:00 P.M.
School Call for non-com Officers Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday....	10:45 A.M.
Sunday Morning Inspection.....	9:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Assembly.....	9:00 A.M.
Signal Instruction..Wednesday from 2:30 to	3:30 P.M.

unruly members of the ranks. One sergeant of the guard at Fort Robinson so stoutly enforced his commands that the recalcitrant private died of a fractured skull.³² The sergeant's action was vindicated by a court inquiry.

The officers were an experienced group and devoted to an Army career. Many had risen, like Guy V. Henry, to the rank of general during the Civil War, only to revert to their regular rank when the Army was reduced to its "peacetime" Indian War size of about 25,000 men. Others came "up from the ranks," as Emmet Crawford who fought through the War between the States as an enlisted man and noncom and was then commissioned. John G. Bourke graduated from West Point after serving through the Civil War as a private.

Promotion was slow in the small army of the Indian War period. It was not at all unusual to spend a decade or more as a lieutenant, and an equal period faced a new captain before he could hope to become a field officer. The families of officers and enlisted men alike shared the rigors and isolation of frontier service. The years of campaigning against hostile Indians required a devotion to duty of the highest order.

CRUSHING THE LAST INDIAN RESISTANCE

In August 1877 Dull Knife and the Northern Cheyenne who had surrendered at Camp Robinson were taken to Indian Territory. During the next twelve months they suffered greatly from lack of food and from diseases to which they had no natural immunity. The Cheyenne had reluctantly accepted removal to Indian Territory on a trial basis, but when they requested permission to return north it was refused in spite of their hardships. On September 9, 1878

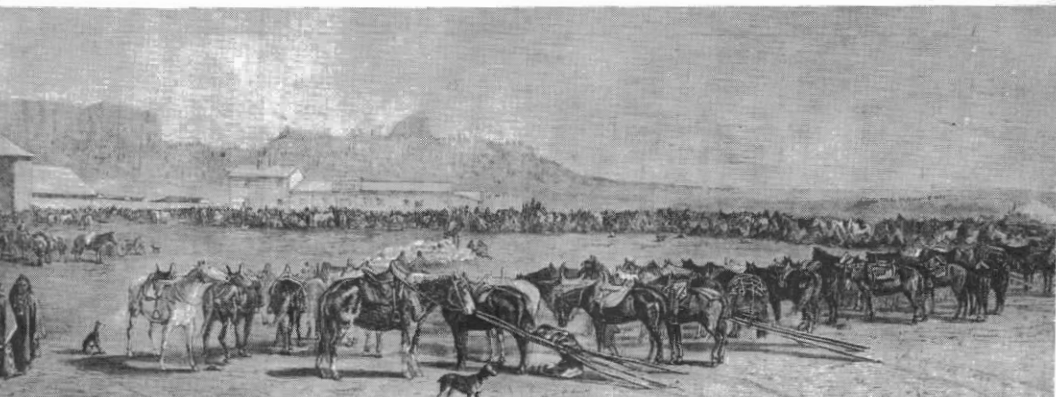
³² Telegram, Lt. Biddle to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Platte, October 16, 1891, NARS, RG 98. Artificer Cornelius Donovan died of a fractured skull inflicted by Sergeant of the Guard Jackson.



(Sketch, **Harper's Weekly**, November 13, 1875)

Red Cloud Agency, Nebraska—Distributing Goods

(Sketch, **Harper's Weekly**, May 13, 1876)





Above—Officer's Quarters, Constructed in 1874
Now converted to tourist cabins, these units are the only
extant buildings from the original post of the 1870's. The
original adobe brick construction has been covered with
frame.

Below—Log Barracks, Constructed circa 1883

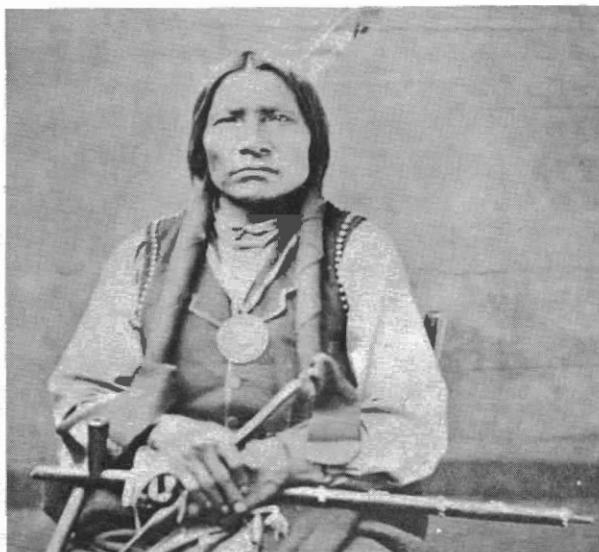




(Photo, 1875)

Above—Red Cloud, famous Oglala Sioux Chief

Below—Little Big Man, Sioux





Above—Woman's Dress, Sioux, in the Uniform of a U. S.
Army Scout

Below—He Dog, Oglala Sioux





Above—Baptiste Garnier (Little Bat), Half-Breed Scout, and His Family at Fort Robinson. Little Bat is third from the left.

Below—Camp of Young Man Afraid of His Horses, Oglala Sioux Leader

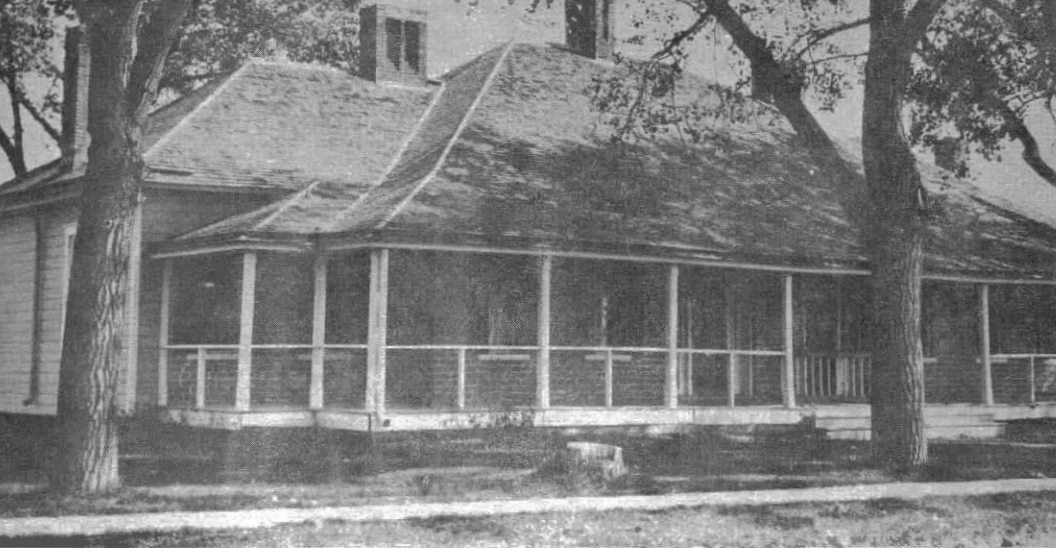




Above—Gen. George Crook During Campaign of 1876-1877

Below—Capt. Emmet Crawford





Above—Officer's Quarters, Constructed in 1887
Note the original adobe brick construction exposed in the
front wall.

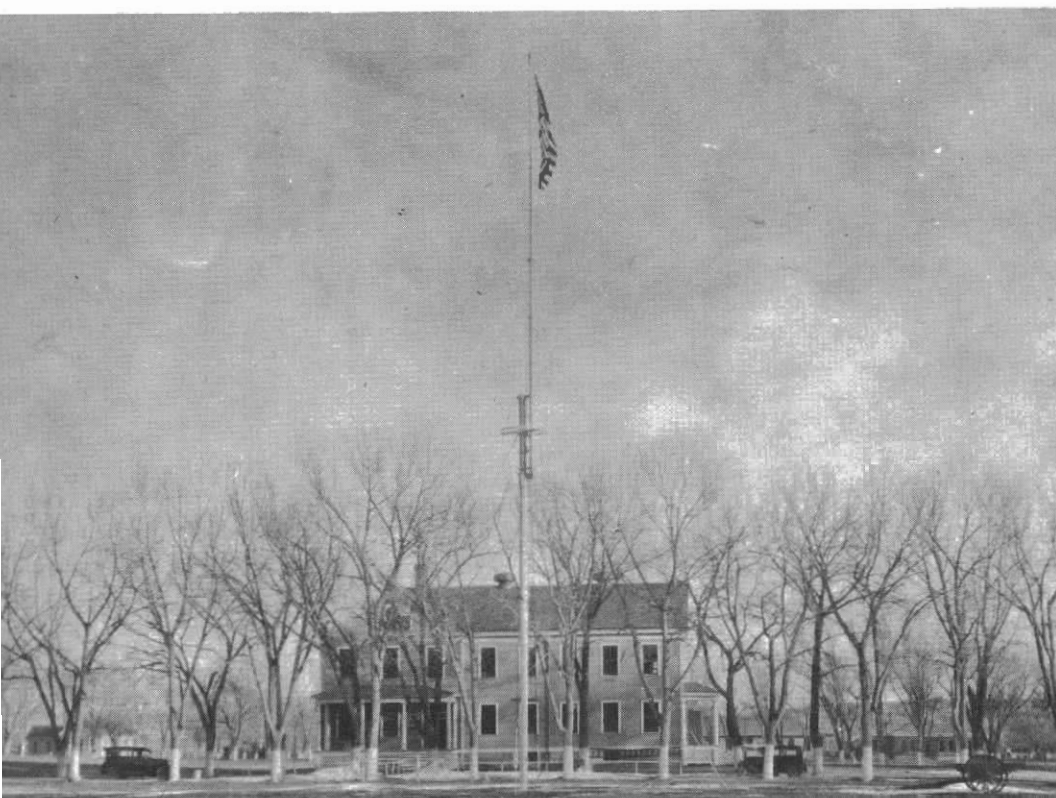
Below—Officer's Quarters, Constructed in 1891





Above—I Troop, Tenth Cavalry, Behind Adobe Barracks
Constructed in 1887. The brick hospital and annex con-
structed 1901-1904 are at far left.

Below—Headquarters Building, constructed in 1905, now
the Fort Robinson Museum, Nebraska State Historical
Society. Flagstaff in foreground was constructed in 1890.



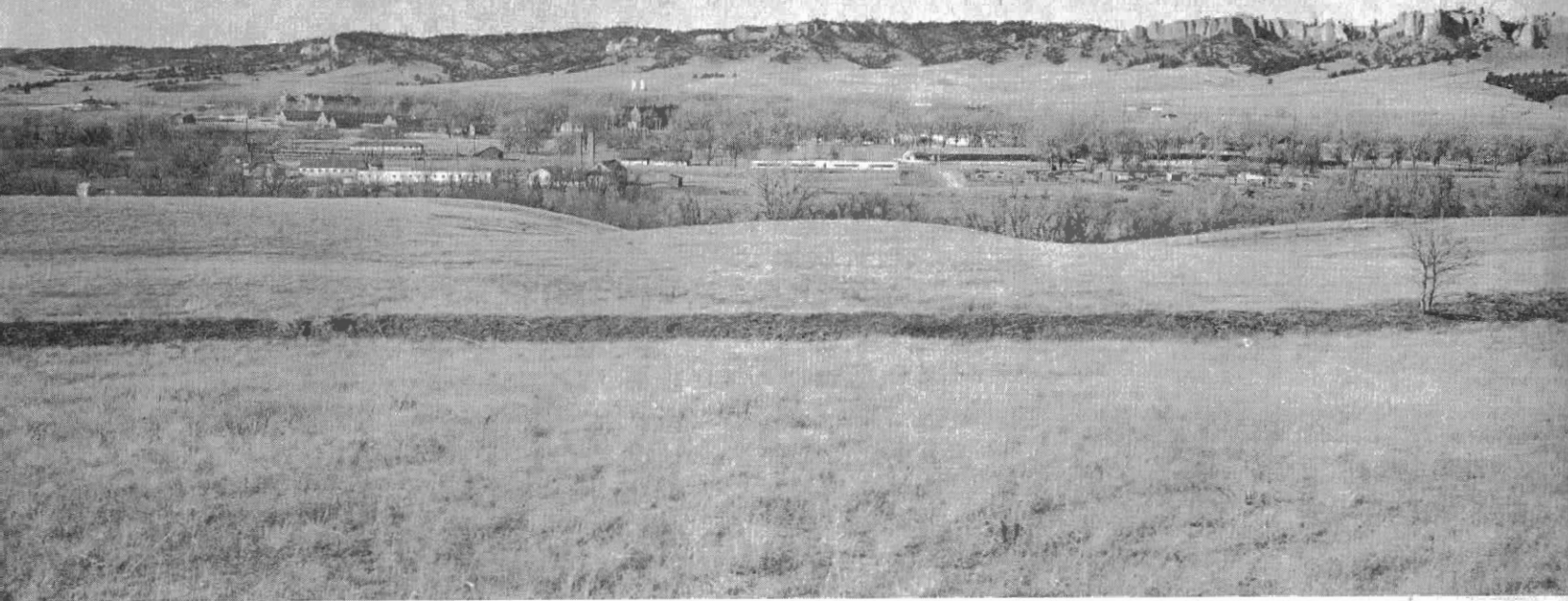


Above—Captain Thomsen on Dakota
Fort Robinson U. S. Army Equestrian Team, June to September
1935.

Below—Training Dogs at Fort Robinson, 1943

(Photo, courtesy U. S. Army)





Fort Robinson Today

(Photo, circa 1955, U. S. Department of Agriculture)

they took matters into their own hands when, led by Dull Knife and Little Wolf, they began their almost unbelievable march back to their northern homeland. Their bid for freedom is one of the epics of the frontier.

Leaving their tipis standing, the Cheyenne slipped away from the troops guarding them near Fort Reno and proceeded to fight their way across Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska, pursued by thousands of infantry and cavalry soldiers. The Indians fought several sharp skirmishes with the troops and managed to elude capture, breaking through lines of intercepting troops along the Kansas Pacific and the Union Pacific Railroads. General Crook ordered General Bradley at Fort Robinson to form a third line of defense. Along with soldiers from Camp Sheridan and other posts the Fort Robinson garrison patrolled the sandhills area of Nebraska. Finally a group of 149 men, women and children led by Dull Knife were met and taken into custody by Captain Johnson's Company from Fort Robinson.

The Cheyenne had planned to seek refuge among their Sioux friends at Red Cloud Agency, not knowing that it had been relocated. They did not want to go to Fort Robinson, but when additional troops and artillery were brought up the Cheyenne were convinced that resistance was useless.

The Indians were taken to the post and imprisoned in the log cavalry barracks at the southeast corner of the parade ground. From their capture in October 1878 until January 1879 the Indians lived at the Fort. Little Wolf and the remaining Cheyenne stayed nearby for some time, then completed their escape to the northern Plains. That group did not surrender for several more months.

The Cheyenne held at Fort Robinson were told that they would have to return to Indian Territory to live on the reservation there. Dull Knife, speaking for his people, said they had returned to their homeland and that they would be killed there rather than return south. In January efforts were made to starve them into submission, and a few of the men were taken prisoner during conferences.

The Indians decided to try to escape. On the night of January 9, 1879 the Cheyenne Outbreak began. Using the few guns they had managed to hide when they were disarmed and imprisoned the previous October, the warriors opened fire on the soldiers guarding their barracks prison. The guards were killed or wounded, and their arms and ammunition captured by the Cheyenne. While the women and children fled towards the river the men fought a stiff delaying action against the hastily aroused garrison. Troops sleeping in nearby barracks went into action in the bitter cold clad only in their underclothing, engaging the fleeing Indians until the cavalry could mount and ride to the scene. Many Cheyenne fell between the parade ground and the sawmill by the river, but some escaped to the hills behind the post.

The Fort Robinson soldiers spent the next two weeks pursuing the Cheyenne in the rough butte country west of the post. Each day their quarry eluded capture. Both the Cheyenne and the soldiers suffered additional casualties in these encounters. On January 22 the last of the Indians were killed or captured.

About sixty-four Cheyenne died in the outbreak and many others were wounded before being captured. Eleven soldiers were killed and ten wounded along with the Sioux Indian scout, Woman's Dress. In the medical history Post Surgeon E. B. Mosely wrote:

During this whole period the fighting was of the most desperate character being from a hand to hand struggle up to a range almost always inside of fifty yards. The great proportion of fatal wounds is remarkable and their concentration on the trunk of the body shows a deliberation and skill in handling the improved breech-loading arms with which they were liberally supplied, a fact which explains why this particular tribe enjoyed the reputation of being the best warriors on the Plains. The conduct of the white troops is worthy of the greatest praise. Taken by surprise the first night, they rallied in the most prompt manner and followed the flying enemy even barefooted in the deep snow with thermometer at 10° F. until ordered back by their officers.

In the final charge the men advanced under a heavy and fatal fire to the edge of the hole in which the enemy were hidden and in a few minutes of short work finished the affair.

By an unfortunate fatality a large number of the killed were of the very best and most respected men of the command.³³

In terms of the number of casualties and intensity of the fighting the Cheyenne Outbreak can be regarded as one of the major battles of the Indian Wars.³⁴ Many of the Cheyenne had been fighting for, rather than against, the Army only two years before. "Among these Indians," wrote General Crook "were some of the bravest and most efficient of the auxiliaries who have acted under General Mackenzie and myself in the campaign against the hostile Sioux in 1876 and 1877, and I still preserve a grateful remembrance of their distinguished services of which the government seems to have forgotten."³⁵

When the Indians were removed from northwestern Nebraska, ranchers moved in and established big cattle ranches in the desirable lands by 1878. The Graham, Bronson and Newman ranches were some of the first established, but their uncontested hold on the free range was of relatively short duration.

The Freemont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad which reached Fort Robinson in 1886 stimulated settlement. So many homesteaders followed the railroad that the post commander at Fort Robinson was forced to carefully mark the boundaries of the military wood reserve to prevent its settlement. Rancher-homesteader conflicts developed, but the presence of Fort Robinson was a big factor in preventing a large scale range war. The Fort was also a source of assistance to the settlers. For example, "Old Jules" Sandoz was treated in the post hospital by the Surgeon, Walter Reed. The town of Crawford was founded at the boundary

³³ "Record of the Medical History of Post," *op. cit.*

³⁴ This brief summary of the Cheyenne Outbreak is not detailed; there are numerous longer descriptions and eyewitness accounts.

³⁵ Martin F. Schmitt, ed., *General George Crook, His Autobiography* (Norman, Okla., 1946), p. 226.

of the Fort Robinson reservation and profited from military business.³⁶

A typical "wild-west" town, Crawford and its entertainment facilities caused many a headache for the post commander who was forced to cancel the practice of allowing the cavalymen to have "mounted" passes during off-duty hours. One Ninth Cavalryman was sentenced to a year at hard labor for riding his horse into a Crawford saloon during a "frolic." Another killed one of the town's law officers in a gunfight. During one eighteen month period three soldiers from the post, one a holder of the Congressional Medal of Honor, were murdered in the vicinity. All three crimes went unpunished.³⁷

The arrival of the railroad at Fort Robinson not only brought settlers to the area but it brought about the end of a famous military post, Fort Laramie. Fort Robinson was easier to supply by rail and it was closer to the Sioux reservation at Pine Ridge, South Dakota. The expansion of Fort Robinson began in 1887 and Fort Laramie was ultimately abandoned in 1890. The expansion of Fort Robinson resulted in a change in its function and it became a regimental headquarters cavalry post.

Actually the summer of 1885 saw the beginning of this change at Fort Robinson, when the first elements of the Ninth Cavalry arrived to garrison the post. The Ninth was one of the Army's two all-Negro cavalry regiments.³⁸ The men of the Ninth continued the routine tasks of repairing

³⁶ Crawford was named for Capt. Emmet Crawford, Third Cavalry, who played a prominent role in the history of Fort Robinson. He was killed in Mexico in January 1886 while pursuing hostile Apache Indians.

³⁷ Col. Edward Hatch to Adjutant General, U. S. Army, April 20, 1888; Lt. A. R. Egbert to the Coroner of Dawes County, Chadron, Nebr., August 31, 1886; Endorsement, Proceedings of a Board of Survey, September 23, 1886; Major A. S. Burt to the Hon. Judge Dandy, U. S. Circuit Court, Omaha, Nebr., January 4, 1888; Fort Robinson, Nebraska, Selected Letters Sent, 1884-1900, NARS, RG 98.

³⁸ Veteran white officers commanded the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry regiments. Both regiments served at Fort Robinson, the Ninth during the 1880's and 1890's and the Tenth in the early 1900's. Both regiments won renown during the Indian Wars.

telegraph lines, patrolling the area, and pursuing stage-coach and train robbers as well as carrying out their usual military training.

In August 1889 a Camp of Instruction was held at Fort Robinson. This event attracted a great deal of attention because it involved the assembly at the post of all troops in the Department of the Platte. The vast encampment was organized by General Brooke under the direction of General Crook, then commanding the Military Division of the Missouri. Training for the 102 officers and 2,155 enlisted men began on August 20 and lasted for one month. The fifty-eight participating companies came from eleven different posts in the Department and consisted of the Ninth Cavalry, the Fifth Artillery and the Second, Seventh, Eighth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Twenty-first Infantry regiments. The soldiers lived in a tent camp about a mile from the main post at Fort Robinson, their temporary quarters being named Camp George Crook.

The expansion of Fort Robinson proved to be timely, for 1890-91 brought new Indian troubles and field service for the garrison. Discouraged by reservation life and hoping to bring back their old nomadic ways by supernatural methods, the Sioux took up the Ghost Dance. Ghost Dancers wore cloth shirts which they believed gave them supernatural protection against bullets, and during the course of their dancing they fell in trances and had visions of the spirit world in which they often talked to long dead relatives. Indian agents and civilians nearby became concerned lest the Indian wars begin again.

In October 1890 the post commander Colonel Tilford informed the Indian agent at Pine Ridge, Dr. D. F. Royer, that if troops were needed they would be sent from Fort Robinson, but the Colonel suggested that the Indians should be allowed to dance as long as they harmed no one. A similar opinion was held by the post scout, Little Bat, who believed that the Ghost Dance would eventually die out if left alone.

By November Agent Royer was even more apprehensive about the Ghost Dance and came to Fort Robinson for a conference. In view of the mounting concern, the Ninth Cavalry was given orders to leave, by railroad, for Pine Ridge on November 19. While in the field in connection with the Ghost Dance troubles the Ninth Cavalry was under the command of Major Guy V. Henry, the same officer who, as a company commander in the Third Cavalry, had figured prominently in the history of Camp Robinson during the Indian War days.

Fort Robinson served as a stop en route for recruits sent to join their various regiments in the field at Pine Ridge. Carbines and other supplies were also forwarded from the post when needed.

The Ghost Dance troubles culminated in the Battle of Wounded Knee on December 29, 1890. Casualties in this battle were quite heavy, both among the troopers of the Seventh Cavalry and the Indian men, women and children of Big Foot's band. Fort Robinson's post scout, Little Bat, acted as an interpreter and helped to disarm the Indians when the well known battle began.

Under Major Henry's leadership the Ninth Cavalry made several long forced marches at the height of the troubles and although they did not see action in the battle of Wounded Knee they did fight a skirmish a few days later when, in classic movie style, they arrived on the scene in time to save elements of another regiment which were surrounded and under attack. The Ghost Dance trouble was the last bloody chapter in the wars with the Sioux.

FORT ROBINSON SINCE 1890

After the Battle of Wounded Knee the Ghost Dance trouble ended, and garrison life at Fort Robinson settled back to training, garden tending, and policing the post, with few breaks in the routine.

In 1892 the Ninth Cavalry, accompanied by post scouts Little Bat Garnier, Woman's Dress, Yankton Charlie, White Antelope, and Joe Mosseau, spent the months from June until October in the field at Camp Bettens, Wyoming.

In 1897 an interesting report on recent minor tactical maneuvers at Fort Robinson was submitted. It described the mounting of Lt. M. A. Batson and two enlisted men on high wheel Columbia bicycles and the results of a rugged test of their ability to keep pace with mounted troops in the field. The bicycle-mounted men had "great difficulty" in keeping up with cavalry in rough terrain but over rolling ground were able to outdistance the horsemen. However, the report concluded that day in and day out the bicycle men would not be able to perform as required. One of the Columbia wheels was wrecked during the test. Lt. Batson later used another of the bicycles to good effect while mapping parts of the military reservation. Despite its humorous aspect, this test foreshadowed the eventual replacement of cavalry by mechanized troops.³⁹

The war with Spain brought orders on April 16, 1898 for the Ninth Cavalry to move to Chicamauga Park, Georgia; it later went to Cuba and then on to the Philippine Islands. In a flurry of activity Fort Robinson was stripped, not only of troops, but of artillery and other needed war material, and the garrison was reduced to a minimum.

After the war the Tenth, Eighth, and Twelfth Cavalry regiments, in that order, followed the Ninth as the Fort Robinson garrison. On December 16, 1900, Little Bat Garnier, the post scout who had served the Army so well since 1876, was shot and killed by a barkeeper in Crawford. He was buried in the post cemetery at Fort Robinson.⁴⁰

In 1906 Fort Robinson was once again involved in In-

³⁹ Col. D. Perry to Adjutant General, Department of the Platte, Omaha, Nebraska, April 2, 1897, NARS, RG 98.

⁴⁰ All graves in the post cemetery were removed to Fort McPherson National Cemetery, Nebraska, when the Army turned the post over to the United States Department of Agriculture.

dian trouble. Col. J. A. Augur, regimental commander of the Tenth Cavalry, had to order troops from the garrison to take the field when three hundred Ute Indians fled their reservation in an effort to relocate themselves in the Big Horn country of Montana. The Fort Robinson troops intercepted the Ute and escorted them to Fort Meade, South Dakota.

During World War I activity at Fort Robinson was reduced. A Signal Corps Training Center was planned for the Fort, but the war ended before it could be established.

After the war, in 1919, the post became a Quartermaster Remount Depot. It eventually developed into the world's largest remount station, with thousands of horses and mules. At the Remount Depot horses were received, conditioned, and issued to Army units and civilian breeders. Some breeding of horses was also carried on at the post as a breeder's demonstration as well as to prove certain stallions. Many famous race horses were at the depot after their racing careers ended and the 1936 U. S. Olympic Equestrian team trained at the Fort Robinson Remount Depot.

Officers of the Remount service belonged to the Soldier Creek Hunt Club and hunted coyotes with their pack of Welch, English and French stag hounds. The men of the post during this period were proud of their extensive swine and dairy herds and flocks of poultry maintained to add variety to their regular rations, just as the troops of the garrison during the Indian wars raised much of their own food.

The Fourth Field Artillery battalion joined the Remount Service at Fort Robinson from 1928 until 1932. The artillery men made extensive tests of pack artillery organization and equipment such as the Phillips pack saddle. One such test was a five hundred mile march to the Black Hills and return, during which they hauled a mountain howitzer to the top of Harney Peak.

In World War II Fort Robinson's remount activities

were continued and expanded, and thousands of horses and mules were conditioned for military service. The post made other contributions to the war effort as well. The Fort Robinson War Dog Reception and Training Center was activated on October 3, 1942, and on March 15, 1943 a Prisoner of War Camp was added.

There were kennels for 2,000 dogs and over 6,000 canine patients were treated in the special dog hospital before the installation was closed in September 1946. War dogs were trained for several types of duty, including sentry, trail, tactical, sledge, pack and hospital service. The internment camp had space for 3,000 German prisoners of war. Only one prisoner escaped from the camp, and he was recaptured in York, Nebraska.

BUILDING FORT ROBINSON

Several building periods can be identified in the development of Fort Robinson. The following description of the old post was written when it was under construction in 1874.

The camp is 160 yards square. Officers' quarters are on the north, infantry barracks on the east and west and cavalry barracks, guard house and storehouse on the south sides. The barracks are built of logs, in panels of 15 feet each. For the infantry they are two in number, each 150 by 24 feet by 9 feet high to the eaves, divided in the center to accommodate two companies. They have a shed extension at the rear, 12 feet wide, the length of the building, partitioned off for mess-rooms, kitchens and wash rooms. The cavalry barrack is built in the same way, but only 90 feet long, for the accommodation of one company with mess-room and kitchen like the others. These buildings are unceiled, have shingle roofs, log walls, window sashes and are floored. One building 142 by 24 feet, 8¼ feet to eaves, and from eaves to ridge 7½ feet, is built of logs, with shingle roof, and divided into twelve sets of two rooms each, and occupied as quarters for married soldiers and laundresses.

The officer's quarters are to be all alike, six sets being authorized each 38 feet long by 32 feet wide and 10 feet high, one for the commanding officer and five for company

officers. They have stone foundations,⁴¹ walls of adobe [bricks] and are to be ceiled by boards and plastered. In each building there are to be four rooms, 15 feet square, with a central hall, four feet wide. The dining rooms and kitchens in the rear are to be made of lumber.⁴²

The warehouses, stables, and other buildings of the early post were constructed of logs, log slabs, or boards. The first post hospital, a log building, was not completed until November 1875, tents and dugouts being used to house the sick and the post surgeon until that time. In addition to the military buildings there was a post trader's residence and store-saloon, and next to it a small log building housing a photographer's studio.

The beginning of the new decade in the 1880's saw some expansion of the post with the construction of another log barracks, an adobe barracks for the band, and a residence for the band leader. The replacement of the log hospital by a concrete structure and other additions were all made before 1886. The 1887 expansion of Fort Robinson, connected with projected reduction of Fort Laramie, took place on a newly established parade ground, northwest of the original one, along the north side of which was constructed a series of duplex adobe brick officers' quarters, six in number. On the opposite side, adobe brick barracks were built, and beyond them new frame cavalry stables. The post commander, Col. Edward Hatch, wanted to use fired brick for the new quarters but was overruled despite the equality of cost and the superior quality of fired brick. Only a year later a forty hour storm caused the unprotected walls of some of the adobe houses to collapse. However, once repaired, they proved durable and are still in use today.

In the early 1890's Fort Robinson was further expanded

⁴¹ When Capt. Anson Mills directed construction of new buildings at Camp Sheridan in 1875 Spotted Tail told him he knew troops were to be permanently stationed at his agency because "when they put rocks under their houses they are going to stay," (Anson Mills, *My Story* [Washington, 1918], p. 163.)

⁴² "Camp Robinson, Nebraska," *Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army* (Washington, 1875), Surgeon-General's Office, Circular No. 8, pp. 366-367.

with the construction of additional officers' quarters in 1891, and the following year more storehouses and a much needed replacement for the old guardhouse were added. New gun sheds, quartermaster stables, wheelwright and blacksmith shops also were built in the 1890's.

During this period there were so many families of Ninth Cavalrymen at the post that the old log barracks buildings as well as the original laundresses' quarters were being used as dwellings for enlisted men's families. Some new quarters for noncommissioned officers' families were also in use by this time, and the original 1874 officers' adobes eventually became noncom quarters.

Construction and improvement continued in the early 1900's with the 1904 addition of a post gymnasium, and in 1905 a frame headquarters building was built. Today the headquarters structure is the Fort Robinson Museum, a branch of the Nebraska State Historical Society.

In 1901 a brick hospital building was erected, and the old concrete structure became the Post Exchange. Before the hospital was even completed the surgeon asked for an additional wing, which was immediately added, as well as a large annex at the rear to accomodate the increasing garrison. Brick buildings built in 1906-1912 included stables, stable guard quarters, blacksmith shops, fire station, bakery, company barracks buildings, bachelor officers' quarters and officers' residences. At one time an elaborate plan to convert the entire post to the new brick style was drawn up but was never carried out. Needless to say, along with construction came the destruction of old and outmoded buildings which were replaced. The only remnants of the original post of the 1870's standing today are the six adobe officers' quarters.

In 1927 the Remount Service began new major construction, building several elaborate horse stables. All buildings were repaired and several recreational facilities were built by the CCC during the 1930's. Expansion during World War II included a large number of temporary buildings for

use by the War Dog Training Center and the Prisoner of War Camp.

The temporary buildings were sold as surplus and removed after the war, and more unused residences and other buildings were torn down in 1956. There remains today an example of each major building period at the post, although some types of structures and materials used are no longer to be seen.

FORT ROBINSON TODAY

World War II marked the end of extensive use of horses in military service. Fort Robinson was declared surplus by the War Department and turned over to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. On April 29, 1949, the Bureau of Animal Industry, U.S.D.A., in co-operation with the University of Nebraska, established the Fort Robinson Beef Cattle Research Station. Major research emphasis is on beef breeding investigations.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture also operates a Soil Conservation Training Center at Fort Robinson, which trains Soil Conservation Service men from the Great Plains states.

The University of Nebraska Department of Geology and State Museum have used the post as a base for paleontological field parties, and the Museum plans a branch Natural History Museum at a future date.

The Nebraska State Game, Forestation, and Parks Commission operates the Fort Robinson Park Facility at the post.

The Fort Robinson Museum, a branch of the Nebraska State Historical Society Museum, was first opened to the public on June 3, 1956.

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FORT ROBINSON

1874-1912

This plan shows **major** buildings constructed in the period 1874-1912. Buildings built after that date are not shown. Buildings shown in black are still standing, those in outline are no longer in existence.

1 Cmdg. Of. Qtrs.....	1875	71-4 Cav. Stables	1908
2, 3 Of. Qtrs.....	1874	75, 6 Stable Guard	1908
4-7 Of. Qtrs.	1875	77 Blacksmith Shop	1904
8, 9 Inf. Barracks.....	1874	78 Blacksmith Shop	1906
10 Inf. Barracks.....	1882	79 Vet. Hosp.	1905
11 Cav. Barracks.....	1874	80 Vet. Hosp.	1909
12 Adjutant	1874	81 Post Gymn.	1904
13 Guard House	1884	82, 5, 6 Of. Qtrs.....	1909
14 Guard House	1874	83 Cmdg. Of. Qtrs.....	1891
15 Commissary Stores	1874	84 Cmdg. Of. Qtrs.....	1909
16 Hospital	1875	87 Water Towers	1889, 1903
17 Laundresses' Qtrs.	1874	88-90, 7, 8 Of. Qtrs.....	1891
18. Q.M. Stores	1874	91-6 Of. Qtrs.	1887
19 Tailor & Saddler Shops.	1874	99 Of. Qtrs.	1909
20 Storehouse	1884	100 Post Hq.	1905
21 Bakery	1874	101 Guard House	1892
22, 5 Q.M. Stores.....	1874	102 Comm. Stores	1892
23 Carpenter & Paint Shops	1874	103 Q.M. Stores	1892
24 Butcher Shop	1874	104 Q.M. Stores	1900
26 Q.M. Corral & Stables..	1874	105 Granary	1895
27, 9, 30 Cav. Stables.....	1874	106 Hay Shed	1897
28 Ord. Stores	1874	107 Hay Shed	1906
31 Magazine	1874	108 Oil House	1900
32 Shops	1884	109 Ord. Stores	1899
33 Non-Com. Qtrs.		110 Wheelwright's Shop	1882
34 Non-Com. Qtrs.	1902	111 Blacksmith Shop	1882
35, 6 Non-Com. Qtrs.	1886	112 Coal Shed	1896
37 Non-Com. Qtrs.	1890	113 Meat Market	1900
38 Non-Com. Qtrs.	1888	114 Bakery	1906
39, 40 Non-Com. Qtrs.....	1897	115 Carpenter Shop	1882
41 R.R. Station	1886	116 Saddler & Paint Shop...	
42 Q.M. Lumber Stores....	1891	117 Q.M. Shop	1906
43 Laundry	1907	118 Bandleader's Qtrs.	1886
44 Comdg. Of. Qtrs.....	1884	119 Band Barrack	1886
45 Admin. Bldg.	1883	120 Post Chapel	1893
46 Ice House		121 Gun Shed	1894
47 Post Trader	1874	122 Q.M. Wagon Shed.....	1896
48 Post Hosp.	1880	123 Packers' Qtrs.	1895
49 Hosp. Stwd. Qtrs.....	1885	124 Saddler's Qtrs.	1887
50 Barracks	1909	125 Teamsters' Qtrs.	1892
51 Cav. Barracks	1889	126 Wheelwrights' Qtrs.	1895
52-4, 56-8 Cav. Barracks ...	1887	127 Carpenters' Qtrs.	1909
55 Fire Station	1810	128 Water Tanks	1884
59 Cav. Barracks	1891	129 Q.M. Pack Train Stable.	1892
60 Barracks	1909	131 Q.M. Stable	1892
61 Post Hosp., Annex.....	1901	130 Q.M. Shed	
62 Hosp. Stwd. Qtrs.....	1910	132 Q.M. Wagon Shed.....	1892
63, 4 Cav. Stables	1891	133 Magazine	1894
65, 6, 8, 70 Cav. Stables....	1887	134 Band Stand	1893
67, 9 Cav. Stables	1895	135 Flag Staff	1890

FORT ROBINSON





99

COMMANCHE HALL

135
FLAGSTAFF
1890

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TOURIST CABINS

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