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Among the Sioux of Dakota: Eighteen Months' Experience as an Indian Agent, 1869-70. By D. C. Poole.

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ing each expedition, are remarkably well-written. Readers might compare his writings to those of William Least Heat Moon, a modern author whose *Blue Highways* is an account of a motor trip along the back roads of modern America. The writer of *Blue Highways* makes clear, however, that he is neither explorer nor pathfinder, blazing new trails for others to follow. Ethnocentrism and racism, moreover, have no place in Least Heat Moon's heart. Almost all of his roads are paved, and he encounters people, even overweight tourists driving motor homes and campers, in the most out-of-the-way places.

Fremont also encountered many people on his way west. He hired guides to take him through mountains and deserts, but even then he often found himself hopelessly lost. Everywhere he turned there were Indians as well as Mexicans, ranchers, traders, mountain men, trappers, and gold seekers. He even ran into wagon trains: seeking a new life in Oregon, American families lugged their possessions and livestock westward through the Rocky mountains. These greenhorns helped point the "Pathfinder" in the right direction. Fortunately for Fremont, motor homes had yet to be invented.

It is clear that Fremont blazed no new trails; but neither do the Smithsonian editors in this reprint of an account that is still available in a far better format through another publisher.

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Among the Sioux of Dakota: Eighteen Months' Experience as an Indian Agent, 1869-70. By D. C. Poole; with an introduction by Raymond J. DeMallie. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988. liii, 241 pp. Paper.

Faced with escalating hostilities on the Great Plains after 1865, a war-weary Congress felt compelled to reassess its Indian policies. Estimating that it would prove less expensive to feed the native people on reservations rather than fight them in endless skirmishes, Congress appointed several special commissions between 1865 and 1868 to investigate Indian affairs, and to negotiate peace terms with the warring tribes.

While at Fort Laramie in 1868, white emissaries concluded a

treaty with representatives of the Northern Plains tribes, including several bands of Lakotas (Sioux). Article Two of the treaty established the Great Sioux Reservation, a huge tract of land west of the Missouri River in present-day South Dakota. The Whetstone Agency, located on the Missouri, was designated the first reservation headquarters and supply point.

The results of these special commissions laid the groundwork for President Ulysses S. Grant's experiment in Indian reform. The president expected the Sioux to remain on the reservation away from white settlements, but not to live according to their time-honored customs. It would be the appointed agent's duty to oversee the basic objectives of Grant's "peace policy"—the destruction of tribalism and forced acculturation. The Lakotas should abandon nomadic pastoralism in favor of agriculture, replace their tipis with frame houses, wear white clothing, send their children to school, and convert to Christianity.

In the spring of 1869, Captain DeWitt Clinton Poole arrived at the Whetstone Agency to begin a short-lived career as agent to the Lakotas. It is his attempts to implement the new Indian policy at Whetstone that form the major thrust of his personal memoir, *Among the Sioux of Dakota: Eighteen Months' Experience as an Indian Agent, 1869-70*, first published in 1881 by D. Van Nostrand.

The reprinted edition contains the contributions not of one man but two: Poole, and Raymond J. DeMallie, author of numerous articles and papers on Lakota culture. In his succinct introduction, DeMallie enriches the memoir by placing it in its historical context, presenting a brief biographical sketch of the agent, and including additional information on individuals, dates, and events where necessary. All federal agents were required to submit periodical observations and assessments of their "charges" to superiors in the Indian Office. DeMallie has researched Poole's official correspondence, now housed at the National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C., to supplement the memoir and to indicate noteworthy discrepancies between Poole's agency records and his published account.

Furthermore, DeMallie briefly but clearly traces the roots of the peace policy at the same time asking the reader to bear in mind that the intended Indian reforms were implemented during an era when significant military tensions remained between the two peoples, and cultural pluralism was a little-known or accepted

concept. The role of the agent was that of a paternal "protector," guiding the native people as they stumbled down the path of enlightenment to "Civilization." Poole firmly believed, like others of his day, that white institutions were superior to those of the Sioux. He describes Lakota Government as "simple," the Indians "egotistical" and "childish," and their religion as "superstitious," "selfish," and "vindictive"—racist statements that undoubtedly stemmed as much from ignorance as from conventional wisdom.

Poole's memoir indeed reveals how little he comprehended Lakota customs. He refers several times, for example, to the unfortunate lot of Lakota women, sentenced by their gender to be the "menials and slaves of their male companions" (page 184). Fortunately, the stereotype of the overworked and unappreciated Indian wife has been laid to rest in *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women* (1983) by Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine.

White policy-makers instructed Indian agents to destroy tribalism by weakening the power of native leaders. In this respect, Poole failed to accomplish his assigned task. On occasions, he was drawn into the very customs he endeavored to change. Poole's duties at Whetstone included allocating a fixed amount of weekly provisions to the Lakota families within his jurisdiction. A Lakota chief's responsibilities included hosting all who sought his advice and friendship, and such duties necessitated additional rations. Spotted Tail, the Brulé chief whose people camped within the vicinity of Whetstone, required extra provisions to fulfill his obligations as chief. Rather than deny him the additional food, Poole helped strengthen Spotted Tail's influence by sending him "extra coffee, bacon and sugar by each supply train, the articles being left without comment in his lodge" (page 120).

Among the Sioux of Dakota also contains a valuable and rather lengthy account of the historic first journey of Brulé and Oglala delegates to the nation's capital. There, they were lavishly hosted at the White House, theaters, and banquets, and treated to amazing artillery demonstrations at the Great Father's armory. Soon after their return to Whetstone, Poole received word that a civilian agent would replace him in accordance with the new legislation prohibiting army personnel from serving as agents.

In December, 1870, Poole left the Lakotas, not without sympathy or respect for them. He also took with him the realization that the native people would fight to save their customs.

Despite the agent's poor understanding of Lakota culture, and the undercurrents of racism and paternalism, *Among the Sioux of Dakota* offers valuable examples of the problems facing the corps of inexperienced men who were sent out to Indian people battling the first shock waves of forced social change. Very few Indian agents preserved their experiences for posterity; thus, Poole's memoir is exceptional for that reason alone. Furthermore, it is the only book source for writing the history of the Whetstone Agency. Finally, the reader may find interesting comparisons and contrasts in James McLaughlin's *My Friend the Indian* (1910), and *McGilycuddy, Agent: A Biography of Dr. Valentine T. McGilycuddy* (1941) by Julia B. McGilycuddy.

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Sovereignty and Symbol: Indian-White Conflict at Ganienkeh.
By Gail H. Landsman. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988. 239 pp., maps, illus. \$19.95 Cloth.

In 1977, near the Canadian border in upper New York State, a faction of the Mohawk Indian Nation and a party of officials headed by the state of New York negotiated a settlement that established the Turtle Island Trust. Thus ended a long period of conflict and mediation leading to the creation of a small reserve known as Ganienkeh. The story of Ganienkeh deals with land and the territorial heritage of the Mohawks who claim much of upper New York and adjacent Vermont. The specifics of Ganienkeh may be new, but the genre of events leading to it has been repeated in other confrontations over land among the Iroquois and other native Americans. One needs only recall Wounded Knee and Alcatraz.

Ganienkeh is the story of land restoration, but as anthropologist Landsman points out (page 72), "The struggle for land at Ganienkeh is both a return to the past and a promise of a future as the Mohawk Nation. Past and future, sovereignty and land,