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## **“Fighting Fire with Fire”: The Frontier Army’s Use of Indian Scouts and Allies in the Trans-Mississippi Campaigns, 1860-1890**

**DAVID D. SMITS**

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Among soldiers in America’s late-nineteenth-century frontier army there was virtually universal agreement that scouts were vital to the success of campaigns in Indian country. Colonel Richard Irving Dodge, a veteran with thirty-three years’ experience on the frontier, publicly acknowledged the army’s dependence on reliable scouts. In his 1882 book *Our Wild Indians*, which General William T. Sherman recommended to the military student,<sup>1</sup> Dodge expressed his representative views:

The success of every expedition against Indians depends to a degree on the skill, fidelity and intelligence of the men employed as scouts for not only is the command habitually dependent on them for good routes and comfortable camps, but the officer in command must rely on them almost entirely for his knowledge of the position and movements of the enemy. These they learn by scouting far in advance or on the flanks of the column, and here the knowledge of trailing becomes of the utmost importance.<sup>2</sup>

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Indian fighting presented the frontier army with challenges that it was poorly prepared to overcome. Trained for conventional European-style warfare, frontier army commanders were slow and even reluctant to adapt to the Indians' brand of guerrilla war. Simply locating the elusive "hostiles" in their homeland was daunting. By the fall of 1868 Brigadier General Philip Sheridan, then commander of the Department of the Missouri, had learned as much. The hard-bitten Civil War veteran later declared that "the Indian, mounted on his hardy pony, and familiar with the country, was about as hard to find, so long as the grass lasted, as the Alabama on the ocean."<sup>3</sup>

Frontier military commanders soon learned that the far-western tribes had no desire to fight pitched battles in open terrain, unless they had overwhelming advantages. The hostiles refused to remain stationary to receive a foe's charge. Instead, they constantly attempted to break the enemy's force into detached fragments that could be separately engulfed. Having no trains or impediments, the Indians could easily avoid battle, unless it was to their advantage to fight. The heavier, slow-moving troops, encumbered with trains of supplies, were rarely in a position to launch a strike. And if the soldiers somehow gained an advantageous position, the hostiles vanished with a swiftness that doomed pursuit. If the Indians gained the advantage, however, they pressed it with the kind of reckless determination that resulted in the annihilation of the five troops of Lieutenant Colonel Custer's Seventh Cavalry along the banks of the Little Bighorn.

Given the soldiers' difficulties, the most telling blows they could strike were at the Indians' camps, forcing the inhabitants to abandon their homes and property. If the troops could regularly surprise and destroy these camps, the demoralized Indian victims were likely to surrender even though they had suffered few casualties. In order to pounce upon the "hostile" camps, the troops had to move through Indian country with great stealth and achieve complete surprise. Should the soldiers be discovered in time, the Indians were apt to escape, for in the words of Colonel Dodge, "even with their women and children, tipis and property, Indians can usually move faster than troops can follow."<sup>4</sup>

Dodge credited Brigadier General George Crook, one of the army's most renowned Indian fighters, with initiating the use of Indian "allies" and claimed that their diligent efforts diminished the soldiers' privations and hardships. The colonel described how the frontier army made effective use of Indian scouts:

Singly, or in bands of two, three, or more, these sleuth-hounds scatter far and wide, miles in advance and on the flanks of the troops. If a trail or other indication of hostiles is discovered, report is sent back to the commander, and the troops halted until the scouts can work up the position of the camp, when a night march is made and the telling blow struck.<sup>5</sup>

By the autumn of 1868 the frustrated Sheridan had learned that the Plains Indians were most vulnerable when immobilized in their winter camps, to which the army's Indian scouts could lead the often outmaneuvered bluecoats.

Such legendary frontier army scouts as Buffalo Bill Cody, Kit Carson, and Jim Bridger, are remembered today, but Indian scouts who were employed by the United States government at almost every western military post performed services that were, in Dodge's words, "invaluable, indeed indispensable to success against Indians."<sup>6</sup> Although most army officers were surprisingly ignorant of the historical precedents that had proved the value of Indian scouts,<sup>7</sup> the late-nineteenth-century consensus was that Indians were uniquely well-qualified to perform essential military tasks. One of those tasks was to follow the tracks of hostile Indians. Dodge reflected the views of a majority of his fellow officers in asserting that even the poorest Indian "trailer" was "superior to any white man." The Indian's skill as a trailer was due, Dodge argued, to his training and routine experiences:

Trailing is a most important and necessary part of the education of every Indian.... He is taught from childhood to note every mark on the ground, to tell what made it, its age, and everything about it of importance to himself. His daily life as a hunter makes him thoroughly conversant with the habits of game animals. These and a pair of eyes exquisitely sharpened by constant use, enable him confidently to take and keep a trail, where a white man, even with sharp eyes and some practice, would only see an occasional unmeaning mark.<sup>8</sup>

Crook offered a more concise explanation of why Indian scouts were preferable to their white counterparts:

I always try to get Indian scouts, because with them scouting is the business of their lives. They learn all the

signs of a trail as a child learns the alphabet; it becomes an instinct. With a white man the knowledge is acquired in after life.<sup>9</sup>

Unfortunately, in Dodge's opinion, the army employed too many white "guides," even though he had never known one "who was better than a mere school boy, when compared with Indian trailers." Dodge insisted that to honor the public's demand for "efficiency and economy" the army ought to avail itself of Indians' unsurpassed skills.<sup>10</sup>

Competent white scouts were in short supply and costly, sometimes receiving ten times as much compensation as an enlisted private. Indian scouts were mustered in for short terms, normally only six-month hitches, compared with the fixed five-year enlistments of white and black soldiers. The army enlisted Indians in times of need and discharged them as soon as their services were no longer required, thus reducing military expenses. Indians received a private's pay of thirteen dollars per month, along with the uniforms, blankets, weapons, and rations that matched those of the regular enlisted man.<sup>11</sup>

This essay will examine the frontier army's rationale for relying on "friendly" Indians, the effects of such reliance on the so-called hostiles, the opposition from tribal chiefs, Indian Bureau officials, and even many army commanders to the enlistment of "friendlies," the exigencies of guerrilla warfare that forced commanders to make use of Indians, the hazardous nature of military service for the "red bluecoats," the multifarious uses of the army's Indian scouts, and the relations between such scouts and their white comrades-in-arms. Thomas W. Dunlay's fine book, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, ranges somewhat more widely, but is more descriptive and less analytical. Thereafter, the question of why the Indians served the frontier army will be explored. That section will reveal a variety of motives, but will stress what Dunlay does not examine, namely the unappreciated fact that most Indians in the frontier army were by no means free to reject the military service which they performed so well.

High-ranking military commanders offered several reasons, beyond the Indians' proficiency as trailers, for enlisting them in the frontier army. John M. Schofield, one of the Union's most distinguished Civil War generals and, after Sheridan, the army's commanding general, believed that service in the army reduced the discontent so common among young Indian men

on reservations. Such young men, Schofield was convinced, possessed an "irrepressible love of military life" that remained unrealized on the reservations. Looking back from the perspective of the late 1890s on his forty-six years in the army, Schofield recalled that military service had converted Indians into friends and "practically civilized allies." The old soldier contended that "fidelity to the war chief" was the Indians' strongest "character" trait and that it lent itself nicely to their enlistment. Schofield rightly pointed out that in only one instance had Indian scouts ever proved unfaithful, even though they had often been used in campaigns against their own people.<sup>12</sup> He conceded that a company of Indians would not be quite as useful for general service as the same number of army regulars, but concluded that experience had shown that "the transfer of a few hundred of the best Sioux warriors from the Sioux side to our side" much more than compensated "for the loss of the same number of white troops."<sup>13</sup>

General Crook was the officer most responsible for convincing the army's high command of the psychological value of employing the hostiles' own tribal members against them. In 1886 he explained the strategy to a reporter:

To polish a diamond there is nothing like its own dust. It is the same with these fellows. Nothing breaks them up like turning their own people against them. They don't fear the white soldiers, whom they easily surpass in the peculiar style of warfare which they force upon us, but put upon their trail an enemy of their own blood, an enemy as tireless, as foxy, and as stealthy and familiar with the country as they themselves, and it breaks them all up. It is not merely a question of catching them better with Indians, but of a broader and more enduring aim—their disintegration.<sup>14</sup>

Crook's words reflect a common assumption among commanders in the frontier army: The employment of Indians—especially those belonging to the hostiles' own tribe—would destroy the troublemakers' morale. Hence, as early as the spring of 1867, an outmaneuvered General Winfield Scott Hancock wrote to Sherman requesting permission to enlist two hundred to three hundred Indian scouts because he believed it would "demoralize" the recalcitrant Sioux and Cheyennes.<sup>15</sup>

Although Indian voices seldom found their way into the

historical record, sufficient fragmentary evidence exists to suggest that the army's efforts to demoralize its Indian foes by employing their own tribesmen were quite effective. Captain John G. Bourke, a member of Crook's staff, recounted that on November 25, 1876, Colonel Ranald MacKenzie, accompanied by Sioux and Cheyenne scouts enlisted at the Red Cloud agency after Crook had confiscated their horses, struck the Cheyenne village of Dull Knife and Little Wolf in the Bighorn Mountains. In utter exasperation Dull Knife called out to MacKenzie's Indian scouts: "Go home—you have no business here; we can whip the white soldiers alone, but can't fight you too."<sup>16</sup> MacKenzie had at his disposal about four hundred Indian allies, including Arapahos, Bannocks, Pawnees, and Shoshones, in addition to his Sioux and Cheyennes, and they bore the brunt of the fighting that day.<sup>17</sup>

It is apparent that the "hostiles" ordinarily disdained the white soldiers' fighting abilities, but had a wholesome respect for the army's Indian allies. Wooden Leg, a Northern Cheyenne who fought against Custer at the Little Bighorn, recalled that in that fight the hostile Indians called out to the Seventh Cavalrymen: "You are only boys. You ought not to be fighting. We whipped you on the Rosebud. You should have brought more Crows or Shoshones with you to do your fighting."<sup>18</sup>

Particularly fearsome to the Plains hostiles were the Pawnee scouts commanded by the brothers Frank and Luther North. George Bird Grinnell, American naturalist and student of Indian life, described the conduct of a company of those scouts against Northern Cheyenne raiders in the Powder River country during the summer of 1865. The Pawnees rode steadily forward in columns of twos like cavalrymen. The Cheyennes, believing that the Pawnees were soldiers, formed a line of battle. The Pawnees advanced until they were within two hundred yards of the Cheyenne line. At that point they began to shout their war cry and slap their chests. "When the Cheyennes heard this war-cry, which told them that the attacking party were Pawnees," Grinnell wrote, "their hearts became like water, and they turned and fled." But mounted on fresher horses, the Pawnees overtook, killed, and scalped twenty-seven Cheyennes, the entire hostile force.<sup>19</sup>

To Crook and other defenders of Indian enlistments, military service would also "break up tribal solidarity." It would wean Indian bluecoats from dependence on their tribes and teach them self-reliance and the ability to think and act as individuals. The

tribal chief's authority would thus be substantially diminished.<sup>20</sup>

Beyond the erosion of their influence, tribal chiefs had other reasons for opposing the enlistment of their young men. In 1870, when Frank North sought to reenlist his Pawnees, their agent, J.M. Troth, reported that the chiefs objected on the following grounds: While in the army their young men would "associate with bad white men, and learn to drink and gamble which unfits them for useful occupations and has an unfavorable effect on others."<sup>21</sup>

The army's efforts to enlist reservation Indians as scouts also met resistance from many Indian agents who viewed the military's Indian policies as harsh and brutal. Crook encountered such opposition in May of 1876 when he marched to Camp Robinson and the Red Cloud agency to enlist Sioux Indians, mostly old men and boys who had not departed, as scouts in the Bighorn campaign. Agent James S. Hastings, who reflected the Bureau of Indian Affairs' jealous paternalism toward its so-called "wards," gave the general a decidedly cool reception. A victim of the interminable wrangling between the army and the Indian Bureau, Crook was unable to enlist a single person.<sup>22</sup> Had the Indian Service been returned to the War Department, as the army had been demanding since 1849 when it was transferred to the Interior Department, Crook undoubtedly would have been successful. In the frontier army's struggles over jurisdiction and policy with the Indian Service, the enlistment of scouts was the army's legal method of removing some Indians from the control of the rival agency.<sup>23</sup>

Not surprisingly, given white Americans' ambivalent attitudes toward Indians, some military officers themselves opposed the army's reliance on Indian confederates. One reason for this opposition was that such opponents doubted that Indians could ever renounce their Indian allegiances and become completely loyal to the United States Army. After Geronimo's escape from the army in March 1886, for instance, Sheridan angrily wired Crook, commander of the Department of Arizona: "It seems strange that Geronimo and party could have escaped without the knowledge of the [Apache] scouts." To the distrustful Sheridan, Crook responded: "There can be no question that the scouts were thoroughly loyal, and would have prevented the hostiles leaving had it been possible."<sup>24</sup>

Two days after Crook's response he was relieved of his Arizona command. His replacement was Brigadier General Nelson A. Miles, who promptly discharged most of the Apache

scouts on the assumption that they were disloyal. Tom Horn, a "white Indian" who served as civilian chief of scouts during the Geronimo campaign (1885 to 1886), thoroughly disapproved of Miles' actions. Horn later recalled: "Miles was going to try the renegades a lick with cavalry. The proposition was to enlist five Apaches in each troop of Cavalry to do the trailing and scouting for the troops." Horn was convinced that the troopers "would never be able to do anything but get whipped," but believed he would be dismissed as a fool if he voiced his convictions.<sup>25</sup>

Although Crook apparently had unwavering faith in his Apache scouts, only a decade earlier even he had been indisposed to trust his Indian confederates. Frank Grouard, a famous scout, described Crook's shrewd use of Pawnee, Shoshone, and Sioux scouts to find Dull Knife (known as Morning Star among his people) and Little Wolf's elusive Cheyennes. Grouard recognized that Crook's "object in picking a few [scouts] from each tribe" was "to get one to watch the other."<sup>26</sup> By 1885, however, Crook had learned through experience the importance of trusting his Indian scouts and allowing them to operate in their own manner.

By contrast, Miles, like so many other commanders, had an egocentric involvement in the success of his own regular troops. Indeed, he had devoted considerable time and innovative methods to their training. Miles claimed to have established the first military gymnasium and to have made calisthenics and "athletic field exercises" routine features of military service. He took great pride in his "trained athletes and skilled marksmen," and boasted that they "knew how to take care of themselves, were ever vigilant, could not be surprised, and were not afraid to confront the Indians under any circumstances."<sup>27</sup> As Miles saw it, a commander's heavy reliance on Indian scouts and allies reflected badly on him and unfavorably on the regular army's capacity to fulfill its mission. This attitude represents a major explanation for opposing Indian enlistments. Furthermore, in the skeletal frontier army, whose numerical strength was reduced and fixed, the enlistment of large numbers of Indians would mean that many fewer regulars in military service.

Another reason why more than a few officers and men opposed the army's reliance on Indian allies was the widespread impression that they were seriously deficient in what might be called soldierly virtues. In the minds of their detractors, the army's Indian allies were cowardly, unreliable, undis-

ciplined, careless, foolhardy, brutal, insubordinate, impulsive, superstitious, prone to exaggeration and desertion, lacking in proficiency with firearms, and unable to devote full-time attention to military duties, to name the deficiencies most often ascribed to Indians.

Sheridan, never supportive of Indian enlistments, added to the list of their supposed shortcomings. In his opinion, Indian soldiers "did not possess stability or tenacity of purpose," nor did they "appreciate responsibility or the sacredness of an oath." Sheridan considered Indians "a race so distinctive from that governing this country that it would be neither wise nor expedient to recruit our army from their ranks."<sup>28</sup>

An attempt to determine the validity of the prevailing objections to utilizing Indians seems appropriate. The place to begin is with the pervasive fear that "the red bluecoats" would prove disloyal. The simple truth is that the Indian scouts, allies, and auxiliaries who rendered assistance to the army were overwhelmingly loyal. To be sure, there was the notorious 1881 Cibicu mutiny, in which twenty-three of the army's White Mountain Apache scouts under the influence of a shaman named Nakaidoklini actually turned on their white comrades in the Sixth Cavalry, who had the revered shaman in their custody.

Of course, this unfortunate incident confirmed the castigators' worst fear, but it stands as the sole instance of serious Indian disloyalty. The vast majority of Apache scouts were scrupulously loyal to the army. Lieutenant Britton Davis, commander of a company of such scouts in the Geronimo campaign, had unwavering trust in his charges. Davis' confidence was justified, for, as he recalled, of more than five hundred Apaches enlisted as scouts during that campaign, only three had deserted.<sup>29</sup> Given the contrast with the regular army's appalling desertion rate of about one-third in the years between 1867 and 1891, there is no justification for censuring the army's Indian comrades-in-arms.<sup>30</sup>

As for realities in the Pacific Northwest, Brigadier General Oliver O. Howard, commander of the Department of the Columbia in the 1870s, had absolute confidence in his Indian auxiliaries. It is true, however, that on one occasion Howard's confidence was misplaced. During the Bannock-Paiute uprising of 1878 the one-armed "Christian general" relied on a Bannock Indian to carry a message some two hundred miles to Camp Henry. The Bannock courier turned out to be a spy. He carried Howard's dispatches straight to Chief Egan of the

Malheur Reservation Paiutes, eventually the leader of the rebels. Howard was shocked by the Bannock's betrayal and asserted that the turncoat "was the only one of all the Indians in the Northwest that I had to do with directly who played me false." Rebutting Sheridan's claim, Howard insisted that Indians were normally true to their words. "As a rule," he stated, "when an Indian looked in my face and gave me his promise to do a certain thing, he was scrupulous to perform that promise." When asked after his long experience among Indians if he had found them "treacherous," Howard answered: "No, not so much as the Anglo Saxon."<sup>31</sup>

As for the Plains Indians employed as government scouts, the secretary of war himself rendered a trenchant verdict on their loyalty as well as their other merits: "They are unequalled as riders, know the country thoroughly, are hardly ever sick, *never desert*, and are careful of their horses."<sup>32</sup> Undoubtedly, the best proof of the Indian auxiliaries' loyalty was their willingness to risk their lives to advance the army's objectives. On more than a few occasions Indian allies saved soldiers from certain death while endangering their own lives. Scout Frank Grouard, who had no ulterior motive for paying tribute to the Crows, credited them with saving many of Crook's troops in the Battle of the Rosebud:

The Indians and the scouts jumped on their horses and just then the Sioux came charging down over the hills. But the troops were not ready to meet the attack, so the Crows met the first charge of the Indians, and I believe if it had not been for the Crows, the Sioux would have killed half of our command before the soldiers were in a position to meet the attack.<sup>33</sup>

Newspaper correspondent John F. Finerty, who accompanied Crook's army, reported that Crow scout Humpy saved the life of Sergeant Van Moll, who had found himself alone, on foot, and surrounded by a dozen enemy warriors. Finerty wrote that Humpy "dashed boldly in among the Sioux ... seized the big Sergeant by the shoulder and motioned him to jump up behind." Van Moll did so and he and Humpy escaped.<sup>34</sup> The army's subsequent shameful neglect of its Crow scouts indicates that it, not the Indians, was the disloyal party in the coalition. In 1930 Crow Chief Plenty Coups lamented that the Crows had still not received any compensation what-

soever for their services to "Three Stars" Crook in 1876.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, many other Indian scouts had difficulty obtaining compensation for their military service in the far-western campaigns.

No incident better exemplifies the army's callous disloyalty to dutiful Indian allies than its imprisonment of the Apache scouts who had made possible the final capture of Geronimo and his renegades in 1886. James Kaywaykla, a Warm Springs Apache with firsthand experiences in the relevant events, bitterly recounted how the victorious Miles had ordered his Apache scouts "rounded up with the hostiles and forced to share their imprisonment. Many had served the cavalry faithfully and incurred the contempt of their own people to aid the White Eyes. And for this they were made prisoners of war for twenty-seven years!"<sup>36</sup> Among the Apache scouts whose reward was imprisonment in Florida were Martine and Kayitah, the individuals most responsible for Geronimo's final surrender. For the loyal Apache scouts, their long confinement was truly a nightmare. Eugene Chihuahua, son of the Chiricahua Apache chief of the same surname, voiced the contempt that the imprisoned "hostiles" had for the Apache scouts who "had betrayed their people." In the son's words: "... the only consolation we got for those terrible twenty-seven years as prisoners of war is that the scouts, too, were prisoners. And we made it miserable for them."<sup>37</sup>

For all the other Apache scouts who served in the southwestern United States and Mexico, army service was extraordinarily hazardous. They might have been killed by renegade Apaches, by Mexicans who hated them, or by American civilians who shared these feelings. Furthermore, the Indian scouts, allies, and auxiliaries were often endangered because of the soldiers' genuine difficulties in distinguishing the hostiles from the so-called friendlies. The army's friendlies faced such dangers on all fronts. Frank Grouard observed that during the Battle of the Rosebud, "it was very hard to keep the soldiers from firing into our [Indian] allies after the troops became engaged with the Sioux, mistaking the Crows and Shoshones for the enemy."<sup>38</sup>

At other times, friendlies were in danger simply because of the soldiers' reluctance to trust any Indian or because frustrated soldiers were unable to find and engage the real hostiles. Thus, in 1866 Black Horse, Red Arm, Little Moon, and several other Cheyenne chiefs, hoping for peace with the Americans, promised Colonel Henry B. Carrington, commander of Fort Phil

Kearny, one hundred of their young men to help the army fight Red Cloud's Oglalas (Sioux) in the Powder River country. Carrington had no authority to enlist the Cheyennes and did not accept the offer; he preferred to use the Pawnees and Winnebagos who had served him well in 1865. Nonetheless, the Cheyenne peace chiefs honored their pledges of friendship. Then in September 1866 a band of eight friendly Cheyenne men, including several of the peace chiefs, and a Cheyenne woman made their way to Fort Phil Kearny for provisions. Carrington supplied them with bacon and coffee and told them to camp on an island near the post. While the Cheyenne band was camped there a rumor spread among the troops that several members of the band had been with a war party that had earlier killed two soldiers. About ninety vengeful armed troopers advanced on the Cheyenne camp, intent on annihilating the occupants. Fortunately Carrington was warned of his troopers' plans and arrived in the nick of time with revolver in hand to prevent a massacre of the peaceful Indians. Margaret Irvin Carrington, the colonel's wife, recorded in her journal that the soldiers involved "were restored to their barracks with only admonition and caution as to future conduct."<sup>39</sup> In this case, friendly Indians nearly lost their lives because of the soldiers' unwillingness to trust their loyalty.

Generally speaking, friendly Indians' loyalty was as wholehearted as the most gung-ho army commander could hope for. It was most apt to be halfhearted when the hostiles targeted were either the friendlies' longtime allies or members of the same tribe. Thomas Leforge, the white man and army scout who lived with the Crows, told how his beloved adopted people reacted when the army requested them to provide scouts to intercept their friends the Nez Perce, who were fleeing toward Canada in 1877. According to Leforge, many of the Crows

affected to array themselves against the Nez Perce, but in reality their warlike operations were restricted to the capture of ponies. The action of the Crows in keeping themselves aloof from gunfire has been branded by writers as indicative of cowardice. In fact, though, it was within my knowledge that they were keeping in grateful memory their past connections with the people [the Nez Perce] now in a vexatious situation.<sup>40</sup>

On many occasions the army's Apache scouts made special concessions to their own people who were at odds with the

government. Thus, in pursuing Kaytennae, an Apache raider attempting to join the renegade Chief Nana in Mexico, Chihuahua and his scouts deliberately allowed the fugitive to escape and reunite with Nana.<sup>41</sup>

There can be no doubt that the frontier army's Indian scouts, allies, and auxiliaries frequently gave preferential treatment to hostiles who belonged to their own tribes or who were their traditional tribal friends, but such treatment was never offered at the expense of the army's mission in the far West. The army's friendlies fulfilled their assignments remarkably well—far better than the regular troops themselves could have—as their hostile Indian kinsmen routinely admitted. In keeping with this reality, the battle-scarred old Nana recalled with pleasure his time spent in Juh's hideout in the mountains of northern Mexico. When the Warm Springs Apache James Kaywaykla asked Nana if anyone could find Juh's stronghold, Nana replied: "Only the [Apache] scouts, the accursed scouts."<sup>42</sup>

The army's heavy dependence on Indians, despite fears that such dependence reflected unfavorably upon the soldiers, indicates just how indispensable they were to the success of the military's agenda. Even the initially skeptical Miles learned from firsthand experience that his troops needed Indian assistance to be effective. In March 1875 Miles reported on his military operations in Indian Territory during the Red River War. Among his recommendations to the army's assistant adjutant general was to discontinue the use of cavalry for scouting. Miles had become convinced that "desultory scouting, often made without positive design and with less result, has a tiresome, exhaustive and injurious influence upon the Cavalry." Miles had learned that "friendly Indians or daring scouts can be more economically employed to discover the hostile camps, trails or movements of Indians." The cavalry should be saved "for the direct march, resistless dash and rapid pursuit for which that arm of the service is so well adapted." Peace could be maintained on the Staked Plains by enlisting "under good officers" a "small force of friendly Navajo Indians" to the west and "the same of Pawnee or Tonkaways" on the east.<sup>43</sup>

In the autumn of 1877 Miles' troops, with the aid of his Cheyenne scouts, caught the fleeing Nez Perce before they could cross the Canadian border. In the ensuing Battle of Bear Paw Mountain, Miles positioned his Cheyenne scouts on the line encircling the Nez Perce camp "where the most desperate fighting was going on." Writing years afterward, Miles recalled

that Hump had killed two Nez Perce with his own hands, and was severely wounded. The Cheyenne scouts, Miles wrote, "had maintained their position with remarkable fortitude and discharged all the duties required of them during the five days siege." Miles was so grateful to his Cheyennes for their "gallant service" that he rewarded each of them with five ponies captured from the Nez Perce herd.<sup>44</sup> Rather than reflecting badly on the army as Miles had once feared its reliance on friendlies would, his Cheyenne scouts had helped to ensure the success of his mission. Such successes were bound to enhance the frontier army's reputation—and, of course, his own. While in command of the Department of the Missouri in 1885, Miles stated in his annual report that he favored the employment of "a number of Indians in the army as scouts, guides, and trailers." He based his recommendation on his "personal observation that they were endowed with many of the qualities which would make them useful." Besides "having found them of great value in numerous ways," Miles had never known one "to be unfaithful to a trust."<sup>45</sup>

Some of the "numerous ways" in which Miles and other army commanders found friendly Indians "of great value" ought to be listed. Besides scouting for and guiding troops and civilians, the most common and important duties of such Indians include the following: interpreting and translating; carrying dispatches and mail; serving as "secret service" agents (i.e., spying and acting as provocateurs); trailing; "peace-talking" (i.e., encouraging surrender); hunting; providing escorts for hunting parties of prominent men, for paymasters, for scientific expeditions, and for visitors to Indian country; patrolling the railroad lines; guarding railroad construction crews and surveyors; identifying unknown Indians; engaging in combat with hostiles (either independently or together with troops); performing guard duty at picket stations and military posts; helping to keep order on the reservations when Indian police were unable to handle disturbances; chasing army deserters; and more. The Indian scouts continued to prove useful to the Bureau of Indian Affairs long after the Indian wars had ended. In 1909, for example, Indian scouts on the Fort Sill Reservation were actually converted to truant officers.<sup>46</sup>

No frontier army commander had more pride in his regiment than the flamboyant and vainglorious Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer. The reckless public idol was completely in character when he boasted that he "could whip all the Indians

on the Continent with the Seventh Cavalry."<sup>47</sup> But Custer enjoyed no success whatever as an Indian fighter until his thirteen Osage Indian scouts, Little Beaver and Hard Rope prominent among them, led the Seventh Cavalry to Black Kettle's winter camp on the Washita River in late November of 1868. There Custer won his first victory as an Indian fighter in the Battle of the Washita. Thereafter, Custer took Arikara and Santee Sioux scouts on his expedition to the Black Hills in 1874. He needed them, he said, "for their knowledge of the country and their watchfulness in camp in detecting the presence of hostile Indians near camp."<sup>48</sup> High praise for the Arikaras came from the geologist, Professor A.B. Donaldson, who accompanied the expedition. "As scouts they are invaluable," Donaldson stated. "They have scouted the whole country over in advance of our marching column. If any hostile Sioux had been anywhere in front of us or on our flanks, these ubiquitous and cunning scouts would certainly have found them out. Where they scour the country no ambush could be successfully laid."<sup>49</sup>

Custer's fondness for Bloody Knife, an Arikara, typified the amicable feelings that many soldiers had for Indian scouts and other friendlies. Thus, the white Crow scout Thomas Leforge commented that in 1876 Colonel John Gibbon's soldiers "chummed and joked" with their Crow scouts and gave them nicknames like "Kelly" and "Skookum."<sup>50</sup> Captain Charles King, who commanded Crow scouts under Crook in the 1876 Bighorn and Yellowstone campaigns, was patronizing toward his charges, but regarded them as "affably disposed." King contended that Crook's troops had "no especial difficulty in fraternizing" with the Crows.<sup>51</sup>

Another of the army's major objections to relying on Indians was that they presumably lacked soldierly virtues. In the spring of 1889, Jules Chaudel, a white cavalryman who cooked for more than fifty newly recruited Northern Cheyenne scouts at Fort Keogh, called attention to their abundant deficiencies as soldiers:

They were hopelessly unfitted for military life as we lived it. Most of them were amiable enough, but compulsory unity of action was entirely contrary to their nature. They paid little attention to Taps and Reveille. They would not take care of their horses in anything like the way required by the rules. Their drills were exasperatingly ragged. Many of them knew nothing about how to handle a rifle.<sup>52</sup>

The transformation of these raw recruits into a crack outfit illustrates the importance of able leadership to the Indians' successful assimilation into the army. Lieutenant Edward W. Casey, one of the army's most well-regarded junior officers, had won authorization to organize the Northern Cheyenne scout troop even though Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas J. Morgan had opposed Indian military service, believing it to be an obstacle to their progress in civilization. Casey was fond of his Cheyenne scouts and trained them to the point where they were smart, well-disciplined, and efficient soldiers. The artist-reporter for *Harper's Weekly*, Frederic Remington, who probably first observed them late in December 1890, was favorably impressed. Remington claimed that the Cheyenne scouts could "fill the eye of a military man till nothing is lacking." In his visit to the camp of log buildings that they had built outside Fort Keogh, Remington saw "perfectly-kept cavalry arms and accoutrements, and fine Indian soldiers who stood like bronze statues, and saluted in the best possible form, while never a muscle of their faces twitched." Remington maintained that the Cheyenne scouts looked and behaved like soldiers and "were in fact the finest I had ever seen."<sup>53</sup> Remington, of course, had seen many good ones.

In contrast to the praise conferred on Casey's Indians, army men frowned upon Frank North's renowned Pawnee scouts because of their inability to execute standard military rituals. In January 1865 a company of Pawnee scouts was mustered into military service and sent into winter quarters at Fort Kearny, Nebraska. The post's commanding officer, Captain Lee P. Gillette of the First Nebraska Cavalry, ordered North to drill the Pawnees thoroughly in the manual of arms. North tried but failed to get satisfactory results, largely because the Pawnees did not understand English and in their language no words existed for the commands given. North gave up the effort, explaining to Gillette that the Pawnees had been enlisted as scouts, spies, and trailers, not as soldiers. Gillette acquiesced but insisted that the Pawnees perform picket duty around the fort. Grinnell offered an amusing account of that service:

The Pawnee could cry "Halt!" to a person, but could not say "Who goes there?" nor could they comprehend what was said to them. The man halted therefore, was in difficulties, for he could neither advance nor retreat. When halted in this manner, officers on their way to the sutlers'

store were often obliged to shout at the top of their voices, calling for Captain North to come to their assistance, and to explain to the Pawnee sentry that the officer was free to pass.<sup>54</sup>

Clearly there were difficulties associated with the army's enlistment of the Pawnees, but there were benefits that much more than compensated. The Pawnees were splendid scouts and fighters. In March 1867 Brigadier General C.C. Augur, then commanding the Department of the Platte, authorized Frank North to organize two hundred Pawnees into a battalion of four companies for duty along the line of the Union Pacific railroad. The Pawnees protected the railroad so well that Augur next raised three 400-man battalions of friendly Indians, mostly Pawnees. From his personal experience campaigning with the Pawnees, Augur greatly admired them; he claimed that he had never seen "more obedient or better behaved troops."<sup>55</sup>

Major Eugene Carr and eight companies of the Fifth Cavalry made effective use of three companies of Pawnee scouts in 1869 in carrying out Augur's orders to clear hostiles from the Republican River country. Initially, Carr was disappointed with the Pawnees' lack of military etiquette and would have preferred to command more cavalymen and fewer Indian scouts. By the end of his very successful campaign against the Cheyenne Dog Soldiers, however, Carr had completely changed his mind. North's Pawnees, he concluded, "were of the greatest service to us throughout the campaign."<sup>56</sup> George Bent, a mixed-blood Cheyenne, substantiated the conclusion when he pointed out that Carr's command was so successful against the Dog Soldiers "because of the presence of the Pawnee scouts."<sup>57</sup>

General Howard, often the beneficiary of the services of Indian scouts and allies, called attention to another problem associated with the army's dependence on friendly Indians in stating that "savages when used as instruments by civilized men cannot always be controlled."<sup>58</sup> General Crook learned that he could not control his Crow and Shoshone allies on his march north toward the Valley of the Rosebud in June of 1876 during the Bighorn campaign. Fearing the proximity of the hostile Sioux, Crook advanced cautiously, hoping to benefit from the element of surprise. But when a huge herd of buffalo was sighted, Crook's Indian allies wasted no time in chasing the beasts. Newsman Finerty, who accompanied Crook's army,

recorded that "Three Stars" was "annoyed" by the conduct of his Indian allies, "which could not help alarming the wary foe"; however, the general was unable to stop the slaughter "so long as a buffalo remained in sight and daylight lasted." That night Crook was further annoyed when the Crows and Shoshones ignored his order to light no fires, and gorged themselves on roasted buffalo meat.<sup>59</sup> Crook tolerated the disobedience of his orders with stoic calm because he, as much as any frontier army commander, knew the true value of his Indian allies; he refused to reprove them lest he run the risk of driving them off.

Another officer who had difficulties controlling his Indian friendlies was Lieutenant James H. Bradley of the Seventh Infantry. In the spring and early summer of 1876, Bradley marched with the Montana Column in the Bighorn campaign against the Sioux. Bradley kept a daily journal of the expedition in which he often recorded his impressions of the Crow scouts under his command. On May 8, 1876, amidst abundant signs of the recent presence of the Sioux, the Crows spotted a large herd of buffalo. Before Bradley could stop them, the scouts were chasing the beasts at full speed while firing their rifles into the herd. Bradley was infuriated with them, fearing that the shooting might bring the Sioux down upon the column. He recorded in his journal that the "carelessness" of his Crows was at times "simply amazing." He had assumed that the Indian's "life of constant exposure to danger would make caution and precaution so much his habit that he would never lay them aside." But such was not the case. Instead, on his missions with the Crows, Bradley "was compelled to watch them constantly to prevent the doing of some foolish or foolhardy thing" that might have betrayed the troops to an enemy and have "brought destruction on us all."<sup>60</sup>

But though Bradley regarded his Crow scouts as dangerously reckless, he knew that their services were absolutely essential to the success of the Bighorn campaign. Personal experience had taught him that if handled properly the Crows would perform their duties well. On April 14, for example, Bradley noted that the Crows had done "excellent" scouting, "scouring the country for a breadth of ten or twelve miles and holding themselves well in front." He was convinced that "if urged and looked after, they will do good work."<sup>61</sup>

Bradley saw firsthand "the aimless, profitless scrambling" through the broken and unfamiliar terrain that occurred when

the "wholly bewildered" cavalry officers acted as guides.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, he urged Brigadier General Alfred H. Terry, the overall commander, to rely on Crow scouts like Little Face, who had roamed the country as a boy fifty years earlier. Little Face and the other Crows proved more than worthy of Bradley's confidence. In his field diary of the 1876 expedition, Terry characterized his Crow scouts and guides as "excellent."<sup>63</sup> They enabled him to unite the Montana Column with Custer's Seventh Cavalry on the banks of the Little Bighorn. Unfortunately for the army, Custer had engaged the hostiles with disastrous consequences before the Montana troops arrived.

Bradley was a punctilious officer who would have exercised a "more rigorous discipline" over his Crow scouts had not his commanding officer, Colonel John Gibbon, restrained him. Bradley contended that Gibbon allowed the Crows "every possible latitude to prevent the restraints of service from becoming too irksome to them."<sup>64</sup> Gibbon's restraint appears justified. Leforge, the white Crow who also scouted for Bradley, respected the young officer, but spoke for the Crows in stating that Bradley "interjected too much red-tape formality into situations where the contingencies of Indian warfare rendered the tedious procedure an actual hindrance to efficiency." Leforge believed that Bradley "underestimated" and "did not understand the character of their [the Crows'] capabilities."<sup>65</sup>

Leforge and the Crow scouts had many good laughs at Bradley's expense because of an incident that occurred one night along the Yellowstone River. A trigger-happy soldier picket mistook a floating log for a swimming Sioux enemy and opened fire at it. The camp was aroused from sleep and an alarmed Bradley ordered his scouts to search along the river bank for imaginary enemies. Bradley himself scurried around wielding a lit lantern. The Crows found it immensely humorous that a well-regarded officer should have behaved so ridiculously as to search for wily enemies with a bright light.<sup>66</sup>

The incident reveals that the army's friendly Indians could be less than totally respectful toward their white commanders. Indeed, they often found fault with the army's methods, strategy, and tactics. Luther North maintained that his Pawnee charges never "adopted any of the white soldiers' tactics. They thought their own much better."<sup>67</sup> Often the army's Indian scouts and allies were outspoken critics of their officers' decisions. Half-Yellow Face, one of Custer's Crow scouts, rightly warned his impulsive commander not to divide his force in the

face of the powerful hostile camp on the banks of the Little Bighorn. Custer snapped back: "You do the scouting and I will attend to the fighting."<sup>68</sup> The Crow chief and army scout, Plenty Coups, critiqued Custer's performance in the Battle of the Little Bighorn with acute judgment when he observed that Custer "was wiped out because he did not wait for his friends to help him do a big job."<sup>69</sup>

Many times the army's friendly Indians felt bitter resentments about what they regarded as the bluecoats' misuse of their services. Curley, one of the six Crow scouts who had enlisted to help Colonel Gibbon find the Sioux hostiles in the Bighorn campaign of 1876, demanded a discharge after narrowly escaping death. Curley and five other Crows, together with six Arikaras, had enabled Custer to locate the hostiles' camp on the river that the Sioux called the Greasy Grass. In a 1910 interview with the diligent researcher, Walter Camp, Curley explained his reasons for demanding an early discharge. According to Camp's notes, Curley had told Gibbon: "You enlisted us to fight the Sioux and then went and sold us 6 Crows to Custer for \$600.... I don't like this and I want to go home. You have not used us for the purpose for which we enlisted, and you have got me nearly killed."<sup>70</sup> Gibbon sympathized with the Crow scouts, gave them provisions, and allowed them to go home.

In the spring of 1877, Colonel Miles used the Cheyenne men of Two Moon's band to help the Fifth Infantry run down the fugitive Nez Perce heading toward Canada. After the Cheyenne chief and his followers had surrendered to the army in April 1877, Miles had converted the Cheyenne men into scouts under the command of a comparatively inexperienced officer. Two Moon had no wish to have such a commander for the Cheyennes and told Miles that no officer was needed. Each Cheyenne, Two Moon pointed out, fought in his own manner and counted his coups; the chiefs stayed behind the lines. Bear Coat Miles thanked Two Moon for the information but insisted that his Indian scouts had to be assigned to an officer, with whom they must remain in times of battle. Two Moon also disapproved of the soldiers' practice of carrying canteens of water and haversacks of rations on their marches. "The white man eats and drinks all the time," he told Miles. "The Indian drinks when he finds water and eats when he kills game."<sup>71</sup> Two Moon's complaints brought no changes.

The customs of Indian scouts were also sometimes objectionable to whites. The Pawnees' practice of scalping their dead

enemies draws attention to a major reason why many Americans, including some military men, opposed the army's use of Indian allies. Such confederates, it was commonly argued, committed atrocities that civilized societies must not condone, yet that military commanders could not or would not prevent. Edward W. Wynkoop, who had been a volunteer Civil War officer before becoming the government agent for the Cheyennes and Arapahos, informed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs late in 1868 that there were "in the field, under the sanction of the government, volunteer troops and Ute and Osage Indians, and whom nothing will prevent from murdering all of whatever age or sex, wherever found."<sup>72</sup>

Captain William P. Clark, himself the commander of a company of Cheyenne and Crow scouts, reproved the army for allowing its Indian comrades-in-arms to commit unforgivable atrocities. Clark stated with a rare sense of history among officers, that in all America's Indian wars "it had *seemed* necessary to use Indian allies, and these have usually been permitted to perpetrate all kinds of savage atrocities, mutilating the dead in the most horrible manner, so that we have not taught the Indians by example any more civilized warfare." The Indian first sergeant of Clark's scouts explained that they killed the enemy's women and children in order to instill fear.<sup>73</sup> Clark's admission that United States armies had not taught their Indian allies how to wage "civilized warfare" is ironic because a basic justification for enlisting Indians was to assist the civilizing process. No frontier officer defined the army's alleged transformation of its Indian enlistees more explicitly than General Crook:

As a soldier the Indian wears the uniform, draws pay and rations, and is in all respects on equal footing with the white man. It demonstrates to his simple mind in the most positive manner that we have no prejudice against him on account of his race, and that while he behaves himself he will be treated the same as a white man. Returning to his tribe after this service, he is enabled to see beyond the old superstition that has governed his people, and thinks and decides for himself.<sup>74</sup>

At times the Indian scouts' disposition to think and decide for themselves had disconcerting consequences, as Miles found out in the fall of 1877 when his troops were pursuing the run-

away Nez Perce. Miles' Cheyenne scouts found the Nez Perce camp on the northern flank of Montana's Bear Paw Mountains about forty miles south of the international border. After an exchange of shots in which the Nez Perce wounded several of the scouts' horses, the fugitives permitted three Cheyennes to come to their camp to talk in sign language. Remembering Miles' earlier declaration that he would rather capture than kill the Nez Perce, the scouts advised the runaways to give up. The Nez Perce then asked to speak to Miles himself. When the general learned that his scouts had acted as intermediaries without permission he became angry and demanded to know who was responsible. High Wolf, one of the Cheyenne go-betweens, reacted by grabbing Miles' collar and shouting: "You told us to try to get these people to come in and not be harmed. They are Indians like us. Why don't you talk to them?"<sup>75</sup> In the end, Miles acted on High Wolf's advice and talked Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce into surrendering.

The episode draws attention to the army's successful employment of friendly Indians to persuade hostiles to surrender. George Bent, the mixed-blood Cheyenne, knew that the surrender of Indians in the midst of an ongoing battle was a departure from the traditional intertribal warfare in which quarter was neither asked for nor given. Bent contended that it was only in the late 1870s that Indians began to surrender in battle. Such surrenders were "usually due to the efforts of the Indian scouts serving with the troops, who called out to the hostiles that they would not be killed or mistreated if they stopped fighting and gave themselves up."<sup>76</sup> Ironically, then, instead of exacerbating the brutalities of warfare, as many whites feared they would, the army's friendlies were often responsible for reducing bloodshed by facilitating the termination of hostilities.

The value of Indian scouts as mediators between hostile Indians and the frontier army was powerfully demonstrated in the final stages of the so-called Sioux Uprising of 1890 to 1891. The year before the Ghost Dance reached the Dakota Sioux, Lieutenant Casey had been authorized to train Northern Cheyennes as regular soldiers at Fort Keogh in Montana. But the fifty-six Cheyenne scouts trained ultimately proved more useful to the army because of their powers of persuasion than because of their military prowess. "Casey's Scouts" were not participants in the tragic events known as the Wounded Knee Massacre. But they personally saw the corpses of the Sioux vic-

tims, mostly women and children, and they condemned the conduct of the Seventh Cavalrymen responsible for the deaths.<sup>77</sup> After the massacre Casey's scouts communicated daily with the remaining Ghost Dancers, led by the defiant Oglala, Kicking Bear. As the scouts drummed home the idea that continued resistance was futile, growing numbers defected from Kicking Bear's camp. Finally, on January 16, 1891, Kicking Bear himself surrendered to General Miles at the Pine Ridge agency, ending the Sioux Uprising.

In 1877 the frontier army's Indian scouts and friendlies were critically important to several military commanders who attempted to get the great Oglala war leader Crazy Horse to surrender. These attempts involved the use of Indians who were Crazy Horse's traditional enemies and allies, as well as his relatives and fellow tribesmen. Late in 1876 Miles sent Indian runners from Fort Keogh to try to persuade Crazy Horse to surrender. On December 16, 1876, with his followers hungry, sick, demoralized, and dwindling in numbers, Crazy Horse was moving down the Tongue River toward Fort Keogh to accept the inevitable. The Oglala leader had sent a peace delegation of five headmen toward the post to learn Miles' terms. But Miles' Crow scouts, hunting in the nearby hills, spotted the Sioux delegation before the soldiers did. The Crows charged the delegates, killed all five, scalped the dead, and went whooping in triumph back to the post. Miles was furious with his Crows for depriving him of the honor of capturing Crazy Horse. He punished them by taking away their horses and sending the animals along with a gift of tobacco and a sincere apology to Crazy Horse. The Oglala leader refused the gifts and went back to the Powder River country to spend the rest of the winter.

From his headquarters at Camp Robinson General Crook was also anxious to win the honor of bringing Crazy Horse in. Crook sent the Brulé chief Spotted Tail, an uncle of Crazy Horse, to the Powder River camp of the Oglala. Spotted Tail did not find his nephew, but did learn from Crazy Horse's father that the Powder River camp of about four hundred lodges of Cheyennes and Oglalas planned to go into the Red Cloud agency as soon as weather permitted. Crook was delighted with the news.

When the Oglala chief Red Cloud learned that his rival Spotted Tail, then chief of all the Sioux at the Red Cloud agency, was being credited with persuading Crazy Horse to

surrender, he was both angry and jealous. Lieutenant Clark, the military head of the Red Cloud agency was also jealous of a rival, namely Crook. Both Clark and Red Cloud hoped to win the honor of bringing Crazy Horse in. So Clark sent Red Cloud to Crazy Horse's camp with agency rations, gifts, and instructions to escort the recalcitrants in. Late in April of 1877, Red Cloud found Crazy Horse with over five hundred followers moving slowly toward the agency. Historian Stephen Ambrose accurately summed up the situation when he wrote: "Spotted Tail had stolen Crazy Horse from Miles for Crook; now Red Cloud was to steal Crazy Horse from Spotted Tail for Clark."<sup>78</sup> On May 6, 1877, Crazy Horse surrendered for the first and last time to Lieutenant Clark.

That the army's control over a Sioux faction—Crook had sixty Sioux scouts with him in his winter campaign of 1876 to 1877—helped persuade Crazy Horse's band to give up is evident from the remark of former Commissioner of Indian Affairs George W. Manypenny. As Manypenny recalled, High Bear, one of Crazy Horse's followers, stated at the time of the band's surrender: "You sent for us to come in, and we knew that some of our people were with you, and we did not wish to fight them, and so we came."<sup>79</sup> The day after Crazy Horse's capitulation, Miles first used the Cheyennes as scouts in an expedition up the Rosebud that crushed Lame Deer's band of Miniconjou Sioux. Lame Deer's defeat marked the end of the Great Sioux War.

One of the most intriguing issues relating to the frontier army's use of Indian scouts, allies, and auxiliaries is the question of why Indians lent their services to an institution whose mission was the conquest of America's aboriginal inhabitants. Undoubtedly, each Indian had his own reasons for choosing to assist the frontier army. It is evident from anecdotal evidence, however, that many eagerly lent assistance to the army in order to strike a blow at their traditional intertribal enemies. As historian Thomas W. Dunlay states:

Historical emphasis on Indian-white conflict tends to obscure the fact that Indians interacted long before white contact became significant. Intertribal conflicts and alliances had an importance often more immediate than any problems or pressures created by whites. For many Indians an alliance with the army offered hope of turning the tables on a powerful enemy who represented an immediate and obvious menace.<sup>80</sup>

Rush Roberts, whose Pawnee name was Ahrekahrard, interviewed when he was ninety-five years old, recalled that he had enlisted in North's famous battalion of Pawnee scouts "because the Sioux and Cheyennes were our enemies and I had this chance to operate against them."<sup>81</sup>

As for those Indians whom the army used against their own people, it should be recognized that such scouts and auxiliaries normally believed that by assisting the army they could actually serve their kin. James J. Cook, an army scout himself, recognized that Indian scouts "employed to lead soldiers against their own parents and relatives" were *not* "traitors to their own people." Instead, they were, as Cook saw it, "generally" men "endowed with sense enough to see that there was absolutely no use in the Indians fighting against the white soldiers." The scouts wisely realized that the whites were too numerous and that "there could be but one ending—the Indian would be exterminated."<sup>82</sup>

The two Chiricahua Apache scouts Martine and Kayitah are cases in point. In 1886, hoping to see Apache resistance come to an end, they volunteered both to seek out Geronimo's renegades in Mexico and to induce them to talk with Miles about surrender. Both aims were accomplished. The daring scouts found Geronimo and succeeded in persuading him to surrender for the final time.

Indian scouts also hoped that in the frontier army's campaigns against their own people, situations would arise in which they could be of assistance to their relatives and friends. Such situations often occurred. Jason Betzinez, a cousin and lifelong associate of Geronimo, recounted that in early September of 1877 the principal Warm Springs Apache chiefs Victorio and Loco led a band of 310 of their tribe and some Chiricahuas in a break from their confinement on Arizona's San Carlos Reservation. Soon soldiers and Apache scouts from neighboring Fort Thomas were on their trail. The pursuers overtook and captured several families whom they returned to the hated San Carlos. But, as the nearly one-hundred-year-old Betzinez remembered, the Apache scouts empathized with the fugitives and permitted most of them to return to the more congenial Warm Springs Reservation without further molestation.<sup>83</sup>

Indian scouts often found themselves in situations where they could restrain the army's harshness or where they could selectively enforce the soldiers' orders to the benefit of their Indian relatives and friends. Scouts also found that army ser-

vice enabled them to be helpful to their own people in a variety of other ways. James Kaywaykla, a Warm Springs Apache whose stepfather, Kaytennae, was a scout for the frontier army, offered additional reasons why Indians enlisted even when the army was campaigning against their own people. Kaywaykla remarked that when his stepfather was asked why he had joined the scouts, he [Kaytennae] explained that he had learned English well enough to "see to it that the interpreters did not twist the meaning of the messages they conveyed to the cavalry," and that army service also enabled him to "check on the scouts" themselves.<sup>84</sup>

Undoubtedly, Indians also enlisted because the army provided one of the few opportunities for gainful employment available to reservation and off-reservation Indians. Most Indians lived a hand-to-mouth existence without such work. Soldier, an Arikara scout stationed at Fort Stevenson, admitted that "the sight of the green paper money" in his hands made his heart leap with happiness.<sup>85</sup> After their discharge from the army the Indian scouts received pensions. In 1931 Wooden Leg claimed that he and a few other Northern Cheyennes who had served as army scouts were the rich men of their tribe because of these pensions. Owing to his service as a scout at Fort Keogh, Wooden Leg subsequently received pension money each month. In his words: "For a while it was twenty dollars monthly. Then it was increased to thirty dollars. Now [1931] it is forty dollars. As I grow older it will be further increased."<sup>86</sup> As late as 1967, John Stands In Timber, a Northern Cheyenne whose grandfather was killed in the Battle of the Little Bighorn, knew two Cheyenne widows who were still drawing pensions because of their husbands' service as army scouts.<sup>87</sup>

Furthermore, the scouts' families were entitled to other fringe benefits. John Rope, a Western Apache who enlisted on the San Carlos Reservation, was delighted because his spouse as well as the other scouts' wives were each allowed to draw out five dollars' worth of supplies monthly from the commissary at Fort Thomas.<sup>88</sup> Chris, a Mescalero Apache whose father joined a company of scouts which twice overtook Geronimo's renegades, remembered that the government gave the scouts' families tools and fences that enabled his father to become a small farmer.<sup>89</sup>

Another economic incentive for enlistment or lending assistance to the army was the hope to gain plunder, especially horses, from the defeated hostiles, or for that matter from

whites. In 1877 General Howard made use of about twenty Bannock scouts in his efforts to overtake Chief Joseph's runaway Nez Perce. Howard had great difficulty in controlling the Bannocks, who helped themselves to forty horses belonging to whites along the route of their march. The angry Howard imprisoned his Bannocks in a guarded tent until all of the horses had been returned to their rightful owners.<sup>90</sup> The army also asked the Crows to help run down Chief Joseph's fugitives. But the Crows had been longtime friends of the Nez Perce and were unwilling to shed their blood. Leforge recounted that although the army's Crow scouts "affected to array themselves against the Nez Percés," in reality "their warlike operations were restricted to the capture of ponies."<sup>91</sup>

The Crow chiefs informed Lieutenant Gustavus Doane that one of their major reasons for assisting the army in its campaign against the Sioux and Cheyenne in 1877 was to adopt and assimilate any captive women and children.<sup>92</sup> The Crow desire to maintain their population at a critical mass by adopting enemy captives exemplifies the complexity of Indian motives for assisting the frontier army.

Army service also afforded Indian men, many of whom took great pride in their personal courage and martial skills, an opportunity and the means to demonstrate their valor and military prowess. Normally their arms were taken from them at the time they took up residence on a reservation. James Kaywaykla was keenly aware of the importance to a warrior of being singled out by the army for his fighting ability and also of having a rifle. In Kaywaykla's words: "Ours was a race of fighting men—war was our occupation. A rifle was our most cherished possession. And though the scouts were permitted to have only five bullets at a time, and had to account for each one fired, a weapon is a weapon. And, believe me, there was not a man who did not envy the scout his rifle."<sup>93</sup> Service with the army thus enabled many an Indian scout to regain his self-esteem.

Eugene Chihuahua, a Chiricahua Apache whose father, Chihuahua, signed on as a scout at Fort Apache, echoed Kaywaykla's sentiments in stating that one reason his father had enlisted was to obtain a rifle and ammunition. But in the son's mind the paramount motive for his father's enlistment was that he "could leave his wife and children and know that they would be protected." Chihuahua also enlisted, according to his son, because he "didn't like living on a reservation."<sup>94</sup>

It is apparent that many Indians shared Chihuahua's aversion to reservation life. One reason that Kaywaykla enrolled as a scout for Crook was because it was, in his words, "a relief from the dreary, monotonous existence of the reservation."<sup>95</sup> Grinnell affirmed that four hundred Pawnee males eagerly hoped to enlist under Frank North in 1876 because of the harsh realities of their lives on the reservation. "Each man," said Grinnell, "at any cost, sought to get away from the suffering of his present life; from the fever that made him quake, the chill that caused him to shiver, and above all from the deadly monotony of the reservation life."<sup>96</sup>

It is also evident that some Indians hoped that by supporting the frontier army they would ingratiate themselves with the power that would ultimately prevail and determine their fates. Kaywaykla lamented that Chato, a Chiricahua, enlisted as a scout because he "invariably allied himself with what he thought would be the winning side," so as to reap the spoils of victory.<sup>97</sup> No Indian better understood the benefits that his people had derived from aligning themselves with the whites than the great Crow chief and army scout Plenty Coups. He was later overjoyed that his people had early realized that the white men "were strong, without number in their own country, and that there was no good in fighting them." As Plenty Coups saw it, the Crow chiefs' decision to help the whites was reached,

not because we loved the white man who was already crowding other tribes into our country, or because we hated the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe, but because we plainly saw that this cause was the only one which might save our beautiful country for us. When I think back my heart sings because we acted as we did. It was the only way open to us.<sup>98</sup>

No treatment of Indian motives for rendering assistance to the frontier army would be complete without the recognition of a crucial but generally ignored historical fact: The frontier army often employed coercion to obtain compliance from the so-called friendlies. To be sure, some friendlies longed for a return to the warrior's life, and there were many instances when Indians were more than willing to help the army defeat old tribal enemies, along with the previously mentioned motives that encouraged voluntary enlistments. But army commanders also commonly relied on intimidation, compulsion, the offer of

bribes, and on the abject dependence of reservation Indians to acquire their services. The army's strong-arm tactics are not surprising. Commissioned and noncommissioned officers generally sought to win unquestioning obedience to orders by instilling in white private soldiers fear of the punishments for disobedience. No Indian would have been considered deserving of less drastic measures to obtain compliance.

During the Civil War, Brigadier General James H. Carleton, commander of the Military Department of New Mexico, decided to resettle the Navajo people on empty land along the Pecos River in the southeast corner of New Mexico. Carleton ordered his subordinate, Colonel Christopher "Kit" Carson, to round up the Navajo and send them to their assigned reservation known as the Bosque Redondo in the shadow of Fort Sumner. Both Carleton and Carson attempted to pressure other Indian peoples of the Southwest into assisting the army to round up the Navajos. On September 19, 1863, Carleton ordered Carson to "seize six of the principal men of the Zuni Indians and hold them as hostages until all the Navajos in and near their village are given up, and all stolen stock surrendered." Carleton told Carson to assure the Zunis "that if I hear that they help or harbor Navajos, .... I will as certainly destroy their village as sure as the sun shines."<sup>99</sup>

Carson made effective use of the Zunis, about two hundred Ute Indian allies, and even managed to intimidate Hopi villagers into aiding Carleton's troops. On December 6, 1863, Carson wrote to the army's assistant adjutant general stating that he had succeeded in obtaining warriors from all but one of the Hopi villages to accompany him "on the warpath." Carson explained that his object "in insisting" that Hopis help him "was simply to involve them so far that they could not retract—to bind them to us, and place them in antagonism to the Navajos."<sup>100</sup> With the important help of his Indian scouts, spies, and fighting allies, Carson forced about eight thousand Navajos to the Bosque Redondo.

The frontier army's most famous Indian scouts were the North brothers' Pawnee battalion. In 1864 when the first company of carefully picked Pawnee warriors was selected to join the troops at Fort Kearny in a common struggle against Sioux and Cheyenne raiders, the Pawnee people were in wretched condition. Confined to a tiny reservation in eastern Nebraska from which they could not leave without written passes, the Pawnees were starving and destitute. They had exhausted their

stores of corn, beans, and dried pumpkins. The reservation's government farmer and his helpers had planted forty acres so negligently that nothing came up. Many Pawnee children had died of measles and diphtheria. When the tribe started for the buffalo range south of the Platte to obtain meat, their enemies the Sioux, Cheyennes, Arapahos, and Kiowas awaited their arrival. The troops along the Platte endangered the Pawnees because the soldiers were rarely able to distinguish friendly Indians from the hostile tribes. The Pawnees were virtually dependent upon the support of the United States government. Their treaty annuities were not paid to their agent in cash, but in such articles as blankets and Indian cloth, so Agent Benjamin F. Lushbaugh had no money to buy food for his hungry charges. Small wonder that in August of 1864 seventy-six Pawnee men were eager to enlist for monthly pay and the opportunity to punish their tribal enemies. The Pawnees had virtually no choice but to perish or to assist the frontier army and hope that their service would win them government favors in return. Such pitiful Indian wards of the federal government were not truly free to reject the army's call for their support.

The army's experiment in recruiting the Pawnees was so successful that Frank North enlisted a new company later in 1864. They joined Brigadier General Patrick E. Connor's Powder River expedition against the hostile Oglala and Miniconjou Sioux and Northern Cheyennes, and in the opinion of historian George E. Hyde, they "performed the best service" of the thousands of troops employed:

They found the trails, followed them, and located the hostile camps. They waylaid war parties of Cheyennes and Sioux coming home from raids on the stage line, attacked them, defeated them, and recovered most of the horses, mules, and other plunder in their possession. When the Arapaho village was attacked, it was the Pawnees who found the village and stampeded the Arapaho ponies. When Colonel Nelson Cole and Colonel Samuel Walker with their large columns of troops were in danger of complete destruction on Powder River, it was the Pawnees who found them and brought them the hope of succor.<sup>101</sup>

As bad as conditions were for the Pawnees in Nebraska during the late 1860s and early 1870s, their problems actually worsened after their involuntary move to Indian Territory. In

November 1874 their Quaker agent William Burgess traveled south to Indian Territory to select a new homeland for the tribe. The last contingent of Pawnees arrived on their new reservation one year later. When the Norths appeared at the Pawnee agency in the summer of 1876 to recruit another company of scouts for the army's campaign against the unconquered Sioux, the brothers found the tribe much worse off than it had been in Nebraska. Once again George Hyde furnishes the salient impressions:

They [the Norths] found nearly all the Pawnees sick, mostly with chills and fever and lung complaints. These Indians ... were living in complete idleness, partly forced on them by the impracticable schemes of the Indian Office, partly due to the people having lost heart completely. They were living in tattered and very dirty canvas tents, because the Indian Office idealists wanted model farmhouses and would accept nothing else. The people had little food and evidently had been half-starved ever since coming south. They had no clothing, most of the Indians, young and old, having nothing beyond thin cotton sheets, which they draped about their naked bodies. All their great herd of horses and mules had disappeared, stolen by Indian and white thieves. They had sold or traded all their weapons to obtain a little more food; an involuntary act of disarmament that had delighted the Quaker pacifists who were in charge of the tribe but had completed the heartbreak of this warrior people. There was no school, and the death rate among the Pawnees, particularly the children, was a shocking thing.<sup>102</sup>

Given their grievous woes and their absolute dependence on the federal government for relief, who could seriously believe that the Pawnees were free to reject an invitation to serve in the army, the military agent of the institution that represented their best hope of deliverance?

Predictably, in 1876 the Norths signed up one hundred Pawnee men as fast as their names could be recorded. At least two hundred more were eager to enlist, but to their enormous disappointment they could not be accommodated. The scouts who enlisted were particularly helpful to MacKenzie in his attack on Dull Knife's Cheyenne camp. They were mustered out in April 1877. No more Pawnee scouts served the frontier

army after that time. During the period that they served under the North brothers (1865 to 1877) they never suffered a military defeat. They were, in Grinnell's estimation "far better than any white soldiers that ever fought on the plains."<sup>103</sup>

Tragically, the sufferings of the reservation Pawnees were all too common on other Indian reservations in the late nineteenth century. Captain J. Lee Humfreville, a retired cavalry officer, lamented that reservation Indians were "literally cabined, cribbed and confined." They were forced to "subsist on rations doled out to them with niggardly hand by government agents." Humfreville deplored the fact that reservation Indians had become "miserable specimens of humanity, with hardly enough to eat, not enough clothing to cover their bodies, and with inadequate means of shelter."<sup>104</sup> Congress too often made pitifully small appropriations thereby causing such unconscionable shortages on the nation's reservations.

One such exploited reservation tribe from which the frontier army recruited valuable scouts was the Osage. In his winter campaign of 1868, Custer relied on his Osage guides and trailers to lead the Seventh Cavalry to victory over Black Kettle's Cheyenne village on the banks of the Washita. The Osage tribe was troubled by many misfortunes at that time. Their agent, George C. Snow, wrote to the superintendent of Indian affairs on January 13, 1868: "I find that most of the Little Osages and many of White Hair's town are *very destitute*. They are near suffering for provisions.... *Something must be done for these people at once.*"<sup>105</sup>

President Andrew Johnson's solution to the Osages' problems was to appoint commissioners to negotiate a treaty calling for cession of their diminished reservation and trust lands in Kansas in exchange for new lands in Indian Territory. At the so-called Sturges Treaty council in the spring of 1868, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Nathaniel C. Taylor informed the Osage that if they did not sign, the Great Father in Washington would send them no more supplies and they would have to defend themselves against both white intruders and their traditional Plains Indian enemies. Taylor urged the Osage to agree promptly to the terms of the treaty so that they would get their choice of lands in the Cherokee country of the Indian Territory. To delay would ensure that other tribes would claim the best lands. The Osage refused to surrender their lands in Kansas but, doubtless in an effort to placate the government while earning pay, agreed to furnish scouts to Custer's Seventh Cavalry.<sup>106</sup>

After his victory in the battle of the Washita, Custer returned in triumph to Camp Supply and then resumed his campaign against the hostiles wintering along the Washita. With Sheridan's approval, Custer took along three Indian women captives for the purpose of "establishing communication with the hostile villages."<sup>107</sup> Custer's use of Indian captives draws attention to another facet of the frontier army's coercion of its Indian helpers, namely, impressment. Thus, in the summer of 1874, while exploring the Black Hills, Custer captured a Sioux Indian named One Stab and forced him to guide the military expedition through the unfamiliar country.<sup>108</sup> Even "the Christian General," O.O. Howard, resorted to the impressment of captured hostiles. In 1879, one of his lieutenants ran down marauding Indian horse thieves high up in Idaho's Seven Devils Mountains. As Howard told it, "several notorious Indians, prominent in the campaigns of 1877 and 1878, were in company with these marauders, and these Lieutenant Farrow, after capture, impressed as guides and scouts."<sup>109</sup>

General Sheridan was responsible for one of the most flagrant and unconscionable instances of the army's use of compulsion to get neutral tribes to lend their assistance to the troops. While campaigning against the Southern Cheyennes during the winter of 1868 to 1869, the frustrated Sheridan devised a strategy for a successful outcome. While in the field near Fort Cobb, Sheridan wrote to Sherman describing his strategy to subdue the hostiles and pointing out that Brigadier General William B. Hazen had approved it. Sheridan stated: "If they do not come in I will employ the Caddoes, the Washitas, and Asahebet's band of the Comanches against them, with my own forces, and will compel the other Comanches to go out against them, or will declare them hostile."<sup>110</sup>

Sheridan, who commanded the pivotal Military Division of the Missouri for a fourteen-year (1869 to 1883) period marked by intense Indian-white conflict, insisted that no Indians be allowed to assume a neutral position between the frontier army on the one side and the "hostiles" on the other. Each Indian tribe must actively support the army or be considered hostile. Sheridan's tactics are evident in his conduct during the Bighorn campaign of 1876. By the autumn of that year Crook was convinced that the pacified Sioux chiefs Red Cloud and Red Leaf were helping the hostiles. Crook decided that both Sioux leaders must be located where the army could scrutinize their actions. He ordered MacKenzie with eight troops of cavalry

from Camp Robinson to the Red Cloud agency on October 22. En route, MacKenzie was joined by Luther North and forty-two Pawnee scouts who had been rushed into action. MacKenzie then split his Fourth Cavalry command, sending four troops and half the Pawnees to Red Cloud's camp and the other four troops along with the remaining Pawnees to Red Leaf's.

The following morning, as Crook watched, MacKenzie's men surrounded the camps of both chiefs. The enclosed Indians offered no resistance and had to suffer the humiliation of being disarmed and dismounted. MacKenzie gave each of his Pawnees a pony and had the remainder driven away and sold. The final insult to the proud Red Cloud was to be told that the government now recognized Spotted Tail as the chief of all the Sioux. Having rendered Red Cloud and Red Leaf powerless, Crook felt relieved. He telegraphed Sheridan: "I feel this is the first gleam of daylight we have had in this business."<sup>111</sup> Sheridan's reply is particularly revealing of his views on fighting Indians. "Go right on disarming and dismounting every Indian connected with the Red Cloud Agency," he responded, "and if Spotted Tail and his Indians do not come up squarely, dismount and disarm them. There must be no half-way work in this matter. All Indians out there must be on our side without question, or else on the side of the hostiles."<sup>112</sup>

But despite Sheridan's orders, Crook did not continue disarming and dismounting the reservation Sioux. He had become convinced that the remaining bands connected with the Red Cloud agency were loyal to the army. It would be best, he believed, not to risk alienating them. Instead, Crook gave them the opportunity to prove their loyalty by assisting the army in its upcoming campaign against the defiant Crazy Horse and his followers. Crook succeeded in recruiting about four hundred Sioux from the Red Cloud agency and another one hundred from Spotted Tail's. When Colonel Wesley Merritt's troops joined him, Crook was ready for the culminating campaign against Crazy Horse.

The manner in which the army pressured Red Cloud to help bring Crazy Horse in exemplified its readiness to offer rewards for Indian cooperation and to threaten punishment for noncompliance. In the spring of 1877, Lieutenant William P. Clark summoned Red Cloud to Camp Robinson. Clark informed the Oglala chief that Crook was very unhappy with Spotted Tail for failing to furnish an adequate number of allies

for the army's expedition against Crazy Horse. Clark told Red Cloud that if he helped bring in Crazy Horse, the government would be disposed to allow the Oglalas to have an agency in their own country instead of being sent to Indian Territory or to a reservation along the Missouri where they feared white peoples' diseases would ravage them. Furthermore, if Red Cloud helped the army, Clark would work to restore the chief's former authority along with a military promotion and food for the Oglalas. As Clark put it:

... Gen. Crook is a friend of mine and if you do as I tell you I'll have him to reinstate you to your place; and I will make you First Sergeant; that is as high as I can place you, for it is the highest office in the Indian Scout Service; I have all the other chiefs on the Agency enlisted; but I will recognize you as the highest officer among the chiefs; so that you can have control of your people. I will assist you with all the rations you think you will need.<sup>113</sup>

Red Cloud welcomed Clark's offer and promptly set out to find Crazy Horse. Late in April 1877, Red Cloud found the great Oglala and his disheartened band moving slowly toward the agency. While Crazy Horse was held at Camp Robinson, Crook's officers began enlisting Sioux scouts to help round up Chief Joseph's Nez Perce fugitives. Crazy Horse, fearing that Sitting Bull's band in Canada was the army's true target, urged his followers to stay on the reservation; he also threatened to head north himself. Observing the turmoil, an alarmed Luther P. Bradley telegraphed Sheridan: "I think the departure of the scouts will bring on a collision here."<sup>114</sup> Sheridan responded by ordering Bradley to detain the scouts until Crook arrived at the Red Cloud agency. Upon arriving, Crook ordered Bradley to take Crazy Horse prisoner. Eight troops of the Third Cavalry and about four hundred Indians under Lieutenant Clark's command succeeded in arresting Crazy Horse at the Spotted Tail agency. That night, September 7, 1877, at Camp Robinson, Crazy Horse was stabbed to death while resisting the army's effort to cage him in a windowless three-foot by six-foot cell. Little Big Man, once among the most intransigent of Crazy Horse's followers, but by then a man determined to cooperate with his captors, had pinioned Crazy Horse's arms to his sides just before the fatal bayonet thrusts ended the Oglala's life. The older chiefs, among them Red Cloud, doubtless fearing the

removal of their people to Indian Territory or the dreaded Missouri River region as punishment for rebelliousness, reasserted their leadership and restored calm to end the crisis.<sup>115</sup>

The frontier army's conquest of the Sioux and Cheyennes on the northern Plains was largely the result of the important contributions of its Indian allies. Colonel Dodge, who participated in the final campaigns, claimed that the "hostiles" were conquered because of Crook's "genius, courage, and persistency." Crook had "dared, in spite of the wails of the humanitarians, to adopt the Roman method, and fight fire with fire." Dodge pointed out that Crook had enlisted three hundred "friendly" Indians, who, "acting in conjunction with the troops, so beleaguered the hostile savages, that their combination was soon broken up."<sup>116</sup> Because the Sioux and Cheyenne reservations had been removed from the Indian Bureau's grip and placed under the control of the War Department, Crook was able to seize the opportunity to recruit Indian warriors and scouts. George Hyde, often called "the dean of Indian historians," argued that Crook "had practically forced the Sioux to serve as scouts."<sup>117</sup>

The reformer, George Manypenny, contended that Crook had deceived the Indians at the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail agencies into believing that they were enlisting to campaign against the so-called Northern Indians (usually a term applied to the non-agency bands), not against their own people.<sup>118</sup> Historian Mari Sandoz maintained that Crook's subordinate, MacKenzie, failed to tell his Cheyenne scouts that they were on their way to attack their relatives in Dull Knife's camp on the Powder River late in November 1876. Upon learning en route of their true quarry, the scouts strongly objected. Crook and MacKenzie quieted their Cheyennes, wrote Sandoz, "with the promise to work for a good agency for all the Cheyennes."<sup>119</sup> Having received this promise, the Cheyenne scouts led the soldiers, together with the Pawnee battalion, to Dull Knife's village and helped destroy it. Then to their anguish the defeated Northern Cheyennes were sent to new homes in Indian Territory. There they died in alarming numbers during the winter of 1877 to 1878. Finally, in September 1878, chiefs Dull Knife and Little Wolf fled northward with about three hundred desperate followers. After dividing in Nebraska, Little Wolf's adherents managed to elude the troops during the winter of 1878 to 1879. By late March 1879, largely because of the efforts of Miles' Cheyenne scouts under Two Moon, Little Wolf's band

was forced to give up. The able-bodied men in the band were enlisted as army scouts. One of those Cheyenne scouts later told Grinnell: "My friend, I was a prisoner of war for four years, and all the time was fighting for the man [Miles] who had captured me."<sup>120</sup>

That unknown Cheyenne scout accurately characterized his own status as well as that of hundreds of other Indian scouts, allies, and auxiliaries. They were prisoners of war pure and simple. Occasionally, soldiers in the frontier army acknowledged that disagreeable truth. Lieutenant Clark, himself a commander of Indian scouts, referred to the nearly five hundred Cheyennes located at or near Fort Keogh in the early 1880s as "prisoners of war."<sup>121</sup> Most army officers preferred to view such Indian friendlies as willing volunteers who served the army of their own accord, by their free choice, and without compulsion or obligation. Such was by no means the case. Perhaps the army officers' prevailing illusion helps to explain why Sheridan declined to approve Lieutenant Richard Henry Pratt's recommendation to enlist as scouts fifty or sixty Indian prisoners confined in the damp recesses of Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida.<sup>122</sup>

In conclusion, it should be stated that Indian scouts, allies, and auxiliaries were unquestionably essential supplements of the frontier army in its struggles against hostile Indians in the late nineteenth century. Richard Irving Dodge was categorically correct when he declared that the army's Indians were "invaluable, indeed indispensable to success against Indians."<sup>123</sup> Unfortunately for the frontier army, its commanders were slow to realize the vital importance of their Indian associates. Initially, proud military commanders thought that the dependence on large numbers of Indian allies would suggest that the army had grave deficiencies. Some commanders also considered the friendlies deficient in soldierly attributes, uncontrollable, and liable to commit atrocities. Furthermore, there were often genuine doubts about the true loyalties of the so-called friendlies. In the end, however, hard necessities compelled the frontier army to rely heavily upon Indian scouts, allies, and auxiliaries.

They performed beyond the army's highest expectations, routinely exceeding the achievements of white regular soldiers. Lieutenant Britton Davis, for instance, called attention to the deficiencies of regular troops that stood in stark contrast to the abilities of the Apache scouts who ran down Geronimo's rene-

gades in their hideouts in Mexico's Sonoran mountains:

... we found that to wear the hostiles down with regular troops was impossible. Without Apache scouts they [the soldiers] could not follow the trails; nor had they the endurance to keep up with the scouts in these mountains where the scouts had been born and bred. They were only a hindrance to rapid movement where rapid movement was essential to success. As well match Londoners against the Alpine Swiss.<sup>124</sup>

Officers like Hugh Lenox Scott who were very sympathetic towards and supportive of their Indian troops and were in turn respected and appreciated by their Indian charges were, of course, apt to be the most convinced of their value. Scott, a second lieutenant in the Seventh Cavalry in 1877, received orders from Miles to take ten soldiers and thirty-five Northern Cheyenne scouts from Fort Keogh west to Montana's Musselshell River where Sitting Bull's followers were said to be raiding from their base in Canada. Scott learned much from his Indian scouts while gaining a profound respect for their abilities. As a retired major-general he fondly recalled the assignment in a revealing passage:

Among the Cheyennes were Two Moons [sic], Little Chief, Hump, Black Wolf, Ice (or White Bull), Brave Wolf, and White Bear—some of the cream of the Northern Cheyennes, who had fought against Custer the year before and had surrendered to General Miles from the hostile camps but recently. My friends cheerfully advised me not to go with them, saying that they had just surrendered, and that they had only to shoot me and run over the Canadian border to Sitting Bull, where they could not be punished; if I went with them the chances were I would not come back. But I never felt that way toward them. They were all keen, athletic young men, tall and lean and brave, and I admired them as real specimens of manhood more than any body of men I have ever seen before or since. They were perfectly adapted to their environment, and knew just what to do in every emergency and when to do it without any confusion or lost motion. Their poise and dignity were superb; no royal person ever had more assured manners. I watched their every movement, and

learned lessons from them that later saved my life many times on the prairie.<sup>125</sup>

Scott's words not only demonstrate that his fellow officers' distrust of the Northern Cheyenne scouts was unjustified, but also call attention to another often overlooked reality. The Northern Cheyenne scouts who so favorably impressed Scott were actually prisoners of war who had virtually no realistic choice but to accept their assignment. Such prisoners, as well as the nation's reservation Indians, were powerless, deprived of their freedom and homelands, and utterly dependent on the federal government for their most elementary needs. Confined to generally undesirable lands, the reservation Indians could not even leave their confinements without official permits from unsympathetic authorities. Moreover, even the measly parcel of land assigned to them might at any time be further reduced in size or expropriated altogether if they were not cooperative.

## NOTES

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3. *Report of the Secretary of the War*, 40th Congress, 3rd Session, in John M. Carroll, ed., *General Custer and the Battle of the Washita: The Federal View* (Bryan, TX: Guidon Press, 1978), 4.

4. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*, 491.

5. *Ibid.*, 492.

6. *Ibid.*, 432.

7. Thomas W. Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers: Indian Scouts and Auxiliaries with the United States Army, 1860-90* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 77.

8. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*, 570.

9. George Crook, *General George Crook: His Autobiography* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1946), 213.

10. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*, 563-64.

11. Time-Life Books, *The Old West: The Soldiers* (New York: Time-Life Books, 1973), 116; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 44, 50.

12. Thomas W. Dunlay rightly points out that "the greatest cause for doubt of the [Indian] scouts' loyalty was the so-called Cibicu mutiny of 1881, in which Apache scouts actually turned on their white comrades on the field of battle." See *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 170.

13. John M. Schofield, *Forty-Six Years in the Army* (New York: The Century Co., 1897), 488-89.
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20. Crook, *Autobiography*, 214; Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 188.
21. Superintendent S.M. Janney to Commissioner E.S. Parker, February 17, 1870, in *Letters Received, Pawnee Agency, 1859-80*, Record Group 75, National Archives and Record Service, Washington, D.C.
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23. Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 188.
24. Britton Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929), 214.
25. Tom Horn, *Life of Tom Horn Government Scout and Interpreter* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 201-02.
26. Joe DeBarthe, *Life and Adventures of Frank Grouard* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 166.
27. Nelson A. Miles, *Serving the Republic* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911), 143-44.
28. Philip Sheridan to Robert Lincoln, Secretary of War, in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Indian Affairs, *Report of the Committee on Indian Affairs on the Advisability of a Military School for Indians...*, 48th Congress, 2nd session, Senate Report no. 348 (1884), 1-2.
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30. Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 23.
31. Oliver O. Howard, *My Life and Experiences Among Our Hostile Indians* (New York: DeCapo Press, 1972), 431-33.
32. Quoted in Stanley Vestal, *Warpath: The True Story of the Fighting Sioux Told in a Biography of Chief White Bull* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1934), 185.
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35. Frank B. Linderman, *Plenty-Coups, Chief of the Crows* (Lincoln: Universi-

ty of Nebraska Press, 1930), 171-72.

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37. Eve Ball, *An Apache Odyssey: Indeh* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1980), 113.

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39. Margaret Irvin Carrington, *Absaraka Home of the Crows* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 117, 160-63.

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42. Ball, *Days of Victorio*, 33.

43. Joe. F. Taylor, "The Indian Campaign on the Staked Plains, 1874-1875: Military Correspondence from War Department Adjutant General's Office, File 2815-1874," *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review* 34 (1961): 211-13.

44. Nelson A. Miles, *Personal Recollections and Observations* (Chicago: Werner Co., 1896), 277.

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46. Ball, *Apache Odyssey*, 191. It should be noted that the frontier army's Indian scouts were distinct from the reservations' Indian police forces, sanctioned by Congress in 1878. But the Indian police served the Interior Department's Indian agents on the reservations with the same faithfulness as that of the off-reservation Indian scouts under the auspices of the War Department. In 1891, Massachusetts Senator Henry L. Dawes, author of the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887, stated that "no white police in any city in the United States has been more faithful to its duties than the Indian police on the reservations. That is the testimony of all who have had anything to do with the Indians." See *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian* (Philadelphia: The Lake Mohonk Conference, 1891), 47.

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75. Stands In Timber and Liberty, *Cheyenne Memories*, 228.
76. Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 296.
77. Marquis, *Cheyenne and Sioux*, 43.
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85. O.G. Libby, ed., *The Arikara Narrative of the Campaign Against the Hostile Dakotas June, 1876* (New York: Sol Lewis, 1973), 46. James Tangled Yellow Hair, a

Cheyenne scout and member of Two Moon's band, which surrendered to General Nelson A. Miles at Fort Keogh in 1877, claimed that the fifty-six Cheyenne scouts each received pay of \$25.30 per month. See Marquis, *Cheyenne and Sioux*, 39.

86. Marquis, *Wooden Leg*, 373.
87. Stands In Timber and Liberty, *Cheyenne Memories*, 231.
88. Grenville, *Western Apache Raiding and Warfare* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1971), 104.
89. Morris E. Opler, *Apache Odyssey: A Journey between Two Worlds* (Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), 49.
90. Howard, *My Life and Experiences*, 365-69.
91. Marquis, *Memoirs of a White Crow*, 129.
92. Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers*, 114.
93. Ball, *Days of Victorio*, 80, 156.
94. Ball, *Apache Odyssey: Indeh*, 47.
95. Ball, *Days of Victorio*, 80.
96. Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero Stories*, 399.
97. Ball, *Days of Victorio*, 156.
98. Linderman, *Plenty-Coups*, 154.
99. Lawrence C. Kelly, *Navajo Roundup: Selected Correspondence of Kit Carson's Expedition Against the Navajo, 1863-1865* (Boulder, CO: The Pruett Publishing Company, 1970), 52.
100. *Ibid.*, 76.
101. George E. Hyde, *The Pawnee Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951), 272.
102. *Ibid.*, 339-40.
103. Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero Stories*, 322.
104. J. Lee Humfreville, *Twenty Years Among Our Hostile Indians* (New York: Hunter & Co., Publishers, 1899), 46.
105. John Joseph Mathews, *The Osages: Children of the Middle Waters* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 666.
106. *Ibid.*, 667-81.
107. George Armstrong Custer, *My Life on the Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 281.
108. Charles Windolph, *I Fought with Custer: The Story of Sergeant Windolph, Last Survivor of The Battle of the Little Big Horn* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 39-40.
109. Howard, *My Life and Experiences*, 427.
110. Senate Executive Document No. 18, 40th Congress, 3rd session in Carroll, ed., *General Custer and the Battle of the Washita*, 50.
111. Telegram, George Crook to Philip Sheridan, October 23, 1876, National Archives, Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Document File 4163, *Sioux War, 1876*.
112. *Ibid.*, telegram, Philip Sheridan to George Crook, October 25, 1876.
113. Quoted in James C. Olson, *Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), 238.

114. Telegram, Luther P. Bradley to Philip Sheridan, August 31, 1877, National Archives, Record Group 94, Document File 4163, *Sioux War, 1876*.

115. Olson, *Red Cloud*, 246. There is widespread disagreement about who killed Crazy Horse, but the most creditable account states that two bayonet wounds caused his death.

116. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*, 493-94.

117. Hyde, *The Pawnee Indians*, 337.

118. Manypenny, *Our Indian Wards*, 330.

119. Mari Sandoz, *Cheyenne Autumn* (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1953), 175.

120. George Bird Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), 428.

121. Clark, *Indian Sign Language*, 104.

122. Joe F. Taylor, "The Indian Campaign of the Staked Plains, 1874-1875," *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review* 24 (1961): 311-12, 356-57.

123. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*, 432.

124. Davis, *Truth About Geronimo*, 221-22.

125. Hugh Lennox Scott, *Some Memories of a Soldier* (New York: The Century Co., 1928), 51-52.