

NORTHERN CHEYENNE RAID

In accordance with an agreement entered into with the Government of the United States, dated September 26, 1876, the Northern Cheyennes were taken from the Sioux country in Dakota to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency in the Indian Territory. Nine hundred and thirty-seven of them arrived there on the 5th of August, 1877, in charge Lieutenant Lawton, of the Fourth United States Cavalry. After reporting to Col. J. K. Mizner, the commandant at Fort Reno, they were formally transferred to the United States Indian agent, John D. Miles, on the second day after their arrival.

On the 9th of September of the present year, a party of about 300, under Chief Dull Knife, including 87 warriors in all, started out from the agency with the determination to return northward and join their old friends, the Sioux.

Their agent states that they have never been satisfied since they arrived at the agency; that the Dull-Knife band were displeased with the system of issuing rations to the heads of families and individual Indians, and that the soldier element of the tribe had at first compelled their women to place in one pile the supplies which had been dealt to them, and having taken to themselves the lion's share, left the rest to be divided as they saw fit. He states that they have always been defiant, claimed that they did not enter into the agreement of September 26, 1876, and said that they would remain at the agency as long as they chose, and no longer; that they have been a great drawback to the advancement of the rest of his Indians, and have displeased those of the Northern Cheyennes who still remain at the agency. He denies in toto the statements which have been made, that for lack of provisions they have been obliged to eat diseased meat, and affirms that there was really no good cause for dissatisfaction on their part. As it has been charged that they were dissatisfied, and left the agency on account of scant rations and to avoid imminent starvation, a few facts concerning the subsistence supplies which have been furnished to them will not be amiss.

The per diem ration due to each man, woman, and child under the treaty is: Beef, $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, net (or 3 pounds, gross), or in lieu thereof, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of bacon; flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound; corn, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound; and for each 100 rations, coffee, 4 pounds; sugar, 8 pounds; and beans, 3 pounds; this is more than sufficient for the ample sustenance of any community in the United States. Excluding Indians, upon the hunt there has been at the agency between the time of their first arrival, August 5, 1877, and the time when the Dull-Knife party left the agency, September 7, 1878 (a period of 398 days), an average of 860 Indians.

They were entitled to the following quantities of supplies:

Beef.....	1,026,840 pounds.
Flour.....	171,140 "
Corn.....	171,140 "
Coffee.....	13,725 "
Sugar.....	27,450 "
Beans.....	10,294 "
Total.....	1,420,589 "

There was dealt out to them during the time mentioned the following:

Beef.....	1,242,208	pounds
Bacon and lard.....	20,016	"
Flour.....	157,060	"
Corn.....	18,190	"
Coffee.....	10,425	"
Sugar.....	20,950	"
Salt.....	2,272	"
Soap.....	2,297	"
Hominy.....	14	"
Tobacco.....	994	"
Baking powder.....	894	"
Total.....	1,475,320	"

There were due them by treaty 1,420,589 pounds of subsistence supplies, and there have been dealt to them 1,475,320 pounds, or a surplus of 54,731 pounds. This statement disposes of all the clamor that has been current during the year that these Indians did not receive rations to the amount to which they were entitled under the treaty.

The treaty requires that "rations shall in all cases be issued to the head of each separate family," and it stipulates that in lieu of the supplies therein named the Commissioner of Indian Affairs may furnish their equivalent. Section 3, page 449, United States Revised Statutes, provides:

That for the purpose of inducing Indians to labor and become self-supporting it is provided that hereafter, in distributing the supplies and annuities to the Indians for whom the same are appropriated, the agent distributing the same shall require all able-bodied male Indians between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to perform service upon the reservation for the benefit of themselves, or of the tribe, at a reasonable rate to be fixed by the agent in charge, and to an amount equal in value to the supplies to be delivered; and the allowances provided for such Indians shall be distributed to them only upon condition of the performance of such labor, under such rules and regulations as the agent may prescribe; provided that the Secretary of the Interior may, by written order, except any particular tribe or portion of tribe from the operation of this provision when he deems it proper and expedient.

It will be seen by the law above quoted that it was the duty of the agent to withhold supplies at times in order to compel the Indians to work if it was possible to get them to do so. No blame can attach to the agent for attempting to enforce this statutory provision by withholding coffee, sugar, and tobacco, which are the only supplies that were at any time withheld.

The agent's statement that the Northern Cheyennes had no good ground of complaint is sustained by the facts herein presented. The truth is that Dull Knife's band contained the vilest and most dangerous element of their tribe. They should have been disarmed before leaving the north, and dismounted upon their arrival at the agency, while still in the hands of the military. To the neglect which permitted them to retain the Springfield carbines captured by them in the Custer fight may be attributed the horrible atrocities perpetrated by the Northern Cheyennes. The trail of blood which they left behind them in Kansas could not have been made and

the outrages could not have been perpetrated but for the possession of these arms, which not only enabled them to defend themselves from attack, but to carry carnage and destruction among the settlers of Kansas.

While in Kansas they murdered more than forty men, women, and children, and outraged some ten or more women.

The War Department has been requested to send to Fort Wallace, in Kansas, the Cheyenne prisoners whom they now hold, to the end that the civil authorities may select those who can be identified, and have them punished for the murders and outrages of which they have been guilty. No undue sentimentality should stand between them and a just punishment for their crimes.

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