RICE UNIVERSITY

The Red River War of 1874

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Arts

Thesis Director's signature:

Houston, Texas

May 1972
ABSTRACT

THE RED RIVER WAR OF 1874

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My thesis is concerned with the Red River War of 1874. This campaign was the largest of the Indian Wars, but has been overlooked by many historians. The reasons for the war are found in the failure of the federal government to provide the Plains Indians with a viable way of life. Reconstruction had devoured the military assets of the United States, and the western frontier was inadequately protected from attack by roving bands of hostile Indians. The economic situation of the United States and the Indian nations was approaching disaster by 1874, and desperate solutions were necessary. The elements for a general outbreak of hostilities were present, and confrontation was imminent.

About five hundred warriors of several tribes attacked an outpost of buffalo hunters at Adobe Walls on June 27, 1874. The battle was indecisive, but the results far reaching, for the nomadic bands of red men had united for war. The U. S. Army prepared a summer offensive that included troops from five states. Numerous engagements in the Texas Panhandle in the summer and fall of 1874 brought fame and suffering to the men that fought there.

By 1875, the once powerful Plains Indians had been
defeated in spirit and in fact. Their leaders were forced into confinement and oblivion, and the tribes forced to live on reservations. The commanders of the formations that had defeated the Indians launched long, successful careers. The overall commander, Nelson Miles, became the highest ranking general in the army. Two of his subordinates in the campaign, Adna Chaffee and S.B.M. Young later served as the Army Chief of Staff.

Tactics and techniques that were developed during this campaign affected American military doctrine and practice for many years. The effects of the war on the people that fought it, were wide spread. It marked the demise of the Plains Indians as a military threat to settlement of the frontier. The experience in Indian warfare marked the beginning of years of similar duty for the soldiers of the frontier army.
I stumbled upon the subject of this monograph quite by accident. In doing some research on the activities of the 6th U. S. Cavalry in Texas during Reconstruction, I found references to an Indian War fought on the Panhandle in 1874. On further checking into the subject, I found that the Red River War of 1874 had been overlooked by most historians. The historiography was scarce with one important exception. In the years following World War I Wilbur Nye interviewed many of the Kiowa and Comanche braves that had fought in 1874. He published their stories in several volumes and gave the Plains Indians their first written history. After reading the Indian accounts of the war, my curiosity was completely aroused.

Why was there a war? What units were involved in the battles? What battles had been fought and where? What tactics did the cavalry use? What tactics did the Indians use, and what was their military capability? With these questions to answer, I plunged into my new field of research.

My first task was to find out what the conditions were in the United States in 1874. Ulysses S. Grant was President and a man with problems. The country was in the throes of an economic depression and Grant was being blamed by the people. His Cabinet was plagued with scandal and corruption. Grant was especially unpopular in the South after years of stifling Reconstruction. Along the frontier, Grant's policy of
'peaceful coexistence' with the Indians was failing and the settlers were fearful of an Indian war. The westward expansion of the country was hastened by railroads stretching out in all directions. The country was unsure of itself politically and economically, yet it looked to the future optimistically.

Plains Indians could not look to a brighter future. The white men seemed to be more numerous with each day. They settled on land that the Kiowa and Comanche tribes had fought for. The two races and their divergent cultures could never exist side by side.

Violence was under the surface, and the story of how that violence errupted and the answers to my questions about this forgotten war, I have attempted to delineate in the following chapters.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some of the people that offered advice or encouragement or both during the preparation of this monograph. Frank E. Vandiver was my chief advisor, guide, and mentor for the last two years, and I wish to thank him especially for his consideration. Ira D. Gruber and R. John Rath are thanked for their valuable suggestions.

To Colonel Clayton Gompf, I give special thanks for arousing my interest in the history of the 6th U. S. Cavalry. My deepest appreciation goes to my wife, Jackie, who understood my joy in finding a first hand account of a battle fought long ago by my old unit, Troop "F", 6th U. S. Cavalry. Her patience in typing my written notes and listening to my draft, made me appreciate her "a little more each day".
CHAPTER I

Pressures building since the Civil War finally drove the Kiowa, Comanche, and Cheyenne Indians to war in the spring of 1874. During the Civil War, the Plains Indians had been able to regain much of their land in the Texas Panhandle. Reconstruction in Texas reopened the frontier for settlement. Federal troops returned to the area, but were occupied with guarding Federal Agencies and unavailable for large offensive operations against Indians.

By 1868, the Indians were raiding the Texas Frontier with little fear of resistance by the United States Cavalry. The citizens of Texas were demanding protection by the Federal government, but the army did not have sufficient troops to fulfill the requirement. Finally, the Governor of Texas, J. W. Throckmorton, was authorized to recruit a para-military unit called a Frontier Battalion. The members of the unit were called Rangers and augmented the federal forces along the frontier.

A decision was made by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington to have a peace conference early in 1868 with the principal chiefs of the Plains Indians in an effort to avoid war. A spot on the banks of Medicine Lodge Creek, some seventy miles south of Fort Larned, Kansas, was selected. Escorted by five hundred soldiers and several artillery pieces, the Peace Commission came to meet with representatives of the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas, Prairie
Apaches, and the Comanches. The United States was represented by N. G. Taylor, Commissioner of Indian Affairs; John B. Henderson, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs; S. F. Tappan and John B. Sanborn, Indian Agents; and Major Generals William S. Harney, Alfred Terry, and C. C. Augur. They hoped that an agreement could be reached on territorial rights and avoid an Indian war.

An equally august group represented the Indians: the Kiowas by Satanta, their principal war chief; the Cheyennes by Roman Nose; the nomadic Comanches by a young war chief called Quanah. Another Kiowa Chief, Kicking Bird, represented the peace faction of his tribe.

Discussions between the Commission and the chiefs went on for several weeks. An agreement was finally reached and most of the chiefs put their mark on the piece of paper that became known as the Medicine Lodge Creek Treaty of 1868. The treaty set aside 5,546 square miles as a reservation and hunting ground for the Plains Indians. The economic and physical expansion of the frontier began to encroach upon the Indians' land within two years of ratification of the treaty by Congress.

There were approximately four thousand braves camped near Medicine Lodge Creek during the negotiations. Even though they outnumbered the soldiers they were poorly armed and had insufficient ammunition even for a buffalo hunt. The chiefs decided that a treaty would prevent starvation, because one of their stipulations was that the government
would provide them guns and ammunition to hunt game. Some of the smaller groups of Kiowa, Comanche, and Cheyennes refused to sign the treaty.

After the signing of the treaty, Black Kettle and Kicking Bird were invited to go to Fort Larned and meet the new "Star Chief," General Phil Sheridan. Black Kettle thought the new commander was built like an "Angry Bear" and was a little intimidated by his presence. Trying to obtain the necessary munitions as soon as possible for his people, Black Kettle asked Sheridan for an immediate issue of arms and ammunition. "Yes, give them arms and if they go to war my soldiers will kill them like men," snapped Sheridan.

Not to be outdone, Black Kettle replied, "Let your soldiers grow long hair, so that we can have some honor in killing them." Black Kettle was killed a few months later on the banks of the Washita River by soldiers led by a Colonel with long hair, George Custer. Most of the Indians had decided to spend the winter in Indian Territory.

The Plains Indians went to the reservation set aside for them and tried the white man's way of farming. Some of the tribes could adapt, but the Kiowas and Comanches felt that tilling the soil was woman's work. Braves were meant to hunt and wage war against their enemies, and not to perform manual labor around the camp. The men looked down upon the Wichita and Caddo Tribes because their men had become women. A single stroke of a pen had emasculated hundreds of warriors; the commissioners that had met at
Medicine Lodge Creek had not understood the fierce pride of the Plains Indian warrior in his masculinity.

By 1871, the old warriors were becoming more and more anxious to return to the "old ways." Starvation and unfulfilled promises could be rectified by raids on the Texas Frontier. White men were hated, but Texans especially were singled out as the cause of the Indians' problems. When the Indians moved to the Indian Territory, they abandoned thousands of acres of rich land that was quickly engulfed by the expanding Texas Frontier. Special railroad rates for immigrants lured 125,000 new settlers to Texas in 1874. Young Kiowa and Comanche braves wanted revenge against the Texans that were settling on their traditional tribal lands.

One of the Indians' favorite areas for raiding was the north central Texas Frontier, around Jacksboro, Texas. On one occasion, the usually peaceful Kicking Bird and his band attacked a mail wagon outside of Fort Richardson, Texas. Troopers of the 6th U.S. Cavalry under the command of Captain Curwen McLellan reacted to the attack and gave chase. Kicking Bird was a master tactitian and before the soldiers realized it, he had them flanked on both sides and blocked in front. The cavalrymen rode into the U-shaped ambush and were decimated.

Raids on the Texas Frontier were brought to the attention of the Commanding General of the Army, William T. Sherman. He visited the Texas Frontier in 1871 to see for himself if conditions were as bad as he had been told.
Early on the afternoon of May 18, 1871, Sherman's ambulance and cavalry escort under command of Lieutenant Richard Carter were near Salt Creek, twelve miles west of Fort Richardson. As Sherman's entourage rounded a bend in the road, it came under the observation of a party of Kiowas. Among the observers were Satanta, Satank, and Mamanti, sometimes known as Sky-Walker or The Dohate, a Kiowa mystic. The night before, Mamanti had seen two wagon trains in a vision. His medicine told him that the first column he was to let pass, but the second would hold much plunder and many horses and mules would be captured. Sherman's group was quite close now and would have been an easy conquest for the Kiowas, but Mamanti forbade an attack. The General of the Army continued on to Fort Richardson in ignorant bliss.

Mamanti's war party waited several hours, and then the creaking, slow moving wagons of a contract resupply train from Fort Sill bound for Fort Richardson came around the bend. The man in charge was Nathan S. Long, a civilian teamster. He was aware of Kiowa and Comanche raiding parties in the area, but he relaxed his vigilance as he approached the post.

Mamanti gave the word and Satanta raised the bugle that hung from his neck and blew the signal for the Kiowas to attack. The complete surprise cost seven civilians their lives. The young braves scalped the fallen men and set fire to the wagons after looting them. One of Long's men had been taken alive and was tied face down on a burning
wagon. Five teamsters escaped to a nearby thicket and made their way to Fort Richardson. Sherman now saw at first hand what the Texans had been complaining about. He also realized that he had been lucky to reach the fort alive, but he never found out that the mystical experience of a Kiowa medicine man had been his salvation. The General had one hundred and fifty cavalrymen sent after the attackers immediately.

Sherman set out for Fort Sill the next morning, not waiting for the results of the 4th Cavalry's pursuit. What awaited him at Fort Sill was a strange climax to the attack on Long's Wagon Train, and another step toward all out war with the Kiowas.

Satank and Satanta returned to the Reservation with their band after eluding the cavalry patrols for several days. General Sherman arrived at Fort Sill on May 22, 1871. He inquired of the resident agent, Lawrie Tatum, if any of the Kiowa or Comanche braves had been off the Reservation. That same day, Satanta and Satank with some of their followers came to the post to draw their weekly rations. When confronted by Sherman and Tatum, Satanta admitted raiding Long's Wagon Train and told them who was with him, with one exception. He said that he alone was the responsible leader of the raid. Mamanti, the Dohate, was not mentioned by any of the Kiowas as being present during the raid. Satanta, Satank, and several other chiefs were arrested by troopers of the 10th Cavalry. An unusual process approved
by General Sherman, permitted A. J. Davis, the Governor of Texas, to try the Kiowas at Fort Richardson. They were found guilty of murder by a jury of frontiersmen, from nearby Jacksboro, Texas, and were sentenced to serve life terms at the Huntsville State Penitentiary in Texas.

Satank and Satanta were loaded on an army wagon, with their hands and feet in shackles. As the vehicle and its escort left Fort Richardson, Satank began his death chant. The Kiowas and Comanches in the vicinity of the post understood what was about to happen. Within a couple of miles of the post, Satank had wrenched his hands through the manacles. He drew a small knife that he had hidden under his loin cloth, and attacked the guard nearest him. A shot rang out and its report drifted back to the post on the wind. Satank was dead but he had died as a warrior and not as a caged animal. To his people, Satank was a heroic warrior, and his death would not soon be forgotten by the Kiowas.10

Sherman and Sheridan now realized that a general outbreak of hostiles was inevitable. The U.S. Army was powerless to take offensive action against the Indian raiders unless the hostiles were caught off the reservation. President Grant had initiated a "Peace Policy" with the Indians to avoid open warfare. The Indians were granted territorial rights and protection under Peace Treaties ratified by Congress. Grant's Peace Policy and the conditions existing on the Southern Plains were incompatable. The expanding frontier encroached on land deeded to the tribes by treaty.
The Indians reacted by attacking the settlers and stealing livestock. After a raid, the warriors returned to the safety of the reservation. As raids increased in 1872 and 1873, it became obvious that the refuge of the reservation would eventually have to be violated.

Texas settlers reacted to the raids on their stock by reciprocal raids into Indian Territory. Some of the settlers recovered lost cattle by stealing them from Indian herds on the reservations. Besides the raids against the Indian herds, other frontiersmen threatened the traditional way of life of the Indians by slaughtering buffalo by the thousands. Some of the hunters were after the buffalo hides only; others were killing buffalo for meat to feed railroad laborers. The result was disastrous to the buffalo herds. The professional hunters accounted for 3,700,000 dead buffaloes between 1872 and 1874. During the same period, only 150,000 animals had been killed by the Plains Indians.11

By early 1874, the Indians realized that their way of life was slipping away from them. Satanta had been paroled in 1873 and constantly reminded his people of the wrongs done by the whites. Their lands and livestock were disappearing. Faced with starvation and poor living conditions, the braves looked upon the white settlers, particularly the Texans, as the basis for their problems, and the largest reason for their degradation. If the frontier could be driven back, there was a chance that the Indians could return to the "old ways", and the trend toward cultural
abasement reversed.

Federal authorities looked upon the Indian as an obstacle to westward expansion. Land granted by previous treaties was now needed for railroad right of way and homesteads. Some of the government representatives felt that the annihilation of the Indians was the ultimate solution. Logic and reason were replaced by frustration and hate and paved the route that led to the Red River War of 1874.
1. James Day and Dorman Winfrey, *Texas Indian Papers 1860-1916*, 70-71, 436. John B. Jones was commander of the first Frontier Battalion. Each battalion was composed of six companies of seventy five men each. Although recruited since 1868, the Frontier Battalion was not placed into service until May, 1874.


10. Robert G. Carter, *The Old Sergeant's Story*, 78 This is the version of the guard that killed Satank. Nye, *Carbine and Lance*, 146.

CHAPTER II

By Kiowa and Comanche law, any brave could lead a war party if he could convince his fellow warriors of the value and success of his mission. The recruiting was usually accomplished by the war leader going from camp to camp gathering his followers. The leader would pass his pipe among the assembled braves and narrate his concept of the operation. Those Indians approving of the leader and his tactics would signify so by smoking his pipe. The same procedure was followed without regard for the size or significance of the operation.¹

Bull Bear, the traditional war chief of the Quohadi Comanche, was dying of pneumonia.² A young opportunist in his band began to talk of war and revenge against the white settlers. He was tall and muscular for a Comanche. His frame was large and could have carried more weight, but lack of proper nutrition made him lean. The brave's black eyes looked out over deeply chisled cheek bones that gave him an almost oriental look. He wore his hair uncut and braided in the back with red ribbons woven into it. The sun had darkened his skin more than his fellow Comanches. Perhaps more handsome than the rest, he would strike a white traveler as a perfect specimen of the Indian race. His father had been a notorious raider during the ante-bellum period in Texas and the traditional war chief of the Comanches. There was however, a genealogical flaw in this young brave's background.
His mother had been a white captive named, Cynthia Ann Parker. Even though he bore none of her Caucasian physical characteristics, he was given her last name by his white enemies. Quanah Parker would start the war against the white invaders as the new principal war chief of the Comanches.

Quanah was an innovator in Comanche government. His first accomplishment was to unify the wandering bands of Comanches for a Sun Dance. Although Quanah was a half-breed, he had never agreed with the whites. In fact, he was one of the chiefs that had refused to sign the Medicine Lodge Creek Treaty and had never brought his people to a reservation. He appears to have had more intellect than his fellow tribesmen, and could grasp problems on a grander scale than his contemporaries.

Quanah Parker knew that the white settlers were becoming more numerous and powerful with each year. A coalition of all the Plains Indians against the invaders would be necessary if victory were to be assured. Messengers were sent across the plains to offer an invitation to Kiowas, Kiowa Apaches, and Southern Cheyennes to join the Comanches for the Sun Dance. The purpose of a Sun Dance was to prepare young men for war. Parker's plan was then to gather all of the tribes for a general council in order to discuss their common problems and grievances against the encroaching white men. Quanah wanted to bring the principal chiefs of the Plains Indians together to talk of war.
Quanah knew that his young braves were longing for war, and that maybe the other tribal chiefs would see this same desire for war in their young men, and unite their tribes with the Comanches for an all out war.

Comanches, like most Plains Indians, depended on prophets or mystics to solve domestic and tribal problems. A new prophet came forth in 1874 that claimed fantastic powers and an intimate friendship with the Great Spirit. This holyman had been given the name Isa-tai which roughly translates as Rear-end-of-a-wolf, or Coyote-droppings. At the great council, he sat next to Quanah. Isa-tai spoke of having ascended into the clouds to speak with the Great Spirit. He boasted of a red war paint he possessed that had magical powers. A brave who covered his body or that of his horse with this paint would be protected from the white man's bullets. His oratory dispelled many doubts held by the younger men. The problem of the scarcity of ammunition was easily solved by Isa-tai. He disclosed that he was able to regurgitate wagon loads of ammunition. There had never been a mystic as powerful as Isa-tai among the Comanches. Who would doubt the word of such a man?

Quanah advocated war against the whites. There were many things to be corrected, and much revenge to be taken. Quanah was a brilliant tactitian, but more importantly he had a grasp of strategy. Tradition and fate limited Quanah's plans to Isa-tai's forecasts and premonitions.

Quixotically, Quanah Parker wanted to attack Fort
Concho, Texas, and kill the Tonkawas that lived in the vicinity. The Tonkawas were hated by all Plains Indians. They had become scouts for the white soldiers and had guided them in attacks against the Plains Indians. There was also a belief among the Kiowas and Comanches that the Tonkawas preferred human flesh to buffalo, deer, or beef. The Tonkawas somehow received word of the impending attack and moved inside the post for protection. Quanah chose another objective for his braves; an objective that was symbolic and assured success for his people. Isa-tai agreed and prophesied a great victory. The camp of the buffalo hunters known as Adobe Walls would be the starting place for the war against the white invaders.

Adobe Walls was a place known to older Comanches. In 1864 a young frontiersman and his cohorts had fought off a Comanche war party there. The white leader, Kit Carson, later became known for his deeds as the army's chief of scouts. The sod houses that he and his thirty or forty companions had defended were now decaying mounds of dirt, spiked with rotten timbers. Some enterprising young men from Dodge City, Kansas had constructed an outpost about two miles north of Carson's post, and called it the new Adobe Walls.

Adobe Walls is not an accurate description of the construction of the outpost. The buildings were of sod construction with staked walls and a thick sod roof for coolness and water proofing. Beams and stringers were cut
and brought to the site from the banks of the East Adobe Walls Creek or from Bent's Creek. The type of wood used depended on availability and ease of procurement. Cotton wood, oak, plum, and beech trees grew nearby. The best stand of timbers grew along Bent's Creek. Two types of log construction was used for the buildings. Logs were placed horizontally, one upon the other, for the habitable buildings, and the out-buildings were constructed of logs placed vertically in the ground, one beside the other. The spaces between the logs were caulked with clay to keep out wind and rain. Openings were left for windows, however, the shutters necessary to secure the "windows" in case of attack were never completed. The buildings were not connected by earth or log walls. The post was designed for crude comfort rather than defense, and that fact would cost several men their lives.

Adobe Walls was a trading post for buffalo hunters. These men were legendary for their marksmanship with their heavy caliber guns. The guns were hefty and long and usually about fifty caliber. Center-fire cartridges utilizing black powder with a copper or brass case had been developed during the post war period. The purpose of the large caliber, long range, highly accurate weapons was to kill a bull or cow bison with a single shot. It was a matter of pure economics for the hunter. Ammunition was expensive, and damaged hides brought less than the usual $2 for a bull hide and a dollar for a cow hide.
In the Spring of 1874, the hunters that came to the Adobe Walls Camp were a highly colorful and mottly group. Some already held their place in frontier history. Among these colorful figures was a former mule skinner turned buffalo hunter, Billy Dixon. Dixon had come south to the Texas Panhandle in search of the diminishing buffalo herd. He spent the spring months south of Adobe Walls on a fruitless buffalo hunt with his two partners, Harry Armitage, an Englishman, and a skinner, known only as "Frenchy". Hunting was better when the herd came north in the early summer, and Billy took a wagon load of hides back to Adobe Walls to sell. He had to cross the rain swollen Canadian River on June 25, 1874, and in the process he lost his wagon and rifle. He met two men on the way to the outpost that told him the Comanches were raiding. Dixon bought a horse and a new buffalo gun at Adobe Walls and returned for his partners to get them to the relative safety of the Adobe Walls settlement. Several hunters had been killed by the Comanches and Kiowas in the vicinity, and it appeared to the frontier-wise men that a general outbreak of hostilities was imminent.

Other white men in the vicinity were also worried about an Indian war. The officers at Camp Supply, Indian Territory had received information that the Comanches were preparing for war. Amos Chapman was a scout working for the army who had some friends at Adobe Walls. He set out for the post accompanied by several soldiers to warn the
inhabitants. Chapman was a "squaw man"; his wife was a Cheyenne. A squaw man was never completely trusted by other whites because of his miscegenetic marriage. Amos was a student of human nature and knew better then to rush into the camp sounding the alarm thus causing panic among some, and distrust among others. When he arrived, Chapman surveyed the situation and made his decision. He decided that he would tell James Hanrahan about the danger.

Hanrahan had come south from Dodge City, Kansas, to help establish the trading post. He knew that the buffalo hunters would pay well for whisky, and envisioned a profitable business on the plains. He knew that the importation of liquor into the Indian hunting ground was against existing federal policy. The area in question legally belonged to the Indians under the treaty, and the hunters were encroaching on Indian rights. The hunters had obtained tacit approval from Major Richard Irving Dodge, the post commander at Fort Dodge, to hunt in the area "if that's where the buffalo were". Probably unknown to Hanrahan and his colleagues, General Sheridan had made the statement: "Let them kill, skin and sell until the buffalo is exterminated, as it is the only way to bring lasting peace and allow civilization to advance." So, with the very unofficial blessing of the government, Hanrahan came to Adobe Walls to buy and sell hides and provide some of the comforts of civilization. His presence at Adobe Walls on the night of July 26, 1874 probably saved the post from annihilation.
Hanrahan was one of several merchants from Dodge City, Kansas who had established trading posts and warehouses at the site. Corrals were built for the mules, oxen, and horses used by the freighters and hunters. Weapons, ammunition, and sundry items needed to outfit a hunting party were stocked. One of the merchants, Charles Rath, a partner of James Langton, built his store with two adjacent store houses that could be used as block houses in the event of an emergency. William Olds and his wife operated a restaurant adjacent to Rath's store. A well was dug in one of the picket corrals to provide water to the little settlement. A blacksmith shop was operated by James O'Keefe between Hanrahan's saloon and a second store run by A. C. Myers and Fred Leonard. The merchants and hunters were more interested in profits than any threats made by the presence of hostile Indians. There was not any plan for defense against attack, but sufficient supplies were on hand to hold out against a siege, however that was coincidental.

Increasing indications of an Indian War drove buffalo hunters to the settlement. The position had not been improved to provide better defense, during the period of increased tension. Some of the hunters planned to leave for Dodge City with wagons filled with hides, while others strengthened their faltering courage at Hanrahan's saloon. Hanrahan suddenly found himself faced with a greater leadership problem than Irish bartenders are used to. His charges were now twenty-eight men and one woman in the camp.
He knew that the moon on the night of June 26th would be full, thus enabling the Comanches to approach the settlement easily. A sudden announcement of Chapman's message would have caused panic and sent the inhabitants fleeing north to Dodge City and probably death in route. Hanrahan knew the hunters were fine marksmen and well armed, and that there was more than an adequate supply of ammunition because a freighter with weapons and ammunition had recently arrived from Dodge City. The people at Adobe Walls tended to minimize the danger, and considered posting sentries or lookouts at night as an unnecessary loss of sleep. Hanrahan used his wits and planned a unique call to arms for his charges.

Some of the hunters preferred sleeping under the stars than under a sod roof. Billy Dixon was one of these. The night was clear and warm and the full moon illuminated the flat expanse of the Panhandle. Dixon was planning to take some pelts to Dodge in the morning anyway and by sleeping outside, he would not disturb the others when he left early. The Shadler brothers, Ike and Shorty, slept in their wagon that night for the same reason. Dixon was near the blacksmith shop and the Shadlers were near the north corral. The still night was shattered from time to time by the hooting of owls and the mournful wailing of coyotes. The camp was quiet now. Several hunters were sleeping on the floor of Hanrahan's saloon. About 2 A.M. on June 27th, a loud crack or pop rent the air and Hanrahan yelled, "the ridge pole's breaking! Quick! Get out!" The dazed and bewildered men
ran out as fast as they could in the darkness and confusion. The clamor and mayhem aroused the remainder of the sleeping camp. The ridgepole was propped up and some of the sod removed from the roof to ease the strain on the cotton wood ridge pole. Once awake, the inhabitants decided to stay up. Hanrahan encouraged this with free drinks. The Irishman had solved his dilemma and had called the post to arms. The Comanches would not catch them asleep. Dixon was awake now and ready to start out. Dawn was breaking on the 27th of June when Billy Dixon was preparing his wagon. He looked toward East Adobe Creek. Something was moving among the trees bordering the banks. The brightness of the rising sun made it difficult to distinguish anything against the blackness of the trees. What had caught his eye seconds before now came out of the shadows into an area of sunlit prairie. Dixon saw Quanah Parker and several hundred Comanches and Kiowas riding hard toward Adobe Walls.

Dixon picked up his "Big-50" and fired at the rushing horsemen, and then ran for Hanrahan's saloon. Ike and Shorty Shadler decided to fight from their wagon. The first wave of Comanches and Kiowas broke over their hastily occupied fighting position, and the Shadlers disappeared. The brothers were the first to die at Adobe Walls.

Skinning knives chipped away at the chinking and sod walls to make expedient firing ports. The Indians swarmed over the buildings firing and prodding with rifles and lances, while two of the braves were scalping the Shadler
brothers. The hunters' camp was now three separate blockhouses, comprised of the two stores and the saloon. Quite by accident, the fields of fire offered to the defenders by the location of the "blockhouses" were mutually supporting. The guns of the hunters began to take their toll and the quick victory promised by Isa-tai became doubtful.

Quanah's men fell back under the scythe-like fire of the defenders. The bullets slashed through the buffalo grass and the light cover offered by the brush and the abandoned wagons. The animals in the corral were caught in the cross fire and were cut down from both sides. The Plains Indians had learned some lessons in their martial endeavors against the white man, one of which was the use of bugle calls to maneuver forces. Quanah's bugler was especially good and the signals he sent were obeyed instantly by the braves. The besieged inhabitants quickly learned the code used by the bugler and knew when to expect the next rush or when contact would temporarily be broken.

During one of the charges, the bugler was observed looting the Shadler's wagon. He emerged with a tin of coffee under one arm and a tin of sugar under the other. Satisfied with his booty, he started running toward safety away from the camp. A bullet tore into his back. He went to his knees and then fell forward on his face dead.11

Quanah Parker was having other problems besides losing his bugler and the initial advantage of surprise. He had been struck by a spent or ricocheting bullet on the top of
his right shoulder and had fallen from his horse. He was unable to continue the fight now because of his injury. His useless right arm hindered him as he crawled through the grass to safety. It took Quanah hours to reach his lines, so in the meantime, Isa-tai took command.

It was becoming evident to the braves that were attacking Adobe Walls that Isa-tai was a false prophet. The hunters had not been asleep, and they were well armed and supplied. They were killing Indians at fantastic ranges and the bullet proof paint Isa-tai had made was not working. This became quite obvious during a meeting between Isa-tai and some sub-chiefs out of range of the big guns. A stray bullet from Adobe Walls cleared the small rise between the braves and the battle area and buried itself in the brain of Isa-tai's horse. Isa-tai had used his magic paint on the animal and the example was not lost on the braves standing with the medicine man. A completely beaten man now, Isa-tai marveled at the strong medicine of the white man's guns. "The white men have a very strong medicine. Shoot today, maybe kill you tomorrow." Smoke and lead poured from the holes and windows of the three forts. The constant roaring of the guns filled the sod houses with acrid smoke and deafening noise. The senses of the defenders were dulled and even though none were wounded since the battle began, they were beginning to suffer from thirst and fatigue. The lack of water was becoming critical by mid-afternoon. The well in the corral
was tantalizingly close, but there was also a good deal of risk involved. The Indians had stopped mounted attacks about noon, but had sent snipers close to the encampment.

Two men were particularly worried about the condition of their animals caught in the cross fire. Fred Leonard and Billy Tyler went outside to try and get the horses to some cover. A fusilade from the concealed Indians met them. Both men fired as they ran back to Myer's store. Billy Tyler stopped at the door after his partner had rushed inside. He raised his rifle and fired again. He had waited too long. He was struck in the chest by a sniper's bullet. His colleagues dragged Tyler's moribund body through the doorway while firing at the unseen snipers in the grass.

One of Tyler's best friends, Bat Masterson, was in Hanrahan's saloon. Word of Tyler's condition was shouted to Bat Masterson. He made the dash from Hanrahan's to see his friend. Tyler was dying and begged Masterson for water. There was none in the store. Masterson quickly seized a bucket and dashed outside to the well, filled the bucket and ran the gauntlet back to the store. Billy Tyler drank the water and then passed away.

Occasional shots were fired during the middle of the afternoon by both sides to keep the enemy honest. Dusk brought an eerie silence. One by one the survivors left their blockhouses. The only Indians in sight were dead ones. The hunters began searching the bodies to determine what tribes were represented. The thirteen bodies found within the post
were identified as either Cheyenne or Comanche with one exception; the bugler. He was discovered to be a negro deserter from the 10th Cavalry. Arrows and lances indicated that Kiowas, Arappahoes, and Kiowa Apaches were also involved. The dead of both sides were hastily buried, and preparations made for a long night. No one slept all night. The blackness held the defenders in a vault of fear. Slowly the morning sun rose and burnt away some of their primitive timidity. Not a shot had been fired during the night. The war party seemed to have left. During the day of June 28th, the people went about strengthening their position. A lookout tower was constructed and a pole was erected so that a distress signal could be flown. A small party of mounted red men was sighted, but were quickly driven off by several shots. That was the only action until the 29th of June.

That day some Indians were observed on a ridge line about a mile from the camp. Billy Dixon carefully aimed his buffalo gun and slowly squeezed off a shot. As much to his surprise as anyone else's, he saw one of the braves fall from his horse. Two braves quickly picked up their stunned companion and rode off. The last shot had been fired at the enemy but ironically the battle wasn't over yet.

A messenger had been sent to Fort Dodge during the night of June 28th but help was slow in coming. Many of the survivors began to wonder if the courier had escaped the war parties outside the camp. More hunters were coming to Adobe Walls from the prairie as news of the uprising spread.
Stronger in numbers and position, the small post grew a little more confident. A constant watch was kept in the newly constructed towers for Indians.

On July 1st, William Olds was on duty in a tower when he observed a group of mounted Indians along the west creek. In his excitement and haste to climb down the ladder from the tower, his rifle accidentally fired. He fell to the ground dead from his own bullet. William Olds, the last man to die at Adobe Walls, was buried near his restaurant. The Indians that he had spotted were never seen again.

Dixon left for Dodge City to get help shortly after Olds' death. He was convinced that the messenger sent earlier had been killed. With him were some twenty-odd hunters and skinners. Billy was surprised to learn after arriving in Dodge that the messenger had indeed arrived safely, and a relief column was being organized. Dixon became a scout for the Army and accompanied the column back to Adobe Walls. Shortly after the relief had been accomplished, the site was abandoned. The Plains Indians attacked the lifeless camp during the fall of 1874 and burned it to the ground.

The Battle of Adobe Walls had been costly for the combined tribes. Quanah had been wounded and was lost to them as a war leader. Isa-tai had been uncovered as a fraud and disgraced. Fifteen braves had been killed and an unknown number wounded. The intent of the tribes to drive the white man away was clear to everyone now and the
intervention of the army was not far in the future. The
hunters had been driven from the plains for the time being,
but the die had been cast and the easy victory promised
by Isa-tai and Quanah eluded the warriors.
FOOTNOTES—CHAPTER II


4. The buffalo guns varied from .49 to .51 caliber. Various manufacturers such as Colt, Sharps, Henry, and Remington had these heavy barrelled, breech loading guns for sale.


11. Derek, "The Battle of Adobe Walls," 25; Nye *Bad Medicine and Good*, 180-183. This is Quanah Parker's version of the battle, as told to Major Hugh Scott at Fort Sill about 1890.


15. Nye, *Carbine and Lance*, 191. The shot was later measured at 1575 yards.


17. Nye, *Carbine and Lance*, 191; Derek, "The Battle of Adobe Walls," 27. There is a great deal of confusion concerning the number of Indians killed. Most of the
Indians say about fifteen. Some of the buffalo hunters said that about 200 Indians were killed. I have used the lowest figure because I feel it is more accurate. The tendency to exaggerate "body count" must be considered.
Tension increased in northern Texas in July, 1874. The events that had taken place at Adobe Walls were a main topic of conversation at posts and settlements throughout the frontier states. Stories about the Battle of Adobe Walls appeared in newspapers in Texas and Kansas. Texans knew that a lot of trouble was brewing, and took what precautions they could against Indian attacks.

In the July heat, Major John B. Jones and about twenty-five men of his Texas Frontier Battalion were on patrol near Jacksboro. They were looking for a band of Comanches that had killed a cowboy at the Loving Ranch. Jones had had much experience fighting Comanches and Kiowas, but some of his men were young and inexperienced. The Rangers had found many trails left by the Comanches, and were following the most promising and freshest one into the Lost Valley.

There were Indians in the valley, but not the ones for whom Jones was looking. Mamanti had taken a party of Kiowas on a revenge raid into Texas. The Dohate had assumed command of this group on behalf of Lone Wolf. Lone Wolf's son had been killed in Texas, and the old man craved revenge against the hated Texans. Mamanti had a vision of a successful raid in which "at least one enemy will be killed. None of us will die." Many of the young Kiowas jumped at the chance to go with the Dohate, for his prowess as a war leader and
mystic were well known to them. A successful revenge raid would insure the young men's acceptance as warriors and men of the tribe. On the night of July 10th, about fifty warriors rode with Lone Wolf and Mamanti towards Texas. The experienced leaders and inexperienced youths of both races met in Lost Valley on the morning of July 12, 1874.

Mamanti spotted Jones' men first. The Rangers were looking at the remains of some calves that the Kiowas had killed. One of the first things that Mamanti and Lone Wolf noticed was that the enemy was well armed with pistols and rifles, and they all wore tall white hats. Mamanti quickly gave a command to his followers in order to lure the Texans into a trap. He and another brave would ride out, so that the enemy could see them. When the Texans gave chase and drew abreast of the hidden war party, the Kiowas would attack from the flank and rear simultaneously. This ageless guerrilla tactic was simple, and easily understood by all of the young braves.

Major Jones' men threw caution to the wind when Mamanti and his companion came into view, and chased the seemingly doomed braves. One minute the Rangers were chasing two Indians, and the next, they were the ones being chased. Jones' men had ridden into the trap set by Mamanti. They stopped running and adopted a hasty defensive position with Jones in the center, calmly directing the fire of his men. One of his men had been shot in the arm and had crawled into some rabbit brush, near a creek and away from the
fighting. Another Ranger went to his aid.

Kiowas circled Major Jones and his remaining men, carefully keeping out of the effective range of the Texans' rifles. The Kiowa custom on a revenge raid was to take two scalps without suffering any casualties themselves, hence their cautious tactics. The Frontier Battalion men had little or no cover to fight behind. The Major made a decision to break out of the encirclement. He had his men remount and then charge the line of Kiowas where it was the thinnest. The quick charge worked, but two more Rangers were wounded. The Rangers made a mad dash to some cottonwoods and a rock strewn, dry stream bed. One of the wounded was not able to make the ride, and fell from his horse. He sprawled on the ground between his comrades and the furious Kiowas. Two young braves eager to get his scalp, started sneaking toward the fallen white man. A sharp volley from the Texans, quickly sent the enthusiastic young warriors back to their own lines. Three Rangers ran out and retrieved their seriously wounded colleague.

Mamanti's plan for the revenge raid was working well. The white men now had three wounded men and no water. They were cut off and surrounded and another breakout was not probable. The Dohate knew that thirst would drive the Rangers to desperation before long. Mamanti had his Kiowas wait out of range and concealed from the observation of the Texans. The pleas and cries of the wounded were more disconcerting than the threat of quick death at the hands
of the unseen Kiowas to Mel Porter and David Bailey. Against Jones' orders, they rode to the nearby creek to get water for the wounded. Mamanti had anticipated that very thing, and had twenty five mounted warriors waiting near the creek. The Kiowa war party attacked the two Rangers when they were filling their canteens. Bailey was knocked from his horse by a spear and killed. Porter was also thrust from his horse, but managed to escape by swimming under water. Lone Wolf mutilated Bailey's body, and gave thanks that his son had been properly avenged.

Under the cover of darkness, Major Jones and his men managed to escape on foot. The Ranger that had fallen in front of the lines earlier in the day, had died. His body was tied on a stray horse and led out with the bedraggled survivors. Jones and his men arrived at the Loving Ranch late that night. A rider was sent to nearby Fort Richardson to summon aid. Porter had joined the two Rangers that had hidden in the brush earlier in the day, and they walked to the ranch later that night.

Lone Wolf's band left the area immediately after killing Bailey. The Owl Prophet, Mamanti, had again been successful in his tactics and vision. The revenge raid had been just as he had predicted. What Mamanti had failed to see in his vision was the consequence of his raid. Coming so soon after the Adobe Walls fight, the raid was a clear indication to the "Angry Bear", General Sheridan, that the "heathen savages" would have to be crushed by military force.
The battle of Adobe Walls had been an indication to Sheridan that the various tribes had formed a confederation to wage war along the Texas Frontier. The reports about the Adobe Walls business had shown that six or seven hundred warriors of the Comanche, Kiowa, Cheyenne, Arappahoe, and Kiowa Apache had joined together for the attack. They had evidently been led by a commander or small command group. The attack had been organized and well executed. Sheridan could only speculate on the size and strength of the Indian confederation, but he knew that its very existence posed a serious threat to the Texas Frontier.

Mamanti's and Lone Wolf’s attack on the Rangers gave Sheridan more of an idea of the seriousness of the situation on the frontier. Lost Valley was several hundred miles from Adobe Walls, so it was very unlikely that the same group of Indians were involved. The Rangers had been well armed and of sufficient strength to prohibit an attack by such a small war party. Sheridan had to conclude that the Indians had a new source of martial confidence, and no longer respected the military authority of the government. The battles predicted an eventful summer for the frontier.

Even the Quaker Indian Agents were losing faith in the good intentions of their wards. In previous outbreaks, the agents had pleaded that only a few Indians were raiding and most remained on the reservation and peaceful. By the middle of July, 1874, the agents were changing their tune. It was becoming increasingly obvious to them that the sit-
uation on the Great Plains was extremely dangerous. The flimsy control that the agents had over the Indians was rapidly slipping through their fingers. The Indians grew bolder and even began to raid the Indian Territory and threaten the agents. The deteriorating situation prompted General Sheridan to start making plans to assume military control of the reservations.

The decision to give the military, specifically the Division of the Missouri, responsibility for the Plains Indians rested in Washington. General Sheridan knew from the reports reaching his desk that the situation was critical. He also knew that his immediate superior, General Sherman, was cognizant of what was happening.

There was a great problem facing Sheridan and his subordinate commanders. How do you tell a hostile from a friendly Indian? A simple solution to a complex question was sought. All of the Plains Indians would come to their designated reservation and be "enrolled." Any Indians remaining off the reservation would be considered hostile. Enrollment meant prison without bars for the red men, but at the same time an escape from the forthcoming war. By changing their location, they would find security, be issued food, and a safe place to await another chance to defeat the encroaching white man.

There was a certain amount of military naivete or maybe senility in Sheridan and his subordinates. If they seriously thought that a traditionally nomadic people
would not cross an arbitrary line to wage war, they were not naive, just foolish. If they were not naive or foolish, they were possible intimidating the Indians. The commanders had set the limits for the tribes, and any red man found out of those limits were enemies. To people that had roamed free and uninhibited for centuries, the concept of enrollment was difficult to accept.

"Black Jack" Davidson was the commander of Fort Sill and of the 10th Cavalry. With most of his troops scattered throughout the Indian Territory, Davidson felt a little insecure. The Indians in the vicinity of Fort Sill numbered in the thousands. The apparent inability of the military to cope with the situation caused the Kiowas and Comanches to become inordinately disdainful of the authority of the government. Some of the braves went so far as to steal the cattle of one of the Quaker Agents. Others attacked and killed a sheep herder only a few miles from the post.

Colonel Davidson issued an order on the 17th of July calling for all friendly Indians to move to the east side of Cache Creek and camp at points selected by Indian Agents. "Black Jack" was going to be able to tell quite simply who were friendly and who were not. If the warriors were coming from the west, they were to be considered hostile. The Commander had established friendly and enemy lines in an attempt to organize the unconventional status of the enemy. Davidson had also gotten a head start on the War Department.
On July 15, 1874, General William Sherman sent a telegram to Sheridan asking his opinion of bringing the 6th and 10th Cavalry together at Fort Sill for an offensive against the Plains Indians that were absent from their reservations. Sherman wanted the hostiles ridden down wherever they went and all their animals and weapons confiscated. Friendly Indians were to be warned and sent to Fort Sill for safety. The General of the Army also realized that if left alone the "rascals" would carry out more revenge raids against the Texans.\(^{12}\)

Sheridan answered him the next day and agreed with the plan fully. "Little Phil" also let his superior officer know that he had asked General Pope to make the 6th Cavalry take the offensive a week earlier, but Pope had asked for more time. Sheridan also criticized Pope's tactical sense by telling Sheridan that "(Pope) is so taken with the idea of defense that he does not see the absurdity of using Cavalry in that way. I will make him use his Cavalry on the offensive, and will stir up the tenth (10) also."\(^{13}\) The old cavalryman of the Shenandoah was eager to use his regiments for the type of mission for which they were trained.

Every officer above the grade of First Lieutenant was a Civil War veteran, and most had several years on the western frontier fighting Indians. Needless to say, experience was not lacking. The troopers and soldiers that served under these officers were seasoned veterans in irregular warfare. The regiments had been re-equipped and personnel vacancies
filled in late 1873 and early 1874. The recruits were in the hands of experienced Non-commissioned Officers. What the rookies lacked in experience was compensated for in training. A sense of urgency spurred the military towards a state of readiness for war.

In his endorsement to the Secretary of War, Sherman supported his subordinate's plan. The General wanted permission to ride against the raiders immediately before they became organized. He also recognized the tactical merits of Sheridan's plan. His endorsement included a statement that "defensively it will require ten thousand Cavalry to give them (the frontiersmen) a partial protection, but offensively a thousand Cavalry can follow them and punish them as they surely merit." 14

A reply from the Secretary of War was quick in coming. On July 20th, Belknap wired to Sherman that the "guilty Indians will be pursued and punished wherever found, and the Reservation lines should be no barrier to such operations." 15 The telegram was sent with the consent of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Secretary Belknap stressed that the friendly Indians should be protected and their safety assured. The civilian heads of government, the senior commanders, the Indian agents, and the politicians wanted the friendly Indians protected, but for the lowly private that had to face the red warriors, there was not any guidance on how to distinguish friend from foe. The young trooper was again being asked to lay his life on the line.
for an obscured reason. If fired at, he could safely assume the Indian was unfriendly, but if it cost the young soldier his life to find out, he was 'just doing his duty'.

On July 21, 1874, Sheridan sent a message ordering the 6th and 10th Cavalry Regiments to concentrate and prepare for action against the hostiles. The troops began to move almost at once. General Augur ordered the 4th U.S. Cavalry minus three garrison companies to proceed to Fort Concho, Texas. There the regiment would equip itself for operations north into the Panhandle. One of the most experienced Indian fighters would command the 4th Cavalry. Colonel Ranald S. MacKenzie had been commanding cavalry units against hostile Indians since the end of the Civil War. The Kiowas' and Comanches' tactics were familiar to him. He had been on many operations against them when the 4th Cavalry had been stationed at Fort Richardson. MacKenzie had also chased Apaches and some renegade Kickapoo into Mexico. His regiment was the most decorated unit in the Army, and one of the most experienced. It posed a real threat to the hostiles.

On July 27th, In Special Order 114, General Pope ordered the 6th Cavalry to assemble at Fort Dodge, Kansas. Companies "A", "D", "F", "G", "H", "I", "L", and "M" were to prepare for operations south into the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandle against the Plains Indians. The 5th Infantry Regiment would provide Companies "I", "C", "D", and "E" for the expedition. The cavalry was to carry all the ammunition from their posts with them. Each trooper would
carry two hundred rounds. Excess ammunition would be carried in the trains. Major James Biddle and Major C.E. Compton would command the two battalions of the 6th Cavalry.

Colonel Nelson A. Miles was named as the Commander of the Expedition. He was currently assigned as the Regimental Commander of the 5th Infantry. Miles was not the obvious choice for the job of Expedition Commander. Only four of his companies were to be involved. He had not been on the frontier as long as some of the other commanders, and certainly did not have a fraction of the experience that MacKenzie had. Miles had been commissioned in the Civil War. He was a brevet Major General and had been wounded twice. Nelson had not had any formal military education as had MacKenzie, but he possessed an insatiable craving for military glory. There was one thing that set Nelson Miles apart from his contemporaries; his wife's uncle was William T. Sherman.

Special Order 114 also directed Major William Price with three companies of the 8th Cavalry to proceed to Fort Union, New Mexico for operations against the Indians. Five additional companies of the 8th Cavalry under command of Major Andrew Alexander were to assemble in the southeastern corner of the Colorado Territory for possible inclusion in the expedition.

John Davidson's 10th Cavalry was assembling at Fort Sill, and elements of the 10th Infantry and 11th Infantry prepared to join the Cavalry when the expedition set out.
Troops from five states moved to assembly areas for outfitting and reorganization. None of the expedition's elements were to be "pure". That is to say, none were to be comprised entirely of cavalry or infantry, but were to be combined arms teams. Miles' force was cavalry heavy and extremely mobile. His infantry were provided with wagons for transportation of supplies. MacKenzie's force had some infantry but was comprised mostly of cavalry. Each force took with it the artillery pieces assigned to the post where it was stationed. These varied from 3 inch rifled guns to 6 pound bronze cannons. The total number of artillery pieces involved was less than twenty.\(^1\)

By concentrating his troops at Fort Dodge, Fort Sill, Fort Concho, Fort Union, the Colorado Territory, and Fort Richardson, Sheridan would be able to attack from five directions and have a small reserve of cavalry on stand-by in Colorado. The elusive nature of the enemy, and the absence of conventional lines made this type of multifaceted operation necessary. The success of the operation depended on the ability of the flying columns to track down, pursue, and eventually attack the fast moving bands of Indians. This military ability was contingent upon the reliability of the men, horses, and equipment, most of which had not been tested on so large a scale. The question of their reliability must have weighed heavily on Sheridan's mind.

Indians were making the choice between suffering on
the prairie or suffering on the reservation. Kicking Bird brought most of the Kiowas to Fort Sill to wait out the war. Almost to a man, the Cheyennes stayed off the reservations. The Comanches were split into the nomadic bands that was their traditional form of government. The Wichitas and Caddoes had never strayed far from their reservation and fields, and wanted only protection from the war-like tribes around them.

Lone Wolf and Mamanti led their braves and their families out onto the plains to fight. They thought that Kicking Bird had become an old woman and did not deserve to be the principal chief. Satanta joined them on the war path. He was no longer one of the war chiefs because of his age, but he still wanted to lead his people against the hated white men.

General Sherman had convinced President Grant that the military had to accept the responsibility for the Indians. He proposed that the tribes be dismounted, disarmed, and enrolled at the reservations. Periodic roll calls by army officers would insure their remaining on the reservation. Any Indians found off the designated area or missing roll call would be severely punished by the military. Grant agreed and on July 26, 1874, orders were published putting the military in charge.

At Fort Sill, Colonel Davidson lost no time. He informed the Indians and their agent that enrollment would be completed by August 3rd. A company of the 11th Infantry
was selected to complete the task. Some of the chiefs were outlawed, and could come in for enrollment only as prisoners of war. Among the chiefs outlawed were Lone Wolf, Red Food, and Satanta.¹⁹

Enrollment went as smoothly as could be expected. The Kiowas were enrolled by August 8th. Among those with an enrollment paper was Satanta. He came to Fort Sill to get some government rations, and then decided to enroll. He later went north with Kicking Bird's band of Kiowas to Anadarko. Lone Wolf was already there trying to get some food. Neither chief had been arrested as an outlaw.²⁰ The congregation of hostiles at the Anadarko reservation meant trouble.

Red Food was one of the outlawed Comanche chiefs. He and his band had come to Anadarko to terrorize the Wichitas and steal the cattle being issued to them for food. The Comanches and Kiowas sat in groups defiantly watching the agents distribute food to the friendly Wichitas.

Colonel Davidson heard of the possible trouble. He left Fort Sill with four companies of the 10th Cavalry for the Anadarko Reservation. After his arrival, Davidson sent word through the Indian Agent for Red Food to surrender.²¹ The Comanche Chief did not want to give up, but the force facing his braves and their families made him change his mind. He was accompanied to his camp by an officer with a detachment of the 11th Infantry. Red Food gave up his fire arms, but balked at giving up his bow and arrows. The
officer sent a message to Colonel Davidson requesting a
decision on the surrender of the bow. While he was
awaiting Davidson's reply, the Kiowas in Red Food's camp
started to taunt the Comanche chief and his braves. 'A
man that gives up his weapons could no longer be a man'
was their basic premise. Red Food took the jeers of the
Kiowas long enough. He bolted away from the infantry and
ran towards some nearby woods. His flight was hastened by
the whizzing of lead over his head. The soldier's bullets
did not hit him and he was able to reach the wood line
safely.

A sharp fire fight quickly broke out. Kiowas and
Comanches in the wood line were firing at the soldiers that
had accompanied Red Food. Another company of the 11th
Infantry was moving through the woods firing at the hostiles.
The thick smoke was trapped in the still air under the trees,
and targets became difficult to distinguish in the blinding
smoke. The Kiowas began to circle the infantry, yelling
and screaming, fired into the knot of blue clad soldiers.
The fight lasted about ten minutes. Strange as it may seem,
there were not any casualties even though hundreds of rounds
had been fired.

A storekeeper, by the name of Shirley, and his family
had been watching the fight from his house. He decided
that the troops at the agency should be summoned. Shirley
ordered his colored servant to get a horse and ride to
Anadarko. As the boy ran from the house to the corral, he
was shot by some lurking Kiowas. He lay outside calling for
help for the rest of the afternoon, but his cries went unheeded. Shirley was too afraid to help. The young boy finally died.24

Davidson heard the firing and was ready with his four companies of "Buffalo Soldiers". As they went on line and moved towards the area of Red Food's camp, they were fired upon from behind by some Kiowas and Comanches. The friendly Wichitas were all around. Davidson was faced with a real problem. Stand and be shot by Kiowas and Comanches or fire back and kill the friendly Wichitas in the process.25 Davidson made a quick decision. He ordered his still mounted troopers to ride out of the ambush to a tree line about a mile away and dismount. By the time, Davidson's force reached the trees, the Indians had disbursed and were raiding the reservation.

"Black Jack" remounted his troopers and charged back to the area of the ambush. One company under Captain Louis H. Carpenter was sent to flush out some Kiowas that were hiding in the buildings and corrals.26 The hostiles began to break off the fight now. As they moved away from the area of the ambush, they plundered Shirley's store and killed four men in a nearly field that had not heard the firing at the agency. The Indians had done what they had come to Anadarko for. They had killed five men, and had plundered the Wichitas and stolen what they wanted from Shirley's store.

Colonel Davidson ordered the Comanche village burned
and all the food in it destroyed. The elements of the 10th Cavalry and the 11th Infantry that were at Anadarko adopted a defensive posture. The outskirts of the reservation were alive with hostiles. Some of the Wichitas and Caddoes had joined in the fun, but not many. The troops sent outside of their defensive positions were quickly driven back by superior forces of Kiowas and Comanches.

There was only one hostile killed by the "Buffalo Soldiers" at Anadarko. Several days after the fire fight, some Kiowas came back to Shirley's store for more plunder. A detachment of the 10th Cavalry drove them off and killed one. The negro troops of the 10th had shown that they were well disciplined and courageous soldiers, but because of their orders against harming friendly Indians, they had suffered casualties.

What had been accomplished by the Anadarko affair? For one thing the lines between friendly and hostile Indians were now more clearly defined. The enrollment paper was useless as a sign of friendliness. Most of the Kiowas and Comanches at Anadarko had enrollment papers on them when they ambushed Davidson. The true intentions of the Kiowa and Comanche war chiefs were uncovered for all to see. The sanctuary of the reservation would no longer keep Federal troops from accomplishing their mission of pursuing and attacking known hostiles. The Army realized that it could not let itself be caught between hostiles and friendlies again. The next fight would be in the open and on the
hostile tribes' own ground. There would not be any decision to hold fire for fear of hurting Wichitas and Caddoes, because the Great Plains would be the battlefield. Anadarko had shown both sides that this would be a fight to the finish with no quarter given. Only one side would be victorious, because stalemate was unknown to Indian Warfare.

While Davidson was fighting at Anadarko, Colonel Miles' task force was forming at Fort Dodge, Kansas. He had divided the Cavalry companies into two battalions, each composed of four companies of the 6th Cavalry. He left the four companies of the 5th Infantry unattached for the present. An artillery detachment was detailed from the infantry companies and placed under command of Second Lieutenant J. W. Pope of the 5th Infantry. Lieutenant Frank Baldwin of the 5th Infantry was given command of a makeshift group of thirty-nine civilian guides and scouts.

On August 11th, Major Compton left Fort Dodge with his battalion of the 6th Cavalry and one company of Infantry. He maneuvered his force towards the west and then south to Camp Supply, Indian Territory. Frank Baldwin and his scouts accompanied Compton's command. Three days later, Miles led the remainder of his force on a direct march to Camp Supply. Miles had made each of his columns strong enough to engage and defeat any Indian force that they expected to meet. Baldwin's mission was to reconnoiter to the west of Compton's column and provide information to Colonel Miles.

Ranald MacKenzie's command left Fort Concho on August
23rd for the forks of the Red River by way of Fort Griffin. He had seven companies of the 4th Cavalry and one company of the 10th Infantry, plus fourteen "Seminole Negro Scouts". Once MacKenzie left the post, he lost direct communication with the Department of the Missouri and General Pope. Messages to and from MacKenzie's command had to be sent by courier between Fort Concho and the field location. As a result, MacKenzie's current position and situation always had to be assumed.

Major William Price's contingent of the 8th Cavalry moved from Fort Union, New Mexico on August 24th and arrived at Fort Bascon on the 27th. Additional mounts were secured there, and contracts left for civilian wagons and teams. Price left on the 28th of August with 216 men, five Navajo scouts, three Mexican guides, and a civilian blacksmith. His trains consisted of twenty Army six mule teams, one escort wagon, one ambulance, one mule mounted forge, two howitzers, thirty pack mules and the contract train of twenty-four wagons. In his trains, Price had enough supplies for an extended campaign. He had rations for fifty days, forty tons of grain, 30,000 rounds of ammunition for pistols and carbines, and two hundred rounds of shot and cannister for his howitzers.

Lieutenant Colonel George Buell left Fort Richardson with a composite force of four companies of the 9th U.S. Cavalry, two companies of the 10th U.S. Cavalry, two companies of the 11th Infantry, and thirty scouts. His mission
was to cover the gap between MacKenzie's force coming north from Fort Concho and Davidson's force moving west from Fort Sill.

Davidson turned over the responsibility of the Fort Sill Reservation to Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Neill of the 6th Cavalry. "Black Jack" had six companies of the 10th Cavalry, three companies of the 11th Infantry and forty-four scouts under command of Lieutenant Richard Pratt. Because of the Anardarko troubles, Davidson was late in leaving Fort Sill. His column finally went to the field on September 10, 1874.

Miles had command of the main column moving south from Kansas. William Price's column with its heavy train was moving east. MacKenzie was coming from the south with his right flank covered by Buell's column. Davidson filled the gap between Miles and Buell and completed the formation. All of the columns were headed for the Texas Panhandle and the forks of the Red River. With the majority of troops engaged in the pursuit of the hostile Indians; the garrisons in Texas and Kansas were dangerously small. From his office in Chicago, Phil Sheridan saw the danger of hostiles, particularly the Cheyennes, slipping past the cavalry columns and joining their red brothers in the northern plains. The first contact made by the expedition with hostiles was made at Adobe Walls on August 19, 1874.

This fire fight was one of the ironies of the war. Frank Baldwin and his detachment had arrived at Adobe Walls
on August 18, 1874. Among his scouts were two men that had fought there six weeks earlier: Billy Dixon and Amos Chapman. The morning after the detachments' arrival, a party of 150 Indians attacked a group of hunters nearby and killed one man. Baldwin and his men rode to the scene and drove the Indians off and pursued the war party twelve miles south before breaking contact. The next day, the scouts proceeded down the Canadian River. They stumbled upon a small party of hostiles. In a short fight, one brave was killed and another was wounded. Baldwin's men captured four ponies and some fire arms. He sent word to Colonel Miles that his reconnaissance was going well, and that the scouts had found many trails left by the tribes near Adobe Walls and the Canadian River. Judging from the number of hostile red men in the area, Baldwin felt that there was "plenty of work before reaching the Command." 34

Colonel Miles began to anticipate a campaign that would last until winter. There were more Indians on the war path than had been reported earlier. The abundant forage available to the columns was being systematically destroyed by the Indians as they moved south. Miles recognized this problem as one that could have serious consequences. If his horses and mules became weak from the lack of sufficient forage, his whole campaign could be ruined. He suggested that a Supply Camp be located on Oasis Creek about ten miles west of Antelope Hills. 35 The location Miles suggested had sufficient supplies of timber, water, and grazing land. It
would be centrally located in the event of further military operations in the area. The camp was called the Sweetwater Contonement.

On August 26, 1874, Colonel Miles and his column moved further south to the Sweetwater Creek. There, his troops found signs of a large group of Cheyennes. On the 27th they tracked the Cheyennes up the Sweetwater, and found indications that other groups of Indians coming from the north, south, and east had joined the main body. The Colonel determined that his trains were slowing down the advance of his column. Taking only those supplies that could be carried by the men, he left his trains, and began a hot pursuit on the 28th of August. The creek beds were parched and cracked from a long drought. The men and horses suffered terribly from thirst and broiling heat. The infantry marched thirty-four miles on the 29th under these hardships. Miles spurred his troops to further effort the next day. The trail was getting fresher by the hour. Lieutenant Baldwin's scouts were acting as the advance guard for the column, when they were suddenly attacked by 200 Indians. Baldwin and his men were able to repulse the attack and fall back to Miles' column, which was already deploying for battle. The hostiles fell back to a line of steep, treeless bluffs and deep, dry ravines. There were now about 600 warriors occupying the position and apparently prepared to make a fight of it.

Miles had Major Compton's Battalion of the 6th Cavalry on the right and Biddles' on the left. His artillery was
placed in the center with an infantry company for security. Captain Lyman and Company "I" 5th Infantry were in reserve. When the artillery opened fire, the troops moved forward on line. The hostiles were not used to artillery fire, and began dropping back to successive positions along the arid, rocky bluffs. The attacking companies of cavalry and infantry drove the Indians back farther and farther.

Captain Adna Chaffee led his Company "I" 6th Cavalry in a charge using only pistols. Chaffee told his men as they attacked, "Forward! If any man is killed I will make him a corporal". His levity in the face of the enemy bolstered the fighting spirit of his men. Miles and Biddle watched what they later called the "prettiest cavalry charge" they ever saw. With pistols carried high in their hands, the troopers rode up the side of the bluff on line. When they reached the Indians' position, the riders engaged the shocked red men in close combat. The startled Indians broke and ran, abandoning their makeshift fighting positions.

Soon after, Major Compton led his entire Battalion in a cavalry charge against a bald crest about 200 feet high and swarming with Indians. The artillery softened the objective before Compton's men swept over it. The Indians were taking a beating spiritually and physically. The artillery was something they could not cope with.

Falling back still farther and regrouping, the red men again occupied a piece of high ground. This was their strongest position and the only way to the top was along
a trail wide enough for only two men to climb at a time. Tullius Cicero Tupper led Company "F" 6th Cavalry up the trail in an attack. His bugler repeatedly sounded "charge" as Captain Tupper's troopers made the ascent. The thoroughly demoralized Indians left the field in confusion and bewilderment. Company "F" had successfully assaulted the final position.38

Colonel Miles had successfully fought the first large engagement of the war. The Army's superiority in armament had been decisive. The Indians had been the best fighters that the Plains Indians had to offer. From items found on the battlefield, Miles was able to determine that he had fought members of the Kiowa, Comanche, and Cheyenne tribes. It should be pointed out, however, that the Indians had also accomplished their mission successfully. They had fought a mobile defense action. By dropping back to successive positions, the Indians had occupied Miles' troops for five hours. The last action was twelve miles away from the initial contact. Miles had been forced to deploy his troops and fight on terrain selected by the enemy. The trail he had been following originally was disregarded for several days while he pursued the retreating Indians. That disregarded trail had been made by the majority of Cheyenne, Comanche, and Kiowa families and livestock, but Miles had been confident that the Indians had been split up and denied a chance to unite with other bands.

Miles was satisfied and so were the Indians. He had
swept the enemy from the field. It was an obvious victory over the heathen savages. The Indians were satisfied because the troops had been drawn away from their families. The war could go on. Both sides had won.

2. Wilbur Nye, Carbine and Lance, 190.


5. Nye, Carbine and Lance, 197.


8. Nye, Carbine and Lance, 200. Major Jones never submitted a written report of the Lost Valley Battle. In the 1880's he claimed to have killed 3 Kiowas during the battle. In the Texas Indian Papers, the Rangers that were killed are not listed. Jones also stated that there were 150-200 braves in Lone Wolf's party. Exaggerations were common when talking of Indian fights.

9. Davidson was only a Lieutenant Colonel. Colonel Benjamin Grierson was the Regimental Commander, but was in Washington at the time.

10. Posts in the Military Division of the Missouri, 72.


13. WDAGO 2815-1874, Sheridan to Sherman.

14. WDAGO 2815-1874, Sherman to Belknap.

15. WDAGO 2815-1874, Belknap to Sheridan.

16. WDAGO 2815-1874, Special Order 114.

17. Posts of the Military Division of Missouri, 153.

18. Nye, Carbine and Lance, 204.

19. Nye, Carbine and Lance, 204.


28. WDAGO 2815-1874, March 5, 1875 Miles After Action Report.

29. WDAGO 2815-1874, MacKenzie to AG.

30. WDAGO 2815-1874, September 23, 1874 Price to AG.


32. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 10, 1874.

33. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 17, 1874. Pope to Sheridan.

34. WDAGO 2815-1874 August 25, 1874 Baldwin to Miles.

35. WDAGO 2815-1874 August 25, 1874 Miles to AG.

36. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 1, 1874 Miles to AG.

37. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 1, 1874 Miles to AG.

38. Company "F" was awarded a silver band for this action.
CHAPTER IV

After pursuing for two days what he now estimated as between two and three thousand Indians, Colonel Nelson Miles turned back towards Camp Supply. He hoped that the red warriors would be intercepted by Colonel MacKenzie or Major Price. Miles felt that he had been successful in breaking up the combined bands before they became organized enough to pose a real threat to any of the columns.

Miles bivouacked his command on September 5, 1874 on the Staked Plains south of the Red River. His plan was to wait there for supplies. He had sent Captain Wyllys Lyman and his company to secure the trains coming from Camp Supply. The good Colonel was about to learn a lesson about security of supply lines. The Comanches and Kiowas were interdicting the lines of communication and Lyman and his wagon train were caught in the middle.

In what has to be one of the best examples of terse military prose, Wyllys Lyman sent the following message to Camp Supply.

In the field near Washita River
3 o'clock P.M. Sept. 10th 1874

Commanding Officer
Camp Supply

Sir:
I have the honor to report that I am corralled by Comanches, two miles north of the Washita, on Genl. Miles' trail. We have been engaged since yesterday morning, having moved since the first firing, about 12 miles. I consider it injudicious to attempt to proceed further.
I estimate the Indians vaguely at several hundred whom we have punished somewhat.
I have but twelve mounted men. West made a pretty charge with them yesterday.

Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant
W. Lyman
Capt. 5th Infantry
Commdg. Train Guard 1

In a few well chosen words, Lyman made it clear that he was surrounded, outnumbered, out maneuvered, and with untold bravado, he had understated the seriousness of his situation. Having been born and raised in Vermont, Lyman’s reticence was probably a natural reaction.

Wyllys Lyman’s predicament began on September 9th, just after he had crossed a deep ravine north of the Washita River. Lyman had first spotted some Indians about eight o’clock in the morning. As a precautionary measure, he had his wagons moving in two parallel columns about twenty yards apart.

In case of an attack, the wagons could be quickly put in a circle for defense. Company "I" was dismounted and walked beside the slow moving wagons. Lieutenant Frank West and a detachment of fourteen soldiers from the 6th Cavalry were riding ahead of the wagon train.

The Indians had been making preparations for an attack several hours before Lyman sighted them. Scouts had spotted the wagon train about dawn and sent word back to the war chiefs. Unfortunately for Lyman, Lone Wolf and Mamanti were the first chiefs notified. The Dohate immediately began preparations for his "Owl Medicine". Satanta and Big Tree were also preparing for the attack. The sacred war color red, was painted on faces and torsos. Excitement over the
pending attack permeated the Kiowa camps as they wove strips of red cloth into their horses' manes and tails. A small party of braves was sent forward to contact the train, and delay it until the main force could be brought into position to attack. These were the Indians that Lyman had spotted at 8 o'clock that morning.

Initial fire from the Kiowas was at long range. Lieutenant Frank West and his detachment of Cavalry rode out to drive the small war party away. This became necessary time and again as the train approached the crossing site at the Washita. While West was in front keeping the way clear for the train, Lyman and his men came to another ravine about two miles north of the river. As the train creaked and rolled slowly through the dry wash, it was suddenly attacked on both flanks and the rear.

Simultaneously, the wagons circled and the foot soldiers deployed to fight off the charging Indians. Company "I" remained calm and professional in front of the charging red horde. They fired their weapons slowly and deliberately. Just when it seemed that they would be overrun, the Kiowas retreated out of range. Company "I" had had one man killed and one of its lieutenants wounded.

Lyman was not in a tenable position. His train was in a deep, rocky ravine, surrounded by Indians that occupied the high ground on all sides. He had a seriously wounded man on his hands. What little water there was in their canteens was going fast, and during the terrible drought, a resupply
from the sky was unlikely. As in events mentioned before, the need for water can become of paramount importance.

As night approached, the Kiowas remounted and circled the wagon train carefully keeping out of range of the soldier's rifles. The wild antics of the circling Indians kept the soldiers under what cover they could find until dark. As soon as darkness came, Lyman had his men dig defensive positions with whatever tools were available. Bags of grain and other supplies were taken from the wagons and used for revetments. The Kiowas were evidently going to wait for the soldiers to weaken before they attacked in earnest.

On the 10th of September, the soldiers were pinned down during the day by long range rifle fire from the elevated knolls. Water was going fast. Lyman forbade any of his men from making a dash outside of the perimeter to find water. He thought that Satanta was among the warriors and would more than likely have a party of Indians waiting for just such an attempt. Lyman felt the heat and craved cool water as much as his men and knew that after another day it would take more than his leadership and example to keep them from bolting for water.

On the evening of September 10th, Captain Lyman held a conference with William Schmalsle. The young German was one of Baldwin's civilian scouts that had joined the train on September 8th. Schmalsle felt sure that he could slip through the Kiowas' lines. Lyman gave permission to try,
and also a message to carry to the commanders at Camp Supply. Schmalsle left about midnight. Lyman waited for sunrise and a fresh attack by the Indians. 

On the third day of the siege, a young Kiowa named Botalye performed a feat of courage unsurpassed in Kiowa history. The Mexican half-breed rode through the lines held by Lyman's infantrymen. He did this not only once, but on four different occasions. After his first lonely ride, his colleagues urged him to stop but he would not listen. The soldiers' bullets came close enough to cut the feathers from his scalp lock. When he returned from his fourth ride, Satanta told him, "I could not have done it myself. No one ever came back from four charges."

September 12th brought some relief for Lyman's embattled troops. The Kiowas began withdrawing some of their men. The chiefs had begun to worry about the families, and had decided to send some of the braves to the villages to protect them. Lyman observed the enemy withdrawing part of his force, and decided to send Lieutenant West's detachment for water. West was successful in driving some waiting Kiowas and Comanches from a nearby water hole.

Schmalsle arrived at Camp Supply at 9:00 A.M. that same day. A relief column of Company "K", 6th Cavalry was dispatched that evening towards the battle site on the Washita. Lyman did not know that Schmalsle had been successful, but Wyllys was beginning to feel optimistic about his situation. Late in the afternoon of September 12th, the
drought that had baked the prairies broke. A torrential down pour fell and drenched the battlefield. Men who had earlier that day been dying of thirst, were now waist deep in water in their rifle pits. The rain lasted all night and until the evening of the 13th.

Sporadic and harassing fire from Kiowas and Comanches continued on the fifth day of the siege. Many hostiles were seen off in the distance, moving north. Late that night, Schmalsle and five other scouts came into the expeditious fortress and announced that a relief column was not far behind them. Company "K" effected the relief at 2:30 A.M. on September 14, 1874. Early the next morning, Lyman's wagon train crossed the Washita River and met Captain Adna Chaffee and Company "I", 6th Cavalry. The siege had been broken.9

Lyman's Wagon Train Battle resulted in the awarding of thirteen Medals of Honor. When you consider that there was a total of fifty-six officers and men in the battle, the awarding of that high percentage of medals to them is an endorsement of their bravery, and military ability. Captain Lyman was breveted, years later, Lieutenant Colonel for his actions during this engagement. His command had had one man killed and several wounded. Possibly, the Kiowas had not been as fortunate.

Captain Lyman claimed that at least thirteen hostiles were killed and many more wounded. The Indians' accounts of the battle do not give any known number of casualties. In his account of the battle, Botalye does make mention of the
fact that the extremely accurate fire of the soldiers kept
the Indians out of range after the first day. It can be
safely assumed that the war party had suffered some
casualties.

However, the battle did have an immense effect on the
Kiowas' will to fight. Wherever the Kiowas went, there
seemed to be troops with more arriving all the time. The
principal chiefs met and decided that the time for peace had
come. Mamanti and Lone Wolf were exceptions, and led their
band toward the Staked Plains. Satanta and Big Tree decided
to surrender at the Darlington Agency in Indian Territory.
On October 4, 1874, Satanta surrendered himself and his
band consisting of 145 men, women, and children to Lieutenant
Colonel Thomas Neill of the 6th U.S. Cavalry at Darlington.
Big Tree and Satanta were arrested as prisoners of war and
sent under guard to Fort Sill. The renegade band of
Mamanti and Lone Wolf had joined the Comanches.

On the same day that Wyllys Lyman's men were quenching
their thirst with rain water, Billy Dixon, Amos Chapman,
and four young troopers from the 6th Cavalry were attacked
by 125 Kiowas and Comanches south of the Washita River. The
small party was carrying dispatches from Colonel Miles to
Camp Supply when they were surrounded. Sargeant Z. T.
Woodhall, Privates Peter Rath, John Harrington, and George W.
Smith were all wounded during the initial fire. The group
took cover in a buffalo wallow about six feet in diameter
and about a foot and a half deep. With knives and canteen
cups, they improved their position as best they could. Smith had been mortally wounded, but concealed his condition from the hostiles by sitting up in the buffalo wallow and continued firing at the circling Kiowas and Comanches.\textsuperscript{11}

For the entire day, the courageous and desperate soldiers and scouts kept up a constant fire against the Indians. At times, the warriors were close enough to the sand pit for the defenders to drive them back with pistol fire. The rain that fell in the late afternoon mingled with their blood and filled their shallow fighting position. The hostiles broke off the attack at dark on the 12th. All of the defenders were wounded, five seriously, and unable to escape. Dixon walked out for help the next day and contacted Major Price's column. When Price arrived at the buffalo wallow, he found four seriously wounded men and Private Smith dead. There was evidence that more than a dozen Indians had been killed.\textsuperscript{12}

All of the defenders at the buffalo wallow fight were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Chapman and Dixon were given the award even though they were civilians. Sergeant Woodhall had a year's less service than the three privates, but all of the soldiers had served at least four years on the frontier and were experienced Indian fighters. Their courage and devotion to duty impressed Nelson Miles so much that he insisted that their bravery be recognized and rewarded.\textsuperscript{13}

Major William Price's column had been out of contact
with Miles since leaving Fort Bascom for the Panhandle. In fact, Price did not submit a report on his activities until he had joined Colonel Miles' column. The Major had led his command of the 8th Cavalry across the Staked Plains. From the outset, Price's column was slowed by his ponderous supply train. On September 4th, he had moved only 150 miles from Fort Bascom. He was now south of the Canadian River. It was here that Price found some signs of Indians.

Price sent Captain Farnsworth and Company "H", 8th Cavalry with his wagon train towards Antelope Hills. Farnsworth had a total force of 110 soldiers and teamsters and one howitzer. Price was left with Companies "C", "K" and "L" which had a total compliment of 130 men and one howitzer. At dusk on September 4th, Price led his column to the southeast in search of hostiles.

On the afternoon of September 6th, Major Price found a trail left by a large group of Indians. Soon there after, he came across a trail left by Colonel Miles' column and he assumed that the Indians were enroute to the Fort Sill Reservation and that Miles was following them. He found Miles' old camp on the Salt Fork of the Red River, and discovered that about forty Indians had been at the abandoned camp site. Price decided that he would follow the trail to the southwest for one day.

Tracking the Indians became extremely difficult because of the rugged terrain. Price was forced to "cache" his howitzer on the Salt Fork. In the middle of the afternoon on September 7th, Price's column was intercepted by a
messenger from Colonel Miles. The Colonel was camped nearby and wanted to talk to Price. He abandoned his search for the hostiles and rode to Miles' camp.

After their conference, Price moved his command north for four days. His wagon train had been out of contact with him for a week now. Every night he fired rockets to guide Farnsworth to his camp site, but to no avail. Believing that Farnsworth was lost, Price started in the direction of Antelope Hills on the 12th of September. At noon, Price saw a column moving towards the west across his front. At first he thought the formation was friendly troops, but as he drew closer he realized that it was a column of hostile warriors.

Price's task force now consisted of 120 mounted men. The ammunition for his howitzer had been soaked by the rain, and was useless with the exception of eight rounds of canister. Price deployed his men and sent out skirmishers. The Indians rode to a crest in front of Price and waited for him. Companies "K", "L" and "C" were ordered to charge the crest and drive the Indians off. When his companies advanced, Price had his howitzer take a position to support the attack. He left an officer and twenty men to guard his artillery. As Price's men advanced, the hostiles sent mounted warriors to the flanks and rear of the 8th Cavalry.

Price was rapidly being surrounded. Word was sent to him by the officer in charge of the howitzer, that dismounted Indians were closing in and the gun might be captured. Price immediately sent a platoon of cavalry to provide
additional security for his all but useless howitzer. The hostiles pressed the attack on all sides for about two hours. 14

As usual, the Indians broke contact and rode off in small parties. Price felt that he had won a great victory. He admitted that there were no dead Indians to be found, but felt sure they "had received a very severe lesson." 15 The Major said he counted 150 to 175 hostiles during the height of battle and they out numbered him two to one. Of all the battles fought, this was one where the forces were more equally distributed than any other, the ratio being nearer one to one.

Price was informed by some of his officers that they had observed a large number of women and children and much livestock moving northwesterly during the battle. The hostiles had evidently fought a delaying action against Price while their families escaped. Major Price decided not to give chase. His men had been living on buffalo meat for two days and had very little salt left to season their food. He let the Indians escape and turned toward the Antelope Hills again in search of supplies. Apparently, Major Price was more concerned with the comfort of his command than in the successful completion of his mission.

Rejoining his trains on September 22, 1874, Major Price requested permission to draw forty days rations for his soldiers and mounts, and to patrol the Palo Duro and Tule Forks of the Red River. He felt confident that along these
rivers were encamped the majority of hostile Indians. The 8th Cavalry would have 180 cavalrymen and two howitzers to pursue and punish any bands of warriors found on the Great Plains.

Miles did not have the confidence in Major Price and his troops that he had in his other commanders. Price appeared to be too concerned with logistics and not enough with tactics. His attempts to pursue Indians up to now had been half-hearted and ineffective. On October 12th, Miles issued an order sending Major Price's two howitzers and two companies of cavalry to Camp Supply, Indian Territory to provide security for trains moving from Camp Supply to forward locations. This permitted James Biddle's battalion of the 6th Cavalry to return to Miles' command for offensive action against the hostiles. 16

Miles' plan for the Fall Campaign was ambitious and far reaching. Major Compton's battalion of the 6th Cavalry was to operate from fifty to one hundred miles west of Adobe Walls. His battalion's mission was to "discover, attack or follow any body of Indians that are going north." 17 Major Biddles' battalion was to operate north of Camp Supply as far as Fort Dodge, Kansas. Lieutenant Frank Baldwin and sixty hand picked men would scout the river valleys south of the Washita River. Thus, Nelson Miles' command would be able to reconnoiter an area from the east of Antelope Hills to the west of Adobe Walls, and from the Red River north to Kansas. Colonel Miles was taking advantage of the mobility
of his command. By delegating authority and areas of responsibility to his subordinate commanders, Miles was able to use the soldiers available more efficiently. He realized that with communication between his headquarters and lower headquarters so unreliable, he could never hope to make timely command decisions. Nelson had confidence that Compton, Biddle, and Baldwin could make sound decisions based on the situation in the areas. Miles still had not heard from MacKenzie.

MacKenzie had been having logistical problems. He had left Fort Concho and gone to Fort Griffin to complete outfitting. He found that there was not enough forage to fulfill the needs of the regiment for the expedition. His forage wagons could not be filled from the supply at the fort or from the surrounding countryside. General Augur came to MacKenzie's aid and sent him 4,000 bushels of corn. On September 20, 1874, the 4th Cavalry moved out of Fort Griffin and headed north. MacKenzie now had 471 men and officers. His scouts began coming back to report numerous small trails left by hostiles. MacKenzie began pushing his men in an effort to contact the bands that were being driven south by Miles' columns. He organized two battalions of cavalry under the command of Captain Napoleon McLaughlen and Captain E.B. Beaumont. Major Thoman M. Anderson commanded five companies of the 10th Infantry that would provide security for the trains. A scout detachment similar to Baldwin's was formed and Lt. William Thompson put in command. By
formed and Lt. William Thompson put in command. By
organizing for combat in this way, MacKenzie was able to
take advantage of the speed and mobility of his cavalry.
The infantry could operate more efficiently by walking along
side the slow moving wagons. The far ranging cavalry could
easily return to the secure trains for resupply. MacKenzie
realized that he had to match the mobility of the Plains
Indians in order to run them down and "punish" them.

By September 25th, MacKenzie's force was on the Staked
Plains. A cold driving rain pelted the men at their
encampment near Tule Canyon. That evening some of Thompson's
scouts reported a large camp of Indians in Palo Duro Canyon.
MacKenzie received the report and prepared his camp for an
Indian attack. He knew from his years of experience that
the Indians would probably try to run off his horses during
the night. Around 10:00 P.M., a hundred braves did try to
stampede the mounts.\textsuperscript{19} The cavalry horses had been hobbled
and tied together. In addition, each horse had been tied
to a stake driven into the ground. The Indians soon realized
that it was impossible to drive the horses away. They fell
back and began harassing MacKenzie's camp with long range
sniper fire for the rest of the night. At dawn, MacKenzie
ordered one of his cavalry companies to attack. The tactic
was successful and the Indians pulled out. MacKenzie gave
chase for a few miles with his entire force. The band of
warriors were moving to the east and away from Palo Duro
Canyon.
MacKenzie had his command camp early that day. He thought that the Indians were trying to draw him away from their main camp. After dark, MacKenzie’s men quietly broke camp and mounted. MacKenzie had decided to move directly to Palo Duro Canyon under the cover of darkness. The 4th Cavalry marched northwest all night. When dawn was breaking, they had reached the rim of the canyon. Palo Duro Canyon is a geological phenomena. It drops straight down for 400 feet from the flat plains and varies in width from a few hundred feet to half a mile. The Canyon floor is flat and is an irregular strip of land almost twenty miles long. MacKenzie was going to fight a battle in a miniature Grand Canyon. Some of Thompson’s scouts found a narrow trail leading down to the canyon floor. When the first rays of sunlight illuminated the floor of the canyon, MacKenzie could see hundreds of tepees. The Kiowas, Comanches, and Cheyennes had evidently massed here for protection from the Federal forces.

MacKenzie’s men started down the trail in single file leading their horses. An Indian sentry fired a shot to warn the sleeping village and then ran toward the bottom of the canyon. The Indians were now awake and beginning to fight. Company "E", 4th Cavalry was the first to reach the canyon floor. Captain Boehm had his men mount and attack. The troopers rode through the village driving women and children before them. The warriors were taking positions behind rocks and trees along the sides of the canyon. Boehm’s company was finally driven back by the ever increasing fire.
MacKenzie had accompanied three more companies down from the top. Palo Duro Canyon was filled with smoke and noise from the battle. Some of the red warriors were advancing against the cavalrymen. Many small fire fights had broken out to add to the confusion. To Indian and trooper, it seemed as if the enemy were on all sides. About noon, some semblance of order began to develop. The majority of the Indians were escaping to the western end of the canyon. MacKenzie had some of his troopers start to destroy the captured supplies.

Most of the supplies that the Indians had collected for the winter had been lost to MacKenzie. Their great herd of horses had been rounded up by the 4th Cavalry. Only three dead braves were found by the cavalry after the fighting had stopped. There had been thousands in the canyon when the fighting had started and more may have been killed, but their bodies had been taken away by the retreating Indians. Poor Buffalo, a sub chief, of Lone Wolf's Kiowas was one of those found by the troopers. MacKenzie's command had suffered one killed and one wounded.

Late that afternoon, MacKenzie led his men out of the Palo Duro to the Staked Plains. The village and supplies had been destroyed. The Kiowas, Comanches and Cheyennes had been routed and left impoverished. MacKenzie brought the Indian herd with him. His first thought had been to turn the horses over to the post at Fort Griffin. If he lost the herd on the way, however, there was a possibility
that the Indians would get it back. MacKenzie decided instead to kill all but a few of the animals. On the morning of September 29th, Lieutenant Henry Lawton and his company began shooting Indian horses.21

Ranald S. MacKenzie had destroyed the Kiowa and Comanche's will to fight. They were starving, mountless and facing a long hard winter. Mamanti had prophesied that no soldiers would ever come to Palo Duro. He had been wrong for the first time and his reputation was damaged. MacKenzie's victory in the Palo Duro was complete. He had destroyed their "supply camp" and winter quarters. Faced with certain death from nature or the military, thousands of Indians started the long trek to the Reservation in the Indian Territory. MacKenzie had accomplished his mission efficiently, completely, and with little fanfare.

Cut off from their sources of supply by the cavalry, the Indians began streaming into Reservations. Wherever the tribes went, soldiers followed them or found them. By November, the Kiowas and Comanches had given up the fight. Their chiefs tried to slip past the soldiers and take their people into Darlington or Fort Sill to surrender. The Cheyenne Agency at Darlington was preferrable to Fort Sill because there was more food available. The Cheyennes still remained off the Reservation and warlike.
FOOTNOTES—CHAPTER IV

1. WDAGO 2815-1874.
2. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 23, 1874 Lyman to AG.
4. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 23, 1874.
5. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 23, 1874; Nye, Carbine and Lance, 217.
6. Nye, Carbine and Lance, 218; Nye, Bad Medicine and Good, 192-194. This is Botalye's version of the battle.
8. WDAGO 2815-1874, September 25, 1874 Lyman to AG.
9. WDAGO 2815-1874, September 14, 1874 Miles to AG.
10. WDAGO 2815-1874 Neill to AG October 4, 1874.
11. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 14, 1874 Miles to AG.
12. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 24, 1874 Miles to AG; Price to AG September 23, 1874.
13. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 24, 1874 Miles to AG.
14. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 23, 1874 Price to AG.
15. WDAGO 2815-1874 September 23, 1874 Price to AG.
16. WDAGO 2815-1874 October 12, 1874 Miles to AG.
17. WDAGO 2815-1874 October 12, 1874 Miles to AG.
CHAPTER V

Rain and sleet pelted soldier and Indian alike in the Fall of 1874. The parched plains of the summer were now quagmires. The miserable conditions affected both sides. The old chiefs could see the women and children suffering terribly. With the cavalry chasing them wherever they went, the Indians knew they had two choices. They could escape to the north or they could surrender. Most of the bands had lost their offensive spirit and were concerned with survival. The extremely harsh weather and the resulting hardships sent many Indians scurrying to Indian Territory.

By the time "Black Jack" Davidson and the 10th Cavalry left Fort Sill for a patrol to the west along the Canadian River, on October 21st, the hostile bands were avoiding contact as much as possible. Davidson's men did find abandoned villages and many items of equipment left by the fleeing red men. The Indians had lost many of their horses through lack of proper diet and long marches. The cavalry had adopted one of the Indian tactics. Whenever a contact was established, an attempt to stampede the Indian livestock was made.

George Buell's column from Fort Richardson had finally arrived in the operational area. On October 24, 1874 he reported that his column was driving a large band of Cheyennes toward the west along the banks of the Salt Fork of the Red River toward the reservations. Buell's only
fight had occurred on the 9th of October when he attacked a
village. His troops had captured many ponies and destroyed
over one hundred lodges. He reported that many trails
left by the Indians were in the direction of the Reservations.

Phil Sheridan arrived at Fort Sill on October 28th and
left immediately for Camp Supply for a first hand look at
how the campaign was going. One of his immediate reactions
to the situation in the Indian Territory was a request for
a new post to be constructed at Darlington. He felt that
troops would be needed to police the Indians for years to
come. He also voiced an optimistic opinion that the hos-
tilities would end before winter set in. Miles' columns
were successfully tracking the hostiles, and forcing them
into submission.

Frank Baldwin was continuing his patrols along the
rivers of the Panhandle. On November 8, 1874, Baldwin
reported to Colonel Miles that he had discovered a large
Cheyenne village on the North Branch of McLellan Creek.
Baldwin had his detachment of scouts plus Company "D", 6th
Cavalry and Company "D", 5th Infantry with him. Miles had
Company "N", 6th Cavalry dispatched immediately to reinforce
Baldwin.

Frank Baldwin was an impulsive and brave man. He
did not wait for Company "N", but decided to attack
immediately. The Lieutenant loaded his infantry into his
supply wagons. On order, the cavalry, the infantry in wagons,
and the scouts charged the camp. Even the limbered howitzer
rolled forward on line with the troops. The shouts of the soldiers, the rumbling of the wagons, the crack of carbines, and the repeated bugle calls sent the village into a panicked flight. Never before had the Cheyennes seen such a sight. Blue clad soldiers were riding into the village in wagons and shooting over the sides. Unlike their brothers at Palo Duro Canyon, these Cheyennes were taken completely by surprise. Baldwin had taken advantage of the Indians' lack of security. He had increased that advantage with the shock action of the infantry fighting in wagons while moving quickly across the terrain.

Lieutenant Baldwin's attack was immediately successful. The Cheyennes left everything except the horses they rode when escaping. When Baldwin's men started searching the abandoned village they found two white girls, Julia and Adelaide German, that had been captured in Kansas during August. The girls, aged five and seven, told Baldwin that their father, mother, brother, and a sister had been killed. Their two older sisters were in the hands of Cheyennes. The freed young girls were sent to Fort Leavenworth for care and refuge.

Miles was extremely interested in recovering the older German girls from the Cheyennes. Colonel Neill had gained some information from some of the Cheyennes that had surrendered at Darlington. His reports indicated that there were two white female captives with Stone Calf's band of Cheyennes. Neill had word that there were about 200 lodges
in the band and that Stone Calf wanted to surrender.\(^4\)

Nelson Miles devised a covert plan to send some civilian scouts to Stone Calf's camp, and attempt to talk to the girls about escape. Neill sent a message directly to the girls by means of a civilian scout. In his message Colonel Neill told the girls that he would accept Stone Calf's surrender at Darlington if he sent the girls in first. Neill even provided the German girls with a paper and pencil to write a reply from Stone Calf.\(^5\)

Neill's efforts were successful. On March 6, 1875, he accepted the surrender of Stone Calf and 820 Cheyennes. Catherine and Sophia German were released by Stone Calf and entrusted to the care of Colonel Neill. He now had a total of 1652 Cheyenne prisoners. After Stone Calf's surrender, Neill telegraphed General Pope. "I think this finishes the war. Small parties are still coming in."\(^6\)

Colonel Neill was correct but possibly a little late in his conclusion. There had been some small skirmishes in November and December, but nothing of importance. The Indians had stopped offensive actions in October and had been avoiding contact with soldiers as much as possible. The last fight of the war took place at Sappa Creek, Kansas in June 1875, and involved a Company of the 6th Cavalry and Cheyennes. The Red River War had diminished from battles involving thousands down to skirmishes involving a dozen people. The war had affected the people on both sides in many different ways.
The Plains Indians had been decisively defeated. They streamed into their reservations during the Winter of 1874-1875. The once proud people of the plains were sick, starving, and tired when they surrendered. Their dream of returning to the "old ways" had been shattered by columns of relentless cavalymen. Most of the people were allowed to remain on the reservations but certain chiefs were arrested and sent to prison in Florida.

Suppose Miles' forces had been unsuccessful in preventing the Indians from forming an 'Indian army'? Would the confederated tribes have found a 'Red Napoleon'? This can only be answered hypothetically. The tactical genius of Quanah Parker and Mamanti were available, and of the two, Quanah was better known among the various tribes. Mamanti's reputation as a sooth-sayer was known to the Kiowas, but there is no evidence that it had spread to the other tribes. Quanah's strange self-enforced exile from the war after Adobe Walls will probably never be explained, but it is known that he and the Quahadi Comanches remained on the Staked Plains. It is quite probable that his location was known to the various bands and if necessary, he could have been summoned to take command. Quanah Parker's fame and ability as a war leader was well known to MacKenzie. In fact, MacKenzie wanted to conduct a search for Quanah during the winter of 1874 with the entire 4th Cavalry. In letters to General Pope, MacKenzie singled out Quanah Parker as the single most dangerous war chief on the Plains.
Perhaps Quanah could have been the 'Red Napoleon' and with Mamanti as his mystic, he could have led the 'Indian army' in a victorious campaign against the blue soldiers. Deprived of their traditional leaders, the plains Indians were forced to adjust to a new way of life. Their society was forced to conform to the regimentation of government control. There was no peace treaty this time. The Kiowas, Comanches, and Cheyennes had lost the war and their independence. As in most wars, the victors were acclaimed heroes.

One of the individual lives most affected by the war, was that of Nelson Miles. The military glory that had eluded him throughout the Civil War came to him on the Texas Panhandle. Miles had deployed and commanded his forces efficiently and with a touch of genius. Even when his force was concentrating at Fort Dodge, Miles had a grasp of the situation and of what could be expected during the campaign. He realized that if the tribes combined and formed an 'Indian army' they would have enough strength to dominate the plains. One of the implied tasks in the order from Sheridan was to prevent a concentration of the hostile bands on the Staked Plains. Miles knew that chiefs such as Quanah Parker, Lone Wolf, Mamanti, Satanta, or Stone Calf were powerful enough to unite the tribes and pose a formidable threat to the army.

Colonel Miles also understood that the mobility of the Indians would make it difficult to keep them from slipping past his forces and regrouping at a predesignated point on the plains. When Miles organized his force for combat, he
may have followed the example set by Sheridan; multiple columns of cavalry supported by infantry and artillery. Sheridan had conveyed his thoughts on the matter by designing the five columns that would be under Miles' command. Miles split his own command of the 6th Cavalry and 5th Infantry before they left Fort Dodge, and had them move to the area of operation on multiple axis.

During the campaign, Miles was able to plan ahead and anticipate problems before they became important. Early in the war, he had anticipated a logistical problem if the troops were to remain on the plains through winter. His concept of supply bases in the forward area of operations, the Sweetwater Contonement, probably kept the campaign from failing due to lack of supplies or the necessity of securing long lines of communication to insure the availability of supplies. These forward bases were resupplied from larger depots that were located in secure areas. The short lines of communication between the bases were easier to secure against interdiction by the enemy. This concept of echeloned supply bases, and seperated unit trains is still adhered to by the U.S. Army.

Miles' summer campaign had been successful. He had apparently defeated the Indians whenever his forces had been in contact with them. His cavalry had out-fought and out-ridden some of the finest horse soldiers in the world. The tactics used by Miles in the summer of 1874 were simple and had proven effective. The real test of his tactical genius
had come in the fall when his mission changed. By October, Miles was faced with preventing the Indians from escaping to the north and uniting with the Sioux and the Northern Cheyennes.

Miles solved that problem by designating zones of responsibility for his cavalry battalions. The battalion commanders were responsible for preventing the Indians from moving north through their zones. In addition, the battalions were charged with the responsibility of keeping constant pressure on the red men to convince them that the only chance of survival was on the reservation. Today, the delegation of tactical responsibility to subordinate commanders is common practice, but when Miles did it, it was an innovation.

Nelson Miles was aware that his conduct of the war against the Indians was going well, and took every opportunity to inform his superiors of his successes. Phil Sheridan approved of Miles' plans and operations, as did General Sherman. Miles felt that his star was rising and that the glory he sought could be found in the destruction of the enemy, who ever he was. Miles was an opportunist and would not hesitate to take credit for a job well done, even though someone else had done it. The Colonel was aware that his exploits on the frontier were being reported in the eastern press. Perhaps for humanitarian reasons, but more likely for purely selfish reasons, Nelson Miles legally adopted the four German sisters. This noble gesture was
reported in the principal newspapers around the country. Miles emerged from the war as a new hero. His military prowess, personal bravery, devotion to his men, and his compassion conformed to the contemporary ideals of the American people. Nelson Miles had found the path to fame and glory and followed it unswervingly to the end. His comrade in arms, Ranald MacKenzie had not been as fortunate in his choice of routes to follow.

MacKenzie's campaign on the Staked Plains was more decisive than Miles' had been. At Palo Duro Canyon, he had destroyed the largest contonement of Plains Indians found during the war. MacKenzie had denied the Indians a Winter refuge and a staging area for large scale assaults during the Spring and Summer of 1875. When he destroyed their horses, he destroyed their mobility. A large portion of the Cheyennes, Kiowas, and Comanches had been reduced from a viable military force to a mass of staggering refugees by MacKenzie's command.

Perhaps Ranald MacKenzie was becoming tired of his endless campaigns or bored with his success as an Indian fighter. He never filed a glowing report of his victory at Palo Duro, instead, a routine after action report was submitted. MacKenzie did submit some rather terse recommendations for awards to individuals in his command, for bravery at Palo Duro. MacKenzie's lethargy developed into mental illness after the war, and his descending star was eclipsed by Nelson Miles'.
The experiences these men had during 1874 and subsequent campaigns set the pace and thought of the U.S. Army through the turn of the century. The troops that Phil Sheridan sent to the field in July 1874 had been untested but within six months they had experienced the hardships of desert and winter warfare and had fought well against an enemy that waged unconventional warfare. The training and the lessons learned by these troops would hold them in good stead for many years. The private soldier of Miles' Expedition was a professional. He may have had difficulty understanding his sergeant because he spoke a different language, and was of different ethnic origin but when in the field, or in a fight he knew what was expected of him and exactly what he must do.

Not all of the soldiers were as professional as they should have been. Major William Price had not been aggressive enough or committed to accomplishing the mission assigned to his battalion of the 8th Cavalry. His reluctance was evident to Colonel Miles and therefore, he was relieved of his command. Colonel Buell was aggressive and eager, but his command had not been mobile enough to successfully accomplish his mission. Price and Buell emerged from the Red River War of 1874 as nonentities.

Some men had found fame and glory and others found disgrace and ignominy. The red, white, and black soldiers had had their moment on the Texas Panhandle. Their deeds shone brightly for a short time and then dimmed. Other chiefs
and generals would gain more notoriety, and fame and their exploits would be better known; but there would not be a larger Indian War or one sooner forgotten than the Red River War of 1874.
1. WDAGO 2815-1874, October 24, 1874, Buell to Miles.
2. WDAGO 2815-1874, October 29, 1874, Sheridan to Sherman.
3. Frank Baldwin was awarded his second Medal of Honor for this action. The first was awarded during the Civil War.
4. WDAGO 2815-1874, Sheridan to Sherman.
5. WDAGO 2815-1874, Neill to German girls.
6. WDAGO 2815-1874, March 6, 1875, Neill to Pope.
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